

**A PHILOSOPHICAL, QUALITATIVE, AND QUANTITATIVE EXAMINATION
OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN SECONDARY
AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION**

A Dissertation

by

JOHNATHAN LEWIS HALL

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2010

Major Subject: Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications

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Approved by:

Co-Chairs of Committee, Gary E. Briers
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Kerry Litzenberg
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ABSTRACT

A Philosophical, Qualitative, and Quantitative Examination of Transformational Leadership in Secondary Agricultural Education. (May 2010)

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Leadership has been a foundational component of secondary agricultural education and teachers are recognized as the program leader; furthermore, agriculture teachers are expected to develop leadership in their students. However, research examining the leadership style of agriculture teachers has not been fully vetted. The purpose of this study was threefold: to examine transformational leadership in secondary agricultural education from philosophical, qualitative, and quantitative perspectives. The study was conducted through a qualitative case study of an agricultural education program at the local level and through a quantitative study of secondary agricultural educators at the national level.

The philosophical portion of the study gave an overview of the agricultural education model and the transformational leadership approach. A dynamic model was developed for agricultural education which places an emphasis on the leadership approach of the agricultural educator. The Transformational Leadership and Community

Impact (TLCI) Model was developed to provide a more holistic approach for operating a high quality secondary agricultural education program.

The qualitative portion of the study was a case study to examine the leadership styles of two agriculture teachers in a high quality secondary agriculture program. The transformational leadership approach of Bass and Avolio provided the framework to explore the leadership styles of the agriculture teachers as perceived by those closely associated with the agriculture program. The results of this case study suggest that the transformational leadership style of the agriculture teachers was a positive and effective way to lead.

The quantitative portion of the study sought to identify the preferred leadership style of a random sample of agricultural educators across the nation who taught secondary agriculture during the 2008-2009 school year. Data were collected online using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). Descriptive statistics were used for reporting the demographic and personal characteristics of respondents. Mean scores were calculated to determine the leadership style and leadership factors of the agriculture teachers. The study concluded that secondary agricultural educators were more transformational in their preferred style in contrast to transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles. The highest mean score for a factor in transformational leadership was *Individualized Consideration* and the highest mean score for a factor in transactional leadership was *Contingent Reward*.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to all of my family and friends who have so graciously blessed me with their prayers, wisdom, encouragement, and support. I am forever grateful for the amazing impact you have on my life; you have helped me achieve more than I ever imagined.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am humbled and honored to accomplish such an outstanding milestone; I have many individuals that I would like to thank. First, I thank God for the favor, strength, grace, and love that He has granted me throughout my life. There are so many amazing people that He has surrounded me with to help me through this journey.

To my parents, Steve and Jeanie, thank you for believing in me and challenging me to accomplish the plans that God has set before me. The example of love, faith, sacrifice, and hard work that you live by has inspired me to accomplish so much more than I had ever imagined. To my brother and sisters, thank you for your love and continued encouragement; to my nieces and nephews, your future is bright, take advantage of the wonderful opportunities God has placed before you.

I would like to thank the Co-Chairs of my committee, Dr. Briers and Dr. Rosser. Together you have provided countless hours of guidance and support to help me develop a research focus area and to help me make the most of my experience as a graduate student. Dr. Briers, thank you for sharing your knowledge and experiences to help me become a better researcher and writer. Dr. Rosser, thank you for helping me discover innovative ways to teach and learn about leadership.

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better educator. Dr. Litz, your passion for teaching has encouraged, motivated, and challenged me to continue to put forth the effort to reach students wherever they are to help them learn.

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To the outstanding individuals in the Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications Department, thank you for sharing your wisdom and experience. I have been blessed to work with and learn from so many phenomenal faculty members, staff, and students. Dr. Elliot, you have done an amazing job leading ALEC, you always look to bring the best out in people. Thank you for seeing potential in me and including me in

various activities that would challenge me to learn and grow personally and professionally. Dr. Larke, you encourage and inspire me on so many levels; your passion for teaching and love for students is amazing. Thank you for continually offering support and guidance, your prayers and friendship are a blessing. You have helped me make it through life in the most challenging times of graduate school.

Finally, thanks to all of the outstanding men and women across the country that make a positive difference in the lives of students through agricultural education. Your dedication to improving the lives of students is an inspiration. I hope that my research can help secondary agricultural educators across the country as they build and sustain high quality programs that benefit the students and communities they serve. Together we can develop the leadership skills necessary to create an even brighter future for agriculture and agricultural education.

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INTRODUCTION

Leadership has long been associated with agricultural education at the secondary level (Connors & Swan, 2006; Grieman, 2009; Morgan & Rudd, 2006). Researchers have examined leadership in agricultural education; a majority of studies focused on students' leadership development rather than the leadership style of teachers.

Understanding the leadership style of teachers and helping teachers develop as leaders is very important (Greiman, Addington, Larson, & Olander, 2007); they are the ones charged with preparing students “for a lifetime of informed choices in global agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resource systems” as well as developing students’ “potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success” (National FFA Organization, 2008, p. 5).

Research on aspects of leadership concerning students is very important, yet for agricultural education to fully benefit, it is imperative to study leadership as it relates to teachers (Greiman, et al., 2007). The profession must examine leadership from this perspective because the strong leadership roots in agricultural education are being tested from two similar yet different angles. One challenge lies in the various issues facing education and agriculture; the other challenge is the goal of increasing the number of quality agriculture education programs.

Today—in 2010, leadership in education is more important than ever before as we face a plethora of issues such as high-stakes testing, economic and budgetary decline, overcrowded schools, and underrepresented populations. Agricultural education faces

This dissertation follows the style of the *Journal of Agricultural Education*.

the challenges felt by education as a whole (Roberts & Dyer, 2004); therefore, leaders in the profession must find solutions to these issues. Stallman (2004) suggested that maintaining and developing high quality agricultural education programs must remain a top priority if we want to enjoy the safest, most affordable, and abundant food supply in the world.

The National Council for Agricultural Education (The Council) has recognized the importance of this issue and has developed a “long-range strategic goal—10X15.” The Council (2007) believes:

Of the critical issues facing the nation, few are more compelling than improving the academic performance of public schools and ensuring a stable, safe and affordable food supply. Today agricultural education is positioned to contribute substantially in these arenas through a major national initiative. (National Council for Agricultural Education)

The goal of the “10X15” plan is to have 10,000 *quality* agricultural education programs in place by 2015 (2007). According to the National FFA, there are 7,358 programs in the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands (National FFA, 2008). The current numbers show that we are 2,642 programs short with about seven years remaining to accomplish this goal. The role of the agriculture teachers as a leader must be addressed to consider how their role contributes to program quality and improving the academic performance of schools.

The agricultural education profession has established five *Research Priority Areas (RPAs) for Agricultural Education in Schools* which are listed in the National

Research Agenda (Osborne, nd); the role of the agriculture teacher relates to all of the RPAs. Through the RPAs, several questions are brought to the attention of those in the profession, calling for studies to address the noted concerns. Through this dissertation the researcher sought to collect data to help answer questions associated with the RPAs. Questions that supported the need for this study were: “How do the components of an agricultural education program influence student success and overall program quality” (p. 8)? “How can this model [the current three circle model] or other educational delivery systems best serve students and their communities” (p. 18)? “What are the professional development needs of agricultural educators” (p. 8)?

Statement of the Problem

Agricultural education faces a plethora of issues brought about by multifaceted societal problems (Roberts & Dyer, 2004), and the profession has been challenged to build and sustain 10,000 *quality* agricultural education programs by 2015. One may opine that leadership at all levels will be needed to address any issues and concerns that could prevent reaching the goal of increasing the number of *quality* programs. More specifically, the leadership of the agriculture teacher is arguably the most crucial aspect to address because so much weight of whether or not a program is successful rests upon their shoulders (Morgan & Rudd, 2006; Vaughn & Moore, 2000). Agriculture teachers are recognized by students, school administrators, parents, and community members to run and maintain the agriculture program.

Therefore, it is conceivable that a model that provides leadership theory and a framework to assist teachers as they lead would be extremely beneficial. The current

agricultural education model is simply structural and does not depict leadership as a necessary component for building and sustaining quality programs. There is a need for a dynamic agricultural education model that incorporates leadership as a means for teachers to utilize as they build a complete, well-balanced, high-quality agricultural education program.

In addition to the lack of an acceptable dynamic model of leadership in agricultural education, there is a lack of research examining the leadership of agriculture teachers. “Understanding the leadership of the agriculture teacher(s) who run(s) a quality program would provide valuable information for the profession” (Hall, Briers, & Dooley, 2009, p. 40). Agricultural educators are expected to develop leadership in their students, yet it is not clear if teachers know and understand their own leadership style. Bass and Avolio (2004) contend, before an individual can effectively develop leadership in others, they must first identify and understand their personal leadership style. The profession has not fully explored the leadership style and abilities of the single most important person responsible for creating a high quality agricultural education program—the agricultural education teacher.

Furthermore, research findings suggest we still have a great deal to learn regarding the concept of leadership, “in the phenomenon known as leadership development, the Agricultural Education profession has much to discover” (Wingenbach & Kahler, 1997, p. 454). The profession has not adopted a particular leadership model or approach for those seeking to enhance their leadership effectiveness as agricultural educators (Hall et al., 2009). Furthermore, it is imperative that the preferred leadership

style of agriculture teachers be identified so that the impacts of their leadership can be evaluated.

Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the leadership of secondary agricultural educators from philosophical, qualitative, and quantitative perspectives utilizing the transformational leadership approach as a framework. The approach to examine leadership in secondary agricultural education through several different methods supports the literature and provides multiple angles to gather and evaluate data.

The philosophical approach to developing a new model for agricultural education served as a foundational starting point to provide an example of an alternative agricultural education model. Croom (2008) recommended that, “a study for alternative models for the delivery of agricultural education would be very useful to the profession” (p.118). Reasoning for a qualitative study was supported by Greiman (2009), he suggested that “qualitative research would be helpful to examine the voice of followers and how the leadership style of adults and peers impacted their leadership development” (p. 59).

A case for quantitative research was made because little is known about the preferred leadership style of secondary agricultural educators, especially at the national level; quantitative design methods are a logical and realistic method for collecting large amounts of data. The subject has not been fully vetted (Connors & Swan, 2006; Greiman, Addington, Larson, & Olander, 2007); thus, quantitative research at the national level would help to fill a void in the literature.

The study explored whether the transformational leadership approach can benefit secondary agricultural educators, creating more effective and successful agriculture programs. A case study approach was utilized to examine the leadership styles of agriculture teachers in a high quality secondary agriculture program. In addition, the study examined the preferred leadership style of secondary agricultural educators across the United States on the basis of personal characteristics. The following objectives were identified to accomplish the purpose of this study:

1. Present transformational leadership as an effective approach for agricultural educators seeking to operate high quality programs;
2. Provide an overview of agricultural education models;
3. Provide an overview of the transformational leadership approach;
4. Describe the possible contribution of transformational leadership to agricultural education in producing a high quality program that positively impacts the community;
5. Determine if the leadership styles of agriculture teachers in a qualitative case study align with the four factors of the transformational leadership approach (Bass & Avolio, 1994) as perceived by those closely associated with the agriculture program;
6. Describe the preferred leadership style and leadership factors of secondary agricultural educators; and

7. Determine if the preferred leadership style and leadership factors of the agricultural educators differed on the selected personal characteristics of gender, highest academic degree earned, and years teaching experience.

Significance of the Study

As a result of a philosophical, qualitative, and quantitative examination of transformational leadership in secondary agricultural education the profession may be more informed as to strategies that could be developed and implemented to enhance the leadership of teachers and students in agricultural education. In addition, this study may provide insight as to the role of leadership in creating and sustaining high quality agricultural education programs. The numerous challenges facing agriculture and education are sure to continue; therefore, one must consider whether or not our teachers will be prepared to lead and succeed under such conditions. Furthermore, will agricultural education equip students to be prepared to lead at the local, state, or national level as they face issues that lie ahead?

**A PHILOSOPHICAL EXAMINATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL
EDUCATION MODEL AND TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR
SECONDARY AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION**

Overview

Leadership has long been associated with agricultural education at the secondary level (Connors & Swan, 2006; Grieman, 2009; Morgan & Rudd, 2006). The findings of agricultural education literature has shown leadership development and leadership activities as products of agriculture programs, rather than as components central to the agricultural education model. The researchers of this philosophical document sought to give an overview of the agricultural education model and the transformational leadership approach. The authors of this paper developed a dynamic model for agricultural education which places an emphasis on the leadership approach of the agricultural educator. Transformational leadership was added to provide a starting point for agricultural educators seeking to utilize the traditional three-circle agricultural education model. The opportunity exists for the transformational leadership approach to enhance the leadership skills of educators, resulting in greater effectiveness in each of the three components, leading to a higher quality agricultural education program. Furthermore, it is conceivable that high quality agricultural education programs will have a positive impact on the local community and its residents. The Transformational Leadership and Community Impact (TLCI) Model was developed to provide a more holistic approach for operating a high quality secondary agricultural education program.

Introduction

In 1963, John F. Kennedy addressed the Graduate Research Center of the Southwest, emphasizing the deep relationship between leadership and learning as he said, “leadership and learning are indispensable to each other” (John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum, n.d.). The outcome of the leadership and learning relationship is dependent upon the teacher, Townsend (1999) stated, “Teaching is an enormous responsibility where teachers are leaders, providers of knowledge, and role models for the generation that will soon run the world” (p. 4). Those involved in agricultural education must have an outlook that supports the development of teachers as effective leaders.

Today—in 2010, leadership in education is more important than ever before as we face a plethora of issues such as high-stakes testing, economic and budgetary decline, overcrowded schools, and underrepresented populations (Roberts & Dyer, 2004; Roberts, Hall, Briers, Gill, Shinn, Larke, & Jaure, 2009). Agricultural education faces the challenges felt by education as a whole; therefore, leaders in the profession must find solutions to these issues. The National Council for Agricultural Education (The Council) has recognized the importance of this issue and has developed a “long-range strategic goal—10X15.” The Council believes:

Of the critical issues facing the nation, few are more compelling than improving the academic performance of public schools and ensuring a stable, safe and affordable food supply. Today agricultural education is

positioned to contribute substantially in these arenas through a major national initiative. (National Council for Agricultural Education, 2007)

The goal of the “10X15” plan is to have 10,000 *quality* agricultural education programs in place by 2015 (2007). One may measure the *quality* of a program by the standards of the Agricultural Education Mission of preparing students for “successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems” (National FFA Organization, 2008, p.5). According to the National FFA, there are 7,358 programs in the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands (National FFA, 2008). The current numbers show that we are 2,642 programs short with about seven years remaining to accomplish this goal. The role of the agriculture teachers as a leader must be addressed to consider how their role contributes to program quality and improving the academic performance of schools.

Agricultural educators must have the necessary knowledge and skills to implement the agricultural education model if they are to make the substantial contributions vital to the success of agricultural education. Furthermore, understanding the origin and historical underpinning of how the model was developed is essential if the profession desires to improve the model. The foundation of agricultural education is based on the familiar three-circle model: instruction (classroom/laboratory), supervised agricultural experience (SAE), and FFA. The three-circle agricultural education model has been widely accepted as a guide—an ideal—for agricultural educators who set out to build and sustain high quality agricultural education programs. Although this model does provide the ideal “end state,” it does not depict how to get to that state. Structural in

nature, the model is somewhat static; thus, it does not depict possible or actual causal relationships.

