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Career Pathways And Demographic Profiles Of University Presidents In The U.S.: 2000-2008

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CAREER PATHWAYS AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF
UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS IN THE U.S.: 2000-2008

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my two beautiful girls that God blessed me with-- Gabriella (8yrs.) and Victoria (4yrs.) Contreras. I thank them for being my inspiration and my motivation even when times were tough. It was their smiles and hugs along with words of encouragement that kept me going while determined to finish my dissertation.

I will always thank them for believing in me, for their patience and unconditional love and for innocently giving up time with mommy so that I could focus on my research and those late nights of writing this dissertation.

CAREER PATHWAYS AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF
UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS IN THE U.S.: 2000-2008

by

LOURDES SÁNCHEZ, B.A., M.Ed.

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
The University of Texas at El Paso
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to obtain a better understanding of the career paths and profiles of contemporary university presidents. The study provided a broad perspective in terms of what institutions and governing boards are looking for when searching for a new president. It also helped to know the trends in those accepting these positions, namely education, career path, gender, and age. I used the following questions to guide the focus of this study:

- RQ1. What are the demographic characteristics of current university presidents (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, and geography)?
- RQ2. What academic and non-academic career paths did presidents take to their current appointment?
- RQ3. Are the demographic characteristics and career paths of current presidents different from those outlined in previous studies?
- RQ4. What are the demographic characteristics of institutions that selected non-traditional presidents?

The changes in mission, personnel, structure and funding of higher education institutions have been significant in American universities hence creating the need for further research on university presidents and their career paths (Mangan, 1998). Since the progressive era, leadership roles have improved and school keepers became professional managers who made a career out of reshaping schools, subsequently there have been repeated studies of the personal, educational, and career experiences of individuals who serve as leaders of higher education institutions (Tyack, 1995).

The significance of this study was to provide a broad perspective in terms of what current institutions and governing boards are looking for when searching for a new president. It also revealed the new trends in those accepting these positions, namely education, career path, gender, and age.

For the purpose of this study, a quantitative method was applied. This study was set to be exploratory in nature, using mainly descriptive statistics to describe the demographics and career paths of the current university presidents while using the most complete demographic and job history data compiled to date. Data was obtained from existing public records maintained by the colleges and universities selected for inclusion in the study.

The usage of quantitative techniques allowed me to become the main data collector, code, measure the data, and interpret the data in a descriptive way and to have a better understanding of the areas being studied. According to Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996), these techniques enabled me to identify trends of certain data through frequency counts.

In order to accomplish these goals, I did the following: (1) the identities of the participants will be kept confidential and only known to my study. (2) I assigned participants a number. Written reports and any oral presentations were referred to as numbers.

The participants examined in this study were a university president to a large research university “flagship” (Doctoral/Research Universities-Extensive) and one mid-size state university (Comprehensive University) in each state. In addition, I intended to study a sample of large private research institutions. Institutions which specialize in arts, medical, and the military will be excluded.

Once the data was coded and placed into the different categories of the spreadsheet, I then developed various matrices which consisted of descriptive statistics. In order to analyze data and gather report findings, a matrix was created for each category in the study. Having a better understanding of who the current presidents are, and the various career pathways to this earned position, will allow those aspiring leaders to plan their own pathways to presidencies. Furthermore, armed with this knowledge aspiring individuals will focus

concisely on identifying and participating in opportunities that will help develop the skills necessary in order to assume a president position.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

During the early 1900's, as colleges evolved into their modern institutional form, governing boards created the position of university president to oversee such organizations (Cuban, 1988). The position of university president can no longer be viewed or symbolized by the approach of spending long hours on administrative duties and brief moments on instruction, community, and public relations (Cuban, 1988). In fact, casual visitations with students are now considered a thing of the past. Instead, the new "modern" university leader is viewed as a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). A university president is now the one leading an academic organization through fund-raising, with dollar goals often into the hundreds of millions, through serving as the public face of the institution, and by maintaining and expanding traditional and emerging academic programs.

The university president's position is considered to be as unique as the American system of higher education. In fact, it has been stated that a president within an American university serves to protect the core democratic values of the country. . For example, Rhodes (2001) described this position as the following:

...in spite of financial pressures and political concerns, in spite of public disenchantment and campus discontent, the academic presidency is one of the most influential, most important, and most powerful of all positions, and there is now both a critical need and an unusual opportunity for effective leadership. The college presidency is one of the most influential of all positions because the future leaders of the world sit in our classrooms. The academic presidency also is one of the most

important of all positions because it is chiefly on campus that knowledge—the foundation of the future—is created. Furthermore, it is most powerful of all positions because of its persuasive influence and long-term and wide-ranging leverage (p.223).

Barwick (2002) refers to a college and university president position as a very special one and unlike any other in education. Nonetheless, the roles have changed substantially with changes in mission, personnel, structure of higher education funding, and clientele altering the view of American universities. Therefore, studying the career paths and the demographic profiles of individuals who pursue this position is common.

In 1998 President Bill Clinton called for strong academic leadership in order to prepare America for the 21st century. While universities continue to experience growth in enrollment and new programs to meet the needs of a knowledge work society (Reich, 1992), university leaders increasingly need to be individuals that can manage change within an organization constructively and creatively (Fullan,1993). In addition, the literature makes reference to the impact presidents have on developing and contributing to the communities they serve (Kerr and Gade, 1987). University presidents also face different levels of challenges and pressure while trying to meet the needs of students, faculty and staff as well as external demands from public leaders, legislators, and the general public to provide quality goods and services (Smith, 2004). In addition, presidents must continue to meet traditional demands associated with student access, student enrollment, and credit hour production, all of which contribute to the university's future reputation and endowment growth.

