

Developing an Understanding of Public Management Leadership Style Innovation:  
Traits of Public Administration Graduate Students of Valdosta State University

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## ABSTRACT

Leadership styles refer to a leader's manner of motivating people, providing them with direction, and implementing plans. It was proposed that graduate students of Valdosta State University may show frequent innovative traits within their leadership styles of choice, in order to project the leadership style of future public administrators. The leadership characteristics were operationalized through survey questions, and the responses of 54 current and former graduate students of Valdosta State University working in public management were analyzed. A majority of graduate students reflected ambitious traits consistent with innovative leadership styles. Fewer graduate students felt satisfied with their jobs and fewer graduate students reflected myopic management traits; satisfaction and myopia were traits of traditional leadership styles. Leadership style innovation is a viable topic with potentially broad application. This dissertation could inspire further study about what other factors compel a leader to develop a new, innovative leadership style.

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Derek Chauran, who said that I'm like a train; you either have to get on board or get out of the way. I also dedicate it to my little girl Eris, who had to endure the most boring bedtime stories ever when I read aloud Public Administration texts. Finally, I dedicate this book to my baby son Orion, who traveled with me to my doctoral residency first when he was only two months old, and we all joked that his dissertation would be called *Infant Vocalizations as Distraction: Their Origins and Impacts*.

## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION

Administration contains the same root word as ministry, the core meaning being to serve. Public management leadership styles in the field of public administration are distinctive. Public administrators do not merely produce a product and bring it to market. In fact, when this factory model is attempted in public administration, such as in the public school system, the results are dissatisfying. This is because each organization has its own vital social ideals, mission statement and population to serve. This dissertation is a study of management as exemplified by current and former Public Administration graduate students from Valdosta State University.

Which style of leadership is the most widely used in public management, or better yet, which style of leadership is the most effective and most desirable? It is the goal of this dissertation to study the development of leadership styles that are most effective for the 21<sup>st</sup> century to preserve and embody public service values within an organization. Specifically, the potentially innovative public management leadership styles of current and former Valdosta State University Doctor of Public Administration and Master of Public Administration students will be probed as an example. This is because a recent education in public administration results in application of the latest, cutting-edge leadership styles (Zydziunaite et al., 2013, 228). Due to adherence to educational values,

these graduate students could be leaders who would be applying the leadership styles of the future in public management.

Matrix management falls short in public administration. Matrix style management is prevalent in the private sector today because of its ease in staffing and in collecting expertise around a product. In matrix management, employees who share a skill set are grouped together and given a manager for leadership. However, for specific projects, the staff will often have another manager to which they must report. This approach in public administration can lead to bloated bureaucracy and frustration. Organizations within organizations compete with each other, rather than acting as perfect puzzle pieces that fit together. Public service cannot simply be substituted for a product. The service to the public good contains within it imperatives that affect motivation and drive conflict for all concerned.

Failed leadership styles and organization of leadership leads to conflict in public administration. Conflicts of interest between disparate reporting managers can leave staff feeling torn between pleasing two or more bosses. Direct conflicts of leadership styles can happen more directly, as well, since one manager's style may differ significantly from another's within the same group or project. Role conflicts emerge when the bureaucracy is unable to negotiate internally. If a staff member feels that the deepest values of the organization are being compromised, but the perceived wrongs fall within common practice and regulations, there may be no opportunity for change.

This is because bureaucracies are organized around agreed-upon common practices and regulations. The process for revising such regulations and procedures may be lengthy and difficult to access or perhaps even fall outside the purview of affected

higher education staff if they are governmental in nature. Even labor divisions are not straightforward in matrix management and other management styles due to increasingly complex specializations that demand public administrators to relinquish flexibility. Public administration, in contrast to strict management in the private sector, evokes a sense of collaborative interdependence in the public sphere, focusing on value ideals in the process rather than utopian outcomes.

This tragedy in action forces a paradigm shift by those who are change makers in public administration. These cannot be mere fad leadership style changes as often happens within the private sector when managers are encouraged to adopt superficial processes and affectations whenever a new coach comes along. Opportunities come first in the form of deep education for public administrators, but also in a return to clinging to the highest ideals of the organization. Society's values are chaotic, conflicting, inconsistent and irrational. Generating a paradigm out of this seeming void of stability is a challenge and an opportunity that can only come from within the organization and from within great leadership.

Finding the ideal leadership style can be paradoxical. Herbert A Simon wrote in "The Proverbs of Administration" that accepted administrative principles are like proverbs in that they sound satisfying but come in contradictory pairs. Just when an organization implements one solution, the next organizational recommendation to implement comes along that seems entirely incompatible.

For examples, he points out that efficiency for public administrators is increased when there is task specialization. This is pretty straightforward, because groups organized around a shared task will be a united team of experts. However, another

equally straightforward proverb is that administration is better with a limited span of control. Fewer staff to oversee, Simon points out, will allow the focused attention of the administrator. As simple as these guidelines would seem to implement, this does not offer guidance for whether small groups within an organization should be made according to process, purpose, the people being served or location. The greater the number of groups, the greater the number of administrators, which dilutes the hierarchy.

Most helpfully, Simon provides recommendations for diagnosing administrative situations, which can be applied in this dissertation. It is stated that efficiency is an administrative principle towards which all should strive. No public manager is perfect. Even the best administrators will at some point reach a limit as regards to their natural skills and abilities, knowledge, as well as correct or incorrect decisions made. This rational approach is one way to begin the inquiry, and Simon suggests assigning weighted criteria in any evaluation in order to justify potential changes that could increase efficiency (Simon 1946).

Developing best practices in public administration begins with the embrace of subjective reality (Bogason 2001, 184). The truth is the truth as long as it works, but the very idea of truth is value-laden and unproductive, since such truth will necessarily be a moving target, false before too long.

Thus, the ideal leadership style for public managers, must shift from structure to process. Goals are only relevant as progress benchmarks, for there is no ultimate outcome for humanity, at least none that we can be privy to at this time. Public administrators can only help their fellow beings along the way, encountering problems based upon experiential knowledge (Jay 1994, 28). In modern times, this can be a direct



appeal to the qualitative experience of the world, or it can be a quantitative positivist approach.

This is not to say that all best practices must be essentially pragmatic, due to the process-centered approach as opposed to an erroneous focus on the outcomes to problems. As stated, a process-centered approach is necessary due to the possibility that there is no ideal outcome for humanity. Imagine the pragmatist as a mouse in a maze. If the mouse takes a wrong turn, he or she may be stuck indefinitely, not wanting to move any further away from the cheese in order to back out of the dead end. Decisive action as a leadership style, even if at first it may seem “wrong” to some, may mitigate that effect. Such a leadership style may be to act as a gadfly to bureaucrats; an irritant that continues the process of pearl formation in the oyster of humanity (Farmer 2005, 28).

The ethical competence of leadership in public administration is of special importance. In the field of public service, when the public good is the highest goal, morality and ethics cannot be ignored. Public Administrators cannot check their morals or ethics at the door to the office in the same way as shrewd businesspeople. A public administrator can be informed by his or her morality while thinking critically about it from an external perspective for the good of the public whom he or she serves.

There is more to the terrible beauty of the public administrator’s world than a single outcome of efficiency and profit. It is one goal of this dissertation to explore how leadership styles might emphasize or protect those special features of Public Administration. Qualitative people skills may be important to grasp and codify. As always, the Public Administrator’s focus should be upon helping the public with the processes, products and services through whatever changes may be necessary in a chaotic

system of government. People exist in a community context and our behavior within organizations might not be adequately understood or predicted on the level of the individual in a way that is authentic. As a group, people become more than the sum of their individual parts or roles played.

An assumption must be made in this dissertation that the jobs performed by public managers, whether graduates of Public Administration oriented higher education or otherwise, are essentially similar along the lines of POSDCORB (plan, organize, staff, direct, coordinate, report and budget) (Van Wart et al., 2008, Kindle Location 1312-14). It will be important to examine whether individual public administrator leadership styles can be generalized from one organization to another. As Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus famously wrote, “That which is not good for the swarm, neither is it good for the bee” (Marcus Aurelius & Long 2011, Kindle Location 1950-51).

With this quote from an exemplary leader in history, let us explore great leadership qualities that transcend the context of the type of organization. Efficiency is always of paramount importance, but public administrators must also capture and define the certain *je ne sais quoi* which excellent leaders possess.

Identifying the traits of truly good leadership is an ongoing problem. “Throughout history, most near geniuses do seem to have had this inner urge. Something called a passion, the madness of the gods. Or merely a deft touch” (Van Wart et al., 2008, Kindle Location 5866-67). How can public administrators culture good leadership?

It is generally hoped that leaders should be moral, ethical and ethically competent. “A person can be ethically competent without being an ethical leader, but not an ethical leader without being ethically competent. Ethical competence is the basis from which the

leader can build and maintain a reputation for being a moral person” (Cooper & Menzel 2013, Kindle Location 1383-85). Morality goes a long way towards predicting ethical competence, because it implies that moral agency is already a skill the leader possesses.

Ethical behavior can be broken down further into identifiable categories. “Ethical leadership is furthermore associated with personal traits and virtues such as honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, authenticity, reliability, responsibility, respect, conscientiousness, and fairness” (Cooper & Menzel 2013, Kindle Location 1421-23). An ethical leader must have competence within each of these traits in order to be perceived as ethical.

An ethical organization cannot exist without ethical staff, which is why ethics might be promoted widely within organizations by the leadership styles of some public administrators. “Without active promotion of ethics, ethical leadership cannot exist. For ethical competence, on the other hand, such a statement is far less obvious” (Cooper & Menzel 2013, Kindle Location 1371-72). An analogy could be made with Sun Tzu’s view of strategy versus tactics. “Strategy is best defined as ‘doing the right thing’ while tactics is ‘doing things right’” (Michaelson 2010, Kindle Location 244-45). In this case, ethics is the strategy and ethical competence would be the tactics.

“Leadership is like beauty. You know it when you see it” (Van Wart 2008, Kindle Location 1262-63). In the same way, an ethical society and government can be known by how it is viewed. Ethics is important in government and society because it is a strong motivator and point of leverage in politics. “Politics is the science of who gets what, when and how” (Scott & Garrison 2012, Kindle Location 312-15). He or she who is an ethical politician has great social power, indeed. “Leaders are best advised to use

positional power sparingly and strategically, and to try to rely most heavily on their personal power” (Van Wart 2008, Kindle Location 5075-78). In this case, ethics boosts the relational and personal power of a leader despite any role or station.

Morality requires a great degree of self-awareness, and knowing one’s own strengths and weaknesses (Edelman et al., 2008, Kindle Location 195-00). Knowing one’s own moral weaknesses can be key to developing a higher degree of morality and resulting ethical competence. “Individual moral selfhood is a highly fungible thing, and shaping moral selfhood is one key element in the administration of administration” (Frederickson & Ghere 2005, Kindle Location 1649-50).

Put in other words, “Know the enemy and know yourself, and your victory will never be endangered” (Michaelson 2010, Kindle Location 2029-30). When one has knowledge of both the self and the enemy, one has a potential advantage as a leader over any situation. For the Public administrator, the enemy could be conflict within the organization, external conflicts, budgetary or regulatory limitations and more. The same organizational structure will not work for every organization or with every public manager.

Conflict is to be expected. Conflicts do not need to be evaluated per se, as they are an eventuality, however they do need to be addressed without guile through the varied leadership styles. A suggested narrative is thus: “We both know that we have a challenge here. I don’t know what the solution is, but I’m sure there’s a good one out there. Let’s work together to find it” (Edelman et al., 2008, 1679-80). It will be of interest to discover how Public managers’ leadership styles address conflict.

Another potential solution public managers may be applying to the problem of not knowing what good leadership may be is to detach from outcomes (Edelman et al., 2008, 1639). When serving people for the sake of serving people, a leader will always succeed, because the process is the mark of success, rather than outcome goals set as relative benchmarks. However, when a leader has the idea to push a specific outcome upon a society, he or she will often be left in frustration. Again, the focus is upon process.

One factor to understand about leadership styles may be to acknowledge those aspects of good leadership that are left up to chance. “All public managers are lucky. But being lucky is not enough. For the luck to count, for the luck to contribute to success, the manager has to recognize and exploit it” (Van Wart et al., 2008, Kindle Location 13026-27). When luck is not present, the public manager must recognize the problem and take steps to mitigate the issue until such time as a lucky opportunity arises.

A good leader is also resourceful. As Sun Tzu wrote, “To a commander adept at the use of extraordinary forces, his resources are as infinite as heaven and earth, as inexhaustible as the flow of the running rivers. They end and begin again like the motions of the sun and moon. They die away and then are reborn like the changing of the four seasons” (Michaelson 2010, Kindle Location 1003-6). The truly resourceful leader has infinite power at his or her command. Finally, another good leadership aspect is creativity. “There are five main approaches to the question of what causes creativity. These are intuition, synthesis, imagination, levels of attention, and conflict” (Van Wart et al., 2008, Kindle Location 5985-86). It may be important to engage the five approaches to creativity that are suggested above.

In summary, good leadership is not bestowed by the corner office. “Generalizing for simplicity, leaders are best advised to use positional power sparingly and strategically, and to try to rely most heavily on their personal power” (Van Wart et al., 2008, Kindle Location 5075-78). One’s charm, charisma, creativity, self-knowledge and smooth detachment from outcomes is more valuable than any organizational seat.

There are numerous leadership styles studied in public administration. In the second chapter’s literature review, many of these will be explored. Beginning with a broad overview of leadership styles in public management, a background of theory of innovation in the realm of leadership styles will be established. Following this, factors which affect innovative leadership styles will be investigated, including leadership style contingency reactions to stressors, some of the less-tangible leadership qualities such as ethicality and caring, and also some confounding factors that may affect the expression or understanding of innovative public management leadership styles in this study. Finally, the feasibility of changing leadership styles will be addressed, since the practicality of whether leadership styles can be changed within an organization is vital if this paper is going to have any significance.

In the third chapter of this dissertation, the non-parametric analysis will be explained. Public managers that will be studied will be those who work in a public-facing administrative capacity during or after completion of the Public Administration graduate programs at Valdosta State University. These include the Doctor of Public Administration and the Master of Public Administration programs. A survey will be administered to a sample of current and former graduate students of these programs, with

the aim of determining whether they more frequently demonstrate innovative as opposed to traditional leadership style traits.

For the purposes of sharpening the focus of this study, only public managers will be studied, with the hopes that the results will be generalizable. Results will relate only to graduate students of public administration programs and not to public administrators in general, certainly not in all states due to vast cultural and organizational differences by region.

In the fourth chapter of this dissertation, results of the statistics such as a chi-square applied to the data and calculated mode will be analyzed. Tables and figures will be viewed in an analytical light. What meanings that can be assigned to the data will be explained, and additional findings or confounding factors will be explored in the analysis.

In the fifth and final chapter of this dissertation, the generalizability of the results of this study will be examined. A rationale for the most prevalent leadership style will be provided. Recommendations for the most desirable leadership style will be given. An implementation and evaluation plan will be developed for public administrators.

## Chapter II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is intended to provide the background necessary to perform a study on innovative leadership style traits of current and former Doctor of Public Administration and Master of Public Administration students of Valdosta State University. What is being sought is an understanding of how existing leadership styles either support or provide a barrier to innovation of potential new leadership styles. Since leadership styles will be inferred from survey responses, it is vital that a firm background of known leadership styles enumerated in the literature is established, in order to examine them as aids or barriers to innovation of new leadership styles. Information from the literature about how leadership styles may or may not evolve may make it possible to interpret the results of this dissertation's survey as either favoring or disfavoring innovation.

This literature review will begin with the problem statement and overview, highlighting why traditional leadership styles from business management practices do not easily translate to public management. Following this, an overview of leadership style theory in public management will be provided as background information so that anything that is not pertaining to public management leadership styles can be excluded from the study. Next, each significant leadership style currently featured in the literature



will be briefly described with respect to its relationship to innovation, beginning with the most traditional leadership styles imported from business management, and then exploring some more innovative leadership styles. This is vital for use in identifying known leadership styles in this study that are already described in the literature today which may aid or hinder new leadership style development.