Findings in literature (Bell, 1996; Dodson & Townsend, 1996; Dyer & Osborne, 1996; Fritz, 1996; Gliem & Gliem, 1999; Vaughn, 1976; Vaughn & Moore, 2000; von Stein & Ball, 2007) indicate the leadership experiences of the teacher have a positive influence on program quality and leadership development of students. But how does the agricultural education teacher—the person responsible for leading the agricultural education program—go about doing his or her job and fulfill the three-circle model creating a high quality program? How does the teacher provide leadership to reach the ideal? What model for leadership should serve as the “ideal”? At this point there is not a leadership model or approach adopted by the profession for those seeking to enhance their leadership within the context of agricultural education.

Ensuring high quality agricultural education programs is vital to the success of the agriculture industry and ultimately to the quality of life in America. Stallman (2004) suggested that maintaining and developing high quality agricultural education programs must remain a top priority if we want to enjoy the safest, most affordable and abundant food supply in the world. Agriculture plays a significant role in the lives of Americans by providing necessities of life and substantial economic stimulus; in 2007, there were over 2.2 million farms across the United States which generated 297 billion dollars in sales, with exports totaling about 90 billion dollars (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2009). In addition, “American agriculture is the world’s largest commercial industry,

with assets of nearly \$1trillion”; in America one out of five jobs is agriculture related (Burton, 2010).

It is crucial that the agricultural educator of today possess strong leadership skills that will ensure a successful agricultural education program, enabling students to gain the qualifications and skills needed to sustain American agriculture as a global leader. If agricultural educators are limited in their development as leaders and in their leadership skills, what are the chances that students in the program will develop the leadership skills necessary to succeed in a highly competitive, global workforce?

Additionally, ineffective or non-existent leadership by teachers in agriculture programs may encourage school administrators to close agricultural education programs or reduce the number of classes, which prevents many students from taking agriculture courses. According to the National Council for Agricultural Education, only about six percent of high school students successfully complete coursework in agriculture (2000). Greater leadership skills and abilities of agricultural educators could increase the number of students interested in taking agriculture courses and the quality of instruction and learning, ultimately leading to an increase in the number of high quality agriculture programs across the nation.

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to examine logically and philosophically whether the transformational leadership approach can benefit secondary agricultural educators, creating more effective and successful agriculture programs. This information will challenge current agricultural educators to enhance their leadership skills, resulting in

greater effectiveness and success of their agriculture program. The objectives are as follows: a) Present transformational leadership as an effective approach for agricultural educators seeking to operate high quality programs. b) Provide an overview of agricultural education models. c) Provide an overview of the transformational leadership approach. d) Describe the possible contribution of transformational leadership to agricultural education in producing a high quality program that positively impacts the community.

Theoretical Framework

The profession has not adopted a particular leadership model or approach for those seeking to enhance their leadership effectiveness as agricultural educators. One may be naive to think that there is only one leadership model or approach which would benefit agricultural educators in every situation they face. However, identifying a model that complements the current agricultural education model should serve as a good starting point. Several key points explained below support the logic as to selecting transformational leadership as the model of choice.

First, the transformational leadership approach has been one of the most widely researched and utilized theories in the leadership profession. In fact, a content analysis in *Leadership Quarterly* by Lowe and Gardner (2001) suggested that one third of the research was about transformational or charismatic leadership. Second, over the past 25 years leaders in military, government, education, manufacturing, high technology, church, correctional, hospital, and volunteer organizations have been studied through the lens of transformational leadership and were reliably differentiated as leaders ranging

from highly effective to ineffective (Bass & Avolio, 2004). An additional point which was made by Boyd (2009) should appeal to those in education:

using transformational leadership theory as a pedagogical method and teaching philosophy will not only help students operationalize the theory, but will also lead to deeper understanding for students— a transformation of their understanding of themselves as leaders and leadership itself. (p. 51)

Finally, Greiman, Addington, Larson, and Olander (2007) studied agricultural educators and suggested that transformational leadership might be advantageous when confronted with issues in the school environment. The 2007 study utilized the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and concluded that agricultural educators are “more transformational in their preferred style in contrast to transactional and laissez-faire styles” (p. 93). The transformational leadership approach seeks to create performance beyond expectations for both the leader and the follower (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Roberts and Dyer (2004) studied an expert panel of agricultural educators in Florida to identify the characteristics of an effective agriculture teacher. One hundred percent of the respondents agreed that an effective agriculture teacher demonstrates personal qualities such as: “cares for students, is honest, moral, and ethical” (p. 89). Each of the previous qualities aligns with the transformational leadership approach; therefore, this approach will be used for a leadership component to be incorporated into the agricultural education model. This leadership emanates from the instructional leader of an agricultural education program—the agricultural education teacher.

Agricultural Education Model

Agricultural education has existed in North America since the early 1600s when Native Americans taught early settlers about crop production (Talbert, Vaughn, & Croom, 2007). The predominant model for agricultural education used today (Figure 1) first appeared in the 1975 version of the FFA Advisor's Handbook (Croom, 2008). However, Croom reported that there is not "evidence of an established date or recognized event that created the three-component agricultural education model" (2008, p. 117). Even though the first document to show the Venn configuration of the three overlapping circles with instruction, FFA, and SAE was in 1975 (National FFA Organization), each of the three components has been in practice for decades.

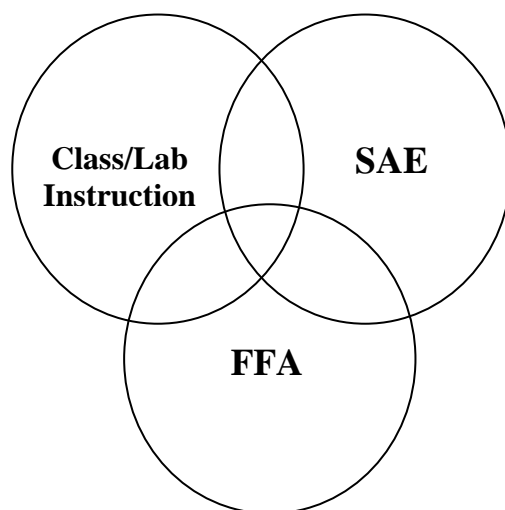


Figure 1. Agricultural education model (National FFA Organization, 2007).

Most likely, the first component developed in the agricultural education model was supervised experience as youth gained skills around the home or through apprenticeship programs dating back to the first American settlers (Struck, 1945). Formal agricultural education in public schools did not exist for almost three centuries; then, the 1917 Smith-Hughes Act was established to provide “instruction in vocational agriculture” (Phipps, Osborne, Dyer, & Ball, 2008, p. 28). A few years later, in 1928, the Future Farmers of America (FFA) was formed and is now a co-curricular organization, providing opportunities unique to students enrolled in agricultural courses. The FFA seeks to make a positive difference in students by developing “premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education” (National FFA Organization, 2008, p.5).

These three components have been integrated to form the agricultural education model. As Croom stated, “the integrated model for agricultural education seems to describe the philosophical thought surrounding agricultural education in the early twentieth century, and as such, became the guide for what agricultural education was to be or become” (2008, p. 117). The three circle model has been the most recognizable and emphasized approach to developing a quality agricultural education program. However, should agricultural educators of today rely solely on the current form of the model which was developed over time and as needed rather than as a part of a concrete or systematic plan? In a study by Brown and Stewart (1991) the authors noted:

Some research has been conducted to document and begin to develop agricultural education program models. However, these studies appeared to focus on the need

for change rather than specific agriculture program components that need to be added, eliminated, modified, or refocused. (p. 134)

The authors and experts in the field suggest that alternative models for the delivery of agricultural education would be useful to the profession (Croom, 2008). The challenges agricultural education faces today are more likely to be overcome by a model that has been developed with purpose, through the scholarship of experts in the profession.

An alternative model for agricultural education was created post the three circle model; in 1992, the Agricultural Education Program Model was developed and published in *Experiencing Agriculture: A Handbook on SAE*. The “new” model (see Figure 2) viewed agricultural education in the context of school and community with four components: a) classroom and laboratory instruction, b) application, c) employment and/or additional education, and d) career (Hughes & Barrick, 1993). The Agricultural Education Program Model of 1992 was not accepted as a replacement for the three circle model; therefore, this study will not focus on the details of that model. However, the development of a “new” model would suggest that the three-circle model may be inadequate to provide the foundation for agricultural education programs of today.

The Hughes and Barrick (1993) model is one example of how the profession attempted to create a new model “representing the total agriculture program,” one that would “more accurately reflect agricultural education” (p. 59). At this point a new model that assists agricultural educators in meeting the standards of the profession has not been developed. Although classroom/laboratory instruction, Supervised Agricultural

Experience (SAE), and FFA are vital components of a quality agriculture program, the leadership of the agricultural educator has not been accounted for in any model. The leadership of the educator orchestrating each of the three components takes precedence as a key factor in building and sustaining a quality agricultural education program. One must seriously consider, therefore, the leadership approach taken by the agricultural educator. Furthermore, agricultural education will greatly benefit by a model which places an emphasis on the leadership approach of the agricultural educator as a means to create and maintain a well-balanced, high-quality program.

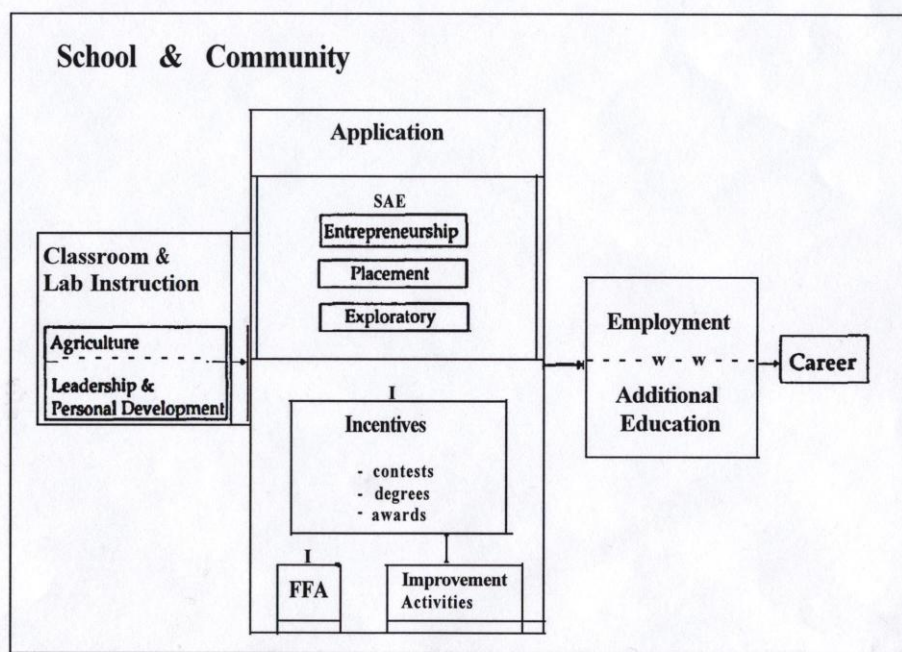


Figure 2. Agricultural education program model (Hughes & Barrick, 1993).

A new model will be explained; the model recognizes the benefits of the traditional three circle model but adds transformational leadership and community impact (TLCI). The TLCI Model for Agricultural Education places an emphasis on the leadership ability of the agricultural educator as he/she performs the various roles required to build and maintain a high quality agricultural education program.

Transformational leadership is the starting point which provides direction for agriculture teachers operating each aspect of the three circle model; it is this component that creates the balance and completeness of the three circles. The transformational leadership approach will now be explained in greater detail and with illustrations to show practical application.

Transformational Leadership Approach

The history of this approach is quite young; the term transformational leadership was first coined by Downton in 1973 and is often viewed as part of a “New Leadership” paradigm (Northouse, 2007, p.175). In fact, leadership theory and empirical work was concentrated almost exclusively on transactional leadership until the late 1970s (Bass, 2008). Greater attention toward transformational leadership began to emerge from the work done by James McGregor Burns in the late 1970s (Antonakis, Cianciolo, & Sternberg, 2004). In his book titled *Leadership*, Burns (1978) wrote that a “transforming leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower” (p. 4). In addition Burns made the distinction that there are two types of leadership: transactional and transforming; transactional leadership is the exchange process that occurs between leaders and

followers, while transforming leadership involves engaging with others to raise the level of motivation and morality of both the leader and the follower.

One cannot consider the transformational approach without also giving attention to the theory of charismatic leadership. The work of House in 1976 sparked a great deal of interest on the subject; however, charismatic leadership is often “described in ways that make it similar to, if not synonymous with, transformational leadership” (Northouse, 2007, p.177). The focus of this discussion will be on research done by the most recognized scholars in transformational leadership.

Bernard Bass authored *Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations* (1985); his is one of the most recognized names associated with transformational leadership research today. Bass “provided a more expanded and refined version of transformational leadership” that built on work from Burns and House (Northouse, 2007, p. 3). In the early 1990s, “transformational and transactional factors were conceived by Avolio and Bass (1991) as continua in leadership activity and effectiveness. Added was laissez-faire or nonleadership to the bottom of the continua in activity or effectiveness” (Bass, 2008, p. 624). The model of the Full Range of Leadership describes transactional and transformational leadership as a single continuum with seven factors; each factor will be explained to clarify the work of Bass and Avolio (1994).

Transformational Factors

Factor one, *idealized influence* or *charisma*, describes a leader who acts as a strong role model, with high morals; followers count on them to “do the right thing” (Bass & Avolio, 1994 p. 3). Factor two, *inspirational motivation*, describes a leader who

communicates high expectations and motivates followers to commit to a shared vision, ultimately inspiring a high level of team spirit (Bass & Avolio). Factor three, *intellectual stimulation*, is evident in leaders who encourage followers to be creative, innovative, and willing to challenge personal as well as organizational beliefs; the leader supports followers as they try new approaches to deal with issues and solve problems within the organization (Bass & Avolio). Factor four, *individualized consideration*, consists of a supportive climate in which the leader listens attentively to individual follower needs, advising and coaching the follower towards self actualization (Bass & Avolio).

Transactional Factors

Factor five, *contingent reward*, is the exchange process between leader and follower: effort is exchanged for a specified reward; the follower gets a payoff for completing tasks that must be done (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Factor six, *management-by-exception*, is evident in leaders who look for mistakes, errors or deviance from standards and takes corrective action; this behavior “tends to be more ineffective, but required in certain situations” (Bass & Avolio, p. 4). There are two forms of management-by-exception: active and passive. A leader using an active approach watches closely for mistakes from the follower and takes corrective action; when a leader does not intervene until after problems arise a more passive approach has been taken (Bass & Avolio).

Nonleadership Factor

Factor seven, *laissez-faire*, is the “avoidance or absence of leadership”; and is, “by definition, the most inactive—as well as the most ineffective according to almost all research on the style” (Bass & Avolio, 1994, p. 4).

Collectively, these seven factors make up The Full Range of Leadership Model developed by Bass and Avolio (1994); the model illustrates the seven different factors of the transformational leadership approach. The model includes four transformational factors (4I’s), two transactional factors, and one nonleadership factor. A clear illustration of what is expected when a leader is transformational or transactional can be seen below in Figure 3, and is referred to as the additive effect of transformational leadership. Bass and Avolio (1990) believe that transactional leadership results in expected outcomes whereas transformational leadership results in performance beyond expectations.

