

DISSERTATION

THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF DIRECTORS PROVIDING LEADERSHIP TO PART-TIME  
FACULTY AT STUDY ABROAD CENTERS IN ITALY:  
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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## ABSTRACT

### THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF DIRECTORS PROVIDING LEADERSHIP TO PART-TIME FACULTY AT STUDY ABROAD CENTERS IN ITALY: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

In the 2017-2018 academic year, 332,727 U.S. university students participated in a study abroad program in a foreign country (Institute of International Education, 2018). Many of these students attend courses taught by part-time faculty, hired locally by study abroad centers with affiliations to U.S. universities. The directors of these centers have responsibility for all aspects of the study abroad programs, including academics and the faculty. The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) study was to investigate how directors of study abroad centers in Italy understand and experience their leadership of part-time faculty. The main research question asked how directors of study abroad centers in Italy understand and experience their leadership of the part-time faculty they supervise? Eight individuals shared their experiences through semi-structured interviews and a follow-up focus group. The participants' essential experience in providing leadership to part-time faculty at study abroad centers in Italy was bridging the gap between different realities. The unique research setting produced results showing that participants employed some practices supporting part-time faculty not found in past research on leading part-time faculty. These included: paying for travel to academic conferences, hosting academic conferences organized by PT faculty, and paying to publish PT faculty scholarship.

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To Dr. Gene Gloeckner, my advisor and committee chair, who led me through the valley and onto the slopes of Mount Dissertation, I owe my deepest gratitude. Your steadfast guidance and wisdom pointed the way without robbing me of the desperation of defeat and the thrill of achievement. I would not have completed this project without you. Your genuine concern for your advisees is evident in so many ways, from buying us lunch, responding to text messages, and returning a manuscript with comments 24 hours after receiving it. I will miss you.

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experience in the program and will always be my prime example of a scholar-practitioner. You are a remarkable leader that brings people together.

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Dr. Karla Barry, you walked the path before me and showed me the way. Thank you for your efforts as my peer reviewer. Your insights and feedback were vital as I grappled with mountains of data.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family. My achievement is your achievement. Your love and support made this task much more manageable, and without you, I would have struggled mightily.

To my wife, I dedicate this dissertation. For years you picked up the slack created by my pursuit of the Ph. D. Your support gave me space, time, and energy to read and write. Your enthusiasm and joy are contagious.

To my son, I dedicate this dissertation. I am so proud that we never stopped doing the things that we loved most. Spending time with you was a welcome break from the rigors of research.

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents. My father instilled in me a strong work ethic and tenacity for achieving goals. My mother gave me a love of higher learning. Through your love and support, you shared in this achievement, often providing shelter, food, and funds to keep me moving forward.

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## DEFINITION OF TERMS

- *Leadership.* Leadership is the process that occurs when one individual organizes a group toward the attainment of a common goal (Hersey & Blanchard, 1972; Northouse, 2013; Stogdill, 1948; Yukl, 2006). In this study, the leadership experiences of veteran study abroad directors in Italy were examined narrowly in the context of leading part-time faculty.
- *Academic Leadership.* Leadership in the context of higher education is the implementation of the policies of the institution for the achievement of its goals and objectives (Fincher, 2003). The institutional leaders and constituents interact with one another in the context of the structures, relationships, and responsibility of the higher education environment through a deliberative process (Birnbaum, 1988; Fincher, 2003). This study examined academic leadership in the context of study abroad programs in Italy.
- *Part-time Faculty.* Part-time faculty are non-tenure track faculty who work less than full-time (Biles & Tuckman, 1986; Gappa & Leslie, 1993). The American Association of University Professors identifies four classifications: those preferring full-time employment, part-timers by choice with no other employer, those with a full-time job elsewhere, and those who are retired (American Association of University Professors, 2006). The part-time faculty present at the study abroad programs in Italy are similar to those in the United States but will operate under different legal and labor regimes. Italians refer to these individuals as *docenti* (plural of *docente*). Pronounced do-CHEN-

tee, this Italian word is similar to the English word, docents, meaning teachers below the rank of professor.

- *Study Abroad Centers.* The Forum on Education Abroad (“The Forum on Education Abroad,” n.d.) defines a study abroad center as a place where non-host country students attend classroom-based courses. The Forum further delineates the types of centers based on operational responsibility: special units within a host country university, centers sponsored by a college or university in another country, or centers operated by a study abroad provider organization. In this study all of the study abroad centers will be either sponsored by a U.S. higher education institution or operated by a study abroad provider organization.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In the 2017-2018 academic year, 332,727 students decided to temporarily leave their institutions of higher education in the United States and participate in a study abroad program in a foreign country (Institute of International Education, 2018). The number of students studying abroad each year has increased significantly for decades. In the 1962-1963 academic year the number of students leaving the United States for a study abroad experience was just 3,174 (Freeman, 1964). More than five decades later in the 2017-2018 academic year, New York University alone sent 4,436 abroad (Institute of International Education, 2018). Often these students are taking courses that they could have taken on their home campuses. The explosion in participation rates evidences the rich academic experience that students encounter while taking these courses abroad. What makes these educational experiences unique is the host culture and often the local faculty that teach classes (Stephenson et al., 2005).

The motivations for leaving the United States and participating in a study abroad experience are many: navigate a new culture, master a foreign language, or deepen one's understanding of a field of study (Engle & Engle, 2003; Freeman, 1964; Garraty & Adams, 1959; Wallace, 1962). Studying abroad has generally been associated with peak student experiences. However, Thomas Jefferson (1785) writing a letter from Europe to his acquaintance John Bannister could see no benefit from an education in Europe other than language acquisition, and listed many reasons why it was probably a bad idea. Jefferson was particularly disparaging of English education writing that a student learns drinking, horse-racing, and boxing. Today this negative opinion of study abroad is not widely held, and the participation rates support that. However, as Wallace (1962) pointed out, it is not enough to merely send students abroad for

them to be positively affected by their travels. There is typically on-site staff that facilitates the experience.

A study abroad program permanently based in a foreign country is a complex, mini-campus led by a director who from moment to moment may function as a dean of students, a contracts specialist, or department chair (Goode, 2007; Goodwin & Nacht, 1988; Hornig, 1995; Lucas, 2009; O'Neal & Krueger, 1995). Stephenson (2005) identified three types of study abroad program directors based on their employer, the number of universities served, and contract length. In any case, the study abroad program director is critical to the success of the program and should be an expert administrator, an accomplished academic, fluent in the host culture, and sympathetic to the U.S. American undergraduate learner (Freeman, 1964; Stephenson, 2005).

The problem is that despite all of the competing demands placed upon study abroad directors, the key to any study abroad program's success is in the director's ability to effectively lead the academic program, which is often taught primarily by part-time faculty hired locally (Borgioli & Manuelli, 2013; Freeman, 1964; Stephenson et al., 2005; Wallace et al., 2005). Despite the importance of the director's ability to lead the academic program, the contemporary research agenda for study abroad does not include organizational aspects such as management and leadership in the position of the director (Ogden, 2015). Furthermore, this information is vital for directors who, through leadership, hope to improve the work experiences of the part-time faculty and thereby improve the academic and cultural experience of the study abroad students they serve.

Leadership theorists and researchers have highlighted the importance of context when building theories and conducting research (Antonakis et al., 2004; Boal & Hooijberg, 2002; Kezar et al., 2006; Osborn et al., 2002; Porter & McLaughlin, 2006; Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003;

Shamir & Howell, 1999; Stogdill, 1948). This study addresses this issue by grounding the research in the specific context of leadership among directors working with part-time faculty at U.S. university study abroad centers based in Italy. There are specific contextual aspects of the study, for instance, the role of a director in a study abroad program, the labor environment in Italy, or the notion of higher education in Italy. All the aspects peculiar to the specific context informed the results of the study, rendering them more meaningful and useful for both practitioners and researchers.

Italy is the second most popular destination in the world for U.S. study abroad students after the U.K., hosting 35,366 U.S. American students in the 2016-2017 academic year (Institute of International Education, 2018). With so many students spending a portion of their higher education experience in Italy at study abroad centers, a clear need exists to research best practices in supervision and leadership in this setting, which carries elements from both U.S. American and Italian higher education, as well as aspects of both U.S. American and Italian culture. The researcher chose to conduct the study in Italy, given its importance for U.S. study abroad numbers. Limiting the analysis to one country also facilitated a deeper understanding of the context in which leadership practices occurred.

The central mission of study abroad centers in Italy is to provide instruction in various academic disciplines within the context of the Italian culture, and this mission is primarily carried out by part-time faculty hired locally. Borgioli and Manuelli (2013) reported that in 2012, the instructors at study abroad centers in Italy were primarily on part-time contracts, and on the average, study abroad centers employed 12 instructors. This sample only includes the 148 member institutions of the Association of American Colleges and Universities in Italy



(AACUPI). There are many for-profit and non-profit study abroad centers that are not associated with AACUPI but which also employ part-time faculty.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) study was to investigate how directors of study abroad centers in Italy understand and experience their leadership of part-time faculty. Researchers have found positive relationships between leadership behaviors and various organizational and personnel outcomes in multiple work settings and cultural contexts (Hartzler-Weakley, 2018; Koh et al., 1995; Liao & Chuang, 1998; Zwingmann et al., 2014) This information could improve the experiences of the individuals that work and study at study abroad centers in Italy.

Researchers in leadership theory have called for new studies on leadership in academic settings at overseas satellite campuses in cultural contexts (Kezar et al., 2006). Given the increasing trend toward part-time faculty in higher education, researchers have called for studies that provide information on how best to support these critical members of the academy (Eagan et al., 2015; Waltman et al., 2012)

### **Research Question**

How do directors of study abroad centers in Italy understand and experience their leadership of the part-time faculty they supervise?

### **Definition of Terms**

- *Leadership*. Leadership is the process that occurs when one individual organizes a group toward the attainment of a common goal (Hersey & Blanchard, 1972; Northouse, 2013; Stogdill, 1948; Yukl, 2006). In this study, the leadership experiences of veteran study

abroad directors in Italy were examined narrowly in the context of leading part-time faculty.

- *Academic Leadership.* Leadership in the context of higher education is the implementation of the policies of the institution for the achievement of its goals and objectives (Fincher, 2003). The institutional leaders and constituents interact with one another in the context of the structures, relationships, and responsibility of the higher education environment through a deliberative process (Birnbaum, 1988; Fincher, 2003). This study examined academic leadership in the context of study abroad programs in Italy.
- *Part-time Faculty.* Part-time faculty are non-tenure track faculty who work less than full-time (Biles & Tuckman, 1986; Gappa & Leslie, 1993). The American Association of University Professors identifies four classifications: those preferring full-time employment, part-timers by choice with no other employer, those with a full-time job elsewhere, and those who are retired (American Association of University Professors, 2006). The part-time faculty present at the study abroad programs in Italy are similar to those in the United States but will operate under different legal and labor regimes. Italians refer to these individuals as *docenti* (plural of *docente*). Pronounced do-CHEN-tee, this Italian word is similar to the English word, docents, meaning teachers below the rank of professor.
- *Study Abroad Centers.* The Forum on Education Abroad (“The Forum on Education Abroad,” n.d.) defines a study abroad center as a place where non-host country students attend classroom-based courses. The Forum further delineates the types of centers based on operational responsibility: special units within a host country university, centers

sponsored by a college or university in another country, or centers operated by a study abroad provider organization. In this study all of the study abroad centers will be either sponsored by a U.S. higher education institution or operated by a study abroad provider organization.

### **Delimitations**

This study involved individuals serving in the role of director, or equivalent, at study abroad centers in Italy hosting U.S. university students. Participants were selected who had a minimum of four years of experience supervising part-time faculty. Participants were required the ability to express themselves fluently in English. Finally, the participants were required to be currently serving as a director in Florence. Therefore, the study was also delimited to within Italy.

### **Assumptions and Limitations**

Given the delimitations of this study stated above, the results and findings are not generalizable. Also, the researcher assumes that the participants provided accurate descriptions of their experiences leading part-time faculty.

### **Significance of the Study**

The value of a study can be measured by the degree to which it creates theory, description, or understanding into some phenomenon (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). There are a few reasons why this study was significant and worth pursuing. From a practical standpoint, the results of this study will benefit those individuals who are leading part-time faculty at the many study abroad centers around the world. This information may improve study abroad programs and improve the experiences of those that work, teach, and study at them. Furthermore, the study adds to the body of scholarship by providing a starting point for future studies into leadership

among directors working with part-time faculty at study abroad centers. Finally, the study advances the academic leadership scholarship by investigating leadership in a unique institutional context.

### **Researcher's Perspective**

I am an experienced study abroad director in the context of programs in Italy, having supervised local part-time faculty at two different programs from 2008 to 2015. I have direct experience in managing and supervising part-time faculty members in Italy in such matters as contracts, curriculum planning, course scheduling, and program evaluation. As a researcher, I am motivated to enhance the work experience of part-time faculty in Italy who are the heart and soul of the study abroad experiences of so many U.S. undergraduate students. I am also hoping the rich narrative from this study might provide useful information for study abroad directors. As a researcher and interviewer, I strove to leave aside my assumptions and biases around the issues that we discussed, allowing the participants to tell their stories and bring their voices to the study. As an observer and interpreter of the world, I understood that my perspective was one of many possible perspectives (Maxwell, 1992).

Because of my connections in Italy to people from the study population and my direct experience leading part-time faculty, I brought biases and assumptions to this study, despite efforts to remain open to the data. I count many PT faculty in Florence as friends and so my interpretations of the experiences of the participants were certainly informed by a personal desire to see an improvement in the professional lives of the PT faculty. There is often a significant power imbalance between the directors of programs in Italy and the part-time faculty that teach courses. Although my research focused narrowly on the experiences of the directors in this relationship, I also hope that the results will improve the working conditions and status of the

part-time faculty. These individuals are often caught between two worlds and noticed by neither. They often do not hold professorships in Italy and are usually not eligible for tenure-track positions at the home campuses in the United States.

### **Overview of the Study**

This qualitative study employed Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to address the research question. The study relied on interviews with directors providing leadership to PT faculty at study abroad programs in Italy. The study also utilizes a focus group to understand further the data derived from the interviews.

IPA, as described by Smith et al. (2009), was ideal for this study because its approach is open and flexible, allowing the researcher to respond to and follow the data toward unanticipated findings during data collection and analysis. This study did not seek to validate theory but explored the topic of leadership through individuals' experiences in a specific context not previously examined.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This study examined the practice of leadership as experienced by directors of study abroad centers in Italy, working with local, part-time faculty. The conceptual areas included in the study were leadership, academic leadership, and part-time faculty. The literature selected for this review focused on these three concepts.

Each section below provides a review of the literature that has situated the research topic within the larger body of scholarship. For leadership, the review followed the historical development of leadership scholarship and the consequent theories that arose from that work. The section on academic leadership situated the study of leadership within the context of higher education and also reviewed the literature on shared leadership: a more recent leadership theory applicable to the higher education context. Finally, the review of the scholarship on part-time faculty addressed the issues scholars have identified for this population within the higher education context. These topics are presented sequentially from the broader perspective of leadership to a narrower focus on leading part-time faculty.

The inclusion criteria for the literature in this review were simple. The first criterion was that the work be influential such that it furthered the field or added to theory in some new way. The second criterion was that the work address one of the three topic areas narrowly. For example, there were allied areas to leadership theory, such as organizational psychology, that were generally excluded to avoid an exponential growth of works to be reviewed. To gauge whether a study was influential, the researcher compared the number of citations of the document to other works on the same topic. The researcher also found influential sources during

the review of the literature, judged by the frequency with which these works were being referenced by most authors.

The section on leadership theory was arranged chronologically by developments in the field. For this section, the researcher emphasized monograph works on leadership from the central leadership theories that have emerged since the 1900s. During this extensive review, the researcher paid particular attention to works cited by authors and added them to the literature review. These works were typically fundamental to leadership theory development or made such an essential contribution that more authors cited them. Next, the researcher collected journal articles using the search terms “leadership” and “theory” from the university library, *ERIC*, and *Google Scholar*. Finally, the researcher collected recent dissertations using the same search terms.

The section on academic leadership focused on works that addressed leadership within the context of higher education, specifically looking at professional, administrative leadership while excluding other instances of leadership in higher education, such as student leadership development. This section also focused narrowly on leadership in higher education as it pertained to leading faculty. This section was arranged by sub-topic areas: executive leadership, higher education context, academic leadership, and shared leadership.

Finally, the section on part-time faculty focused on the characteristics of this cohort within higher education and the scholarship that investigates how to support them better. This section also looked at the scant body of work that addresses part-time faculty at study abroad centers. The concepts and theories contained in this literature review were arranged graphically in Figure 1.1.

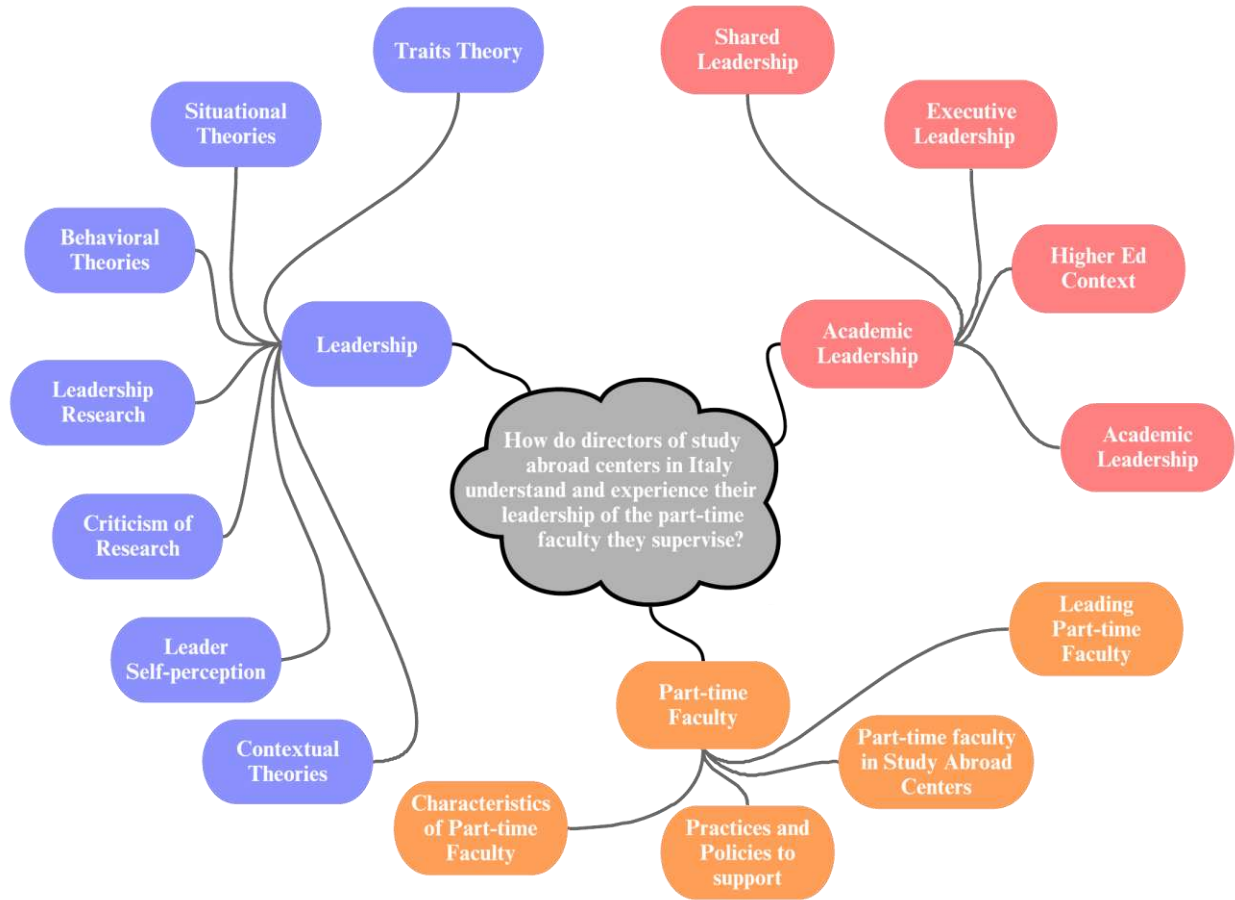


Figure 1.1. Concept map of the literature review and guiding research question.

### Leadership Theory

Leadership theorists and scholars have provided varying definitions of leadership but many agreed that it involves three essential elements: a leader, one or more followers, and a common goal or task (Burns, 1978; Fiedler, 1967; Hersey & Blanchard, 1972; Northouse, 2013; Stogdill, 1948; Yukl, 2006). It is the preoccupation with what is occurring among these three elements plus many more such as context, culture, or resources that have occupied leadership scholars for more than a century. This section will examine the scholarship on leadership theory from its beginning.

From ancient writers such as Plutarch or Plato, discussions around leadership were often narrowly focused on the individuals, usually men, who rose above others as exemplars of virtues



such as justice or courage to elevate a people or a nation. Centuries after Plutarch or Plato, in 1532, Niccolo' Machiavelli published *The Prince* (1532/2015), which deserves mention because of the discourse on power and influence to gain an advantage over enemies, especially political ones. The prescientific tradition of literature about extraordinary individuals was certainly not scholarship in a social scientific sense. Still, it did contribute to the first scientific inquiry into the phenomenon of leadership (Hollander, 1964). This nascent scholarship began to shift the discourse from being about any specific "great man" to examining the phenomenon of leadership.

### **Traits Theory**

The first wave of scientific inquiry into leadership is often referred to as traits research and dominated leadership scholarship in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Northouse, 2013; Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003; Yukl, 2006). The theories brought forth through traits research have been referred to as the "great man" theories because they often sought to identify or measure leadership qualities. This moniker for this generation's scholarship is misleading, for there were significant insights and research conducted that continue to resonate in leadership research today, such as the work on Strengths-based Leadership from Gallup (Rath & Conchie, 2008).

Two scholars in this early phase of leadership research moved the field forward in significant ways. Barnard (1938) noted that not leadership but cooperation and coordination were essential to an organization's success. With this, Barnard attacked the "great man" hypothesis and argued that leadership was not merely bound to a CEO but to anyone holding a position of authority at any level within an organization. Barnard imbued successful organizations with a creative energy springing from human cooperation but theorized that leadership was the "indispensable fulminator of its forces" (p. 259). If Barnard's work broadened the horizon of

leadership research in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, then Stogdill's (1948) paper in the *Journal of Psychology* was the end of serious scholarship focused narrowly on the physical traits of leaders. Stogdill's meta-analysis debunked any possible attribution of physical characteristics, such as height, age, or health, to successful leadership. Stogdill did find that across 15 studies, leaders generally exceeded the average member of the group on five metrics: capacity, achievement, responsibility, participation, and status. However, the real insight was in the analysis, where Stogdill stated that "... leadership is a relation that exists between persons in a social situation, and that persons who are leaders in one situation may not necessarily be leaders in other situations" (Stogdill, 1948, p. 65). This statement ushered in the next leadership research phase, which some scholars refer to as the situational approach (Hackman & Johnson, 1991; Hollander, 1964; Northouse, 2013).

### **Situational Theories**

Researchers theorized that leadership styles were more or less effective in specific situations differentiated by the group's characteristics or the context. Hollander (1964) noted that leaders must be aware of the group's situational aspects to apply appropriate action steps. Similarly, the research by Fiedler (1967) employed contingency theory to show that specific leadership approaches (e.g., task-oriented versus relationship-oriented) were more or less effective in particular situations. House (1971) conducted similar research using path-goal theory, finding that certain leader behaviors (e.g., providing direction) were more or less statistically correlated to employee outcomes such as satisfaction and performance among individuals working at different levels (e.g., professional staff versus hourly employees). Finally, Hersey and Blanchard (1972) suggested that theoretical models could be developed to predict the most effective leadership behavior given a specific type of work situation.

The scholarship from the 1950s through the 1970s moved leadership research forward, but Burns (1978) noted that it lacked a central paradigm that might provide a foundation for the accumulation of knowledge about the phenomenon of leadership. Burns inspired the formation of that central paradigm and has had an enormous effect on leadership scholarship.

### **Behavioral Theories**

Theorists have noted that leadership is universally recognized as essential but confoundingly tricky to describe (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Birnbaum, 1988; Burns, 1978; Hackman & Johnson, 1991; Kezar et al., 2006; Yukl, 2006). Burns' (1978) critically acclaimed book on the topic provided a theory of leadership that was relatively easy to conceptualize, and that incorporated a moral and ethical dimension not previously seen. Burns' ideal leader transforms followers and initiates a "relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents" (p. 4).

### ***Transformational Leadership***

Burns (1978) used reasoning and observation, not empirical research, to articulate a leadership theory that incorporates ethics and morality and is remarkable in its completeness and longevity. The transforming leader was one that raised followers to "higher levels of motivation and morality" (p. 20). Burns contrasted this with the transactional leader who engaged with followers to achieve a common goal for mutual benefit merely. This contrast between the transforming leader and the transactional leader emphasized the relational nature of leadership. Burns moved leadership theory and research into psychology and sociology and brought followers into closer proximity with the leader.

Burns' (1978) comments about the "great man" theory symbolized his shift from a leader-centric notion of leadership to one that elevated the importance of followers. They so

foreshadowed more current ideas that do not focus solely on the leader and emphasize the follower. Burns argued that the problem with the “great man” theory was not necessarily cultural or sexual, but the assumption that “great men” single-handedly shaped history. For Burns, this assumption ignored the countless contributions of individuals whose names history had forgotten. Burns’ transforming leadership would elevate the followers to become leaders and achieve more than any single individual.

