

DISSERTATION

HUMOR STYLES AND LEADERSHIP STYLES:
COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS

Submitted by
Jennifer L. Carrica
School of Education

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, Colorado

Fall 2009

UMI Number: 3400987

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

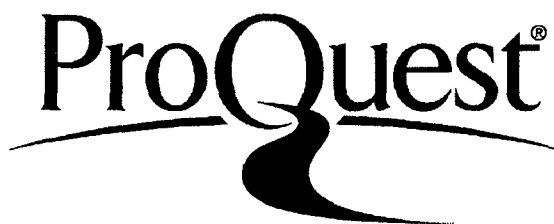
In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI 3400987

Copyright 2010 by ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This edition of the work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.



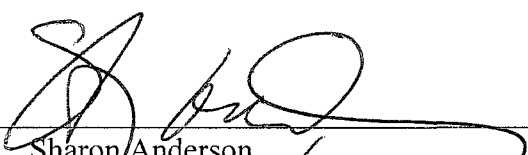
ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

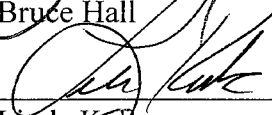
November 6, 2009

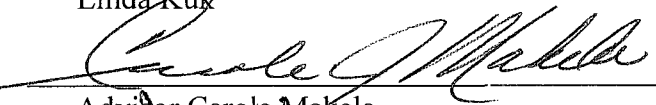
WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE DISSERTATION PREPARED UNDER
OUR SUPERVISION BY JENNIFER L. CARRICA ENTITLED HUMOR STYLES
AND LEADERSHIP STYLES: COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS BE
ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING IN PART REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

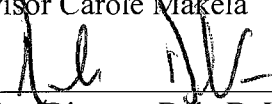
Committee on Graduate work



Sharon Anderson

Bruce Hall

Linda Kuk

Advisor Carole Makela

Acting Director Dale DeVoe

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

HUMOR STYLES AND LEADERSHIP STYLES: COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PRESIDENTS

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between leadership styles (transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) and humor styles (affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, self-defeating) of community college presidents. Research has shown that humor and leadership styles are related and that humor may enhance interpersonal relationships between leaders and followers. Participants of this study included 166 community college presidents from 600 randomly sampled institutions belonging to the American Association of Community Colleges. The presidents completed an online survey including a relatively new humor questionnaire, the Humor Style Questionnaire, as well as a leadership questionnaire, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. This study proposed that affiliative and self-enhancing humor would be positively related to transformational and transactional leadership styles; while aggressive and self-defeating humor would be negatively related to transformational and transactional leadership styles. Additionally, it was hypothesized that the four humor styles would be negatively related to the laissez-faire leadership style.

In sum, affiliative and self-enhancing humor had a positive relationship with transformational leadership. Self-enhancing humor also had a positive relationship with the contingent-reward subscale of transactional leadership; while aggressive humor was inversely related to transformational leadership and to the contingent-reward subscale of

transactional leadership. No significant relationships were found between humor styles and the laissez-faire leadership style.

Exploratory analyses were conducted to investigate demographic variables. Females ($n = 44$) scored significantly higher than males ($n = 119$) on self-enhancing humor and transformational leadership. Age and years of experience were significantly and negatively related to affiliative humor.

Based on the findings of this study, one could suggest that community college presidents may be more likely to utilize affiliative and self-enhancing humor when utilizing transformational and transactional leadership styles. Additionally, presidents may be less likely to utilize aggressive humor when using these leadership styles. The findings support previous research in the general premise that humor and leadership are related. However, the findings of this study also highlight the multiple variations of how these two constructs may be associated and interact.

Research should continue with other populations and in relation to humor styles and leadership styles as perceived by others.

Jennifer L. Carrica
School of Education
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523
Fall 2009

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

Purpose of Study	1
Background of Study	2
Research Design.....	4
Research Questions	4
Definition of Terms.....	4
Study Delimitations	6
Assumptions.....	6
Summary	6
Researcher's Perspective	7

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Leadership.....	8
Transformational Leadership	11
Transformational Leadership in Community Colleges.....	12
Interpersonal Behavior and Individual Consideration	14
Communication.....	16
Humor and Transformational Leadership.....	17
Humor and Gender.....	20
Humor Styles	22
Studies Employing the Humor Styles Questionnaire.....	24
Humor Styles and Transformational Leadership	28
Conclusion	30

Chapter 3: Methodology

Design of Study.....	32
Participants.....	33
Materials	33
Pilot Study.....	35
Administration and Follow-Up	42
Variables of Study.....	42
Analysis of Data.....	44
Hypotheses	44
Statistical Analyses	47
Summary	47

Chapter 4: Findings

Participants.....	48
Reliability.....	50

Statistical Analyses	53
Humor Styles and Transformational Leadership	54
Humor Styles and Transactional Leadership	57
Humor Styles and Laissez-faire Leadership	59
Exploratory Analyses	62

Chapter 5: Discussion

Interpretation of the Findings.....	67
Humor Styles and Transformational Leadership	70
Humor Styles and Transactional Leadership	72
Humor Styles and Laissez-faire Leadership	74
Exploratory Analyses.....	75
Implications for Further Research	77
Target Population.....	78
Self-Perception Research.....	78
Design of Instrument.....	80
Conclusions.....	81

References.....	84
-----------------	----

Appendixes

A Humor Styles Questionnaire	87
B Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (five sample items).....	90
C Demographic Survey.....	91
D Cover Letter	92
E Follow-up Email.....	93
F Comments of Participants.....	94

Tables

1. Humor Styles, Purpose, Use, and Intended Impact	23
2. Correlations Between HSQ Scales and Measures of Perceived Health and Well-being	27
3. Correlations of Humor Styles and Other Measures	34
4. Leadership Pilot Test Analyses.....	37
5. Means and Standard Deviations for Subscale Development and Pilot Samples	38
6. Reliability: Humor Subscales by Total and Sample with Varying Duration of Experience.....	39
7. Reliability: Transformational and Transactional Subscales by Total and Sample with Varying Duration of Experience	40
8. Variables of Study.....	43
9. Age and Years of Experience of Community College Presidents by Gender	49
10. Community College Presidents by Years of Experience and Age	50
11. Humor Style Subscale Reliabilities of the Current Sample and the Martin et al. Sample.....	51
12. Reliability, Means, and Standard Deviations: Leadership Style Subscales.....	53
13. Correlations Between Humor Styles and Transformational Leadership of Community College Presidents.....	55
14. Correlations Between Transformational Leadership Subscales and Humor Styles of Community College Presidents.....	56
15. Correlations Between Transactional Leadership Subscales and Humor Styles.....	59
16. Hypothesized Relationships Between Humor Styles and Leadership Styles: Levels of Support.....	61
17. Comparing Means of Females and Males in Humor Styles	62
18. Comparing Means of Females and Males in Leadership Styles	63
19. Correlations Between Humor Styles and Age	64

20. Correlations Between Humor Styles and Years of Experience	65
21. Findings in Exploratory Analyses Between Humor Styles and Leadership Styles by Gender, Age, and Years of Experience.....	66

CHAPTER 1: THE INTRODUCTION

“All good activities which encourage people to learn how to live with one another pleasantly and to develop a sense of humor improve living” (Leonard Carmichael).

Humor is a topic that has received some attention in leadership literature (Davis & Kleiner, 1989; Decker, 1987; Decker & Rotundo, 2001; Duncan, 1982). In one study, humor has been explored in relation to three primary styles of leadership including transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire (Avolio, Howell, & Sosik, 1999). However, much of the research has been based on the general use of humor without much differentiation among types of humor. This chapter will introduce my research and discuss the use of the Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ), which is a recent measure in humor research. The HSQ is unique from other measures of humor in that it differentiates four styles of humor. While the HSQ has been utilized in a variety of studies, it has not been used to investigate relationships among particular humor styles and particular leadership styles.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship among four humor styles (aggressive, affiliative, self-enhancing, self-defeating) and three leadership styles (transformational, transactional, laissez-faire). This study focused on discussing leadership in community colleges and investigating how leadership style relates to interpersonal relationships and communication. Specifically, there was discussion related

to interpersonal skills and how the use of humor may enhance a leader's ability to interact with others.

Background

Bass (1989) suggested that the study of leadership has provided three primary theories explaining how individuals become leaders. Trait Theory claims that distinct personality traits may guide people into leadership roles naturally. The second is the Great Events Theory that asserts leaders are those individuals who act in an extraordinary way during a crisis or important event. Last, Transformational Leadership Theory maintains people can learn leadership skills and choose to become leaders. In reference to transformational leadership, it is suggested at some point in time, leaders decide they want to provide others with vision, direct the course of future events, and inspire others to success. Bass (1985) identified leadership behaviors fitting into the broad categories of transactional and transformational leadership. The transformational leadership style includes leaders using empathy, personal support, and interpersonal communication to motivate followers. Transactional leadership includes a contingent-reward approach. Laissez-faire style is a third type of leadership typified to represent the absence of leadership (Bass, 1985). This study will investigate the use of these three leadership styles in relation to humor styles.

Humor has been identified as a method to enhance communication and motivate followers (Davis & Kleiner, 1989). From research, humor is verbal or nonverbal and may elicit a positive cognitive or affective response from listeners (Meyer, 1990; Mulkay, 1988; Taylor, 1974). Although, humor is a multi-faceted construct, it may be conceptualized as cognitive ability, an aesthetic response, an attitude, a coping strategy,

or a defense mechanism by the individual utilizing it (Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray, & Weir, 2003). It is a component of communication. There are few concrete concepts about defining humor or explaining the process of humor in relation to effective leadership. Bass (1998) claimed that communication was a crucial element in transformational leadership and humor has been identified as a method to enhance communication and motivate followers (Davis & Kleiner, 1989).

A recent development in the study of humor relates to humor styles and the Humor Style Questionnaire developed by Martin et al. (2003). They proposed two humor styles potentially beneficial to well-being (affiliative and self-enhancing) and two styles potentially detrimental to well-being (self-defeating and aggressive). In regard to humor styles that may be beneficial to well-being, affiliative humor relates to spontaneous banter, telling jokes, and amusing others. In addition, it is often used in forming interpersonal relationships and reducing tensions. Using self-enhancing humor is a coping strategy and individuals tend to maintain a humorous outlook on the incongruities of life. For the potentially detrimental humor styles, aggressive humor is the use of humor in the criticism or manipulation of others. This humor is often expressed as sarcasm, ridicule, or at the expense of others. Self-defeating humor is the use of self-disparaging comments at one's own expense. Martin et al. suggested this humor style involves one's own underlying negative feelings and sometimes an attempt to gain approval of others.

The use of humor is important because it is often difficult for a leader to relate to all individuals in all situations. Yet, the literature indicates humor may provide a way for individuals to connect with one another in a variety of situations (Clouse & Spurgeon, 1995; Martin & Lefcourt, 1983).

Research Design

This study utilized a comparative and associational design. A random sample of 600 community colleges listed as members of the American Association of Community Colleges was surveyed. The presidents of the selected colleges were asked to complete the Humor Styles Questionnaire, the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), and a demographic survey.

Research Questions

The purposes of this study were to investigate the relationship between humor styles and leadership styles. While studies have investigated the concept of humor and leadership, none was found that utilizes the HSQ to identify specific humor styles in relation to the MLQ, which identifies specific leadership styles. With the use of these instruments, the following research questions are posed.

1. What is the relationship between humor styles and transformational leadership?
2. What is the relationship between humor styles and transactional leadership?
3. What is the relationship between humor styles and laissez-faire leadership?

Definition of Terms

The Humor Style Questionnaire assesses four dimensions of the use of humor by individuals as described by Martin et al. (2003).

Self-enhancing Humor: This is a relatively benign use of humor to enhance the self. Individuals tend to be amused by incongruities in life and maintain a humorous perspective in adversity. It may be used as a defense mechanism. Interpersonal relationships are emphasized and it is possible this use of humor is beneficial to the user's well-being.

Affiliative Humor: Humor is used in a benign manner to enhance one's relationships with others. Individuals tend to say funny things, tell jokes to those around them, and use witty banter to amuse others. Humor is used to enhance interpersonal cohesiveness and attraction and is possibly beneficial to well-being

Aggressive Humor: This use of humor is to enhance the self at the expense of others. Individuals tend to use sarcasm, teasing, and ridicule of those around them. Individuals may manipulate with ridicule and it is possible this humor may hurt others and possibly be detrimental to well-being.

Self-defeating Humor: This use of humor relates to enhancing relationships at the expense of self. Individual tends to allow self to be the focus of others' humor and to laugh when ridiculed by others. This use of humor allows for interpersonal interaction, but may be related to low-self esteem. It is possibly detrimental to well-being.

The MLQ measures the use of the three leadership styles by an individual and each is described here.

Transformational Leadership: Bass (1985) expanded upon the earlier ideas of Burns (1978) and his theory of transformational leadership. He defined this style of leadership in terms of the leader's motivational effect on followers. Transformational leadership has four components: charisma, idealized influence-attributed, or behavioral (provides vision and gains trust); inspirational motivation (uses symbols to focus efforts in communicating the vision); intellectual stimulation (provides followers with challenging new ideas); and individualized consideration (uses mentoring and continuous feedback linking follower's needs and organization's mission) (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Transactional Leadership: Burns (1978) identified this type of leadership as contingent based on punishment and reward and the idea of a follower being compliant with a leader in exchange for expected rewards (Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Laissez-faire Leadership: Northouse (2004) describes this leadership in terms of the French translation meaning “hands-off—let things-ride” approach. He further indicates that leaders utilizing this approach tend to abdicate responsibility, give little or no feedback, and exert little effort in terms of assisting followers.

Study Delimitations

This study included leaders from a random sample of institutions listed in the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). This study focused on individuals rating themselves in terms of leadership styles and humor use.

Assumptions

The sample of those agreeing to participate is representative of all community college presidents in the AACC. The AACC consists of 1,195 institutions throughout the country.

Summary

The purpose of this research was to enhance the knowledge of the use of humor and particular humor styles in conjunction with identified leadership styles. Previous studies have laid a foundation for the study of humor and leadership; however, the development of a humor measure, the HSQ, may provide new insights and help to elaborate previous findings in this research area.