### Problem Statement and Overview

Leadership styles refer to a leader's manner of motivating people, providing them with direction, and implementing plans. "Style is generally considered a mid-range conceptualization of recognizable patterns of leader characteristics and behavior" (Van Wart 2013, 531). For the purpose of this dissertation, the focus will be on leadership styles exhibited by Public Administrators, rather than managers in the private sector. Private administration practices differ significantly from those in public administration, due to the focus on a need for profit and sound business practices. Business management practices may be forced to innovate due to pressures that public administrators don't always face, such as competition from other businesses. In a public management context, those same pressures may cause management practices to stagnate and remain traditional.

The conceptual underpinnings of this research is that Public Administrators chafe under traditional leadership styles that work well in the private sector, due to difference in care and mission when performing a public service (Williams 2012, 126). Public Administration is unique due to the role Public Administrators play overseeing organizations that have important social ideals. Rationally, Public Administrators might display a particular leadership style that is most prevalent, due to efficacy and faithfulness to the integrity of social ideals. It is proposed that graduate students of

Valdosta State University may show frequent innovative traits within their leadership styles of choice. Innovative leadership style traits may relate to the forward-thinking of academia because students turn to graduate school in order to gain further power and influence in their field of choice, thus becoming the leading edge of modern thought as much as they learn about the latest and greatest management practices.

### Leadership Theory and Public Managers

Though ten years ago there was a dearth of scholarly literature about leadership in Public Administration, as observed by Montgomery Van Wart, he returned to publish “Administrative Leadership Theory: A Reassessment After 10 Years” in order to retract his statement and reframe it in 2013. He reports that scholarly public sector leadership literature is now available in quantity, and that there are some fields more than other that are what he calls “ripe for research” (Van Wart 2013, 522-523). The usual debates about Public Administration leadership have evolved with technology and politics, and researchers are just beginning to ask research questions such as “How and where is administrative leadership distinct from generic notions of organizational leadership?” (Van Wart 2013, 530). Van Wart is saying that innovation of new leadership styles spring forth from potentially unique needs of public management from other forms of organizational leadership.

Van Wart writes directly about leadership style and the current narrative in the literature about which leadership style may be best. He writes that, in 2003, literature in the public sector regarding leadership styles was fragmented. However, he cites promising research in the recent decade, which have revealed leadership styles by name, and theories for dividing leader behavior into strategic camps, (i.e., prospectors,

defenders, analyzers, and reactors. Transactional leadership has received criticism and more favored leadership styles that invite further research include: Transformational leadership, distributed leadership and collaborative leadership (Van Wart 2013, 532). Many leadership styles have been categorized, but many more may be emerging based on innovative leadership style traits demonstrated by today's leaders.

In 2012, Rick Vogel and Doris Masal wrote that "leadership remains a topic that has hitherto been neglected in research on public management" in their journal article, "Publicness, Motivation, and Leadership: The Dark Side of Private Management Concepts in the Public Sector" (Vogel & Masal 2012, 6). They assert that traditional leadership styles developed for efficient use in the private sector can be downright harmful for public administration. This is significant because it may provide a pressure or stimulus to motivate public managers to innovate new leadership styles. Just as environmental pressures stimulate evolutionary biology, the unsuitability of traditional leadership for adaptation could cause traditional leadership styles to lose prevalence.

The authors write that one similarity between public and private sector leadership is that it is the leadership styles themselves that propel the organizations to effectiveness and efficiency. They argue that leadership in the public sector is even more important, due to smaller staffing as a result of financial budget crunches. They identified directive versus participative leadership styles, and suggest that, "Preliminary findings of empirical studies indicate that the participative leadership style prevails in the public domain, which is in keeping with the fundamental motivations of the employees" (Vogel & Masal 2012, 12). In this case, participative leadership styles are favored and made more prevalent, which suggests that new leadership styles may evolve from these models. The

authors caution against using directive leadership style plucked from the private sector without giving the participative origins of public sector administration careful cogitation. This process requires flexibility, resourcefulness, and innovation.

Wouter Vandenabeele, Lotte Bogh Anderson and Peter Leisink provide an overview of public administration leadership in “Leadership in the Public Sector: A Tale of General Principles and Particular Features.” The authors present that the innovative process of developing new leadership styles has been challenging for public administration.

Despite the present shiny status of leadership as a research domain in general, the situation in the field of public administration does not present itself as being equally bright. Where in general management studies the advent of charismatic and transformational leadership theory has generated a multitude of research reports, creating a refreshing perspective on a field that had come to a standstill in the 1970s, this has not been the case in public management and public administration. (Vandenabeele et al., 2014, 79)

As explanation, the authors suggest that there is considerable doubt that the transformational leadership style is applicable to public administration (Vandenabeele et al., 2014 79). More literature on this leadership style and its relevance to traditional versus innovative leadership traits will be provided in a later section of this dissertation’s literature review, when transformational leadership is discussed as a potentially innovative stepping stone from traditional leadership.

Writing more on the non-transference of leadership styles from the business world to public administration, Jon Aarum Anderson distinguished “Public Versus Private Managers: How Public and Private Managers Differ in Leadership Behavior” in 2010. Leadership styles were analyzed for the variables task style, relationship style and change orientation style. Decision-making styles were also analyzed for the functions of

intuition, sensing, thinking and feeling. Anderson associated change-centered leadership with the learning-centered transformational style of leadership.

The conclusion Anderson drew was that, “Public and private managers differ significantly in leadership behavior, but not in decision-making styles” (Anderson 2010, 137). Ultimately, public administrators primarily demonstrated change-oriented leadership styles, are motivated by achievement and use intuition when making decisions. Anderson notes that leadership style may be correlated to years of experience as a public administrator, explaining that older public managers may be more satisfied with traditional leadership styles and unwilling to innovate.

Henry Eric Williams writes about the apparent dichotomy between management skills and leadership styles in 2012. He notes that leaders and managers are two separate entities, each with their own bodies of literature. However, the public administrator requires a unique union of the two (Williams 2012, 125). Williams paints the picture of apathy that can develop in the public administrator who begins working with a management vision to behave morally and ethically, but is faced with harsh challenges in reality. He calls the brief period of administration before impotence the charismatic phase, and unfortunately notes that it disappears when public administrators feel overwhelmed with the notion of overhauling the culture of an organization to fit with their original visions (Williams 2012, 129). Again, this author supports the idea that innovation of new leadership styles becomes more difficult for public managers the longer that they remain in their careers. This is important for this dissertation because newly made public administrators fresh out of a graduate school program could potentially be more ready to innovate than public managers with more experience.

In order to understand leadership style evolution and innovation, it's important to understand the nature of leadership styles. Leadership styles may derive from "cognitive styles," a term that is used in an identical context in by Ajay K. Jain and Hans Jeppe Jeppesen in 2013. The authors identify a paradox of interest. They defined three cognitive styles: Radical, innovative-collaborator, and adaptor. Furthermore, while innovation and collaboration is praised, the authors suggested that it had a negative impact in public sector knowledge management. "The results show the relevance of the adaptor style of thinking in promoting knowledge management practices, which is consistent with the prevailing public sector work norms in India, which do not support any radical changes in their ways of working and solving problems" (Jain & Jeppesen 2013, 1). Innovation has a negative aspect because it is destructive to the status quo.

Essentially, the authors argue that the most effective leadership styles match the task at hand, rather than the organization of the future. Their results disproved their hypothesis, which would have favored innovative and collaborative leadership styles. Ultimately, public administrators were found to prefer the stability and job security of adapting, rather than becoming a radical thus "It is more likely that adaptors would be more successful in large, bureaucratic organizations" (Jain & Jeppesen 2013, 10). This illuminates the paradox that, if an organization is in need of change, its best change agents might be unlikely to succeed or to be perceived as effective public administrators. In the case of Valdosta State University graduate students, they have already chosen to undertake the major life change of returning to school. It may be that individuals that are unfazed by constructive disruption self-select for both innovative leadership styles and a graduate level education. It may also be the case that such students feel just as unsettled

by changes to the status quo, but gain a sense of perspective from their education which steels them to the task. Furthermore, a graduate degree places an employee in an excellent position for job-seeking, should he or she threaten job security with necessary innovations, providing a buffer against fears of criticism.

This dissertation's study aims to take a look at this problem from the angle of how higher education affects leadership style innovation, in the context of those graduate students who are valued for their recent education in cutting-edge leadership styles. That is to say that higher education students of public management may have traits that allow them to eschew the focus on stability and job security in favor of pursuing leadership style innovation. These educated public managers may be permitted to innovate if such radical ideas are taken more seriously by others within their organization in the context of educational qualifications, allowing persuasive argument for innovation to be made. If an educated public manager can make a cogent argument for taking a management risk based on a solid educational foundation, this risk potential could possibly be minimized in the eyes of others in the organization.

An example of how leadership styles can be evaluated is provided in the article "Assessing Leadership Decision-Making Styles: Psychometric Properties of the Leadership Judgment Indicator" by Palmira Faraci, Michael Lock, and Robert Wheeler. The four styles they assess are: Directive (I made the decision based on my ideas), consultative (I make the decision based on our ideas), consensual (we make the decision based on our ideas) and delegative (you make the decision based on your ideas) (Faraci et al., 2013, 117). These four styles could either promote or inhibit innovation, depending upon the tendency of the leader towards innovation and the organizational climate

towards innovation. For example, a directive but innovative leader might be able to independently generate a leadership style only if he or she is inclined to do so. This inclination towards or away from innovation is what will be examined in this dissertation.

As methodology, the authors wrote letters to companies inviting leaders to participate. Leaders were given sixteen different challenging scenarios in writing and asked to put themselves in the position of leader and reply with a reaction, followed by a rating scale of how appropriate the action chosen seemed to each respondent. The authors did not recommend a particular style over another, but found a preference for consensual decision-making. This is an example of a survey style methodology that could be adapted for the public sector. For this dissertation, the survey will focus on determining innovative as opposed to traditional leadership style traits, rather than categorizing each public manager's leadership style as a whole. This next section of the literature review will focus on separating out tradition from innovation, beginning with the traditional leadership styles imported from business management and then introducing some of the potentially innovative public management leadership styles.

### Overview of Traditional Leadership Styles

#### *Authoritarian Leadership*

C. Wright Mills wrote *The Power Elite* in the 1950s, and that became an icon for the authoritarian leadership approach. In it, Mills wrote about how leadership of the nation arises organically from the wealthy, the military, and from corporations rather than solely through the usual political means. Though authoritarian leadership may seem like an older model, it is important to assess how well it can give rise to innovation in studies in the present day. Mills wrote, "Propertied giants are seen as men who stand at the focal



points of the ‘perennial gale of innovations’” and, “These contrasting images – of the robber and of the innovator – are not necessarily contradictory: much of both could be true, for they differ mainly in the context in which those who hold them choose to view the accumulators of great fortune” (Mills 1956, 96).

Mills argues that these authoritarian leaders, at least in the private sector, can be a source of innovation. Mills wrote extensively about the emergence of new money society from old money. The tension that exists between authoritarian power leadership can create competition, which encourages innovation (Mills 1956, 31-69). However, nepotism in authoritarian leadership can also squelch the development of new leadership styles, as the content of leadership teams become more homogenous.

Writing more about whether authoritarian leadership is something that can be changed within an organization, Mills wrote,

Do the elite determine the roles that they enact? Or do the roles that institutions make available to them determine the power of the elite? The general answer – and no general answer is sufficient – is that in different kinds of structures and epochs elites are quite differently related to the roles that they play: nothing in the nature of the elite or in the nature of history dictates an answer. It is also true that if most men and women take whatever roles are permitted to them and enact them as they are expected to do by virtue of their position, this is precisely what the elite need not do. They may call into question the structure, their position within it, or the way in which they are to enact that position. (Mills 1956, 24)

Clearly the authoritarian leader has the freedom to come up with and to enact his or her innovative plans for an organization. The power associated with authoritarian leadership gives it a unique opportunity for innovation, and yet at the same time might discourage authoritarian leaders from relinquishing this leadership style in favor of a new one.

## *Democratic Leadership*

Robert A. Dahl wrote several books on a counterpoint pluralist theory that pointed leaders in the direction of democratic decision-making. In 1998 he wrote a cogent argument for democratic leadership in *On Democracy*. The wheels of democracy, however, are slow. Democratic requires the availability and review of many alternative sources of information. When making decisions, a democratic leader, “must give equal consideration to the good and interests of every person bound by those decisions” (Dahl 1998, 65). Dahl concedes that the ability to quickly innovate must be sacrificed for the other benefits of democratic leadership including avoiding tyranny, being morally responsible, and protecting equality and personal interests (Dahl 1998, 45, 60). Democratic leadership, Dahl argues, is stable and resilient.

Dahl clearly favored the democratic leadership style for many reasons. One which may support innovation is when he asks the question, “In order to meet the ideal standards as best we can, given the limits and possibilities of the real world, what political institutions are necessary?” With this question, the pressures that inspire innovation are addressed and Dahl argues that democratic leadership is sufficient to meet the challenges.

Dahl suggests that the size of the organization may affect the democratic leadership style’s ability to quickly innovate. In *On Democracy*, he wrote, “Small is beautiful” (Dahl 1998, 110). This is significant because size of the organization may be a factor that affects populations studied in this dissertation, and individual leaders’ opportunities to innovate. In 1973, Dahl and Edward R. Tufte wrote in *Size and Democracy* that, “Smaller democracies make it easier for citizens to internalize norms

and values, hence to increase voluntary compliance and reduce coercion” (Dahl & Tufte 1973, 13). This relates directly to the idea put forth by this dissertation that persuasiveness is a leadership trait associated with innovation. Thus, democratic leaders of smaller organizations may be able to innovate more easily than those in larger organizations.

Dahl wrote about the development of democracy as a leadership style, which is significant for this dissertation since the development of new leadership styles is being examined. Of the evolution of leadership styles he wrote,

Their rise and decline could not be portrayed as a steady upward climb to the distant summit, punctuated only by brief descents here and there. Instead the course of democratic history would look like the path of a traveler crossing a flat and almost endless desert broken by only a few hills, until the path finally begins the long climb to its present heights. (Dahl 1998, 7-9)

Dahl thus offers the wisdom that innovation of new leadership styles is a long journey, and they might not explode onto the scene in one observable moment in time. Furthermore, he writes that it is quite possible for another leadership style innovation to gradually overtake democracy in the future (Dahl 1998, 25, 188). Hopefully, he suggests innovations from democracy might lead to some new form of advanced democracy.

Nadeem Bhatti, Ghulam M. Maitlo, Naveed Shaikh, Muhammad A. Hashmi and Faiz M. Shaikh identified autocratic and democratic leadership styles in “The Impact of Autocratic and Democratic Leadership Style on Job Satisfaction.” A democratic leader, though he or she may have had the final say, invited other members of the team to make contributions to the process of making decisions. This led to more job satisfaction than the converse, autocratic leadership style (Bhatti et al., 2012, 2). Job satisfaction may inhibit innovation, however, because satisfaction with traditional management may

encourage its continued use without change. These leadership styles can either help or hinder innovation based on organizational structure. A democratic decision-making environment can allow for greater innovation, due to an increased number of people who can potentially come up with original ideas, but it can be a source of dialogue that discourages change just as easily as it could generate new ideas (Denhardt et al., 2012, 233).

A third leadership style was mentioned by these authors, a laissez-faire leadership style, in which the Public Administrator takes on an attitude of non-interference whenever possible to value the freedom of workers. This style was only effective depending on the organizational situation, which implies a high degree of situational failure. Laissez-faire leadership style would be a barrier to innovation, as it allows those staff who are satisfied with the status quo to remain content, and therefore refrain from implementing any change.

#### *Transactional and Transformational Leadership*

Transactional leadership is claimed to be found commonly by Williams in the public sector. This style of leadership clarifies worker responsibilities and thus increases workers' sense of worth (Williams 2012, 129). Motivation is achieved with rewards and punishments, and the leader must display an authoritarian model. Trastek et al., write of transactional leadership that it is the most prevalent leadership style currently used in health care, and yet it fails to promote trust and to facilitate ethical decision making (Trastek et al., 2013, 378). This leadership style is prevalent because it is so traditional, and thus it does not exemplify nor support innovation, especially as this might allow transfer of the motivating power from the manager to the staff.