Researchers have empirically tested the transformational leadership theory proposed by Burns (1978). Burns surmised that if it were discovered that humans across cultures shared standard hierarchies of needs, which in turn contributed to typical moral reasoning patterns, then it would follow that common patterns of leadership behavior might lead to generalizations that could be described. This torch was picked up by Bass (1985), who began the work of empirically testing and describing transformational leadership in greater detail.

Whereas Burns (1978) offered a grand new leadership theory, Bass (1985) sought to identify and quantify the actual behaviors that transformational leaders exhibited (Conger & Kanungo, 1998). Bass and contributors' work on transformational leadership stemmed directly from Burns but did introduce some new elements. Bass asserted that transactional leadership went beyond Burns’ conception to include general supervisor-subordinate relationships and that it was a useful behavior for leading and managing individuals. Bass also differed from Burns by accepting that transformational leadership may be morally uplifting but could also be used for evil. Finally, Bass (1985) claimed that his research indicated that leaders could exhibit both transformational and transactional behaviors, which refuted Burns' notion that transformational and transactional leadership were opposite ends of a spectrum.

One of Bass' most important contributions to research on transformational leadership was in the development of the Full Range of Leadership model (Bass, 1998; Bass & Riggio, 2006) which is expressed in the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire or MLQ: a survey instrument which has dominated quantitative inquiry in leadership research. The Full Range of Leadership (FRL) model operated on the premise that "every leader displays each style to some amount" (Bass, 1998, p. 7).

The FRL model included a spectrum of behaviors and separated transformational and transactional leadership into components (Bass, 1998). The component transformational leadership behaviors were charismatic leadership (or idealized influence), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Together these are often referred to as the four "I"s. The transactional leadership behaviors were contingent reward and management-by-exception. Contingent reward differed from management-by-exception in a few key ways and has been found to be highly effective in research studies. Contingent reward consisted of a supervisor or leader working with followers to agree upon the task and the appropriate compensation and then making the transaction upon task completion. Management-by-exception was either passive or active and consisted of a leader providing corrective action instead of offering a reward as in the case of contingent reward. Finally, the spectrum of FRL also included laissez-faire leadership or the absence of leadership.

Many studies have linked transformational leadership to various organizational outcomes. For instance, one study (Koh et al., 1995) found that transformational leadership traits among school principals had a significant add-on effect to transactional leadership traits in explaining variance on teachers' scores on a compliance subscale of organizational citizenship behavior ( $R^2 = 0.24$ ,  $F = 6.59$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , change in  $R^2$  of 18 percent,  $p < 0.01$ ). Similarly, the results showed

that transformational leadership also had significant add-on effects to transactional leadership of principals in relation to both teachers' organizational commitment ( $R^2 = 0.20$ ,  $F = 5.39$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , change in  $R^2$  of 17 percent,  $p < 0.01$ ) and teachers' satisfaction with the principal ( $R^2 = 0.30$ ,  $F = 9.05$ , change in  $R^2$  of 26 percent,  $p < 0.01$ ). The study found no significant effect of transformational leadership on student learning, however hierarchical regression analyses showed that the intermediate variables of satisfaction with leader, organizational citizenship behavior, and organizational commitment did combine to have a significant impact on student learning ( $F = 4.66$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ,  $R^2 = 0.22$ ). Therefore, Koh et al. concluded that although transformational leadership did not have a significant impact on measurable student learning outcomes such as math achievement scores, it did indirectly exert an effect through teacher satisfaction measures.

Another example of the empirical support for transformational leadership was a study (Griffith, 2004) on transformational leadership among principals. The study used a structural equation model to examine both the direct effect of principal leadership on school outcomes and the indirect effect on school outcomes mediated by staff job satisfaction. The model showed that principal transformational leadership exhibited a significant, positive relationship to staff job satisfaction (standardized  $\beta = 0.88$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) which then showed a significant, negative relationship to staff turnover (standardized  $\beta = -0.41$ ,  $p < .05$ ). It was significant that this study found similar results for the path from leadership to staff satisfaction (standardized  $\beta = 0.88$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and then from staff satisfaction to student achievement (standardized  $\beta = 0.36$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The study did not find significant direct effects of principal transformational leadership on either staff turnover or student achievement.

As noted above, FRL included charismatic leadership (idealized influence) as one component of transformational leadership. A significant behavioral leadership theory in the development of the field was Charismatic Leadership.

### ***Charismatic Leadership Theories***

Max Weber (1924/1964) and his writings on charisma influenced transformational and charismatic leadership theories. Weber differentiated charisma and charismatic authority from bureaucratic authority. Charismatic authority holds a supernatural force over followers and gives the leader the ability to disrupt and revolutionize the status quo. For Weber, charismatic leaders were rare individuals who identified and exploited an opportunity to improve the society somehow. Followers gave the charismatic leader authority because of a sign, such as a miracle, of the leader's special, nearly divine status. However, charisma is also a cloak that can be lost if the followers lose faith, which may occur if the charismatic leader fails to deliver on the vision.

Relying on earlier literature and Weber's (1924/1964) work on charisma, House (1977) identified a set of outcome variables that might be found among followers such as trust in the leader's beliefs, alignment of expectations between leaders and follower, devotion to the leader, identification with the leader, or elevation of desires. Conversely, the charismatic leader in House's model exhibited four primary characteristics: dominance, self-confidence, need for influence, and a firm conviction in the righteousness of beliefs held. House also incorporated specific leadership behaviors under each of these characteristics. Bass' development of the transformational leadership theory and the FRL model owed much to House's work and the charismatic leadership theory. House relied on the descriptions of charismatic leaders in traditional literature to identify charismatic leaders in organizations and then specified operational variables to begin building his theory of charismatic leadership.

House's (1977) work on leadership differs significantly from Burns (1978) because it produced a fully developed model with specific variables among followers, which would relate to organizational outcomes. As stated above, Bass' (1998) FRL model operationalized Burns' vision of transforming leadership and includes charisma (or idealized influence) as one of four behaviors in transformational leadership. There is much affinity between the behaviors described by House and the behaviors in Bass' model. The full range leadership model may have gained greater acceptance because of its simplicity compared to House's model. This simplicity lends itself to survey research, which leads to a larger body of empirical studies and its subsequent validation in various settings.

As transformational leadership has enjoyed greater exposure among researchers, other theories have contributed to the field. Kouzes and Posner (1995) examined cases where ordinary people accomplished extraordinary feats while leading organizations. This emphasis on the exceptional echoes Weber's (1924/1964) conception of the charismatic leader. Kouzes and Posner identified five practices of leadership: challenge the process, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, model the way, and encourage the heart.

Another critical contribution to leadership scholarship was the charismatic leadership theory from Conger and Kanungo (1998), which identified stages through which a leader passes to influence a group and achieve higher outcomes. Charismatic leaders first assess the environment and detect the faults of the status quo. In the second stage, the leader shares a vision that deviates significantly from the present state of affairs. In the third stage, the leader engages in unconventional behavior at personal risk to transcend the routine. The charismatic leader exerts personal power (i.e., not positional power) based on the status afforded by devotees.



## **Leadership Research**

Researchers and theorists have often called for increased research into the phenomenon of leadership to better understand it (Burns, 1978; Fiedler, 1967; Paige, 1977; Terry, 1993). Because leadership is a social activity present when a group faces a challenge, it is ubiquitous. Leadership is universal in two important ways. On one hand leadership has been a focus of attention among scholars and thinkers for more than two thousand years (Hackman & Johnson, 1991), but it is also universal in the sense that anyone can engage in it (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Burns, 1978; Kouzes & Posner, 2003) and most people will at some point in their lives (Yukl, 2006).

Leadership research is complicated and particularly problematic (Birnbaum, 1992; Fiedler, 1967) to the degree that the field lacks clarity and focus (Conger & Kanungo, 1998) despite, or perhaps because of, the proliferation of empirical studies which vary immensely in quality and rigor (Birnbaum, 1988; Yukl, 2006). As stated above, leadership definitions flourish as do theories (Hackman & Johnson, 1991; Kezar et al., 2006). This abundance has obfuscated the formation of a scholarly paradigm in the Kuhnian sense (Kuhn, 1970) and has hindered leadership research advancement. Despite these difficulties, the literature on leadership has exploded. Web of Science reported more than 98,000 results when searching for the topic of leadership from 1900 to 2019. For the same date range, Google Scholar reported more than 1.7 million results.

Notwithstanding the difficulties that leadership research and theory building must confront, there are similarities between many behavioral theories and their subcomponents, as shown in Table 2.1. These similarities suggest that researchers described the same phenomenon given that their observations exhibit some level of agreement.

**Table 2.1***Components of Behavioral Leadership Theories*

The Leadership Challenge (Kouzes & Posner, 1995)	Charismatic Leadership (House, 1977)	Full-Range Leadership (Bass, 1998)
Inspire a shared vision	Goal articulation	Inspiration
Enable others to act	High expectation of followers	Intellectual stimulation
Model the way	Role modeling	Idealized influence
Encourage the heart	Motivate followers	Individualized consideration
Challenge the process	Demonstration of confidence	Contingent award
	Personal image building	Management-by-exception Laissez-faire leadership

**Criticisms of Leadership Scholarship**

Leadership scholars have offered some criticisms of the body of scholarship. Hunt (1991) called for a pragmatic perspective in leadership knowledge orientation and leadership knowledge content. The multi-level model proposed by Hunt is complex and requires more than the restricted knowledge orientation common in leadership approaches. Hunt (1991) criticized Bass and associates for using questionnaires prematurely. Hunt suggested that more descriptive and observational research was needed to understand further whether transformational leadership is purely a leader behavior or a follower's response to leader behavior.

Bass (1985) lamented that leadership research had been grounded primarily in logical positivism and operationalism. Bass claimed that the focus has been on economic models of exchange that are easier to conceptualize and test. In contrast, the essence of leadership phenomena of uplifting and enriching social interactions had been ignored. Similarly, Fincher (2003) complained that leadership research was often dependent upon ad hoc criteria chosen because of fit with research purposes while being largely unrelatable to actual administrative

practice. Lastly, Yukl (2006) criticized the heavy reliance on survey research, which often focused narrowly on the leader and incapable of capturing the complex, dynamic social systems inherent in leadership.

Leadership theory is still in a state of flux. As with any social phenomenon, it is highly specific to the participants and the context of any given study. This specificity to the social context means that replicating the results of a study is difficult or impossible. This replication issue does not mean that research on leadership is meaningless; on the contrary, it implies that if the results are valid, they are correct for the study's specific context. The findings from the present study extended our understanding of leadership narrowly defined within the context of the handful of participants, and in the context of study abroad centers in Italy and how directors lead part-time faculty.

### **Leader Self-Perception**

The self-perception of leaders was an important area of scholarship for the present study given that the qualitative data relied on firsthand accounts of the experiences that directors had in leading part-time faculty. Self-perception and self-awareness are linked, and there is some empirical evidence that self-aware leaders are more effective.

Atwater and Yammarino (1992) found that self-awareness, assessed by self-other agreement, was positively related to performance. The researchers conducted the study at the U.S. Naval Academy among students and involved leadership assessments from subordinates and superiors and leadership self-assessments using the MLQ. Those students who over-estimated their leadership relative to their subordinates' assessments and superiors performed worse as leaders than those who either under-estimated their leadership or whose self-assessment agreed with the assessments of subordinates and superiors. The study also found that self-

assessments in general among all participants tended to be higher than the assessments of subordinates and superiors. This inflated self-assessments phenomenon was consistent with the findings from many studies on self-supervisor, self-peer, and peer-supervisor ratings of performance in management (Harris & Schaubroeck, 1988).

In a study by Van Velsor, Taylor, and Leslie (1993), three groups of leaders were compared (“underraters,” accurate raters, and “overraters”) on self-awareness ratings from others and leadership effectiveness. The study found that women did not rate themselves lower than their male counterparts. The study also found that “underraters” were more likely to be rated as self-aware and more effective leaders by subordinates. “Overraters” showed inverse relationships being rated less self-aware and less capable as a leader by subordinates. A similar study (Sturm, Taylor, Atwater & Braddy, 2014) examined women's leadership self-perception in a novel way by considering meta-perception through the leader's prediction of their supervisor's rating of their leadership. The study found that men and women self-rate similarly with no statistical differences; whereas women tend to predict lower ratings from their supervisors than men do.

### **Contextual Theories of Leadership**

Scholars noted that context is of vital importance to understand leadership (Kezar et al., 2006; Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003; Stogdill, 1948). Kezar et al. (2006) pointed out that researchers often neglect to ground a study in a broader context. Studying leadership in the context of higher education presents unique challenges compared to other environments because of characteristics such as shared governance, ambiguous goals, and dispersed control (Birnbaum, 1988).

The issue of context in leadership research is gaining ground in more recent scholarship, but it is not new. Stogdill's (1948) insight in the mid-1900s was that leaders that were effective in one situation might not be effective in another. Indeed, the situational leadership theories that

followed this insight (Fiedler, 1967; Hersey & Blanchard, 1972; Hollander, 1964; House, 1977) were based on the notion that leadership actions should be responsive to the situation, or context that was present.

The behavioral theories such as transformational (Bass, 1985) and charismatic leadership (Conger & Kanungo, 1998; House, 1977) relied on an influence interaction between leader and followers, which tended to ignore contextual factors. The early work by Weber (1924/1964) on charisma, in contrast, was aware of context and asserted that charismatic leaders arose when conditions were unstable. Transformational and charismatic leadership researchers and theorists, in contrast, generally placed greater emphasis on identifying a set of universal leadership behaviors that were disconnected from contextual considerations. Burns (1978) theorized that if humans were motivated by some fundamental ethical or moral telos across cultures, some universal leadership behaviors could be discovered. Indeed, the GLOBE project did find some evidence that specific leadership characteristics were positively viewed across cultures (House et al., 2002).

The calls for context in leadership research and theory building have originated from many working in the field (Antonakis et al., 2004; Boal & Hooijberg, 2002; Gordon & Yukl, 2004; Kezar et al., 2006; Osborn et al., 2002; Porter & McLaughlin, 2006; Shamir et al., 1993; Yukl, 1999). Several researchers have responded to the calls for greater attention to context in leadership research.

Pawar and Eastman (1997) theorized that organizations would be more responsive to transformational leadership under the following conditions: (a) during periods of adaptation orientation (versus efficiency orientation); (b) that are typified by more dominant boundary-spanning units (versus organizations with discreet but dominant technical cores); (c) that have

simple, adhocracy structures (versus more rigid bureaucratic structures); and (d) that have clan modes of governance (versus bureaucratic modes of governance). Shamir and Howell (1999) echoed this with a list of organizational factors that would encourage and support the emergence of charismatic leadership. These included: (a) moments of crisis and instability, (b) organic organizational structure, (c) adaptive organizational culture, and (d) ambiguous performance goals. Finally, the model proposed by Gardner and Avolio (1998) asserted that charismatic leadership was more appropriate during times of environmental turbulence and within a proper organizational context.

Contextual leadership theory explicitly recognizes that leadership effectiveness depends on context (Osborn et al., 2002). This contextuality of leadership leads to the conclusion that no one theory of leadership will ever describe all scenarios, but that multiple leadership theories are needed, which align with a multitude of contexts (Osborn et al., 2002). To this end, Osborn et al. (2002) offered another competing definition of leadership that did, however, begin to incorporate contextual flexibility: “Leadership is defined as the incremental influence of position holders exercised via direct and indirect means to maintain and/or alter the existing dynamics in and of a system” (p. 804).

Osborn et al. (2002) proposed a contextual theory of leadership that incorporated four contextual variables but stopped short of addressing leadership behaviors specifically. These four contexts are stability, crisis, dynamic equilibrium and edge of chaos. These contexts serve to categorize an organizational environment.

Osborn et al. (2002) described “stability” as a context where the organization exhibits stasis among the macro elements that immediately influence operations. For “crisis,” the authors describe the organizational context as experiencing a dramatic departure from normalcy with

immediate threats to the core mission. The authors describe “dynamic equilibrium” as a context in which the organization is actively pursuing change for strategic reasons. The fourth context offered by Osborn et al. is “edge of chaos” which they describe as a liminal zone between order and chaos.

### **Leadership Theory and Study Abroad Directors in Italy**

This section of the literature review focused primarily on the chronological development of leadership theory. The purpose of this review was to weave together the voices of many of the principal interventions in the development of leadership theory. The proliferation of leadership theories in the past century meant that the researcher had to exclude many worthy ideas from this review.

Given the purpose of this chronological overview, the researcher preferred to provide an exposition of the currents of leadership theory and the contents of the specific theories, instead of providing a critique of the empirical data. More detailed analyses of leadership studies are present in the following section on Academic Leadership in Higher Education and in the final section on Leading Part-time Faculty. These last two sections narrow the literature review on leadership to areas that are more pertinent to the experiences of study abroad directors in Italy, providing leadership to PT faculty.

Study abroad directors in Italy providing leadership to PT faculty are bound to context and personal and professional experiences. This review of the literature on leadership theory provided a rich resource to draw from to conduct data analyses on the participants' experiences. The literature revealed commonalities between many different leadership theories, suggesting that theorists were describing the same phenomenon. The leadership experiences of study abroad directors in Italy should resonate with some of the theories reviewed in this section.

To study the participants' experiences in providing leadership to PT faculty in Italy, the researcher examined the literature on leadership in the context of higher education. The higher educational enterprise presents a specific context and operational environment that requires a more focused review of leadership literature. The next section explored this body of literature.

### **Academic Leadership in Higher Education**

Colleges and universities present a unique organizational environment characterized as organized anarchy (Cohen et al., 1972), and as entertaining multiple, incompatible demands (Birnbaum, 2001). The collegiate environment is organizationally different from a commercial one (Birnbaum, 1988, 2001; Dressel, 1981; Veblen, 1918), and therefore, leadership in this context will be significantly different. The study abroad centers in Italy that host U.S. university students will have an analogous environment to those of campuses in the United States with some differences.

### **Executive Leadership**

The growth and complexity of higher education institutions in the United States have placed greater emphasis on presidents' executive ability. Still, academic leadership is also essential if college and university presidents are to be successful (Blackwell, 1966). This tension, however, is not a modern phenomenon. Veblen (1918) sarcastically referred to college presidents as the “captains of erudition,” and was critical of the corporatization of higher education in the United States more than a century ago. Veblen underlined the incompatibility between the bureaucratic impulse to increase efficiency on the one hand, and the professional, scholarly motivation to resist this process on the other. The author pointed out that presidents will tend to focus on initiatives and outcomes that satisfy the board of trustees to whom they are beholden while neglecting initiatives that support and uphold the academic freedom required for faculty to



generate knowledge. When competing cultures become entrenched in conflict, the entire institution is in crisis (Olscamp, 2003), and disputes with faculty over issues of governance can be “deadly for presidents” (p. 50).

### **Higher Education Context**

The higher education environment differs in many significant and profound ways from a commercial setting (Birnbaum, 1988, 2001; Dressel, 1981; Veblen, 1918). The goals, purpose, and outcomes of higher education have few counterparts in other sectors and are challenging to quantify and measure (Birnbaum, 1988; Dressel, 1981). Accountability and efficiency run counter to the intellectual enterprise and the academic freedom required (Birnbaum, 1988; Veblen, 1918).

Higher education institutions are traditionally managed through the mechanisms of shared governance (Birnbaum, 1988; Fincher, 2003; Olscamp, 2003). Governance occurs through the communication and interactions of institutional participants through structures and processes evolved over time (Birnbaum, 1988). It is a deliberative process that allows for an open debate to shape and create new policies and practices for running institutions of higher education (Fincher, 2003). Finally, the various campus constituents involved in governance have different goals within the context of higher education, and when one area such as administration attempts to take hold of another area such as instruction, then conflict may ensue (Olscamp, 2003).

There are various cultures within the academy, but two of them are especially important for the concept of academic leadership in higher education. Bergquist and Pawlak (2008) defined the managerial culture within higher education institutions as one that finds meaning in work that is measurable against specific outcomes and goals. On the other hand, the collegial culture sees a

purpose in scholarship, believes that rationality should dominate the institution, and understands that the institution's primary mission is rooted directly in its efforts to generate, interpret, and disseminate knowledge for the betterment of society. Institutional leaders need to understand the collegial culture to be successful (Hendrickson et al., 2013).

### **Academic Leadership**

Administrators providing academic leadership to faculty members are most effective when they appreciate and support the collegial culture (Blackwell, 1966; Fincher, 2003; Wergin, 2007). Learning is at the center of the higher education enterprise, and therefore, academic leadership must provide an environment that enables scholarship to flourish. Wergin (2007) wrote a theoretical piece calling for a flatter leadership structure that bridges the gulf between faculty and administration and engages faculty in the life of the campus.

Effective academic leadership occurs when administrators are openly and honestly communicating with faculty members (Dressel, 1981; Leaming, 2007). Academic leaders should build individual relationships with faculty to solicit and incorporate their ideas into the work of the academic unit (Leaming, 2007). Communication from administration to faculty must be thoughtful to maintain trust and a sense of respect (Dressel, 1981).

The relationship between the independent, professional authority of faculty and the administrative power of academic leaders naturally exhibits tension (Birnbaum, 1988; Hendrickson et al., 2013; Ramsden, 1998). Veblen (1918) argued that senior leaders should serve the needs and specific requirements of faculty whose work is central to the institution's mission. However, universities operate in legally and financially complex environments such that faculty can begin to associate administrators with bureaucratic red tape and constraints, which occlude the central purpose of scholarship (Birnbaum, 1988).

The faculty represents the academic integrity of an institution of higher education, and the governance of academic issues should reside with them (Birnbaum, 1988, 1992; Dressel, 1981; Fincher, 2003). Astute institutional leaders who are sensitive to faculty culture and academic governance make decisions and institute policies that resonate with faculty (Hendrickson et al., 2013). The professional orientation of faculty means that professors tend to be highly independent within the institution (Dressel, 1981; Wergin, 2007), identifying as much with their academic disciplines as with the institution itself.

Academic freedom, which sprang from the formation of the American Association of University Professors in 1915, requires that faculty be free from censure or external pressures when engaging in research or teaching (Blackwell, 1966; Dressel, 1981; Fincher, 2003). Because of the tradition of academic freedom, faculty may harbor ill will toward institutional leadership and administration (Dressel, 1981).

The importance of leadership in higher education lies in its potential to transform and improve institutions (Ramsden, 1998). If leaders are to navigate the future of higher education successfully, new skills and new ideas may be required (Kezar et al., 2006). Ramsden (1998) found that academic environments function better when leadership is “enabling, coherent, honest, firm, and competent” (p. 106) while providing efficient management, promoting a positive vision, and developing staff. In Table 2.2 below, the academic leadership practices derived from the literature review on the same topic conducted by Bryman (2007) are listed together with the academic leadership practices offered by Ramsden’s (1998) work. Finally, a synthesis of the behavioral leadership theories presented in Table 2.1 is also listed. The three lists of leadership practices in Table 2.2 exhibit much affinity between them.

## **Table 2.2**

*Academic Leadership Practices Compared to Synthesis of Behavioral Leadership Practices  
From Table 2.1*

Effective leadership in higher education: A literature review (Bryman, 2007)	Learning to lead in higher education (Ramsden, 1998)	Synthesis of behavioral leadership models from Table 2.1
Provide a strategic vision	Provide positive vision	Create a vision
Provide resources to stimulate scholarship and research	Enable	Enable followers
Treat faculty fairly and with integrity, create a collegial environment	Be competent, firm	Be a role model
Be trustworthy	Be honest, competent, and efficient	Arouse motivation in followers
Provide feedback on performance	Develop individuals	

**Shared Leadership**

Recent scholarship on leadership has recognized that in a knowledge-based society, top-down, leader-centric theories of leadership might be less appropriate (Bolden et al., 2015). In a purely theoretical piece, Gronn (2002) argued that leadership studies needed an expanded unit of analysis and an updated concept called distributed leadership. Gronn noted a cultural and scholarly dissatisfaction with the binaries often found in leadership research: leader-follower, or leadership-followership. Conjoint agency for Gronn was the idea that individuals in an organization synchronize their actions in the collective according to their agenda and those of their peers and their sense of group membership. Gronn’s theoretical writings influenced the emergence of shared leadership research.

Distributed or shared leadership has two essential principles: first, leadership is a shared influence process occurring within a group, and second, leadership arises from the dispersed

expertise of the group members (Bennett et al., 2003; van Ameijde et al., 2009). This leadership conception has shifted the focus from leader-centric models to leadership as a collective group phenomenon (Bolden et al., 2009). Shared leadership is an emergent property of a group committed to a common task and is useful for reconceptualizing the notion of leadership (Bennett et al., 2003).

Researchers have commented that shared leadership is conceptually well-suited to the higher education environment where the tension between the managerial and collegial cultures diminish leader-centric models of leadership (Bolden et al., 2008; Jones et al., 2012; van Ameijde et al., 2009). Bolden et al. (2015) cited the example of a grant-funded research project which requires the shared leadership of multiple professionals working in different offices.