Researcher's Perspective

My experiences as a student, as a Peace Corps Volunteer, as a professional in human services and in education have all involved working with individuals with different backgrounds, different cultures, and different perspectives. I have had favorable experiences with the use of humor in many situations, both as a receiver and a sender. My biases in relation to this topic relate to my positive view on the use of humor. While I realize that humor may not be appropriate in all situations, I do have a tendency to favor the use of it in many situations. I am interested in how those in leadership positions use this construct. Leadership is a topic that impacts us all. This study will not provide answers to all questions relating to humor and leadership; however, it may provide insights on different types of humor and the different types of leadership styles perceived by community college presidents.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to review literature that discusses leadership styles in community colleges and how they relate to interpersonal relationships and communication. Specifically, the review will focus on these interpersonal skills and how the use of humor may enhance leaders' ability to interact with others. The use of humor is important in my discussion because it is often difficult for a leader to relate to all individuals in all situations. Yet, the literature indicates humor may provide a way for individuals to connect with one another in a variety of situations. More specifically, I will review publications that reflect the themes of empathy, personal support, interpersonal interaction, and effective communication in the leadership literature. This review will demonstrate that leaders who utilize empathy, support, and communication are more likely to participate in transformational leadership and to be viewed as transformational leaders by others. In addition, the literature will demonstrate while effective communication is emphasized, it is not clearly defined. Literature will also be reviewed to demonstrate the positive and negative uses of humor in particular situations. This review will highlight the potential for leaders who are more likely to utilize humor in particular situations to be viewed as transformational leaders.

Leadership

Leadership has been defined and conceptualized in numerous ways throughout history. According to Doyle and Smith (1999), there have been four primary generations of leadership theory which include the Trait, Behavioral, Situational/Contingency, and

Transformational theories. The Trait Theory claims distinct personality traits may guide people into leadership roles naturally. Trait theories were present during the early to mid-1900s and focused on identifying specific traits leaders possessed which differentiate them from followers. As Sadler (1997) indicated, previous studies have not adequately addressed the relationship among traits and leadership effectiveness. Additionally, these theories minimized the impact of the situation in relation to the leader.

A different type of leadership theory known as Behavioral theories emerged during the 1950s and 1960s and moved away from the idea that leaders are born and not made. The focus in these theories was on the leader's behavior rather than personality traits. Different behaviors were grouped together and labeled as "styles". Sadler (1997) and Wright (1996) identify many inconsistencies in the studies relating to Behavioral theories of leadership and their incomplete consideration for the situation of the leader and leadership behaviors.

Situational/Contingency theories of leadership emerged during the late 1950s through the 1980s and addressed the assumptions leaders may act differently in different situations. The central idea in this type of leadership theory was effective leadership was dependent on a combination of factors such as the relationship between the leader and the follower or the structure of the task. Situational/Contingency theories have been criticized for being too ambiguous. Bolman and Deal state these theories "focus mainly on the relationship between managers and immediate subordinates, and say little about the issues of structure, politics, or symbols" (1997, p. 302).

The fourth generation of leadership theory is Transformational, which maintains people can learn leadership skills and choose to become leaders. In reference to

transformational leadership theory, Burns (1978) differentiated ordinary (transactional) leadership and extraordinary (transformational leadership) leadership. Transactional leadership has punishment and reward as motivating factors. It is based on the idea of a follower being compliant with a leader in exchange for expected rewards.

Transformational leadership is defined as “the development of mutual needs, aspirations, and values in which the leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs and engages the full person of the follower” (p. 4). Bernard Bass (1985) expanded upon the ideas of Burns with his theory of transformational leadership, which he defined in terms of the leader’s motivational effect on followers.

Bass (1985) identified leadership behaviors fitting into three broad categories of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire. The transformational leadership style includes leaders using empathy, personal support, and interpersonal communication to motivate followers. Transactional leadership includes a contingent-reward approach. The laissez-faire leadership style is a third type of leadership typified to represent the absence of leadership (Bass, 1985).

In his overview of leadership, Northouse (2004) indicates leadership is a process, involves influence, occurs in a group context, and involves goal attainment. Therefore, he defines it as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (2004, p. 11). In other words, leaders and followers are both integral to the process and thus their relationship becomes a center of focus in goal attainment.

For the purposes of this discussion, leadership will be referred to as the process of an individual influencing a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse,

2004). Transformational leadership theory, in particular, relates well to this definition. Transformational leadership can be defined as a process that changes and transforms individuals in terms of emotions, values, and long term goals. It often incorporates charismatic and visionary leadership skills (Northouse, 2004).

Transformational Leadership

Burns differentiated ordinary (transactional) leadership and extraordinary (transformational leadership) leadership. Transactional leadership has punishment and reward as motivating factors. It is based on the idea of a follower being compliant with a leader in exchange for expected rewards. Transformational leadership is defined as “the development of mutual needs, aspirations, and values in which the leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs and engages the full person of the follower” (1978, p. 4).

Bernard Bass (1985) expanded upon the ideas of Burns with his theory of transformational leadership, which he defined in terms of the leader’s motivational effect on followers. Transformational leadership has four components: (a) charisma or idealized influence-attributed behavior (provides vision and gains trust); (b) inspirational motivation (uses symbols to focus efforts in communicating the vision); (c) intellectual stimulation (provides followers with challenging new ideas); and (d) individualized consideration (uses mentoring and continuous feedback linking followers’ needs and organizational mission) (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Followers feel loyalty, trust, admiration, and respect toward the transformational leader. They are inspired to achieve higher-order needs and made more aware of the organization’s needs for their unique skills and talents. Thus, followers are motivated to

serve and achieve more than was originally expected by the organization. With the leader focusing on individual development, the follower's performance is enhanced; and as a result, there is organizational growth (Bass, 1985). Bass asserted transformational leadership exists when leaders and followers share the same goals. One arena in which it would be important for followers and leaders to share the same goals is higher education and, in particular, community colleges.

Transformational Leadership in Community Colleges

Community colleges offer a wide array of opportunities in credit, non-credit, and lifelong learning education in technical and general education programs. Today, one major role of the community college is to meet local community and labor force needs. Thus, a community college needs to be able to adapt in a timely manner to meet demands. Because of the uniqueness of community colleges, the need for continual change and continuing pressures of accountability, leadership at community colleges must be responsive. Effective leadership has been defined as leadership that produces movement toward the long-term best interests of the group (Burns, 1978; Kotter, 1988; Thorn, 1999).

Transformational leaders in community colleges have been characterized as having the ability to influence the values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of others by working with them to accomplish the mission and purpose of the college (Rouche, Baker, & Rose, 1989). Community college presidents and their administrative teams have responsibilities for shaping the climate of their organizations. Particular characteristics such as those associated with transformational leadership are needed to do this effectively.

Kirby, Paradise, and King (1992) were interested in two research questions in their study of extraordinary leadership in education at six different school districts. They asked (a) to what extent are leaders perceived to use transformational and transactional leadership behaviors, and (b) which behaviors are predictors of followers' satisfaction and leadership effectiveness? To answer the first question, 103 educators enrolled in graduate programs from six school districts completed the MLQ providing their perceptions concerning their immediate supervisors. In this quantitative investigation, analyses revealed that in addition to charisma, the subscales of individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspiration, and contingent reward were positively and significantly related to perceived effectiveness of a leader. The authors concluded this first study by discussing the transformational and transactional leadership styles and how their findings demonstrated charisma alone does not explain leader effectiveness.

In their second study, a survey was used to ask 58 graduate students to describe a specific situation in the education field and their perceptions of a leader's actions and outcomes of that situation. Through data analysis of the situations, leaders were described as having the following characteristics: people oriented (caring, personable, supportive); knowledgeable through experience; and a positive outlook (enthusiastic, optimistic). The leaders were not described as having extraordinary personal appeal or ability to attract followers. Instead, the qualitative findings indicated the leaders' ability to inspire extra effort was associated with modeling behaviors, communicating expectations, and challenging followers.

The authors stated "although transformational leaders may be charismatic, the motivational effectiveness of observable, teachable, leader behaviors such as intellectual

stimulation are supported in both studies” (1992, p. 310). In addition, individualized consideration was related to leader effectiveness in both studies. Individualized consideration is one of the four components of transformational leadership and can be defined as treating followers on a one-to-one basis and emphasizing a supportive relationship by the leader (Bass & Avolio, 1990). Kirby, Paradise, and King (1992) concluded by stating skills in educating and challenging followers should be important considerations in leadership development training. As indicated in their study, one of the important components of transformational leadership is individualized consideration. A review of literature in regard to this concept provided insight into the leader and follower relationship.

Interpersonal Behavior and Individual Consideration

As stated previously, individual consideration relates to leading through support and encouragement, coaching, and working on an individualized basis. It is one of the four components of transformational leadership. According to Rubin, Munz, and Bommer, transformational leadership requires leaders “to build trusting, warm relationships with employees through honest engagement (2005, p. 848). In their study, 145 leaders from a midwestern, global biotechnology/agricultural company completed a survey of 22 items pertaining to six dimensions—articulating a vision, providing a role model, communicating high performance expectations, providing individualized support, fostering acceptance of group goals, and providing intellectual stimulation. Analysis of data indicated leaders who accurately identified emotions from facial expressions and leaders who scored high in positive affectivity were more likely to engage in transformational leadership. In addition, agreeableness was a significant predictor of

behavior demonstrating transformational leadership. The authors stated, “These results support theoretical arguments that leaders who perform transformational leadership behavior are more interpersonally sensitive than leaders who might engage in solely contingent reward behavior” (p. 854).

In an educational setting, Coats (2000) examined interpersonal behaviors of department chairpersons in community colleges by utilizing survey data collected from faculty members and division heads at 15 institutions. Twenty-eight division heads completed a 54 item survey relating to perceptions of their own behavior as leaders toward others (expressed) and their perception of the behaviors of others directed at self (received). Faculty members ($n = 172$) completed a 15 item survey rating how well division heads performed their job activities. The findings indicated the division heads who were more likely to establish and maintain interpersonal interaction with others were perceived to be more effective by faculty members than division heads who do not develop relationships. In addition, effective leaders perceive themselves as being included by others in their interactions.

A more recent study, which helps to highlight interpersonal relationships, discussed emotional intelligence in relation to transformational leadership. Barbuto and Burbach (2006) identified five aspects of emotional intelligence including (a) empathetic response (ability to understand the emotional makeup of other people), (b) mood regulation (ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods), (c) interpersonal skill (proficiency in managing relationships and building networks), (d) internal motivation (a passion to work for reasons beyond money and status involving the ability to delay gratification in pursuit of a goal), and (e) self awareness (ability to understand

one's own moods, emotions, and drives and the effects on others). To investigate these five aspects of emotional intelligence, 80 community leaders and 388 direct-report staffers from the Midwest United States completed surveys. The leaders completed a self-report instrument relating to emotional intelligence and then completed the MLQ. Each of the staffers completed a rater version of the MLQ. Analysis of the data yielded interesting findings. Leader empathy, interpersonal skills, and interpersonal motivation were positively related to transformational leadership. Mood regulation was negatively related to transformational leadership, and self-awareness was negatively related to inspirational motivation. In sum, the researchers concluded leaders' empathetic responses relate to the staffers' perceptions of the use of intellectual stimulation and individual consideration by the leaders. Interpersonal skills were shown to be highly important in transformational leadership practices. One technique a leader may use to demonstrate interpersonal skills relates to communication.

Communication

Developing interpersonal relationships is an important aspect to transformational leadership. Communication is a common theme in the research as exemplified by a study regarding leaders in self-managed teams at a college. Gust-Thomason and Yantis (1998) conducted a study of the assessment of the effectiveness of team leaders at the College of the Mainland in Texas. As organizations move toward more leaders emphasizing a team approach to goal achievement versus traditional leadership skills such as supervision, scheduling of work, and giving orders; the literature indicates that business and industry have flourished with improved productivity, better quality, and reduced conflict. From their literature review, Gust-Thomason and Yantis stated leadership skills and activities

in this approach in an educational setting would include administrators (a) moving from authoritarian roles to proactive empowerment, (b) translating the vision into reality and persuading all to pull together, (c) acting as facilitator and supporter, (d) listening, and (e) recognizing the success of the group process. To investigate their assertions, the authors surveyed team members and team leaders and found the most valued skill of team leaders was communication. Additionally, survey results demonstrated participants' recommendations for future team leader preparation programs. The primary recommendation included enhancing communication skills. These findings supported some of the conclusions of Kirby, Paradise, and King (1992) in their assertion that communication is crucial to transformational leadership.

However, the preceding studies do not indicate what content or tone of communication should be used and when. In many of these studies, effective communication and articulating a vision are important to the theory of transformational leadership; yet little data exist to indicate how the type, use, or frequency of communication is associated with the relationship between the leader and followers. The importance of this relationship is vital to the transformational leadership process as implicated through the construct of individualized consideration. Relationships among individuals are as unique as individuals themselves; and relating to others in different situations can be enhanced through the use of particular methods in communication such as empathy, honesty, and a sense of humor, which may be relevant to the situation.

Humor and Transformational Leadership

Bass (1989) identified differences between transactional and transformational leaders and identified ten components of leadership effectiveness based on

transformational leadership including loyalty, cohesion, satisfaction, creativity, low stress, communication, low unit conflict, performance, low unit tension, and trust. Humor has been identified as a method to enhance communication and motivate followers (Davis & Kleiner, 1989). As defined in research, humor is verbal or nonverbal and may elicit a positive cognitive or affective response from listeners (Meyer, 1990; Mulkay, 1988; Taylor, 1974). Although, humor is a multi-faceted construct, it may be conceptualized as a cognitive ability, an aesthetic response, an attitude, a coping strategy, or as a defense mechanism (Martin et al., 2003).

Monro (1980) identifies three primary theories of humor that explain its use including superiority, incongruity, and relief. Superiority theory refers to humor used to empower one over another resulting in feelings of superiority. Incongruity refers to humor used as a means of dealing with frustration or injustice or mingling of two ideas that are completely different. Relief theory views humor as a cathartic release to relieve tension (Monro, 1980). While these theories are helpful in understanding humor, humor is utilized in a variety of ways in a variety of settings. There are few concrete concepts about defining humor or explaining the utilization of humor in relation to effective leadership. Bass (1998) claimed communication was a crucial element in transformational leadership and humor has been identified as a method to enhance communication and motivate followers (Davis & Kleiner, 1989). In other words, humor relates to the communication process and can be an effective way for leaders to engage followers.