Traditionally, the majority of the presidents were selected from within the university, namely from among the ranks of faculty, department chairs, deans, and vice presidents. Recently, however, the university has faced new challenges, including the reality of increased campus violence, such as the recent tragedy at Virginia Tech, state and national fiscal crises

and relative decline in federal research and development revenues. In response to these challenges, university governing boards increasingly search for university leaders that are coming from a career path outside higher education (Noyes, 1994; Corrigan, 2002). The current issues facing higher education are not simple. In fact, they are multidimensional and broad in scope. They require complex assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Even though many of these issues are not new to the environment of higher education institutions, changes in the society, technology, economy, and politics alter the way in which they must be viewed. These evolving pressures and demands placed on the modern university prompt a call for individuals with strong leadership skills to fulfill the chief executive's role. Among those skills are administrative abilities, management expertise, fund-raising, media relations, community relations, legislative relations, union and collective bargaining, guiding an athletics program, all of which combines to make the role of president parallel to one of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). In fact, it was in the 1980s that approximately 500 former CEO's served as university presidents (Kerr and Gade, 1986). Furthermore, they predicted that this number would double by the end of the century. This in turn has created a high level of pressure on the governing boards and selection process as it is critical to match leadership characteristics to the needs of the institution (Fisher & Koch, 1996).

In these days, while some scholars might be against the idea of non-academicians overseeing higher education institutions, others feel that individuals with backgrounds in business, government or military experience are going to have a better handle on the challenges to come. In fact, leadership is treated as something tangible, identifiable, efficacious, and measurable; it constitutes much more than mere personal charisma. (Bass, 1981; Hollander, 1985; and Yukl, 1981). Bensimon, Newmen, and Birnbaum (1989), stated that the understanding of leadership at all levels is critical to the effectiveness of any higher

education organization. As a result, regardless of career path, those aspiring to university presidencies must be individuals who are ready to shape themselves psychologically, emotionally, and intellectually for the leadership challenge that they will encounter.

Background

The role and duties of a university president have become far more complex since the first institution of higher education, Harvard University, was founded in 1636. According to Burton (2003), it was indicated that throughout the 1600's and 1700's some of the first leaders in colleges and universities didn't come from the academic ranks. It further indicated that most of the presidents came from clergy in Europe where all priests were (Burton, 2003). In addition, the United States established the same model prevalent in Germany and Great Britain, where clergy traditionally became educators. In 1640, President Henry Dunster of Harvard College taught a full course load while fulfilling his duties as president of the institution. In addition, it has also been indicated that at Harvard University, 12 of the 15 presidents appointed between 1640 and 1868 were clergymen. Burton(2003), states that the first 2 presidents at the University of Michigan and the first 3 at the University of Cincinnati were ministers.

Towards the end of the Civil War, most, if not all, college presidents were clergyman (Rudolph, 1990/1962). In the beginning of the nineteenth century, individuals who were selected to serve as presidents were primarily expected to be administrators, fundraisers, and in some instances, teachers. Most importantly, they were expected to be moral leaders (Bornstein, 2003). Furthermore, it was during this time that university presidents were viewed as intellectual people or academic leaders who had major influence on campus and in the community, state, and nation (Shapiro, 1998). The typical profile of a university president in the 1900s was a white male, approximately 46 years old, married, Protestant with a solid

background in education (Cohen & March, 1986). In 1945, Warren, Adams, and Donovan reported that the average age of a president for the 1900-1945 period was over 50 years.

Soon after the United States entered the Industrial Age, institutions immediately shifted their mission from moral leadership to teaching and research. Therefore, investigations were performed to gather personal and professional demographics of college presidents during this period (Kunkel, 1948). Among the many characteristics examined were: marital status, ethnicity, gender, geography, and age.

In 1957, the launching of Sputnik challenged our nation to ask for stronger educational reform. Educators at this time were extremely concerned that the country was lagging behind the Russians in the realms of science, math and technological innovation. In fact, remodeling occurred to improve math, science, and language facilities. Teachers became better educated in these fields as a result of this reform effort, and there was an increased interest in producing presidents with biology and physical science backgrounds (Cohen and March, 1986). At the same time, professionals who were working in student affairs were shifting into presidency positions given their experience in advising, testing, counseling. This movement began in the 1960s and 1970s, a time when students were speaking out on social issues involving civil rights, world peace, and the Vietnam War (Altbach & Cohen, 1990). It was during this volatile era, which included violent protests, that colleges and universities experienced a high turnover in presidents.

As the years progressed and after serious institutional financial difficulties, governing boards started seeking business and industry executives to lead their universities. This shift was based on the belief that these backgrounds provided the knowledge and prior experiences necessary for managing financial and human resources (Mangan, 1998). In the late 1980s it was believed that the graduate degrees of university presidents should reflect the institutions

they serve (Cohen and March, 1986). The changes in mission, personnel, structure and funding of higher education institutions have been significant in American universities hence creating the need for further research on university presidents and their career paths (Mangan, 1998). Since the progressive era, leadership roles have improved and school keepers became professional managers who made a career out of reshaping schools, subsequently there have been repeated studies of the personal, educational, and career experiences of individuals who serve as leaders of higher education institutions (Tyack, 1995).