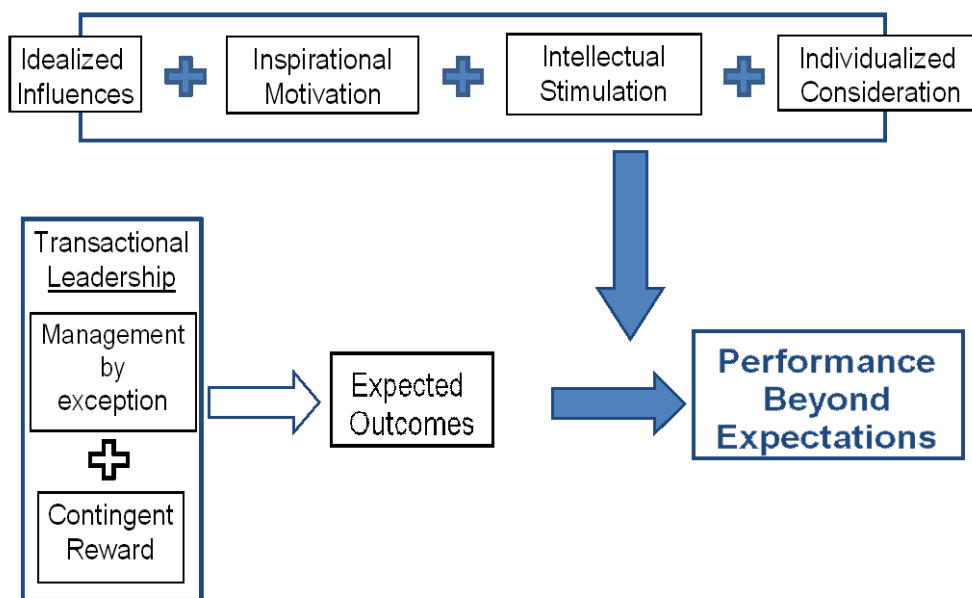


Figure 3. The additive effect of transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Transformational Leadership Applied to Agricultural Education

The traditional agricultural education model is a structural figure depicting the “ideal” secondary program. The model suggests that a high quality program is represented by the interrelated balance of classroom/laboratory instruction, FFA, and SAE activities. The current model exhibits the make-up of a high quality program; however, it does not provide the means by which an agricultural educator can reach such a level of quality. In addition, the current model does not depict the outcomes associated with high quality agriculture programs. A high quality program results in a positive impact on the community on a personal and professional level. A model that illustrates the how, what, and why behind agricultural education may be beneficial for those in the profession and for those unfamiliar with its value. Therefore a more holistic, dynamic model that provides a) the means to reach the standard (ideal) for a high quality program and b) the positive impact on the community is needed.

Agricultural education is a natural fit for the application of transformational leadership. The constant interaction between the teacher, students, and community provides the perfect opportunity for each party to be transformed in order to perform beyond their personal expectations (Bass & Avolio, 1990). The authors contend that the extent to which the leadership of the teacher can cause further overlap of the three circles, program quality and the level of impact on the community will increase. The TLCI Model for Agricultural Education is shown in Figure 4 to illustrate leadership as a starting point for agricultural educators seeking to operate a well-balanced program that impacts the community.

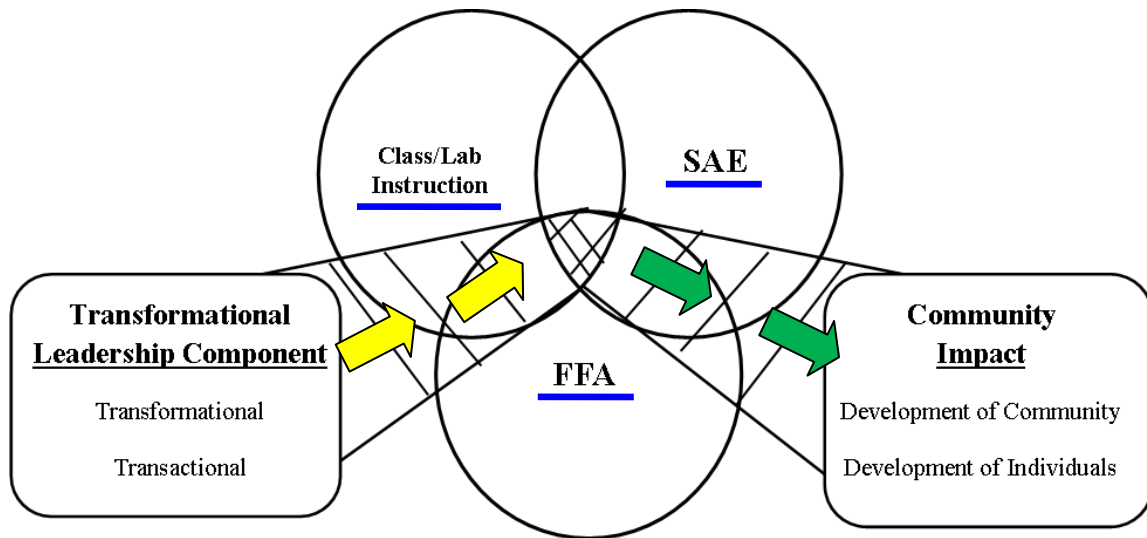


Figure 4. TLCI model for agricultural education.

Outcomes of a High Quality Agricultural Education Program

Very few researchers have examined the quality of secondary agriculture programs, thus, the literature is quite limited on the impacts of quality programs on the community. One can glean valuable information, however, from studies that look at individuals or groups associated with secondary agriculture programs. Researchers studied the impact of an agriculture program on community leadership and found that the program “had an impact on the success of many community leaders” and the “agriculture participants were found to have a higher degree of involvement in community activities” (Brannon, Holley, & Key, 1989, p. 43). Connors and Swan (2006) noted that leadership skills have been gained by agriculture students for many years; “agricultural education has prided itself on developing youth leadership through

secondary agricultural programs and the FFA organization since the early 20th century” (p. 1).

Summary

Agricultural education plays a key role in promoting a safe, affordable, and abundant food supply. Ensuring quality agricultural education programs is vital to the success of agriculture industry and ultimately to the quality of life in America (Stallman, 2004). There are countless challenges facing agricultural education today; agricultural educators need a solid model to guide their efforts to meet and exceed such challenges. The history of the traditional agricultural education model shows that the three components have existed in some form for decades (Croom, 2008). The three components provide structure; however they need an engine to put them in motion. That engine is the teacher and the teacher’s leadership. In addition, a more complete model should depict outcomes. In the newly-proposed model community impact is shown as an outcome of a high quality program. In the age of accountability, outcomes must be communicated. Therefore, the TLCI model may better meet the needs of today’s agricultural education programs. Leadership is too important a concept for agricultural education to be considered in FFA alone. Purposeful attention to leadership by teachers and students is necessary for a more effective agricultural education model.

The transformational leadership approach is a natural fit for the agricultural education profession. The teacher is the most important person to assist youth in developing leadership through involvement in an agricultural education program; therefore, to accomplish the missions of agricultural education and FFA, effective

leadership is a requirement of secondary agriculture teachers. Evidence shows that the transformational leadership approach is currently in use by some agriculture teachers (Greiman, Addington, Larson, & Olander, 2007). Agricultural education can greatly benefit from adopting a transformational leadership approach in the daily activities required to run a successful agriculture program.

Implications

Agricultural education currently has many challenges that will need strong leadership to overcome; without effective leadership of agriculture teachers, programs will close and countless students will miss out on the benefits provided from a successful program. In the event of programs closing, the “10X15” plan set by The Council will have a difficult time reaching the goal of 10,000 quality agriculture programs by the year 2015 (National Council for Agricultural Education, 2007). In order to ensure that agriculture teachers are effective, Roberts and Dyer (2004) believe that teacher educators at universities have the primary responsibility of preparing future agriculture teachers to conduct a total agricultural program. Furthermore, teacher educators can now focus on developing the skills in their students that research has shown to be essential (Roberts & Dyer, 2004). The TLCI Model for Agricultural Education provides an example for agriculture teacher preparation programs to employ as they equip preservice teachers to effectively lead secondary agricultural education programs.

Recommendations

The history of agricultural education models can be examined more intently to determine if the model will meet current and future challenges and demands within

agricultural education. For instance, has the three-circle Agricultural Education Program Model been fully vetted by the profession? An examination of current agricultural education models is needed in order to create a contemporary model that will provide the foundation for successful agricultural education programs. The extent at which transformational leadership can create a quality program with a positive community impact is yet to be determined; therefore, research should be conducted to test the TLCI model.

At this time only one study has been conducted to determine the leadership style of secondary agricultural educators (Greiman, Addington, Larson, & Olander, 2007); therefore, a gap still exists regarding leadership styles of agricultural educators. The research study done on leadership styles of Minnesota agriculture teachers needs to be expanded. More research is needed perhaps at the national level to ensure that findings can be generalized to all agriculture teachers and programs. In addition to identifying leadership styles, future studies should be conducted to determine if agriculture programs with transformational leaders are more successful than programs that lack leadership or use a style that is not transformational. Research on leadership styles of agriculture teachers will also need to determine how effective the leadership style being used is in terms of complete agriculture program success. Furthermore, the impact of the agriculture program on the community should be researched; ultimately the impact of the program determines if it is a high quality program.

Additional recommendations include determining how leadership development can be more prominent in agriculture teachers. If the agricultural education profession is

going to advance the knowledge base within leadership development, it must adopt a plan; what is the “best” leadership approach to use in secondary agricultural education (Connors & Swan, 2006). Programs and/or courses geared at developing leadership within preservice teachers and current agricultural educators should be offered.

Providing agricultural educators with training and knowledge of leadership should result in greater success for the teacher, students, the agricultural education program, and the community as a whole.

**EXAMINING SECONDARY AGRICULTURAL EDUCATORS AS
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL: A
QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY**

Overview

Agriculture teachers are recognized by students, school administrators, parents, and community members as the leaders of the agriculture program. This case study examined the leadership styles of two agriculture teachers in a high quality secondary agriculture program. The transformational leadership approach of Bass and Avolio (1994) provided the framework to explore the leadership styles of the agriculture teachers as perceived by those closely associated with the agriculture program. All 15 individuals who participated in the case study provided specific examples of the agriculture teacher's behaviors which were compared with the four factors associated with transformational leadership. The results of this study suggest that the transformational leadership style of the agriculture teachers was a very positive and effective way to lead. Future research should examine transformational leadership of teachers in a broad (national) sample and evaluate other leadership models which may be beneficial for secondary agricultural education programs.

Introduction/ Theoretical Framework

For decades agricultural education has been making a positive difference in the lives of students and communities across the nation. The opportunities afforded to students enrolled in high quality agricultural education programs are countless; students can gain diverse and practical experience in a hands-on fashion through a wide variety of

classroom/laboratory, FFA, and supervised agricultural experience (SAE) activities. The magnitude and degree of agricultural education's impact may be difficult to fully measure; however, it is conceivable that countless individuals have gained competencies through agricultural education that enabled them to become successful members of society. Furthermore, quality agricultural education programs have played a significant role in the leadership development and personal growth of students.

The extent to which agricultural education has a positive impact on students and communities is greatly dependent on the number of high quality programs. The profession has taken note of the importance of this issue evident by the National Council for Agricultural Education's (The Council) "10X15" plan. The goal of the "10X15" plan is to have 10,000 *quality* agricultural education programs in place by 2015 (2007). To accomplish this goal, effort is needed by all who support agricultural education. The quality and success of the program are dependent upon many individuals and factors; however, none carry a greater weight of responsibility for the program than the agriculture teacher(s). Experts may opine that in order to have high quality agriculture programs there must be high quality agriculture teachers leading the way. In fact, Roberts and Dyer (2004) stated, "Creating effective agriculture teachers is imperative for the long-term sustainability of agricultural education programs" (p. 94).

Therefore, determining what is required to become an effective agriculture teacher is extremely important. Several studies (Harlin, Roberts, Dooley, & Murphrey, 2007; Roberts & Dyer, 2004; Rosenshine & Furst, 1971) provide valuable insight on characteristics and competencies needed for effective teaching. Research has shown that

the effectiveness of an agriculture teacher is dependent upon their development of personal qualities and leadership skills. Additionally, scholars have indicated that the leadership experiences of the teacher have a positive influence on program quality and leadership development of students (Bell, 1996; Dodson & Townsend, 1996; Dyer & Osborne, 1996; Fritz, 1996; Gliem & Gliem, 1999; Vaughn, 1976; Vaughn & Moore, 2000; von Stein & Ball, 2007). Greiman, Addington, Larson, and Olander (2007) argued that the teacher is the most important person to assist youth in developing leadership through involvement in an agricultural education program.

Agriculture teachers are recognized by students, school administrators, parents, and community members to run and maintain the agriculture program. They are charged with preparing students “for a lifetime of informed choices in global agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resource systems” as well as developing students’ “potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success” (National FFA Organization, 2008, p. 5). If agriculture teachers seek to effectively develop leadership in others, they must first identify and understand their personal leadership styles (Bass & Avolio, 2004). The teacher’s leadership, whether it be effective or ineffective, will significantly impact students, agriculture program, school, and community.

Studies are needed to examine and describe the behaviors and characteristics of the agriculture teachers who teach in quality agriculture programs. "Understanding the leadership of the agriculture teacher(s) who run(s) a quality program would provide valuable information for the profession" (Hall, Briers, & Dooley, 2009, p. 40). Furthermore, Greiman (2009) suggests that "qualitative research would be helpful to

examine the voice of followers and how the leadership style of adults and peers impacted their leadership development" (p. 59). The need for research examining the leadership style of agriculture teachers is clear; selecting an appropriate leadership theory or model can provide a framework and starting point to discover an effective leadership style for agriculture teachers.

The profession has not adopted a particular leadership model or approach for those seeking to enhance their leadership effectiveness as agricultural educators (Hall, Briers, & Rosser, 2009). However, several key points explained below support the logic of selecting transformational leadership described by Bass and Avolio (1994) as an appropriate model for secondary agricultural educators.

First, the transformational leadership approach has been one of the most widely researched and utilized theories in leadership situations. A content analysis in *Leadership Quarterly* by Lowe and Gardner (2001) suggested that one third of the research was about transformational or charismatic leadership. Second, over the past 25 years leaders in military, government, education, manufacturing, high technology, church, correctional, hospital, and volunteer organizations have been studied through the lens of transformational leadership and were reliably differentiated as leaders ranging from highly effective to ineffective (Bass & Avolio, 2004). An additional point made by Boyd (2009) should appeal to those in education:

using transformational leadership theory as a pedagogical method and teaching philosophy will not only help students operationalize the theory, but will also

lead to deeper understanding for students– a transformation of their understanding of themselves as leaders and leadership itself. (p. 51)

Finally, research specific to our profession by Greiman, Addington, Larson, and Olander (2007) suggested that transformational leadership might be advantageous when confronted with issues in the school environment. Their 2007 study utilized the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and concluded that agricultural educators are “more transformational in their preferred style in contrast to transactional and laissez-faire styles” (p. 93). Roberts and Dyer (2004) studied an expert panel of agricultural educators in Florida to identify the characteristics of an effective agriculture teacher. One hundred percent of the respondents agreed that an effective agriculture teacher demonstrates personal qualities such as “cares for students, is honest, moral, and ethical” (p. 89). Each of these qualities aligns with the transformational leadership approach; therefore, this approach will be used to examine the leadership style of the agriculture teachers in this study.

Scholars explain transformational leadership as a continuum consisting of transformational and transactional factors and a laissez-faire factor. According to Bass and Avolio (1990), transactional leadership results in expected outcomes whereas transformational leadership results in performance beyond expectations. Therefore, this study will focus solely on the four transformational factors.