In studying humor and leadership, Avolio, Howell, and Sosik (1999) examined links among leadership style, use of humor, and two measures of performance. The

authors focused on two questions: (a) To what extent does the use of humor by leaders impact positively on performance? and (b) For which leadership styles is the use of humor more (or less) effective? To investigate these questions, they examined how the use of humor moderates the three leadership styles including transformational, contingent reward, and laissez-faire.

In their literature review, Avolio et al. noted that transformational leadership and contingent reward leadership have been shown to have a direct and positive relationship with unit and individual performance of followers. In contrast, laissez-faire leadership has been shown to have a negative relationship with performance. Therefore, they hypothesized the use of humor would (a) be positively related to individual and unit performance, (b) enhance the positive effect of transformational leadership on individual and unit performance, (c) enhance the positive effect of contingent reward leadership on individual and unit performance, and (d) enhance the negative effect of laissez-faire leadership on individual and unit performance.

To investigate their hypotheses, Avolio et al. distributed surveys in a large financial institution to 115 leaders representing the top four levels of the institution and to 322 of their subordinates. Followers were asked to rate the frequency with which their managers used different leadership behaviors and humor. The MLQ was used to measure leadership style while five items from the literature on humor were utilized to measure leaders' use of humor in terms of frequency and occurrence. The financial institution provided two performance measures: consolidated unit performance (the degree to which a manager achieved targeted goals for the year) and individual performance appraisal (a score representing a focal manager's overall performance).

Analysis indicated the use of humor and style of leadership were related. More specifically, transformational leadership was significantly and positively related to the use of humor and to both individual and unit performance. Contingent reward leadership was significantly and positively related to the use of humor; but it was negatively related to individual and unit performance. Laissez-faire leadership was significantly and negatively related to the use of humor and to individual and unit performance. These findings suggested transformational leaders could use humor as a form of reassurance and a demonstration of confidence in tense situations. Transformational leaders empower others to develop their full capabilities and to move toward a common goal. In addition, humor could be perceived by followers as promoting greater flexibility and innovation, which ultimately would enhance performance.

However, the authors noted their study had limitations as it did not account for different types of humor. Findings indicate humor is an important construct in transformational leadership and suggest further research is needed. While Avolio et al. noted their study was limited by a small number of females; there were implications that gender and the use of humor are related.

Humor and Gender

Decker (1987) explored the concept of managerial humor and subordinate satisfaction. In his study, 131 males and 159 females from a variety of organizations completed a questionnaire containing 46 questions measuring job satisfaction and rating supervisors' humor in the workplace. Participants were categorized by age and gender and the findings indicated older females found supervisors who utilized aggressive and sexual humor as less effective than did any other groups. Additionally, younger

participants rated supervisors who used more humor as more effective than supervisors who used less humor. Decker notes the findings indicate different types of humor could be used effectively by different groups in different situations.

Similar findings were identified by Decker and Rotundo (2001) who examined the relationship between humor use and key leadership behaviors with implications relating to gender. In their study, 1,000 business school alumni were randomly selected resulting in 359 participants (217 males, 135 females, and 7 who did not specify gender). In addition to demographic information, items measured respondents' perceptions of his/her manager's use of positive humor, negative humor, task behaviors, relationship behaviors, and overall effectiveness. Findings indicated the use of humor was related to the other variables. Managers', both males and females, positive use of humor led to increased perceptions of task desirability and relationship behaviors, while negative humor decreased perceived task and relationship behavior. Positive humor was associated with increased perceived effectiveness. Gender and humor were related as female managers were rated higher than male managers on relationship behavior and effectiveness when using positive humor. However, female managers were rated lower than male managers when using negative humor.

The use of positive humor related positively to perceptions of effectiveness and overall favorable perceptions of managers in contrast with the use of negative humor. This study suggests the use of particular types of humor in particular situations could be beneficial in the workplace. In addition, it suggests gender and the use of humor may need further exploration. Earlier studies suggest it would be important to use humor styles appropriate to particular situations. In more recent studies, the research has become

more specific suggesting there are different types of humor, which are used in different situations.

Humor Styles

The Humor Style Questionnaire (HSQ) developed by Martin et al. (2003) identifies the use of four different humor styles. They proposed two humor styles potentially beneficial to well-being (affiliative and self-enhancing) and two styles potentially detrimental (self-defeating and aggressive). Affiliative humor is often used in forming interpersonal relationships and reducing tensions and characterized by statements such as “I enjoy making people laugh.” and “I laugh and joke a lot with my friends”. Self-enhancing humor is used as a coping strategy and typified with the following statement, “If I am feeling depressed, I can usually cheer myself up with humor”. As to the potentially detrimental styles, aggressive humor is the use of humor in criticism or manipulation of others and a related statement would be “If someone makes a mistake, I will often tease them about it”. This type of humor is often expressed in the form of sarcasm, ridicule, or at the expense of others. Self-defeating humor is the use of self-disparaging comments at one’s own expense and might be described as “When I am with friends or family, I often seem to be the one that other people make fun of or joke about”. Martin et al. suggested this humor style involves one’s own underlying negative feelings and sometimes is an attempt to gain approval of others. Table 1 demonstrates the purpose, use, and intended impact of each humor style as summarized from Martin et al.

Table 1

Humor Style Purpose, Use, and Intended Impact

Humor Style	Purpose	How it is used	Impact
Affiliative	to enhance relationships with others	witty banter, telling jokes	puts others at ease
Self-Enhancing	to enhance self	amused by incongruity	defense, coping
Aggressive	to enhance self at expense of others	sarcasm, teasing	manipulate with threat or ridicule
Self-Defeating	to enhance relationships at expense of self	joking about self, self-disparaging	gaining approval, integration

The purpose of the work of Martin et al. (2003) was to develop a questionnaire to study humor styles. In their overall sample, the authors examined responses of 1,195 participants from Canada. The authors verified the scale reliabilities and intercorrelations and performed a variety of cross validation tests. Once the scale was developed and determined to be valid and reliable, the researchers found males scored significantly higher than females on all four of the humor styles while 370 younger participants (14 to 19 years of age) scored significantly higher than did 218 older participants (25 to 87 years of age) in aggressive humor and affiliative humor styles. While the analyses involving age differences could have provided more detail as there is a broader age range in the older participants, development of the HSQ and the findings could prove to be

beneficial in the study of humor and its positive and negative uses in particular situations. While research regarding the HSQ and the defined humor styles is relatively recent, humor styles have been investigated (Decker & Rotundo, 2001; Duncan, 1982) and continue to be investigated in relation to personality factors, which may relate to leadership.

Studies Employing the Humor Styles Questionnaire

The HSQ has been utilized in a variety of studies. In 2002, Saroglou and Scariot utilized the HSQ to investigate relationships among humor styles and personality at a university in Belgium. The HSQ was utilized with a questionnaire developed to address the Five Factor Model of Personality to solicit data from 72 female and 15 male undergraduate students. Participants voluntarily chose to take part in this study, which could have implications about the validity and reliability of the findings. The Five Factor Model of Personality included items addressing extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness. Analysis of data collected with the HSQ indicated men tended to score higher than women in self-enhancing humor, self-defeating humor, and aggressive humor. Higher scores on each of the humor scales indicate a greater tendency to use that humor style. The findings with all participants demonstrated affiliative humor and self-enhancing humor were positively correlated to extraversion, agreeableness, and openness. Aggressive humor was positively correlated with extraversion but negatively correlated with agreeableness. Another interesting finding involved aggressive humor and self-defeating humor being negatively correlated with conscientiousness and emotional stability. These findings indicate affiliative humor and self-enhancing humor could be vital to transformational leadership. In sum, the

personality correlate of extraversion was found to be positively related to all humor styles except self-defeating humor. Affiliative and self-enhancing humor styles shared several personality correlates including agreeableness, openness, and self-esteem.

In another study, Saroglou (2004) utilized the HSQ to investigate the relationship between humor styles and religiosity and spirituality. In one study, 175 high school and undergraduate university students (53 males and 122 females) completed the HSQ, the Humorous Behavior Q-Sort, a questionnaire on spirituality, and another on religiosity. Religiosity was measured using a three-item index including questions about (a) importance of God in life, (b) importance of religion in life, and (c) frequency of prayer. These studies took place in Belgium and the instruments were translated into French. Findings suggested, for women, humor styles were not correlated with spirituality or religiosity. However, men's religiosity was negatively related to the use of social humor and men who rated high in spirituality reported low use of hostile (aggressive) humor. In the second study, 98 heterosexual couples answered questions separately relating to humor styles, quality of attachment, and marital satisfaction. Religious men and women did not use hostile humor and used social humor less often than other couples. Religious men used self-defeating humor more often than non-religious men. The authors noted the findings supported their hypothesis that religiosity and the use of three of the four humor styles (self-defeating humor was predicted to have no relationship with religiosity) were negatively correlated.

In 2004, Kazarian and Martin further explored humor styles with 401 undergraduate students at the American University of Beirut. All 401 students (221 females and 180 males) were fluent in English. The students completed the HSQ, the

Individualism and Collectivism Scale (ICS), the Experiences in Close Relationships Scale (ECR), and a scale on psychological well-being and perceived health (HSS). Findings indicated affiliative humor was positively related with horizontal collectivism (individuals viewed as interdependent and equal to others in the group), aggressive humor with vertical individualism (individuals viewed as independent; however, inequality and competition are the norm), and self-defeating humor with vertical collectivism (individuals viewed as interdependent but unequal). Horizontal collectivism was negatively correlated with aggressive but positively correlated with self-enhancing humor. For close relationships and attachment style, self-defeating humor was positively related to anxious attachment style while affiliative humor was associated negatively with the avoidant style of attachment. Perceived health was positively correlated with self-enhancing humor. Table 2 displays the correlations between the HSQ scales and the other measures in this study as presented by Kazarian and Martin (2004, p. 216).

Table 2

Correlations Between HSQ Scales and Measures of Perceived Health and Well-being of College Students

Measures	HSQ Scales			
	Affiliative	Self Enhancing	Aggressive	Self-Defeating
Horizontal Collectivism	.26***	.11*	-.12*	-.09
Horizontal Individualism	.10	.01	.07	.08
Vertical Individualism	-.05	-.01	.15**	.05
Vertical Collectivism	-.03	.00	-.07	.19***
Anxious Attachment	-.08	.01	.07	.44***
Avoidant Attachment	-.44***	-.10	.02	.13
Perceived Health	.10	.26***	-.06	.00
Well-being	.23***	.40***	-.03	-.09

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

The authors note this is the first study of humor styles in Lebanon and while the four humor styles were found, the aggressive humor dimension did have lower internal consistency than it did in Martin et al. (2003) conducted in Canada suggesting expressions of humor may vary among cultures. Similar to previous studies, this research was consistent with Saroglou and Scariot's (2002) finding that the use of self-disparaging humor was related to insecure attachment style involving anxiety and discomfort with

closeness. Saroglou and Scariot (2002) had congruent results with Martin et al. (2003) with positive associations between self-enhancing humor and affiliative humor with psychological well-being and life satisfaction.

Hampes (2006) was interested in the relationship between shyness and humor styles. For this study, 174 community college students (69 males and 105 females) from the midwest United States completed the HSQ and the Shyness Scale. Hampes reported a significant negative correlation between shyness and affiliative humor overall while there was a significant positive correlation between shyness and self-defeating humor overall. A positive relationship was found between shyness and aggressive humor in males but not for females. One possible reason for this finding relates to the tendency for males to be more comfortable than females in displaying anger in social situations when they may feel frustrated or rejected. There were no significant relationships between shyness and self enhancing humor. No gender differences were found for use of this humor style.

Findings of recent studies involving the HSQ demonstrate the use of humor and the styles used are related to communicating and forming relationships. Thus, there could be a positive or negative experience for the sender or the recipient depending on a variety of factors, specifically in the workplace and as related to leadership styles.

Humor Styles and Transformational Leadership

While the studies presented in this literature review do provide a foundation for demonstrating a relationship between leadership and humor, there is no evidence of a study investigating the relationship between transformational leadership and specific humor styles. In sum, a variety of studies have been conducted in relation to humor in the workplace, and findings indicate humor may play a positive role in organizational

functioning. However, apart from the studies conducted by Duncan (1982), Decker and Rotundo (2001) and Avolio et al. (1999), little research has looked at humor or humor styles and leadership styles simultaneously or transformational leadership, specifically.

One recent study did investigate humor in the workplace and related findings to transformational leadership. Holmes and Marra (2006) were interested in spontaneous verbal humor, which occurs naturally in everyday workplace interactions. Their purpose was to examine ways effective leaders use humor as a resource to construct particular aspects of leadership style. The authors utilized a qualitative analysis of interactions from workplaces found in the Language in the Workplace Project (LWP) database in New Zealand. This database of more than 2,000 interactions is maintained by the Victoria University of Wellington and has been in progress since 1996. A variety of workplaces have been observed and recorded including government, commercial organizations, small businesses, factories, and hospitals. Data collection involved recording authentic workplace interactions between supervisors and subordinates using audio and video recording over two to three week periods.

This article did not give a specific number of overall interactions analyzed; however, the authors gave five examples to demonstrate different uses of humor in different situations. They suggested leaders typically make use of humor for solidarity or social cohesion in terms of team building; skillful leaders recognize the transformational potential of humor. They also noted humor may have value in helping achieve transactional objectives as it can be used to foster an atmosphere of enjoyment and creativity.

The literature review indicates humor styles may be related to transformational leadership. Additionally, it could be argued that the use of humor by particular leaders may be beneficial in establishing relationships with others and in communicating vision in specific situations. Interpersonal interactions and behaviors were found to be vital to leader/follower relationships in the transformational leadership literature. Specifically, qualities as providing personal support, being people oriented, and having a positive outlook contributed to the positive perception of the transformational leader (Coats, 2000; Kirby, Paradise, & King, 1992). Additionally, Barbuto and Burbach (2006) found empathy expressed by leaders was deemed important. Overall interpersonal skills and the ways in which leaders interact with followers facilitate transformational leadership.