Statement of the Problem

Considering the increasingly complex and demanding role of a university president, it is important for those individuals aspiring to this position to be well informed regarding all aspects of the job. This study seeks to determine who the current presidents are, where they came from, and how they prepared for this position.

The majority of the studies dealing with university presidents are quantitative in nature, providing a statistical and demographic profile that includes such elements as gender, education, age, and career path.

This study will attempt to provide quantitative data describing the characteristics of university presidents selected from 2000 to 2008. Anecdotal data would indicate that there has been a significant increase in the number of new university presidents with a military and business background. If empirical evidence suggests a newly emerging trend in the career pathway to the university presidency, then this researcher will discuss what impact this trend might have upon the culture of the university, traditions of faculty governance, the relative status of traditional and emerging academic disciplines, and the relative power and influence of various administrative units.

Theoretical & Conceptual Framework

Higher education is undoubtedly experiencing deep changes. It is facing the competing pressures to achieve higher performance goals and to maintain operational efficiency at the same time. In addition, issues of balancing access while maintaining excellence, containing rapidly rising tuition costs, and maintaining student safety and security on campus are each contributing to altering the institutional field (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983) for university presidents. Consequently, university presidents are becoming more focused on managing the institution, including resource generation, and have placed less emphasis on the traditional collegial processes. One result is that academic administration is subject to requirements for greater formal professionalization, and the traditional pathways to the presidency become more limited. Change in institutional environments also influences the manner in which universities are being governed. Governing boards are expected to respond to external environments and to knowledgeably represent and defend their institutions to their various publics. These influences are most visible as governing boards engage in deliberation regarding the identification and selection of a new president.

To better understand the factors affecting governing boards while reexamining the selection process of new leaders, the researchers develop a conceptual framework combining two established theoretical traditions. These theoretical traditions are institutional theory and rational choice theory. We assume that when making selection decisions, boards are faced with two general challenges. First, because the president will serve as the public face of the university, the board wishes for external constituencies, including policy makers, alumni and donors, funding agencies and foundations, other university administrators, faculty and

students, to perceive the person selected as possessing appropriate levels of status and expertise. This is an issue of external legitimacy. One means to attain such perceptions of legitimacy is for boards to conform to established institutional norms when making selections. That is, boards consider the network of organizations their university interacts with as their institutional field and implicitly ask the questions: “Are our selection processes representative of the norms found in the institutional field?” “Will the knowledge, skills and dispositions the candidate brings to the position be perceived as appropriate and legitimate?”

Second, regardless of the norms of the institutional field, the board must attend to the expectations of internal constituencies and the unique challenges faced by its particular organization. This is an issue of internal legitimacy. In this regard we make use of rational choice theory, in which, despite possible limitations of knowledge and judgment, board members will be expected to make decisions that further the interests of their particular organization. There is, however, a point of intersection between the external and internal expectations and pressures. Institutional theory would suggest that board decisions tend to be “conserving” of traditional practices and result in “organizational isomorphism” (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983) among organizations within an institutional field. Isomorphism occurs in large part because rational choice is a type of “bounded rationality”, that is, choice bounded by prior socialization into the beliefs, values and assumptions that characterize the institutional field (Abell, 1995). Rational choice theory does, however, introduce greater flexibility and dynamism in making selection decisions. Institutional norms influence, but do not determine the choices to be made. Aggregated alternative decisions made on the basis of rational choice may, over time, be incorporated as new traditions within an institutional field. This is a normal process of institutional evolution. We should note, however, that the institutional field also may

be altered by dramatic social events (e.g., the Virginia Tech tragedy) to which all organizations in the field feel that they must respond.

The conceptual framework presented here builds on Meyer and Rowan's (1977) study, yet draws on broader literature to derive additional theoretical perspectives. In describing the structure of the modern university, Meyer and Rowan (1977) placed great emphasis on societal modernization, followed by the growth of rationalized institutional elements, the emergence of legitimizing rational myths, and the increasing structural complexity of existing organizational forms. That is, the universities, as well as other institutions of the society, were significantly shaped by the ideas constituting the Progressive Era of the late 19th and early 20th century. These ideas were firmly established as the new orthodoxy during the New Deal, and remained dominant until the late 1970s. We are now witness to institutional realignment as ideas such as market dominance, decentralization, consumer choice, and limited government rise to challenge the progressive ideal of earlier periods (Boyd, Kerchner and Blyth, 2008).

Meyer and Rowan (1977) suggest that structures in an organization emerge as reflections of rationalized institutional rules. New rules account for an increase in the complexity of formal organization structure as the organization responds to new situations, reexamines and redefines the current situation, and specifies the means to cope rationally with both. Consequently, institutional rules and norms promote the success, survival and evolutionary change of organizations (Dowling and Pfeffer 1975; Meyer and Rowan 1975). Furthermore, Meyer and Rowan (1977), state that rules often operate as myths allowing organizations to gain legitimacy, resources, and stability, which increases their survival prospects. The mythological character of some institutional rules emerges as established norms and patterns are reified, taken for granted and internalized as the natural and rational response to current conditions. These elements function as rationalized and impersonal

prescriptions allowing the participants to organize along the prescribed lines while they are highly institutionalized (Meyer and Rowan 1977, 1986). In addition, these rules, policies, and procedures in modern organizations are reinforced by public opinion, and important constituents. The result of institutional influence is that organizations within the same institutional field tend to adopt similar structures and operational processes (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Hawley, 1968).