Transformational Factors

Factor one, *idealized influence* or *charisma*, is characterized by a leader who acts as a strong role model with high morals; followers count on them to “do the right thing”

(Bass & Avolio, 1994 p. 3). Factor two, *inspirational motivation*, is demonstrated by a leader who communicates high expectations and motivates followers to commit to a shared vision, ultimately inspiring a high level of team spirit. Factor three, *intellectual stimulation*, is evident in leaders who encourage followers to be creative, innovative, and willing to challenge personal as well as organizational beliefs; the leader supports followers as they try new approaches to deal with issues and solve problems within the organization. Factor four, *individualized consideration*, is portrayed by a leader that creates a supportive climate in which he/she listens attentively to individual follower needs, advising and coaching the follower toward self actualization (Bass & Avolio).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study was to examine the leadership styles of agriculture teachers in a high quality secondary agriculture program. The researchers sought to determine if the leadership styles of the agriculture teachers align with the four factors of the transformational leadership approach (Bass & Avolio, 1994) as perceived by those closely associated with the agriculture program.

Methods/Procedures

Case study research was used to examine the quality of a secondary agricultural education program. “A case study is an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system” (Merriam, 2009, p. 40). The principal researcher’s experience as a secondary agricultural educator and current work with agriculture programs created a mental model of what constitutes program quality. Then, in this study of one program and its teachers, a holistic picture of the program was gained through semi-structured interviews with 15

participants (Merriam, 2009), all of whom had different but close associations with the program. Participants were interviewed separately/individually to help ensure confidentiality and to encourage honest, detailed responses. The interviews were audio recorded; additional data were collected through observational field notes that included photographs onsite.

Prior to conducting the interviews, the researcher used pilot interviews with several agricultural educators to eliminate confusing questions and to elicit suggestions for additional questions (Merriam, 2009). Additional qualitative methods included observations of the agriculture teachers as they carried out various roles within the program.

Data Collection

The purposive sample for this case consisted of the two agriculture teachers and 13 other individuals associated with the selected secondary agricultural education program; they were purposely chosen to create a holistic representation of the agriculture program. The agriculture teachers were asked to identify possible participants: former students who had graduated from the program, parents of current and former students, faculty and staff from the school, and community leaders. A list of the respondents depicting their connections to the agriculture program is shown in Table 1. In order to protect the identity of each participant, pseudonyms were given; pseudonyms provide an audit trail of each individual's responses and bring the case study to life. The program was selected purposively based on the following criteria:

- a) The agriculture program/FFA chapter was recognized as a “high quality” program by the researcher and a panel of agricultural education experts.
- b) The agriculture teachers were recognized as outstanding leaders and effective teachers by the researcher and a panel of agricultural education experts.
- c) The school was located in the southeastern United States where the researcher taught agriculture and believed that that connection would foster greater rapport with participants.

Table 1

Participant List

Respondent Pseudonym	Title/Connection to Program
Sue	Parent/ FFA Alumni President
Mrs. Carter	Science Teacher
David	Parent/ FFA Alumni/Former Student
Mr. Wright	Principal/Parent of Current Student
Larry	Former Student/ Valedictorian
Jeff	Former Middle School Agriculture Teacher
Mrs. Fields	School Secretary/ Parent of Former Student
Barry	Community Leader/ Former Student/ State FFA President
Meghan	Former Student
Gary	Parent/ FFA Alumni
Lucie	Parent/ FFA Alumni
Mrs. Williams	Guidance Counselor
Ms. Hansen	Agriculture Student Teacher
Mr. Adams	Agriculture Teacher
Mr. Oliver	Agriculture Teacher

Data Analysis and Trustworthiness Measures

The qualitative data were analyzed using “the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data” (Stauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 61). Semi-structured interviews were audio recorded and field notes were taken throughout the observation and interviewing process. To enhance the credibility of the study, several strategies were utilized by the investigator: triangulation, peer examination, and the clarification of researcher’s biases (Merriam, 2009). Triangulation was accomplished through gathering data from a variety of participants and through direct observation by the researcher. “Triangulation using multiple sources of data means comparing and cross-checking data collected through observations at different times or in different places, or interview data collected from people with different perspectives” (Merriam, 2009, p. 216). Peer examinations took place in several meetings with experts who made comments on audio recordings and themes that emerged. The researcher’s background and perspectives related to the study were cataloged in a methodological and reflexive journal. All coded data were traced back to the transcripts with an audit trail (i.e., table on p. 48). Results are presented with representative quotes to give voice to the respondents and provide thick description so that readers can vicariously determine if the results from this case will transfer to their contexts.

Results/Findings

The Context

The selected secondary agricultural education program is located in the southeastern United States in a town with about 7,000 residents. According to the city’s

chamber of commerce, residents are employed in a variety of industries: health care and social assistance (18%), educational services (11%), retail trade (10%), construction (8%), and agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting (8%); the ethnicity of the city comprises 68% White/Caucasian, 28% Black, and 4% Hispanic (Chamber of Commerce, 2009).

There was one high school in the town; there were about 675 students in the high school with about 180 enrolled in the agriculture program. The agriculture program had two agriculture teachers with combined experience of more than 50 years in the classroom. The eight agriculture courses offered were Agriscience Foundations 1, Animal Science and Services 2, 3, & 4, Introductory Horticulture 2, Horticultural Science 3, and Agricultural Sales and Services 2 & 3.

Participants in the study were associated with the agriculture program in multiple ways. Spending time at the school allowed the researcher to observe that the school, community, and agriculture program were interrelated and connected in numerous ways. Students, parents, teachers, and community leaders were connected on multiple levels both personally and professionally. For example, one school employee grew up in the community, knew one agriculture teacher as a family friend, and had a child go through the agriculture program (personal); however, now they are colleagues and work together at the school (professional).

Attention was brought to the interconnected, personal, and professional relationships that exist in this case because throughout the results there was an overlapping and connectedness of themes. The results should be considered from the

multiple perspectives in which they were shared. In addition, there is an inextricable bond between the agriculture program and the agriculture teachers. However, this study seeks to focus specifically on the agriculture teachers.

Leadership styles of the agriculture teachers were assessed as perceived by their former students, school faculty and staff, parents of current students, community leaders, and the agriculture teachers themselves. The transformational leadership theory provided a theoretical framework to examine the leadership of the agriculture teachers in the selected program. The four transformational factors—*Idealized Influence*, *Inspirational Motivation*, *Intellectual Stimulation*, and *Individualized Consideration*—provided a starting point for the semi-structured questions. Through interviews and observations, several themes and subthemes emerged within each of the four factors; each of the themes and subthemes is explained in relation to the respective transformational factors.

Idealized Influence

Participants described the level at which the agriculture teachers are looked up to and respected by students and others associated with the agriculture program. Three themes: 1) well-respected, 2) family figure, 3) role model, and one subtheme, character, emerged to describe the *idealized influence* of the agriculture teachers.

Numerous comments were made illustrating the level of respect the agriculture teachers have in the school and community. Ms. Hansen, the student teacher interning at the school, spoke of how parents and members of the community see the agriculture teachers; often their comments were, “These are the best guys ever.” Ms. Hansen further explained her perspective, “I have never heard anybody say anything bad about them

[Mr. Adams and Mr. Oliver].” A former student, Larry, spoke of this respect as well; he stated, “It is probably the highest that teachers could receive...my personal respect for them is...I respect them as teachers, I respect them as men.” Another comment regarding the respect of the agriculture teachers was shared by Jeff, the former middle school agriculture teacher, “Well, they think Mr. Adams walks on water; I don’t know if I need to say more than that.”

Idealized influence was evident through comments that depicted the agriculture teachers almost as members of the family. A community leader and former student, Barry, believes

there’s a lot of people that you’d interview that look to Mr. Adams as a father figure, somebody they could entrust... they would talk to him about some things they wouldn’t talk to anybody else about, his advice and the character that he upholds everyday in the community is the reason for that and I don’t think Mr. Oliver is any different...he has instilled some of those same values.

Larry shared about a friend of his in school who had a rough home life and shared how important the agriculture teachers were for her. “[Mr. Adams] took the father figure role that was void for most of her life and she definitely got extremely close to [Mr. Adams] as well as [Mr. Oliver].”

In addition to being well-respected/family figures, the agriculture teachers were viewed as role models with solid character. Jeff mentioned, “Parents want their kids to have [Mr. Adams and Mr. Oliver] because they do provide such a good role model.” Mr. Wright, the high school principal and father of a student in the program, stated, “ They

[Mr. Adams and Mr. Oliver] are both positive people... the kids really do pay attention to what they say and they [students] take a lot of it to heart.” David, an FFA alumni member and former student, was confident that the agriculture teachers have an influence on students and serve as role models. “I definitely think they [students] look up to them and respect them and you know, try to act like them.”

The well-respected, family figure, role model was a deliberate and intentional behavior that both agriculture teachers sought to portray. When asked about being someone who is looked up to, Mr. Adams said, “Well, that is something that I have always taken kinda personally, because I think we are role models... all teachers should be role models.” He explained, “I think ag teachers are in a unique position to do that because of the relationship that most ag teachers have with their students.... we need to set examples of what is right and what is wrong.” The other agriculture teacher, Mr. Oliver, believes, “It’s kinda like taking an oath of morals and ethics and living up to it, not just from 8-5...you have to accept a higher level of responsibility.” Mr. Oliver concluded, “We [Mr. Adams and Mr. Oliver] take it very seriously, it’s not just a job; it’s a life.”

Inspirational Motivation

Another factor of transformational leadership is *inspirational motivation*. Through interviews and observations specific ways the agriculture teachers motivate students became evident. Four themes, 1) lead by example, 2) the program, 3) developing students’ self-esteem, and 4) high expectations, surfaced to show the *inspirational motivation* provided by the agriculture teachers.

Participants described ways the agriculture teachers motivate students through behaviors themed as “lead by example.” David spoke of how “their general attitude” motivated students, [Mr. Adams and Mr. Oliver] act like they are genuinely interested in the kids doing good and learning and doing their best.” Individuals shared examples illustrating *inspirational motivation*; numerous words were used to show that the example they set motivated others. The “dedication” (Mr. Wright), “encouragement” (Mrs. Fields), “enthusiasm” (Lucie) and “love” (David) for the kids and the program represent the way in which the teachers “lead by example” (Larry and Mrs. Carter).

The program itself serves as a strong motivator. Individuals stated that competitions offered through the agriculture program, the success of the program, and the traditions associated with the program provided a source for the teachers to encourage and push students to do their best. Mr. Wright believes, “One of the things they [Mr. Adams and Mr. Oliver] use to motivate them [students] is past success; obviously you have a program that has a long history of success...in a lot of ways the tradition in itself is a motivator.” The guidance counselor, Mrs. Williams, said, “The plaques on the wall, the trophies in the case, their [students] pictures in the paper” challenge students to do well. Sue, a parent and FFA alumni president, spoke of using competitions to challenge students, “Well, [FFA] competitions are a great thing, some of your student are very competitive.”

In addition to leading by example and using the program to motivate students, the agriculture teachers develop the students’ self-esteem which creates an environment of *inspirational motivation*. Jeff illustrated how one of the agriculture teachers motivates

students who may not have the confidence or courage to participate in a competition or activity.

I think Mr. Oliver does a great job with that because he has taken kids that say “oh I don’t want to do this, I don’t care about that, I’m not interested in this,” but what he does is challenges them to just try it... a lot of times they will do that and they find out they enjoy it... then they become successful at whatever they are doing.

Even though program is very competitive, the teachers “make sure that they [students] feel good about themselves and their success” (Sue). Meghan, a former student, said, “They just make you feel like you needed to do your best.”

The high expectation of the agriculture teachers was a final theme that emerged reflecting the *inspirational motivation*. Larry shared from his experience as a student, “They had a standard of excellence that they expected you to reach and it was high, but it was not so high that it was unattainable.” Jeff believes that the teachers’ high expectations motivate students to do their best and it attracts the higher achieving students to the program, “We have had the valedictorians and salutatorians and I think it’s because they expect the best from these kids.”

Intellectual Stimulation

Another key factor of transformational leadership is *intellectual stimulation*. Through the study several themes and subthemes appeared to illustrate ways the agriculture teachers challenge students to do their best and to think critically. The three themes that support *intellectual stimulation* are 1) FFA events, 2) good teaching skills

with hands-on activities as a subtheme, and 3) challenge students with higher-order thinking as a subtheme.

The agriculture teachers encourage and support student planning and participation in FFA events and activities like the FFA banquet and Career Development Events (CDE) (Lucie). Sue shared one benefit of allowing students opportunities through FFA, “The FFA offers plenty of contests that critical thinking skills are involved.” The FFA events the students participate in benefit them beyond high school, Mrs. Williams said, “Students come back and tell me FFA prepared them for college more than some of the purely academic classes they were taking [in high school].”

The good teaching skills of the agriculture teachers were voiced by several individuals. Sue stated, “He [Mr. Adams] just has good teaching skills, he is an excellent teacher.” The student teacher, Ms. Hansen, believes, “They [Mr. Adams and Mr. Oliver] model what it means to be a good agriculture teacher.” Participants shared several reasons they felt the agriculture teachers exemplify *intellectual stimulation*. Individuals spoke of how the teachers did a great job of connecting multiple subjects and topics from multiple classes. Mr. Adams and Mr. Oliver “teach math and science and make them use it in a way that is meaningful” (Mrs. Williams). In Mrs. Carter’s science class students often said, “We talked about that down in ag” (Mrs. Carter). When Mrs. Carter, a science teacher comes by to visit the agriculture building she doesn’t expect them to be studying out of books, even though she knows they do, she mentioned, “I expect them to be doing all kinds of hands-on things” working in the greenhouse or on a piece of equipment. Mrs. Carter also spoke of the education value of hands-on activities, “they

[students] like that ...and they remember it [the material being taught] because it's a practical application.”

The agriculture teachers challenge students to think for themselves and question what they believe which leads to higher-order thinking. Jeff mentioned the agriculture teachers set high expectations to motivate students, the *intellectual stimulation* is evident as the teachers "challenge them with difficult things...they make the kids work for it." The principal, Mr. Wright, said he observed Mr. Adams in class the other day and he got kids to think, "Why would you do it that way?" Ms. Hansen put it this way, "They do a really good job of asking a lot of those quadrant four type questions; just going beyond basic recall...they play devil's advocate, making them more of what the other side's argument is.”

Individualized Consideration

Another factor associated with transformational leadership is *individualized consideration*. Participants spoke of how the agriculture teachers show students that they care about them. The three themes associated with *individualized consideration* are 1) genuine interests/selfless behavior, 2) involved in students' lives, which has two subthemes, nicknames and relationships, and 3) coaching/advising, with two additional subthemes, student potential and discipline.

The genuine interests and selfless behavior exhibited by the agriculture teachers was expressed by Mr. Wright, "They [Mr. Adams and Mr. Oliver] are always giving of themselves...not many teachers would put in the extra time." They "genuinely have an interest in students" (Sue) so the "extra hours that they do for practice with their teams,

going to competitions or what have you on the weekends” (Mr. Wright) is all part of their “dedication” to the students and the program. The agriculture teachers expressed as teachers, genuine interest in students should be expected of them. Mr. Oliver believes that “what we are all supposed to be doing is taking a interest in the personal student.” Mr. Adams shared his desire that students know the agriculture teachers care. “They need to know that somebody cares about them. This may be the only place on earth that they know somebody cares about ‘em. I do care about our kids...I try to convey that to them.”