In some situations, particular uses of humor contribute to interpersonal interactions. The literature revealed the concepts identified in relation to transformational leadership are congruent with the use of humor. Although there is little research in this area, Avolio et al. (1999) indicated in transformational leadership where communication and interpersonal relationships are important, humor may play a key role. Research involving humor styles demonstrates how humor may be related to particular personality factors that impact how people relate to one another (Hampes, 2006; Saraglou & Scariot, 2002).

Conclusion

Based on this review of literature, it seems reasonable to infer the use of humor may enhance the effectiveness of leadership. Affiliative humor was found to be related to extraversion and openness, which directly relate to ability to form interpersonal relationships. Interpersonal skills including empathy, personal support, and humor can be

important qualities for leaders to possess. Leaders are able to inspire and motivate others by relating to them in a variety of situations and utilizing a variety of techniques.

Research is needed to determine what humor styles are most appropriate in specific situations as the community college environment and to leadership in general.

There have been a large number of leadership studies involving individuals in particular positions within work environments. Many of the humor studies included participants who were undergraduate students, not professionals in the workplace. Thus, there is a gap in humor style literature regarding the target population of this study, community college presidents, and how their humor styles and leadership styles may be related. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between humor styles and leadership styles with a population utilizing the MLQ and the HSQ. By studying a unique population, new information about the use of humor in leadership may be revealed.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Chapter three describes the methods and procedures utilized to explore the relationships between humor styles and leadership styles. This chapter will explain the design of the study, describe the sample, and discuss the data collection. Analysis of data will also be explained.

Design of Study

According to Babbie and Rubin (2004), survey research is one of the most widely used forms of gathering data as it allows the study of large groups of individuals who can be observed. Additionally, the survey is a standardized instrument delivered in the same manner to each participant in the study, which assists in maintaining data integrity.

Studies of humor styles and leadership styles have employed the use of survey research successfully (Aviolo et al, 1999; Barbuto & Burbach, 2006; Saraglou & Scariot, 2002). In some studies, participants completed surveys in the presence of the researcher; while in others, participants returned surveys via the postal service. Although survey research can be susceptible to socially desirability bias where participants respond in terms of how they believe others may want them to rather than giving accurate self-reports, social desirability is not limited to survey research. As Nancarrow and Brace (2000) indicated, physically distancing the researcher may assist in lessening social desirability bias. Similarly, employing web based questionnaires may reduce this threat to construct validity. Participants may feel less obligated to respond in a particular way to please the researcher and may feel more anonymous at a distance.

Participants

The participants of this study included community college leaders whose institutions were randomly sampled from the American Association of Community Colleges listing, which includes 1,195 institutions as of the 2007 membership listing (AACC, 2008). Of the institutions listed in the membership of AACC, 600 were randomly sampled. Invitations to participate were sent via email to 600 presidents of community colleges randomly sampled from the AACC. Sixteen of the 600 emails were returned as undeliverable. It is unknown how many other emails may have been filtered as spam or junk mail. Without knowing this information, it is assumed that 584 individuals received the email request to participate. Of the 584 individuals who are assumed to have received the email, 166 participated by completing the survey online (28%). Greater detail of the sample is provided in Chapter 4.

Materials

This study included three components--the Humor Style Questionnaire (Appendix A), the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire (Appendix B - five sample items), and a demographic survey (Appendix C). The three components were compiled into one instrument and each contained instructions specific to its content and format. The instrument was adapted to electronic delivery through the SurveyMonkey website.

The Humor Style Questionnaire has 32 items, eight items on each of the four humor styles. Each item has a seven option response in Likert format ranging from Totally Agree (1) to Totally Disagree (7). Reliability of the four scales has been demonstrated by internal consistencies of .77 to .81 and test-retest reliabilities of .80 to .85 as reported by Martin, et al. (2003) with a sample of 1,195 Canadian participants.

Evidence of validity includes theoretically meaningful correlations with other measures of sense of humor, self-esteem, psychological well-being, hostility, coping, intimacy, social support, relationship satisfaction, and the Five-Factor Model of Personality as reported by Martin, et al. The correlations indicating significant relationships and validity are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3

Correlations of Humor Styles and Other Measures (Martin, et al., 2003)

Construct/variable	Humor Style			
	Affiliative	Self-enhancing	Aggressive	Self-defeating
RSEI-self-esteem	.21***	.28***	.03	.36***
RYFF-well being	.26*	.46***	-.11	.24*
SSQ-S -social support	.11	.30***	-.04	-.21**
MSIS-intimacy	.25***	.17*	-.14	-.15*
Neuroticism	-.08	-.37***	.21*	.35***
Extraversion	.47***	.28***	.13	.10
Openness	.23***	.27***	-.14	.06
Agreeableness	-.05	.17*	-.59***	-.23**
Conscientiousness	-.07	.12	-.37***	-.34***

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

The Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire Form 5X (Bass & Avolio, 1997), a 45 item instrument, measures the perceived extent to which leaders exhibit particular

leadership behaviors on a five-point scale--not at all = 0, once in a while = 1, sometimes = 2, fairly often = 3, frequently if not always = 4. The variables measured as components of transformational leadership included idealized influence, inspirational leadership, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Transactional leadership is measured by four items and laissez-faire leadership by three items. Bass and Avolio (1997) report reliability of each of the scales of the MLQ with Cronbach's alphas ranging from .74 to .94 using nine samples ($N = 2,154$) in the 1995 MLQ Technical Report.

Pilot Study

An invitation to participate in a pilot study was sent to 75 administrators throughout the Colorado Community College System via email request. Forty-five individuals (60 % response rate), 28 females and 17 males, completed the survey via a web link provided in the email. The participants ranged in age from 21 to 59 years with one to 34 years of experience in a variety of leadership positions.

Participants were asked to complete the 32-item HSQ measuring four humor styles and the 45-item MLQ measuring transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. Reliability analyses using Cronbach's alpha were conducted for each subscale in the HSQ. Each subscale (affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, self-defeating) consisted of eight questions. The inter-item correlations yielded a reliability for the affiliative humor scale with a coefficient alpha of .77, the self-enhancing humor scale with a coefficient alpha of .87, and the self-defeating humor scale with a coefficient alpha of .80. The aggressive humor scale yielded a coefficient alpha of .52. The affiliative, self-enhancing, and self-defeating humor style alphas in this pilot study are

relatively similar to those in previous studies using the HSQ (Martin et al., 2003; Saraglou & Scariot, 2002). However, the aggressive humor style alpha is lower.

In regard to the MLQ, participants were asked to complete the 45-item survey consisting of five subscales measuring transformational leadership, three subscales measuring transactional leadership, and one subscale measuring laissez-faire leadership. Each subscale consisted of four items. Table 4 displays the coefficient alphas for each transformational leadership subscale, each transactional leadership subscale, and the laissez-faire subscale. In addition to the individual subscale analyses, a reliability analyses was conducted for all 20 items included in the transformational leadership subscales. The scale of 20 items yielded a coefficient alpha of .88. A reliability analysis was conducted on the 12 total items measuring transactional leadership yielding a coefficient alpha of .50.

Table 4

Leadership Pilot Test Analysis (n =45)

Subscale	Cronbach's Alpha	Split-Half
Transformational Leadership		
Idealized Influence (Attributed)	.63	.69
Idealized Influence (Behavior)	.44	.59
Inspirational Motivation	.77	.77
Intellectual Stimulation	.62	.67
Individual Consideration	.46	.54
Transactional Leadership		
Contingent-Reward	.50	.59
Management by Exception (Active)	.48	.50
Management by Exception (Passive)	.47	.47
Laissez-faire	.32	.41

It should be noted that scales with fewer items tend to have lower correlation coefficients; therefore, the means and standard deviations from this sample were compared with the means and standard deviations of the Bass and Avolio (1997) sample (n = 3,375). The Bass and Avolio sample completed the self report survey to establish reliability data for the MLQ as currently published. Trends in responses of this pilot are

very similar to the total sample as illustrated in Table 5. This similarity in trends in responses is an indicator of sufficient reliability for use of the instrument.

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations for Subscale Development and Pilot Samples

Subscales	Bass & Avolio Sample (N = 3,375)		Pilot Sample (N = 45)	
	M	SD	M	SD
Transformational Leadership				
Idealized Influence (Attributed)	2.95	.53	2.95	.57
Idealized Influence (Behavior)	2.99	.59	2.95	.50
Inspirational Motivation	3.04	.59	3.09	.51
Intellectual Stimulation	2.96	.52	3.01	.54
Individual Consideration	3.16	.52	3.17	.51
Transactional Leadership				
Contingent Reward	2.99	.53	2.83	.54
Management by Exception (Active)	1.58	.79	1.75	.61
Management by Exception (Passive)	1.07	.62	1.18	.52
Laissez-faire	.61	.52	.67	.43

Based on the target sample of this pilot study, community college administrators; the demographics of the pilot study sample were examined. Of the 45 participants, 27 indicated having 10 or more years of leadership experience. It was determined that an

individual, in most cases, would not be at the presidential level without several years of experience in some type of leadership position. Additionally, those with fewer years of experience may not have had concrete leadership examples to draw from in the educational setting; or may have had other types of leadership and it impacted responding to the MLQ. Therefore, reliability analyses were conducted utilizing the data from the 27 individuals having at least 10 years of experience. This sample consisted of 18 females and nine males ranging from 40 to 59 years of age with 10 to 34 years of experience. Reliability analyses were also conducted for those individuals with less than 10 years of experience. This sample included seven males and 11 females ranging in age from 26 to 51 years with one to seven years of experience. Table 6 displays the reliabilities for the humor subscales. Table 7 displays the reliability results for the transformational leadership subscales and the transactional leadership subscales.

Table 6

Reliability: Humor Subscales by Total and Samples with Varying Duration of Experience

Subscale	Cronbach's Alphas		
	Total Sample (n = 45)	Experience of 10 Years or More (n = 27)	Experience of Less Than 10 Years (n = 18)
Affiliative Humor	.77	.82	.66
Self-Enhancing Humor	.87	.88	.86
Self-Defeating Humor	.80	.82	.77
Aggressive Humor	.52	.61	.32

Table 7

Reliability: Transformational and Transactional Leadership Subscales by Total and Samples with Varying Duration of Experience

Leadership Subscale	Cronbach's Alphas		
	Total Sample	Experience of 10 Years or More	Experience Less Than 10 Years
	(n = 45)	(n = 27)	(n = 18)
Transformational			
Idealized Influence (Attributed)	.63	.67	.63
Idealized Influence (Behavior)	.44	.51	.67
Inspirational Motivation	.77	.80	.63
Intellectual Stimulation	.62	.62	.33
Individual Consideration	.46	.61	.43
Transactional			
Contingent-Reward	.50	.68	.47
Management by Exception (Active)	.48	.64	.57
Management by Exception (Passive)	.47	.61	.51

Reliability analyses of a more experienced group of individuals revealed higher correlation coefficients for most subscales (Tables 7, 8). Additionally, Cronbach's alpha of the laissez-faire leadership scale was .32 with the total sample; however, when analyzing responses from the individuals (n = 27) having at least 10 or more years of

experience, the Cronbach's alpha was .53 and .04 for the sample having less than 10 years of experience.

In sum, the HSQ has demonstrated sufficient reliability with the total pilot sample as well as the sub-sample of individuals having at least 10 years of experience. While the initial reliability analyses relating to the MLQ yielded marginal reliability coefficients, the correlation coefficients markedly improved when analyzing data from individuals with longer leadership experience. Additionally, while some of the individual MLQ subscales yielded low reliability scores, the analyses involving the total scales (summed subscales) measuring each transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership demonstrated adequate reliability within the sample of those having at least 10 years of experience. Further, it is apparent that reliability scores involving individuals having less than 10 years of experience were lower than the sample with 10 or more years of experience. While there may be several explanations for low correlation coefficients, the pilot sample did demonstrate similar response patterns to the sample used by Bass and Avolio (1997) and others (Avolio et al., 1999; Barbuto & Burbach, 2006).

The MLQ has been a widely used instrument in numerous leadership studies; although, the author of the present study is not aware of studies relating years of experience to the reliability of the instrument. Therefore, considering the established reliability of this instrument over many years and the higher reliability scores in the pilot sub-sample having leadership experience, there was evidence to continue this study with the target population.

Administration and Follow-up

In regard to the target population, survey materials were delivered to the participants via email. The email contained a link to a third party website that allowed the participants to complete the survey anonymously. The materials included (a) the Humor Style Questionnaire, (b) the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire, and (c) a demographic survey inquiring about gender, age, and ethnicity. A cover letter (Appendix D) describing the background of the study contained contact information. A follow-up email (Appendix E) was sent approximately two weeks after the initial emailing as a reminder to assist with response rate.

Variables of Study

For this study, the variables of age, ethnicity, and gender were considered exploratory and attribute independent variables. The dependent variables were (a) scores on each of the three leadership styles, and (b) scores on each of the four humor styles. Table 8 displays the variables of study, their possible range of values, and their classification of dependent or independent.

The MLQ was utilized to measure leadership styles. The leadership styles are comprised of subscales and each subscale consists of four items. Scores on each subscale and each leadership style can be derived by summing the total for that scale and dividing by the number of items answered.

The HSQ was utilized to measure humor styles. Humor styles are individual scales comprised of eight items each. The score on each scale is derived from summing the total of the eight items.

Table 8

Variables of Study

Variable	Possible Score	Classification
Transformational Leadership	0 - 4	dependent
Idealized Attributes	0 - 4	
Idealized Behaviors	0 - 4	
Inspirational Motivation	0 - 4	
Intellectual Stimulation	0 - 4	
Individualized Consideration	0 - 4	
Transactional Leadership	0 - 4	dependent
Contingent Reward	0 - 4	
Management by Exception (active)	0 - 4	
Management by Exception (passive)	0 - 4	
Laissez-faire	0 - 4	dependent
Humor Styles		
Affiliative Humor	7 - 56	dependent
Self-Enhancing Humor	7 - 56	dependent
Aggressive Humor	7 - 56	dependent
Self-Defeating Humor	7 - 56	dependent
Age	Continuous	independent
Years of Experience	Continuous	independent
Ethnicity	Nominal (5 categories)	independent
Gender	Nominal	independent

Analysis of Data

The analysis of data was directly related to the research questions. The research questions being explored were:

1. What is the relationship between transformational leadership and humor styles?
2. What is the relationship between transactional leadership and humor styles?
3. What is the relationship between laissez-faire leadership and humor styles?