Empirical evidence, however, suggests that traditional, top-down leadership exists in higher education. Bolden et al. (2008) conducted 152 semi-structured interviews at 12 universities in the United Kingdom to understand competing academic leadership conceptions, such as managerial versus shared. The conclusions from the study were that conceptions of leadership were hybridized and that the tensions between managerialism and collegiality, for example, were typical. Eddy and Vanderlinden (2006) analyzed the responses to an open-ended question on a survey administered to 682 community college administrators, which asked if the respondents viewed themselves as leaders and, if so, why. Content analysis of the responses showed that nearly half (47%) of the respondents viewed their leadership as positional; whereas, only 3.1% expressed their leadership in terms of empowering others to act.

Shared leadership may be a rhetorical device or an ideal to be strived for in higher education more than reality (Bolden et al., 2009). The work by Jones et al. (2012) identified a set of values and practices that encouraged the emergence of shared leadership in higher education,

which included: trust, respect, recognition, collaboration, reflection, group awareness, social support, and open dialogue. Jones et al. employed an action research methodology in their study over 18 months. A community of practice met regularly at reflexive workshops to share their experiences of which conditions and leadership skills were required to achieve a distributed leadership environment. These findings are similar to the items that researchers have found to be effective in leading part-time faculty, as will be presented in the next section of this literature review.

### **Academic Leadership and Study Abroad Directors in Italy**

The higher education environment presents unique challenges for leaders. The study abroad directors in Italy find themselves in a similar context with some differences. Still, for the most part, the concepts of academic leadership presented in this section of the literature review shed some light on the participants' experiences in this study.

Just as campus leaders at colleges and universities in the United States must lead in a way that resonates with the collegial culture common among faculty, so too, the study abroad directors in Italy must understand the culture of the PT faculty they lead. This section of the literature review explored leadership within the context of higher education. There is a tension between campus leaders' managerial imperatives and the pursuit of knowledge among the faculty.

The final section of the literature review examines the leadership of PT faculty in higher education. This section presents empirical studies and their findings. The studies reviewed in the next section focused on a U.S. higher education setting and the leadership that either deans or department chairs provide to PT faculty. These studies' findings were essential for the present study, which focused explicitly on PT faculty leadership at study abroad programs in Italy.

## **Leading Part-Time Faculty**

The growth in the number of part-time faculty at higher education institutions has created problems that require attention (American Association of University Professors, 2006; Eagan et al., 2015; Gappa et al., 2007). There are widely accepted policies for tenured, full-time faculty, such as tenure, promotion, and evaluation, and yet the same is not true for part-time faculty (American Association of University Professors, 2006; Biles & Tuckman, 1986; Waltman et al., 2012).

### **Characteristics of Part-Time Faculty**

Part-time faculty are typically considered to be non-tenure track faculty that work less than full-time (Biles & Tuckman, 1986; Gappa & Leslie, 1993). These individuals are diverse groups who come to an institution with unique perspectives and motivations for their work (Biles & Tuckman, 1986; Leslie et al., 1982). The American Association of University Professors (2006) identified four classifications for part-time faculty: those preferring full-time employment, part-timers by choice with no other employer, those with a full-time job elsewhere, and those who are retired.

Colleges and universities have increasingly relied upon part-time faculty because of the flexibility that their employment affords in terms of costs, scheduling, and staffing (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008; Gappa et al., 2007; Leslie et al., 1982). Because department heads are required to balance the demands of institutional policies, curricular requirements, and budgets, the use of part-time faculty provides an advantage (Leslie et al., 1982). However, this advantage of greater flexibility should be balanced with suitable working conditions for the part-time faculty member (Biles & Tuckman, 1986).

Despite the advantages of using part-time faculty compared to full-time tenured faculty, many have argued that the practice is often exploitative (American Association of University Professors, 2006; Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008; Biles & Tuckman, 1986; Gappa et al., 2007; Gappa & Leslie, 1993). To earn a living wage, some part-timers teach at multiple institutions (American Association of University Professors, 2006). Part-timers may feel a calling to the teaching profession and will endure low pay and poor work conditions, which they find dissonant with the academy's spirit and its mission (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). Some institutions may be driven toward greater reliance on part-time faculty precisely because of the challenging fiscal environment in which they operate (Fryer, 1977).

### **Practices and Policies for Part-Time Faculty**

Researchers have noted that institutions and academic leaders can improve part-time faculty's working environment and job satisfaction by enacting policies that foster a culture of respect for the part-time faculty (Eagan et al., 2015; Leslie et al., 1982; Waltman et al., 2012). Eagan et al. (2015) found that merely recognizing excellence in teaching among part-time faculty contributed to job satisfaction. Waltman et al. (2012) found that part-time faculty job satisfaction and institutional commitment were enhanced by policies that promoted job security, allowed advancement opportunities and fostered inclusive environments. Researchers suggest that greater integration of part-time faculty into the campus community is vital to improving their experience at an institution (Eagan et al., 2015; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Waltman et al., 2012).

Researchers have found that the institution's physical working conditions for part-time faculty will influence their job satisfaction (Eagan et al., 2015; Leslie et al., 1982). Leslie et al. (1982) found that part-time faculty felt alienated and less supported when small things were missing from their working environments, such as office space, access to copying equipment, or



nearby parking. Eagan et al. (2015) found that those with a private office space were significantly more satisfied than those that did not have one. The study also found that part-time faculty with shared office space were substantially more satisfied than those with none. Finally, the study found that part-time faculty with a personal computer provided by the institution were more satisfied than those who did not have one.

The use of part-time faculty at institutions of higher education may continue to increase. The scholarship has provided indications and guidelines which administrators can employ to work more effectively with part-time faculty to address some of the disparities between part-timers and tenured faculty. Table 2.3 provides a synopsis of some of these findings from the works reviewed.

**Table 2.3**

*Practices for Managing Part-Time Faculty*

The invisible faculty (Gappa & Leslie, 1993)	Factors for satisfaction of PT faculty (Waltman et al., 2012)	New policies for PT faculty (Fryer, 1977)	Supporting the majority (Eagan et al., 2015)
Publicly recognize achievement	Support teaching efforts	Compensation recognizes out-of- classroom work	Recognize excellence in teaching
Seek feedback on supervision	Promote job security and advancement opportunities	A planned development program for PT	Provide access to professional growth opportunities
Treat PT faculty with respect	Create an inclusive climate	Full range of support services	Provide office space, shared office space
Invite to departmental social events		Invite to departmental meetings and committees	Integrate into department and institution

## **Part-Time Faculty in Overseas Study Abroad Programs**

The scholarly work on the use of part-time faculty at overseas study abroad programs is limited. Garraty and Adams (1959) surveyed the state of affairs of U.S. study abroad programs in Western Europe 60 years ago. They quipped that instructional costs were significantly reduced compared to the home campus. In 1959, a highly qualified instructor from France could be hired for \$300 to teach a French Composition course (Garraty & Adams, 1959). Freeman (1964) mentions local tutors in discussing models of delivering the curriculum at overseas study abroad programs in Europe. Freeman (1964) noted that study abroad programs employ one or a combination of the following models: instruction provided by the local university, instruction provided by local university augmented by contract tutors, instruction provided solely by contract tutors, or instruction provided by faculty from home campus.

Scholars have also raised concerns about the quality of education provided by local part-time faculty at study abroad programs (Freeman, 1964; Garraty & Adams, 1959). Some have commented on the differences between the United States and Western Europe in the teaching style of faculty, characterizing European faculty as more distant and tending not to coddle students as much as their American counterparts (Garraty et al., 1976). More recently, scholars have highlighted the importance of the cultural ambassador role to students held by local part-time faculty in study abroad programs (Stephenson et al., 2005). In general, there is a lack of scholarly commentary on the organizational aspects of managing part-time faculty at overseas study abroad programs.

Some news outlets more recently covered the perceived exploitation of part-time faculty at study abroad programs in Italy (Guttenplan, 2012; Redden, 2013). Part-time faculty in Florence, Italy that tried to organize better contracts through local labor organizations, reported

professional consequences (Guttenplan, 2012). After the introduction of new labor laws in Italy, at least one large study abroad program faced lawsuits from disgruntled part-time faculty over how the institution handled the matter (Redden, 2013).

### **Scholarship on Leading Part-Time Faculty**

A search for scholarship on leading and supporting part-time faculty yielded several studies. Eleven were selected for review, as shown in Table 2.4, where they are sorted by the method and then the publication year: five employed qualitative methods and six used quantitative methods.

**Table 2.4**

*Characteristics of U.S.-Based Studies Examining Organizational Aspects of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty (NTTF)*

Reference	Purpose	Methods	Participants & setting
Gappa and Leslie (1993)	Identify practices and policies to support NTTF.	Qualitative case study	467 participants (administrators, faculty deans, department chairs, faculty leaders, and part-time faculty) at 18 different universities.
Cunningham (2010)	Identify practices and policies to support NTTF.	Qualitative case study	17 contingent faculty at extended campus locations of a central university.
Waltman et al. (2012)	Identify practices and policies to support NTTF.	Qualitative focus groups	24 focus groups with 220 non-tenure-track-faculty (both full and part-time) at 12 research universities.
Kezar and Sam (2013)	Identify practices and policies to support NTTF.	Qualitative case study	45 faculty leaders (40 contingent and 5 tenured) at 30 institutions that either have positive institutional policies for contingent faculty or are working towards them.

Kezar (2013)	Identify practices and policies to support NTTF.	Qualitative case study	107 non-tenure-track faculty in 25 departments at three large four-year public universities.
Hoyt (2012)	Identify factors predicting NTTF satisfaction and loyalty.	Quantitative survey	358 adjunct faculty at one satellite campus of Brigham Young University.
Eagan et al. (2015)	Identify factors predicting NTTF satisfaction.	Quantitative, secondary data	4169 respondents on original survey who identified as part-time faculty. 279 four-year colleges and universities.
Gehrke and Kezar (2015)	Understand decision-making process of leaders supporting NTTF.	Quantitative, secondary data	278 deans of either colleges of arts and sciences or colleges of liberal arts across many institutions.
Delotell and Cates (2017)	Correlate leadership of chairs and commitment of NTTF.	Quantitative Survey	560 online adjunct faculty at a single, for-profit institution.
Ervin (2018)	Identify practices and policies to support NTTF.	Quantitative survey	309 adjuncts at two extended campuses of a central university.
Barnett (2018)	Correlate leadership and satisfaction of NTTF.	Quantitative survey	77 online adjunct faculty at one for-profit university.

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The five qualitative studies in Table 2.4 vary somewhat in their discreet purpose, but for the most part, they are seeking to identify practices and policies that support non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF) at higher education institutions in the United States.

The book by Gappa and Leslie (1993) provides very little information about the data analysis techniques used for the case study. It does reproduce the questionnaires directed at different stakeholders for the interviews. It describes the participants and institutions only generically. The study does boast a large population across many institutions, which adds strength to the findings and their generalizability. The conclusions produced 43 recommendations for supporting NTTF. Some of these are listed below in bullet points. Some were omitted because they were not central to the relationship between a supervisor and a part-time faculty member.

- Recommended practice 25: "Develop objective performance criteria and procedures for evaluating part-time faculty and use the results as the basis for decisions about reappointment" (p. 259).
- Recommended practice 26: "Provide support services to part-time faculty" (p. 260).
- Recommended Practice 27: "Communicate the message that part-time faculty are important to the institution" (p. 263).
- Recommended practice 30: "Invite part-time faculty to share their perceptions of effective supervisory practice at department chair training sessions" (p. 265).
- Recommended practice 35: "Appoint part-time faculty to committees" (p. 268).
- Recommended practice 37: "Invite part-time faculty to social events" (p. 269).
- Recommended Practice 38: "Publicly recognize part-time faculty for their achievements and contributions" (p. 270).
- Recommended practice 39: "Orient part-time faculty to the institution and to the expectations the institution has for them" (p. 271).

- Recommended practice 41: "Provide in-service professional development opportunities for part-time faculty" (p. 273).
- Recommended practice 42: "Provide incentives for good performance" (p. 274).
- Recommended Practice 43: "Use teaching evaluations to help part-time faculty improve" (p. 275).

The dissertation study by Cunningham (2010) and the research article by Waltman et al. (2012) found somewhat conflicting results between them. Cunningham's case study interviewed 17 contingent faculty at one extended campus, and in contrast Waltman et al. conducted 24 focus groups with 220 NTTF at 12 research universities. Waltman et al. found four themes that emerged, two for satisfaction and two for dissatisfaction among NTTF. Satisfaction was associated with "teaching and students" and "personal life and flexibility." Dissatisfaction was associated with "terms of employment" and "respect and inclusion." The results for respect and inclusion contradict the findings from (Cunningham, 2010) but the study sites and participants are very different. The study by Waltman et al. (2012) included 12 institutions and Cunningham (2010) included only one with extended campuses. Waltman et al. (2012) found that the level of satisfaction with integration into the campus and departmental culture was directly tied to the department chair's activities and leadership, just as Gappa and Leslie (1993) had found.

The final two qualitative studies in Table 2.4 by Kezar (2013) and Kezar and Sam (2013) approach the topic of supporting NTTF in two novel ways. Both studies employ a qualitative case study methodology. Kezar focused on NTTF in teaching roles in departments that had either implemented favorable policies for NTTF or failed to do so and asked how this affected the NTTF's perceived ability to teach well and create a positive student learning environment. The study used the concept of "opportunity to perform" which competes with Herzberg's Motivation-

Hygiene theory (1959) to measure job satisfaction. Kezar argued that the work environment can have a direct influence on work performance. In Herzberg's model, work satisfaction is a mediating variable whereby the environment influences worker motivation (satisfaction or dissatisfaction), which in turn influences work performance. The findings from the study were significant for this dissertation study. Table 2.5 lists the results.

**Table 2.5**

*Kezar's (2013) Departmental Policies that Positively or Negatively Impact NTTF Perceived Ability to Create a Positive Learning Environment*

Negative impact	Positive impact
Last-minute course scheduling	Departmental orientation and onboarding
Working at multiple institutions plus lack of departmental commitment to rehire	Provide academic freedom and encourage experimentation in pedagogy
Lack of input into curriculum	NTTF coordinator or advocate
Lack of learning resources	
Lack of feedback or meaningful input from the administrative leadership	
Lack of office support	

The six quantitative studies from Table 2.4 examine the relationships between organizational aspects such as policies or leadership and specific outcomes for NTTF, such as commitment or job satisfaction.

Hoyt (2012) conducted a study at a single satellite campus of Brigham Young University in Utah. The regression analyses used data from a single survey administered to the adjunct faculty at the satellite campus. Several variables significantly predicted job satisfaction with an adjusted  $R^2$  of .57. These variables included pay, work preference, quality of students, faculty support, teaching schedule, collaborative research with tenured faculty, classroom facilities, and

teaching load. The study also found several variables that significantly predicted job loyalty with an adjusted  $R^2$  of .45. These variables included work preference, pay, facilities, autonomy, faculty support, and quality of students. The study is limited by a number of factors.

Although Hoyt (2012) did include data from 358 adjunct faculty, these are all at one satellite campus for Brigham Young University. Adjunct faculty may have felt a sense of calling or duty to teach at the institution because of religious beliefs. This is a mechanism that may not be present at most institutions, and therefore the results are less generalizable. Finally, the study suffered from common-rater bias where both the independent and dependent variables for the regression analyses were derived from a single survey administered on one occasion, which can significantly inflate correlation values (Meier & Toole, 2012).

Eagan et al. (2015) used data from the 2010-2011 administration of the HERI faculty survey and sought to ascertain institutional characteristics and NTTF characteristics that predict job satisfaction. The researchers found that only 3.5% of the variance in workplace satisfaction was attributed to differences between institutions. Despite this low percentage, they argue that hierarchical linear modeling is appropriate because their model has more than one level and the data are nested. McNeish et al. (2017) point out that researchers in psychology tend to overuse hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) for clustered data. They offer that other techniques may be just as appropriate to use, robust, and can handle clustered data. Population-averaged methods (PAMs) account for clustered data without splitting the model into multiple levels. Clustered robust standard errors (CR-SE) are another technique that does not require multiple levels and uses more straightforward calculations that produce more standard outputs like  $R^2$ . Furthermore, compared to these more straightforward techniques, HLM carries a more extensive list of



assumptions that introduce more potential for flawed analysis if not met. HLM may be overly complicated and unnecessarily powerful for the context in the study by Eagan et al. (2015).

Despite potential issues stemming from HLM, Eagan et al. (2015) found that involuntary part-timers who wanted full-time appointments (underemployed) were less likely to have a positive working relationship with administration compared to voluntary part-timers. The involuntary part-time faculty were less satisfied with their work than voluntary part-timers. The underemployed part-time faculty were also less likely to feel respected by full-time faculty. The researchers report that the lower levels of workplace satisfaction among involuntary part-time faculty are associated with more mediocre relationships with administration and less respect from full-time colleagues.

These findings may not translate into the context of study abroad programs in Italy, where workplace satisfaction among part-time faculty may be linked to their perception of their relationship with the director. It is less likely that their workplace satisfaction will be linked to perceptions of lack of respect from full-time faculty because as Borgioli and Manuelli (2013) report, part-time faculty at these programs are in an overwhelming majority.

Also included in Table 2.4 is a quantitative study by Barnett (2018) that examined the predictive relationship between administrators' leadership behaviors and the job satisfaction of online adjunct faculty at a for-profit university. The results showed that transformational leadership was a significant, positive predictor of job satisfaction ( $t(73) = 4.85, p < .0005$ ; 95% CI (1.78, 4.26)), and transactional leadership was a significant, negative predictor of job satisfaction ( $t(73) = -2.81, p = .006$ ; 95% CI (-7.61, -1.29)). The coefficient for transformational leadership was  $B = 3.02$ , indicating that overall job satisfaction increases by 3 for each 1-point

increase in the transformational leadership scores. The results may be inflated due to the issue of common-rater bias as previously mentioned.

The quantitative study by Gehrke and Kezar (2015) is included in Table 2.4 and investigated the decision-making process of deans of colleges of liberal arts or colleges of arts and sciences in supporting NTTF. The study found that deans more strongly support the deployment of policies and resources to support full-time NTTF than they do policies to support part-time NTTF. For example, on a 5-point Likert scale, the deans were supportive of providing orientation ( $M = 4.67, SD = 0.81$ ), office supplies ( $M = 4.65, SD = 0.81$ ), medical benefits ( $M = 4.63, SD = 0.83$ ), and office space ( $M = 4.61, SD = 0.83$ ) for full-time NTTF. On the other hand, for part-time NTTF deans supported only orientation ( $M = 4.30, SD = 1.05$ ), office supplies ( $M = 4.19, SD = 0.94$ ), and administrative support ( $M = 4.12, SD = 1.01$ ). Considering most instructors at study abroad centers in Italy are part-time, outnumbering fulltime instructors ten to one on average (Borgioli & Manuelli, 2013), the results from the study by Gehrke and Kezar (2015) may not be as meaningful in the context of the study abroad centers in Italy.

Also included in the quantitative studies in Table 2.4 is a correlational study by Delotell and Cates (2017) that administered a survey to online adjuncts at a single institution, seeking to measure the relationship between the transformational leadership of departmental chairs and the continuance commitment of the faculty. The analysis results showed that the transformational leadership component of the MLQ-5X was the only one that exhibited a statistically significant relationship to the continuance commitment of the online adjunct faculty that responded ( $R = .487, R^2 = .237, F = 34.249, p < .001$ ). This large correlation for a social phenomenon as complicated as leadership and continuance commitment is likely inflated due to common rater bias problems, as discussed above. The study results also found that transformational leadership

accounted for 42.8% (partial correlation coefficient) of the variance observed in the outcome variable (continuance commitment). This percentage is unusually large.

Finally, the last study to be discussed from Table 2.4 was a dissertation by Ervin (2018) studying the motivation (Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale) from Tremblay et al. (2009) and perceived organizational support (POS) from Eisenberger et al. (1986) among adjunct faculty at two extended campuses of a single university. The results showed that most adjunct faculty members perceived being supported by the institution ( $M = 5.039$ ,  $SD = 1.342$ , 7-point Likert Scale). The study also found that adjunct faculty members who were more self-determined (intrinsic motivation) reported higher levels of POS ( $r = .272$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

The studies in Table 2.4 provided some indications about the relationships between the leadership of the director and the experiences of the part-time faculty. The studies provided useful information on the leadership behaviors that might bolster job satisfaction or the policies that might positively affect their work experience. None of the studies addressed the specific context of study abroad centers in Italy.

Many of the researchers listed in Table 2.4 have called for research studies at more institutional types on the policies and practices supporting part-time faculty (Hoyt, 2012; Kezar & Sam, 2013; Waltman et al., 2012). Delotell and Cates (2017) called for research that considers the specific dimensions of transformational leadership in the context of leading adjunct faculty. Deyo (2018) called for an investigation, specifically in the context of overseas study abroad programs that consider the training and rules that directors give to local staff, including faculty. One well-known scholar in leadership and part-time faculty stated that she could not recall ever seeing any scholarship specifically on part-time faculty leadership at study abroad centers (A. Kezar, personal communication, May 31, 2019). A thorough literature review corroborated

Kezar's statement of a lack of any studies specifically on the leadership of PT faculty at study abroad centers. The present study examined the experiences of leadership study abroad directors in leading part-time faculty at study abroad programs in Italy.

### **Summary**

Leadership scholarship has advanced significantly over the last century and has been identified as strategically important in the higher education context (Kezar et al., 2006; Ramsden, 1998). Leadership, specifically in the context of overseas study abroad programs, has not been addressed. Some scholars have provided descriptions of the role of the director or noted the job complexity and the many hats that directors must wear to lead a program successfully (Goode, 2007; Goodwin & Nacht, 1988; Hornig, 1995; Lucas, 2009; O'Neal & Krueger, 1995; Stephenson & Forward, 2005; Stephenson et al., 2005). Still, these commentaries do not address leadership specifically.

The increased reliance on part-time faculty appointments in higher education has spawned a body of research on these individuals' plight and the policies and practices that might improve their station within the academy. Due to various scholars cited above, these individuals are no longer invisible in the higher education landscape in the United States of America. There is an echo of this trend among part-time faculty of U.S. study abroad programs in Italy too. In 2009 the Association of Scholars at American Universities in Italy (ASAUI) was formed and had recently partnered with the Sociology Department of the University of Florence and an Italian labor organization to conduct the first-ever exploratory poll to understand the situation of these professionals in Italy better. This dissertation study has complemented this movement in Italy while also providing useful data on study abroad directors' leadership experiences working with part-time faculty.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Because leadership is a social phenomenon, it is reasonable to assume that it is observable through the experiences of individuals. This section describes the methodology, procedures and methods used to conduct the data collection, and analysis for this investigation into the phenomenon of leadership. The purpose of this IPA study was to investigate how directors of study abroad centers in Italy understand and experience their leadership of part-time faculty.

The following research question guided this study: How do directors of study abroad centers in Italy understand and experience their leadership of part-time faculty? The following guiding questions provided data to answer the main research question:

1. Describe your role as the leader of the part-time faculty at your program.
2. How do you define leadership for yourself?
3. Describe one or more instances of when you felt that you had successfully provided leadership to the part-time faculty. How did you feel? How did you experience that?
4. Describe an instance of when you felt that you had failed as a leader of the part-time faculty. How did you feel? How did you experience that?
5. What do you find most challenging in working with part-time faculty? And, why?
6. What are your priorities for the academic program and what do you do to achieve them? Provide examples.
7. Describe some ways in which you interact with the part-time faculty collectively or individually on a routine basis as the director of the program.
8. How do you feel about the support you receive from the main campus?

9. Describe your feelings about the status of part-time faculty at your program and in academia in general.

The rest of this chapter provides a detailed description of the research design and rationale. The chapter also discusses the data collection and data analysis strategies. Finally, the chapter presents the steps taken to ensure the research's trustworthiness and covers ethical considerations.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

Given this study aimed to understand and make sense of leadership in a specific context, the research design and rationale were open and flexible to provide adequate data to address the research question. A qualitative research method was appropriate in this case because, as Merriam (2002b) pointed out, all qualitative research is typified by three elements: a search for understanding and meaning, the use of the researcher as the primary instrument for data gathering and analysis, and an abundantly discursive final product. Merriam provided a general distinction between qualitative and quantitative research based on a fundamental difference in the nature of reality: Reality is socially constructed and subjective versus being fixed and universal in quantitative research designs. This distinction does not always hold, but it served to situate the approach that this study employed.

This study provided a detailed examination of individual experience and how individuals derived meaning from that experience. IPA is a qualitative research methodology committed to the in-depth study of lived experiences and how individuals make sense of them (Eatough & Smith, 2008). IPA incorporates three distinct elements: phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography (Smith et al., 2009).

Phenomenology proposes that our experience of reality is always an interaction between the objective world and the sense-making that we bring (Spinelli, 2005). The leading figures in this philosophical tradition are Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre (Smith et al., 2009). In this study, the reality of the phenomenon of leadership among study abroad directors was multitudinous and dependent upon the context (objective world) and the meaning born by the directors, and the substance derived by the researcher. In this way, the phenomenon under study was best understood holistically rather than through discreet variables (Lincoln & Guba, 1986).

Hermeneutics is the theory of interpretation and is what “interpretative” refers to in IPA. As discussed above, an individual makes sense of the objective world through mental processes. This sense-making is an interpretation of reality. The main protagonists for this branch of philosophy are Schleiermacher, Heidegger, and Gadamer (Smith et al., 2009). Hermeneutics holds that to understand the whole, one must look at the parts, and to understand the parts, one must look at the whole (Smith et al., 2009). Scholars refer to this as the hermeneutic circle, which has been criticized for its seemingly logical inconsistency.