The genuine interest and selfless behavior is the beginning of being involved in students’ lives. Individuals spoke of how the agriculture teachers are “a part of their [students] lives” (Sue) and how students share all aspects of their lives with them even if it does not relate directly to the agriculture program. Mrs. Carter mentioned how the agriculture teachers are

involved in all the things they [students] do...involved in their lives more so than just, well I see you for 50 minutes and you can go on and I’ll see you tomorrow for 50 minutes...the program is more involved than just the 50 minutes classroom.

The agriculture teachers are “keeping up with what they [students] do in their lives outside the classroom” (Mrs. Carter). If the students go on trips with church, sports, band, or other groups they will call the agriculture teachers to let them know they arrived safely.

As a result of being so involved in their students' lives, nicknames and strong relationships have formed. Mrs. Fields shared, "If he [Mr. Adams] likes you and he sees there is something there he can get out of you, he always has a nickname for the student." The close relationship between teachers and the students was shared by Gary, "Mr. Adams kinda jokes with our son" in a friendly manner. Evidence of the teachers being somewhat like a friend was also shared by Lucie, who said, "Spending so much time with them [Mr. Adams and Mr. Oliver], there is a camaraderie there." Mrs. Williams believes that the relationships the agriculture teachers develop with their students are very important. Over time "that relationship is built up and on a number of occasions made a difference in a kid's life."

Individualized consideration was illustrated by the time the agriculture teachers spent coaching/advising students. The agriculture teachers were willing to listen to and help students with anything and everything they were going through in life. Meghan shared of challenges she faced and the advising she received, "I always had confidence issues and whenever Mr. Oliver would see that I was really having a tough time with something he would say, hey you need to talk? We'd talk...he has always been there for us." Looking to develop students' potential and discipline are aspects of coaching/advising that surfaced. Larry said the agriculture teachers have "the leadership ability to recognize some strong traits in some of the students and like help them develop." Meghan recalls, "Becoming a part of the agriculture program, the teachers' outlook was "How can we help you further yourself?" Bringing out the best in students required the teachers to discipline students as well. Lucie shared how that influenced her

daughter, “she does not want to be seen in a bad light by him, times when she has kinda screwed up, kids stuff, she has not wanted it pointed out or in detail to Mr. Adams.”

Mrs. Williams also shared about the teachers’ discipline,

He [Mr. Adams] will have to come down on a kid hard and that kid leaves the meeting knowing that he has been fussed at, but he also knows the he is loved too... they don’t tolerate a lot of fooling around, but they still maintain a sense of fun and they still convince the kids they are in it for them.

A summary of the transformational leadership factors with supporting themes and the source of each theme are provided in Table 2.

Table 2

Audit Trail of Transformational Factors with Supporting Themes

Themes and subthemes	Source of themes and subthemes
<i>Idealized Influence</i>	
Well-respected	Sue, Mrs. Carter, David, Mr. Wright, Larry, Jeff, Mrs. Fields, Meghan, Mrs. Williams, Ms. Hansen
Role model	Sue, Mrs. Carter, David, Mr. Wright, Larry, Jeff, Barry, Meghan, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver
Character	Mrs. Carter, Barry, Ms. Hansen, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver
Family figure	Sue, Mr. Wright, Larry, Mrs. Field, Barry, Meghan, Gary, Lucie, Ms. Hansen, Mr. Adams
<i>Inspirational Motivation</i>	
Lead by example	Mrs. Carter, David, Mr. Wright, Larry, Barry, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver
The program	Sue, Mr. Wright, Mrs. Fields, Mrs. Williams, Mr. Adams
Developing students’ self-esteem	Sue, Jeff, Meghan, Mrs. Williams, Ms. Hansen, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver

Table 2 Continued

Themes and subthemes	Source of themes and subthemes
High expectations	Mrs. Carter, David, Mr. Wright, Larry, Jeff, Mrs. Fields, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver
<i>Intellectual Stimulation</i>	
FFA events	Sue, David, Jeff, Mrs. Fields, Barry, Gary, Lucie, Ms. Hansen, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver
Good teaching skills	Sue, Mr. Wright, Larry, Jeff, Mrs. Fields, Barry, Meghan, Gary, Lucie, Mrs. Williams, Ms. Hansen, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver
Hands-on activities	Sue, Mrs. Carter, Larry, Barry, Meghan, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver
Challenge Students	Sue, Mr. Wright, Larry, Jeff, Mrs. Fields, Meghan, Gary, Lucie, Mrs. Williams, Ms. Hansen, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver
Higher-order thinking	Sue, Mr. Wright, Larry, Jeff, Mrs. Fields, Meghan, Gary, Lucie, Mrs. Williams, Ms. Hansen, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver
<i>Individualized Consideration</i>	
Genuine interest/ selfless behavior	Sue, David, Mr. Wright, Mrs. Fields, Meghan, Mrs. Williams, Ms. Hansen, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver
Involved in students' lives	Sue, Mrs. Carter, Jeff, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver
Relationships	Larry, Mrs. Fields, Barry, Meghan, Gary, Lucie, Mrs. Williams, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver
Nicknames	Mrs. Fields, Gary, Lucie, Mr. Adams
Coaching/advising	Larry, Jeff, Mrs. Fields, Barry, Meghan, Gary, Lucie, Mrs. Williams, Ms. Hansen, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver
Student potential	David, Mr. Wright, Larry, Mrs. Fields, Barry, Meghan, Mrs. Williams, Ms. Hansen, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver
Discipline	Mrs. Carter, David, Mr. Wright, Gary, Lucie, Mrs. Williams, Ms. Hansen, Mr. Adams, Mr. Oliver

Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations

All of the individuals who participated in the case study shared the perspective that both of the agriculture teachers exhibited each of the four factors associated with transformational leadership. In addition, those associated with the program believe that the agriculture teachers have a strong influence on the quality of the program, the students, and the community. They believe that leadership of the agriculture teachers is the key component to the success of the program. “There is no doubt that the leader of the program makes all the difference in the world” (Barry).

As a result of this study it is evident the transformational leadership style of the agriculture teachers was a very positive and effective way to lead. Their impact on the students, agriculture program, school, and community has created a very significant impact that was greatly appreciated by those in the study. This study supports the previous study of Minnesota agriculture teachers claiming transformational leadership may be "advantageous" in the school environment (Greiman, et. al., 2007). In both quantitative and qualitative studies the transformational leadership approach seems to provide a resourceful leadership model for secondary agriculture teachers. However, the effectiveness of other leadership styles is unknown.

Additional studies should be conducted not only in individual states, but also on a national scale. Agricultural education is community based; therefore, it would be helpful to see if the transformational leadership approach can help agricultural educators create and sustain high quality programs in all parts of the country. National studies should consider the demographic and programmatic variables associated with the

agriculture teacher(s) and their program(s). Then, one could determine if the transformational style of agriculture teachers has any correlation with variables that can be changed or added to create a higher quality agriculture program. Future studies should also consider other leadership models (i.e., authentic leadership, situational leadership, etc.) to determine if other models can help agricultural educators lead more effectively.

EXAMINING THE PREFERRED LEADERSHIP STYLE OF SECONDARY AGRICULTURAL EDUCATORS: A NATIONAL STUDY

Overview

Agricultural educators are expected to develop leadership skills in their students as well as serve as the program leader. In order to effectively lead and develop leadership in others it is important to understand one's personal leadership style. The researchers sought to identify the preferred leadership style of a random selection of agricultural educators across the nation who taught secondary agriculture during the 2008-2009 school year. A 60.2% response rate was achieved through online data collection using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). One may conclude from this study that secondary agricultural educators are more transformational in their preferred style in contrast to transactional and laissez- faire leadership styles. The findings of this study concurred with the findings of a similar study on the preferred leadership style of Minnesota agriculture teachers. A statistically significant difference was found in the *Individualized Consideration* and *Contingent Reward* leadership factors when comparing gender; however, statistically significant differences were not found on the leadership style and leadership factors associated with years of teaching experience and highest academic degree earned. Future studies should examine the impact of a teacher's preferred leadership style on students' leadership development and agricultural program quality.

Introduction

The term leadership is widely used throughout society—in formal and informal settings and in nearly every context imaginable. No doubt, people are intrigued by the concept of leadership; yet, for many, it is an ever elusive idea that is hard to define, describe, and develop. Nonetheless, agricultural educators are expected to develop leadership in their students. The agricultural education mission challenges teachers to prepare students “for a lifetime of informed choices in global agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resource systems” while utilizing the FFA to develop students’ “potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success” (National FFA Organization, 2008, p. 5). However, before agricultural educators can effectively develop leadership in their students, they must first identify and understand their personal leadership style (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Leadership of agricultural educators is too important a topic to overlook; Hall, Briers, and Rosser (2009) identified a plethora of literature (Bell, 1996; Dodson & Townsend, 1996; Dyer & Osborne, 1996; Fritz, 1996; Gliem & Gliem, 1999; Vaughn, 1976; Vaughn & Moore, 2000; von Stein & Ball, 2007) indicating that “the leadership experiences of the teacher have a positive influence on program quality and leadership development of students” (p. 2). At this point there is not conclusive evidence as to what specific leadership style will bring about the best results for agricultural educators, their students, and the programs and communities in which they serve. Wingenbach and Kahler (1997) pointed out, “in the phenomenon known as leadership development, the Agricultural Education profession has much to discover” (p. 454). Identifying and

examining the leadership style of agricultural educators is a crucial step for enhancing the leadership development of teachers and, ultimately, their students. If a specific leadership style can be identified which creates positive outcomes for agricultural educators and their programs, then the profession could implement courses and training for both preservice and inservice teachers.

Educators may opine the agriculture teacher is the most important person in the process of developing leadership skills of students in the agricultural education program (Morgan & Rudd, 2006; Vaughn & Moore, 2000). Little is known about the preferred leadership style of secondary agricultural educators, especially at the national level. Only one study has been conducted to examine the preferred leadership style of agricultural educators. Greiman, Addington, Larson, and Olander (2007) studied the preferred leadership style and leadership factors of Minnesota agricultural educators and recommended that the “study be extended to a larger population of agricultural education teachers throughout the United States” (p.100). The leadership style and leadership factors of agricultural educators have not been fully vetted (Greiman, 2009); therefore, more research is needed to identify their preferred leadership style and the outcomes of their leadership. The researchers sought to fill a gap in the literature by determining the preferred leadership style of secondary agricultural education teachers through a conceptual and theoretical framework.

Conceptual Framework

Townsend (1999) stated, “Teaching is an enormous responsibility where teachers are leaders, providers of knowledge, and role models for the generation that will soon

run the world” (p. 4). Researchers in agricultural education have provided data that supports the development of teachers as effective leaders. In a study seeking to determine the competencies required for preservice and inservice Agricultural Science teachers, the authors state, “Leadership theory and skills was expressed as something to be both taught and modeled for success” (Harlin, Roberts, Dooley, & Murphrey, 2007 p.90).

Roberts and Dyer (2004) studied an expert panel of agricultural educators in Florida to identify the characteristics of an effective agriculture teacher. One hundred percent of the respondents agreed that an effective agriculture teacher demonstrates personal qualities such as: “cares for students, is honest, moral, and ethical” (p. 89). Each of the previous qualities aligns with the transformational leadership approach. This leadership emanates from the instructional leader of an agricultural education program—the agricultural education teacher.

Agriculture teachers are recognized by students, school administrators, parents, and community members to run and maintain the agriculture program; they are the program leader. Vaughn and Moore (2000) suggest agricultural educators with more leadership training and experience would develop leadership in students, which would result in higher quality programs. Agriculture teachers must utilize the most appropriate leadership style if their program is going to reach the desired level of quality. In order to provide support and a foundation for the concept of the agriculture teacher as program leader, a theoretical base rooted in Transformational Leadership by Bass and Avolio (2004) was used in this study.

Theoretical Framework

A particular leadership model or approach for agricultural educators seeking to enhance their leadership effectiveness has not been adopted by the profession (Hall et al., 2009). The idea that more than one leadership model or approach could benefit agricultural educators in a variety of situations is certainly conceivable. However, identifying a model that complements the agricultural education model should serve as a solid starting point. Several key points explained below support the logic as to selecting transformational leadership for studying the preferred leadership style of agricultural educators.

The transformational leadership approach has been one of the most widely researched and utilized theories in the leadership profession. In fact, a content analysis in *Leadership Quarterly* by Lowe and Gardner (2001) suggested that one third of the research was about transformational or charismatic leadership. Over the past 25 years leaders in military, government, education, manufacturing, high technology, church, correctional, hospital, and volunteer organizations have been studied through the lens of transformational leadership and were reliably differentiated as leaders ranging from highly effective to ineffective (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

The transformational leadership model has also been used in the agricultural education profession to study leadership styles of college of agriculture deans, extension leaders and educators, and agricultural educators (Greiman, 2009). Research specific to agricultural educators by Greiman et al. (2007) suggested that transformational leadership might be advantageous when confronted with issues in the school

environment. Furthermore, the study found agricultural educators to be “more transformational in their preferred style in contrast to transactional and laissez –faire styles” (Greiman et al., p. 93). According to Bass and Avolio (2004) “transformational leadership is associated with motivating associates to do more than they originally thought possible” (p.26). One may propose, that in today’s challenging times of higher-expectations with less resources, a model that could motivate both teachers and students to do more than they thought possible, is well worth studying.

Another reason to utilize the transformational model is its potential to help teachers develop leadership in their students. Greiman and Addington (2008) studied youth leadership development self-efficacy (YLD-SE) in agricultural educators and found, “teachers who study and adopt a transformational leadership style and who reduce their laissez-faire leadership style are likely to see an increase in their YLD-SE” (p.16). Additionally, the transformational leadership approach seeks to create performance beyond expectations for both the leader and the follower. The models potential for positively impacting both the leader and follower through the leadership process provides a natural fit for the close relationship between teachers and students in agricultural education.

The transformational leadership approach utilized in this study is grounded in the full-range leadership theory of Bass and Avolio (2004) which consists of three leadership style constructs: transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire. The three leadership style constructs make up a leadership continuum with a total of nine factors. Each of the factors are explained in the contexts of the associated leadership style.

Transformational Factors

Idealized influence describes a leader who acts as a strong role model, with high morals; the leader is “admired, respected, and trusted” ((Bass & Avolio, 2004 p. 96).

Idealized influence can be *attributed* by the follower or exist from the actual *behavior* of the leader. *Inspirational motivation*, describes a leader who communicates high expectations and motivates followers to commit to a shared vision, ultimately inspiring a high level of team spirit (Bass & Avolio). *Intellectual stimulation* is evident in leaders who encourage followers to be creative, innovative, and willing to challenge personal as well as organizational beliefs; the leader supports followers as they try new approaches to deal with issues and solve problems within the organization (Bass & Avolio).

Individualized consideration consists of a supportive climate in which the leader listens attentively to individual follower needs, advising and coaching the follower towards self actualization (Bass & Avolio).

Transactional Factors

Contingent reward is the exchange process between leader and follower: effort is exchanged for a specified reward; the follower gets a payoff for completing tasks that must be done (Bass & Avolio, 2004). *Management-by-exception*, is evident in leaders who looks for mistakes, errors or deviance from standards and takes corrective action; this behavior “tends to be more ineffective, but required in certain situations” (Bass & Avolio, 1994, p. 4). There are two forms of management-by-exception: *active* and *passive*. A leader using an *active* approach watches closely for mistakes from the

follower and takes corrective action; when a leader does not intervene until after problems arise a more *passive* approach has been taken (Bass & Avolio).