Meyer and Rowan (1977), have described universities as more similar to “organized anarchies” than to traditional rational bureaucracies. Universities are subject to multiple and often times contradictory goals, unclear technology, and fluid participation by faculty and administrators all of which reduces the effectiveness of internal coordination and makes it extremely difficult to set, pursue, and obtain goals while displaying a hierarchy of authority (Cohen and March, 1974; 1986). Because traditional bureaucratic organizational theories were seen as inadequate to describe the functioning of universities, new theoretical accounts were explored. Scott (1995), DiMaggio and Powell (1983), among others began to advocate the use of institutional theory. Hall (1991) provides a comprehensive list of relevant emerging theories. Those theories include: (1) Population-Ecology Model, (2) Resource-Dependence Model (3) Rational-Contingency Model, (4) Marxian Twist, (5) Transaction-Cost Model, and (6) Institutional Model. Among these, institutional and rational choice theories are the most often employed in studies of university change and development.

Scott (1987) has provided a historical review of the development of institutional theory which is summarized in the following. Early conceptions of institutional theory as developed by Selznick, stressed that organizations which persisted over time became “institutionalized” in public discourse and were attributed with values that transcended the organizations’ manifest goals and objectives. In this regard institutionalization was thought of as a process of instilling

value. As developed by Berger and Luckmann, institutionalization occurs as social actors attempt to create and maintain social order. Patterns of behavior become “typified”, “habitualized”, “internalized”, and reified. It is at the point of reification that a particular institutional order ceases (in part) to be the result of rational collective social action, becoming instead the cause and creator of institutionalized action. It is this variant of institutional theory that was first incorporated by Meyer and Rowan (1977) and Cohen and March (1986) in their studies of K-12 and university schooling. Further development by Meyer, Rowan, Cohen, March and others gave rise to a third variant of institutional theory. Building upon the social constructivist role of institutions, attention began to shift from the technical demands of goal accomplishment to also examine the cultural elements (symbols, norms and values) associated with the institution and its constituent organizations. In this version of institutional theory, institutions shape the presuppositions that organizational members bring to the organization. In this regard the influence of the institution resides in institutionalized social actors acting in predictable institutionalized fashion. The fourth and final variation that Scott discusses centers on the idea that organizational members are also members of a variety of different institutions. Thus determination of appropriate organizational action occurs within a marketplace of competing institutional logics. Where there is a high degree of similarity between institutional orders then one would expect low levels of discussion regarding appropriate organizational behavior. When the different institutional logics separating various institutional orders, is more apparent, then the task for both organizational members and analysts becomes more complex in determining which sets of ideas should be granted preference. Theoretical trends outlined by Scott range from a process of instilling value, to a process of creating reality, to describing elements of the institutional order, and finally recognizing the existence of multiple institutional spheres. Even when the main function of an

institution is to provide stability and order, institutions will experience change in both incremental, evolutionary, as well as in revolutionary ways.

As changes emerge, institutional components play a significant role as they make up and support institutions. Attempting to draw from the various strands of institutional theory to develop a unified institutional theory, Scott (2001) identifies three contrasting components: regulative (rules), normative (norms), and cultural-cognitive (cultural beliefs). Each of these components is considered a necessary part of any institution. The regulative component develops in response to external mandates on the institution. It is comprised of both constitutive rules which establish a desired direction for action but don't prescribe the necessary action, and regulative rules that specify what one should or should not do in particular situations. The normative component is comprised of the informal rules and regulations that govern institutional behavior and that have been internalized by participants through engagement within the institution. The cultural-cognitive component is comprised of the sets of assumptions, values and beliefs used by members of the institution and the public to make judgments about the effectiveness and appropriateness of institutional and organizational action.

It is evident that governing boards face a significant amount of pressure while they are expected to respond to the internal and external environments. In addition they knowledgeably represent and defend their respective institutions. In fact, trying to maintain internal and external legitimacy, institutional components play a significant role as they make and support institutions. Therefore, it is critical that throughout the analysis of this study to consider the three previously mentioned contrasting components: regulative (rules), normative (norms), and cultural-cognitive (cultural beliefs) as they are indeed a necessity to any institution while searching and selecting the new leaders of higher educational institutions.

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) defined organizational fields as “organizations that in the aggregate constitute a recognized area of institutional life: other organizations that produce similar products or services” (pp.64-65). The concept of organizational field allows educators to expand the lens to better understand the range of those actors mediating the implementation of institutional reforms. However, the end product can result in linking across organizations which are under similar aspects of the reform but in different roles (Birch, 2007). In addition, it was indicated that some factors contributing to possible environmental causes of change can include: level of ideological conflict within the field, the recurrence of a problems, and the actors’ ability to situate the problem in a broader institutional or policy discourse. The construct of organizational field cannot be determined but must be defined or connected (Birch, 2007). In other words, the construction of organizational field is similar to the construct of communities of practice (Wenger 1998).

The efforts to continue molding the institutional environments carry on as governing boards and organizations persist to seek leaders to manage and institutionalize the goals and structures in the rules of authorities. Therefore, governing boards and institutions are forced to maintain focus on the emerging needs of an institution while considering the organizational field, organizational theory, theoretical trends, and institutional components.

The challenges facing higher education rest firstly on our better understanding of the current and emerging needs pressuring and framing the institutional field. Furthermore, understanding institutional theories is vital in addition to the theoretical trends and institutional components which support the institution. Nonetheless research to this date offers theoretical models that may through their different and complementary perspectives in some way assist

governing boards and institutions face an uncertain future with greater insight and confidence through a rational choice.