On the contrary, leading IPA proponents (Smith et al., 2009) point out that the hermeneutic circle is central to conducting an IPA study because data analysis is not linear but helical, shifting from individual cases to the corpus of data across subjects and back again to the individual to gain deeper insights. In this sense, IPA, and indeed most qualitative research, involves a double hermeneutic because the participants interpret their experience, and the researcher interprets these interpretations.

Idiography is concerned with the individual case and is a central feature of IPA. As Lincoln and Guba (1986) stated, the statements derived from a qualitative analysis are bound to

the specific individuals and the context of the study. Therefore, the results are not generalizable except where through a careful analysis of the report, a reader might find something useful for another context. This potential to transfer the findings to another context can only be achieved if the research provides a detailed, in-depth description (Merriam, 2002a).

Operationally, IPA moves inductively from a single individual to a set of individuals and from the descriptive to the interpretative (Smith et al., 2009). In this study, therefore, the researcher was not committed to one theory of leadership but rather to deriving statements that offer a coherent and logical account of the experiences of a handful of study abroad directors in Italy providing leadership to part-time faculty.

IPA is one variant within the tradition of phenomenology. As all phenomenology is descriptive versus explanatory, researchers tend to differentiate phenomenology as either descriptive or interpretative (Finlay, 2009). Descriptive phenomenologists work to elucidate the “essential, general meaning structures of a phenomenon” (Finlay, 2009, p. 10), limiting themselves to the phenomenon itself and what the information immediately presents. Descriptive phenomenologists in the Husserlian tradition seek to arrive at an essence of the phenomenon, remaining somewhat removed from the phenomenon itself (Sloan & Bowe, 2014). There is a stronger tradition of objectivity in descriptive phenomenology.

In contrast to descriptive phenomenologists, interpretive or interpretative phenomenologists work in the Heideggerian tradition, holding that interpretation is an inevitable part of being the world and is unavoidable (Finlay, 2009). Heidegger argued that an observer cannot remain detached from a phenomenon, but is inextricably linked to its meaning (Sloan & Bowe, 2014). This is the interpretative aspect of interpretative phenomenology, that the researcher necessarily interprets the meaning of the phenomenon under study; therefore, there is



less objectivity in this tradition. IPA is an analytic, research technique derived from the tradition of interpretive phenomenology.

### **Data Collection**

This qualitative study conducted interviews and a focus group to collect data to answer the research question. This process involved many steps and procedures, as outlined in the following sections.

#### **Study Abroad Directors in Italy**

The survey conducted for the Association of American College and University Programs in Italy (AACUPI) by Borgioli and Manuelli (2013) represents the most recent data on the study abroad centers in Italy. The report counted 148 study centers in Italy among the AACUPI member institutions. Although no direct data exists, it was reasonable to assume that nearly 100% of these study abroad centers had a director or some variant such as a resident director or dean responsible for the academic, administrative, and student life functions of the program. Therefore, there were more than 148 directors in Italy because there are study abroad programs in Italy that were not members of AACUPI. The researcher attended the quarterly AACUPI meetings with many of these individuals from 2010 to 2015 and can report significant diversity within the population for gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, experience, and educational attainment.

The study abroad centers in Italy were distributed across the country with concentrations in Florence (31.2%) and Rome (47.2%), according to the survey conducted by Borgioli and Manuelli (2013). The survey also found that in 2012, the percentage of U.S. American students that attended programs associated with AACUPI in either Latium or Tuscany was 80%. Not surprisingly, these two regions have Rome (Latium) and Florence (Tuscany) as their capital

cities. After these two, the next most popular study abroad region in Italy was Emilia Romagna, but the number of students it hosts was an order of magnitude less than either Latium or Tuscany. Bologna is the capital city of Emilia Romagna and has a long history of being a university town dating back to the middle ages. Because of the concentration of programs in either Florence or Rome, it was likely that the part-time faculty teaching at study abroad centers in Italy were also concentrated in these two cities.

### **Participant Selection Criteria**

The participants in the current study were individuals currently acting as the director or equivalent, such as dean or resident director, of study abroad centers in Italy. Although there was some diversity among the participants on characteristics such as gender, race, or age, they were macroscopically homogenous because they all shared roughly the same title and duties in the context of study abroad centers in Italy. A more homogenous sample of the population is appropriate for IPA (Smith et al., 2009) because the data analysis can focus more on the uniqueness of each participant's experience without the noise of grossly different contexts.

The number of participants in IPA should be small to allow for a detailed and in-depth analysis of individual experiences (Smith, 2004). Leading proponents of IPA have suggested from five to 10 participants (Smith, 2004) and from three to six for student projects (Smith et al., 2009). This study included eight participants.

The selection criteria for the participants were the following:

- currently employed as a study abroad director or equivalent in Florence,
- willingness to participate in the study,
- ability to adequately describe their experiences in English,

- a minimum of four years' experience supervising part-time faculty in the context of study abroad centers in Italy.

The researcher chose to narrow the possible sample to only directors in Florence because of the concentration of programs in Italy in this city. As stated above, there may have been characteristics of the interplay between U.S. study abroad centers and the pool of part-time faculty unique to this locale. These unique characteristics may not have manifested in other cities in Italy, where the concentration of programs was much less.

### **Participant Selection**

The researcher used purposeful sampling to select the most appropriate individuals for the study based on the selection criteria. Purposeful sampling is used in qualitative research to intentionally (purposefully) determine individuals or sites that will provide the researcher with information that will answer the research question and address the phenomenon under study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Gliner et al., 2017). The researcher utilized professional and personal relationships within the research population to recruit participants.

The researcher contacted known individuals who met the selection criteria through electronic communication via email. In this regard, the researcher also used convenience sampling by identifying and recruiting individuals through professional and personal connections. The email to recruit potential participants solicited information from the potential participants, to ensure that they met the selection criteria, asking specifically what their current title and role were and how many years they had been supervising faculty. The email also contained information about the nature of the study, including its purpose and main research question. Finally, the information in the email included issues of confidentiality and data security.

Recruitment occurred as the COVID-19 pandemic was exploding in Italy. The directors of the study abroad programs in Italy were very busy coordinating their responses and plans for the spring semester with their colleagues in the United States. Eight individuals agreed to participate in the study while about fifteen were contacted. Many declined giving reasons related to increased workload while dealing with the pandemic.

For participants who agreed to be in the study and who met the criteria, the researcher sent a follow-up email with a link to a short web survey that captured information about each participant and their study abroad program, including educational attainment, years of experience, nationality, gender, number of part-time faculty-supervised, and the total number of student participants per year. Finally, the participants were asked to provide a pseudonym for the study to protect their identity.

## **Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews provided the primary source of data for addressing the research question. The researcher also conducted a follow-up focus group with a subset of four of the eight participants to validate the main themes derived from the interviews through member-checking, described by Cho and Trent (2006) as a way of checking with participants on the accuracy of the findings from the data analysis.

Participants were experts in the study topic from a practical sense, and the researcher treated the participants as such. This approach elicited detailed responses from participants in the interviews as the participants were presumed to be knowledgeable and informed, thereby being capable of providing essential insights and analysis to the phenomenon (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

Interviews are a qualitative data collection technique whose purpose is to facilitate a discussion that brings forth the participant's thoughts, ideas, and feelings about a phenomenon (Smith, 2004). The interview questions were open-ended (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) to allow for the inductive investigation of the phenomenon enabling the participants to lead the researcher in unexpected directions (Eatough & Smith, 2008).

The researcher scheduled 90-minute interviews with the participants conducted via computer with video and audio. Zoom software captured the video interview given the participants were all in Italy. The interview guide included nine open-ended questions. Smith et al. (2009) suggested from six to 10 open-ended questions for an interview that lasts from 45 to 90 minutes. At the moment of each interview, the researcher read a statement that included information about confidentiality, data security, the purpose of the study, and informed consent.

The researcher downloaded the recordings from the Zoom cloud and then deleted them from the cloud. The researcher stored the recordings on a secured device with password protection. The researcher prepared the transcripts of the interviews from the recordings. Zoom also prepared a transcript of the interviews automatically, which aided in the preparation of complete transcripts. Listening to the interviews repeatedly while transcribing them was an essential part of the data analysis (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999).

The researcher documented the insights and understandings that arose from transcription in a reflective journal. The reflective journal allowed the researcher to write a reaction to the interviews. This process was somewhat detached from the more meticulous data analysis. The reflective journal offered a space for the researcher to explore impressions or ideas about the interviews through the analytical process of writing.

## **Focus Group**

The researcher conducted a follow-up focus group after collecting and analyzing the interview data. The purpose of the focus group was to explore the themes that arose from the interviews. Creswell (2015) suggested four to six participants, and Smith et al. (2009) suggest four to five participants. Both agree that the focus group should be large enough to allow for a discussion among participants but not so large that the process becomes unmanageable or too lengthy. The researcher recruited the focus-group participants from the participants of the study based on the quality of the responses they provide from the interviews. In simple terms, these four participants all engaged more with the interview questions and provided more detailed descriptions of their experiences in leading PT faculty.

A focus group does not fit with traditional IPA because of the importance placed on idiography, but Smith (2004) suggests that researchers can overcome this by parsing the transcript in two ways: one complete transcript of the discussion and another transcript for each participant as a standalone document. In any case, the purpose of the focus group was that of a member-check to the main findings of the semi-structured interviews, which were the primary data for the study.

The focus group was scheduled for two hours and took place after the interview data had been analyzed and themes had been developed. Zoom was used again to record the focus group session. The researcher introduced the main themes from the interviews to the focus group. Each focus group member was given a chance to provide their insights and perspectives.

The researcher followed the same data security procedures for the focus group. The researcher downloaded the recording and transcript from the Zoom cloud and then deleted them from the cloud. The researcher stored the recordings on a password-protected account. The

researcher prepared the transcripts of the focus group from the recording and documented the transcription process in a reflective journal.

### **Data Analysis**

Qualitative data analysis occurs in concert with data collection (Merriam, 2002b). The data collected from the first interview informed subsequent interviews as the study progressed. The researcher formulated initial concepts and categories and tested them as more data were collected (Glesne, 2011). During data collection and analysis, the researcher kept a reflective journal to capture sudden insights while also freeing the mind to experience new ones (Glesne, 2011).

The sequence and nature of the data analyses steps in this study followed the suggestions from Smith et al. (2009). These include six actions for interpretative phenomenological analysis: (a) reading and re-reading, (b) initial noting, (c) developing emergent themes, (d) searching for connections across themes, (e) moving to the next case, and (f) looking for patterns across cases.

Step 1: Reading and re-reading. In this step, Smith et al. (2009) suggested listening to the audio recording while reading the transcript to pick up additional meaning that might be available. The researcher took notes on any immediate understandings to bracket them for later analysis. Bracketing is a concept from phenomenology where the researcher is encouraged to set aside intuitions and biases that arise from interacting with the experience or data in this case (Spinelli, 2005). Bracketing is never entirely possible, but it reminds the researcher to be present with the data initially without jumping immediately to analysis. Bracketing in the hermeneutic tradition of phenomenology from Heidegger, which gave rise to IPA, is not intended to set aside personal biases to gain a fresh experience of the phenomenon but rather to be aware of personal

biases so as to separate them from the phenomenon. In the hermeneutic tradition, subjectivity is not only inevitable and crucial in experiencing a phenomenon. it is unavoidable (Finlay 2009).

Step 2: Initial noting. This step occurred in unison with the first step. The researcher spent time examining the content and language of the data in a spirit of exploration, maintaining an open mind while noting all insights without searching for a master narrative (Smith et al., 2009). This process coalesced toward emergent themes, but the ultimate emergence of themes happened in step 3. The researcher used the three categories of notes offered by Smith et al. (2009): descriptive comments focused on the content of what was said, linguistic comments focused on language use, and conceptual comments investigated potential emerging themes.

Step 3: Developing emergent themes. In this step, the researcher moved away from the transcript and focused more on the notes derived from step 2. Smith et al. (2009) describe this step as a fragmentation of the narratives of the transcripts as the researcher organizes and analyzes the notes on the transcripts. The themes were more conceptual and less descriptive. The researcher strove to generate short, sharp statements that encapsulated the meaning of a passage or section of the transcript. The hermeneutic circle describes this step as the researcher derived themes from the notes while also reflecting on the whole narrative of the transcripts— understanding the part from the whole and the whole from the parts (Smith et al., 2009).

Step 4: Searching for connections across emergent themes. Smith et al. (2009) offer three techniques that researchers can employ to identify relationships between themes. Abstraction is the technique of grouping similar themes to generate over-arching themes. Polarization is another technique whereby the researcher puts opposing themes together as a contrast. Finally, numeration is merely counting the number of times a theme appears in the transcripts; although,



Smith et al. (2009) warn that higher frequency may not equate to greater importance in every case.

The purpose of this step was to reduce the number of themes to those that were most representative of the phenomenon. The researcher employed an iterative process of trial and error, testing out themes, and their ability to both amalgamate and represent the plethora of experiences expressed by the participants.

Step 5: Moving to the next case. At this point, the researcher moved on to the next interview transcript and started over from step 1. The researcher strove to bracket what had already been discovered from the first transcript and allow the present transcript to offer new themes and insights. Journaling aided in this process. The commitment to the idiographic nature of IPA seeks to treat each case individually (Smith et al., 2009).

Step 6: Looking for patterns across cases. This final step of analysis involved comparing each case or interview against all the others to understand the themes' efficacy across the data set to offer insights and interpretations of the phenomenon. The main themes derived from the analyses were both descriptive and practical as the researcher used them to make sense of the data and bore down to the core experience of the participants amidst the noise of the interview transcripts.

Finally, the transcripts derived from the focus group were analyzed following the six steps above after all of the interviews had been analyzed and the main themes had been established from the interviews. *Excel* was used to analyze and derive the data using notes, emergent themes, and the three main themes. The researcher used the search and sort features of Excel to group notes and emergent themes. The analysis of the focus group data served to interrogate the themes specifically.

## **Trustworthiness**

Qualitative research studies that employ IPA are not seeking to enunciate a truth statement but are striving to deliver a coherent, representative interpretation of the words and ideas of the participants (Pringle et al., 2011). There are some ways in which researchers can ensure that this interpretation does reflect the data provided by the participants. Guba (1981) and Lincoln and Guba (1986) proposed four criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of qualitative studies: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Each of these is addressed below in the context of this study.

The analog for credibility in a quantitative study is internal validity, or whether the research design successfully measured what it intended. For bolstering credibility in this study, the researcher employed several strategies, as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1986) and Shenton (2004). Member checking is the process of soliciting feedback from participants on the appropriateness of themes derived from the data analysis. This focus group accomplished credibility because the researcher presented the themes to a subset of the participants. The researcher also used negative case analysis, a technique where the researcher actively looks for cases in the data that refute an emerging theme or interpretation. The use of a follow-up focus group is also an example of triangulation, or cross-checking, where the data of the focus group was compared to the data from the interviews. The researcher also employed peer debriefing to ensure that the researcher's analysis made sense to another researcher. Finally, the researcher was forthcoming in this write up about biases, motivations, and assumptions.

Transferability is an analog for generalizability in quantitative studies. For a qualitative researcher, transferability is not a primary objective, but it can occur whenever a reader finds similarities between their situation and the context of the study. This is unattainable, however, if

the research report does not provide enough information and detail. Through a thick description of the data, transferability may be possible (Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Shenton, 2004). The researcher provided a detailed presentation of the data in chapter four.

Dependability is usually referred to as reliability in quantitative studies, or the extent to which the research findings can be replicated. This criterion is tricky in social sciences because human behavior is not static, and humans have unique perspectives on phenomena (Merriam, 2002a). Dependability in qualitative designs can be achieved by employing an audit trail through a reflective journal recording the entire process of data collection and analysis (Merriam, 2002a; Shenton, 2004). The researcher kept a journal and shared data analyses with a peer reviewer who provided feedback.

Confirmability is similar to dependability and is addressed by Lincoln and Guba (1986) similarly. The analog to this in quantitative studies is objectivity, which is inappropriate for IPA. Confirmability can then be achieved through an external audit. By following the audit trail and the process that was documented by the researcher, an external auditor should be able to judge the final product of the research project. For this project, the researcher relied on a peer reviewer to audit the data collection and analysis process.

Finally, the trustworthiness of a qualitative study is also closely tied to ethical considerations. The starting point for ensuring an ethical study in qualitative methods is for the researcher to examine personal assumptions about the setting, the participants, the data, and the dissemination of results (Merriam, 2002a). The researcher used the reflective journal to record personal assumptions, biases, and doubts as the research progressed. The researcher also stored the data in a secured location and used pseudonyms in the write-up to protect participant identity.

Figure 3.1 provides a graphical representation of the procedures used in this study for conducting the IPA. Smith (2004) admonishes against following an overly rigid protocol, and accordingly, the researcher used the procedures and steps outlined in this chapter as a guide and not a set of rules.

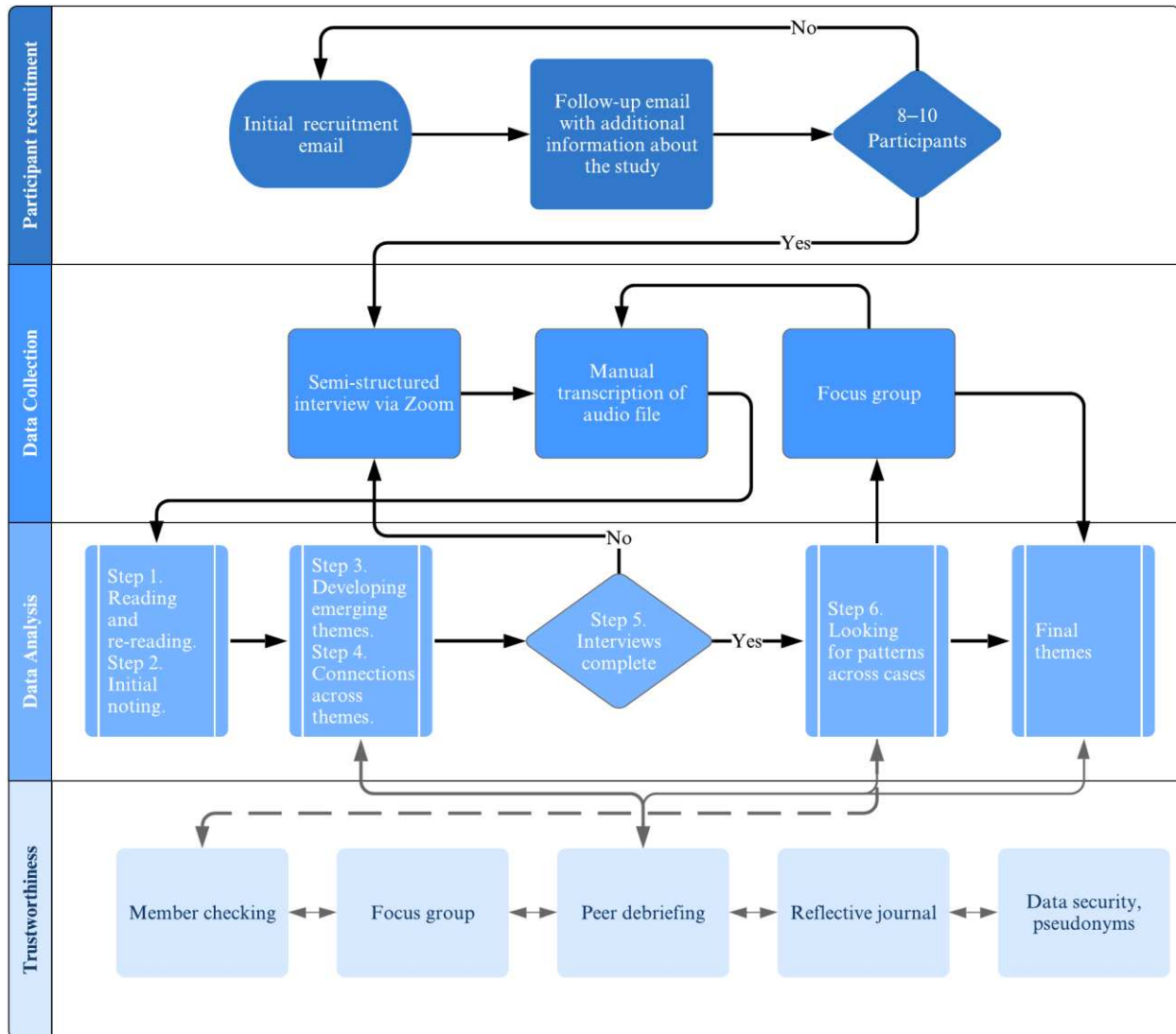


Figure 3.1. Process flow for conducting the interpretative phenomenological analysis study.

## CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the data analyses conducted to address the research question: How do directors of study abroad centers in Italy understand and experience their leadership of part-time faculty? Three main themes emerged from this process: Leadership, Support, and Bridging the Gap.

This chapter presents six sections to organize the information. These sections are participant data, support, bridging the gap, leadership, focus group, and summary. The three main themes include subsections, which served to organize the data into groups to aid in their presentation.

Table 4.1 lists these three themes and delineates the types of statements that fall under each of them. These ideas facilitated the organization of the data set, allowing for a deeper understanding of how the participants understand and experience this phenomenon.

**Table 4.1**

*Three Main Themes and Their Differences*

Leadership	Support	Bridging the Gap
Statements about personal leadership style.	Statements about material support provided to PT faculty.	Statements about programs or activities aimed at overcoming differences between the USA and Italy.
Statements about participant's understanding of leadership.	Statements about some act (e.g., meetings, evaluations) in support of PT faculty.	Statements about interpreting main campus policies into the local context.
Statements providing advice about leading PT faculty.	Statements about labor contracts or the status of PT faculty in Italy.	

Figure 4.1 provides an overview of the three main themes and the sub-themes that arose from the participants' discussions of their experiences. The themes and sub-themes serve to organize and categorize the experiences of the participants to make sense of the data set. In this sense the themes and sub-themes in figure 4.1 are descriptive of the statements from the participants as analyzed by the researcher.

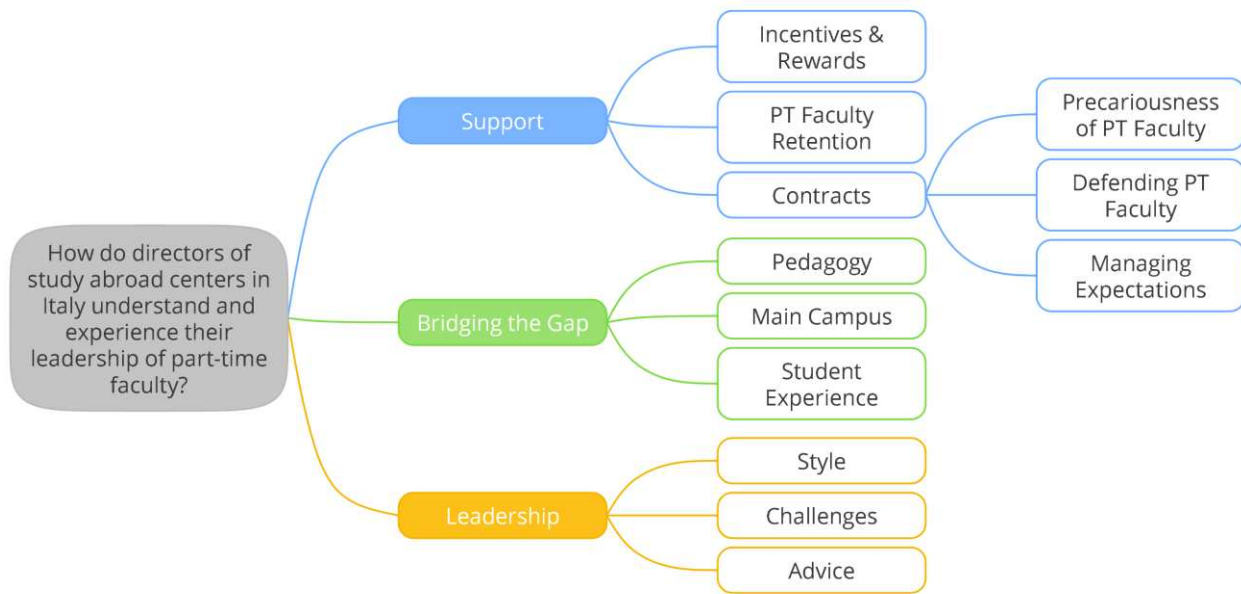


Figure 4.1. Themes and sub-themes from data analysis.

### Participant Data

Eight participants agreed to participate in the study. The coronavirus pandemic was ravaging Italy during both the recruitment and data collection phases of this study. Study abroad directors in Italy were scrambling to respond to the outbreak in March 2020 and through most of April. Some individuals opted out of participation after initially showing interest. Participants routinely canceled interview meetings due to the enormous workload as Italy went into lockdown, and entire cohorts of study abroad students left Italy to transition to online learning. The participants were grappling with a rapidly evolving situation.

The semi-structured interviews ranged from 45 minutes to 75 minutes and utilized Zoom audio and video recording. The participants were all based in or near Florence, Italy, and represented various program types concerning their affiliations to U.S. universities and their control. Each program was unique, but five out of eight of the programs were direct extensions of the home campus and operated independently in Italy. One program was an extension of the home campus but was housed within a local academic entity based in Italy and shared some administrative responsibilities. Another program was solely based in Italy but with ties to one “school of record” in the United States. The final program was a study abroad provider based exclusively in Italy but with deep links to many U.S. universities.