Transformational leadership is often contrasted with transactional leadership in the literature. Though the definition of the word “transform” means change, the literature presents evidence that transformational leadership style may not support innovation. There is a wealth of literature on the transformational leadership style. Leaders who work with the transformational leadership style align vision and values with the group’s mission to motivate workers towards the organization’s best interests, according to Trastek et al. They state that transformational leadership includes four factors: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and idealized consideration.

As a criticism of transformational leadership, the authors point out that transformational leadership for small group missions may be too myopic to create organizational change, and may be inappropriate when serving individual needs that fail to conform to a single vision (Trastek et al., 2013, 379). This tight focus, or myopia, is one characteristic of traditional leadership styles.

Lilly Lemay adds an additional dimension to leadership styles in “The Practice of Collective and Strategic Leadership in the Public Sector.” She writes that the literature on transactional and transformational styles is “a truncated vision of the reality because it disregards the situation and the other leaders present” (Lemay 2009, 1). In an organization, there are multiple leaders. They do not necessarily only interact with subordinates, so their interactions with each other can be as important if not more so to the organization. This is significant to this dissertation’s survey because an understanding of how interactions between administrators affect innovation is as vital as surveying the interaction of administrators with staff.

Strategizing among leadership within an organization, Lemay writes, is an important overlay upon the job of leadership. Leadership styles that allow leaders to work together collectively to advance the organization are going to be more effective. “As to the debate about the best style of leadership to utilize,” she states, “I infer from these results that it is a matter of aligning the right level of individual development of leadership with the type of position held” (Lemay 2009, 16). Lemay is saying that the adoption of a preferred leadership style depends on organizational structure, implying that transformational leadership does not support innovation more than any other leadership style. To Lemay, a leader’s winning strategy must depend on his or her position in the game. Next, literature which describes more innovative leadership styles will be explored.

### Overview of Potentially Innovative Leadership Styles

#### *Servant Leadership*

Robin B. Weinstein wrote in 2013 that, “The servant leadership model fills the void of morality that some suggest exists in other leadership paradigms” (Weinstein 2013, 85). The author addresses a potential motivator for innovation of leadership style; moral pressures. Morals and ethics, though difficult to measure in a survey, could possibly be behind what encourages public managers to innovate new leadership styles.

Servant leadership, as a leadership style, asserts that leader motivation should come from an intrinsic drive to serve the organization and to have a positive outcome for the public good. For this reason, financial problems and chaotic external issues should have no bearing on such a leader’s motivation and style. Weinstein finds that the key to

servant leadership is trust, because a lack of trust can cause problems from blame to general lack of cooperation (Weinstein 2013, 86).

Weinstein concludes that “the servant leadership paradigm would be applicable in a public sector unionized setting and could provide a relationship of trust to address the problems affecting governments” (Weinstein 2013, 89). The model Weinstein presents for servant leadership is that it forms a symbiotic relationship, by which the public administrator’s apathy is quelled and the organization’s workers are reassured. Innovative leadership capacities include the ability to be persuasive (Denhardt et al., 2012, 233). In the case of servant leadership, the persuasiveness of the reassurance process in the face of conflict can nurture innovation.

#### *Adaptive Leadership*

Servant leadership is given further support by Victor F. Trastek, Neil W. Hamilton and Emily E. Niles in “Leadership Models in Health Care – A Case for Servant Leadership.” The authors argue that servant leadership is the superior leadership style because it plays on the strengths of teams as allies and develops trust (Trastek et al., 2014, 374). The authors mention adaptive leadership as a style used by leaders who identify challenges and enables others to see the reality of the new and old beliefs that must be reconciled in order to make change. Adaptive leadership is a transitional leadership style that the authors suggest is innovative by definition. However, it is noted that adaptive leadership requires more time than organizations have to sacrifice, and that it does not explicitly take into account moral and ethical issues that could put such changes on indefinite hold (Trastek et al., 2014, 379).

### *Facilitative Leadership*

In 2008, Stephen Greasley and Gerry Stoker introduced facilitative leadership as a leadership style in a 2008 study. They described facilitative leadership as transparent, outward-looking, and non-partisan in a political context. This is encouraging for both the formation of innovative new ideas and the implementation of them. The authors assert that,

Leadership is not simply a product of personality, capabilities, or contingency – although all of these factors play a part. Crucially, from the perspective of reformers, institutional design does make a difference and can encourage leadership practices of a particular style and form. (Greasley & Stoker 2008, 722)

The authors suggest that, in order to support a facilitative leadership style, an organization must provide visible leadership that is open and transparent with decision-making. Partnerships should be invited to interact with the organization. Ultimately, this should invite leadership styles that turn outward towards those they serve, rather than inward towards authorities, regulation and politics (Greasley & Stoker 2008, 728). These are all factors that help innovation thrive by allowing external pressures to shape the organization and by creating a welcoming attitude towards new ideas.

### *Affective and Whole Soul Leadership*

In “Beyond Cognition: Affective Leadership and Emotional Labor,” Meredith A. Newman, Mary E. Guy and Sharon H. Mastracci promote affective leadership, which is a leadership style that champions a caring and emotionally sensitive approach. The authors argue that leadership, at its heart, is a relationship. The walls that authority figures typically build around their emotions should thus be broken down in order to make interactions less mentally exhausting. The implication for this dissertation’s research is that an affective personality trait may be a persistent factor in an individual that



encourages innovative leadership despite educational background or lack thereof. This could be a potential confounding issue in research on innovative tendencies. “Emotion work is as individual as cognitive work.” They stress, “It is a skill and is subject to individual differences” (Newman et al., 2009, 7). Breaking down barriers to relationships may also break down barriers to innovation, and allow an environment conducive to collaboratively brainstorming new ideas.

Key features of affective leadership include: Social intelligence, relationship management, listening skills, reading people, improvisation, emotional give and take, and the ability to be convincing. Some of these can be gained through experience or education, but others are natural talents. In order to implement affective leadership, the public administrator must first detect the emotional state of others through communication, second analyze and compare the emotional state to his or her own and judge how actions will affect others and finally to take action in order to see the desired emotional reaction.

Whole soul leadership, also known as spiritual leadership, “builds on the ideas of displacing values and maintaining a culture of trust, as it focuses attention on the whole-soul nature of both the individual leader and each follower” (Van Wart et al., 2008, Kindle Location 1326-41). Montgomery Van Wart and Lisa A. Dicke wrote in *Administrative Leadership in the Public Sector* about this leadership style as an overarching and encompassing leadership style. This connection between leader and follower might allow the flow of information about the follower’s needs that can apply pressure on the leader to innovate.

Spirit is a source of morality, and a source of ethical competence for those striving to grow moral agency. “‘Spirit’ is defined in terms of the basis of comfort, strength, happiness; the essence of self; the source of personal meaning and values; a personal belief system or inner certainty; and an emotional level of being” (Van Wart 2008, Kindle Location 1326-41). It’s possible that a search for deeper meaning can motivate leaders to innovate rather than being satisfied with the status quo. Rather than working in contrast to scientific management, whole soul leadership enfolds and penetrates the practice of scientific management to align data driven goals with human needs.

Terry L. Cooper and Donald C. Menzel expanded on Van Wart and Dicke’s favor for this leadership style in *Achieving Ethical Competence for Public Service Leadership*. Spiritual leadership “seeks to blend and balance the emotive needs of the individual (e.g. a sense of belonging, respect, confidence, prestige) with the leadership vision of the purpose and mission of the organization” (Cooper & Menzel 2013, Kindle Location 471-75). This expansive, resourceful leadership style may prefer innovation over more traditional management styles. In particular, the drive in accordance with the purpose and mission of the organization can provide similar energy within staff to sustain the organization through change as it would in transformational leadership.

Leadership styles do not exist in a vacuum, though they are sometimes treated as if that were the case. While leadership styles are often selected while the organization is running normally, the true stripes of a public manager’s leadership style are shown when problems arise. Thus, the next subsection of the literature will focus on leadership style

reactions to challenges, conflicts and crises, which may create pressures towards innovation.

### Confounding Factors for Innovation

Some potential confounding variables for this study include the effect of gender on desired leadership styles as well as potential variation across regions that may affect the generalizability of the results of this study. Assuming that innovation is present to develop a new leadership style, various factors may present themselves that shape the ideal leadership style towards which innovators may strive.

#### *Gender*

The way that expression and perception of caring comes easily to some people may be based on specific factors. Gender as a factor of caring leadership is explored in “Chairing and Caring: Gendered Dimensions of Leadership in Academe” by Sandra Acker. When writing about the factors affecting her ability to express caring during a critical incident, Acker stated that, “A caring, collegial style of leadership might have been expected, yet it also took place in a context of pressures from the increasingly corporatized university to engage in firm, decisive, directive management” (Acker 2011, 423).

Though Acker believed that she had been cast in a mothering role as a female leader, she was encouraged to use more masculine styles of direct and authoritative management over the caring and nurturing style that she felt came naturally to her. Acker also emphasizes that a culture of white leadership can also make it difficult for nonwhite leaders to express powerful leadership styles.

On the flip side, Victoria Bellou wrote, “Do Women Followers Prefer a Different Leadership Style than Men?” It turns out that women and men do prefer different leadership styles and perceive a leader as more or less effective depending on his or her leadership style. Though both genders rated a “people oriented” style as most important, women were more likely than men to expect effective leadership styles to be both people and change oriented (Bellou 2011, 1817).

A number of variables were tackled all at once by Oladimeji Jamiu Odetunde in “Influence of Transformational and Transactional Leaderships and Leaders’ Sex on Organizational Conflict Management Behavior.” These variables must be examined in order to discover whether they could be confounding variables for this dissertation as well. Odetunde stated that:

Results revealed that effective organizational conflict management behavior is more related to transformational leadership than transactional leadership, there is no significant difference between male and female leaders and there is no significant interaction between leaders’ sex and leadership style in effective conflict management behavior. (Odetunde 2013, 3323)

This study is useful because the issue of gender is examined as well as two leadership styles compared in the context of conflict, and gender might certainly be a confounding variable in the case of leadership style efficacy. However, according to Odetunde, it has no bearing in the interaction between leadership style and conflict resolution. For this reason, gender was not selected as a control variable for this dissertation.

### *Regional Generalizability*

Do leadership styles in public administration remain stable across country lines?

Siti Fardaniah Abdul Aziz, Abu Daud Silong, Nor Akmar Abdul Karim and Hazliza Hassan investigated this question in “Leadership Practices in Public Sector in Selected Countries: An Integrative Literature Review.” Effectiveness was found to differ significantly between countries, as developed countries had leaders of greater efficacy.

However, there were some similarities across all countries as well, including: Bureaucracy and shifts to new public management (NPM) (Aziz et al., 2012, 119). This is significant because new public management includes management practices taken from the business world, which could encourage leadership styles better suited to the private sector.

Finally, this upcoming last subsection before the summary will explore the literature relating to changing leadership styles within organizations. This is important because the usefulness of this study depends on the possibility that leadership style is fungible. Otherwise, it is no good to know the best leadership style if leadership style is a set function of the nature of the organization.

Leadership styles get their chances to shine during crisis situations, interpersonal conflicts and situational challenges. However, such factors can also be confounding variables when learning about which leadership style is most effective. The literature can point to how different leadership styles respond under external stressors and the chaos of changing environments. Crises, challenges and conflicts can also be the crucible within which innovation must arise out of necessity.

### *Leaning on Traditional Leadership During a Crisis*

A study by Arjen Boin, Paul 'T Hart, Allan McConnell and Thomas Preston, reprises the crucial role of leadership style in the aftermath of a crisis. The authors stress that leadership style relates to how quickly a leader turns to accountability, blame, or further inquiry into a problem. "Two dimensions of leadership style have been shown especially relevant in understanding leadership during crises: a leader's need for control and a leader's sensitivity to context" (Boin et al., 2010, 714). The authors organize leader decisions into three pairs of opposing reactions: Stonewalling versus cooperation, denial versus acknowledging fault, and resignation versus perseverance (Boin et al., 2010, 708-710). The authors say that leaders who are more controlling can effect the process of innovation and change, as opposed to becoming mired in endless discussion without action.

A controlling leadership style was actually lauded as being more directly involved, rather than allowing a crisis to become mired in bureaucracies. Sensitivity to context is preferable because it allows faster perception of developing issues in a crisis situation. The authors concluded that general leadership style leads to predictable results in a crisis, as leaders are prone to "stay the course." Inevitably, a leadership style that embraces delegation and doesn't allow for sensitivity to context will not fit a crisis situation (Boin et al., 2010, 720). This is significant to this dissertation's understanding of how a persuasive leader is important when moving from a traditional to more innovative leadership style in crisis conditions.

### *Reliance on Traditional Leadership Styles to Resolve Conflict*

The frequent problem of conflict resolution for public administrators is faced head on in “Leadership Styles in Relation to Conflict Resolution Modes: A Study of Delhi Jal Board (DJB)” by Adu Singh Lather, V. K. Jain, Silpha Jain and Sona Vikas. The authors found that the most prevalent leadership style was transactional leadership. Such leaders usually used accommodation to resolve conflict. It was also found that workers preferred very close oversight as a leadership style in order to remain motivated, effective and cooperative (Lather et al., 2009, 19). This suggests that traditional leadership styles are favored under conditions of conflict within the organization.

The authors, however, did assume that leadership style itself did not have a particular role to play in conflict resolution, satisfaction or effectiveness of staff, insisting that, “The probable explanation of these results could be that managers in DJB do not show personal preference for any leadership style.” Furthermore, they wrote that, “Any style of leadership prevailing here is prompted by the structure and culture of organization” (Lather et al., 2009, 34). When comparing transformational and transactional leadership, the authors lean towards the theory that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to leadership style, despite a preponderance of transactional. This is important as a confounding factor because it implies that leadership style could be flexible depending on how much conflict is present or ongoing at the time that leaders are surveyed about leadership style traits.

### *How Self-Directed Staff can Help or Hinder Innovation*

Since worker roles and procedures differ between organizations, it's also important to ask how leadership styles affect self-directed employees. A self-directed staff organizational structure may help or hinder innovation. Innovation can be hindered by self-directed staff if they are not given enough organizational power, or it can give the time and space necessary for creativity and innovation. Joseph C. Santoria wrote, "Managing 'Open' Employees: Do Resources and Leadership Style Matter?" to address just this situation. For such creative and independent workers, Santoria asserted that leadership style does indeed matter, and recommended a transformational leadership style over transactional or even laissez-faire (Santoria 2007, 84).

On the flip side of this, Heather Getha-Taylor, Chris Silvia and Scott Simmerman investigated, "Individuality, Integration: Leadership Styles in Team Collaboration" for those workers who must work seamlessly as members of a group. The authors produced simulations in which the leader switched styles to show one of four different strengths: Contributor, communicator, collaborator or challenger. The dominant strengths of each style were reported, with contributor fairing best of the four, and collaborator the least (Getha-Taylor et al., 2014, 42). Note that this showed how effectively the leaders were able to take on the role, rather than which was most effective. This study showed how challenging it is to be a collaborator, which may encourage leaning back on traditional leadership styles rather than pushing to innovate.



## Ethics, Caring Leadership, Authenticity and Adherence to Mission as Stimulation to Innovate

This subsection is devoted to those less-tangible leadership style qualities that are special topics in public administration, including: Caring leadership, authenticity, ethicality, and adherence to the mission statement of the organization. Though these may be applicable in business management to a lesser extent, they are vital to public management. These topics are also tougher to build into a management style, as it is easier to instruct managers to “communicate more” or “collaborate more” and less so to demand a personality characteristic such as “care more” or “be more passionate about our cause.”

These qualities are nevertheless important, and so literature is of import to understand how to enfold them into leadership style knowledge. Ethical considerations, caring leadership, authenticity and adherence to mission can all aid innovation through the leadership capacities of originality, intuition, and the ability to be dynamic in the face of the public’s needs (Denhardt et al., 2012, 233).