Nonleadership Factor

Laissez-faire, is the “avoidance or absence of leadership”; and is, “by definition, the most inactive—as well as the most ineffective according to almost all research on the style” (Bass & Avolio, 1994, p. 4).

Purpose/Objectives

The purpose of this study was to examine the preferred leadership style of secondary agricultural educators across the United States. This study sought to compare leadership style and leadership factors on the basis of personal characteristics. The two objectives for this study are:

1. Describe the preferred leadership style and leadership factors of secondary agricultural educators.
2. Determine if the preferred leadership style and leadership factors of teachers differed on the selected personal characteristics of gender, highest academic degree earned, and years teaching experience.

Methods/Procedures

This national study was descriptive and comparative; self administered web based questionnaires were utilized to obtain data for analysis. The target population for the study was secondary agricultural education teachers in the United States. The sample consisted of agricultural education teachers (N=11,773) who taught secondary agricultural education in the United States during the 2008-2009 school year. The

sampling frame was created from a contact list from the National FFA Organization along with directories from every state in the study. A larger sample size was selected to account for incorrect email addresses or servers that block emails from unrecognized senders. There were 500 secondary agricultural educators randomly selected, of those selected there were 399 with valid email addresses.

The data collection instrument comprised two parts: the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) 5X Short Form (Bass & Avolio, 1995) and a section for demographic information. The MLQ 5X Short Form consisted of 36 Likert-type questions that measure nine factors across three leadership styles: transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire. Internal consistency estimates of the MLQ range from .74 to .94 for the total items and for each of the factor scales (Bass & Avolio, 2004). This study achieved a post hoc Cronbach's alpha of .77 for the total items, .89 for the 20 items representing transformational leadership, .47 for the 12 items representing transactional leadership, and .55 for the four items representing laissez-faire leadership. The demographic content of the instrument was examined for content and face validity by an expert panel; changes were made as suggested.

The instrument was put online using SurveyMonkey®. Kiernan, Kiernan, Oyler, and Gilles (2005) found that “a Web survey appears to be as effective as a mail survey in the completion of quantitative questions that measure knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and intentions” (p. 250). Participants received an email cover letter and a web link to access an online version of the questionnaire; the email also informed participants of the option to complete a paper version of the questionnaire. The use of “multiple modes”

can help to meet the preferences of participants and to improve response rate (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009, p.304).

Over the course of the study follow up emails were sent to non-respondents at one week intervals as an effort to reach a higher response rate. The timing of the data collection process forced two waves of collection. The first wave came in early summer, at the end of the school year and the second wave came in the fall of the new school year. The MLQ and demographic information of the summer respondents were compared to the fall respondents in order to account for non-response error. There were no significant differences found, thus increasing the generalizability of the results. Descriptive statistics, independent samples *t* tests, and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were computed and data was analyzed with the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS).

Results/Findings

A total of 240 agricultural education teachers out of the 399 selected to participate responded to the questionnaire, which represented a 60.2% response rate. There were 71 teachers that opted out of the study; therefore data from 169 participants was available for analysis. The mean age of teachers was 43 (*SD* = 10.8), with a range of 24 to 63 years. Participants had taught agricultural education an average of 16 years (*SD* = 10.1), with a range of 1 to 39 years. An average of 150 unduplicated students (*SD* = 114.52) were enrolled in agricultural education courses the participants taught, with a range of 0 to 806 students. The mean size of an FFA chapter was 111 members (*SD* =

102.6) with a range of 0 to 806 members. An average of 1.8 teachers ($SD = 1.1$) taught in the agriculture education department that year, with a range of 1 to 8 teachers.

The first objective of the study was to describe the preferred leadership style and leadership factors of secondary agricultural educators. Teachers had mean scores of 3.15 ($SD = .44$) for transformational leadership, 1.97 ($SD = .36$) for transactional leadership, and .83 ($SD = .62$) for laissez-faire leadership. The highest mean score for a factor in transformational leadership was *Individualized Consideration* ($M = 3.44$, $SD = .47$) and the highest mean score for a factor in transactional leadership was *Contingent Reward* ($M = 3.11$, $SD = .52$). The scores were determined by the participants self-rated responses on the MLQ; the scale ranged from 0= *not at all* to 4=*frequently, if not always*. The preferred leadership style and leadership factors are shown in Table 3.

The second objective sought to determine if the preferred leadership style and leadership factors of teachers differed on the selected personal characteristics of gender, highest academic degree earned, and years teaching experience. An independent samples t test was conducted to determine if differences existed between male and female teachers in relation to leadership style and leadership factors. As shown in Table 4, there was not a statistically significant difference in leadership style between male and female teachers. However, when comparing leadership factors by gender, statistically significant differences were found between male and female teachers on *Individualized Consideration* ($t = -2.79$, $p < .05 = .01$) and on *Contingent Reward* ($t = -3.00$, $p < .05 = .00$).

Table 3

Preferred Leadership Style of Teachers (n= 167)

Leadership style and factors	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Transformational	3.15	.44
Individualized Consideration	3.44	.47
Inspirational Motivation	3.18	.59
Idealized Influence (behavior)	3.11	.59
Idealized Influence (attributed)	3.04	.57
Intellectual Stimulation	2.98	.56
Transactional	1.97	.36
Contingent Reward	3.11	.52
Management-by-Exception (Active)	1.61	.78
Management-by-Exception (Passive)	1.19	.62
Laissez-faire	.83	.62

Note. Scale: 0 = *not at all*, 1= *once in a while*, 2= *sometimes*, 3= *fairly often*, 4= *frequently, if not always*

In order to determine if differences existed between teachers whose highest academic degree earned was a bachelor's or a master's or higher (advanced degree), an independent samples *t* test was conducted. When comparing the leadership style of teachers with a bachelor's degree and those with an advanced degree, no statistically significant differences were found. In addition, there were no statistically significant differences in leadership factors between teachers with a bachelor's degree and an advanced degree. The results of the teachers preferred leadership style are shown in Table 5.

Table 4

Preferred Leadership Style of Teachers by Gender

Leadership style	Male			Female			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Transformational	100	3.11	.45	54	3.23	.42	-1.56	.11
Transactional	100	1.99	.37	54	1.95	.45	.57	.57
Laissez-faire	100	.82	.63	54	.78	.59	.36	.72

Note. Scale: 0 = not at all, 1= once in a while, 2= sometimes, 3= fairly often, 4= frequently, if not always

Table 5

Preferred Leadership Style of Teachers by Highest Academic Degree Earned

Leadership style	Bachelor's			Advanced Degree			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Transformational	88	3.16	.37	66	3.13	.52	.43	.67
Transactional	88	2.01	.34	66	1.93	.37	1.34	.18
Laissez-faire	88	.85	.64	66	.73	.59	1.20	.24

Note. Scale: 0 = not at all, 1= once in a while, 2= sometimes, 3= fairly often, 4= frequently, if not always

ANOVA was utilized to determine if differences existed between teachers in relation to their leadership style and leadership factors based on years of teaching experience. Years of teaching was separated into three categories: 5 years or less, 6 to 15 years, and over 15 years. There were no statistically significant differences in leadership

style (Table 6) or leadership factors between teachers based on years of teaching experience.

Table 6

Preferred Leadership Style of Teachers by Years of Teaching Experience

Leadership style	5 years or less			6 to 15 years			Over 15 years			F	p
	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD		
Transformational	29	3.18	.43	52	3.10	.46	73	3.19	.43	.87	.42
Transactional	29	2.05	.25	52	1.92	.33	73	1.98	.40	1.22	.30
Laissez-faire	29	.89	.56	52	.86	.71	73	.73	.56	1.04	.36

Note. Scale: 0 = not at all, 1= once in a while, 2= sometimes, 3= fairly often, 4= frequently, if not always

Conclusions and Implications

The importance of leadership in secondary agricultural education has been researched and documented through numerous studies and many experts opine that the leadership of the agriculture teacher can have a positive influence on the leadership development of students in the program (Hall et al., 2009; Morgan & Rudd, 2006; Vaughn & Moore, 2000). Only one study (Grieman et al., 2007) has been published identifying the preferred leadership style of agricultural educators; research on the leadership style of agricultural educators has not been fully vetted. Therefore, this study

sought to fill a gap in the literature by identifying the preferred leadership style of secondary agricultural educators across the nation.

The results of this study show agricultural educators are more transformational in their preferred leadership style in contrast to transactional and laissez-faire styles. Teachers were engaging in transformational leadership behaviors *fairly often*, were engaging in transactional leadership behaviors *sometimes*, and were engaging in laissez-faire behaviors *once in a while*. The study also revealed several key findings related to the personal characteristics of the agriculture teachers and their leadership style. There were no statistically significant differences among agriculture teachers' preferred leadership style based on gender, years of teaching experience, and the highest academic degree earned. However, when comparing the agriculture teacher's leadership factors, statistically significant differences were found between male and female teachers on *Individualized Consideration* and on *Contingent Reward*.

The findings on preferred leadership style were consistent with the work of Greiman et al. (2007) in terms of the level at which agricultural educators prefer transformational, transactional, and laissez faire styles of leadership. However, this national study revealed a statistically significant difference between male and female teachers on the *Contingent Reward* leadership factor, while the study of Minnesota Agriculture Teachers (Grieman et al., 2007) did not reveal such findings. The difference between the two studies regarding leadership factors in relationship to gender may be considered for future studies.

An implication of this study is that the preferred leadership style of agricultural educators from across the nation has been identified. Thus, agricultural educators can begin to more fully understand the personal leadership style of secondary agriculture teachers and study the impacts of their preferred leadership style. Bass and Avolio (2004) suggest, before agricultural educators can effectively develop leadership in their students, they must first identify and understand their personal leadership style. Therefore, the agriculture teachers who have identified their preferred leadership style should be able to more effectively develop leadership in their students.

Recommendations

Identifying the leadership style and leadership factors of agricultural educators provides a foundation for future research associated with leadership in secondary agricultural education programs. As a result of this study, agricultural educators should be informed of the preferred leadership style of teachers. In addition, preservice and inservice teachers should be encouraged to identify their leadership style and to consider how they will lead in the various situations they face as they build and sustain a quality agricultural education program.

This study was descriptive in nature; therefore, future studies should examine the impact of the agriculture teachers' leadership style on important aspects of agricultural education. More specifically, studies examining the relationship between preferred leadership style and the leadership development of students would benefit the profession. In addition, determining which leadership style is most conducive to enabling teachers to build and maintain high quality agriculture programs would support

current research priority initiatives. Does a certain leadership style correlate with specific indicators of student and program success (i.e. student involvement in various instructional, SAE, and FFA activities)?

At this point, the only leadership theory utilized to identify the preferred leadership style of agricultural educators is the transformational approach. Therefore, future studies should utilize additional leadership theories to identify preferred leadership style (i.e. authentic leadership, situational leadership, etc.). Studies comparing and evaluating agricultural educators to similar would be professions another area to explore. Connors and Swan (2006) recommended reaching “across disciplines such as education, business, and military science” to complete more “focused and rigorous” research (p. 9). Valuable information could be gleaned by effective leaders across professions resulting in more effective leadership of teachers and higher quality programs.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The conclusions of this study were based on the findings from data collected and analyzed in this research. Some conclusions are followed by findings from this study that support or refute other research. The conclusions are sequenced by the philosophical, qualitative, and quantitative methods used to conduct this study.

Philosophical

The history of the traditional agricultural education model shows that the three components have existed in some form for decades. The three components provide structure; however they need an engine to put them in motion. That engine is the teacher and the teacher's leadership. Similar, a more complete model should depict outcomes. The outcomes of the newly-proposed model are community development and individual development. In the age of accountability, outcomes must be communicated. Therefore, the TLCI model may better meet the needs of today's agricultural education programs. Leadership is too important a concept for agricultural education to be considered in FFA alone. Purposeful attention to leadership by teachers and students is necessary for a more effective agricultural education model.

The transformational leadership approach is a natural fit for the agricultural education profession. In order to accomplish the missions of agricultural education and FFA, effective leadership is a requirement of secondary agriculture teachers. Evidence shows that the transformational leadership approach is currently in use by some agriculture teachers (Greiman, Addington, Larson, & Olander, 2007). Agricultural

education can greatly benefit from adopting a transformational leadership approach in the daily activities required to run a successful agriculture program. In addition, the community impact aspect of the model shows the outcomes of a high quality secondary agriculture program.

Qualitative

All of the individuals who participated in the case study shared the perspective that both of the agriculture teachers exhibited each of the four factors associated with the transformational leadership theory of Bass and Avolio (1994). In addition, those associated with the program believe that the agriculture teachers have a strong influence on the quality of the program, the students, and the community. They believe that the leadership of the agriculture teachers is the key component to the success of the program. "There is no doubt that the leader of the program makes all the difference in the world" (Barry).

As a result of this study it is evident that the transformational leadership style of the agriculture teachers was a very positive and effective way to lead. Their impact on the students, agriculture program, school, and community has created a very significant impact that was greatly appreciated by those in the study. This study supports the previous study of Minnesota agriculture teachers claiming transformational leadership may be "advantageous" in the school environment (Greiman, et. al., 2007). In both quantitative and qualitative studies the transformational leadership approach seems to provide a resourceful leadership model for secondary agriculture teachers.

Quantitative

The results of this study show agricultural educators are more transformational in their preferred leadership style in contrast to transactional and laissez-faire styles. Teachers were engaging in transformational leadership behaviors *fairly often*, were engaging in transactional leadership behaviors *sometimes*, and were engaging in laissez-faire behaviors *once in a while*. Several key findings related to the personal characteristics of the agriculture teachers and their leadership style was revealed. There was a statistically significant difference among agriculture teachers based on gender; however, there were no statistically significant differences based on years of teaching experience and highest academic degree earned.

The findings on preferred leadership style were consistent with the work of Greiman et al. (2007) in terms of the level at which agricultural educators prefer transformational, transactional, and laissez faire styles of leadership. However, this national study revealed a statistically significant difference between male and female teachers on the *Contingent Reward* leadership factor, while the study of Minnesota Agriculture Teachers (Grieman et al., 2007) did not reveal such findings.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this research, several recommendations for practice and for future research are made concerning transformational leadership in secondary agricultural education. Before making recommendations it is important to note that research on new models for agricultural education are limited and research looking at the leadership of the teacher is in the infancy stage. Therefore, the

recommendations for practice are few and the recommendations for future research are many.

For Practice

The agricultural education profession should be informed of the preferred leadership style of teachers and that information should be shared and explained to current and future agriculture teachers. Agricultural educators should continue the discussion and dialect that has begun regarding the leadership of agriculture teachers and the role leadership plays on determining program quality and community impact.

Individuals involved in preparing preservice teachers and providing continuing education for inservice teachers should challenge agriculture teachers to discover and utilize leadership theory(s) and concepts that complement the current agricultural education model. Furthermore, preservice and inservice teachers should be encouraged to identify their leadership style and consider how they will lead in the various situations they face as they build and sustain a quality agricultural education program. In addition, agricultural educators should provide knowledge and resources for agriculture teachers that would help teachers further develop as leaders, prepared to build and sustain a high quality agricultural education program.

For Research

At this point only a few studies have been done to examine the most effective model for agricultural education and the most effective leadership style for teachers to use as they build and sustain high quality programs. In order to get a holistic view and a

thorough understanding of leadership in agricultural education the profession must utilize philosophical, qualitative, and quantitative research methods.