The participants represent various backgrounds and have arrived in their leadership roles through different paths. The titles for the participants were director (four), dean (three), and resident director (one). Three of the participants were female, and five were male. Some chose pseudonyms that differed from their gender and nationality. Five of the participants were not culturally Italian. Six of the participants held doctoral degrees, and two of them had terminal master’s degrees. Table 4.2 provides information about their experience in the role. Table 4.3 displays a brief quote that provides an insight into the participants' lived experiences.

**Table 4.2**

*Study Participants Experience and Program Size*

Participant	Years leading PT faculty in Italy	Number of PT faculty in the program in a typical year
Bill	25+	20
Davide	4	25
Diego	7*	40
Jenny	7	20

Mary	20	20
Moira	20	20
Paul	8	100**
Silla	7	25

*Note.* \*Some of these years were spent leading PT faculty in another country.

\*\*This is probably not accurate. The participant may not have understood the poll question.

**Table 4.3**

*Study Participants' Leadership Quotes*

Participant	Statement from interview
Bill	"So, they feel like they're more independent than they really ... should be, so you have to be careful that they really follow ... regulations, you know. And that's it, that is probably the most difficult technical issue, which is to have faculty respect."
Davide	"I think that's what I've tried to tell them is that, you know, if this works for you, it will work for me and vice versa."
Diego	"And you see, so part of the challenge has been how to lead a kind of... we're pushing pretty hard to move into a very new space in that sense. So, it's a culture shift. How do you change culture, right?"
Jenny	"And probably that's another reason why my leadership style is down on the battlefield. Because otherwise those teachers will say, [raspberry] 'See ya!'"
Mary	"The director often has a cult of personality in these programs, and I stepped very much back from that. And I really try to make the instructor the center of their classroom and then any issues they have come to me from the instructor and not the students."
Moira	"There is a line, I think, which you have to draw sometimes and say, 'well you know, we're all here for a common purpose, sometimes the needs of an individual don't trump the big picture.'"
Paul	"So you have to be a good leader, of course, but you are receiving students. They are not coming to be with you because you are you. They are there because there is a political vision by the institution (home campus), and without that support, the study abroad unit (center) doesn't exist."
Silla	"I would never want any professor to feel cheated. Because if you lose their trust, they're gone forever. And it shows in a number of ways."



## **Support**

One of the essential themes from the data analysis was ‘Support’. The two other essential themes were ‘Bridging the Gap’ and ‘Leadership.’ There was some overlap in the experiences and activities described by the participants but generally, ‘Support’ included those actions carried out by the participants in favor of the PT faculty they led.

The participants conveyed a desire to support the PT faculty at their programs. Participants provide this support in various ways, and, in most cases, the precarious work situation or low pay of the PT faculty seemed to motivate the participants. Participants also provided support as a retention strategy when PT faculty desired a complete work schedule or a more secure contract, which was often not an option. This transactional approach was often the only one available to program directors who had a limited degree of freedom within their budgets and Italy's labor contract environment. Participants were also motivated to provide support to the PT faculty to establish and build trust.

### **Incentives and Rewards**

Because increasing either pay for teaching or the number of courses taught were typically not an option, the participants provided encouragement and support to PT faculty through incentives and rewards. These can take the form of travel reimbursements for attending conferences, publishing costs for books or teaching manuals, additional pay for organizing and leading didactic excursions, or providing support to run an academic conference led by the PT faculty. Silla began his career as a PT faculty in Italy and personally experienced the irony of being passionate about teaching at study abroad programs under a precarious labor contract, as was demonstrated by his comments:

But I can also understand their passion and their motivation. So, what I try to do is ... involve them and reward them as much as possible.

So, I always try to let them know that if they need help, they can come to me, and we can also subsidize their research; we've done that. But we have to be clear about that. The research should not be finalized to boosting their intellectual narcissism but to produce something that can be used here, in their class. So, it's always, you know, a win-win situation.

Of all the participants, Bill was least sympathetic to PT faculty's situation at study abroad programs in Italy in general, yet he provided support to those teaching at his program to make them feel appreciated and an integral part of the program. For Bill, the PT faculty teaching at the Italy study abroad programs were well paid and had excellent benefits. Bill also recognized that all of the faculty were part-time at his program, so there was not a stark contrast between the tenure-track and PT faculty that might have existed on campuses in the United States. Bill stated:

Obviously, we refund faculty if they want to attend conferences, we support them in this, but really, there is no actual payment for the time they spend on research or this type of thing.

Over here, you see they're not ... treated as second class because there is more homogeneity ... and not that gap between the various faculties. They know that if we can, we do support them, you know, and I know that there are universities that have been really supportive to them. And anyhow, over here, for example, the faculty have access to computers. They have a faculty room, you know, so they even have access to make their own coffee and tea. We supply coffee and tea for all the faculty so they can use that. And, you know, we try to do little things to make them feel part of a family, you know.

Davide supported his PT faculty by hosting and paying for academic conferences organized by the PT faculty themselves. His approach to working with PT faculty was similar to Mary's in that he avoided using his position of power to promote himself as an academic. Davide was motivated by a desire to build trust with his faculty by being selfless and authentic. Davide stated:

No, I think you know Florence is an incredible place to put together fantastic academic experiences for students and also for the public at a low cost, right? You can get great people to come here and do great conferences, even day conferences ... for students. ... I can't do a million things, but I can do three or four or five things a year pretty well. Yeah. And so, working with faculty who have these connections ... to put together little events across town that bring together American students with the Italian communities are fun. I make sure I never do anything about my own research. I always make sure I do things

about my faculty's research. I said, you know, I don't need to be the person who decides what all the conferences are about ... There's a lot of people [other directors] that you know that it's ... "about me."

Finally, many participants spoke about appointing PT faculty to either academic leadership roles for specific academic disciplines in more extensive study abroad programs or administrative functions such as learning management system support for the rest of the PT faculty. Jenny was acutely aware of some of her PT faculty's desire for more work to augment their teaching. She employed some of the PT faculty to cover administrative support roles. Jenny explained:

... we always look for, like, creative solutions and things like that. So, you know, I developed a lot of coordinator positions. So, okay, various types of things: tech coordinator soft tech, you know, like Blackboard. ... take one of the professors who's amazing at that and say 'you will be my tech coordinator. I'll give you 45 hours this semester to be my tech coordinator.' So, you know, they're not hired. But if the concept is the same as release time, you know, faculty [on home campus] are given release time to do that kind of service, and I'm not giving them [PT faculty] release time. I'm just paying for the same time.

In one case, a participant prioritized the program's perceived needs over the interest of one PT faculty member. The PT faculty wanted to deliver a course both in-person and online so that students from the main campus could also take the course. The participant denied this request stating that any activity that might dissuade a student from physically coming to Italy was counterproductive to enrollments and the program's strength. However, another participant said that he would allow PT faculty to deliver online courses even if it was not strategic for the program.

Most participants spoke about a beaten path to their door by PT faculty who proposed new classes or projects because they wanted more work and more pay. The incentives and rewards that the participants provided the PT faculty did not seem to satisfy the overall demand that the PT faculty have for a better contractual arrangement. It appeared that the participants

supported the PT faculty through incentives and rewards as a response to several issues inherent to the precarious part-time nature of teaching at study abroad programs in Italy. Bill was an outlier for this argument and represented a negative case for this interpretation of the data since he strongly believed that PT faculty contracts were appropriate. Still, Bill did provide incentives and rewards as stated previously.

### **PT Faculty Retention**

One recurrent theme throughout the data set was a desire among the participants to support the PT faculty to retain them. In a dense study abroad market such as Florence, there is competition among the programs for excellent instructors. Many of the participants spoke about scheduling classes to avoid a conflict that the PT faculty member might have with another program. Jenny said that she tried to always honor the same teaching schedule for her PT faculty from year to year to provide some stability amid instability. Diego expressed empathy that many of the PT faculty taught at multiple institutions to create an appropriate salary. Diego stated:

There are so many programs in Florence, and so many of our faculty are teaching at multiple organizations. I don't get into this tug of war at all, because my feeling is, I think it's fantastic if they're teaching in three places, and they can round out their work and have full-time work equivalent. That's a great thing, because I know we can't do that for them. So, for me, it's not a competitive thing. It's; actually, you know I wish it could be otherwise, and it's not, so I hope that those things exist. I mean, it's a precarious living.

Moira proscribed the proper treatment of PT faculty to retain them in the competitive marketplace in Florence. Moira asserted:

Also, as far as they're concerned, you're competing with other programs that maybe would like the best faculty teaching for them. So, I think ... there's another necessity that you can't (mistreat PT faculty), you obviously want a good faculty to stay with you. ... You want to treat them well, give them opportunities to do things.

As described earlier, Silla supported his faculty by funding travel to conferences and publishing their research. Silla also included the PT faculty in meetings with visitors from the main campus, treating them as vital members of the academic community. When there were

grade disputes, he shielded his PT faculty and mediated the process to protect the PT faculty from feeling exposed or criticized. He felt strongly that his supportive approach built trust and had been effective in retaining PT faculty because only one had ever left for another position. In that case, it was for a tenured position at a public university in Italy.

Of all the interviews, perhaps the one with Davide focused more on this issue of providing support to build trust. Building trust was the central theme of his entire talk. Through his words, he expressed both empathy and pragmatism in the work situation experienced by the PT faculty at his program and, more importantly, what he could do to enhance their status. He summed up his approach to addressing the precariousness of the PT faculty:

But, you know, giving them ample support ... trying to build trust between me and them, that I'm looking out for them. ... My goal is to give them a better experience as well. So, I've been able to give them some incentives and reward them in some ways for work they've done. I want them to feel as if being at (this university) is a home, even if they're part-time, and I expressed that. The job is what it is right. We're, we're a non-degree granting study abroad affiliate campus, so we don't grant degrees. We don't have programs. We just teach our courses. That's what we do. But within that, I want you to have as much as you can have. So I secure for them research money, other development funds, recognizing their research, you know, trying to build, really build trust with them to let them know that I value them as professionals, but that we all understand the context in which we're working.

The participants all spoke about providing support to their PT faculty in various ways.

Table 4.4 displays all the initiatives that the participants discussed that support the PT faculty to build trust and boost retention.

**Table 4.4**

*Actions and Initiatives That Support PT Faculty*

Participants	Initiatives
Davide, Silla	Hosting and sponsoring an academic conference organized by the PT faculty
Silla, Paul	Creating academic coordinator roles

Bill, Silla, Davide	Travel to conferences
Davide	Extra pay for leading didactic excursions
Bill	Faculty room with computers, coffee, tea, etc.
Silla	Publishing PT faculty research books
Davide, Mary	Recognizing their research and academic achievements

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## Contracts

Supporting PT faculty and how the participants experienced their role was no more apparent than what they said about the labor contracts applied to the individuals that teach at the study abroad centers in Italy that they managed and directed. Five of the eight participants voiced solidarity with the PT faculty and their precarious work situations, whereas the remaining three expressed opinions that the PT faculty were fairly treated. Bill asserted that the contracts applied to PT faculty were appropriate and that their pay was sufficient:

They make good money because they're paid well. They're not underpaid, but they're paid well. And it's not that the alternative is to be employed by the Italian universities. ... And so, I think that the times have changed since when all these protests started because people who really had the quality for teaching more than one course, for being very valuable to the universities (study abroad programs), have been employed.

Paul was also fairly upbeat about the current state of affairs for PT faculty and their contracts in Italy, but he was much less direct than Bill. Paul has been looking at this situation professionally for a long time both as PT faculty and now as director. His main point was that a balance needed to be achieved between what went on in the USA and what went on at study abroad programs in Italy concerning contract permanence. Paul said:

Let me say that old directors tried to find the right path for not having problems. So, which means that wherever and whenever a director has the option and the opportunity to stabilize someone, so it is immediately done. The moment in which you have a not-so-stable position, the position is related and connected to the volatility of the course itself, which might be offered, you know,

one semester and not the following, or the experiments (curricular changes) which are done from the central campus into the study abroad (program). But this is not only related to the study abroad world. It is existing and happening also in central campuses. So, we need to forget the difference between being a faculty abroad and being a faculty in the U.S. So, what we need, is to create the same balance between the two, and the study abroad world, you know, and the same percentage of the jobs (that have) full-time faculty and part-time faculty. So that's the new frontier.

Finally, Moira did not express concern about the labor situation of the PT faculty at her program. She stated that they were all content with their contracts except for one individual who wanted more U.S.-style benefits such as sabbatical. The other participants (Davide, Diego, Jenny, Mary, and Silla) all expressed varying levels of concern about the precariousness of PT faculty at study abroad programs in Italy.

### *The Precariousness of PT Faculty*

Moira did report that nearly every PT faculty at her program was optimistic about the nature of their work contracts. However, earlier in the same interview, she also said that the instability of the years she spent teaching as a PT faculty drove her into a leadership position.

Moira explained:

So, but, yeah, so I've been in leadership for a while, and I think one of the motives, one of the motivations that got me into leadership, was just an economic thing. I just thought a lot of the teaching and touring and guiding I was doing was very enjoyable but quite exhausting, and none of it gave me more of a guarantee than something like three or four months down in the future. Secure, long-term contracts and administration seem to offer that. So, when admin opportunities came along. I jumped at them and said, 'yeah, this sounds great.' And then I found that I enjoyed it as well. I'm very passionate about it.

This inconsistency permeated most of the interviews. Many participants would decry the plight of PT faculty in Italy and then, in a separate part of the conversation, would state that their institution follows the labor laws in Italy—mostly washing their hands of any responsibility to offer more to the PT faculty. Five of the eight participants had worked as PT faculty before transitioning to the director role. This inconsistency among some of the participants was not self-

deceit. Instead, it seemed that they were operating under strict budget constraints. Diego voiced genuine empathy in his comments:

I'm incredibly sympathetic and empathetic to the challenge of being a faculty member ... so it's a very difficult country to make a living at all. Right? There's no surprise that Italy has massive outgoing migration of the young people graduating high school or college because there are no jobs here. So many people are just trying to find ways to get by, and that includes our faculty. I really ... honestly, you develop these individual relationships, of course, that are, at the core, they have to be professional relationships. But I always like to think about what we can do to find ways to support our faculty.

Diego talked about the salaries paid to the PT faculty and directly contradicts what Bill said about PT faculty pay. Diego stated:

You know, the salaries simply don't replicate what they would in the U.S., so it's a lot. So, you're always feeling like you're asking for more than you should be in a way. And at the same time, and I'm sure this is probably something you hear as well, I think we all who are in our positions, ... we're always trying to create the best conditions possible for faculty knowing that their reality is teaching a course here, teaching a course there, trying to make a living.

Mary's comments below typified the views of other participants about feeling empathy but being unable to do anything to improve the labor contracts for PT faculty. Like most participants, Mary expressed solidarity with the faculty at her program and wished that she could do more. Mary expressed empathy:

And it is [a] precarious, and anxiety-ridden situation for them and you know I'm fully, fully on their side, you know, but as I keep telling them, unfortunately, your country's law kind of allows people to exploit that situation and until this country doesn't allow that anymore...

So it's been very precarious, and professors are teaching at 2 or 3 different institutions and so even you know asking them to do something a bit more for you is difficult, I mean they have "acqua alla gola" [water up to their throat], even with everything that's going, even with all the institutions they're teaching at, economically they're just not, you know, really sustaining themselves at a high level. But also, you know the law has changed somewhat here, but you know the uncertainty from one year to the next or even semesters to the next is just a source of great anxiety for them.

It's precarious. I'm happy to talk about it because I keep inciting the professors to form a union and strike against us. You know, but it's a precarious situation that doesn't take into consideration at all what exactly it means sometimes to be teaching. Unfortunately, this is



a reality that is, you know, has invaded the U.S. as well with the whole adjunct professor situation, so you know, I think now maybe the U.S. is more familiar with it, but unfortunately, they're going in the wrong direction as well where instead of you know creating this situation that protects and cultivates great academics, they're really creating a sense, you know, almost Exodus from the field. And that's really a horrible situation, and that's always been the situation in Italy.

Whether explicitly or implicitly, most participants recognized that the plight of PT faculty in Italy teaching at study abroad programs was precarious. Some participants were frank about this; others stated that the situation was satisfactory but contradicted themselves in the same discussion. As the participants discussed the PT faculty, it became apparent that part of the way they view their role is defending the PT faculty from unreasonable requests from the main campus. This aspect was not present in two of the participants whose programs were not tied to a single U.S. university main campus. For those who report to one main campus in the United States, defending their PT faculty could be a way of showing solidarity with the PT faculty even if they could not offer them higher salaries, more stable contracts, or more courses.

### ***Defending PT Faculty***

The participants provided leadership and support by defending their PT faculty from initiatives or requests from the main campus, which would require unpaid work from the PT faculty. As we will see in the theme below on Bridging the Gap, the participants mediated between the central campus work culture and what was culturally or legally possible in the context of a study abroad program in Italy. This mediation expressed itself around the nature of PT faculty contracts when many participants actively pushed back on requests from the main campus. The participants were fulfilling their duty as directors to abide by local laws. Still, they also used these situations to instill trust with the PT faculty that they led. Davide saved some money in his overall budget by streamlining the curriculum and could then demand extra pay for

his PT faculty when a request came from the main campus to revamp a course or perform a task beyond the teaching hours. Davide explained:

Now that's a little bit of a straw horse, but no one on the home campus is going to challenge me because I'm not asking for millions of dollars, right, but I'm saying if we're going to ask them to do extra work you need to pay them for that extra work. So that's it. That's the kind of trust-building that I can then kind of engage in, which is not expensive, and we save money elsewhere.

This is what I always come back to my home campus with when they say things like, "oh, we need them to revamp their syllabi," or we need them to do something. I said, well, then you're going to have to pay them to do that because I'm paying them for their teaching hours.

Mary defended her faculty and expressed dismay that the main campus did not fully understand the reality that she navigated from a labor standpoint in Italy. Mary explained:

Absolutely, and we're very lucky in that regard because study abroad is such a big part of who we are as an identity, but at the same time, it's just you know, even with an institution like ours that has study abroad as a major part of their identity, sometimes it's difficult to help local faculty understand what exactly those differences are. And this is just you know, even protecting them in terms of you know labor laws and what you know demands can be made and what demands should be made. You know, especially, Americans have a very different idea of what you can and should ask people to do.

The participants may have defended their PT faculty from unreasonable requests from the main campus to garner trust and boost retention. The participants supported the PT faculty by communicating to the main campus what was possible concerning their contracts.

### ***Managing Expectations***

Davide spoke at length about how he had approached the topic of contracts, stability, and even tenure with his PT faculty. He had been in his position for four years and had a practical approach for dealing with PT faculty's expectations. Many of the participants did mention that the PT faculty would usually want more stability, pay, or more hours. Still, Davide spent a significant amount of time on this subject, explaining his journey with the PT faculty and how he had supported them with transparency and pragmatism while also communicating respect. His

thoughts were notable because, more than the other participants, he articulated a clear strategy for managing his PT faculty's expectations who wanted better contracts. When asked about what he finds the most difficult in leading PT faculty, he spoke about this issue. Davide explained:

Yeah, no, I think that the hardest part is probably something you'll have heard already from the rest of the directors that you're talking to are their expectations and their desires for more permanent positions. I think that I understand it. And I think that that's justified in certain cases, and I'm happy when we can, but I also think that their concept of the tenured faculty as a whole is a bit outdated. So, we've actually tried to talk to them a little bit about what the differences are between the American tenure system and what they might be imagining it is and the "ordinario" of the University of Florence or wherever they're from.

Davide spoke to them about what it would mean to win a full-time permanent professorship at a university. He pointed out that there would be an international search conducted and that the university would choose the best candidate. Davide used the example that an Art History tenure-track search in Florence would attract hundreds of qualified candidates worldwide. He also communicated that a tenured position in their program that did not grant degrees is nearly impossible. He tried to make them understand the professoriate in the United States and showed them how their positions were much more stable and secure than many adjuncts in the United States. Davide stated:

I say compare your situation to a lot of adjunct faculty in the United States, and you're actually doing much better in terms of pay and job security than your colleagues in the States. So, I always go back to the fact of what we are, right? We're not a degree-granting institution. So, you know we can't support tenured faculty here because we don't have all the ancillary academic work that needs to be done that a degree-granting institution does, right. We just teach classes here, and then we do all these other things.

The participants actively supported the PT faculty in different ways and for different reasons. There was undoubtedly a transactional nature to this employee-supervisor relationship. Still, the participants understood the symbiotic nature of their relationship with the PT faculty. Whether or not they believed that the PT faculty situation was stable or precarious, they realized that their study abroad programs would not exist without these instructors. The participants were

caught between two worlds and served as a bridge across the gap between the U.S. and Italy. Bridging the gap was a central theme of the interviews.

### **Bridging the Gap**

One of the most salient and persistent features of the study abroad directors' lived experiences in this study was the idea of serving as a bridge between two different realities. The participants had different approaches to confronting these challenges, including differences in work cultures, pedagogy, and student services. The participants had made decisions consciously or unconsciously about where they stood between both sides of these realities. Studying abroad at its core is about experiencing another reality, and it is the central mission of all study abroad programs to facilitate this experience. Therefore, the programs themselves are designed to bridge the gap between the home culture and the host culture. The main campus exerts a large amount of influence on the study abroad programs, which ultimately exist because of the main campus and its desire to send students to Italy.

### **Main Campus**

All participants expressed satisfaction with the support they received from the main campus in general. Still, Paul and Mary stood out because of the opposition in their conceptions of the influence that the main campus exerts. Most participants had a single central campus; whereas, Silla worked with multiple sending institutions, and Diego worked with a single institution but only as an institution of record. All the participants related to the sending institutions' policies uniquely and translated these policies into the local context.

Paul was unequivocal in his approach to bridging the gap between the main campus directives and the study abroad program he supported. The interview question sought to interrogate how the participants felt about the support they received from the main campus. This

line of inquiry focused on the quality of the relationship and whether the participants felt supported. Paul's response flipped this question on its head and argued that a study abroad program could not exist without unfailing support from the main campus. He even suggested that the study abroad director's leadership only matters in so much as there was excellent support from the main campus. Paul explained:

If you don't have support from the central campus ... your study abroad (program) is not existing. ... So, we are good leaders at the moment in which we are supported by the central campuses. So, a study abroad reality is not functional if you don't have support from the campus in every possible kind of sense: legally, economically, academically; in every possible sense, you are not alone. You have to be followed, you know, hour by hour, you know, day by day by the main campus. This is the only option. You know, I've seen ... in all those (programs) that have grown in the last, let's say, four or five years in the study abroad world, not only in Italy also in Europe as well, their growth is proportional to the intensity of the pressure which is determined by the central campus. It is not determined by your ability to do a good job.

Paul's study abroad program had grown since he took the leadership role. Paul's statement might be more about the limitations of leadership and its influence on growth and success. Study abroad programs, such as Paul's, were connected by an umbilical cord to the main campus. He was not implying that leadership was not essential; only good leadership alone was not enough to thrive in a competitive study abroad market without support from the main campus.

Paul then related his vision of the importance of the main campus in program success to the PT faculty situation. Paul himself worked for many years as a PT faculty at various study abroad programs. His comments below were not a critique of the PT faculty but a reality-check for their movement for better working conditions. Paul stated:

So, you have to be a good leader, of course, and but you are receiving students. Students are not determined to be with you because you are you. So, they are there because there is a political vision by the institution, and without that support, the study abroad unit doesn't exist. So, this is something we forgot. And this is something which sometimes causes faculty to misunderstand their job position in the study abroad world. There is a, you know, a very thin line between you as knowledgeable faculty and the political decision made by the main campus. So, without that decision, you are not existing.

Whereas Paul prioritized being in lockstep with the main campus, Mary expressed difficulty defending the local reality in the face of a significant power imbalance with the main campus. Her comments went further than other participants in criticizing a tone-deafness from the main campus, but Mary contradicted herself like most participants. Many participants expressed contentment with their support from the main campus but would later counter this, expressing dismay at main campus realities being imposed on their local context. These contradictory statements belied the difficulties that directors face in bridging the gap between the study abroad programs they direct and the main campuses they served.

Mary admitted that one of her biggest challenges after two decades in her role remained to help the main campus understand the local reality. Still, she was committed to both the local reality and the main campus. This tension did not exist in Paul's comments because he had embraced a full commitment to the main campus so that his study abroad program might persist and succeed. As will be discussed, Bill was very optimistic about the support from the main campus. Later, he was critical about sensitivity training around speech codes from the United States' cultural "dictatorship." Similarly, Jenny described her support from the main campus as merely "fine" because of a discrepancy between main campus statements supporting international education and the facts on the ground. Later, Jenny stated that her longevity in the role was due to her satisfaction and contentment.

Mary's statements about her working relationship with the main campus were starkly contradictory when placed together. Mary stated:

I've said this a million times, is that I wouldn't work for another institute if it weren't [US main campus] to be quite honest. You know the international office, we have a great rapport, we can all agree always to disagree, they've created a rapport among all directors. I mean, it's really just a big collegial reality where all of us are very open about the difficulties we have, issues we need to overcome. So, we go to each other, so I think [U.S. main campus] and the international office has created just a reality that I don't think

is equivalent in any other institution. You know there are still issues, there are still difficulties with understanding the workings involved in many different countries. It's not easy for anybody, I think.

Then in the same discussion, Mary stated:

Yeah, I do feel there's a colonialism on that; there is just, you know, an empire colonialism type of view, and everything should be done in a certain way.