### *Caring Leadership Styles*

Newman, Guy and Mastracci conclude that, “The most important challenge facing public administrators is not to make work more efficient, but to make it more humane and caring” (Newman et al., 2009, 6). The authors suggest a whole new vocabulary and focus to revolutionize leadership in the public sector, focusing on relationships, compassion, service, connection and “soulwork.” Emotional connection is the living and breathing dimension of leadership that makes up the person-to-person interactions in the everyday life of a Public Administrator. The authors are saying that,

though difficult to measure, emotional connection may support innovation to create positive change, favoring caring interactions over the existing pragmatism.

Caring leadership was detailed by Satu Uusiautti. In Uusiautti's article, public administrators were asked about their most successful leadership experiences, which turned out to point towards moments in time where caring was demonstrated. "Although the experience of success is a personal, positive, emotion, it may spring from collaboration with co-workers, clients, or other people closely involved in the present task" (Uusiautti 2012, 492). Uusiautti's conclusion was that action-oriented caring leadership is not only a preferable leadership style, but also a practical one (Uusiautti 2012, 482). This is significant because Uusiautti implies that caring leadership may be a good jumping off point for innovation of new leadership styles.

Caring leadership is also mentioned in "The Four Cs of the HR Profession: Being Competent, Curious, Courageous, and Caring About People," by Susan R. Meisinger. These leadership style aspects, Meisinger insists, will be as important in the future as they are now. Meisinger argues that public administrators must move beyond the rhetoric of saying that people are valuable to arrive at the belief and mission that it is true. Admittedly, Meisinger writes, "some people can drive you nuts." Leadership strategy is only good if it takes into account the real people that will be affected by decisions.

Caring about people and doing the right thing on behalf of employees are components of being a business partner because it's good for business. It increases retention, increases the level of employee engagement, and helps build a corporate culture that will help advance the business strategy. And yes, it's also the right thing to do. (Meisinger 2005, 193)

This is relevant because Meisinger is saying that caring leadership may propagate itself through its own success as a leadership style. The "courageous" nature of caring

about people aligns with the ambitious traits of innovative people discussed in this dissertation. It is possible that the next new leadership style may be innovated by a leader demonstrating a caring leadership style.

#### *Authenticity as Necessary to Assess Innovation*

Authentic leadership is another aspect of style that has been identified as important in public administration by Antoni Barnard and Nirvana Simbhoo. “Authenticity is experienced as an affective state that results from a continuous self-appraisal of the extent to which expression of self is congruent with a subjective and socially constructed expectation of self in relation to others” (Barnard & Simbhoo 2014, 1). Authenticity is relevant to this dissertation because if a public manager is not accurately introspective or “authentic,” this means that he or she may self-report as innovative on a survey when the reality may be that he or she favors traditional leadership styles. The authors studied how authenticity was experienced and expressed. Authenticity not only could be cultivated in leaders by challenging them to affirm their identities, but acting authentically also enhanced assertive behavior, constructive relationships, confident decision-making and a subjective sense of well-being (Barnard & Simbhoo 2014, 12). The authors suggest that the reliability of this study will depend upon the authenticity of the survey respondents.

#### *Ethicality as Impetus to Innovate Leadership Style*

The tendency of a leader to be ethical may be a factor that motivates innovation in public management away from traditional leadership styles imported from business management. An effort is made to distinguish the most effective ethical leadership in “What’s the Difference? Ethical Leadership in Public, Hybrid and Private Sector

Organizations,” by Leonie Heres and Karin Lasthuizen. The authors found that public administrators are more likely to communicate about ethics explicitly and frequently than their private sector managerial counterparts. In fact, they suggest that an ethical leadership style is more valuable than any other. Adding an ethical dimension to existing leadership styles may be the chemistry needed to concoct a new leadership style.

Though ethics may be key to developing the next great leadership style, it is not an easy answer. The authors explain that there are differing styles of ethical leadership and that one ethical style of leadership may not be generalizable. The authors stress that, “not only are conceptions of leadership context-dependent, but they also influence the extent to which particular leadership characteristics and behaviors are effective in influencing follower decision-making and behavior” (Heres & Lasthuizen 2012, 442). In other words, when situations arise that require ethical decision-making, there is not any one-size-fits-all leadership style that will make the right choice every time, nor will it always stimulate innovation.

Ethics and conflicts in the public sector were explored in by Madalina Tomescu and Mihaela Agatador Popescu. The authors unpacked what decisions made by leaders effectively generate and sustain trust. “The project manager must be consistent in valuing the well-being of all those on the project” (Tomescu & Popescu 2013, 204). This is relevant because this dissertation uses intuition as one innovative trait in public managers. The ethical ability to see beyond one’s own nose to remain adaptable to the needs of others on the project every time a decision is made may support innovation.

How do different leadership styles play a role when ethical dilemmas arise? V. Zydziunaite, D. Lepaite and T. Suominen wrote about these contingencies in 2013. The

authors discovered that nurses that had been in the field over ten years used older, bureaucratic and what the authors called “primitive” leadership styles. Newer nurses in the field, presumably more recently educated, used more contemporary leadership styles. Since this dissertation is studying the innovation of graduate students, this study suggests that they will not prefer the older, bureaucratic, traditional leadership traits.

#### *Adherence to the Mission and Possible Inhibition of Innovation*

The special topic of adherence to mission was also explored in 2012 by Bradley E. Wright, Donald P. Moynihan and Sanjay K. Pandey. In particular, they note that transformational leadership’s focus on a leader’s singular vision or mission can help motivate workers towards aligning the organization with its mission. If transformational leadership is a barrier to innovation, as other authors have suggested, this means that the mission of an organization may be a confounding factor affecting willingness to innovate in the participants of this dissertation’s study.

Adherence to mission was also investigated in 2014 by James Gerard Caillier. This study of state and federal employees in the United States showed that transformational leadership improved employee evaluations, and that, “mission valence strengthened the positive relationship between transformational leadership and performance” (Caillier 2014, 218). This suggests that adherence to mission created satisfaction, which does not create the ambition for change required for innovation to occur.

## Effective and Desirable Leadership Styles as the Potential Leading Edge of Innovation

Change in leadership style occurs when one is thought to be more effective or more desirable than another. Innovation may occur when existing leadership styles do not satisfy. What makes one leadership style more desirable than another? In order to provide recommendations for innovating new effective and desirable leadership styles following this study, the literature must be reviewed to search for academic consensus.

Susan A. Henricks and Genevieve M. Henricks-Lepp examined this by looking at job advertisements in “Desired Characteristics of Management and Leadership for Public Library Directors as Expressed in Job Advertisements.” For example, advertisements were more likely to use words like “Applies state & federal policy” rather than “Aligns people,” or “Solves problems” rather than “Generates trust” (Henricks & Henricks-Lepp 2014, 282). This suggests that problem-solving and performance may be spurring the leaders of tomorrow towards innovation.

Robert G. Hamlin and Alf Hatton wrote a paper in 2013 in order to catalogue effective behavioral criteria, some of which pertain to leadership styles. Because the authors assert that management and leadership are complementary, they used the terms for management and leadership interchangeably. The criteria for effective leadership styles that they identified included: Planning, organizing, proactive execution, active support, delegation, empowerment, care, concern, attending to learning and developmental needs, fighting in staff’s interest, trust, openness, and communication (Hamlin & Hatton 2013, 382). Planning and proactive execution aligns with the ambitious and adaptable leadership traits that will be examined by this dissertation. Ineffective leadership styles were described as: Autocratic, unfair, selfish, manipulative,

intimidating, slack, abdicating, withholding, closed-minded and simply negative. These align with some of the traditional traits identified by this dissertation.

In 2013, Carlos F. Gomes and Mahmoud M. Yasin worked to question what behaviors and characteristics of leaders (i.e., leadership styles) were most effective. When grouping together behaviors and characteristics, they found that, “The most relevant group includes characteristics/behaviors which have to do with motivation, loyalty, and ability to deal with others” (Gomes & Yasin 2013, 116). This supports innovation in the same way that caring leadership supports innovation.

Participants in this study were asked to rate project effectiveness based on various factors, so effectiveness was subjective. The authors concluded that the most effective leadership styles also used long-term planning and strategizing rather than being reactive and tactical. Overall, they wrote, “leadership appears to be the most significant factor in determining the success or failure of projects in the public sector” (Gomes & Yasin 2013, 120). This conclusion highlights the importance of studying leadership styles.

Another way to analyze the effectiveness of various leadership styles is to look directly at the impact on employee behavior, as did George Schin and Margareta Racovita in 2013. The authors found that employee behaviors affected were both performance and motivation. The most prevalent leadership style found was authoritarian, though it produced low motivation and loyalty indicators and only moderately efficient performance (Schin & Racovita 2013, 783).

The superior leadership styles supported by these authors were both participative and delegative decision-making for higher levels of motivation and loyalty. There were slightly more leaders practicing participative leadership than delegative, and participative

leadership showed the highest performance level while both showed comparable high levels of loyalty and motivation for workers (Schin & Racovita 2013, 780). Overall, they found that the most common leadership style is not necessarily the best. This is important because it shows a potential barrier to innovation being that innovation may have to explode suddenly from the most traditional forms of leadership styles, rather than evolve gradually as a tendency towards innovation from more recently described leadership styles in public management literature.

Abdul Quayyum Chaundhry, Husnain Javed and Munawar Sabir wrote a comparison of transactional and transformational leadership in “The Impact of Transformational and Transactional Leadership Styles on the Motivation of Employees in Pakistan.” Both leadership styles showed a positive correlation with motivation (Chaundhry et al., 2012, 230). This suggests that more satisfaction is gained from these traditional leadership styles, which could possibly delay innovation. Taken together with the previous study, it could be that innovation springs more easily from traditional leadership styles, but the process may take longer due to increased satisfaction with tradition under some circumstances.

V. N. Srivastava adds an interesting angle to the effectiveness of leadership styles in “Powerful Leadership and Excellence in Public Enterprises.” Srivastava writes that it is not necessarily one leadership style that is important for excellence, but the flexibility of leadership styles that makes room for excellence. Calling this “leadership style dynamism,” Srivastava explains that “Leadership style dynamism is about high-performance leadership, developing leadership at all levels, shared leadership and developing a second in command” (Srivastava 2014, 172). Srivastava concludes that



training assertiveness and bringing the best out of any leadership style is important, but training flexibility as a skill is also crucial.

### Making Change in Leadership Styles

In order for a specific leadership style to be useful, change would need to be possible for organizations and leaders within such organizations. It is for this reason that literature on change in public administration are of interest. Eran Vigoda-Gadot and Itai Beeri wrote an article in 2013 in order to present findings on the effect of leadership on organizations in flux that actively seek innovation. The authors point out that bureaucracy is known for its red-tape, regulations, procedures and inflexibility, but that leadership styles that encourage change can be key to organization-wide change (Vigoda-Gadot & Beeri 2012, 574).

After introducing transactional and transformational leadership styles, the authors go on to say that leaders' exchanges with other members of the organization will over time develop relationships and support between and among workers.

Leaders receive approval in the form of status, esteem, loyalty and influence, whereas followers receive rewards such as authority, promotion and favorable job assignments. However, exchange relationships are not limited to material transactions. They may also include social exchanges of psychological benefits such as trust, esteem, support, consideration and friendship. (Vigoda-Gadot & Beeri 2012, 577-578)

In other words, the traits of a leader who creates change will rub off on the workers who make up the organization at large. As this ripple effect spreads, a leadership style can effect organizational change. The authors conclude that these informal sociological effects can initiate creativity and innovation that can overcome any formal resistance to change.

Elisabeth Berg, Jim Barry and John Chandler take a slightly less optimistic view of leadership styles' abilities to make change in "Changing Leadership and Gender in Public Sector Organizations." The authors acknowledge that some leaders become stuck in dead end careers and become apathetic middle-managers. Citing Machiavelli, they assert that some leaders choose to be feared rather than loved. "Although the style of leadership undoubtable matters to those subject to it," the authors conclude, "what matters more, perhaps, are the changes that any leadership brings about or attempts to effect" (Berg et al., 2012, 411).

### Summary

In summary, though there is a wealth of literature on comparisons and contrasts between transformational leadership and other leadership factors, no single comprehensive leadership style has yet emerged as most effective given any organizational structure, contingency or conflict. This suggests that the ability to innovate in the face of pressures upon the organization may be more important than whatever initial leadership style is in place. Montgomery Van Wart puts this best in "Lessons from leadership Theory and the Contemporary Challenges of Leaders" when he writes,

Does one want to adopt the perspective that individuals add up to systems of leadership, or that leadership is a system composed of individuals? The difference is not trivial. This is the level of analysis issue. Another particularly important aspect of leadership is whether one is more interested in explaining how leadership is (i.e., descriptive) or should be (i.e., prescriptive). Still another example of definition and focus decisions is the level of activity analyzed, such as tasks, behaviors, or style patterns, which may make an enormous difference depending on whether one is adopting an overarching leadership philosophy or providing contextualized feedback to a line supervisor. (Van Wart 2013, 554)

The most effective leadership style, according to the cumulative literature, should provide not only motivation to efficient productivity, but also increase loyalty and trust with an attitude of caring and overt ethicality. The future of leadership styles should also be flexible in the case of contingency or organization-wide change.

With this information from the literature, it will be possible to interpret survey results to observe whether public managers who are current or former graduate students of Valdosta State University's public administration programs align with more innovative as opposed to traditional leadership styles. Either a preference will be indicated for traditional leadership styles, or innovation may be present to potentially allow a new leadership style or styles to emerge, or perhaps both phenomena will be observable.

## Chapter III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Research Question

The desired result of this dissertation will be to determine whether traditional or innovative leadership is more prevalent among graduates of public administration in their employment. It is important to confirm whether or not public managers from the Valdosta State University Doctor of Public Administration or Master of Public Administration programs conform to the expectation that innovative leadership styles are possible in such an educated leadership context. The most prevalent type of leadership among public administration graduate students is being investigated.

The essential research question is this: Is an innovative leadership style more prevalent than a traditional style among public managers who are graduate students in public administration?

There were eight leadership styles identified from the literature, which include more traditional leadership styles (autocratic, transactional, and transformational) and innovative leadership styles (servant, adaptive, facilitative, whole soul, and democratic). Note that aspects of leadership style such as caring leadership, authenticity, ethicality and adherence to mission have not been identified as leadership styles in their own right, but are enfolded into the constellation of aspects within the identified leadership styles. For example, adherence to mission is particularly important to transformational leadership,

while caring leadership could be claimed by whole soul or servant leadership in particular with regards to caring about consumers. This dissertation's research will be to confirm or deny leadership characteristics which support innovation of leadership style.

### Hypotheses

Graduate students in public administration are typically non-traditional students, many of whom already work in management positions. It is proposed that the leadership style of these graduate students can be used to project the leadership style of future public administrators. The question is, what style of leadership do current graduate students exhibit? Is it traditional or do they lean toward being innovative?

The following characteristics are used to exemplify the two different leadership styles (Denhardt et al., 2012, 233):

Traditional: Satisfied, myopic, and rigid.

Innovative: Ambitious, adaptable, reflective, and persuasive.

Using these characteristics, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1<sub>0</sub> Graduate students in public administration who are employed in management positions will exhibit no difference in management style with regards to ambition.

H1<sub>a</sub> A majority of graduate students will reflect an ambitious management style.

H2<sub>0</sub> Graduate students in public administration will exhibit no difference in job satisfaction.

H2<sub>a</sub> Fewer graduate students will feel satisfied with their jobs.

H3<sub>0</sub> Graduate students in public administration who are employed in management positions will exhibit no difference in adaptability.

H3<sub>a</sub> A majority of graduate students will reflect an adaptable management style.

H4<sub>0</sub> Graduate students in public administration who are employed in management positions will be equally myopic in their tasks.

H4<sub>a</sub> Fewer graduate students will reflect a myopic management style.

H5<sub>0</sub> Graduate students in public administration who are employed in management positions will exhibit no difference in persuasiveness.

H5<sub>a</sub> A majority of graduate students will reflect a persuasive management style.

The leadership characteristics will be operationalized through survey questions.