Therefore, considering that the institutional environment has great influence through the normative and cultural cognitive components, the researcher intends to apply this theoretical framework throughout the data analysis of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study will be to obtain a better understanding of career paths and demographic profiles of university presidents. Individuals aspiring to be university presidents, as well as search committee members and scholars specializing in higher education administration will benefit greatly from this study

It will provide information on:

- Personal experiences
- Educational background
- Professional career paths
- Experiences that can have an impact on their professional development
- Demographic characteristics of university presidents
(e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, and geography)
- Skills and background that institutions are looking for in a president

This study will develop and provide a comprehensive and descriptive profile of university presidents. In order to create such profiles, various institutions from each state and different Carnegie classifications will need to be examined.

Significance of the Study

Selecting a university president has become the most significant function for governing boards making the need for these studies vital. The study will provide a broad perspective in

terms of what current institutions and governing boards are looking for when searching for a new president. It will also help to reveal the new trends in those accepting these positions, namely education, career path, gender, and age. Advertisements for president positions are commonly found in The Chronicle of Higher Education. Over 250 vacancies are posted yearly. The Chronicle of Higher Education (2008), provides a diverse list of many skills and expectations. They depict what selection committees are looking for in their candidates:

- visionary and dynamic leader
- superb academic credentials
- track record of successful leadership in a world-class institution
- highly values both research and teaching
- ability to develop and promote a vision based on the unique identity of the institution
- ability to drive institutional excellence academically
- ability to drive institutional excellence administratively
- ability to drive institutional excellence financially is essential
- the successful candidate will combine an understanding of mission, a commitment to cutting-edge research
- the ability to inspire and relate to students, faculty, staff, alumni, trustees and other university stakeholders
- must have an earned doctorate
- a record as a distinguished teacher and scholar
- academic credentials necessary for appointment as a full professor

Leaders of higher education institutions are expected to plan, organize, lead, and control their organizations daily. University presidents are viewed as role models and

community leaders. Therefore, their skills and expectations will be determined by the governing boards and different types of institutions. In fact, financial planning, communication skills, being politically savvy and having the ability to adapt are extremely crucial (Boggs, 2003).

Research Questions

The researcher intends to use the following questions to guide the focus of this study:

- RQ1. What are the demographic characteristics of current university presidents (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, and geography)?
- RQ2. What academic and non-academic career paths did presidents take to their current appointment?
- RQ3. Are the demographic characteristics and career paths of current presidents different from those outlined in previous studies?
- RQ4. What are the demographic characteristics of institutions that selected non-traditional presidents?

Definition of Terms

Career Paths – The academic and non-academic career paths taken by presidents to obtain their current appointments.

Change – To alter or make different in some particular way, to transform, to replace with another, to undergo modifications, a shift from one to another, and to pass from one phase to another (Merriam, 1993).

Chief Executive Officer - Executive manager in the highest policy-determining level. One who directs, maintains, and operates organizations through systematic coordinated cooperative human effort (McFarland, 1974).

Commonalities and differences.- What, if any, very distinct educational, professional, or demographic commonalities or differences which exist among the public university presidents.

Curriculum Vita - A written summary of a person's educational and professional experience.

Effectiveness- Production of a definite or desired result.

Experiences - What personal, educational, and career experiences had an impact on the presidents' career development processes (e.g., postdoctoral fellowships, leadership development, and research).

Institutional Field – Organizations that in the aggregate constitute a recognized area of institutional life: other organizations that produce similar products or services (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983).

President - Chief executive officer of a university. The title of chancellor may also be used to describe the position of chief executive officer.

Leadership - Authority with capacity to lead.

Normative – Component comprised of the informal rules and regulations that govern institutional behavior and that have been internalized by participants through engagement within an institution.

Public University -State supported institution of higher education.

Regulative – Component which develops in response to the external mandates on the institution.

Restructuring- Major changes to existing knowledge structures. A process by which new schemata are created.

Vision- Dynamic source of leadership that imbues other aspects of leadership with special energy and significance (Starratt, 1995).

Chapter II

Review of Related Literature

The purpose of this study is to obtain a better understanding of the career paths and profiles of contemporary university presidents. Because we believe that appointment follows perceptions of the governing board regarding the nature of anticipated role demands and the type of individual required to meet those demands, the first section of the review is focused on the role of a university president. The second section examines the literature on career pathways of university presidents. The third section provides an overview of the characteristics of higher education institutions. Finally, the fourth section addresses the literature on president characteristics.

The Role of a University President

Being president of a college and university is a very special position. Barwick (2002) believes that it is unlike any other in education. Rhodes (1988) considers it a very influential position as the future leaders of the world sit in the institution classrooms. According to Stout (1998), President Clinton addressed this priority by calling for strong academic leadership in order to prepare America for the 21st century and to focus on shaping schools to the emerging needs of the communities they serve. However, the development of criteria and standards for the preparation of effective leaders presents a significant challenge. According to Drucker (1989), these strong academic leaders are much desired in a “post-business society.” In addition, Drucker states that economy’s foundation and true capital is

indeed “knowledge”. Furthermore, Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, and Tipton (1991), reported that the entire economic system of this country calls for a new sense of direction towards global and national responsibility. While organizations experience growth, leaders need to be individuals that can manage change within an organization constructively and creatively (Fullan, 1993).