Future studies should be conducted to determine if adding a leadership theory to the agricultural education model will: (a) enable teachers to more effectively fulfill their role in providing each of the three components and (b) result in high quality programs with a positive community impact. Studies should also set out to find out whether agriculture programs with transformational leaders are more successful than programs that lack leadership or use a style that is not transformational. Research on leadership styles of agriculture teachers will also need to determine how effective the leadership style being used is in terms of complete agriculture program success. Does a certain leadership style correlate with specific indicators of student and program success (i.e. student involvement in various instructional, SAE, and FFA activities)?

This study was descriptive in nature; therefore, future studies should examine the impact of the agriculture teachers' leadership style on important aspects of agricultural education. More specifically, studies examining the relationship between preferred leadership style and the leadership development of students would benefit the profession. In addition, the profession would benefit by determining the relationship or causes which could account for the differences in academic degrees and preferred leadership style and leadership factors.

At this point, the only leadership theory utilized to identify the preferred leadership style of agricultural educators was the transformational approach. Therefore, future studies should utilize additional leadership theories to identify preferred

leadership style (e.g. authentic leadership, situational leadership). Studies comparing and evaluating agricultural educators to similar professions would be another area to explore. Connors and Swan (2006) recommended reaching “across disciplines such as education, business, and military science” to complete more “focused and rigorous” research (p. 9). Valuable information could be gleaned by effective leaders across professions resulting in more effective leadership of teachers and higher quality programs.

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APPENDIX A
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD-HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH
APPROVAL LETTERS

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES - OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

1186 TAMU, General Services Complex
 College Station, TX 77843-1186
 750 Agronomy Road, #3500

979.458.1467
 FAX 979.862.3176
<http://researchcompliance.tamu.edu>

Human Subjects Protection Program

Institutional Review Board

DATE: 04-Mar-2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: HALL, JOHN L
 77843-3578

FROM: Office of Research Compliance
 Institutional Review Board

SUBJECT: Initial Review

Protocol Number: 2009-0147

Title: Leadership in Secondary Agricultural Education Programs

Review Category: Expedited

Approval Period: 04-Mar-2009 To 03-Mar-2010

Approval determination was based on the following Code of Federal Regulations:

45 CFR 46.110(b)(1) - Some or all of the research appearing on the list and found by the reviewer (s) to involve no more than minimal risk.

 (7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation or quality assurance methodologies.

(Note: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) and (b) (3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt.)

Provisions:

This research project has been approved for one (1) year. As principal investigator, you assume the following responsibilities

1. **Continuing Review:** The protocol must be renewed each year in order to continue with the research project. A Continuing Review along with required documents must be

submitted 30 days before the end of the approval period. Failure to do so may result in processing delays and/or non-renewal.

2. **Completion Report:** Upon completion of the research project (including data analysis and final written papers), a Completion Report must be submitted to the IRB Office.
3. **Adverse Events:** Adverse events must be reported to the IRB Office immediately.
4. **Amendments:** Changes to the protocol must be requested by submitting an Amendment to the IRB Office for review. The Amendment must be approved by the IRB before being implemented.
5. **Informed Consent:** Information must be presented to enable persons to voluntarily decide whether or not to participate in the research project.

This electronic document provides notification of the review results by the Institutional Review Board.

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES - OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

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Human Subjects Protection Program

Institutional Review Board

DATE: 07-May-2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: HALL, JOHN L
 77843-3578

FROM: Office of Research Compliance
 Institutional Review Board

SUBJECT: Initial Review

Protocol Number: 2009-0352

Title: A National Study Examining Leadership Styles of Secondary Agricultural Educators

Review Category: Expedited

Approval Period: 07-May-2009 To 06-May-2010

Approval determination was based on the following Code of Federal Regulations:

45 CFR 46.110(b)(1) - Some or all of the research appearing on the list and found by the reviewer (s) to involve no more than minimal risk.

 (7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation or quality assurance methodologies.

(Note: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) and (b) (3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt.)

Provisions:

This research project has been approved for one (1) year. As principal investigator, you assume the following responsibilities

1. **Continuing Review:** The protocol must be renewed each year in order to continue with the research project. A Continuing Review along with required documents must be

submitted 30 days before the end of the approval period. Failure to do so may result in processing delays and/or non-renewal.

2. **Completion Report:** Upon completion of the research project (including data analysis and final written papers), a Completion Report must be submitted to the IRB Office.
3. **Adverse Events:** Adverse events must be reported to the IRB Office immediately.
4. **Amendments:** Changes to the protocol must be requested by submitting an Amendment to the IRB Office for review. The Amendment must be approved by the IRB before being implemented.
5. **Informed Consent:** Information must be presented to enable persons to voluntarily decide whether or not to participate in the research project.

This electronic document provides notification of the review results by the Institutional Review Board.

APPENDIX B

AGRICULTURE PROGRAM PARTICIPATION LETTER



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications
2116 TAMU, College Station, Texas 77843-2116

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FAX: 979-845-6296

<http://alec.tamu.edu>

March 9, 2009

Mr. Oliver
School in the Southwest, USA

Dear Mr. Oliver,

I am writing to seek your participation in a qualitative research study examining leadership in a quality agriculture education program. As a former high school agriculture teacher in Florida; I have a strong desire to promote the positive aspects of agricultural education. I am currently working on a PhD in Agricultural Leadership and Education; conducting research that I hope will help strengthen secondary agriculture programs throughout the nation.

The Williston High School Agriculture Education Program has been recognized as a "quality" program and as a researcher I believe that the agriculture education profession could benefit from the various aspects of leadership exhibited in your program. I would like to interview you and several individuals that are associated with your program in order to gain insight into what has helped make your program successful.

I would need your help in selecting the individuals who may wish to participate. I am looking for approximately three to four individuals from each of the following categories: Parents of Current Students, School Faculty and Staff, Former Students (1-3 years post graduation), and Community Leaders that are associated with your program.

I have attached an information sheet that highlights how the study will be conducted. I plan to use this study in my dissertation and I would greatly appreciate your participation in the study. This will be the only secondary agriculture program that I conduct qualitative research. Please look over the attached information sheet and contact me if you have any questions. Thank you for all that you do to make a positive difference in the lives of students!

Sincerely,

John L. Hall
Graduate Teaching Assistant
979-862-7650
jhall@aged.tamu.edu

APPENDIX C
CONSENT FORM



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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CONSENT FORM

Leadership in a Quality Secondary Agricultural Education Program

Introduction

The purpose of this form is to provide you (as a prospective research study participant) information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research.

You have been asked to participate in a research study examining a quality agriculture education program. The purpose of this study is to examine the various aspects of leadership that contribute to the quality and success of the agriculture education program. You were selected to be a possible participant because you can provide valuable information about aspects of the program.

What will I be asked to do?

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to provide information regarding the agriculture program through an interview and complete a questionnaire on the leadership of the agriculture teachers. This study will take approximately 30 minutes on the day of the interview and approximately 30 minutes on a later date to complete the questionnaire.

Your participation during the interview will be audio recorded in order to provide more accurate information through the descriptions you provide. Only the researcher will hear the audio tapes; the tapes will be destroyed upon completion of the study.

What are the risks involved in this study?

The risks associated with this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life.

What are the possible benefits of this study?

The potential benefits of this study include but are not limited to a greater knowledge base of the impacts of leadership in secondary agricultural education. Agricultural educators will be able to reflect on the descriptive details provided from the case study and apply the positive outcomes in their own agricultural programs throughout the nation.

Do I have to participate?

No. Your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with Texas A&M University being affected.

Who will know about my participation in this research study?

This study is confidential. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely and only John Hall will have access to the records.

If you choose to participate in this study, your interview will be audio recorded. Any audio recordings will be stored securely and only John Hall will have access to the recordings. Any recordings will be kept for 6-12 months and then erased.

Whom do I contact with questions about the research?

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact John Hall at jhall@aged.tamu.edu or by phone at 979-862-7650

Whom do I contact about my rights as a research participant?

This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979)458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.

Signature

Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. You will be given a copy of the consent form for your records. By signing this document, you consent to participate in this study.

_____ I agree to be audio recorded.

_____ I do not want to be audio recorded.

Signature of Participant: _____ **Date:** _____

Printed Name: _____

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent: _____ **Date:** _____

Printed Name: _____

APPENDIX D
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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Leadership in a Quality Secondary Agricultural Education Program

Participant Information Form

What's your relationship(s) to the agriculture program (i.e. former student, parent of current student, agriculture teacher, school administrator/counselor/teacher, community member)

What are ways in which you are involved with the agriculture program as a result of your relationship. (for example, a parent may also be involved in the FFA alumni chapter, volunteer as a chaperone, support fundraising activities, etc.)

How many years have you been associated with the agriculture program and teacher?
 How all have you been involved?

What is your current occupation?

Are you involved in some aspect of agriculture through your job or through a professional organization? (For example you are a board member for farm bureau)

Yes ___ please list _____

No ___

How often do you participate with the agriculture program? (circle one)

Daily/Weekly Bi-weekly Monthly Quarterly Semiannually Annually

Gender _____ Age (years) _____

Contact Info:

Address:

Phone:

email:

APPENDIX E
SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



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Potential Interview Questions

Leadership in a Quality Secondary Agricultural Education Program

Agriculture Teacher

How would you describe your agriculture program?

What components/attributes constitute a quality agriculture program?

What roles/responsibilities must an agriculture teacher carry out in order to have a successful agriculture program?

What are the most challenging aspects of being an agriculture teacher?

What are the most rewarding aspects of being an agriculture teacher?

How has your philosophy of teaching agriculture changed throughout your career?

What caused you to change your teaching philosophy?

How important are community leaders/parents to the success of the program?

How important are school faculty members to the success of the program?

How would you describe the level at which students and others associated with the agriculture program looked up to you (as a role model) and respect you?

How do you challenge students to do their best?

How do you show students that you care about them?

What are ways you try to motivate students?

What opportunities do you provide for students to think critically?

What leadership qualities/skills do you believe are most important for an agriculture teacher?

What would you say is the most important component of having a quality agriculture program?

What do you think the community and school would be like if the agriculture program no longer existed?



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Potential Interview Questions

Leadership in a Quality Secondary Agricultural Education Program

Community Leaders

How would you describe the high school agriculture program?

What impact does the agriculture program have on the community?

What leadership qualities/skills do you believe are most important for an agriculture teacher?

How would you describe the level at which the agriculture teacher is looked up to and well respected by students and others associated with the agriculture program?

How does the agriculture teacher challenge students to do their best?

How does the agriculture teacher show students that he cares about them?

What are ways the agriculture teacher motivates students?

What opportunities does the agriculture teacher provide for students to think critically?

What would you say is the most important component of having a quality agriculture program?

How important are community leaders/parents to the success of the program?

How important are other school faculty members to the success of the program?

Some people may say that agriculture is not an important subject like Math, Science, or English. What would you say?

What do you think the community and school would be like if the agriculture program no longer existed?



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Potential Interview Questions

Leadership in a Quality Secondary Agricultural Education Program

Former Student:

What was the agriculture program like when you were a student?

What made you decide to take agriculture courses in high school?

What classes and activities did you participate in as an agriculture student?

What did you gain from those experiences?

What qualities or skills did you learn as a result of being in the program?

What are a few of your most memorable moments as an agriculture student?

How would you describe your high school agriculture teacher?

What are a few strengths that you feel made your agriculture teacher successful?

What are a few weaknesses that you feel your agriculture teacher could work on?

What leadership events/activities did your agriculture teacher encourage students to be involved in?

How would you describe the interaction between your teacher and the students in the program?

What leadership qualities/skills do you believe are most important for an agriculture teacher?

How would you describe the level at which your agriculture teacher was looked up to and well respected by students and others associated with the agriculture program?

How did your agriculture teacher challenge students to do their best?

How did your agriculture teacher show students that he cared about them?

What were ways your agriculture teacher motivated students?

What opportunities did your agriculture teacher provide for students to think critically?

Some people may say that agriculture is not an important subject like Math, Science, or English. What would you say?

Would you say that now that you are out of school and can reflect back on your days in agriculture class you understand or appreciate the lessons your teacher taught more?

What would you say is the most important component of having a quality agriculture program?

How did being in the agriculture program impact or influence your life?



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
 Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications
 2116 TAMU, College Station, Texas 77843-2116

979-862-7650

FAX: 979-845-6296

<http://alec.tamu.edu>

Potential Interview Questions

Leadership in a Quality Secondary Agricultural Education Program

Parent of Current Student

How would you describe the high school agriculture program?

What impact does the agriculture program have on the community?

What leadership qualities/skills do you believe are most important for an agriculture teacher?

How would you describe the level at which the agriculture teacher is looked up to and well respected by students and others associated with the agriculture program?

How does the agriculture teacher challenge students to do their best?

How does the agriculture teacher show students that he cares about them?

What are ways the agriculture teacher motivates students?

What opportunities does the agriculture teacher provide for students to think critically?

What would you say is the most important component of having a quality agriculture program?

How important are community leaders/parents to the success of the program?

How important are other school faculty members to the success of the program?

Some people may say that agriculture is not an important subject like Math, Science, or English. What would you say?

What do you think the community and school would be like if the agriculture program no longer existed?



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FAX: 979-845-6296

<http://alec.tamu.edu>

Potential Interview Questions

Leadership in a Quality Secondary Agricultural Education Program

School Faculty and Staff

How would you describe the agriculture program?

How does the agriculture program contribute to overall school success?

What could the agriculture teacher do to ensure the agriculture program contributes toward the overall school effectiveness?

What leadership qualities/skills do you believe are most important for an agriculture teacher?

How would you describe the level at which the agriculture teacher is looked up to and well respected by students and others associated with the agriculture program?

How does the agriculture teacher challenge students to do their best?

How does the agriculture teacher show students that he cares about them?

What are ways the agriculture teacher motivates students?

What opportunities does the agriculture teacher provide for students to think critically?

What would you say is the most important component of having a quality agriculture program?

How important are community leaders/parents to the success of the program?

How important are other school faculty members to the success of the program?

Some people may say that agriculture is not an important subject like Math, Science, or English. What would you say?

What do you think the community and school would be like if the agriculture program no longer existed?

APPENDIX F
OBSERVATION SHEET

AGSC Quality Program Observation Sheet		
Date:	School Name/Location:	Minutes/Hours Observed:
Teacher's Full Name (first and last):		Specific Course Title:
Student Numbers/Descriptions: (gender, classification, ethnicities, etc.)		Classroom Layout (if applicable):
Topic/Lesson Taught:		
Teaching Methods Used (lecture/discussion, demonstration, guided practice, etc.):		
Interactions (Student-Teacher and Student-Student):		
Classroom Management:		
Summary Observations:		
Reflections:		

APPENDIX G

EXPERT PANEL EMAIL: INSTRUMENT REVIEW

Hall, John

From: jhall@aged.tamu.edu
Sent: Tuesday, May 26, 2009 10:12 PM
To: Hall, John
Subject: National Study of Agriculture Teacher Leadership

Dear Expert Panel,

Below is the message that will be sent out to agriculture teachers across the nation requesting their participation in a leadership study involving agriculture teachers. We will be very grateful if you can complete the instrument; your feedback is very important.

Dear Agriculture Teacher,

We are writing to seek your participation in a research study examining leadership styles of secondary agricultural educators. As former high school agriculture teachers; we have a strong desire to find the most effective leadership style for secondary agricultural educators. We are currently conducting research that will help strengthen secondary agriculture programs throughout the nation.