These research questions provided a foundation for the study of humor and leadership relating to the literature review. However, in relation to the quantitative nature of this study and to more adequately address these questions, more specificity is required.

Therefore, hypotheses were formulated based on evidence provided in earlier studies.

Hypotheses

Research Question 1. What is the relationship between humor styles and transformational leadership?

Avolio, Howell, and Sosik (1999) investigated humor in relation to each of the four humor styles discussed in the present study. Their findings discuss the use of humor in general and how it was positively related to transformational and transactional leadership, while negatively related to laissez-faire leadership. The studies employing the HSQ provide support for relationships between each of the humor styles and transformational leadership (Hampes, 2006; Martin et al., 2003; Saraglou & Scariot, 2002). These studies discuss affiliative humor style as correlating positively and strongly with personality factors including openness and extraversion which relate to the ability to communicate and maintain interpersonal relationships (Martin et al., 2003).

Additionally, Avolio, Howell, and Sosik (1999) discussed “positive” humor use being related to transformational leadership which could include self-enhancing humor. The authors discussed “negative” uses of humor being inversely related to transformational leadership. While these authors did not use the HSQ, it would be reasonable to infer that negative humor would include aggressive and self-defeating humor as described by Martin et al. (2003).

Hypothesis 1a: There will be a positive relationship between affiliative humor and transformational leadership.

Hypothesis 1b: There will be a positive relationship between self-enhancing humor and transformational leadership.

Hypothesis 1c: There will be an inverse relationship between aggressive humor and transformational leadership.

Hypothesis 1d: There will be an inverse relationship between self-defeating humor and transformational leadership.

Research Question 2. What is the relationship between humor styles and transactional leadership?

In regard to humor styles and transactional leadership, there is evidence of a possible relationship. Avolio, Howell, and Sosik (1999) suggested humor was positively related to both transformational leadership and transactional leadership. These authors provided a foundation to study the three leadership styles in relation to humor; however, they did not differentiate among humor styles. The studies utilizing the HSQ have not specifically addressed the three leadership styles, therefore, there is no evidence to suggest positive humor such as affiliative and self-enhancing would not be related to

transactional leadership. This logic follows the findings of the Avolio, Howell, and Sosik (1999) study. Additionally, it could be inferred that negative uses of humor would have a negative relationship with transactional leadership.

Hypothesis 2a: There will be a positive relationship between affiliative humor and transactional leadership.

Hypothesis 2b: There will be a positive relationship between self-enhancing humor and transactional leadership.

Hypothesis 2c: There will be an inverse relationship between aggressive humor and transactional leadership.

Hypothesis 2d: There will be an inverse relationship between self-defeating humor and transactional leadership.

Research Question 3. What is the relationship between humor styles and laissez-faire leadership?

Laissez-faire leadership was found to be negatively related to the use of humor (Avolio, Howell, & Sosik, 1999). Again, studies using the HSQ have not specifically addressed this leadership style, therefore the hypotheses relating to this research question are based on Avolio, Howell, and Sosik.

Hypothesis 3a: There will be an inverse relationship between affiliative humor and laissez-faire leadership.

Hypothesis 3b: There will be an inverse relationship between self-enhancing humor and laissez-faire leadership.

Hypothesis 3c: There will be an inverse relationship between aggressive humor and laissez-faire leadership.

Hypothesis 3d: There will be an inverse relationship between self-defeating humor and laissez-faire leadership.

Statistical Analysis

This study employed an associational and comparative approach to data analysis to test the hypotheses. Scores from the HSQ and the MLQ were correlated to test the hypotheses posed regarding relationships among leadership styles and humor styles.

The focus of the statistical analyses was to answer the three major research questions. However, with demographic data available and with the interest in characterizing this sample as well as gaining new information, exploratory analyses were conducted. Descriptive statistics were determined on all measures in terms of participant scores and in relation to the independent variables.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationships among leadership styles and humor styles among community college presidents. Research in the area of leadership styles has relied heavily on survey research utilizing the MLQ. To build on leadership research and to further investigate humor styles with the HSQ, survey research was used. Quantitative design using comparative and associational analyses was directly related to the overall guiding research questions posed and was specifically applied to the hypotheses tested.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The focus of this study was to explore relationships among leadership styles and humor styles of community college presidents. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the descriptive and statistical analyses. Associational and comparative statistics were used to test the hypotheses and to explore demographic data.

Participants

Invitations to participate were sent via email to 600 presidents of community colleges randomly sampled from the AACC. Sixteen of the 600 emails were returned as undeliverable. It is unknown how many other emails may have been filtered as spam or junk mail. Without knowing this information, it is assumed 584 individuals received the email request to participate. Of the 584 individuals who are assumed to have received the email, 166 participated by completing the survey online (28%).

The presidents who responded included 44 (27%) females, 119 (72%) males, and three individuals who did not specify gender. In relation to ethnicity, respondents included five African-Americans (3%), one American-Indian (0.6%), one Asian (0.6%), six Hispanic (3.6%), and 148 Caucasian (89%). Five of the presidents did not specify their ethnicity. The community college presidents ranged in age from 36 to 73 years ($M = 57.97$, $SD = 6.94$) with one year to 51 years of experience ($M = 23.00$, $SD = 9.30$) in leadership positions. Table 9 displays ranges, means, and standard deviations of age and years of experience by gender.

Table 9

Age and Years of Experience of Community College Presidents by Gender

Category	<u>Females (N = 44)</u>			<u>Males (N = 119)</u>		
	Range	M	SD	Range	M	SD
Age (years)	38 – 70	56.61	7.40	36 – 73	58.48	6.72
Experience (years)	6 – 51	20.75	8.56	1 – 45	23.84	9.51

To gain more insight about the presidents' age and years of experience, a cross tab summation in Table 10 displays the number of community college presidents in relation to their age groups and years of experience. The largest percentage of presidents were 50 to 69 years of age (86 %) and had 11 to 30 years of experience (69%).

Table 10

Community College Presidents by Years of Experience and Age

Experience (years)	Age (years) (N = 162)					Total
	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	
1 – 10	1	4	8	4	0	17
11 – 20	3	8	24	19	0	54
21 – 30	0	0	30	29	2	61
31 – 40	0	0	5	23	0	28
41 – 51	0	0	0	0	2	2
Total	4	12	67	75	4	162

The sample is representative of the demographics of current community college presidents/CEOs as reported by the AACC. The AACC database (AACC Membership Database, 2008) indicates that of the 996 community college leaders who participated in their survey, 28% were female and 72% were male. Eighty-nine percent of all president/CEOs in the AACC reported to be Caucasian and the largest age group were individuals from 55 to 59 years (37%).

Reliability

The presidents completed the 32-item HSQ measuring four humor styles and the 45-item MLQ measuring transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. Reliability analyses using Cronbach's alphas were conducted for each subscale in

the HSQ. Each subscale (affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, self-defeating) had eight items. The inter-item correlation for the affiliative humor scale was a coefficient alpha of .84, the self-enhancing humor scale with a coefficient alpha of .79, and the self-defeating humor scale of .72. The aggressive humor scale yielded a coefficient alpha of .66. The alphas in this study are relatively similar to those in previous studies using the HSQ (Martin et al., 2003; Saraglou & Scariot, 2002). Table 11 lists the reliabilities of the HSQ in the current study and in the scale development from Martin et al. (2003).

Table 11

Humor Style Subscale Reliabilities of the Current Sample and the Martin et al. Sample

Humor Style	Current Study (N = 166)	Martin et al., (2003) (N = 1,195)
Affiliative Humor	.84	.80
Self-Enhancing Humor	.79	.81
Aggressive Humor	.66	.77
Self-Defeating Humor	.72	.80

In regard to the MLQ, participants completed the 45-item survey consisting of five subscales measuring transformational leadership, three subscales measuring transactional leadership, and one subscale measuring laissez-faire leadership. Each subscale consisted of four items. A reliability analyses was conducted of all 20 items included in the transformational leadership subscales yielding a coefficient alpha of .83.

A reliability analysis was conducted of the 12 items measuring transactional leadership ($\alpha = .62$). The scale of four items measuring laissez-faire leadership yielded a coefficient alpha of .60. These reliabilities are relatively similar to those of other studies involving participants in leadership positions (Avolio et al., 1999; Barbuto & Burbach, 2006). Table 12 displays leadership subscale reliabilities, means, and standard deviations. The transformational leadership subscale means ranged from 3.33 to 3.63 while the transactional subscale means were much more variant ranging from 0.84 to 3.21. Both measures demonstrated relatively similar reliability, means, and standard deviations to previous research and to the pilot data in this study.

Table 12

Reliability, Means, and Standard Deviations: Leadership Style Subscales

Subscale	Cronbach's Alphas	M (N = 166)	SD
Transformational	.83	3.45	.32
Idealized Influence (Attributed)	.50	3.33	.43
Idealized Influence (Behavior)	.57	3.55	.44
Inspirational Motivation	.68	3.63	.40
Intellectual Stimulation	.43	3.36	.42
Individual Consideration	.62	3.39	.51
Transactional	.62	1.86	.35
Contingent-Reward	.52	3.21	.48
Management by Exception (Active)	.58	1.53	.73
Management by Exception (Passive)	.55	.84	.58
Laissez-faire	.60	.42	.56

Statistical Analyses

The purpose of this study was to explore three research questions:

1. What is the relationship between humor styles and transformational leadership?
2. What is the relationship between humor styles transactional leadership?
3. What is the relationship between humor styles and laissez-faire leadership?

Each research question had four directional hypotheses associated with the relationship between the scores for each of the four humor styles and the respective score for

leadership style. The hypotheses will be presented with explanation of the statistical analyses and the related findings.

Humor Styles and Transformational Leadership

In relation to Research Question 1, the following hypotheses were asserted:

Hypothesis 1a: There will be a positive relationship between affiliative humor and transformational leadership.

Hypothesis 1b: There will be a positive relationship between self-enhancing humor and transformational leadership.

Hypothesis 1c: There will be an inverse relationship between aggressive humor and transformational leadership.

Hypothesis 1d: There will be an inverse relationship between self-defeating humor and transformational leadership.

Associational analyses were conducted using Pearson's r to correlate each of the four humor style scores with the transformational leadership score derived by summing all 20 items from each of the transformational leadership subscales and dividing by the number of items answered. The possible range of scores in transformational leadership was 0.00 to 4.00, and the actual range was 2.55 to 4.00. The possible range of scores for each of the humor styles was 7 to 56. The actual ranges were affiliative (15 to 56), self-enhancing (19 to 56), aggressive (8 to 49), and self-defeating (8 to 46).

As demonstrated in Table 13, transformational leadership was significantly and positively related to affiliative and self-enhancing humor. However, transformational leadership was significantly and inversely related to aggressive humor. No relationship

existed between self-defeating humor and transformational leadership. In sum, Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c were supported; while Hypothesis 1d was not supported.

Table 13

Correlations Between Humor Styles and Transformational Leadership of Community College Presidents

Humor Style	Transformational Leadership (N = 166)		
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i> ²
Affiliative Humor	.18	.01	.03
Self-Enhancing Humor	.36	.00	.12
Aggressive Humor	-.26	.00	.06
Self-Defeating Humor	-.05	.48	.00

It should be noted that although significant relationships were found in these analyses, effect sizes were small (Morgan, Leech, Gloeckner, and Barrett, 2004). For example, transformational leadership had a positive relationship with affiliative humor; however, the correlation of determination indicated that proportion of variance shared by the two variables was 3%. Additionally, self-enhancing humor accounted for 12% of the variance on transformational leadership; while the proportion of variance shared in the negative relationship between aggressive humor and transformational leadership was 6%.

To further explore the relationship between the humor styles and transformational leadership, additional correlation analyses were conducted between the humor styles and

the transformational leadership subscales. Table 14 displays the correlations between the transformational leadership subscales and the four humor styles.

Table 14

Correlations Between Transformational Leadership Subscales and Humor Styles of Community College Presidents

Transformational Leadership Subscales	Humor Styles (N = 166)							
	Affiliative		Self-Enhancing		Aggressive		Self-Defeating	
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Idealized Influence (Attributed)	.11	.14	.30	.00	-.16	.03	-.06	.43
Idealized Influence (Behavioral)	.06	.42	.18	.01	-.20	.00	-.08	.30
Inspirational Motivation	.20	.00	.28	.00	-.26	.00	.05	.46
Intellectual Stimulation	.20	.00	.43	.00	-.23	.00	-.01	.82
Individual Consideration	.11	.12	.18	.01	-.14	.06	-.05	.44

The findings demonstrated self-enhancing humor was significantly and positively related to each of the five subscales of transformational leadership supporting Hypothesis 1b. The associations between self-enhancing humor and idealized influence (behavioral) and between self-enhancing humor and individual consideration were smaller than typical (Morgan et al. 2004) with the shared proportion of variance being 3% for each correlation. The associations between self-enhancing humor and the three other subscales (idealized influence-attributed, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation)

were small with effect sizes ranging from 0.07 to .18 (7% to 18% of shared variance).

Affiliative humor was positively and significantly related to inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation, which provides support for Hypothesis 1a. Again, although significant relationships existed, each correlation yielded small effect sizes indicating 4% of shared variance.

Aggressive humor had inverse and significant relationships with four of the five transformational leadership subscales (idealized influence-attributed, idealized influence-behavioral, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation) supporting Hypothesis 1c. The effect sizes in these correlations were also smaller than typical ranging between 0.02 and 0.06 (2% to 6% shared variance). The self-defeating humor score was not significantly related to any of the transformational leadership subscales scores leaving Hypothesis 1d unsupported.

Humor Styles and Transactional Leadership

Research Question 2 focused on the relationships between transactional leadership and the four humor styles. The scores for transactional leadership ranged from 0.00 to 4.00 with the actual range being 1.00 to 2.92. Hypotheses related to this research question include the following:

Hypothesis 2a: There will be a positive relationship between affiliative humor and transactional leadership.

Hypothesis 2b: There will be a positive relationship between self-enhancing humor and transactional leadership.

Hypothesis 2c: There will be an inverse relationship between aggressive humor and transactional leadership.

Hypothesis 2d: There will be an inverse relationship between self-defeating humor and transactional leadership.