Yeah, I think the biggest difficulty that I still face is helping, I don't think I've really made a huge difference in helping the ... American counterpart understand the local reality, and I feel ... I wish I could figure that out better and make them understand better that certain things are not possible, and they work a different way, and the expectations shouldn't be what it is. Sometimes I feel regardless of how much I communicate that message; it's just not getting through.

### **Pedagogy**

The participants had to bridge the gap between the cultural, procedural, or pedagogical norms of Italy's higher education landscape and those in the United States. A study abroad program's central task is the delivery of an academic program in a context that is different from the one students know. Study abroad programs strive to find a balance between replicating the main campus classroom and exposing students to a different learning environment. The PT faculty are central to this endeavor, and the participants expressed mixed opinions about the role of faculty and how they worked with them.

Jenny's comments about this pedagogical gap were typical of the other participants. She worked closely with the faculty to recognize and address these differences to optimize the student experience. Jenny stated:

... but the professors are very open and willing to work with, I say, to bridge the gap between the Italian culture and environment and educational system and work towards creating an environment that works to achieve the objectives of this American system. So they're willing, but that's something that we talk about, that's a conversation that we repeatedly talk about, year after year, okay, because I call it the gap, the gap between Italy and the United States, in this case, because the educational system is so different, and the mentality of the students is also quite different.

Silla spoke about actively coaching the PT faculty on their teaching style and interacting with students in the classroom. Silla explained:

Another thing that I always warn my teachers about is that in the European system teaching in the Middle Ages and down to almost today is that 'I'm the teacher, you are the pupil. You shut up, take notes, and then you regurgitate what you know at the end of the semester and then (there is) an exam.' ...that it's going to be either make or break, right? Yeah, it doesn't work that way in U.S. universities. So, I always tell them, "please don't put so much pressure on the students by saying there is a midterm and there is a final exam. Try to distribute as many tests and quizzes throughout the semester so that they can, you know, pace and gauge and judge themselves."

Silla went on to give his PT faculty advice about managing a classroom. He warned them against employing the more traditional approach in Italy of calling randomly on students to answer questions in class to keep their attention by putting them on the spot. He felt that U.S. undergraduates generally did not respond well to this interrogative style that was the tradition in Italian universities.

As with other topics in the interviews, Mary's comments about bridging the pedagogical gap were well articulated and underscored the PT faculty's importance in the study abroad centers in Italy. Mary viewed the PT faculty as guides for students grappling with a shift from a U.S. learning experience to an Italian one. Mary explained:

Well, I mean, they (PT faculty) are the conduit through which they're learning all of that. You know, they are the ones that are bridging that difference in helping them to understand why the differences are there and taking them on that journey from a place of purely, you know, being guided through every step of their study ... in America [to] just somewhere in the middle where ... the local faculty here at our center are really the mid-point between the two systems. They're guiding them through that process and helping them get away from what they know into a situation that's slightly familiar but not as familiar, and then going in finally to a situation that's going to be completely different without any guidance.

Mary continued describing the role that PT faculty play in bridging this gap: "...but the fact that they're teaching them how to learn in a different way that is so, you know, diametrically opposed to what they're used to, that's the fundamental role that the instructors have."



The notable standout was Paul, who saw that the gap in teaching styles between the United States and Italy had all but disappeared within the study abroad context in 2020. Curiously, he did not see an issue where every other participant did. Paul's dismissal of differences in teaching styles may have been attributed to his tendency to be future-oriented. His point was that this issue was of concern decades ago, but that now it was diminished. Paul asserted:

I don't see many differences between teaching at the moment. I would say the only difference is the environment. So, there are no differences (between) teaching here, there, everywhere in the world now. So, I don't think we have any more of the problems that those who were teaching abroad 25 years ago had. Now the students are perfectly trained to be abroad; they already know where they will stay. They Google Map everything, and they perfectly know what restaurant to reserve, you know, on the third day of their arrival in the country, which is hosting that first semester. This is good. This is bad in the same way because they're not exposed anymore to otherness. But this is the price or the good thing of globalization.

Paul made another critical point that the study abroad student had evolved over the decades. There is a significant amount of information flow about being a study abroad student between Italy, in this case, and the United States. Through social media and the internet, students can virtually witness what their peers are doing while abroad. Therefore, students' expectations are different from what they used to be a few decades ago.

Other than Paul, the rest of the participants were concerned about coaching the PT faculty in teaching style and ensuring continuity between their study abroad program's courses and the equivalent course on the main campus. These issues are rooted in degree plans and accreditation for any study abroad program directly tied to a U.S. university. This was the case for most of the participants. They would begin speaking with the PT faculty during the hiring process about addressing U.S. undergraduate learners' expectations, and they tended to select PT faculty who were either open to adapting their teaching style or who had already had some experience.

Davide stated:

Yeah, well yeah, I think that's one of the biggest challenges, I think for someone in my role is to kind of communicate to our faculty, the expectations that students have of them that are different from what they might have. So, um, I think the first part of it is discussing when hiring a faculty member, especially a younger faculty member who hasn't had a lot of teaching experience. We have a few of those on our faculty, really giving them a sense of the difference in the higher ed [environment].

Jenny echoed Davide's comments and stated:

We still have onboarding workshops and meetings, especially related to how to achieve our learning objectives and how to interact with the students to best achieve the learning objectives, given a changing student base. And also, that's one aspect of it and then also to really try to find the best way in terms of communication and approaches to, let's say, bridge a perspective that is not an Italian perspective. So, you know, yeah.

Bridging the gap in expectations between the students and the teaching style of the PT faculty for Mary and Davide was a balancing act—it was not a one-way street from the main campus to the study abroad program. Again, the strength of a study abroad experience is this encounter with otherness, which Paul believed was disappearing due to the connectivity brought about through globalization and the internet. Davide bridged the gap but made sure that information also flowed back to the main campus. Davide explained:

So, you know, I consider it a chunk, maybe a third of my job is working with these faculty members here in Florence and kind of serving as a link between the expectations that we have for the curriculum on the home campus and the kind of unique experience that we want our students to have in having instruction in a different country and specifically from a group of faculty who don't, for the most part, come from American higher ed. So, I really see my role as being that of a kind of a bridge between both - back and forth. It's not just sending them information from home campus to here, but it's also vice versa, letting the home campus know what we're doing here that might be innovative or interesting for best practices back home. So, I made a point to make sure that this is a two-way process, not a one-way process or flow. Let's say it's not just home campus telling us what we have to do, although that's part of it. It's also home campus can learn from what we do here that's different.

Mary echoed the approach taken by Davide where she described working with a PT faculty and coaching that person on teaching techniques. Mary stated:

And with that conversation, in particular, was a question of having them understand why it was different but also having them understand the technique in teaching as well, and so sometimes the changes would have come regardless of my presence, but certainly, we're

here because of my own understanding of what might be a good balance between the 2 systems, because it shouldn't be all one or the other. We really need to find that balance, and so that was many conversations that assured the person that it wasn't about their particular style, but it was about changes in evolution happening in teaching in general and teaching at the university level in particular.

The generational progression of U.S. undergraduates and the development of new teaching styles in the United States required that the participants constantly readjust their efforts to strike a balance between the U.S. higher education teaching environment and their study abroad programs in Italy serving U.S. undergraduates.

Besides working with the PT faculty in bridging the gap between a U.S. classroom and an Italian one, the participants were responsible for some degree of curriculum matching with the main campus. When asked about the nature of their role and what they do for their study abroad programs, they raised this point. They saw academic leadership as central to their position, and it was no surprise that most of the participants have terminal degrees, and all of them were either teaching or had taught. Most of the participants commented that they must ensure sufficient academic continuity so that students could continue with their degree plans. For instance, if the program offered Intro to Biology, the students had to be ready to take the next course in the sequence upon return to the main campus. This issue was more pressing for the participants that directed large programs tied to a single U.S. institution and offered an extensive range of courses.

### **Student Experience**

Finally, bridging the gap was an activity in which the participants engaged because of the cultural differences between the United States and Italy. In the last decade, it has become routine for professors in the United States to incorporate trigger warnings in their lectures, to adhere to stricter speech codes, and to pay particular attention to issues around diversity, equity, and inclusion. The participants provided training to the mostly European PT faculty and intervened

when a student complained about an incident in a classroom. Also at play here was the notion of what level of service an undergraduate student should receive. With the high tuition paid by U.S. undergraduates, there is an expectation of customer service that does not exist in the Italian university system's lecture halls. Silla and Mary both made this point in their comments around the student experience. Mary stated:

Yeah, but you know that's the main difference between our two systems between Italy and the U.S. is actually that, it's that Italy considers education a right, so you pay very little even though here they think they pay a lot, but you pay very little, and you know you might not get the great gym, or the great cafeteria, or you know 24/7 access to ... your library with a Starbucks in it but you get the education, and you can make of that what you will. Whereas you know people are struggling, I mean in the U.S., student debt, I mean that is an incredible reality, I'm just not... it is incredible to me that students have to go into debt or families have to go into debt to ensure that their student gets a good education—something that I'm against.

... and I think the amount of tuition that's being paid so that a sense of having to answer to you know the client, it's the client ... I don't know if that's the right word that I want to use, but it's like more you know, 'customer,' Yeah, so you have to kind of justify even you know the more blatant aspects of academics, like even justifying a grade, and I'm all for a student saying I don't deserve the grade, tell me why, absolutely, their right, I feel that's 100 percent but the fact that you know that at some point it's the expectation that they're buying an education as opposed to buying the best professor to give them an education is really quite incredible. But you're paying \$60,000 to \$70,000.

In the interview with Bill the issue of bridging the gap of the student experience was raised outside of the scripted questions. Bill dedicated significant time speaking about his role in trying to cater to the U.S. undergraduates while not replicating a U.S. classroom in Italy. Jenny, Silla, and Davide also talked about this issue. Most of Bill's comments were around the frustration he experienced due to the "dictatorship" coming from the United States around speech codes. Bill explained:

I mean, the students that are here, they have to understand the culture differences. So, they have to know, understand, that we have a language that has not been progressing like the cultural language in the U.S., but they have to be informed about that, you know, and understand the differences. Also, what has been defined politically correct, you know, which, you know, sometimes can be a revolutionary idea. The fact that being politically incorrect sometimes is part of an expression, you know, cultural expression,

right? So I think there is a little bit of a dictatorship in this that, you know, we have to be careful about which borders to keep, but this is too sophisticated for the students to understand. So we need to simplify it and try to stick as much as possible to the American way of looking at that, but keeping an open door to the students so that they also understand that if a mistake is made, it is due to a general local culture, which is not yet ready to, to face this.

When asked about how he addressed these issues with the PT faculty Bill stated:

Well, we talk; basically, we talk in faculty meetings, and we are pretty much aware of these changes. And obviously, there are discussions. Not all the faculty accept that they have to somehow, you know, cannot express their opinion in a more open and free, you know, way as we are used to doing in Europe. So, there has been some debate on that. Yes, definitely.

Bill expressed contempt in his comments around issues of the use of language and speech codes in the classroom. Still, in the end, he decided that it was easier to cater to the U.S. undergraduate learner. It seemed that this was a bitter pill for Bill to swallow but avoided larger problems with students and central campus administrators. Bill engaged the PT faculty in an ongoing discussion about what was the appropriate balance between the two realities.

Similarly, Jenny also grappled with catering to U.S. undergraduate sensibilities around language and offering a more Italian or European classroom experience. She recounted how the PT faculty wanted to strike a balance between the two cultures, but that it couldn't just be the instructors making all of the efforts. Jenny stated:

And it's something we talk about; you know how to find that balance. It's something that I don't think any of us have the perfect answer because a lot of professors say, "okay, I'm happy to work towards that. But the students have also made an effort to study abroad." So, I think it's really important that they also take a step in that direction. And they also look at the intercultural differences in the language differences and what they mean and have an open discussion about that. It's like, let's go 50/50 or let's, like the professors, go 60 and the students 40 because you know the professors are older, we are teaching. Okay, but it can't be 95% of the professor, you know, the professor goes 95% of the way and the student 5% of the way.

Jenny described her conversations with PT faculty after a student had complained about an incident in the classroom. The PT faculty in her program expressed concern about offending

students and confusion about avoiding similar speech code violations in the future. Jenny declared:

I mean, we have a lot of ... conversations certainly about engaging with the students, and overcoming you know this Italy-U.S. gap in expectations for different things that we talk about openly that they come to me, we organize workshops, we have ongoing professional development in that area, but for, you know, something like terminology, or other things it's very often they don't even realize that they have stepped in a direction that is potentially inappropriate and at all. I'm always the one to call them because the students come to me. Yeah, and then they're... I find their reactions very normal in the sense that they're unhappy. They explain that they had no idea they were being offensive or saying something inappropriate or doing something inappropriate or anything.

And they're very apologetic. But then at the same time, they're like, how do I even know how to adjust my behavior when I don't even know that what I'm saying is wrong? Or I'm just translating from the Italian word, which is not the correct translation, and my students are being offended at that, and they're not telling me.

Like Jenny, Silla provided training to his faculty on diversity, equity, and inclusion. His program also had an office specifically for students to voice their concerns about these issues and receive support. Like Bill and Jenny, though, Silla's comments expressed a willingness to cater to the students and an underlying skepticism about the cultural norms in play. Silla noted:

Today, the big emphasis is on diversity, equity, and inclusion. There are various approaches to that maybe we can come back to that you know that in Italy we prefer not to ask a person: "Oh, since you are black, right, how do you feel, do you feel welcome?" No, we prefer to ignore the blackness of that person or any kind of color and treat them like anybody else. Usually, students seem to appreciate that because here they are not on their home turf. They are away. So, they also feel that they are being away from the kind of pressure that you may have in certain parts of New York City versus other cities and stuff like that. But if they want, we have an office specifically for that. And we have a number of psychological counselors, and one of them is specialized in dealing with this diversity, whatever that means, diversity as race, diversity as gender identity. So, we also have psychological counselors, apart from the coordinator, to take care specifically of these so-called issues.

Silla's comments might be considered inappropriate from an administrator in the United States but may be more typical of Italian directors running study abroad programs in Italy. The Italian cultural approach to issues of race and diversity is much different than in the United States. It is beyond the scope of this analysis to list those differences. Still, Silla's comments about color

blindness and diversity are more typical in Italy than on a U.S. college campus. Finding the balance and bridging the gap was a challenge for the participants.

### **Leadership**

Leadership was central to the interviews with the participants. So far, this analysis has covered the support the participants provided the PT faculty and their strategies and struggles with bridging the gap between their local reality and that of the U.S. higher education campuses that send them students. Providing support to PT faculty and bridging the gap were both aspects of their leadership experience as they informed the participants' intentions and actions.

Participants may have assuaged the PT faculty's precarious work contracts through transactional means by providing incentives and rewards, subsidizing research, funding conferences, or paying for service outside the classroom. In bridging the gap, the participants engaged the PT faculty through coaching and training to strike a balance between the classroom experience in the United States and in Italy. For the final theme, the analysis focused precisely on how the participants conceived of leadership, the challenges they faced, and the advice they had for leading PT faculty at a study abroad program in Italy.

The first question of the interview asked the participants to describe their role as the leader of the PT faculty. The participants tended to answer the interview's first question by focusing on mechanical, administrative tasks associated with organizing the PT faculty. Five of the participants gave an initial response focused primarily on upholding academic integrity, such as ensuring that courses' content and structure fulfilled main campus expectations. Two of the participants gave an initial response about their role in leading PT faculty that described their responsibility in selecting and hiring appropriate individuals. Only one participant spoke directly in terms of leadership style. All participants signaled a leadership profile in their discussions, but

they tended to conflate administrative responsibilities with leadership when asked about leadership concepts.

## **Style**

The participants exhibited varying degrees of awareness of their leadership style. If someone had not studied or read about leadership, they would lack the language or concepts to define leadership for themselves. This personal disassociation with leadership may also be attributable to the sense that leadership is something other people exhibit in different industries outside academia. The participants may not have seen their activities in directing the PT faculty as leadership, but their descriptions of these activities described leadership approaches and choices.

Some of the participants described their interactions with PT faculty in terms of collegiality. Participants also spoke about giving the PT faculty center stage and allowing them space to be the leaders of their classrooms. Finally, participants also talked about working with PT faculty in terms of participation in a struggle or being in the trenches with them.

Two participants struggled to define their leadership even though their interviews yielded plenty of leadership examples. It may have been that they didn't think of what they were doing in directing a study abroad program in terms of leadership. This may have been because they conceived of leadership as something more appropriate for a corporate setting. Davide stated:

I don't think in those terms. I mean, I'm an old school humanities scholar, so it's hard for me to talk about leadership. I tend to be someone who leads from the back rather than the front if I can say it that way.

Davide seemed to be asking the interviewer for approval to characterize his leadership style. It was as if Davide wasn't sure that what he did with PT faculty was leadership. Similarly, Moira also expressed an inability even to understand her leadership style. Moira explained: "I find it



hard to answer, and I'm not very good at analyzing my own leadership style or defining it, I'm afraid."

Many of the participants spoke about their leadership of PT faculty in terms of collegiality. It may be that the participants, especially Davide and Moira, saw a conflict between their idea of what leadership was (CEO and corporate) and the collegiality they viewed as necessary when leading PT faculty.

Characterizing their leadership as collegial may have suggested suspicion of hierarchy in this context and a desire to treat the PT faculty as equals. Silla made a point in the interview to underline his avoidance of a hierarchical imposition in his relationship with staff and PT faculty. Silla explained:

I want to actually open a small parenthesis here about lexicon. I never call my colleagues 'staff' as if there was such a rigid hierarchy that I'm up above, on cloud nine, and they're down, but I always call them colleagues because it's true. We are connected. We're linked together, right, "collega," "collegati."

This sentiment of being linked together was prevalent in all of the interviews except Bill and Paul. Bill exhibited a top-down managerial style, even authoritarian, despite speaking of a desire to create a family atmosphere. In the case of Paul, it seemed that this idea of being colleagues existed. Still, it was overshadowed by his pragmatic decision to center his focus on the directives and guidelines issued by the main campus.

Davide spoke about his program's relationship to the PT faculty in terms of a family. His desire to create a family atmosphere for the PT faculty seemed to stem from his inability to appease their dreams for a more permanent, tenure-style employment. Davide explained:

It's hard because many of them have this dream to become tenured faculty ... And so that kind of push and pull of, like, you know, that's really not what we're going to do. That's not what we do here. That's, that's not in the cards. It's hard. But on the other hand, we're doing everything we can to make sure you feel like you're part of the family, so to speak.

Bill suggested that offering some material support to PT faculty in the form of computers, a break room, and coffee was part of a more considerable motivation to make PT faculty feel like they were part of a family. Bill stated:

And anyhow, over here, for example, the faculty have access to computers. They have a faculty room, you know, so they even have access to make their own coffee and tea. We supply coffee and tea for all the faculty in the faculty room so they can use that. And, you know, we try to do little things to make them feel part of a family, you know.

Moira spoke about her interactions with the PT faculty in terms of collegiality in opposition to hierarchy. Moira explained:

I think it's very collegiate or collegial, whatever the right word is where we are as well. There's a lot of open doors everywhere and a lot of first name terms. It's not very hierarchical. So, I think I have a very friendly relationship with lots of the faculty as well.

Another way that two of the participants expressed this collegial relationship with the PT faculty was in terms of a battlefield metaphor. This use of language suggested that these participants viewed themselves side-by-side with the PT faculty overcoming a common enemy. Moira stated: "And I've been teaching for the program since it began. So, I sometimes feel like I'm in the trenches with them as well." Jenny echoed Moira's characterization of the relationship and suggested that this solidarity was essential for the continued loyalty of the PT faculty. Jenny explained:

My approach in leadership is that I definitely feel that for me, it has been more successful, let's say, to be down on the battlefield with everybody, as opposed to standing above them issuing directives. ... And probably that's another reason why my leadership style is down on the battlefield because otherwise, those teachers will say, [raspberry] "See ya!"

As discussed above in the section describing the support that the participants provide the PT faculty, it seemed that this collegiality and solidarity to the PT faculty were genuine. Still, they were also a form of appeasement for lack of better pay or more permanent positions. From an observers point of view, this collegiality seemed to contradict the reality that all participants

enjoyed precisely what they claimed the PT faculty desired to have: job security and a livable salary. This point was evidenced by Silla, who described how the term “colleghi” or colleagues in Italian is derived from “collegati” or linked together. With this, Silla flattened the hierarchy and brought himself closer to the PT faculty. Yet, Silla later separated himself from the PT faculty as he expressed empathy for the plight of his PT faculty: “I believe I can put myself in the shoes, so to speak, in our teachers' shoes, I can understand their uncertainties; I can understand their concerns.”

Three participants described their leadership style or approach in terms of trusting the PT faculty. This approach may have had much to do with the collegiality style discussed above. The participants and the PT faculty were peers as educators. They understood that the dynamics of a classroom learning experience required that the instructor be a leader and make the right decisions while teaching and interacting with students. Moira stated:

Yeah, I think a lot of the faculty get it already. I think they know what they're doing, and I think they can derive more satisfaction than I do from seeing how their students are transformed. So, I think with many of the faculty, I don't need to intervene really. You know we intervene on technical things and use of technology and showing up at a faculty meeting or saying the right thing to a student or attendance policies. You know, there's a lot of fiddly things which we have to be really clear on and firm on because a lot of the time we're supporting the faculty, and we want to do that consistently. It's not just about making sure that they're doing things right for the students. It's the other way around as well. But I think, on the whole, I don't feel we need to do pep talks for this faculty.

Paul stated that shared trust with the PT faculty was vital, given that the program hosts young people. Paul explained:

Because you need to, first of all, have people trusting you. Because if you don't have this kind of link between you and them, you are alone, and you cannot be alone in an institution which hosts, you know, kids. Both in the U.S. as well as in the study abroad campus, wherever you are.

Davide gave the PT faculty the benefit of the doubt, trusting that they were working to do the best job they could with the resources and qualities they possessed. Davide explained:

Right, that I like to empower the people around me, and I trust the people around me to kind of express their qualities. I believe in the good faith of everyone, and, you know, I think everyone's trying to do a good job. So, I'm not quick to accuse or, kind of, call people out. I tend to let people express their qualities, and if it turns out that they're failing, then I'll intervene.

The participants tended to describe their leadership styles with the PT faculty as collegial. Some characterized their leadership of PT faculty as being in the trenches with them. Others expressed their style in terms of trusting the PT faculty to do a good job. This proximity to the PT faculty flattened the hierarchy. It may have been an attempt to provide support in the form of professional respect instead of more generous material support in pay or stability. Closeness and collegiality may also have arisen because most of the participants also taught in their programs or used to teach. In this sense, they were colleagues.

### **Challenges**

The participants showed little agreement about the most significant challenges in leading the PT faculty at their programs. Some offered some technical difficulties they faced, such as the inflexibility of the contracts in the Italian labor system, providing good communication to the PT faculty, or making sure the PT faculty follow all curricular requirements from the main campus. A few responded that their main challenge stemmed from the part-time nature of the work of the PT faculty. These participants lamented that part-time contracts made it difficult to cultivate a stronger sense of community. Diego stated:

You know, I think it's always -- I mean, I would say, I think it goes back to kind of, and this is probably a 101 question you've got a lot of answers on, but I think it's just, it's the nature of leading faculty in an environment like this and ours, where it's very hard to get them together. You have such few -- we try to have one to two faculty full meetings every semester. They don't come. Right. And you can't really ask them to come because the reason they often don't come is because they're teaching somewhere else, or they have another -- So they're always having to make these decisions. So, I think the single most difficult thing is really creating that esprit de corps because you just don't have enough time to bring them together to create fraternity or sorority between them. So, you have a lot of these situations where as a result, faculty tend to rely on the ones that they know and not others. So, it's really hard to build a faculty community. And it was the same

thing in [different country]. It's more complicated here because this is a larger organization with more diversified types of programs. But just building a sense of community and really having that kind of level of engagement and a sense of connection to the entity is, it's just about as hard as anything, I think.

Similar to Diego, Jenny stated:

I guess I find it really a challenge from an institutional point of view to have to manage an entire group of faculty that are all part-time, and no one is teaching more than two courses this semester and given the small size of our group. You know, if I could hire them more and say, and some of our professors, all the [specific discipline] professors, only have one class a semester. Just because of the sheer number of classes we have, and our students, that's how it is, and the business students because we have two sections. So, everyone teaches two sections of their classes. So that's a little bit better. But that's... we're talking six hours a week. You know what I mean? This is not enough to make it, so I guess having to manage that because that means I want to engage them, and I want them to put in 1,000% into what they're doing and be serious about what they're doing, but they're only teaching for me six hours a week. And that is really hard. How do you have devotion? And how do you, how do you achieve what you would expect to have a full-time faculty member on a home campus, you know, who has a long term contract and is supposed to be doing university service and teaching and another one who teaches three hours a week.

Um, I meet individually with all professors at least once a semester. And sometimes we have group meetings, maximum once a semester, like all faculty meetings, maximum once a semester, and to those meetings, probably half of the faculty come maybe like two thirds, maybe like two-thirds of the faculty come to those, and one third don't come because it's impossible to force adjunct faculty to come and everybody has different schedules, and everybody teaches at other institutions and has other jobs, and so we try to get together. We test out dinners, lunches, mid-afternoon morning, everything we've tried it all, and I still cannot get more than a maximum of two-thirds of the faculty to come at any one given time.