Given the high demands for quality of goods and services, revenues decline due to increased costs (Astin, 2004, Quinn, 2004); colleges and universities are not an exception. Literature makes reference to the impact presidents have on developing and contributing to the communities they serve (Kerr and Gade, 1987). This position calls for an individual with strong leadership skills making the role of president parallel to one of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Presidents at colleges and universities face increased levels of pressure while trying to meet those needs (Smith, 2004). While attempting to meet those needs, university presidents are also facing the reality of increased crises and tragedies within their institutions. According to Bensimon, Newmen, and Birnbaum (1989), the understanding of leadership at all levels is critical to the effectiveness of the organization. Furthermore, they define the ideal leader as one that will know how to find and bring together diverse minds—minds that can reflect variety in their points of view, in their thinking processes, and in their question-asking and problem-solving strategies; minds that differ in their unique capacities as well as in their unique limitations (Bensimon and Neumann 1993, pp. 1-2). As a result, those individuals aspiring to be university presidents must be ready to shape themselves psychologically, emotionally, and intellectually for the leadership challenges that they will encounter.

Regardless of the background a president or CEO has, this individual must have a clear understanding that a university president is at the center of all the action. It is this person who

is making the decisions that potentially have significant impacts on the institution and all of its constituencies.

Career Pathways

Becoming a college or university president is a dream to some, yet a reality to others. However, given that higher education institutions are viewed as another way of providing a service, they have allowed for a more diverse group of people to pursue this career. Brown (2000), Burton (2003), Cohen & March (1986), described the job of a college and university president as “an after-the-fact invention.” In the meantime, literature reveals that while there has not been a prescribed career degree plan or path that will prepare individuals for these positions in higher education, many comprehensive studies on career paths and educational backgrounds have been conducted. One of the many studies was performed by Ferrari (1970). This study focused on analyzing the patterns, mobility, personal, and social characteristics of presidents. Ferrari used this information to compare presidents from public and private institutions, and to compare the career pathways to the university presidency with career pathways of government and business executives. The outcome of this study revealed that 75% of the presidents were highly educated as reflected by earned doctorate degrees. Furthermore, 86% had prior experience in academia as college professors, 60% of those attained the rank of full professor, and their average age was 53 years old.

In addition, Brown (2000), Burton (2003), and Cohen and March (1986) focused on the extent to which presidents plan their career path. They reported that many of the presidents had not planned to become university presidents. In fact, these individuals had served in different capacities in academia and once they reached senior level positions, they then

became interested in and sought opportunities to seek the presidential position. Burnham and Umbach (2001) examined various ways in which an individual can become president, which were categorized in four different areas. The first two: (1) Scholar and (2) Steward are considered traditional, while (3) Spanner and (4) Stranger are labeled as non-traditional. The scholar is defined as the individual who followed the traditional career ladder. An individual who held various administrative positions in higher education but yet never experienced being a full-time faculty member is labeled as a steward. On the other hand, a spanner" is referred to as the individual who excelled as a faculty member within the institution and with external experiences in government, business, and in some cases non-profit organizations. Finally, a stranger is defined as an individual who never taught and whose previous positions were outside of the higher educational field. In fact, these individuals are sometimes referred to as parachutists (Moore, 1986).

Traditionally, when selecting a college and university president, it is common for academicians to give preference to those candidates with similar backgrounds. In addition, literature reveals that there are committees that will search for traditional candidates only when filling this vacancy. Corrigan (2002), in a study of 2,594 presidents, described traditional candidates as those with previous college and in some cases university presidency experience.

Literature often makes reference to the six-rung ladder career developed by Cohen and March (1986). This model outlines the promotional hierarchy for academic administrators as follows:

- (1) Entering as student, teacher
- (2) Student and/or teacher becomes professor
- (3) Professor is then promoted to department chair

- (4) Department chairs then qualify to become assistant, associate, deans (5) Deans then take the role of vice president or provost
- (6) Provosts will then accept the challenge of a college or university presidency position

In other literature, however, Cohen and March's findings are interpreted as representing a common process for attaining the presidency rather than as a fixed model of career development.

It is described as the academic ladder: starting professor, advancing to department chair, dean, making progress to vice president for academic affairs or provost and culminating in the presidency. This process tends to socialize the individual to privilege the academic and scholarly functions of the university over such concerns as resource acquisition, organizational design and management (Birnbaum & Umbach, 2001; Boggs, 1989; Moore & et al. 1983). As stated previously, considering that there is no fixed career path for college and university presidents, some of these rungs and ladders are skipped at times. According to Cohen and March (1986), it is not common for an individual to achieve three or more rungs of the ladder at the same institution. Therefore, in some cases, mobility within different institutions will allow the opportunity of professional development. For example Moore, Salimbene, Marlier, and Bragg (1983) discovered that only 3.2 percent of presidents held all five positions within a career ladder; 19.3 percent had four of five rungs; 30.8 percent had three of the five rungs; and 32.1 percent had served two rungs of the five. In addition, they found that 20.5 percent had never served in a faculty position, and 14.8 percent had no prior academic experience.

Moreover, according to Williams (2007), one out of five presidents had served a presidency prior to their appointment in 2006. In addition, at least 31 percent of the presidents

had served as provosts. Within a six year period, Corrigan (2001) reported that 20.4% of those serving as presidents had held presidencies at other institutions of higher education.