Correlations ($N = 164$) were used to investigate the relationships between transactional leadership and the humor styles. None of these analyses yielded significance (affiliative humor: $r = .03$, $p = .69$; self-enhancing humor: $r = .09$, $p = .24$; aggressive humor: $r = -.01$, $p = .88$; self-defeating humor: $r = .08$, $p = .29$).

To further investigate the hypotheses posed, correlations were conducted between the transactional leadership subscales and the four humor styles scores and are displayed in Table 15. The correlations between transactional leadership subscales and humor styles indicated contingent reward was positively and significantly related to self-enhancing humor while being inversely and significantly related to aggressive humor, which support Hypotheses 2b and 2c. Management by exception (passive) was significantly and positively related to aggressive humor which is contradictory to Hypothesis 2c. The strength of association between these variables were smaller than typical with effect sizes ranging from 0.02 to 0.04 (2% to 4% shared variance). No other relationships existed between the transactional leadership subscales and humor styles.

Table 15

Correlations Between Transactional Leadership Subscales and Humor Styles

Transactional Leadership Subscales	Humor Styles (N = 166)							
	Affiliative		Self-Enhancing		Aggressive		Self-Defeating	
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Contingent Reward	.14	.06	.21	.00	-.23	.00	-.01	.91
Management by Exception (Active)	.04	.56	-.04	.54	.01	.91	.07	.36
Management by Exception (Passive)	.01	.92	.05	.50	.17	.02	.11	.15

Humor Styles and Laissez-faire Leadership

Research Question 3 involving laissez-faire leadership and humor styles included the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3a: There will be an inverse relationship between affiliative humor and laissez-faire leadership.

Hypothesis 3b: There will be an inverse relationship between self-enhancing humor and laissez-faire leadership.

Hypothesis 3c: There will be an inverse relationship between aggressive humor and laissez-faire leadership.

Hypothesis 3d: There will be an inverse relationship between self-defeating humor and laissez-faire leadership.

Correlations were used to investigate the relationship between the laissez-faire leadership style and the humor styles. Possible and actual ranges in scores for laissez-faire leadership were 0.00 to 4.00. These correlations ($N = 164$) revealed no significant relationships (affiliative humor: $r = -.11$, $p = .14$; self-enhancing humor: $r = -.14$, $p = .06$; aggressive humor: $r = .08$, $p = .27$; self-defeating humor: $r = .04$, $p = .59$). Therefore, the hypotheses associated with Research Question 3 were not supported.

Table 16 displays the summary of the hypotheses posed in relation to the research questions inquiring if the four humor styles are related to each of the leadership styles including transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire. In sum, the relationships between transformational leadership and the four humor styles were supported. The relationships between transactional leadership and the four humor styles were partially supported, while the relationships predicted between laissez-faire leadership and the four humor styles were not supported.

Table 16

Hypothesized Relationships Between Humor Styles and Leadership Styles: Levels of Support

Hypotheses	Predicted Direction of Correlation	Level of Support
Transformational Leadership (RQ 1)		
Affiliative Humor	Positive	Supported
Self-Enhancing Humor	Positive	Supported
Aggressive Humor	Inverse	Supported
Self-Defeating Humor	Inverse	Unsupported
Transactional Leadership (RQ 2)		
Affiliative Humor	Positive	Unsupported
Self-Enhancing Humor	Positive	Partially Supported
Aggressive Humor	Inverse	Partially Supported
Self-Defeating Humor	Inverse	Unsupported
Laissez-faire Leadership (RQ 3)		
Affiliative Humor	Inverse	Unsupported
Self-Enhancing Humor	Inverse	Unsupported
Aggressive Humor	Inverse	Unsupported
Self-Defeating Humor	Inverse	Unsupported

Exploratory Analyses

Demographic information was gathered to characterize the sample of community college presidents. Analyses related to ethnicity, gender, age, and years of experience is presented.

In relation to ethnicity, 148 of the presidents identified themselves as Caucasian (89%) and five individuals did not specify an ethnicity. Small cell frequencies did not warrant additional statistical analyses.

One hundred nineteen presidents were males and 44 were females (three individuals did not specify gender). Independent t-tests were used to compare means between males and females in each of the four humor styles. As displayed in Table 17, there was a statistical significant difference in means and females scored higher than males in self-enhancing humor with a medium effect size of .41 (Morgan et al. 2004). No other differences were found between males and females in humor styles.

Table 17

Comparing Means of Females and Males in Humor Styles

Humor Style	Females (n = 44)		Males (n = 119)		t(161)	p	d
	M	SD	M	SD			
Affiliative	46.36	7.82	45.97	7.55	.28	.77	.05
Self-Enhancing	44.50	7.11	41.68	6.63	2.35	.02	.41
Aggressive	19.97	5.62	21.05	7.20	-.89	.37	-.16
Self-Defeating	25.34	7.84	26.52	7.63	-.86	.38	-.15

Table 18 displays the independent t-tests comparing the mean scores of females and males in leadership styles. Females scored higher than males in transformational leadership with a small to medium effect size of .36. No other significant differences were found in regard to gender and leadership style.

Table 18

Comparing Means of Females and Males in Leadership Styles

Leadership Style	Females (n = 44)		Males (n = 119)		t(161)	p	d
	M	SD	M	SD			
Transformational	3.54	.29	3.43	.32	2.04	.04	.36
Transactional	1.83	.34	1.88	.36	-.71	.47	-.14
Laissez-faire	.34	.36	.44	.60	-1.05	.29	-.20

Of the 166 college presidents, individuals ranged in age from 36 to 73 years old. Correlations were conducted to investigate the relationship between age (continuous variable) and humor styles which are displayed in Table 19. The findings demonstrated that age was significantly and inversely related to the affiliative humor style indicating that as age increased the scores on affiliative humor decreased. The strength of association between age and affiliative humor was smaller than typical with an effect size of 0.04 (4% of shared variance). No other relationships existed between age and humor styles. Correlations (N = 160) were used to explore if relationships existed between age

and leadership styles. No significant relationships were found (transformational: $r = .02$, $p = .76$; transactional: $r = .07$, $p = .34$; laissez-faire: $r = -.07$, $p = .37$).

Table 19

Correlations Between Humor Styles and Age

Humor Style	Age (N = 162)		
	r	p	r^2
Affiliative Humor	-.22	.00	.04
Self-Enhancing Humor	-.04	.54	.00
Aggressive Humor	-.01	.84	.00
Self-Defeating Humor	-.14	.06	.01

Community college presidents reported having from one to 51 years of experience in leadership positions. Years of experience (continuous variable) were correlated with humor styles to explore any relationships that may exist as displayed in Table 20. Years of experience were significantly and inversely related to the affiliative humor style indicating that as years of experience increased, the scores on affiliative humor decreased. The effect size of this relationship was smaller than typical with 3% shared variance between the two variables. No other relationships existed between age and humor styles. Correlations (N = 161) were conducted between years of experience and leadership style. No significant relationships were found (transformational: $r = .05$, $p = .49$; transactional: $r = .08$, $p = .27$; laissez-faire: $r = -.14$, $p = .07$).

Table 20

Correlations Between Humor Styles and Years of Experience

Humor Style	Years of Experience (N = 163)		
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i> ²
Affiliative Humor	-.18	.02	.03
Self-Enhancing Humor	-.01	.84	.00
Aggressive Humor	-.13	.08	.01
Self-Defeating Humor	-.05	.46	.00

Table 21 displays a summary of the findings in the exploratory analyses including the demographic variables of gender, age, and years of experience on the dependent variables of humor styles and leadership styles. In sum, the exploratory analyses resulted in three primary findings. First, affiliative humor was inversely related to age and years of experience. Second, females scored higher than males in self-enhancing humor; and third, females scored higher than males in transformational leadership.

Table 21

Findings in Exploratory Analyses Between Humor Styles and Leadership Styles by Gender, Age, and Years of Experience

Dependent Variables	Findings
Humor	
Affiliative	Inverse relationship with age Inverse relationship with years of experience
Self-Enhancing	Females scored higher than males
Aggressive	No significant findings
Self-Defeating	No significant findings
Leadership	
Transformational	Females scored higher than males
Transactional	No significant findings
Laissez-faire	No significant findings

Discussion of the findings, implications, and suggestions for research will be presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This chapter will provide a summary of this study and a discussion of the findings. Additionally, implications for research and conclusions will be presented. The purpose of this study was to explore relationships between humor styles (affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, self-defeating) and leadership styles (transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) of community college presidents. Although relationships between humor and leadership have been studied, the recent development of the HSQ allowed for more insight in relation to style of humor. Furthermore, research previous to the current study has not utilized the HSQ and the MLQ together.

Interpretation of the Findings

The findings of this study, involving community college presidents, indicated humor styles and leadership styles are related. In sum, affiliative and self-enhancing humor had a positive relationship with transformational leadership. Self-enhancing humor also had a positive relationship with the contingent-reward subscale of transactional leadership; while aggressive humor was inversely related to transformational leadership and to the contingent-reward subscale of transactional leadership. While there were significant findings in this study, it should be noted these correlations had small effect sizes.

Leadership involves an association or a relationship between the leader and the follower. Although the dynamic is different in each style of leadership, the leader and the follower are involved in some type of interaction and communication. Based on the

findings of this study, one could suggest that social and non-threatening humor styles such as affiliative and self-enhancing may be employed more often than other humor styles when using transformational leadership and contingent-reward behaviors such as in transactional leadership. One possible explanation for this finding relates to the study by Holmes and Marra (2006) and their findings that indicated effective leaders tend to display management styles which are at times transactional in orientation and at others transformational. They further concluded “effective leaders typically make use of humor for its most obvious function of strengthening solidarity or social cohesion between team members, building good rapport and emphasizing collegiality” (p. 133). The findings of significant and positive relationships between the “positive” humor styles and transformational and transactional leadership support this notion as the purpose and intent of affiliative and self-enhancing humor styles involve “enhancing relationships with others” and “putting others at ease.”

Additionally, aggressive humor, which includes degrading humor towards others, is not used as often in these leadership styles. This conclusion is congruent with the findings of Avolio et al. (1999) in that “negative” humor had an inverse relationship with transformational and transactional leadership. While Avolio et al., did not use the HSQ in their study between humor and leadership styles; they did discuss the use of “positive” and “negative” humor with descriptions and sample items. As discussed previously, in the context of this study and as similarly suggested by Martin et al. (2003), affiliative and self-enhancing humor may be beneficial to one’s well-being which can be viewed as “positive.” Conversely, the aggressive and self-defeating humor styles may be detrimental to well-being and viewed as “negative.”

In addition to the relationships that were found, it should be noted no relationships were found between laissez-faire leadership and any of the four humor styles. Laissez-faire leadership was defined, for the purpose of this study, as a “hands-off” approach in which the leader provides little or no feedback to the follower. In this type of interaction between a leader and a follower, communication through any type of humor may not provide an advantage or disadvantage in creating an environment of collegiality or relating to others when using laissez-faire leadership style.

Community college presidents are faced with many challenges and interact with many different stakeholders. The community college leader may need to navigate at a state or local government level as well as interact with student groups and faculty members. In each of those interactions, different skills of communication and leadership are necessary. Based on the findings of this study, one could suggest those community college presidents who employ transformational leadership and transactional leadership also utilize “positive” humor including affiliative humor and self-enhancing humor. In other words, some community college leaders may have found using these types of humor assists them using interpersonal skills and in promoting the type of environment in which followers are motivated to achieve a common goal through improved communication and social cohesiveness. Conversely, these leaders may avoid using aggressive humor when using transformational or transactional leadership as it could be detrimental to relationships among colleagues and stakeholders. A more in-depth discussion of the findings will link the findings of this study to previous research.

Humor Styles and Transformational Leadership

Research Question 1 inquired about the relationship between humor styles and transformational leadership. Self-enhancing humor was significantly and positively related to all five of the transformational leadership subscales. While the effect sizes ranged from 3% to 18% in the five subscales which indicate the strength of the relationships as smaller than typical to small, these findings provided support for hypothesis 1b (self-enhancing humor and transformational leadership). Additionally, affiliative humor was significantly and positively related to two of the transformational leadership subscales including inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation; however, the shared variance was small.

Hypothesis 1c involving aggressive humor was supported by the findings of this study as aggressive humor score was significantly and inversely related to the transformational leadership score. Additional correlations between transformational subscales and aggressive humor revealed aggressive humor had significant and inverse relationships with four of the five subscales (idealized influence – attributed, idealized influence – behavioral, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation). These correlations provided support for Hypothesis 1c. Hypothesis 1d involving self-defeating humor and transformational leadership was not supported. Self-defeating humor scores were not related to transformational leadership scores or to transformational leadership subscale scores.

Self-defeating humor is the use of humor at one's own expense. There could be multiple explanations for the findings relating to self-defeating humor. Perhaps the participants in this study do not favor this use of humor in the setting of higher education.

Community college presidents often work at varying levels of state and community government in addition to their on-campus duties and it is possible that self-defeating humor may shed an unfavorable light on oneself which is not desired in these situations. However, as mentioned previously, the self-defeating humor style involves joking about one's self and may not necessarily be relationship based. It is also possible that community college leaders do use this humor style as a power equalizer at times with particular audiences, but may not perceive themselves as using it which was reflected in their responses.

Although research has not been reported relating transformational leadership to these specific humor styles, the findings of some studies provided evidence that significant relationships would be found. For example, Barbuto and Burbach (2006) found that interpersonal skills were positively related to transformational leadership while Saraglou and Scariot (2002) found affiliative and self-enhancing humor styles shared several personality correlates including agreeableness, openness, and self-esteem, which are beneficial in the transformational leadership style.

The findings of this study supported Hypotheses 1a (affiliative humor and transformational leadership) and 1b (self-enhancing humor and transformational leadership) and are relatively similar to findings in other studies of transformational leadership and humor styles as independent constructs. Additionally, Avolio et al. (1999) found that the use of humor in general was positively related to transformational and transactional leadership, while negatively related to laissez-faire leadership style. Avolio et al. (1999) discussed "positive" humor use being positively related to transformational leadership and "negative" uses of humor being inversely related to transformational

leadership. While these authors did not use the HSQ, it would be reasonable to infer positive humor would include affiliative and self-enhancing humor while negative humor would include aggressive and self-defeating humor as described by Martin et al. (2003). The findings of this study in regard to Hypotheses 1a (affiliative humor and transformational leadership), 1b (self-enhancing humor and transformational leadership), and 1c (aggressive humor and transformational leadership) are congruent with the findings of other studies in this area (Avolio et al., 1999; Burbato & Burbach, 2006). However, Hypothesis 1d (self-defeating humor and transformational leadership) was not supported by this study. As mentioned previously, self-defeating humor may not be a humor style community college presidents view themselves as using or it is not related to leadership style as it is not a relationship based style of humor.