The language in the questions holds terminology about which respondents may have personal judgements. So, it must be said that a source of error may be some of the negative and passive terms that may push respondents away from self-identifying with such questions. Traditional leadership characteristics will be operationalized as follows:

- Satisfied:
  - I am slow to adapt to new initiatives.
  - I am not very adventurous
  - I don't usually question the way things are done.
  - I value stability, order, and continuity.
- Myopic:
  - I don't know a lot about the needs of the people I serve.
  - I don't know much about the competition.
  - I don't read the business news.
  - I don't have any specific learning goals.
- Rigid:

- I am sometimes quite inflexible.
- I am quite set in my ways.
- I am unwilling to take risks.
- I don't handle setbacks very effectively.

Innovative leadership characteristics will be operationalized as follows:

- Ambitious:
  - I am prepared to do whatever it takes.
  - I enjoy learning new ways of doing things.
  - I make things happen.
- Adaptable:
  - I handle myself pretty well in a crisis.
  - I tend to adapt quickly to new situations.
  - I adjust easily to change.
  - I handle change with an open mind.
- Reflective:
  - I consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions.
  - I emphasize the importance of having a collective sense of mission.
  - I seek differing perspectives when solving problems.
  - I understand the needs of the people I serve.
  - I try to help people learn from their mistakes.
- Persuasive:
  - I articulate a compelling vision of the future.

- I am pretty good at selling my ideas.
- I get others to look at problems from many different angles.

### Study Population and Data Source

#### *Data Source*

The Public Administration Program Coordinator at Valdosta State University granted access to public student records for the purposes of this dissertation. Student names and email addresses are public unless they opted to not be listed in the directory. There is a Master of Public Administration graduate list of two years to the fall of 2014 containing 109 contacts, a list of current Master of Public Administration students registered for spring 2015 containing 114 contacts, a list of Doctor of Public Administration Graduates as of fall 2014 containing 42 contacts, and a list of current Doctor of Public Administrations registered for spring 2015 containing 112 contacts. This represents 223 Master students from which to sample, and 153 Doctoral students, for a total of 377 potentials to sample.

The last two questions of the survey will verify whether the respondent is a current or former student, identify which program the student attended, and confirm whether he or she currently works in public management. Public managers will not be differentiated by position or level within the organization. Those who do not currently occupy a public administration role will be eliminated from final analysis. An IRB application will be made for this study and the resultant waiver will be included in Appendix D.



### *Study Population*

This study makes use of a convenience sample of public managers who are current or former students of Valdosta State University due to the affiliation of the researcher, also a student at Valdosta State University. This necessarily means that the study could be biased and not representative of the entire population of public managers. This study is exploratory with the goal to stimulate discussion and to suggest lines of research for future study. The database being used is from an online, nationwide graduate program in public administration, and thus will reflect a more generalized attitude among graduate students towards leadership style than a regional university.

The Doctor of Public Administration (DPA) degree at Valdosta State University is a program for practitioners to develop leadership, communication, management, research, analytical, and problem-solving skills. The courses are designed for people who want to manage or direct a public organization. The degree is designed to be marketable in both private and public sectors. The DPA degree requires 54 hours of course work including Logic of Inquiry, and a capstone final project requiring intense independent study. Students admitted to the program must have a minimum score of 295 on the quantitative portion of the Graduate Record Exam, 153 on the verbal, and 5.0 on the writing portion.

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree at Valdosta State University is designed for students seeking entry-level positions in public management as well as those already working in the public sector. Its purpose is to prepare students for a career in public service. The program requires 36 hours of course work including a Foundations Seminar in Public Administration, an Internship, and a Capstone Seminar. Students

admitted to the program must have a minimum score of 450 on the Graduate Management Admission Test, or a combined Graduate Record Exam score of 280 or more on the verbal and quantitative or 146 on the verbal and 3.5 on the writing portion. Both the DPA and MPA programs are offered exclusively via the Internet by Valdosta State University. Program descriptions of the DPA and MPA degree offerings at Valdosta State University are included in Appendix B.

The study population was chosen as an example of public administrators that would demonstrate leadership styles prevalent in public management. As mentioned in the second chapter of this dissertation, the literature revealed that newer public managers tend to display the latest leadership styles because they've received more recent training. The next innovative leadership style to emerge in public administration may or may not emerge from Valdosta State University, but it will hopefully be described and anticipated by these scholars. They have the motive. They have the means.

### Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study will be a survey, administered through Qualtrix survey web tools available for student use through Valdosta State University. The survey can be found in Appendix A of this dissertation, and its Institutional Review Board approval can be found in Appendix D. It is proposed that the survey will include questions in order to assess whether current public managers are demonstrating leadership style traits that support or inhibit innovation.

All current and former DPA and MPA students from Valdosta State University will be emailed the survey who have opted in to have their email addresses made public

in the directory. A week will be given for respondents to submit the survey before a reminder notice will be sent out and another week allowed for late responders.

### Study Measures

Each question in the survey is a question where a positive answer either supports innovation, such as, “I handle change with an open mind,” or is a barrier to innovation, such as, “I don’t handle setbacks very effectively.” A confirmation of my hypotheses would reveal that the percentage of positive answers to questions regarding supports to innovation will be greater than the percentage of positive answers to questions regarding barriers to innovation.

### Analysis

The analysis reflects the preference for a traditional versus innovative management style relative to graduate education. The results will be largely nominal data, since all the answers to survey questions are either yes, no, or don’t know. These can convert easily to the placeholder numbers 1, 2, and 3 for analysis of dummy variables. The percentage difference between the number of each innovative or traditional management trait will be calculated to assess the difference between innovative and traditional leadership styles.

The mode will be calculated to determine the most frequently occurring characteristics in the data sample, potentially showing a preference for innovative or traditional management traits. A contingency table analysis done via cross tabulations constructed as pivot tables will be used to analyze and record the relationship among characteristics. After this analysis, a chi-square will be used to determine the goodness of

fit of the cross-tabulations. Tables and figures will then be used to graphically display the relationship between innovative and traditional leadership styles.

### Study Limitations

The data collection will be limited to Valdosta State University, which could present variation that affects generalizability. Public managers who have received graduate level education were selected as potential examples, however, there may be a preference for leadership styles unique to those formally educated at the graduate level which will affect generalizability to other methods of getting into the field or improving one's public management work. This study is restricted to focusing solely on the education programs at Valdosta State University and its impact on their leadership style as Valdosta State University graduate students. Other barriers include nonresponse bias, which will be significant due to the distribution of the survey which allows respondents to easily ignore the survey. There may also be a problem with authenticity. Answers may be selected in the survey simply because they sound better and the answers to the question make respondents feel better about their own leadership style.

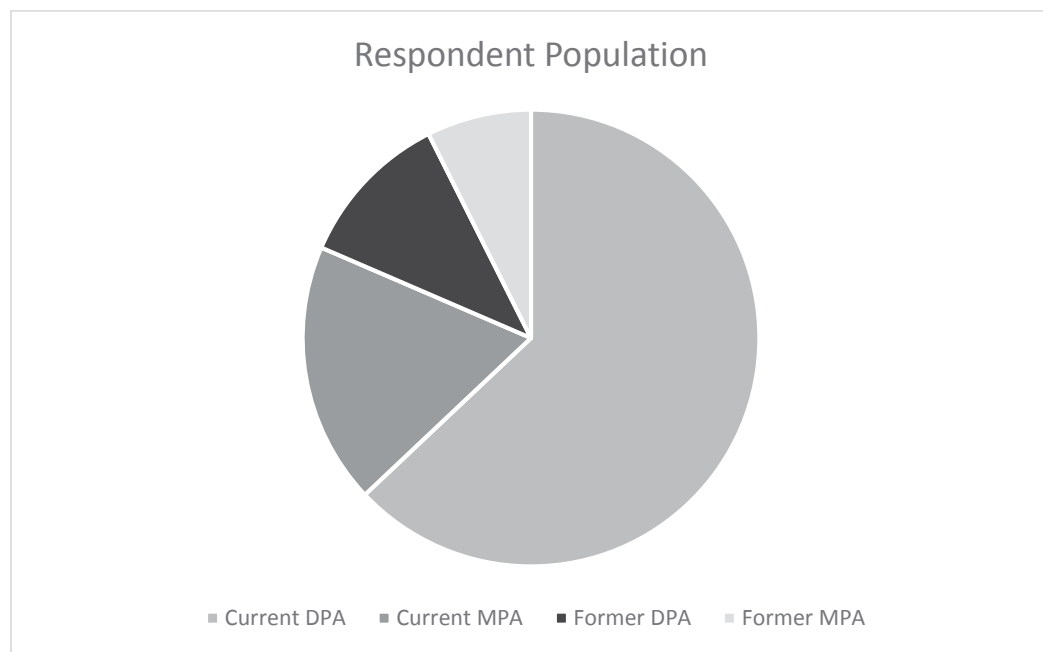
## Chapter IV

### RESULTS

#### Survey Respondent Population Description

There were 76 total respondents to the leadership style survey. After removing all survey responses from those who do not currently work in a public management capacity, 54 respondents working in public management were left. It's important to note that self-identification with a public management position was left at the discretion of the respondent and is a source of potential error. Though MPA and DPA participants were differentiated, there was no attempt made to sort out the different levels of management experience between MPA and DPA graduates and students. A response rate of only 14% is low. However, in support of this dissertation's small sample size, other studies have been done with a small sample. On a similar scale to this dissertation's study, in 2000 Finn et al., completed a study with a response rate of 9.6% (N = 172) and in 2004 the response rate was 10.4% (N = 234) (Finn et al., 2006, 282). In another, though Schin and Racovita did not reveal how many managers were asked to take their survey at 20 different public institutions, only 70 valid respondents from the target group were obtained (Schin & Racovita 2013, 779). Caillier commiserates that, "Web-based surveys have lower response rates, are sometimes discarded as spam, and do not always reach their intended targets" (Caillier 2014, 224). For exploratory purposes, a small sample size is sufficient.

Of respondents analyzed for this dissertation, 44 were current students of the graduate program in public administration at Valdosta State University, while 10 were former students. Respondents represented each of the programs within the Graduate School of Public Administration as well. Forty respondents were current or former DPA students, and 14 were current or former MPA students at Valdosta State University. See Figure 1 for a depiction of the educational demographics of leadership style survey respondents whose responses were analyzed in this study.



*Figure 1: Respondent Population.*

#### *Difference Between Each Innovative or Traditional Management Trait*

The percentage difference between the number of innovative or traditional management trait was calculated to assess the difference between innovative and traditional leadership styles. It is valuable to see which leadership style, innovative or traditional, has the most positive answers percentage-wise. In Table 1, below, the

questions are displayed along with the percentage of each answer. The questions regarding leadership characteristics that support innovation are displayed in white, while those that are barriers to innovation (traditional) are in grey. These data are consistent with the expectation that respondents will favor innovative leadership style characteristics, with the exception of the positive answers to only one of the four questions used to assess the management trait of being *satisfied*, “I value stability, order, and continuity.” The questions used in the survey may have led respondents towards choosing innovative traits due to the negative tone towards a more traditional leadership style. However, the values of “stability, order, and continuity” are word choices with less negative bias relative to other questions, as stable and orderly people who create continuity are useful and valuable in society. It is important to note that this study is for exploratory purposes only, and, as such, is meant to suggest further areas of research rather than presenting definitive conclusions.

Table 1: Percentages of Responses

Key				
	Traditional Learning Questions Shaded		Innovative Learning Questions	
Question	Yes	No	I Don't Know	Unanswered
I am prepared to do whatever it takes.	72.22%	20.37%	7.41%	0.00%
I am slow to adapt to new initiatives.	7.41%	90.74%	1.85%	0.00%
I handle myself pretty well in a crisis.	94.44%	3.70%	0.00%	1.85%
I am sometimes quite inflexible.	27.78%	68.52%	3.70%	0.00%
I enjoy learning new ways of doing things.	90.74%	5.56%	1.85%	1.85%
I articulate a compelling vision of the future.	81.48%	9.26%	9.26%	0.00%
I don't know a lot about the needs of the people I serve.	3.70%	90.74%	3.70%	1.85%
I am quite set in my ways.	16.67%	77.78%	5.56%	0.00%
I don't know much about the competition.	7.41%	83.33%	7.41%	1.85%
I am unwilling to take risks.	7.41%	92.59%	0.00%	0.00%
I tend to adapt quickly to new situations.	92.59%	5.56%	1.85%	0.00%
I make things happen.	87.04%	5.56%	7.41%	0.00%
I consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions.	98.15%	1.85%	0.00%	0.00%
I adjust easily to change.	83.33%	1.30%	3.70%	0.00%
I am not very adventurous.	29.63%	64.81%	1.85%	3.70%
I emphasize the importance of having a collective sense of mission.	88.89%	3.70%	7.41%	0.00%
I am pretty good at selling my ideas.	90.74%	1.85%	7.41%	0.00%
I don't usually question the way things are done	1.48%	85.19%	0.00%	0.00%
I seek differing perspectives when solving problems.	96.30%	3.70%	0.00%	0.00%
I understand the needs of the people I serve.	98.15%	0.00%	1.85%	0.00%
I don't read the business news.	33.33%	66.67%	0.00%	0.00%
I value stability, order, and continuity.	87.04%	9.26%	1.85%	1.85%
I get others to look at problems from many different angles.	92.59%	1.85%	5.56%	0.00%
I don't have any specific learning goals.	9.26%	87.04%	1.85%	1.85%
I don't handle setbacks very effectively.	12.96%	83.33%	1.85%	1.85%
I try to help people learn from their mistakes.	96.30%	1.85%	0.00%	1.85%
I handle change with an open mind.	92.59%	5.56%	1.85%	0.00%



### *Mode*

The mode was calculated to determine the most frequently occurring characteristics in the data sample, potentially showing a preference for innovative or traditional management traits. In Table 3, nominal data is shown where the number 1 represents a positive answer to a question within the management trait category, 2 represents a negative answer to a question within the management trait category. Not shown was 3, which represented an “I don’t know” answer. The modes demonstrate consistent support for innovative (ambitious, adaptable, reflective, and persuasive) management traits over traditional (satisfied, myopic, and rigid).

Table 2: Mode of Responses

Key			
Traditional		Innovative	
Yes	No	I Don't Know	Unanswered
1	2	3	

Question	Mode
I am prepared to do whatever it takes.	1
I am slow to adapt to new initiatives.	2
I handle myself pretty well in a crisis.	1
I am sometimes quite inflexible.	2
I enjoy learning new ways of doing things.	1
I articulate a compelling vision of the future.	1
I don't know a lot about the needs of the people I serve.	2
I am quite set in my ways.	2
I don't know much about the competition.	2
I am unwilling to take risks.	2
I tend to adapt quickly to new situations.	1
I make things happen.	1
I consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions.	1
I adjust easily to change.	1
I am not very adventurous.	2
I emphasize the importance of having a collective sense of mission.	1
I am pretty good at selling my ideas.	1
I don't usually question the way things are done	2
I seek differing perspectives when solving problems.	1
I understand the needs of the people I serve.	1
I don't read the business news.	2
I value stability, order, and continuity.	1
I get others to look at problems from many different angles.	1
I don't have any specific learning goals.	2
I don't handle setbacks very effectively.	2
I try to help people learn from their mistakes.	1
I handle change with an open mind.	1

### Contingency Table Analysis

A contingency table analysis done via cross tabulations was used to analyze and record the relationship among characteristics. Cross-tabulation is presented here in order to describe the relationships between the nominal categorical variables. To make a more useful comparison, the rate of responses within each management trait was calculated and compared with an independent cross-tabulation. This was done with column percentages; the cell count divided by the column total of 54 respondents. Since the hypotheses are organized by individual management trait, a table of each management trait's cross-tabulations is included below.