Why do some institutions prefer the traditional candidates? Research revealed that in some cases, committees search for candidates with more similarities to those of the institution (Greenwood and Ross, 1996) making the location of where degrees were earned a contributing factor. This in turn has caused those aspiring candidates to apply at institutions where they have had the majority of their educational and professional experiences (Salimbene, 1982). According to more extensive review, a doctoral intensive university may want to seek a former president of a doctoral extensive university in order to assist the institution in moving to the next level of the Carnegie Classification (Dowdall, 2002). According to Cohen & March (1986), Ferrari (1970), and Burton (1986), the majority of presidents have served in the academic ranks prior to becoming presidents.

Normally a presidents' background resides in academia; meaning they work their way up the academic ladder taking the normative career path. Other publications revealed that in 2001, at least 85% of those serving as presidents followed the traditional academic path(Corrigan, 2002). Indeed faculty and the academic administrators play a big role when selecting presidents at their institutions. At times, search committees will tend to give special consideration to those individuals who have completed leadership training programs. Moreover, literature revealed that there are a few leadership training institutes offered by professional associations and their role is to highlight the formal and informal aspects of leadership (Hoppe and Speck, 2003). These groups usually focus on grooming those aspiring leaders for tomorrow. Institutions such as Harvard University, the University of Texas-Austin, and the University of Pennsylvania have these leadership training programs currently in place (Hoppe and Speck, 2003).

In the last ten years, the job of a university president has become more complex. Higher education institutions are no longer focusing on their upcoming presidential appointment to be a strong academic individual. Furthermore, institutions and governing boards are no longer looking for people to deal with today's agenda (Williams, 2007). Instead, they are looking for individuals with a vision for the future and a mission geared for the longer term, even if the candidate comes from outside the academic world. The skills and expectations that governing boards have for these leaders have changed.

The position of university president calls for an individual with strong leadership skills. Those skills include: proven administrative abilities, management expertise, fund-raising, media relations, community relations, legislative relations, union and collective bargaining, guiding an athletics program and many others making the role of president to be parallel to one of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) (Sederberg, 1999). Some have even argued that those aspiring leaders with backgrounds in business, governmental or military experience are going to have a better handle of the challenges to come (Mangan, 1988). These individuals are defined as non-traditional presidents.

According to Birnbaum & Umbach (2001), non-traditional individuals are described as those who have never taught in higher education and whose jobs have alternated from higher education and external positions or simply no experience in higher education. Literature has suggested that a large number of college and university presidents are coming from outside academia (Covert, 2004; Moore, Salimbene, Marlier & Bragg, 1983; Salimbene, 1982; Wessel & Keim, 1994). In fact, in 2006, more than 13 percent of the presidents in office had held a prior position outside the academic field (Williams, 2007). In a study conducted by Corrigan (2002), it was reported that 14.8% of the presidents did not have an academic career path.

Understanding that there are different career pathways for individuals is fundamental. For example David Boren, formerly Governor and United States Senator, became president of The University of Oklahoma; Robert M. Gates, former Central Intelligence Agency Director, was hired by Texas A & M; Michigan State University hired Peter McPherson, a former leading banker and federal government employee (Birnbaum and Umbach (2001) to name a few. Additionally, those hired as presidents had an average of six and one-half years of work experience outside the academic fields.

Research performed by Corrigan (2002) indicated that 0.9% of those serving as university presidents held K-12 school administration positions. In addition, 2.0% were in the business field, 1.7% were clergy, 1.8% were government employed, and 0.4% had a military background, and only 7.9%, were non-academic (Corrigan, 2002). Murphy (1997) also found that it is not uncommon for those individuals with non-academic experience to seek and accept the challenge of college and university president.

The high demands in society, including access, accountability, and measurable outcomes, may prompt the increasing employment of non-traditional individuals as university presidents. Ross and Green (1988), found evidence of this trend in their study, which found that 50% of those serving as presidents were in non-academic positions immediately prior to accepting the presidency. Nevertheless, some of these individuals did have some academic experience as faculty members and in some cases had some experience in some capacity of university administration prior to accepting a presidency. As mentioned earlier, research indicates that one out of five presidents had served a presidency term prior to their assignment in 2006 (Williams, 2007). Previous to this finding, Ross and Green (1988) indicated that 32.7% of those serving as presidents had served as college and university vice presidents prior to

becoming presidents. Others served as chief academic officers (27.8%), and 4.4% served as department chairpersons.

While there are many reasons that motivate individuals to pursue the career of college or university president, literature reviews highlight the following three factors in particular. According to Birnbaum and Umbach (2001), there are three approaches that individuals consider when the opportunity to serve as university president approaches. These include the following: (1) there are aspiring leaders who seek to make a difference in their institution due to feeling dissatisfied when they sought a new opportunity and therefore took the opportunistic approach. (2) In addition, they state that while some have no career planning, being in the right place at the right time referred to as serendipity, and (3) a third approach is the planned approach. In this case, individuals who planned throughout their professional career and or strategize how to attain office through education, networking, and career development. Literature also revealed that financial compensation is also a motive for individuals pursuing this position as well as transferring from one institution to another.