We value your experience as an agriculture educator and we realize you and people like you are the only individuals that can provide this valuable information. Agriculture teachers from across the nation have been randomly selected to complete a questionnaire to determine their leadership style. We know how valuable your time is, so completing the questionnaire should only take about 15 to 25 minutes. The instrument can be found at the link below.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=kPxxEyRQt6xcn89H6y5heQ_3d_3d

If you would rather complete a paper version of the questionnaire please respond to this email with your name and address and we will send the questionnaire and a prepaid return envelope.

Your answers are completely confidential and will be released only as summaries in which no individual's answers can be identified. When you complete the questionnaire, your name will be deleted from the mailing list and never connected to your answers in any way. Your participation is voluntary. However, your thoughts and experiences about leadership as an agriculture teacher will provide valuable information needed to complete this study. If for some reason you prefer not to respond, please reply to the link below
https://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx?sm=kPxxEyRQt6xcn89H6y5heQ_3d_3d

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board- Human Subjects Research, Texas A&M University (2009-0352.) If you have any questions or comments about this study, we would be happy to talk with you. We can be reached via phone or email with the contact information below.

Thank you very much for helping with this important study. Please return completed questionnaires by June 4, 2009.

Sincerely,

John L. Hall
Graduate Student
Agricultural Leadership, Education,
and Communications Department
TAMU 2116
College Station, TX 77843-2116

APPENDIX H

MIND GARDEN, INC. MULTIFACTOR LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

RECEIPT: BULK PERMISSION

Hall, John

From: info@mindgarden.com
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2009 3:37 PM
To: Hall, John
Cc: info@mindgarden.com; bobmost@msn.com; mindgardeninfo@gmail.com
Subject: Mind Garden, Inc. Order 8615

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

The following order was placed with Mind Garden, Inc. If you ordered paper versions of our products you will be notified when we ship your order. If you ordered Web-based Administrations you will be receiving a separate e-mail containing instructions on how to access and use those administrations. If you ordered PDF versions of our products you will be receiving a separate e-mail containing instructions on how to download your file(s). If this e-mail does not appear in your inbox within 3-4 hours, be sure to look in your Spam and Junk E-mail folders.

We appreciate your business. If you have any questions about your order please contact us by either replying to this e-mail or calling our office at 1-650-322-6300.

Order 8615

Placed on 05/27/2009 at 16:36:47 EDT

Special Instructions:

Ship To:
John L. Hall

jhall@aged.tamu.edu
813-956-5494

jhall@aged.tamu.edu
College Station TX 77840
United States

Bill To:
John L. Hall

jhall@aged.tamu.edu
813-956-5494

jhall@aged.tamu.edu
College Station TX 77840
United States

Product name	Code	Qty	Price	Total
MLQR Bulk Permissions (bundle of 400 @ \$0.65 each) (PDF)	MLQ-B-400-PDF	1	\$260.00	\$260.00
	Shipping: Online Product Delivery:			\$0.00
	Sales Tax:			\$0.00
			Total:	\$260.00

Payment method: Visa

APPENDIX I

**MIND GARDEN, INC. ONLINE USE AGREEMENT FOR THE
MULTIFACTOR LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE**

Hall, John

From: info@mindgarden.com
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2009 2:52 PM
To: Hall, John
Subject: Fwd: MGAgree: Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire from John LHall (Order # 8615)

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hello John,
 Thank you for your order and for completing the Online Use agreement.
 Please feel free to move ahead with your survey.
 Best,
 Valorie Keller
 Mind Garden, Inc.

----- Forwarded message from Jhall@aged.tamu.edu -----
 Date: 27 May 2009 16:49:08 -0400
 From: Jhall@aged.tamu.edu
 Reply-To: Jhall@aged.tamu.edu
 Subject: MGAgree: Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire from John L Hall (Order # 8615)
 To: info@mindgarden.com, mindgardeninfo@gmail.com

Name: John L Hall
 Email address: Jhall@aged.tamu.edu
 Phone number: 813-956-5494
 Company/Institution: TAMU
 Order/Invoice number: 8615
 Order Date: May 27, 2009

Project Title: A national study examining leadership styles of secondary agricultural educators
 Instrument Name: Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

I will compensate Mind Garden, Inc. for every use of this online form.

I will put the instrument copyright on every page containing question items from this instrument.

I will remove this form from online at the conclusion of my data collection.

I will limit access to this online form and require a login or uniquely coded url. Once the login/code is used that evaluation will be closed to use.

The form will not be available to the open Web.

Method for Restricting Access:

The questionnaire is being sent out to a sample list formulated by the researcher over survey monkey. The only way that an individual can access the instrument is through the link they receive through the email. The link can only be used one time and they will not be able to access the link more than once.

Electronically signed on May 27, 2009 by John L Hall.

APPENDIX J

**MIND GARDEN, INC. COPYRIGHT LETTER FOR THE
MULTIFACTOR LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE**

For use by John L Hall only. Received from Mind Garden, Inc. on May 27, 2009



www.mindgarden.com

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to grant permission for the above named person to use the following copyright material;

Instrument: *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire*

Authors: *Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass*

Copyright: *1995 by Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass*

for his/her thesis research.

Five sample items from this instrument may be reproduced for inclusion in a proposal, thesis, or dissertation.

The entire instrument may not be included or reproduced at any time in any other published material.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vicki Jaimez", written in a cursive style.

Vicki Jaimez
Mind Garden, Inc.
www.mindgarden.com

APPENDIX K
QUESTIONNAIRE

LEADERSHIP
QUESTIONNAIRE

National Study Involving
Agricultural Education
Teachers



Spring 2009

LEADERSHIP
QUESTIONNAIRE

National Study Involving
Agricultural Education
Teachers



Dear Agricultural Science Teachers,

We are writing to seek your participation in a research study examining leadership styles of secondary agricultural educators. As former high school agriculture teachers; we have a strong desire to find the most effective leadership style for secondary agricultural educators. We are currently conducting research that we hope will strengthen secondary agriculture programs throughout the nation.

We value your experience as an agriculture educator and we realize you and people like you are the only individuals that can provide this valuable information. Agriculture teachers from across the nation have been randomly selected to complete a questionnaire to determine their leadership style. We know how valuable your time is, so completing the questionnaire should only take about 15 to 20 minutes.

Your answers are completely confidential and will be released only as summaries in which no individual's answers can be identified. The code number on the questionnaire is used to follow up with non-respondents. When you return your completed questionnaire, your name will be deleted from the mailing list and never connected to your answers in any way. Your participation is voluntary. However, your thoughts and experiences about leadership as an agriculture teacher will provide valuable information needed to complete this study.

The questionnaire is divided into two parts. Please read the directions for each part before responding. If you have any questions or comments about this study, we would be happy to talk with you. We can be reached through the contact information below.

Thank you for all that you do to make a positive difference in the lives of students!

Sincerely,

John L. Hall
Graduate Student
Agricultural Leadership, Education,
and Communications Department
TAMU 2116
College Station, TX 77843-2116
Office: (979) 862-7650
Email: jhall@aged.tamu.edu

Gary E. Briers
Professor
Agricultural Leadership, Education,
and Communications Department
TAMU 2116
College Station, TX 77843-2116
Office: (979) 862-3000
Email: g-briers@tamu.edu

Part 1

For this part of the questionnaire you are to judge how frequently each descriptive statement fits you. *Provide your honest response as there are no correct answers.* The word "others" may mean your peers, stakeholders, students, members of youth organizations such as the FFA, members of adult/professional organizations, and/or all of these individuals. If an item is irrelevant, if you are unsure, or do not know the answer, then leave the answer blank. Please circle your answer, and use the following rating scale.

Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
0	1	2	3	4

1. I provide others with assistance in exchange for their efforts 0 1 2 3 4
6. I talk about my most important values and beliefs 0 1 2 3 4
13. I talk enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished 0 1 2 3 4
28. I avoid making decisions 0 1 2 3 4
29. I consider an individual as having different needs, abilities,
and aspirations from others 0 1 2 3 4

*** Only five items of the MLQ may be reproduced
(See attached letter from Mind Garden, Inc.)**

Please continue on the next page 

Part 2

Please answer the following questions about your agricultural education program and yourself by providing information in the space provided.

Program Information for the School Year:

46. Number of instructors in the agricultural education program
47. Number of students (unduplicated) enrolled in agricultural education courses.....
48. Number of FFA members in the agricultural education program.....
49. Number of Career Development Events participated in by your chapter
50. Percentage of your students with an SAE project.....
51. Number of students who received the state FFA degree.....
52. Number of students who attended the National FFA Convention.....
53. Number of students who attended the most recent State FFA Convention.....
54. Number of students who attended the most recent Washington Leadership Conference....
55. Did your chapter submit a National Chapter Award Application?
- YES
- NO

Please continue on the next page 

Personal Information:

56. Years you have taught agriculture at the secondary level (including this year).....

57. Years you have taught agriculture at the current school (including this year).....

58. Have you taken leadership courses in college or through training programs, seminars, or workshops?

YES

NO (Skip to Question 61)

59. Number of leadership courses completed through a college program.....

60. Number of leadership training programs, seminars, workshops, etc. completed

61. What is the highest degree you have attained?

Bachelor's

Specialist

Master's

Doctorate

62. Are you currently certified to teach agriculture education?

YES

NO (Skip to Question 64)

63. How did you earn your agriculture instruction certification/license requirements?

Traditional Certification Program

Non-Traditional/Alternative Certification Program

64. What is the length of your current contract?

10-10.5 months (210 days or less)

10.5-11 months (211-225 days)

11- 11.5 months (226-240 days)

11.5-12 months (240 days or more)

65. What is your gender?

Male

Female

66. What is your age ?

(years)

67. What is your ethnicity?

White, Non-Hispanic

Asian or Pacific Islander

Hispanic

American Indian or Alaskan Native

Black, Non-Hispanic

68. Would you like to receive a results summary document of the study via email?

YES

NO

Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire!

*Thank you for taking time to
complete this questionnaire and
for all you do to make a positive
difference in the lives of students!*

APPENDIX L
FIRST E-MAIL NOTICE LETTER

To: [Email]

From: agrileader@aged.tamu.edu

Subject: National Study of Agriculture Teacher Leadership

Body: Dear Agriculture Teachers,

We are writing to seek your participation in a research study examining leadership styles of secondary agricultural educators. As former high school agriculture teachers, we have a strong desire to find the most effective leadership style for secondary agricultural educators. We are currently conducting research that will help strengthen secondary agriculture programs throughout the nation.

We value your experience as an agriculture educator and we realize you and people like you are the only individuals that can provide this valuable information. Agriculture teachers from across the nation have been randomly selected to complete a questionnaire to determine their leadership style. We know how valuable your time is, so completing the questionnaire should only take about 15 to 25 minutes. The instrument can be found at the link below.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx>

If you would rather complete a paper version of the questionnaire please respond to this email with your name and address and we will send the questionnaire and a prepaid return envelope.

Your answers are completely confidential and will be released only as summaries in which no individual's answers can be identified. When you complete the questionnaire, your name will be deleted from the mailing list and never connected to your answers in any way. Your participation is voluntary. However, your thoughts and experiences about leadership as an agriculture teacher will provide valuable information needed to complete this study. If for some reason you prefer not to respond, please reply to the link below.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx>

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board- Human Subjects Research, Texas A&M University (2009-0352.) If you have any questions or comments about this study, we would be happy to talk with you. We can be reached via phone or email with the contact information below.

Thank you very much for helping with this important study. Please complete the questionnaires by June 9, 2009.

Sincerely,

John L. Hall
Graduate Student
Agricultural Leadership, Education,
and Communications Department
TAMU 2116
College Station, TX 77843-2116
Office: (979) 862-7650
Email: jhall@aged.tamu.edu

Gary E. Briers
Professor
Agricultural Leadership, Education,
and Communications Department
TAMU 2116
College Station, TX 77843-2116
Office: (979) 862-3000
Email: g-briers@tamu.edu

APPENDIX M
SECOND E-MAIL NOTICE LETTER

To: [Email]
From: jhall@aged.tamu.edu
Subject: National Agriculture Teacher Leadership Study- Follow- up
Body: Dear Agriculture Teachers,

Last week a questionnaire seeking your thoughts on leadership as an agriculture educator was emailed to you. You have been randomly selected along with several hundred agriculture teachers from across the country to participate in this study.

Please take a few minutes to respond to the questionnaire at the link below.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx>

I am especially grateful for your help because it is only by asking agriculture teachers like you to share your experiences that we can promote effective leadership in agricultural education.

If you do not want to complete the questionnaire and want to be removed from the study you may opt out by clicking the link below.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx>

If you have any questions about this study please let us know.

Sincerely,

John L. Hall
Graduate Teaching Assistant
Agricultural Leadership, Education,
and Communications Department
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77840-2116
Email: jhall@aged.tamu.edu

Gary E. Briers
Professor
Agricultural Leadership, Education,
and Communications Department
Email: g-briers@tamu.edu

APPENDIX N
THIRD E-MAIL NOTICE LETTER

To: [Email]

From: jhall@aged.tamu.edu

Subject: Agriculture Teacher Leadership- Please Respond

Body: Dear Agriculture Teachers,
About two weeks ago a questionnaire seeking your thoughts on leadership was emailed to you. You have been randomly selected along with several hundred agriculture teachers from across the nation to participate in this study.

We are especially grateful for your help because it is only by asking agriculture teachers like you to share your experiences that we can promote effective leadership in agricultural education.

Please take a few minutes to respond to the questionnaire at the link below. The survey should only take 15-20 minutes to complete.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx>

If you do not want to complete the questionnaire and want to be removed from the study you may opt out by clicking the link below.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx>

If you have any questions about this study please let us know.

Sincerely,

John L. Hall
Graduate Student
Agricultural Leadership, Education,
and Communications Department
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77840-2116
Email: jhall@aged.tamu.edu

Gary E. Briers
Professor
Agricultural Leadership, Education,
and Communications Department
Email: g-briers@tamu.edu

APPENDIX O
FOURTH E-MAIL NOTICE LETTER

To: [Email]
From: jhall@aged.tamu.edu

Subject: Leadership- National Study- Please Help

Body: Dear Agriculture Teachers,

As former agriculture teachers we know that you are very busy and filling out a survey is not high on your list of things to do. However, the information we seek to gather is very important for agriculture education. Asking agriculture teachers like you to share your experiences is the only way we can promote effective leadership in agricultural education.

Please take a few minutes to respond to the survey at the link below. The survey should only take 15-20 minutes to complete.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx>

If you do not want to complete the questionnaire and want to be removed from the study you may opt out by clicking the link below.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx>

If you have any questions about this study please let us know.

Sincerely,

John L. Hall
Graduate Student
Agricultural Leadership, Education,
and Communications Department
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77840-2116
Email: jhall@aged.tamu.edu

Gary E. Briers
Professor
Agricultural Leadership, Education,
and Communications Department
Email: g-briers@tam.u.edu

VITA

Johnathan L. Hall received his Bachelor of Science degree in agricultural education from the University of Florida in 2001. He entered the Food and Resource Economics Department at the University of Florida in August of 2001 and received his Master of Agribusiness degree in December of 2002. In 2003, he began teaching agriculture education at Sickles High School in Tampa, Florida. In August of 2007, he started his doctorate in the Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications Department at Texas A&M University, where he graduated in May of 2010. His research interests include agricultural education/teacher preparation and leadership education. He plans to teach agricultural education and leadership courses at the university level.

Dr. Hall may be reached at the Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications Department, Texas A&M University, 2116 TAMU, College Station, TX, 77843 and via email at jhall.lead@gmail.com.