Table 3: Cross-Tab of Ambitious Management Trait by Question

Ambition Questions					
Response	Yes	No	I Don't Know	Unanswered	Total
I am prepared to do whatever it takes.	39 72.22%	11 20.37%	4 7.41%	0 0.00%	54 100.00%
I enjoy learning new ways of doing things.	49 90.74%	3 5.56%	1 1.85%	1 1.85%	54 100.00%
I make things happen	47 94.00%	3 6.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	50 100.00%

Table 4: Cross-Tab of Reflective Management Trait by Question

Reflective Questions					
Response	Yes	No	I Don't Know	Unanswered	Total
I consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions.	53 98.15%	1 1.85%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	54 100.00%
I emphasize the importance of having a collective sense of mission.	48 88.89%	2 3.70%	4 7.41%	0 0.00%	54 100.00%
I seek differing perspectives when solving problems.	52 96.30%	2 3.70%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	54 100.00%
I understand the needs of the people I serve.	53 98.15%	0 0.00%	1 1.85%	0 0.00%	54 100.00%
I try to help people learn from their mistakes.	52 96.30%	1 1.85%	0 0.00%	1 1.85%	54 100.00%

Table 5: Cross-Tab of Adaptable Management Trait by Question

Adaptability Questions					
Response	Yes	No	I Don't Know	Unanswered	Total
I handle myself pretty well in a crisis.	51 94.44%	2 3.70%	0 0.00%	1 1.85%	54 100.00%
I tend to adapt quickly to new situations.	50 92.59%	3 5.56%	1 1.85%	0 0.00%	54 100.00%
I adjust easily to change.	45 83.33%	7 12.96%	2 3.70%	0 0.00%	54 100.00%
I handle change with an open mind.	50 92.59%	3 5.56%	1 1.85%	0 0.00%	54 100.00%

Table 6: Cross-Tab of Persuasive Management Trait by Question

Persuasiveness Questions					
Response	Yes	No	I Don't Know	Unanswered	Total
I articulate a compelling vision of the future.	44 81.48%	5 9.26%	5 9.26%	0 0	54 100.00%
I am pretty good at selling my ideas.	49 90.74%	1 0.00%	4 7.41%	0 0	54 100.00%
I get others to look at problems from many different angles.	50 92.59%	1 1.85%	3 5.56%	0 0	54 100.00%

Table 7: Cross-Tab of Satisfied Management Trait by Question

Satisfaction Questions					
Response	Yes	No	I Don't Know	Unanswered	Total
I am slow to adapt to new initiatives.	4 7.41%	49 90.74%	1 1.85%	0 0.00%	54 100.00%
I am not very adventurous.	16 29.63%	35 64.81%	1 1.85%	2 3.70%	54 100.00%
I don't usually question the way things are done.	8 14.81%	46 85.19%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	54 100.00%
I value stability, order, and continuity.	47 87.04%	5 9.26%	1 1.85%	1 1.85%	54 100.00%

Table 8: Cross-Tab of Myopic Management Trait by Question

Myopia Questions					
Response	Yes	No	I Don't Know	Unanswered	Total
I don't know a lot about the needs of the people I serve.	2 3.70%	49 90.74%	2 3.70%	1 1.85%	54 100.00%
I don't know much about the competition.	4 7.41%	45 83.33%	4 7.41%	1 1.85%	54 100.00%
I don't read the business news.	18 33.33%	36 66.67%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	54 100.00%
I don't have any specific learning goals.	5 9.26%	47 87.04%	1 1.85%	1 1.85%	54 100.00%

*Table 9: Cross-Tab of Rigid Management Trait by Question*

Rigidity Questions					
Response	Yes	No	I Don't Know	Unanswered	Total
I am sometimes quite inflexible.	15 27.78%	37 68.52%	2 3.70%	0 0.00%	54 100.00%
I am quite set in my ways.	9 16.67%	42 77.78%	3 5.56%	0 0.00%	54 100.00%
I am unwilling to take risks.	4 7.41%	50 92.59%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	54 100.00%
I don't handle setbacks very effectively.	7 12.96%	45 83.33%	1 1.85%	1 1.85%	54 100.00%

## Chi-Square

A chi-square was used to determine the goodness of fit of the cross-tabulations to determine whether the results are likely the result of sampling error. In the case of the management trait of ambition, the chi square test revealed that  $p = 0.02$ . This is less than 0.05, so there appears to be a non-random relationship between the leadership trait question and the response tendency to the question (in this case positive), rejecting the null hypothesis. For persuasiveness, the chi square test resulted in a  $p = 0.23$ , which is greater than 0.05, so the results could be from random sampling error, meaning that the alternative hypothesis was not accepted. For the reflective leadership trait,  $p = 0.10 > 0.05$ , so again the alternative hypothesis was not accepted. Likewise, the adaptable management trait was greater than 0.05 with  $p = 0.40$ . Thus, no alternative hypotheses for the innovative management traits were accepted due to the chi square test results with the exception of one. What this means is that only the management trait of ambition is significant as an innovative leadership style. The implication is that a drive to succeed and advance is preferred among these public managers, which is consistent with their decisions to go back to school for a higher degree in public administration.

As for the traditional management traits, a chi square was performed on each trait to reveal whether the responses may have been due to random sampling error rather than indicating significant results. For the rigid management trait, the chi square test resulted in  $p = 0.07$ , which is greater than 0.05, indicating that the results were likely due to random sampling error and not accepting the alternative hypothesis.

Conversely, for the myopic management trait,  $p = 3.69 \times 10^{-29}$ , and for the satisfied management trait,  $p = 8.69 \times 10^{-18}$ , both accepted the alternative hypotheses. Since the



myopic management trait is significant, of interest is the fact that a full third of respondents didn't read the business news. The business world impacts the public management world by means of macroeconomics and by creating private competition for public services. A perceptive public manager would be ready to innovate based on pressure from these factors, however a myopic manager could keep nose to the grindstone without taking note of the population served migrating to private providers.

This implies that the business news is less relevant than other sources of information about external pressures that drive innovation in the public sector. For example, while it's true that competition in the marketplace can drive innovation, many public services do not directly compete with commercial service providers. Or, it could simply be that a negative tone about the myopic management trait was not detected by respondents, leading them to feel comfortable answering this question positively at a greater rate than other more slanted questions.

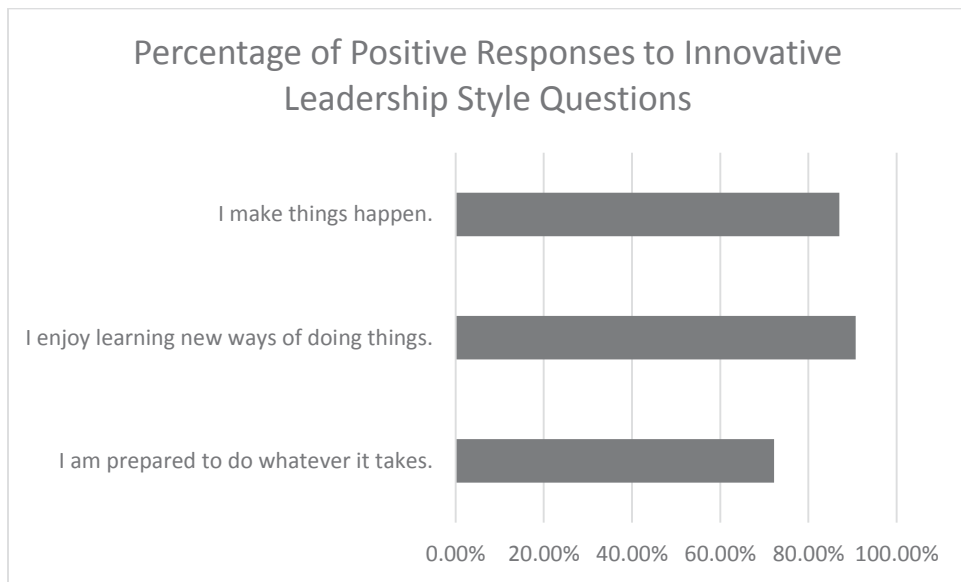
For example, it's more socially acceptable to avoid reading the business news than it is to be slow to adapt to new initiatives or to handle setbacks poorly. Few people would want to admit that they are not adaptable. As for the satisfied management trait, almost 30% of respondents indicated they were not very adventurous. This could imply a preference for stability at the level of the organization or the individual that could potentially stifle the sense of adventure required for innovative endeavors.

In summary, the null hypothesis could not be rejected by the  $p$  values for hypotheses concerning the persuasive, reflective and adaptive (all innovative) management traits. Potentially significant are the results regarding the ambitious

leadership trait of innovative leadership styles as well as the results from the traditional management traits (rigid, satisfied, and myopic).

Figures

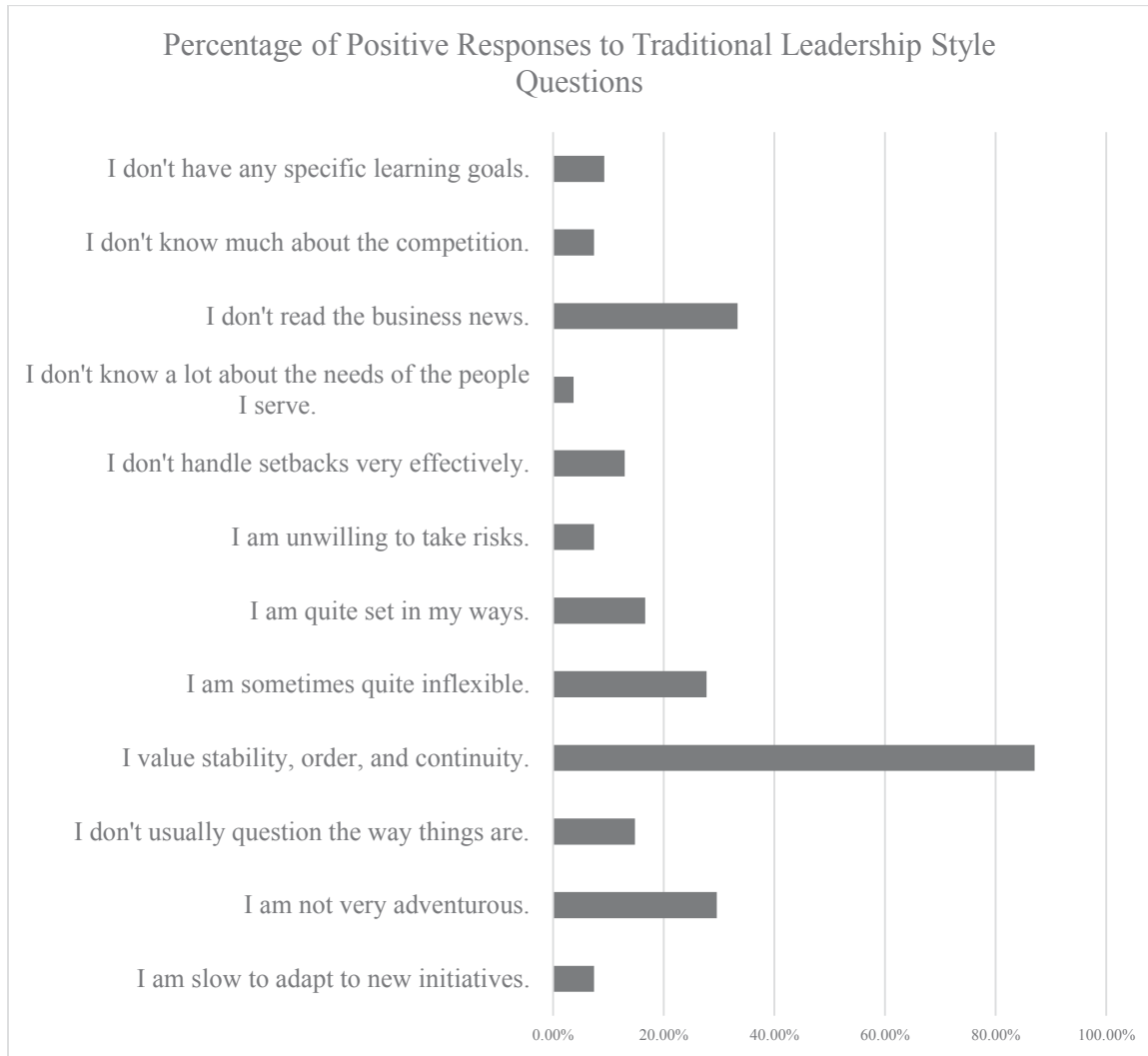
Figures were used to graphically display the relationship between innovative and traditional leadership styles. In order to compare the innovative versus traditional positive responses, below is a figure showing an example of percentages of positive responses. Note that only questions regarding the management trait of ambition are included here since the null hypotheses were rejected by the chi square test.



*Figure 2: Percentage of Positive Responses to Innovative Leadership Style Questions Regarding the Ambitious Management Trait.*

One can compare the above figure of innovative leadership style questions with the figure below regarding traditional leadership style questions. Since the null hypotheses of all management traits in these hypotheses were rejected after the chi square

test, they are all included below. Observe how the positive responses compare to questions regarding being satisfied, rigid, and myopic.



*Figure 3: Percentage of Positive Responses to Traditional Leadership Style Questions Regarding the Satisfied, Rigid, and Myopic Management Traits.*

In general, there is a trend towards answering questions regarding innovative leadership styles positively in a greater percentage than positive answers to questions regarding traditional leadership styles. There is a notable exception of one question addressing the satisfied management trait. The three satisfaction questions below the one

in question on the figure provide a visual representation of how little positive response other satisfaction questions received. Since a positive answer to a question about valuing stability, order, and continuity would not reflect poorly on the character of the respondent, this question was the only one that fell into the traditional management style and also received more positive responses than negative.

### Additional Findings

#### *Bias Interpretive Statement*

The answers to questions about traditional management traits took on a negative tone. Certainly no manager wants to be perceived as myopic or rigid. Likewise, all managers would like to be perceived as adaptable, reflective, and persuasive. It is possible that the leading questions swayed some respondents to answer questions in a way that allowed them to be perceived in a favorable light. Perhaps if all survey response prompts were as carefully worded as the aforementioned satisfaction statement affirming “stability, order, and continuity”, results may have differed overall.

### Summary of Results

The first alternative hypothesis, H1<sub>a</sub>, was accepted: “A majority of graduate students will reflect an ambitious management style.” This result is certainly consistent with a decision to attend graduate school. Indeed, nine out of ten agreed that, “I enjoy learning new ways of doing things.” More ambitious public managers are likely to pursue jobs that require an advanced degree, and more ambitious individuals are willing to pursue continuing education for personal or professional reasons.

The second alternative hypothesis H2<sub>a</sub>, was also accepted: “Fewer graduate students will feel satisfied with their jobs.” This implies that job dissatisfaction might

drive ambition, or the converse may be true that an ambitious person is never quite satisfied. Though job dissatisfaction can be an indicator of organizational turmoil or personality clashes, the complete converse of job dissatisfaction, complacency, is also not ideal. Perhaps a balanced motivation for improved conditions is key. Over 85% of respondents indicated that they actively question the status quo. By inquiring as to why things are done the way they are and how the organization can be improved, innovation is encouraged.

Alternative hypothesis H3<sub>a</sub>, could not be accepted. It did not turn out to be the case that, "A majority of graduate students will reflect an adaptable management style." The positive results regarding adaptability may have been due to random sampling.

H4<sub>a</sub> was accepted as an alternative hypothesis: "Fewer graduate students will reflect a myopic management style." In general respondents indicated they were not myopic, revealing a trait which might stimulate innovation. Problems in the greater world, such as a changing community demographic, a national economic fluctuation, or competition from the private sector, might stimulate innovation in public management. Four out of five respondents indicated that they were knowledgeable about service providers that could act as competition with the statement, "I don't know much about the competition." Managers that perceive external pressures that necessitate change within the organization can drive innovation.

The final hypothesis, H5<sub>a</sub>, was rejected. The premise that, "A majority of graduate students will reflect a persuasive management style" was not sufficiently supported by the evidence. Results may have been from random sampling and were not significant.

## Chapter V

### DISCUSSION

In this discussion, the generalizability of the results of this study will be examined, and a rationale for the most prevalent leadership style will be provided. Recommendations for the most desirable leadership style will be given, and an implementation and evaluation plan will be presented for public administrators. The essential research question for this study was: Is an innovative leadership style more prevalent than a traditional style among public managers who are graduate students in public administration? Overall, it did turn out to be the case that, of the significant results, respondents affirmed traits of innovative leadership styles and avoided admitting traits of traditional leadership styles. Of course, with leading questions, it can be assumed that many respondents simply selected the most flattering characteristics. It's not easy to admit that one does not respond well in a crisis or adapt easily to change. It is far easier to cheerfully affirm flexibility and functionality in the face of work stressors. Even an honest respondent might forget about the worst episodes in his or her career and assume the best of himself or herself in the future.