These challenges expressed by Diego and Jenny were probably common with the other participants. In the section above on support of the PT faculty, the participants spoke about creating a family atmosphere for the PT faculty. The other side of the coin of these challenges was that if the PT faculty don't have time to be engaged, then it was also challenging to achieve a family atmosphere or an "esprit de corps," as Diego put it. It may also be difficult for the PT faculty teaching at multiple institutions to invest in deeper working relationships at each study abroad center where they teach, even if they desired to be more deeply engaged.

Diego spoke at length about the challenges he faced in change management. The program he directed was a well-established study abroad provider in Florence attempting to rebrand itself from the curricular niche that it originally occupied to be more of a comprehensive program that can accommodate students from a broader range of academic majors. Because of the faculty's part-time contracts and the lack of "esprit de corps," he found it very difficult to push the program in a new direction. Diego stated:

And you see, so part of the challenge has been how to lead a kind of -- we're pushing pretty hard to move into a very new space in that sense. So, it's a culture shift. How do you change culture, right?

So how do you really think anew about this as a program that could really fit the needs of students from many, many disciplines, not just those who are coming out of the traditional [curricular niche] that I think historically we've done. So working with faculty in that way, that's I think, been one of the biggest challenges. Because some buy into that very quickly, some die a little harder, or they're towards the end of their careers, and they just, they don't want to spend the energy on thinking now.

And I think that the other challenge goes back to Italy. There is the Italian conundrum when it comes to, as you were talking about, contracts because also it's a curriculum question. I mean, if you're trying to do something new, how do you make a change in terms of curricular change? Because it also means new courses. So, who takes on those courses? Can you convince a faculty member to drop one course they've been teaching ten years to pursue an entirely different idea that we think is really going to move us in the direction we want to go?

Bill found it most challenging to work with veteran PT faculty who took the liberty to decide about curriculum or procedures without first consulting with him. He attributed this to the PT faculty's sense of independence. He experienced these acts of misplaced freedom as a lack of respect. Bill stated:

Or after they are teaching, you know, they have been teaching for a long time, maybe they take the liberty of making decisions that they shouldn't make without asking the school about it. So, they feel like they're more independent than they really, you know, should be, so you have to be careful that they really follow regulations, you know. And that's it, that is probably the most technical, the most difficult technical issue, which is to have faculty respect.

More than any other participant, Bill exhibited an authoritarian leadership style. He had more experience in the role than any of the other participants. It seemed as if after nearly three decades of leading PT faculty, he had arrived at a style that gave more importance to upholding the main institution’s procedures while minimizing the importance of community building among the PT faculty. Though the PT faculty were the leaders of their classrooms, highly educated, and independent, they also had limited power to change the programs that employed them. Other participants felt it was a challenge to engage the PT faculty and create a sense of community, whereas for Bill, the main challenge seemed to be reigning in the PT faculty’s sense of freedom.

**Advice**

Most of the interviews concluded with a question about leading the PT faculty and the advice that the participants would give a future director or dean hired into their role. The participants reflected on what they felt were the most critical aspects of leading PT faculty at their programs. Table 4.5 provides paraphrased statements from the participants.

**Table 4.5**

*Participants’ Advice for Leading PT Faculty*

Participants	Statements (paraphrased)
Silla	Be passionate about your job. Serve the PT faculty. Be curious. Be patient. Be empathetic. Don’t be judgmental,
Paul	Share leadership but not the responsibility for decisions. Be respectful. Trust the PT faculty. Listen, listen, listen. Be yourself. Don’t let negative comments about you get under your skin. Making decisions means disappointing someone. Take time to develop in your role.
Davide	Listen to your PT faculty and promise little. Cultivate trust. Be honest about what you can give the PT faculty—do not string them along. “We’re in it together.”

Diego	There is a tremendous amount of loyalty to the program among the PT faculty—do not abuse that. The world changes: make sure this program does to. Bring the PT faculty along with you.
Bill	The PT faculty are independent by nature, but you must actively supervise them to be sure they are complying with policies.
Mary	Be empathetic to the situation of PT faculty at study abroad programs in Italy. Never take it personally. Communicate often with PT faculty about decisions and new initiatives. Get to know the PT faculty as people and academics—recognize their scholarly achievements. Build trust. Give them space to lead their classrooms.
Moira	The PT faculty and the classroom are the core of the heart of the program.

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The statements from the participants about leading PT faculty at their study abroad programs in Italy provided both general leadership insights and specific glimpses into the leadership styles of the participants.

This section concludes the presentation of the data analyses of the eight interviews conducted with the participants. To more deeply understand the experiences of the participants' leadership of the PT faculty at their programs, the researcher conducted a follow-up focus group with four out of the eight participants.

### **Focus Group**

Four of the eight participants agreed to participate in a focus group discussion to interrogate the three main themes derived from the analysis of the interviews. Paul, Silla, Mary, and Davide participated in the focus group. The discussion lasted about one hour and covered a range of topics.

The focus group discussion offered some new insights into the participants' experiences around the themes of bridging the gap and providing support to the PT faculty. The conversation also confirmed much of the analysis results from the primary interviews. The paradoxical relationship that the participants had to the PT faculty concerning supporting their growth while



maintaining the status quo remained present in the focus group. The group dynamics seemed to shift the participants' opinions in a way that was not present in one-on-one interviews.

### **Leadership Theory**

The focus group participants seemed to view the researcher as the “leadership” expert. This expressed itself as uncertainty, either genuine or feigned, in leadership theory. Some participants assumed a pupil role during the focus group when leadership was the topic, asking the researcher about leadership theory and requesting confirmation when making statements about leadership. In the case of each focus group participant, though, their understanding of leadership was sophisticated.

The researcher asked the participants to speak about leadership in general at the beginning of the focus group. The purpose of this open discussion was to foster an environment that would encourage a group discussion. Silla expressed regret at his lack of preparation around leadership theory. Silla declared:

I must confess that I haven't read anything at all about leadership that dates from the last three centuries. I must admit my complete ignorance about that. I have read lots of books on leadership from Plato to the end of the Renaissance, but nothing that has been published in the last four hundred years. So, I don't know whether this confession makes any difference, whether it puts me in a good light or in a bad light, but when I talk about leadership, if it's in class to students, I talk about, again, the Classics, Middle Ages, the Renaissance, murals for princes. And when it comes to the last four centuries, it is just my own personal experience with all the pros and cons, and lots of cons, I guess, and very few upsides. So that is one thing: I'm bloody ignorant about it, and I'm sorry because I would love to have the time, and I've heard that there are a number of good books on leadership also in our own field of business, in our sector, but I've never read any. So, I look forward to reading your thesis because I'm sure I have a lot to learn from it.

Silla felt unprepared to speak about leadership despite having read so much about it from classical literature. He seemed to suggest a reluctance to talk about leadership or a belief that he was incapable of offering any essential contributions to the discussion. In fact, during the conversation, he made significant comments about leadership that were complex.

Throughout the discussion, the participants expressed their opinions about leadership in various comments. Davide asked about the generational changes among students and whether there was a vein of scholarship about generational differences in leadership theory literature. He pointed out that the focus group participants were all Generation Z, and he wondered whether generations engaged in leadership differently. He wanted the researcher to answer this question during the focus group.

Silla also asked about how leadership changed depending upon the follower. He expressed an opinion about how a leader in his case would change style based on whether the individuals were students, faculty, or staff. His statements were convictions and stood in stark contrast to his opening statement about his lack of preparation in leadership theory. It may have been that his expressed “uncertainty” around leadership was a rhetorical device or an admission that his comments on leadership are not grounded in scholarship but personal experience.

Mary responded to Silla’s comments about followers by stating that she had learned to display more masculinity as a leader in her career because of how she perceived the responses from followers. Mary stated:

And can I also interject? I think, gender, sorry, as the woman, of course, I have to bring it up, plays a role as well because I think, when you were talking about followership Alan, the way people perceive your leadership is very different if you're a man if you're a woman if you're African American if you're Chinese if you're ... So I think, you know, even probably my style, something that I've evolved into, of leadership, probably, I noticed in the beginning, the way I was responded to, you know when I'm more masculine.

In these opening comments about leadership, Paul was noticeably silent. From the video, it seemed he was taking notes, and his remarks later about supporting PT faculty and bridging the gap contributed to the flow of the discussion.

## **Supporting Part-Time Faculty**

To introduce this part of the discussion, the researcher articulated the theme of support for PT faculty from the primary interviews. The researcher explained that participants provided support to PT faculty in various ways, such as reimbursement for conference attendance or extra pay for curriculum development. The researcher also explained that the analysis seemed to suggest that the support was a way of making amends for the lack of full-time permanent contracts or higher pay that were typically not an option.

While providing a brief explanation of this theme, the researcher used the word “family” to describe the atmosphere that the participants wanted to create for the PT faculty as a form of support in place of a better contract or payment. Only two participants used this terminology in their one-on-one interviews. One was Bill, and the other was Davide. Both of them used this terminology in the context of providing some form of support because they could not offer a tenure-style appointment. From the one-on-one interviews, Bill stated:

They [PT faculty] know that if we can, we do support them, you know, and I know that there are universities that have been really supportive to them. And anyhow, over here, for example, the faculty have access to computers. They have a faculty room, you know, so they even have access to make their own coffee and tea. We supply coffee and tea for all the faculty, so they can use that. And, you know, we try to do little things to make them feel part of a family, you know.

In his one-on-one interview in the context of supporting faculty, Davide stated.

No, it's hard because many of them have this dream to become tenured faculty at [home institution]. So that kind of push and pull of, like, you know, that's really not what we're going to do. That's not what we do here. That's, that's not in the cards. It's hard. But on the other hand, we're doing everything we can to make sure you feel like you're part of the family, so to speak.

In the focus group, on the other hand, Davide forcefully rejected the use of the family metaphor for a supportive work environment. After the researcher finished introducing the theme of supporting PT Faculty to the focus group participants, Davide stated:

I want to say something. First, I want to put it back. I don't want to create a family atmosphere. I detest the language of family in the workplace. It's one of my big pet peeves. I have a family. And it's my responsibility to make sure they survive and eat, and I have a workplace, and it's my responsibility to be professional and provide a good product. So, I just want to be on the record and say that the language of the family in the workplace doesn't belong, and I think it's a real imposition on our people that work at our workplaces to use that language because then we're telling them "oh sacrifice for me because I'm your 'pater familia.'" So just to get that out of the way.

This distinct break from Davide's use of the word family to describe the workplace in his one-on-one interview could be attributed to any number of factors. The researcher did notice a tonal shift, to greater or lesser degrees, in most of the discussions in the focus group compared to the one-on-one interviews. This may have been due to the inherent differences in the dynamics of the interviews and the focus group. The participants may have been gauging more carefully what they said and how they were perceived by their peers in the focus group setting.

Now concerning the main theme of supporting the PT faculty, the participants departed somewhat from the findings of the interview analyses. For the eight interviews, the researcher found that support was provided to PT faculty to offer some added benefits because better contracts with more permanence, teaching hours, or pay were not possible. In contrast, a few of the focus group participants stated that they provided support to encourage PT faculty to grow professionally both within their institutions and perhaps one day in a tenure-style position with another institution. Although the two motivations were similar, the one described in the interview analyses was limited to PT faculty retention and reducing discomfort. In contrast, the motivation explained by some participants in the focus group was focused on the future growth of the individual PT faculty.

Davide followed up his statement about not using the language of family in the workplace with his motivation for providing support, which was for faculty development. Davide stated:

But so, but on the terms of professional ... you know, I think that one of the responsibilities I have with part-time faculty is professional development. I think being clear that this role has limits that are clear, but this could be a way to get experience that can take you to other types of roles. And so, I frame what we can do for our part-time faculty as professional development. ... They are going to conferences and writing papers and I'm giving them research money so that they can develop, because what I can't offer them is advancement in this institution, and I let them know that, but what I can give them is the opportunity to better their skills, teaching, and maybe research if that's what they think they're going to benefit from... so that they can go on to other opportunities.

Absent from his comments were any references to PT faculty retention or enhanced workplace atmosphere as the main goal of support, which were present in his interview comments.

Paul spoke for the first time at this point in the focus group at 17 minutes into the discussion, and he attempted to rephrase the idea of supporting the PT faculty without creating a family atmosphere, but at least one that was collegial. Paul stated:

What is crucial in our job is creating a vibrant background in which everyone is not 'happy' because you cannot be happy when you work. But in a certain way, being cooperative and being able to express yourself, have a voice, not as an exile, but as an insider, in an institution. I think that this is a crucial point on which combines the idea of leadership and the idea of personal and professional duties with all those who are linked to you.

Paul was pragmatic and growth-oriented, but his calculus for the future of his program also considered what was best for the PT faculty that taught there. As the pandemic unfolded, he had made plans in late spring to provide meaningful work to his PT faculty for fall 2020 (with no study abroad students) uniquely and creatively in a way that perhaps no other directors in Italy had done.

Silla reiterated what Davide said about the motivation of his PT faculty, the support he provided, and why he provided it. Again, this was a departure from the one-on-one interview. In the one-on-one, he stated that only one PT faculty had ever left his program. In this singular case, the individual left for a tenured position at the local Italian university—something he labeled as rare. In the one-on-on interview, Silla stated:

... so far, I think it [supporting PT faculty] has paid off because it's extremely rare that teachers want to go away from here. So, for us, the only time that has happened, it has been because they won a chair [tenured position] in an Italian university.

In contrast, in the focus group, he stated that the PT faculty do want tenured positions at Italian universities. Silla explained:

So, it's quite obvious that in most cases, professors who come and teach at our place have an ultimate desire of finding the chair in say an Italian university or a U.S. University which cannot be [his program], right, unfortunately. ... What I try to do is try to support and build a bridge for our faculty to grow here at [his program] temporarily, by not only teaching, but also publishing, participating in conferences, organizing conferences, and so on and so forth. And usually, we try, I try, to make them grow, so to speak, although I don't want to sound too romantic or exaggerated, to become both good teachers and good scholars.

When placed side by side, Silla's comments from this interview and the focus group created a problem. This problem surfaced in the interviews where the participants' sentiment was that the PT faculty was the study abroad programs' heart and soul, yet they had almost zero possibilities for professional growth. From the interviews, the researcher noted a tension in the participants' comments around this issue, which was not resolved in the focus group.

As with her interview, Mary openly expressed dismay at the professional situation that the PT faculty face at study abroad programs in Italy. Her comments in the focus group were open and candid, and perhaps brave. They went further than anyone else's at problematizing the precarious situation of the PT faculty teaching at study abroad programs in Italy. The directors experienced this tension in their roles. Mary stated:

Can I just add to that that my own personal style is complete honesty with my instructors in that I think they are well aware of the fact that for the most part, they love to be in the academic field, but they're aware that who they are, is normally people who haven't gotten into the local institution and are looking for some way to continue in their academic discipline and teach, and publish? You know, we hire a lot of local, I think, a lot, most of us hire a lot of local instructors, you know, people who are highly, highly prepared ... But they're aware of the fact, and, you know, I'm very, very upfront with them that there is no real advancement, as Davide was saying. I mean, they're accumulating a series of contracts with different institutions, and I think this is the most

problematic aspect of what we do, with the full knowledge that it's very rare that this is going to take them anywhere else.

As with Paul, Silla, and Davide, Mary understood that this practice was “problematic” as she stated, but that there was very little that they could do. Mary was brave enough to state it as fact.

The focus group discussion added more texture to how the participants experience this tension between PT faculty precariousness and their central role in their respective programs' mission. The analysis of the interviews found that support was given as a way of improving PT faculty retention instead of better contracts. In the focus group, on the other hand, the participants indicated that support was provided for professional development for career growth while also stating that this was a rare occurrence in the academic field in Italy. It was paradoxical, but this tension captured the internal inconsistencies of the participants' experiences related to this issue.

### **Bridging the Gap to the Future**

The focus group provided a rich discussion about the future of study abroad programs such as the ones managed by the participants. In speaking about the theme of bridging the gap, the participants touched on many issues that were already present in the one-on-one interviews, such as their interactions with the main campus, teaching style differences, and the student experience. Paul shared a future vision for his program and for study abroad in Italy that would seek to bridge the gap between his program and the main campus, drawing the two into a more symbiotic relationship instead of one of the “empire and the colony,” using his metaphor.

In providing support to PT faculty, Paul shared his thoughts about the future of study abroad in Italy. The other focus group participants did not share his enthusiasm for this vision, but it was a compelling model, and it did address somewhat the precariousness of the PT faculty. To ensure the anonymity of the participants, the details about Paul's vision were abbreviated. In

short, Paul saw a future where study abroad programs permanently based in a foreign country became more integrated into the activity of not only the main campus but a network of global campuses.

Paul's future vision addressed the precariousness of the PT faculty because it dismantled the typical model where the study abroad program is a satellite that relies completely on the home campus, not as partners but as colonizers and the colonized. Paul stated:

What I mean, what I envisioned, is this. Not trying to, I don't, I don't want to say the majority of faculty being considered as a real integral part of the main campus, but part of them, yes. Let's say that, you know, everyone knows that in the U.S. that we have 30% full-time professors and 70% that are adjuncts. So why not in the future, starting, we create a sort of environment like this, no? Where our programs are more and more integrated within the central institutions, we are representing abroad. You know, I don't know if you have seen how NYU is working for this fall 2020. So, they have asked Florence faculty to join the Shanghai program, for example. They had an explosion, in terms of numbers in Shanghai, from 500 students to 3000 in two weeks. [names of two NYU Florence faculty], so many are traveling, have been traveling, you know, in the last few days for reaching Shanghai and going there to teach. That's the future of things. So that's what we should ... No? because Florence is part of NYU New York, is part of NYU Shanghai, and so on.

In Paul's future, the PT faculty teaching at his program in Florence could teach one class in Florence and two on-line courses at his home institution, as an example. He saw this as a way of creating more equity between his program and the main campus while also providing better working conditions for his PT faculty. Paul explained:

As soon as we reach or whenever we will reach this kind of frontier goal, I think that the idea of global education will be reached. Otherwise, we are, you know, in a situation in which we have dominant cities and colonies, you know, dominate cities and satellite situations like Florence in the Renaissance, when it tried to conquer Pisa in 1404, the first thing which was stolen from the Pisan townhall was the "pandette," so the origins of the city-state, which was the identity of the place which was conquered by the dominant city, and of course the Florentines were hated by the Pisans, as we know. Now, so I think this creating an interaction between that, you know, whatever point A and point B, 'bridging' as you were saying before, is the only possible chance we have. And I think that our goal as directors is this one in the future. Probably we won't see it, you know, because I, in my case, I hopefully have ten years of work, before retirement, you know, but let's say that this is the future.



Mary reacted to Paul's vision by agreeing that it might be the future but lamented its consequences. Mary was a self-proclaimed traditionalist for study abroad, and she directed one of the older programs in Florence. She argued that study abroad was about living the local reality of a place and a culture. Study abroad programs fully integrated into the main campus would dilute the local experience for the students. Silla reacted to Paul's vision in a similar way to Mary. He hoped that there would be room in the study abroad future for a multitude of models.

The focus group provided another perspective on the three main themes derived from the primary interviews. The focus group participants seemed to measure their responses more carefully. Critiques of the opinions of other participants were qualified and delicate. For the most part, the experiences and the views they shared aligned with the data analysis from the interviews. Their motivation for providing support to PT faculty shifted notably from the interviews, as discussed at length above.

### **Research Question**

The guiding research question for the collection and analysis of the data was: How do directors of study abroad centers in Italy understand and experience their leadership of the part-time faculty they supervise? This section addresses some of the interpretations and discussions related to the findings of the data analysis.

The participants were engaging in leadership in a specific context. The study abroad programs in Italy were a facsimile of an academic department from a U.S. main campus, but they were also quite distinct in at least three fundamental ways. The programs in Italy were accountable to the demands, policies, and culture flowing from the main campuses in the United States that were sending students. The programs offered courses taught primarily by PT faculty where tenure, better pay, and stability are difficult or impossible to deliver. Finally, these

programs were more sensitive to the financial pressures brought on by fluctuations in enrollment or even a global pandemic.

### **Managing the Main Campus**

The participants deferred to the main campus's directives, even if they may have disagreed with them. This lifeline from the main campus significantly impacted how the participants experienced their leadership of PT faculty. As Paul stated directly, the participants understood that without supportive policies from the main campus, the study abroad program would not exist. This total dependence on the main campus meant that the participants would ultimately always side with the main campus or leave their role. Jenny admitted that she was a good fit for her program; otherwise, she would not have stayed so long in her role.

Most participants experienced genuine empathy for the plight of the PT faculty they lead, yet they were relatively powerless to change the situation. Mary stated that the labor laws in Italy allowed for the treatment the PT faculty were getting—implying that her hands were tied. But even if Mary had wanted to do more, the main campus would have probably not approved it. In the focus group, Mary recounted how she rebuked the main campus for cutting all temporary contracts with the PT faculty as the pandemic unfolded. Despite her criticism, she was most likely the one to execute this directive, as the director and legal representative in Italy.

More generous pay or more stability for the PT faculty means less flexibility and more financial liability for the program and the main campus. Stuck between this rock and a hard place, the participants seemed to occupy a state of solidarity to both the PT faculty and the main campus's essential lifeline. In their interviews, this contradiction showed as they would lament PT faculty contracts in one breath and then state that the PT faculty were happy in the next. The focus group did not resolve this problem but complicated it.

A few participants expressed some annoyance about the classroom speech codes and diversity and inclusion issues from the main campus. This clash of cultures between Italy and the United States bothered Bill. Silla and Jenny criticized the United States' approach on some of these issues, yet both offered specialized training to the PT faculty and resources for students around diversity and inclusion issues. All of the participants understood that regardless of how they felt about these issues, their lifeline prioritized them, and by consequence, they had to prioritize them too.

The participants had to continuously manage the central campus hegemony while serving in the local context. This required compromise, but most of the participants experienced their roles in a very positive way. Many of them expressed significant satisfaction in their role. Being a director or dean of a study abroad program in Italy brought both personal and professional prestige for many of the participants. The researcher knows from personal experience that the participants had been invited to meetings held by the mayor's office in Palazzo Vecchio where official governance of Florence has been carried out for more than 500 years. They were invited to parties and receptions at the U.S. consulate in Florence. Typically, they enjoyed much better pay than administrators or professors in similar roles at Italian universities. They had offices in the frescoed rooms of historic palaces or villas. Therefore, despite this servitude to the primary campus directives, the participants derived personal and professional perks that few department chairs in the United States have. Meanwhile, some of the PT faculty they led struggled to round out a comfortable salary teaching at two or more study abroad programs.

### **The PT Faculty**

The second contextual element that informed the participants' lived experiences and their leadership was that the overwhelming majority of the courses at their programs were taught by

faculty on part-time contracts. These faculty might have had time-unlimited contracts with the program or time-limited contracts, but they were almost always part-time in both cases. Those on time-unlimited contracts enjoyed the added stability of having some greater assurance that they would be teaching from semester to semester, albeit usually only one or two courses. Those on the time-limited contracts faced a much less certain future because, after a specific number of months, the employer (the study abroad program in this case) had to either hire the instructor on a time-unlimited contract or discontinue the contract.

It is the part-time commitment among the faculty that provided a challenging context in which to lead for the participants. Leadership is a social phenomenon, and most participants found it a challenge to lead the PT faculty precisely because of the lack of time spent together. The participants wished that they had more time with the faculty and that they could expect more from them. This desire was unachievable, given the reasons stated numerous times around financial liability and the necessity of prioritizing flexibility for the program. The participants then found themselves in a less than ideal leadership context because the followers tended to be narrowly focused on teaching their course.

The participants recognized the central role of the PT faculty in creating a rewarding and engaging program for the students. Still, they also understood the limitations of part-time employment. The participants tended to commiserate with the plight of the PT faculty at the programs they led but were realistic about what they could do given the nature of the employment relationship.

The interview narratives provided some insights into the leadership mindset of the participants concerning the PT faculty. It seemed the participants fell somewhere along a spectrum. On one end of the spectrum, a participant might have viewed the PT faculty as part-

time employees to be closely supervised to maintain main campus standards. On the other end of the spectrum, the participants viewed the PT faculty as vital and essential to the study abroad experience. The participants fell somewhere between these two extremes with a tendency toward the latter, recognizing the PT faculty's importance. This tendency expressed itself in how the participants spoke about the PT faculty and how they went out of their way to keep them happy and to provide the best situation they could, given the limitations described above.

### **Program Fragility**

Finally, the last contextual element that seemed to influence the participants' experience leading PT faculty was that their programs were fragile. A significant decline in enrollments or a sharp rise in costs would mean the end for some of the programs lead by the participants. The fragility of study abroad programs was not unique in higher education. Study abroad programs outside of the United States tend to be self-contained units that shoulder 100% of the financial burden for operations. This reality shaped how the participants viewed their role, how they interacted with the main campus, or even how they made staffing decisions.

The participants tended to prioritize activities and initiatives that show some promise for boosting enrollments. If there was one word to summarize Paul's interview, it would be growth. His discussions around growing his program were central to nearly every response he gave, regardless of the question. Paul's preoccupation with growth seemed to be a mixture of ambition and forethought against future threats. Paul prioritized the central campus policies over everything else because, as Paul noted, it would not survive if the program did not enjoy the main campus' full support. There was entrepreneurialism expressed by Paul that was present in other participants as well, albeit to a lesser degree. It seemed that for most participants, decisions around new initiatives or program overhauls were focused on growth. Most of Diego's interview

was a discussion around his efforts to reimagine and expand the program's curricular identity. The subtext of this was increased enrollments and more stability for the future. Moira recounted that one PT faculty member proposed offering a course online to attract enrollments from the main campus students. Moira rejected this proposal because she perceived it could jeopardize a student's decision to come to Italy and study at the program.