Humor Styles and Transactional Leadership

Research Question 2 explores the relationship between the four humor styles and transactional leadership. Hypotheses 2a and 2b posed that significant and positive relationships would exist between transactional leadership and the humor styles of affiliative and self-enhancing. The findings did not support these hypotheses as no relationship was found between these variables. Hypotheses 2c and 2d posed significant and inverse relationships would exist between transactional leadership and the humor styles of aggressive and self-defeating, respectively.

Correlations between transactional leadership subscales and the humor styles subscales did yield a significant and positive relationship between self-enhancing humor and the contingent-reward subscale as well as a significant inverse relationship between aggressive humor and the contingent-reward subscale. These do provide partial support

for Hypotheses 2b (self-enhancing humor and transactional leadership) and 2c (aggressive humor and transactional leadership) and are congruent to findings between humor styles and transformational leadership, suggesting community college presidents in this study may view the use of humor similarly when using contingent-reward behaviors and transformational leadership behaviors. Transformational leadership behaviors involve interaction with the follower, and a leader providing a follower with vision toward a common goal, mentorship, and individualized attention. In a contingent-reward relationship, there is give and take between the leader and follower that could have commonalities found in the transformational leadership style. A follower may view their individualized attention as a “reward” for performance and resembles a contingent-reward relationship.

Again, research has not directly investigated the relationship between transactional leadership and these four humor styles. However, the research of Avolio et al. (1999) provided some evidence there may be a relationship between these variables as they found “positive” humor to be positively and significantly related to transactional leadership and “negative” humor to be inversely and significantly related to transactional leadership.

Although some similarities in previous studies were indicative of possible significant findings relating to transactional leadership and the four humor styles, there are a variety of explanations for the findings in this study. While many significant relationships were yielded, the effect sizes of those correlations were small. Additionally, some hypotheses were not supported.

First, one must consider the differences between this study and previous studies. The primary difference in this study and that of Avolio et al. (1999) and other studies investigating humor and leadership involves the use of different instruments to measure humor. Avolio et al. explored followers' responses generally about the use of humor by leaders and the relationship to perceived effectiveness of leadership. In this study, four specific humor styles were measured with the relatively new HSQ, which has not been reported as used in conjunction with the MLQ or with any other leadership tool measuring transactional leadership.

Additionally, many studies involving humor and leadership involve followers rating leaders. The HSQ is a tool used to measure self-perceptions of humor style tendencies; therefore, this study focused on the self-perceptions of community college presidents in relation to humor style and leadership style. Self-perceptions and the perceptions of humor style or leadership style of recipients may be very different.

Humor Styles and Laissez-faire Leadership

Research Question 3 focused on the relationship between laissez-faire leadership and the four humor styles. It was predicted in Hypotheses 3a (affiliative humor and laissez-faire leadership), 3b (self-enhancing humor and laissez-faire leadership), 3c (aggressive humor and laissez-faire leadership), and 3d (self-defeating humor and laissez-faire leadership) that significant and inverse relationships would exist between the laissez-faire leadership style and all four humor styles. No relationships were found in this study and these hypotheses were not supported.

As mentioned in relation to transformational and transactional leadership, Avolio et al. (1999) provided some evidence utilized in the formation of the hypotheses relating

to laissez-faire leadership and humor styles. However, findings in this study do not support the premise of the four humor styles being inversely related to laissez-faire leadership. Lack in relationship building in this leadership style and the four humor styles in the current study could be explained by reasons mentioned previously including the instruments used and the possibility that the constructs are not related. If humor is a tool that enhances a leader's ability to build relationships with followers, then it may be used little in a leadership style that is not relationship building based.

Another difference between previous research specifically relating to leadership and humor involves time. The Avolio et al. (1999) study occurred approximately 10 years prior to the current study. In the realm of educational settings and leadership settings in general, there could have been changes in training and education and an emphasis toward particular leadership styles that community college presidents have experienced in the last decade which impacted responses. The mean length of experience for the community college presidents in this study was 23 years. There is some evidence to suggest that humor styles may change over time. Martin et al. (2003) and the current study found older individuals were less likely to use particular styles of humor than were younger individuals (e.g., affiliative).

Exploratory Analyses

Because the MLQ and the HSQ have not been used simultaneously previously, and in an effort to gain more insight about humor, leadership, and demographic variables; exploratory analyses were conducted regarding gender, age, and years of experience in a leadership positions.

In relation to gender, the humor scores of males and females were compared. Females scored significantly higher in self-enhancing humor than did males; however, no other gender differences in humor were discovered. Studies utilizing the HSQ found males scored higher than females in self-enhancing humor (Martin et al. 2003; Saraglou & Scariot, 2002) while others found no differences between males and females in this humor style (Hampes, 2006; Kazarian & Martin, 2004; Saraglou, 2004). Due to the relatively new use of this measure and the different populations sampled, it is possible that males and females in different target groups may score differently in humor styles. As more research involves the use of the HSQ, perhaps a clearer pattern of gender differences and similarities will emerge.

Leadership scores from males and females were compared to investigate differences. In this study, females scored significantly higher in transformational leadership than did males (with a small effect size). Bass and Avolio (1997) noted “prior evidence indicates that women leaders are more transformational than their male counterparts” (p. 42). In this study, community college presidents were asked to rate themselves as to their perceptions of their leadership style. Transformational leadership places an emphasis on developing needs of followers. It is possible women in this study perceived themselves to be more socially aware and responsive to those needs than did males.

This study did not find that age and leadership style were related. However, age was found to be significantly and inversely related to the affiliative humor style which may suggest that as individuals age, they may not use a humor style which enhances their relationships with others. In other words, as an individual ages, he or she may experience

less time with other individuals or may not feel the need to use affiliative humor in their leadership situations. No other significant relationships involving age and humor were found.

In relation to years of experience, findings did not suggest years of experience and leadership style were related. Yet, when investigating the relationship between years of experience with humor styles, a significant and inverse relationship was found with affiliative humor. This study found both age and years of experience were significantly and negatively related to affiliative humor. One possible explanation for the inverse relationship between affiliative humor and these two variables is similar to what Martin et al. (2003) found in their study when developing the HSQ. In that study, younger participants scored higher than older participants in affiliative humor and those authors suggested older individuals participate in less affiliative joking and laughing with others due to the possibility that they are less involved in social activities.

In sum, the exploratory analyses were interesting as gender differences in humor styles in this study were different from those in previous studies. Additionally, findings involving age and years of experience relating to affiliative humor were similar to the HSQ scale development work of Martin et al. (2003) providing further evidence to support their findings.

Implications for Further Research

This study utilized a relatively new measure, the HSQ and yielded findings that contribute to the field of research in humor. Some of the findings in this study are consistent with previous studies (Avolio et al. 1999; Martin et al. 2003; Saraglou, 2004) while contradicting others (Hampes, 2006; Kazarian & Martin, 2004). Based on the

support for the general thesis that humor and leadership would be related and on some of the findings from exploratory analyses, research should continue in this area.

Target Population

The findings of this study were based on survey research which can be helpful in describing the characteristics of particular populations. Research could expand upon this study by sampling different populations of leaders. Perhaps different relationships would emerge between humor styles and leadership styles in military, business, or in different levels of education. The exploratory analyses in this study included findings of gender differences in humor styles different from those in previous studies.

Additionally, one must consider the impact of cultural, geographical, and generational influences in relation to humor styles for the sender and the receiver. One's world view could influence responses on the HSQ whether rating self or others. This suggests future research should continue to explore these differences and their variances.

Self-perception Research

For the purposes of this study, community college presidents were asked to answer questions relating to leadership style and humor style as they perceived themselves. Self-perception responses may be vulnerable to social desirability and responses are not always reflective of actual tendencies but rather tendencies respondents hope they possess. This vulnerability is typically addressed in the types of items utilized in the questionnaires. Often times, such as in the MLQ and the HSQ, items are rephrased and placed throughout the questionnaire to assess consistency in answering a similar type of item in a similar fashion during the administration.

While studies involving perceptions of others have accounted for the majority of research in humor and leadership, this study focused on self-perception to continue this exploration. Self-perception research is important and beneficial as it allows insight on how individuals view themselves, their attitudes, and their beliefs. All of the studies involving the HSQ (Kazarian & Martin, 2004; Martin et al., 2003; Saraglou, 2004; Saraglou & Scariot, 2002) highlight the advantage of studying self-perceptions as they investigated humor styles and other constructs including shyness, personality factors, and religious beliefs. Additionally, Bass and Avolio (1997) created a self-rating version of the MLQ, to assist leaders in understanding their own perceptions of leadership styles, which has been used multiple times. In attempting to understand how individuals perceive their own humor styles or leadership styles, there is an attempt to understand their world view which can impact many facets of life including leading a community college and interacting with students and colleagues. Leaders view themselves in particular ways and insights gained from their perceptions may contribute to how they relate to others in the workplace or other situations. A general theme in the participant comments (Appendix F) involves valuing the place of humor in their positions of leadership (“A sense of humor is frequently the most important trait to have,” “One of my frequent suggestions to new administrators is the importance of maintaining a sense of humor,” “Humor is one of the most important tools a president can employ,” “We all benefit when we can laugh and still lead”).

While self-perception research is important and beneficial, research involving the perceptions of others gives insight (Decker & Rotundo, 2001; Martin et al., 2003). Therefore, research could expand upon this study by modifying the current HSQ to assess

the perception of the leader's humor style as rated by followers. Relationships investigated (humor styles and leadership styles as perceived by leaders and followers) could promote a greater understanding of the associations between these constructs and consistency of perceptions.

Design of Instrument

Finally, as demonstrated by some of the participant comments in Appendix F, some of the community college presidents identified some of the questions as confusing ("My answers would have been considerably different if adverbs like "often" and "a lot" had been removed," "The use of double negatives, probably purposefully, makes it difficult to understand the point of the questions"). Others indicated they did not understand how to respond based on the instructions ("Some of the questions are confusing in that I wasn't sure if the continuum meant "how often" I did something rather than "how well," "Some of the questions are ambiguous, I don't know if they refer to me as a leader or to the perception of those with whom I work"). While many comments focused on the positive perceptions of the questionnaire ("Excellent questions," "Thanks for keeping it easy to complete"), it is possible that some of the questions or the manner in which they were posed caused problems or confusion for more of the presidents than those who commented. Conversely, perhaps more of the participants held a positive view of the questionnaire and did not comment.

As mentioned previously, questionnaires are often designed with some redundancy and some ambiguity to prevent socially desirable answers and to capture attitudes and beliefs. While both the HSQ and the MLQ have been found to be reliable in multiple studies (Bass & Avolio, 1997; Martin et al., 2003), the items within the

questionnaires could be slightly modified to assist responders. Perhaps a simplification in wording would assist in the ease of completing the instruments without jeopardizing the integrity of the responses.

Additionally, perhaps the MLQ rater form (based on self-perception of leadership style) was not the best suited questionnaire for this particular study. The complete MLQ consists of a leader form in which individuals rate their leaders and a rater form in which the leaders rate themselves (as used in this study). The responses from both forms are utilized to provide the leaders with multiple angles of feedback. The MLQ rater form consists of four questions relating to the laissez-faire leadership style, 12 relating to the transactional leadership style, and 20 relating to the transformational leadership style. The number of questions per leadership style and the manner in which the questions were posed may have contributed to the findings in this study.

The use of an online questionnaire did not seem to cause hardship for the community college presidents. None of the responders commented on a different format or delivery method.

Conclusions

In summary, the purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between three leadership styles and four humor styles in community college presidents. Another purpose of this study was to incorporate the humor measure, the HSQ, into the humor and leadership research. The findings supported the hypotheses that transformational leadership was positively and significantly related to the affiliative humor style and to the self-enhancing humor style; while being inversely and significantly related to the aggressive humor style. Findings provided partial support of the hypotheses stating

transactional leadership was significantly and positively related to self-enhancing humor and inversely and significantly related to aggressive humor.

There was no support relating to the suggestion laissez-faire leadership would be inversely and significantly related to the four humor styles. Laissez-faire leadership could be viewed as a non-relationship based form of leadership, which could explain the lack of relationship with any of the humor styles as the leader and follower have little interpersonal communication or interaction.

Self-defeating humor style was not found to have significant relationships with any of the leadership scales or subscales. These findings regarding the self-defeating humor style were not anticipated. There is nothing conclusive in the data to suggest why this humor style was not related to leadership style. However, it is possible that self-defeating humor is simply not related to any of the leadership styles. Self-defeating humor involves someone making jokes at his or her own expense and the results of this study suggest this use of humor is not a correlate with transformational, transactional, or laissez-faire leadership style as perceived by the leader.

In conclusion, the topic of humor and leadership has been studied for many years and in many different ways. This study provided evidence indicating particular styles of humor are related to particular styles of leadership in community college presidents, supporting the idea that leadership styles involving relationship building and interpersonal skills, some humor styles are used more often than others.

The findings of this study may contribute to the foundation of humor and leadership research and assist in providing more insight into these two constructs.

Leadership and humor are complex constructs individually, and as the findings of this study have demonstrated, together they are just as intricate.

References

- American Association of Community Colleges (2008). Fast facts. Retrieved November 8, 2008 from <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC>.
- Avolio, B. J., Howell, J. M., & Sosik, J. J. (1999). A funny thing happened on the way to the bottom line: Humor as a moderator of leadership style effects. *Academy of Management Journal*, 42(2), 219-227.
- Babbie, E.R. & Rubin, A. (2004). *Research methods for social work*. Pacific Grove, CA: Thomason/Brooks/Cole.
- Barbuto, J. E., & Burbach, M. E. (2006). The emotional intelligence of transformational leaders: A field study of elected officials. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 146(1), 51-64.
- Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. New York: The Free Press.
- Bass, B. M. (1989). *Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: A Survey of Theory and Research*. New York: Free Press.
- Bass, B. M. (1998). *Transformational leadership: Industrial, military, and educational impact*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1990). Developing transformational leadership: 1992 and beyond. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 14(5), 21-27.
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1997). *Full range leadership development: Manual for the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire*. Palo Alto, CA: Mind Garden.
- Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (1997). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice and leadership* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Carmichael, Leonard. (1992). *The Merriam-Webster dictionary of quotations*. New York: Merriam-Webster, Inc.
- Clouse, R. W., & Spurgeon, K. L. (1995). Corporate analysis of humor. *Psychology A Quarterly Journal of Human Behavior*, 32(3), 1-24.