The traits themselves are not leadership styles. In fact, leadership traits such as those studied can be enfolded into the many leadership styles already written about in the literature. The leadership traits studied included traditional traits, such as satisfied, myopic, and rigid. Innovative traits, such as ambitious, adaptable, reflective, and persuasive were also studied. There were eight leadership styles enumerated in this

study's literature review. These included traditional leadership styles (autocratic, transactional, and transformational) and innovative leadership styles (servant, adaptive, facilitative, whole soul, and democratic). The pertinent leadership traits are woven like threads throughout the known leadership styles. For example; ambition was a significant leadership trait displayed by respondents. It is easy to see how this could fit into innovative leadership styles such as adaptive, facilitative and democratic. However, it is certainly possible to have an ambitious traditional leader as well, such as an autocratic, transactional or transformational leader.

Perhaps the leadership trait of ambition, accompanied with a lack of satisfaction with the status quo, is one key to how transformational leadership is a stepping stone from traditional leadership styles to more innovative leadership styles. Since transformational leaders are mission-focused, keeping the long-term goals of the organization foremost in their mind, such leaders can be ambitious on behalf of their organizations. An ambitious transformational leader could dream up better services for a community, or perhaps spearhead an organization's growth of manpower, service area, or fixed assets. A leader who is unsatisfied with his or her current organization may be driven to not only align with the team's mission, but to help it evolve into something more suitable to a changing future.

It is a little more challenging to see ambition as a strength for the leadership styles of servant or whole soul leadership, since the focus of these leadership styles is upon the other rather than on the self. However, this dissertation's study also highlighted the responses that eschewed myopic management traits. Myopia would be an extreme barrier to effectively displaying the innovative leadership styles of servant and whole soul

leadership. An innovative leader must be able to see beyond his or her nose in order to observe the changing needs of those he or she serves. Myopia is one stumbling block that respondents in this study would need to overcome when adopting leadership styles that involve a diffuse focus that includes those served as much as or more so than coworkers and authority figures. Perhaps the next leadership style on the horizon will involve this far-sighted approach. The results of this study confirmed that ambition, paired with a lack of satisfaction and a vehement rejection of myopia are some of the innovative traits that inspire and motivate today's emerging leadership styles.

#### What is the Rationale for the Most Prevalent Leadership Style Traits?

Is an innovative leadership style more prevalent than a traditional style among public managers who are graduate students in public administration? When the mode was calculated as an indicator of trait prevalence, it was confirmed that affirmations of the traits of ambition, adaptation, and reflection received mostly positive affirmations. Recall from the *p* value that, of these, ambition was a significant result. In order for innovation and change to happen in the way that leadership styles occur in public management, it is up to the individual managers to make a fundamental deviation from the norm. In order to desire change, a manager must be ambitious. It would make sense that public managers coming from graduate school in public administration are ambitious and desire change in their lives. Such educated public managers must have been dissatisfied by lower levels of education and the jobs and salaries accessible with less education. The decision to attend graduate school is demonstrative of ambition, so the correlation with ambitious leadership styles that support innovation is unsurprising.



Of interest is that there was one outlier question about a traditional leadership trait that received prevalent positive responses. The statement, “I value stability, order, and continuity,” demonstrating satisfaction as a traditional leadership trait, received mostly positive answers. This may show that ambition tempered with reliability is more conducive to an innovative public management style. After all, unbridled ambition might lead towards a hasty exit to a more profitable career in the public sector. Or, a public manager with all ambition and no stability might choose to change jobs frequently in order to move up the promotional ladder. In effect, he or she would be unable to sit still long enough to affect organizational change.

One might wonder how persons who fit the traditional management pattern end up as public managers, given that traits like having no learning goals, being unwilling to take risks, and avoiding adventure might seem to lead them to another career choice. However, these aforementioned traits are also well-suited to someone who is content with one’s current job duties to the point of being unwilling to face change. For example, a traditional public manager nearing retirement might choose not to rock the boat; a public manager experiencing health problems at home might content himself or herself with doing the bare minimum required to get by. Traditional management practices provide a forum for those who don’t want to put forth the herculean effort to hop on the moving train of evolving public management practices.

#### Are These Results Generalizable?

Leadership style innovation is a viable topic with potentially broad application even though these data were limited to Valdosta State University graduate students. Public managers who enter the VSU, MPA and DPA degree programs are a narrow slice

of the profession, so one cannot have confidence that they represent the public management as a whole, however extrapolation is possible. Since the graduate program studied takes place almost entirely online, with the exception of brief residencies, students involved in the program live and work all across the country and even the globe. The problem of generalizing results from South Georgia is mitigated by the fact that some students in the program perform their public management duties in other states or countries, while connecting with instructors and fellow students online. It may very well be that the ambition shown by students in this graduate school program is equivalent to or greater than the ambition shown by students in other graduate programs for public management. As an exploratory study this dissertation may spur others in the field into further research on leadership styles that fit today's technological landscape. It would be interesting to see if online graduate programs in public administration offer flexible opportunities that attract or foster the unique blend of ambitious leaders who also yearn for stability and abhor a myopic worldview.

### *Confounding Factors*

There are a few confounding factors that make the interpretation of this dissertation somewhat guarded. The sample size was small and the response rate was very low. The question interpretive bias may have led many respondents to choose responses that would cast them in a favorable light, regardless of their assured anonymity. As pointed out in the literature, gender may also be an important factor in the expression of leadership style, and the results were not studied with gender as a variable. It would be interesting to see future studies that examined further how the leadership

traits of ambition, satisfaction, myopia, and stability are the same or different in women and men.

Furthermore, an important variable that affects the pertinent leadership traits may be age and the years spent in public service. Some current MPA students are very young in comparison to those returning to graduate school after many years of work. Certainly one who is just starting out in his or her public administration career may make choices that seem more ambitious than one who already established, if that person is trying to acquire a reputation as a change-maker. Conversely, it may be the case that public managers nearing retirement make bold and ambitious moves in order to affect lasting change before he or she makes an exit. It would be interesting to see at what stage in one's career a public manager might choose to play it safe and value stability over change, and at what life and career stage a manager is willing to take more risks. Another potentially interesting avenue for future study would be to include respondents not currently working in public management to see how the opinions of other employees are affected. This dissertation could inspire further study about what other factors compel a leader to develop a new, innovative leadership style.

#### *Leaning on Traditional Leadership During a Crisis*

Another variable for which this study had no control was the present work climate, including economic pressures or any other emergent issues that might affect leadership style. The literature shows that public managers tend to fall back on traditional leadership styles in order to work through a crisis, whether the crisis is merely increased workload or a systemic problem within the organization. There is no way of knowing what particular crises might be happening for the respondents to the survey in

this dissertation that might make their answers this year look quite different from the way that each respondent normally operates at work.

#### What is the Recommendation for the Most Desirable Leadership Style?

If an organization desires innovative leadership, it must attract leaders who are neither myopic nor entirely satisfied with business as usual. Such leaders should also have the drive of ambition. Of the described leadership styles in the literature review, these traits are most accurately and completely encapsulated by the adaptive leadership style. Adaptive leadership is an innovative leadership style focused on frankly addressing issues within an organization, both positive and negative, with an eye towards change. Thus, the adaptive leadership style is defined by its transitional nature, and is the most overt and efficient way to usher in potential new leadership styles hitherto undescribed.

The literature shows that making change in leadership styles within an organization is possible by exposing innovative leaders widely to members of the organization so that ideas and habits of mind will spread. It is not necessary to force all managers within an organization to undergo re-education. Rather, the motivation should come from seeing enthusiastic leaders who already value education, ambition, growth and change.

#### What is an Implementation and Evaluation Plan?

In order to properly evaluate a leadership change, it is important to first describe the baseline leadership styles extant in the organization. It is possible that each leader displays a different style or constellation of leadership traits. Leadership traits can be assessed with the survey included in Appendix A, or through other means. Set a

reasonable time goal for leadership styles to shift towards innovation. A time goal will vary with the size of the organization as well as other factors such as any crisis point that may be happening to cause leaders to retreat towards traditional leadership styles. It is safe to say that organization-wide leadership change can take time, from months to years.

Identify the leaders within the organization who already align with the traits that support innovation: Ambition without myopia nor satisfaction with the status quo. Provide these leaders with opportunities to interact with members of the organization. Exposure of inspirational leaders should be done at all levels of the organization, not just with other members of leadership teams. Allowing innovative leaders to spread their enthusiasm organically and authentically may take time, but it is more effective than disingenuous training seminars given to those who don't yet see the value of continuing education. At the end of the chosen time period for a shift in leadership style, re-assess leaders using the same tool as used initially in order to observe whether leadership traits have taken root.

#### Analysis of Questions Raised in the Literature

Given that the recommendation of this dissertation is adaptive leadership, it is important to analyze the literature previously reviewed on the subject of the leadership style in question. Trastek et al., wrote about adaptive leadership, defining it as leadership, "used to enable a group to overcome challenges created by change".

According to the authors, an adaptive leader is one who;

Identifies adaptive challenges and confronts difficult realities of the situation and old values or beliefs contributing to the adaptive challenge. An adaptive leader helps to regulate the distress of the group and facilitates collaborative efforts to create solutions. An adaptive leader... seeks to affect change through a process of individual and group reflection and collaboration. (Trastek et al., 2014, 378)

This definition of adaptive leadership would neatly encompass the graduates of Valdosta State University who were not satisfied with the existing state of affairs and who were ambitious about necessary changes. Trastek et al., throw light on the fact that change is stressful for many people, and that leaders do not serve anyone by painting a happy face on desired changes and ignoring the reality of the challenge.

The findings of this dissertation reinforce the findings of Trastek et al., by showing that the traits of innovative leaders identified also show a rejection of the traditional leadership trait of myopia, which could otherwise keep a leader hyper-focused on the positive aspects of change as they affect him or her.

However, Trastek et al., stop short of this dissertation's recommendation of adaptive leadership as a means of innovating leadership style, particularly in the contingency of chaos and emergencies during which leaders are actually encouraged to fall back on more traditional leadership styles. The authors warn that, "Teamwork in the health care setting can require more technical solutions and decisive actions than adaptive leadership allows" (Trastek et al. 2014, 379).

Though this dissertation did not control for situations of intense pressure, it is likely that many respondents were able to offer technical solutions and decisive actions, otherwise the duties of leadership simply could not be performed. Thus, this dissertation suggests a contradiction of the literature. Furthermore, Trastek et al., wrote that there are ethical concerns associated with adaptive leadership.

Despite the potential risks of applying adaptive leadership, the practice of collaborative problem solving and honest confrontation could promote innovation and effective changes at various levels of the health care system; however, adaptive leadership may not match the ethical requirements of health care service. Adaptive leadership fails to provide an explicit requirement that change and

action to overcome an adaptive challenge must take into account moral and ethical aspects of human life. (Trastek et al. 2014, 379)

While the above is technically true, there is nothing about adaptive leadership which explicitly precludes ample use of ethics in decision-making. In fact, most leadership styles do not explicitly reference ethics, since ethical decision-making can be enfolded into many leadership styles. It is of import to modify any leadership style adoption with the ethical standards upheld by the organization as a whole.

Having defined adaptive leadership and the innovative leadership traits displayed by Valdosta State University graduate students turned public managers in the context of this dissertation's recommendations, efficacy of leadership styles studied by Gomes and Yasin can be reviewed in light of these findings. The authors identified factors influencing success of the projects, emphasizing that good leadership is key, particularly with regards to motivation and loyalty.

One of the most influential factors they acknowledged was, "desire to excel on the project" (Gomes & Yasin 2013, 120). A desire to excel implies more than simply maintaining the minimum standards of a project. Certainly the motivation and desire to excel, of which these authors wrote, can also be understood as ambition to not only succeed but to excel, which is supported further by the findings of this dissertation.

It is important to note that loyalty, in the context of Gomes and Yasin and ambition or desire to excel are not mutually exclusive. Loyalty does not mean loyalty to one's current administration or rule set, but loyalty to one's organization and subordinates. Such loyalty, they explain, nurtures the trust required in order to affect change. The unique structure of the Valdosta State University graduate school online

program in public administration allows students to continue working at their current organizations while obtaining a higher degree.

Such education can potentially help Valdosta State University graduates perform existing jobs more effectively or obtain a promotion. Though loyalty was not specifically studied in this dissertation, the findings of this dissertation are consistent with those of Gomes and Yasin regarding ambition and help modify the understanding of how loyalty, ambition, and dissatisfaction with the status quo can reinforce one another.

With the definition of adaptive leadership and its relevance with regards to effective leadership in hand, it's of interest to reassess how much these innovative leadership style traits are desired and how these desires are effectively expressed in the job marketplace. Turning attention back to Henrick and Henricks-Lepp's study of desired characteristics of management as expressed in job advertisements, let's see how the most desired leadership traits match up to those reflected by the responses of Valdosta State University's current and former graduate students in public administration now working as public managers.

Several of the authors' findings reinforce the findings of this dissertation. The ambition of Valdosta State Graduates could align easily with words found in the job postings such as: Implements the vision, results oriented, motivates, vision, initiative, and strategic planning (Henricks & Henricks-Lepp 2014, 282). In fact, some of the words used in their study directly reflect the findings of this dissertation. The authors identified the words "innovation" and "change and adaptation" as desired characteristics of management and leadership, which feed directly into the recommendations of this dissertation.



The aversion Valdosta State University graduate public managers felt towards satisfaction and myopia can also be understood as more positive words found in job postings as well. For example, the authors wrote about words and phrases that are incompatible with myopia such as: “assesses community needs,” “community involvement and engagement,” and “sees big picture.” The lack of satisfaction in the context of this dissertation can be inferred from the desirability of a leader who values change and adaptation as well as takes risks, according to the authors.

There were findings, however, that were not supported by this dissertation. Although “persuasiveness” was a management trait identified as desirable by Henricks and Henricks-Lepp, it was not found to be significant in this dissertation, and so the previous authors’ work was not supported in this way. Many of the words found by Henricks and Henricks-Lepp were not clearly defined characteristics of leadership, and so this dissertation’s work modifies their previous work by clarifying that while words like “Administers” are certainly things that managers do, they are not necessarily the traits that lead to the development of innovative leadership styles.

There were a great many more words that Henricks and Henricks-Lepp included within their leadership characteristics that refer more to what leaders do than what they are, for example “makes decisions” (Henricks & Henricks-Lepp 2014, 282). Likewise, Gomes and Yasin also identified factors that affected the success of projects that had to do more with the nature of the project or the context of leadership than the leadership traits themselves.

For example “decisions made by the project team” is a key factor influencing project success (Gomes & Yasin 2013, 120). An intermingling of what public managers

do and what they are is consistent within the literature on leadership styles and innovation. Perhaps one of the most important functions of this dissertation is to begin to operationalize leadership traits that affect leadership style as personality characteristics that can be either fixed or mutable, rather than a specific job function. This dissertation is by no means a complete analysis of the traits of public managers, but it does add to the conversation.

### Case Study

To add a concrete example to this assessment, a current events case study on Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau follows, which reflects this dissertation's findings on innovative and adaptive leadership. Trudeau was selected in 2015 as Prime Minister by a vote of the people desperate for change from the conservative and traditional leadership of former Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Trudeau said it himself on *PBS NewsHour*, "You want a government with a vision and an agenda for this country that is positive and ambitious and hopeful. Well, my friends, I promise you tonight that I will lead that government. I will make that vision a reality. I will be that prime minister" (Brown et al., 2015).