The COVID-19 pandemic will significantly change the landscape of study abroad programs in Italy. Higher education is already facing stiff challenges due to the pandemic. Many solutions to address the challenges do not make sense for study abroad programs where being physically present is at the core of the experience. Paul spoke about a future of study abroad in Italy where there will be fewer but larger programs. To greater or lesser degrees, the participants understood their programs' fragility, but COVID-19 has completely changed everything. Some of their programs have been around for decades, and yet this pandemic is an existential threat.

During the interviews in March and April of 2020, the participants were either sending students home early or had already done so. The pandemic was not part of this dissertation's original research plan, yet it often surfaced in the interviews. No participants expressed concern during the interviews that their program might be closed, but other programs' possible closure was mentioned, albeit infrequently, in the interviews.

Davide seemed confident that his main campus could not easily shut down his Florence facility because they own the property. Still, the participants spoke about the pandemic in uncertain terms. While explaining something about their experience, the participants would occasionally remark that they did not know what would happen now with COVID-19. As the pandemic progresses and continues to alter the way universities operate, it may become a more massive threat to many of these programs.

## Summary

The participants' essential lived experience in leading PT faculty at study abroad centers in Italy was bridging the gap between two different worlds. The participants made conscious and unconscious decisions based on the differences between the main campuses that sent students and the study abroad programs they managed. The challenges the participants faced in leading PT faculty stemmed from these differences. The leadership choices they made reflected both their commitment to the main campus and their desire to cultivate and retain the PT faculty at the center of the study abroad experience.

The analysis of the interviews resulted in three main themes that described the experience of the participants in leading PT faculty. The first theme was the support the participants provide to the PT faculty. The second theme was bridging the gap, which was the central theme of their experience. Finally, the third theme was leadership itself. The participants did not generally articulate distinct personal leadership styles, and some were reluctant to characterize what they did as leadership. All participants provided leadership to the PT faculty at their programs in a unique context.

The focus group confirmed the findings from the main interviews and further problematized the issue of supporting PT faculty and the precariousness of their working conditions. Whereas in the individual interviews, participants seemed to support their PT faculty through various means to assuage their unfavorable work contracts, among other reasons. On the contrary, in the focus group, a new reason emerged for providing support to PT faculty, namely to help them grow professionally to attain better positions elsewhere. These motivations are problematic given the general belief among all participants that the PT faculty have little chance of securing tenure-line positions in either the United States or Italy.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis study was to investigate how directors of study abroad centers in Italy understand and experience their leadership of part-time faculty. Directors of study abroad campuses face competing priorities (Goode, 2007; Goodwin & Nacht, 1988; Hornig, 1995; Lucas, 2009; O'Neal & Krueger, 1995; Stephenson, 2005), and perhaps the most critical role they must fill is that of the academic leader of their programs. Part-time faculty teach most courses at study abroad programs in Italy (Borgioli & Manuelli, 2013), yet no research to date had investigated leadership of PT faculty in this unique context.

The research question asked how directors of study abroad centers in Italy understand and experience their leadership of the part-time faculty they supervise? IPA provided a methodological framework to collect and analyze data to answer the research question. Consequently, the data collection and analysis provided insights into the leadership experiences, in particular with PT faculty, of study abroad directors in Italy.

### **Summary of Research Study**

The researcher conducted eight semi-structured interviews with current directors (or equivalent title) who provided leadership to PT faculty at study abroad programs in Italy. The researcher interviewed each participant once using Zoom, a virtual meeting platform with video and audio. The researcher transcribed and then coded the interview transcripts, which provided meaningful insights into the participants' experiences. After analyzing the interviews, the researcher conducted a follow-up focus group with four of the eight participants to interrogate and validate the main themes.



## **Key Findings**

This section further elucidates some of the study's key findings as they relate to the experiences of study abroad directors providing leadership to PT faculty and past research on leadership in academic settings. Three themes emerged to organize and understand the experiences of the participants: support, bridging the gap, and leadership.

### **Support and Leadership Activities**

During the interviews, the participants shared their stories about leading PT faculty and provided several initiatives and activities to support and lead their PT faculty. Table 5.1 lists many of these activities from the participants and compares them to past research. Most of the activities provided by the participants were also present in past research with a few exceptions. The context may be the key to understanding why some initiatives appeared in past research on supporting and leading faculty, and others did not.

Context is an essential component of leadership analysis (Kezar et al., 2006; Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003; Stogdill, 1948). The participants were in an academic leadership context, as were all of the past research studies listed in Table 5.1 except Kouzes and Posner (1995), a behavioral leadership theory. Therefore, the similarities between the present study and past research findings were not surprising given the similar contexts.

This study provided further evidence supporting the research by Waltman et al. (2012), Eagan et al. (2015), Gappa and Leslie (1993), and Fryer (1977) on leading and supporting PT faculty. The present study's data analyses suggested that the participants were motivated to retain the PT faculty, which is similar to the construct of job satisfaction.

**Table 5.1***Comparison of Support Initiatives and Leadership for PT Faculty From Participants and Past Research*

Participants	Past Research
Create academic coordinator roles.	Promote job security and advancement opportunities (Waltman et al., 2012).
Faculty room with computers, coffee, tea.	Provide office space, shared office space (Eagan et al., 2015).
Recognize research and academic achievements.	Publicly recognize achievement (Gappa & Leslie, 1993), recognize excellence in teaching (Eagan et al., 2015), & support teaching efforts (Waltman et al., 2012),
Extra pay for leading didactic excursions.	Compensation recognizes out-of-classroom work (Fryer, 1977).
Pay for travel to academic conferences. Hosting academic conferences organized by PT faculty. Pay to publish PT faculty scholarship.	-
Build trust.	Be trustworthy (Bryman 2007).
Share the vision with PT faculty.	Provide a strategic vision (Bryman 2007), provide a positive vision (Ramsden 1998), & Inspire a shared vision (Kouzes & Posner, 1995).
Be respectful. Show empathy. Treat PT faculty as colleagues. Listen to the PT faculty	Treat faculty fairly and with integrity, create a collegial environment (Bryman 2007), treat PT faculty with respect (Gappa & Leslie, 1993), & create an inclusive environment (Waltman et al., 2012).

There were three initiatives that some participants mentioned in support of their PT faculty that were not present in the past research. Participants reported that they provided reimbursements for travel to academic conferences for their PT faculty. Some participants also paid to publish PT faculty scholarship. Finally, some participants hosted and paid for academic conferences organized by their PT faculty.

All three of these activities indicate a unique perspective in supporting and incentivizing the PT faculty at Italy's study abroad programs. Past research about supporting PT faculty did not include these three activities, perhaps, because they are more typical among tenured faculty. The presence of these activities in support of PT faculty may indicate that the directors in Italy were elevating the PT faculty's stature at their programs above what is standard practice at university campuses in the United States for PT faculty. This divergence from the past research is discussed in the Implications section.

### **Bridging the Gap**

Bridging the gap was the language used by some participants to explain their leadership experiences. Whether a participant used this language or not, bridging the gap was the essence of the participants' experiences in leading PT faculty in Italy. The participants all found themselves at some point along a continuum between two realities. They each provided leadership to the PT faculty in unique ways to react to this context, which exerts pressures from both directions. Although no analogous contexts were found in the past research reviewed, the participants' choices did resonate with the literature on providing academic leadership to faculty.

Davide and Mary explicitly mentioned defending PT faculty from main campus requests to build trust, which is also present in Bryman (2007). In some cases, Davide and Mary would reject requests from the main campus to ask the PT faculty to do out-of-classroom work. In other

cases, they would negotiate some benefit for the PT faculty. For instance, if the main campus asked for syllabi to be rewritten, Davide would demand that the PT faculty be compensated in some way for this extra work. In Davide's own words: "So I secure for them research money, other development funds, recognizing their research, you know, trying to build, really build trust with them to let them know that I value them as professionals."

Bryman's (2007) literature review on academic leadership practices identified ten leader behaviors for department chairs supported by the empirical literature. Among these were being considerate, treating faculty fairly and with integrity, being trustworthy, and creating a positive collegial environment. All these leadership practices were present in the participants' activities to treat the PT faculty as well as possible as they grappled with two different cultural environments.

In the interview, Paul stated that study abroad center directors are only good leaders in so far as the main campus supported them. This affirmation is supported by contextual leadership theory, which recognizes that leadership effectiveness is dependent upon context (Osborn et al., 2002). The programs directed by the participants were utterly reliant on the main campuses they served. This context shaped and influenced the choices that the participants made in providing leadership to the PT faculty. These choices ultimately must align with the institutions sending the students that keep their programs running.

### **Implications**

Findings regarding the lived experiences of directors leading PT faculty at study abroad centers in Italy have significant implications for leadership theory, research, and practice. The participants' statements on how they support and lead PT faculty and what motivates them provided evidence that further supports many leadership studies, as displayed in Table 5.1.

## Implications for Leadership Theory

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis is not suited for theory building; however as Pringle, Drummond, McLafferty, & Hendry (2011) pointed out, an IPA study can dialogue with theory and may provide important contributions by engaging with the whole through the experiences of the parts. The findings from this study echoed some of the prominent behavioral leadership theories. These theories provide broad general statements for effective leadership and are context neutral. As reported previously, Burns (1978) theorized that if humans were motivated by some fundamental ethical or moral telos across cultures that it would follow that some universal leadership behaviors could be discovered. Table 2.1 lists the leadership behaviors from *The Leadership Challenge* by Kouzes and Posner (1995), *Charismatic Leadership* by House (1977), and *Full Range Leadership* by Bass (1998).

The participants' leadership experiences resonated with some aspects of the behavioral leadership theories listed in Table 2.1. Common to all three approaches was inspiring a vision or goal articulation. This behavior was mainly present in Paul, Mary, and Diego, who spoke of their experiences in sharing their vision with the PT faculty. Diego struggled with change management and convincing some PT faculty of the program's need for a new curricular identity. Mary warned new directors to communicate with PT faculty and bring them along as the program moves in new directions. Finally, Paul was particularly future-oriented in his interview and often spoke about fostering an open dialogue with the PT faculty.

Also common to all three theories in Table 2.1 was the idea of empowering followers expressed as "enable others to act" by Kouzes and Posner (1995, p. 12), "high expectation of followers" by House (1977, p. 14), and "intellectual stimulation" by Bass (1998, pp. 5 - 6). Bass (1985, p. 98) defined "intellectual stimulation" as the leader inspiring followers to be more

creative in recognizing and solving problems, in thinking more strategically. Most of the participants strove for a collegial environment acknowledging the value and ability of the PT faculty. In his interview, Silla pointed out that he never referred to the PT faculty as employees but always as colleagues to flatten the hierarchy and recognize their capabilities. Similarly, Mary's advice for a director was to enable the PT faculty to lead their classrooms, recognizing the professionalism of her PT faculty.

This study also revealed several significant findings that have implications for the leadership theory in supporting PT faculty. As highlighted in Table 5.1, there were a few leadership activities derived from the participants' experiences not found in past research. Those unique to the participants were a set of actions or initiatives tied to the PT faculty's status as academics. Specifically, these were paying for travel to academic conferences, hosting academic conferences organized by PT faculty, and paying to publish PT faculty scholarship.

These unique activities in support of PT faculty may have resulted from the context in which the leadership occurred. At least two contextual factors impacted this study's results compared to past research conducted at U.S. higher education institutions. The competition for quality instructors in Florence may be greater than it is at most U.S. college campuses for PT faculty instructors such as adjuncts. The other factor was that nearly all of the instructors at study abroad programs in Florence were part-time (Borgioli & Manuelli, 2013), which was probably not the case at most U.S. university campuses.

The participants may have been motivated to retain the best PT faculty at their programs for fear of losing them to another program in the competitive labor market for Florence's quality instructors. Moira stated in her interview that one reason to treat PT faculty well was that there were many other options available to PT faculty for teaching. This same sentiment may not be as

strong at U.S. college campuses where the past research studies listed in Table 5.1 were conducted. Florence's competition may push study abroad directors to offer more tenure-style support initiatives, such as hosting an academic conference, to boost retention and satisfaction among PT faculty.

The other unique contextual factor was that the instructors at study abroad programs in Florence were relatively homogenous because the vast majority were both non-tenured and part-time (Borgioli & Manuelli, 2013). As Moira stated, the PT faculty and the classroom were the heart of a study abroad program. At academic departments on college campuses in the United States, tenured faculty, and not PT faculty, form a department or college's academic identity. It is important to note that because the present study was exploratory, there was no evidence that these three initiatives supporting PT faculty, unique to this study, impacted any aspect of the work experience of the PT faculty they targeted.

The participants' motivation to provide support to the PT faculty was another finding from this study that presented leadership theory implications on supporting and leading PT faculty. Logically, the participants offered support to the PT faculty, as shown in Table 5.1, to boost job satisfaction and, consequently, PT faculty retention. This motivation was an integral part of the purpose for much of the past research reviewed on supporting and leading PT faculty. Still, the interview data in this study found that many participants presented a logical inconsistency by recognizing the precarious working situation for PT faculty at their programs and stating that the PT faculty teaching at their programs was satisfied with their positions. This logical inconsistency was not present in past research reviewed. The focus group did not resolve this inconsistency among some participants; instead, the issue was further complicated by the four participants.

In the individual interviews, the participants generally suggested that support was provided to PT faculty to build trust and boost retention, as stated previously. On the other hand, in the focus group, the participants indicated that support was provided to promote faculty development so that they could grow into a better position in the future. During the focus group, the participants also expressed little hope of advancement in academia for the PT faculty either at their programs or at other universities. This paradox left the researcher wondering why the participants claimed to provide professional development for career advancement while also admitting that there was little chance of a better position or contract at a university for the PT faculty.

Another important finding that has implications for leadership theory regarded the general perception that the participants had on their leadership. As noted in chapter 2, past research has generally found that self-awareness and lower self-ratings of leadership are typically associated with better leadership as perceived by followers or third-party observers (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Harris & Schaubroeck, 1988; Sturm et al., 2014; Van Velsor et al., 1993) . In general, the participants expressed an unwillingness to characterize their interactions with the PT faculty as leadership. In some instances, participants sought approval from the researcher for their leadership statements, as if they were uncertain that what they were describing was leadership.

The low self-ratings of the participants' leadership did not provide any evidence that the participants were effective leaders. Still, the fact that the participants also described leadership and support activities found in the empirical research for positive outcomes for PT faculty did provide some indication that the participants were capable in their roles



### **Implications for Leadership Research**

The purpose of this IPA study was to investigate how directors of study abroad centers in Italy understand and experience their leadership of PT faculty. This study also sought to explore how directors provide leadership to part-time faculty in this setting. The findings provided an essential first step toward addressing the lack of leadership research at overseas satellite campuses, as noted by Kezar et al. (2006).

This study also added to the research on how best to support PT faculty, thus, addressing the call for more research in this area (Eagan et al., 2015; Waltman et al., 2012). This study provided an exploratory analysis of directors' leadership experiences only, and so no claims can be made about the efficacy of the participants' leadership activities.

### **Implications for Leadership Practice**

Maira stated that the PT faculty and the classroom were the center of the heart of the study abroad program she directs. This study provided valuable insights for the directors of study abroad centers at satellite campuses. Given the similarities between the participants' leadership statements and the findings from past research in Table 5.1, the study did provide some important clues about how directors of study abroad centers can best provide leadership to PT faculty. Many participants also shared support initiatives for the PT faculty beyond those in past research, which recognized the PT faculty's status as scholars. In a dense study abroad environment such as Florence, it may be beneficial for directors to provide support that rewards and recognizes PT's scholarship by paying for travel to academic conferences, sponsoring the publication of PT faculty scholarship, and sponsoring academic conferences organized by the PT faculty.

Directors of study abroad programs must juggle many competing priorities (Goode, 2007; Goodwin & Nacht, 1988; Hornig, 1995; Lucas, 2009; O'Neal & Krueger, 1995). The participants' accounts of their experiences brought to light the challenge they face in bridging two different realities, which complicated their workload. This situation presents unique leadership challenges for directors. This research has provided some crucial insights from the participants' experiences about how directors can bridge this gap while supporting both the PT faculty and the main campuses they serve.

Most participants in this study described their leadership as collegial. For the most part, the participants strove to build trust and communicate respect toward the PT faculty. They sought to recognize the scholarly accomplishments of the PT faculty. Similarly, the participants tended to disavow any top-down managerial style in working with the PT faculty. Finally, many participants were reluctant to speak about their relationships with the PT faculty in terms of leadership.

Bryman (2007) discussed this aversion toward traditional leadership in an academic setting among the participants. Bryman surmised that given the professionalism and internal motivation of academics, there was little need for a traditional leadership approach. Moira stated that the PT faculty derive as much or more of a sense of achievement in positive student outcomes as she did. She went on to state that the PT faculty did not need pep talks to be motivated. Similarly, Silla stated that the setting in which he led warranted a softer approach. Bryman (2007) theorized that more traditional leadership in an academic context might be more important for the damage it causes than for the good it brings.

This tension with leadership may also be explained by the concept of cultures within the academy from Bergquist and Pawlak (2008). The managerial culture's focus on efficiency and

measurable results is in opposition to the collegial culture's pursuit of knowledge. By engaging in "collegial" leadership, as they put it, the participants were recognizing the PT faculty's core values and creating a less managerial work environment.

The study provided many important insights about leading PT faculty in a unique setting, even though some participants themselves were reluctant to classify their activities as leadership. In this sense, leadership may hold a negative connotation in academic settings because of a lack of understanding about leadership theory and what constitutes good leadership. The notable exception to this reluctance was Jenny, who spoke openly about her leadership style. She came from a corporate background before directing a study abroad program in Florence. Even in Jenny's case, though, she characterized her leadership as "in the trenches" with the PT faculty, describing a direct, collegial relationship.

### **Future Research**

The study provided the first examination into directors' experiences leading PT faculty at study abroad programs in Italy. This study's findings provided a significant number of possibilities for future research into leadership in this context. Future research could build on the work of this study in three crucial ways.

A more extensive study among study abroad programs beyond just Italy could incorporate the leadership practices found in this study. A larger sample size across different cultural contexts would provide more data to understand the participants' leadership initiatives and experiences more fully. This could be achieved through a survey that draws from the themes and initiatives discovered in this study.

This study found that the participants provided some support initiatives to the PT faculty not found in the past research reviewed. The researcher surmised that these unique initiatives

were present because of the unique context in which the participants lead. In Florence, it may be that competition to retain the best PT faculty is more pronounced than at a typical U.S. institution of higher education. A future study could provide evidence to support or refute this claim by examining the support initiatives offered by directors in various study abroad settings that either exhibit high program density like Florence or low program density.

Finally, to further leadership research in this context, it would be essential to link positive organizational outcomes to leadership behavior. A future study could seek to validate the initiatives and leadership behaviors discovered in this study. A study involving directors and PT faculty could provide the necessary evidence for the leadership practices' effectiveness at study abroad programs.

### **Limitations**

There are few notable limitations that diminished this study's efficacy to answer the main research question. The main research question asked how directors of study abroad centers in Italy understand and experience their leadership of the part-time faculty they supervise. The researcher chose IPA as the methodological framework to gather and analyze data to answer the research question. The descriptive analysis provided an answer to the main research question. Still, there were limitations to this study imposed by the design of the research and choices made by the researcher.

Spinelli (2005) characterized phenomenologists as individuals that reject any claims to perfect interpretations of a phenomenon because this would imply a direct experience with the true nature of reality. This researcher's analysis of the data collected was subjective and therefore limited to an interpretation that was ordered and arranged by past experiences and current capabilities. Furthermore, the data were utterances from the participants as they

translated their experiences into words. All of this means that this study's results are finite and incapable of offering a complete explanation of the phenomenon. This is the hermeneutic circle: the researcher interprets the participants' interpretations of their experiences. Despite this, the findings from this qualitative study are plausible, as Bogdan and Biklen (2003) put it, given the available data; but they cannot be completely accurate.

This study engaged eight participants in one-on-one interviews that lasted about 60 minutes each. A follow-up focus group involved four of these individuals and also lasted about 60 minutes. This small sample size, limited in both the number of participants and the quantity of data, restricted the study's power to provide a complete analysis of the leadership of PT faculty among study abroad directors in Italy. The findings were limited to only the experiences of the participants, as interpreted by the researcher. They cannot be considered representative of the experiences of all directors of study abroad programs in Italy.

Another limitation of this study was the data collection design. During the one-on-one interview, participants appeared to be more candid in some cases as compared to the focus group. The focus group participants knew each other using first names to address one another. In Florence's dense study abroad environment, there is a high level of awareness and competition among the directors of the more prominent study abroad programs. During the focus group, participants seemed to measure their responses more carefully than they did in the interviews. This difference in data resulted in different findings for one aspect of the study. As noted previously, the interview data suggested that the participants provided support to PT faculty to boost retention and job satisfaction. At the same time, during the focus group, they stated that they were motivated to support PT faculty to become stronger candidates for better positions at universities.

Another limitation encountered in this study was a reluctance among most participants to share personal insights about the topics raised during the interviews. Instead, the participants tended to respond with descriptions of how they lead and what they do, avoiding more personal statements about their opinions. The researcher knew most participants on a first name basis and had met all of the participants except one before the research began. This familiarity may have caused the participants to be more guarded. The use of online video to conduct the interviews may have also limited the openness of the participants.

This reluctance to share more personal experiences may have also been due to the professional acculturation of typical study abroad directors at overseas campuses representing U.S. institutions. Directors are accustomed to being in the public spotlight. Study abroad directors in Florence, Italy that represent U.S. universities have a public image that they must cultivate and protect given they are ambassadors to Florence and Italy for their institutions. Because of these reasons, a deeper, richer data set may not have been achievable.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

The first study abroad program in Florence was established in 1931 by Smith College (Scheinder, 2017). Since then, the number has steadily climbed. Now, there are 43 university programs based in Florence listed as members of the Association of American College and University Programs in Italy (<https://aacupi.org/members-by-location/>). Besides the AACUPI member institutions, there are many other study abroad programs based in Florence that host students from the U.S. and worldwide. Each of these study abroad programs is unique, but typically an individual leads them.

This study examined the lived experiences of eight individuals serving as directors of study abroad programs in Italy, providing leadership to PT faculty. The study identified three

main themes to organize the experiences of the participants: support, bridging the gap, and leadership. The findings provided information in a novel leadership setting to augment past research on leading and supporting PT faculty. This study has also provided an essential first step toward future research into leadership in this context.

As a former director of study abroad programs in Italy, the researcher sought to shed light on colleagues' experiences operating in a challenging institutional environment. This study has provided a significant amount of information useful to current and future directors seeking to provide leadership to the faculty at their programs.

Leadership is difficult to describe and even more challenging to study. Yet, it has enormous potential to improve the lives of individuals who, through fate or choice, find themselves working together to accomplish a goal. Providing excellent study abroad experiences for students is a just and noble goal that has the power to shape the future of our interconnected world. May the findings from this study spark an interest in its readers to be better leaders. The sincere hope of the researcher is that this research might shed more light on the importance of the PT faculty, not only in Italy but around the world, who educate so many young people on study abroad programs. The PT faculty are often the heart and soul of a study abroad program permanently based in a foreign country.

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## APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Describe your role as the leader of the part-time faculty at the study abroad program that you direct.
2. How do you define leadership for yourself?
3. Describe one or more instances of when you felt that you had successfully provided leadership to the part-time faculty. [follow-up questions: How did you feel? How did you experience that?]
4. Describe an instance of when you felt that you had failed as a leader of the part-time faculty. [follow-up questions: How did you feel? How did you experience that?]
5. What do you find most challenging in leading part-time faculty?
6. What are the goals of the academic program and how do the part-time faculty figure into the achievement of them? Provide examples.
7. Describe some ways in which you interact with the part-time faculty collectively or individually on a routine basis as the director of the program.
8. How do you feel about the support you receive from the main campus?
9. Describe your feelings about the status of part-time faculty at your program and in academia in general.

## APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear Participant,

My name is Alan Earhart and I am a doctoral student from Colorado State University in the School of Education. We are conducting a research study on the leadership of directors working with part-time faculty at study abroad centers in Italy. The purpose of this Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis study is to investigate how directors of study abroad centers in Italy understand and experience their leadership of part-time faculty. The title of our project is “The experiences of directors providing leadership to part-time faculty at study abroad centers in Italy: a phenomenological study.” The Principal Investigator is Dr. Gene Gloeckner of the School of Education, and I am the Co-Principal Investigator.

In order to participate in this study you must meet the following criteria.

- currently employed as a study abroad director or equivalent in Florence,
- willingness to participate in the study,
- ability to adequately describe your experience in English,
- a minimum of four years’ experience supervising part-time faculty in the context of study abroad centers in Italy.

If you have any questions about the research, please contact Alan Earhart at [alan.earhart@colostate.edu](mailto:alan.earhart@colostate.edu) or Dr. Gene Gloeckner at [gene.gloeckner@colostate.edu](mailto:gene.gloeckner@colostate.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the CSU IRB at: [RICRO\\_IRB@mail.colostate.edu](mailto:RICRO_IRB@mail.colostate.edu); 970-491-1553.

Dr. Gene Gloeckner

Mr. Alan Earhart

Professor

student