- Coats, L. T. (2000). Interpersonal behavior and the community college department chairperson. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 24(10), 773-783.
- Davis, A., & Kleiner, B. H. (1989). The value of humour in effective leadership. *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal*, 10(1), 1-3.
- Decker, W. H. (1987). Managerial humor and subordinate satisfaction. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 15(2), 225-232.
- Decker, W. H., & Rotundo, D.M. (2001). Relationships among gender, type of humor, and perceived leader effectiveness. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 8(4), 450-465.
- Doyle, M. E., & Smith, M. K. (1999). Born and bred? *Leadership, heart and informal education*. London: YMCA George Williams College/Rank Foundation.
- Duncan, W. J. (1982). Humor in management: Prospects for administrative practice and research. *Academy of Management Review*, 7(1), 136-142.
- Gust-Thomason, S., & Yantis, J. T. (1998). Assessment of team leader effectiveness within self-managed teams. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 22(2), 159-168.
- Hampes, W. P. (2006). Humor and shyness: The relation between humor styles and shyness. *Humor*, 19(2), 179-187.
- Holmes, J., & Marra, M. (2006). Humor and leadership style. *Humor*, 19(2), 119-138.
- Kazarian, S. S., & Martin, R. A. (2004). Humour styles, personality, and well-being among Lebanese university students. *European Journal of Personality*, 18(3), 209-219.
- Kirby, P. C., Paradise, L. V., & King, M. I. (1992). Extraordinary leaders in education: Understanding transformational leadership. *Journal of Educational Research*, 85(5), 303-311.
- Kotter, J. P. (1988). *The leadership factor*. New York: The Free Press.
- Martin, R. A., & Lefcourt, H. M. (1983). Sense of humor as a moderator of the relation between stressors and moods. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 45(6), 1313-1324.
- Martin, R. A., Puhlik-Doris, P., Larsen, G., Gray, J., & Weir, K. (2003). Individual differences in uses of humor and their relation to psychological well-being: Development of the Humor Styles Questionnaire. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 37(1), 48-75.

- Meyer, J. (1990). Ronald Reagan and humor: A politician's velvet weapon. *Communication Studies*, 41(1), 76-88.
- Monro, D. H. (1980). Theories of humor. In L. Behrens and L. J. Rosen, (Eds.). *Writing and reading across the curriculum*. Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman & Company.
- Morgan, G. A., Leech, N. L., Gloeckner, G. W., Barrett, K. C. (2004). *SPSS for introductory statistics: Use and interpretation*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Mulkay, M. (1988). *On humor*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Nancarrow, C. & Brace, I. (2000). Saying the right thing: Coping with desirability bias in marketing research. *Bristol business school teaching and research review*, 3, 171-178.
- Northouse, P. G. (2004). *Leadership theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Rouche, J. E., Baker, G. A., & Rose, R. R. (1989). *Shared vision: Transformational leadership in American community colleges*. Washington DC: The Community College Press.
- Rubin, R. S., Munz, D. C., & Bommer, W. H. (2005). Leading from within: The effects of emotion recognition and personality on transformational leadership behavior. *Academy of Management Journal*, 48(5), 845-858.
- Sadler, P. (1997). *Managerial leadership*. London: Routledge.
- Saraglou, V. (2004). Being religious implies being different in humour: Evidence from self- and peer-ratings. *Mental Health, Religion, & Culture*, 7(3), 255-267.
- Saraglou, V., & Scariot, C. (2002). Humor Styles Questionnaire: Personality and educational correlates in Belgian high school and college students. *European Journal of Personality*, 16(1), 43-54.
- Taylor, P. M. (1974). An experimental study of humor and ethos. *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 39, 359-366.
- Thorn, I. M. (1999). Leadership in an international institution and its impact on retention: A case study. Retrieved on March 3, 2005 from http://www.academy.umd.edu/publications/global_leadership/Thorn.pdf
- Wright, P. (1996). *Managerial leadership*. London: Routledge.

Appendix A

Humor Styles Questionnaire

People experience and express humor in many different ways. Below is a list of statements describing different ways in which humor might be experienced. Please read each statement carefully, and indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with it. Please respond as honestly and objectively as you can. Use the following scale:

- | Totally Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Slightly Agree | Moderately Agree | Totally Agree |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 1. I usually don't laugh or joke around much with other people. | | | | | | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 2. If I am feeling depressed, I can usually cheer myself up with humor. | | | | | | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 3. If someone makes a mistake, I will often tease them about it. | | | | | | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 4. I let people laugh at me or make fun at my expense more than I should. | | | | | | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 5. I don't have to work very hard at making other people laugh--I seem to be a naturally humorous person. | | | | | | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 6. Even when I'm by myself, I'm often amused by the absurdities of life. | | | | | | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 7. People are never offended or hurt by my sense of humor. | | | | | | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 8. I will often get carried away in putting myself down if it makes my family or friends laugh | | | | | | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 9. I rarely make other people laugh by telling funny stories about myself. | | | | | | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 10. If I am feeling upset or unhappy I usually try to think of something funny about the situation to make myself feel better | | | | | | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 11. When telling jokes or saying funny things, I am usually not very concerned about how other people are taking it | | | | | | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 12. I often try to make people like or accept me more by saying something funny about my own weaknesses, blunders, or faults | | | | | | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |

13. I laugh and joke a lot with my closest friends. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. My humorous outlook on life keeps me from getting overly upset or depressed about things 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. I do not like it when people use humor as a way of criticizing or putting someone down. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. I don't often say funny things to put myself down. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
17. I usually don't like to tell jokes or amuse people 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. If I'm by myself and I'm feeling unhappy I usually try to think of something funny about the situation to make myself feel better 1 2 3 4 5 6
19. Sometimes I think of something that is so funny that I can't stop myself from saying it, even it is not appropriate for the situation. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
20. I often go overboard in putting myself down when I am making jokes or trying to be funny. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
21. I enjoy making people laugh 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
22. If I am feeling sad or upset, I usually lose my sense of humor. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
23. I never participate in laughing at others even if all my friends are doing it. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
24. When I am with friends or family, I often seem to be the one that other people make fun of or joke about 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
25. I don't often joke around with my friends 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
26. It is my experience that thinking about some amusing aspect of a situation is often a very effective way of coping with problems. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
27. If I don't like someone, I often use humor or teasing to put them down. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
28. If I am having problems or feeling unhappy, I often cover it up by joking around, so that even my closest friends don't know how I really feel. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
29. I usually can't think of witty things to say when I'm with other people 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
30. I don't need to be with other people to feel amused – I can usually find things to laugh about even when I'm by myself 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

31. Even if something is really funny to me, I will not laugh or joke about 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
it if someone will be offended

32. Letting others laugh at me is my way of keeping my friends and 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
family in good spirits

Appendix B

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Leader Form

This questionnaire is to describe your leadership style as you perceive it. Please answer all items on this answer sheet. If an item is irrelevant, or if you are unsure or do not know the answer, leave the answer blank.

Forty-five descriptive statements are listed. Judge how frequently each statement fits you. The word others may mean your peers, clients, direct reports, supervisors, and/or all of these individuals.

Use the following rating scale:

Not at all	Once in a While	Sometimes	Fairly Often	Frequently if not Always
0	1	2	3	4
1. I provide others with assistance in exchange for their efforts	0	1	2	3 4
2. I re-examine critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate.	0	1	2	3 4
3. I fail to interfere until problems become serious	0	1	2	3 4
4. I focus attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards	0	1	2	3 4
5. I avoid getting involved when important issues arise	0	1	2	3 4

Appendix C

About You-

Please respond to each of the following items. This information will only be used to describe the sample and will not be used to identify you.

GENDER Please circle one: M F

RACE Please circle one: African-American
Asian
Caucasian
Hispanic
Multi-Racial
Other _____

What is your age? _____ years

How many years have you been working in a leadership position? _____ years

Have you had any formal training in leadership? _____ How many years? _____

Please add comments for me about your experience with humor and leadership?

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix D

Cover Letter (On School of Education Letterhead)

Dear Community College President,

You are invited to participate in a research study investigating the relationship between leadership styles and the use of humor by community college presidents. You are being asked to participate because you are the president of an institution randomly sampled from the membership of the American Association of Community Colleges.

My name is Jennifer Carrica and I am completing my Ph.D. in the Community College Leadership program at Colorado State University.

Participation and completion of this study will take about 10 to 15 minutes. You may access the survey at your earliest convenience at the following website.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=g4o803MYVlXkMTav9aj5vw_3d_3d

You will be asked to complete the survey that will involve responses to items about humor, leadership, and about your demographics.

There are no known risks or discomfort associated with participating in this study. There are no direct benefits to you as a participant either. However, the findings may provide insights about how humor relates to leadership styles.

The information obtained will only be used to characterize the sample. No information will be directly linked to you as all data will be reported by group. Your answers will be anonymous.

Your rights as a volunteer participant have been explained and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 719-853-6329. If you have any additional questions concerning your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Janell Barker at the Colorado State University Institutional Review Board at 970-491-1553.

You will receive a reminder postcard inviting you to participate in approximately 10 to 14 days. Because no identifying information is being gathered in this study, I am unable to determine if you have completed the survey. Therefore the postcard will be sent to all potential participants. I apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

I appreciate you considering participating in my research project.
Thank you for your time and consideration.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR
Carole J. Makela, Ph.D.

COINVESTIGATOR
Jennifer Carrica, M.A.

Appendix E

Follow-up Email

Dear Community College President,

Dear Community College President,

My name is Jennifer Carrica and I am currently working on my Ph.D. in Community College Leadership. You may remember receiving an email asking you to participate in a survey for my doctoral dissertation regarding humor and leadership styles in community college leaders recently.

If you have already completed the survey, thank you very much for your time and consideration.

If you have not completed the survey and would like to participate, please access my survey at

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=g4o803MYVlxkMTav9aj5vw_3d_3d

You will receive a final request to participate via email in approximately 10 to 14 days. Because no identifying information is being gathered in this study, I am unable to determine if you have completed the survey. Therefore the final reminder email will be sent to all potential participants. I apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact me at jlcarrica@semhs.org or at 719-853-6329.

Thank you, again, for your time.

Jennifer Carrica

Appendix F

Comments of Participants

Each number identified in Appendix F is representative of a participant comment.

Of the 166 participants, 37 (22%) included a comment at the conclusion of the online survey.

1. Fun
2. Easy to respond. Well done.
3. Please say hello to Tim for me. As a campus administrator in Iowa I led the start of a CSU Ph.D. cohort on our rural campus.
4. Good luck in your pursuit! Don't stop!
5. First time humor has been included as a part of leadership and individual satisfaction.
6. Interesting survey. The results may vary depending on what level of management the responder occupies. My approach changed somewhat as I moved from legal counsel to vice president to COO to President.
7. Excellent questions! Causes one to reflect to past situations relative to the question.
8. Interesting. I would like to see the results of your research.
9. I would be interested in seeing the results
10. Good topic. A sense of humor is frequently the most important trait to have.
11. Some of the questions are ambiguous; I don't know if they refer to me as a leader or to the perception of those with whom I work. So, I'm not entirely confident that my responses accurately reflect my personal performance and relationships with those around me.
12. Good luck on your research!

13. Just that one of my frequent suggestions to new administrators is the importance of maintaining a sense of humor. Used the right way, it can get you through some pretty tough situations.
14. In some of the questions the answer would depend on who you were with close friends and family versus family and friends you are not very close with. Depending on this, my answers reflect my personal performance and relationships with those around me.
15. Questions were fairly straightforward; the focus on humor and its possible relationship to leadership styles is unusual and interesting. Good Luck
16. Humor is one of the most important tools a President can employ...for motivation, morale, vision & direction, coaching...it has a place.
17. Most interesting idea to correlate humor with effective leadership. Results should be worth the time. Good luck!
18. Thanks for keeping it easy to complete.
19. Some of the questions are confusing in that I wasn't sure if the continuum meant "how often" I did something rather than "how well" The two are different.
20. Interesting subject. Best of luck with your dissertation.
21. You're doing important work. We all benefit when we can laugh and still lead. Best wishes for much success in your doctoral journey.
22. My answers would have been considerably different if adverbs like "often" and "a lot" had been removed. I believe they unnecessarily skewed the results, because the options themselves were designed to handle the work of modifying the statement. Also, the use of negatives in statements complicated the process of answering.
23. Excellent questions. I would like to receive a copy of the results and ensuing analysis
24. I am not a very humorous person. I am straight-forward, task oriented, "get the job done" person. That is why I hired a vice-president who had all the human, humorous, touchy-feely traits – to counteract my traits.
25. I'd like to receive a summary of the research results for this very interesting topic. Good luck.
26. There seemed to be a bit too much redundancy in the humor questions. There may be large individual differences in how respondents interpret the meaning of "fairly often" versus "frequently"

27. I think this is a great topic and am looking forward to your conclusion. Thanks for including my responses in your study.
28. Very easy. Thank you.
29. Would love to see your results and what theories you make.
30. I don't respond to many of these surveys but your idea of humor and leadership struck a nerve. I do think leaders can be more effective when they use humor and do not take themselves so serious all the time. This is not life and death (well, at least most of the time).
31. I enjoyed taking the questionnaire
32. Very interesting data, I'm sure
33. Best of luck!
34. The use of double negatives, probably purposefully, makes it difficult to understand the point of the questions.
35. Use of negatives forced some long pauses; to not do a "positive" leads to exaggeration in response
36. Well done! Only one that was confusing and did not make any sense so I left it blank. Good job on the survey.
37. Of course with any kind of scale you want to hedge even more than allowed – sometimes I have a hard time distinguishing from mostly doing something to almost always – Could be I don't want to admit to absolutes.