In this statement Trudeau self-identifies as ambitious, in a political climate in which Canadians hungry for a change in leadership style were looking for anyone but Harper. Fresh-faced Trudeau's campaign was to become the archetype of innovation and adaptive leadership. Instead of offering a path-dependent plan, Trudeau proposed an innovative plan to help the Canadian government adapt. As author Stephanie Dion wrote on the political climate of the election in question,

As it currently stands, there are three bold options on the table when it comes to reforming the Canadian Senate: make it an elected body, abolish it, or make it

more independent and less partisan. Only the third option, proposed by Liberal leader Justin Trudeau, is the realistic option. (Dion 2015, 61)

Justin Trudeau, aged 43 at the time of this writing, was born when his father, Pierre Elliott Trudeau was acting as the fifteenth Prime Minister of Canada. One might assume that, being the son of a former Prime Minister could brand Trudeau as a tool to maintain the existing state of affairs in Canada, much the way that former President George W. Bush was accused of carrying on a dynasty of conservative thought. Indeed, Justin Trudeau and his father shared Liberal Party membership. Part of Justin Trudeau's campaign was to demonstrate that the Liberal Party represents adaptive leadership by distancing himself from his father.

“Like Father, Like Son. Only Not Always,” author John Geddes explains that the Canadian public had fond memories of an adventurous Pierre Trudeau, and his son following in his footsteps merely increased hopes that Justin Trudeau would shake up the country in a similar way with the new issues that his father did not have to face at the time. Justin Trudeau's tactics during his campaign included making himself accessible to the public and surrounding himself with people in a way that his father never found comfortable (Geddes 2015, 19).

Very much in the way that this dissertation recommends the implementation of innovative, adaptive leadership, Justin Trudeau spent all of his waking campaigning hours striving to surround himself with both small and large groups of Canadians in order to authentically spread his ambitions for the nation and motivation. Trudeau also maintained an active social media presence, giving millions direct access to beginning a conversation with him. As a relatively youthful candidate with technology savvy, Trudeau was demonstrating that he could adapt to modern demands for transparency and

direct access to leadership and ideas. Geddes writes about Trudeau seeking out opposition and, “patiently stating and re-stating his position with implacable protesters” with a patience never seen before. This is evidence of his adaptive leadership because Trudeau realistically addressed problems and crises in a bid for change, and actively rejected the myopia that could stymie innovation.

Trudeau demonstrated his lack of satisfaction with the abundance of power given to the Prime Minister. When his supporters accused Harper of being a tyrant, Trudeau pointed out that his own father was the one who increased the power of the Prime Minister, and said he would enjoy the “symmetry” of ending such an unbalance of power (Geddes 2015, 19). Trudeau identified his father as an autocratic leader according to the perceptions of Canadians.

Opinions of his father were not the only thing that Trudeau had to overcome in his campaign. He also had to prove that he was a more innovative and adaptive leader than opponents from the New Democratic Party. Public opinion had already swayed in Trudeau’s favor the year before, when the New Democratic Party was criticized for not being progressive enough (Wherry 2015, 17). In “Greater Expectations” author Aaron Wherry explains that there’s nothing inherently innovative and adaptive about the New Democratic Party, though they are progressive on some individual issues.

In contrast, the Liberal Party became known as a source of something new and different, no matter what the issues at hand. “Indeed,” Wherry writes, “for the first time in Canadian political history, the NDP’s final result will be measured against the possibility of forming a government” (Wherry 2015, 19). Canadians wanted more than progression, they wanted an overhaul. This is why Justin Trudeau presented himself as

an adaptive leader, in order to be the face of innovation for the nation.

### Taking Knowledge Further and Re-Defining Leadership?

This conclusion will demonstrate how this study's findings reinforce and contradict previous understandings and conclusions. The goal of this dissertation was to further define the leadership traits that foster innovation, in order to peer into the future of leadership styles that have not yet been defined. Overall, this study's findings support the findings of previous leadership style studies that indicate that a drive and motivation for change comes from individual leaders who are ready to adapt and be flexible to affect change. Many leadership style studies focus upon the stepping stone leadership styles with the hopes that by transparently training a leader to be transformational or adaptive, the leadership will indeed transform and adapt the organization.

There is a certain amount of truth to the theory that the structure of the organization itself must facilitate change. If a public manager must surmount barriers such as bureaucracy, red-tape or a lack of support for exchanging ideas and seeking higher education, change will indeed be more difficult. However, this dissertation's findings suggest that the leadership traits that make up innovative leadership styles can be effectively nurtured. After all, those who chose to pursue an online graduate degree in higher education were not all compelled to do so as a mandatory training in order to keep their jobs.

Though some current and former graduate students at Valdosta State University may have had tuition paid by their employers, each individual chose the program for his or her own reasons and went through the trouble to apply, including writing a career goal statement. While in their graduate programs, Valdosta State University students'

ambitions were nurtured and applied towards innovative thinking. For example, one of the electives available to both DPA and MPA students in 2013 was a course titled “Innovation and Creative Problem Solving in the Public Sector.” An example list of courses is included in Appendix C. The program may have produced traits in its graduates that aid them not only as leaders, but as employees, leaving this topic ripe for future studies. Yes, these public managers are ambitious, and though correlation does not indicate causation in this dissertation, the hurdle of the graduate school application process would suggest that the ambitious chicken comes before the egg.

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APPENDIX A  
Survey Instrument

## Introduction

You are being asked to participate in a study because you are a current or former Doctor of Public Administration (DPA) or Master of Public Administration (MPA) student of Valdosta State University. This survey research project is entitled “Leadership Style Survey,” which is being conducted by Alexandra Chauran, a student at Valdosta State University. The purpose of this survey is for a dissertation to be submitted to the Graduate School of Valdosta State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DPA in the department of Political Sciences of the College of Arts and Sciences. This survey is anonymous. No one, including the researcher, will be able to associate your responses with your identity. Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to take the survey, to stop responding at any time, or to skip any questions that you do not want to answer. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study. Your completion of the survey serves as your voluntary agreement to participate in this research project and your certification that you are 18 or older.

Questions regarding the purpose or procedures of the research should be directed to Alexandra Chauran at [anchauran@valdosta.edu](mailto:anchauran@valdosta.edu). This study has been exempted from Institutional Review Board (IRB) review in accordance with Federal regulations. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229-259-5045 or [irb@valdosta.edu](mailto:irb@valdosta.edu).

1.



I am prepared to do whatever it takes.

Yes / No / Don't Know

2.

I am slow to adapt to new initiatives.

Yes / No / Don't Know

3.

I handle myself pretty well in a crisis.

Yes / No / Don't Know

4.

I am sometimes quite inflexible.

Yes / No / Don't Know

5

I enjoy learning new ways of doing things.

Yes / No / Don't Know

6.

I articulate a compelling vision of the future.

Yes / No / Don't Know

7.

I don't know a lot about the needs of the people I serve.

Yes / No / Don't Know

8.

I am quite set in my ways.

Yes / No / Don't Know

9.

I don't know much about the competition.

Yes / No / Don't Know

10.

I am unwilling to take risks.

Yes / No / Don't Know

11.

I tend to adapt quickly to new situations.

Yes / No / Don't Know

12.

I make things happen.

Yes / No / Don't Know

13.

I consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions.

Yes / No / Don't Know

14.

I adjust easily to change.

Yes / No / Don't Know

15.

I am not very adventurous.

Yes / No / Don't Know

16.

I emphasize the importance of having a collective sense of mission.

Yes / No / Don't Know

17.

I am pretty good at selling my ideas.

Yes / No / Don't Know

18.

I don't usually question the way things are done.

Yes / No / Don't Know

19.

I seek differing perspectives when solving problems.

Yes / No / Don't Know

20.

I understand the needs of the people I serve.

Yes / No / Don't Know

21.

I don't read the business news.

Yes / No / Don't Know

22.

I value stability, order, and continuity.

Yes / No / Don't Know

23.

I get others to look at problems from many different angles.

Yes / No / Don't Know

24.

I don't have any specific learning goals.

Yes / No / Don't Know

25.

I don't handle setbacks very effectively.

Yes / No / Don't Know

26.

I try to help people learn from their mistakes.

Yes / No / Don't Know

27.

I handle change with an open mind.

Yes / No / Don't Know

28.

Do you currently work in a public management capacity?

Yes / No / Don't Know

29.

Are you a current or former student of Valdosta State University's Doctor of Public Administration or Master of Public Administration program?

Current DPA / Current MPA / Former DPA / Former MPA / Not Applicable



APPENDIX B

VSU MPA/DPA Program Descriptions

Program descriptions for the MPA and DPA degrees offered at Valdosta State University (Valdosta State University 2016).

The MPA degree is designed to prepare students for productive and rewarding careers in public service. The format of the program accommodates students currently employed in the public sector as well as students seeking entry level positions. The MPA Program is designed to complement any undergraduate degree.

Students pursuing the MPA degree online or at the Moody Campus must complete 36 hours of course work to include 24 hours of required core courses and 12 in a concentration area approved by the PA Coordinator. The 24-hour core includes PADM 7300: Foundations Seminar in Public Administration which must be taken in the first semester. Your final semester will require you to take PADM 7210: Internship in Public Administration and PADM 7900: Capstone Seminar in Public Administration. These courses serve as the exit requirement for the MPA program.

The MPA degree, Public Policy and Public Sector Management concentrations are offered exclusively via the Internet. The Human Resource Management concentration is offered exclusively at the Moody campus.

The DPA degree is a practitioner-oriented degree that helps students to develop the essential leadership, management, communication, and problem solving abilities necessary to succeed in today's professional environment. The courses in the program are designed to suit the information and skill needs of professionals currently in the field. The DPA degree is designed to provide students with the analytical and research skills that may be used in a variety of professional careers. While the public and the not-for-profit sectors have traditionally offered the greatest employment opportunities for DPA



graduates, the degree is also highly marketable in the private sector given its analytical and research-oriented focus.

Students pursuing the DPA degree online at Valdosta State University must complete 54 hours of course work to include 15 hours of required core courses, 9 hours of methods, 15 hours in a concentration area approved by the DPA Coordinator, and 6 hours of guided electives approved by the DPA Coordinator. The 15-hour core includes PADM 9030: Logic of Inquiry which must be taken in the first semester. Your final semester of coursework will require you to take PADM 9990: Capstone Seminar and PADM 9999: Final Project. These courses serve as the exit requirement for the DPA program.

The majority of the DPA program is designed around the use of web technology, residency orientations on VSU main campus each fall and spring semester, seminars and meetings, and intensive individual study of a research topic and writing of a capstone project which is supervised by DPA faculty members.

APPENDIX C

VSU MPA/DPA Course Examples

Example course names and descriptions of Master of Public Administration and Doctor of Public Administration program courses at Valdosta State University in 2016 that may support innovation (Valdosta State University 2016):

PADM 7010: Public Sector Labor Relations (3 hours credit) (HRM)

An analysis of labor relations in public organizations. Topics include dispute resolution, management of benefit packages, and other current issues of labor relations.

PADM 7020: Public Sector Planning (3 hours credit) (PSM)

An exploration of the elements of public sector planning, including data validation, forecasting and projection techniques, and decision making.

PADM 7050: Administrative Law and Government (3 hours credit) (PSM)

An overview of the administrative legal processes, focusing on the formation and execution of public policy. Special emphasis is placed upon protecting the rights of all parties in the complex process of administrative law, policy formation and implementation.

PADM 7090: Policy Analysis (3 hours credit) (PP)

A systematic survey of the theories, basic concepts and approaches associated with empirical analysis of public policies. Topics include problems and uses of analysis, with reliance on case studies.

PADM 7110: Information Management (3 hours credit) (MPA Core / PSM)

A survey of the issues and problems of information management. Emphasis is on modern developments in the generation, storage, classification and transmission of information vital to the management of public organizations.

PADM 7170: Organizational Theory and Behavior (3 hours credit) (MPA Core / HRM)

An introduction to major theories concerning management in the public sector, including analysis of individual behavior in an organizational context. Emphasis is on the politicized environment.

PADM 7180: Labor Law (3 hours credit) (HRM)

An examination of modern labor movements in the United States, with special attention to the National Labor Relations Act and other fair employment practices acts. Attention will also be focused on the laws of unionization, collective bargaining, strikes, and picketing.

PADM 7190: Special Topics in Public Administration (3 hours credit) (Depends on Topic)

Study in areas which are not ordinarily covered in the MPA Program, but which may be of contemporary or special interest to MPA students at the time.

PADM 7200: Directed Study in Public Administration (3 hours credit) (Depends on Topic)

Directed readings in selected areas of public administration with regular conferences between the student and the faculty member.

PADM 7220: Managing Diversity in the Public Workforce (3 hours credit) (HRM)

An overview of diversity issues in public management from a human resource manager's perspective. Topics include differences in age, disability, gender, race / ethnicity, and culture and their impact on human resource management.

PADM 7240: Public Administration and Community Based Organizations (3 hours credit) (PSM)

An examination of the relationships between urban public administrators and their environment. Topics include but are not limited to the roles of community organizations, interest groups, and demographic diversity upon the management function.

PADM 7270: Innovation and Creative Problem Solving in the Public Sector (3 hours credit) (HRM/PSM)

An exploration of innovation, problem solving, and creativity as applied to the public sector. The course seeks to expand class participants' understanding and abilities in each of these areas.

PADM 7360: Planning and Implementing Electronic Government (3 hours credit) (PSM)

An introduction to the methods and processes for planning and implementing a website for a governmental entity or a nonprofit organization. Students will learn how public and nonprofit organizations utilize the web to meet the needs of their constituents.

PADM 7370: Comparative Public Policy (3 hours credit) (PP)

An examination of how public policies differ cross-nationally, why they differ, and what impact they have on their respective societies.

PADM 7400: Ethics and Public Administration (3 hours credit) (Any Concentration)

An examination of the role of ethics in public administration, with an emphasis on ethical obligations, practices, and decision-making. Students will analyze the principal philosophical approaches that inform ethical behavior and apply moral reasoning to a variety of specific cases that highlight ethical dilemmas faced by public administrators.

PADM 7410: Performance Analysis for Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (3 hours credit) (MPA Core/PSM)

Prerequisite: PADM 7060: Quantitative Methods for Public Administration

An overview of performance measurements and analysis for public and non-profit organizations

PADM 7420: Homeland Security (3 hours credit) (PSM)

An overview of homeland security, focusing on conventional and unconventional threats. Special emphasis is placed on civil defense, emergency management, and policy making.

PADM 7500: Environmental Policy (3 hours credit) (PP)

An examination of environmental politics and policy in the U.S. and U.S. involvement in global environmental issues. Using historical and current case topics, students will gain a greater understanding of challenges facing public administrators in managing environmental concerns.

PADM 7510: Health Policy (3 hours credit) (PP)

An examination of politics and policy making in health care in the U.S. Topics will include providers, payers, and regulators; policy evaluation; and the challenges facing public administrators who manage or access the health care system.

PADM 7600: Public Policy Formation (3 hours credit) (PP)

An examination of the making of public policy in the United States. Using case studies and applied analysis, students will develop a deeper understanding of the institutions, people, and environmental conditions, that influence the formation of public policies.

PADM 7670: Quality Management in Public Administration (3 hours credit) (HRM)

A survey of the history, practice, and theory of quality management, as specifically related to public sector and nonprofit organizations.

PADM 9030: Logic of Inquiry in Administration (3 hours credit) (DPA Methods)

An in-depth examination of the various epistemological approaches used in the systematic study of public administration.

PADM 9040: Research and Methods for Public Administration (3 hours credit) (DPA Methods)

An in-depth examination of the research methods used in the study of public administration. The course will expose students to the research methodologies available to modern public administrators and academics and to the software packages available to analyze data concerning various questions important to political scientists. The course will help students acquire the capability to critically examine empirical research and facilitate their ability to develop and carry out a complete empirical research project.

PADM 9050: Program Evaluation (3 hours credit) (DPA Methods)

Prerequisite: PADM 9040. Also offered as PSYC 9050.

Theories, research, and practice related to program evaluation in government and nonprofit organizations.

PADM 9070: Culture of Formal Work Organizations (3 hours credit) (DPA Core)

Also offered as SOCI 9070.

The study of organizational culture and methods of changing culture in public and nonprofit organizations. The impact of culture on organizational behavior will be discussed.

PADM 9670: Quality Management in Public Administration (3 hours credit) (PSM)

A survey of the history, practice, and theory of quality management, as specifically related to public sector and nonprofit organizations, with emphasis on data collection and analysis.



APPENDIX D  
IRB WAIVER



IRB.pdf