Regardless of career path or whether a person is traditional or non-traditional, they are faced with multiple challenges everyday. How challenges are handled is indicative of how effective they are as leaders. These challenges range from: recruitment, retention, fund raising, athletic issues, media, government, alumni, budget, faculty, and staff issues, to name a few (Evelyn, 2006). However, when dealing with these types of challenges, effective individuals find time to execute the necessary actions to address these issues. In addition, presidents can fail to proactively plan for the future while reacting to these ongoing challenges. Yet, as leaders of an institution, they are expected to both effectively address unexpected events and deploy efficient planning strategies in the best interests of the community and institution being served. A study was conducted by Fisher, Tack, and Wheeler (1988) that

examined how effective presidents were considered to be different from typical presidents. Based on their study, the following are referred to as characteristics of what an effective president is considered to be:

- retain final authority
- are very self confident and positive individuals
- believes that respect is worth more than popularity
- have strong beliefs of being visible and out front in order to advance the cause
- think very carefully protecting what is said or done

In a study done by the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) (1999), several recommendations were listed that can potentially enhance the effectiveness of a college and university president. Among those recommendations, the AGB made reference to the following for college and university presidents: (1) formulate a vision of the institutions' future, (2) exercise the authority that has been inherent in the position, (3) knowing how to lead the board and faculty through a process of reducing all ambiguities in authority and decision making (AGB, 1999). Tewel (1990), added that effective communication is indeed the key to success, which allows for the transfer of knowledge and enhances interpersonal and technical interactions, assuring the completion of all tasks.

Furthermore, Tewel (1990) states that presidents should have the ability to disseminate information to a variety of constituents, including faculty, parents, students, and community. Communication should always be open in order to create a better climate and to allow for increased collaboration as opposed to competition. In addition, there are six leadership theories that through practice have assisted in creating stronger and better university presidents (Bensimon et al.(1989):

- (1) Trait theories- the ability to identify specific characteristics that will

provide a person with the ability to assume and function in leadership positions

- (2) Power and influence theories- describing the amount of power that is available for leaders to have over followers
- (3) Behavioral- study leaders' patterns on activities, manager roles, and the different categories of behavior
- (4) Contingency- highlights the significance of situational factors to better understand the effectiveness of leadership
- (5) Cultural and symbolic-knowing how to maintain a leaders' beliefs and values and giving meaning to the organizational life
- (6) Cognitive- suggesting that leadership is a social attribution and allows individuals to make sense of a complex world.

Fisher, Tack and Wheeler (1988) conducted a two-year study that found similarities that effective university presidents have with corporate presidents. For example, they discovered that effective presidents and corporate leaders were:

- more committed to an ideal or a vision more so than to the institution
- less likely to make decisions easily
- more confident
- more inclined to take calculated risks
- less likely to do spontaneous speeches and actions (p.28)

When facing challenges of crises and tragedies as university presidents, there are many factors that will contribute to determining their effectiveness as leaders. For example, according to Nelson (2008), campuses are increasingly becoming battlegrounds. In fact, even though conflicts have been occurring for a few decades, the public attention has intensified in

recent years. In addition, presidents are far more visible than just five years ago. There is no escape from the “24/7” news cycle and technological tools creating curses and blessings for presidents as well as other public leaders.

Fain (2007) discusses one of the most prevalent challenges a president has had to face: the deadly shootings at Virginia Tech that occurred on Monday 16, 2006. According to Fain (2007), President Charles W. Steger could not have predicted that the decisions he would make on that morning and in the days to follow would in fact be the most important of his 40 years at the university. Challenges such as this, namely not being able to foresee the magnitude of the tragedy, makes it impossible for the leader of an institution to be fully prepared to handle this tragedy.

Characteristics of Higher Education Institutions

Literature has revealed that aside from a solid educational background, one of the most important factors being considered when selecting a president is work experience. According to Kerr and Gade (1986), a president is considered to be the most important individual connected to the institution aside from the trustees. In fact, they state that college presidents should provide the proper leadership and knowledge to guide the institution through the challenges and opportunities it faces making it critical that the right individual with the necessary experience is selected.

Regents, trustees, elected or appointed, have found their roles to be increasingly untenable in recent years. This trend is complicated by the fact that they are also expected to knowledgeably represent and defend their institutions to their publics. In addition, they are expected to regulate campus affairs in accord with the wishes of the public (Chalmers, 2008). When searching for a new college and university president, the selection criteria will vary depending on the expectations that the board of trustees and search committees have

enumerated, which often reflect the characteristics of the institution. Greenwood and Ross (1996) make reference to the tendency that search committees have when considering new applicants. They found that aside from a solid educational background, the committees will focus strongly on the applicant's most recent position, instead of cumulative work experience. However, currently many universities are eager to find a president with very strong management skills. Birnbaum (1988) supports this statement by indicating that these are probably institutions focusing on overcoming weak areas. In many cases, search committees are looking at recent positions while other institutions will focus on management skills. Therefore, situational factors often drive selection processes. Ironically, it was not long ago that non-traditional candidates were disliked by those in the academic fields; however the reality of a university becoming such a complex organization has forced institutions and governing boards to reevaluate their selection criteria and focus on individuals with abilities to manage increasingly sophisticated institutions. Moreover, the Chronicle of Higher Education, (2008) revealed that criteria have changed dramatically for selecting a new leader. It is no longer the teaching and research experience that is primarily considered by decision makers. Instead, a greater array of qualifications are now listed on postings for the university presidency, including these examples: (1) candidate must have administrative abilities, (2) management experience, (3) leadership experience, (4) experience in media relations, community relations and legislative relations, (5) ability in guiding athletic program (Chronicle Careers, 2008). These expanded criteria have in turn opened the doors to a great number of nontraditional candidates as they are being sought for their expertise in many of these areas and for their experience in overseeing large and complex organizations.

Among those who are not traditional but increasingly considered are individuals in the field of institutional advancement. These individuals are considered to have the potential of

being very effective presidents for their institutions. Committees often value their experience in alumni relations, fundraising, media, and government relations. These candidates frequently possess excellent people skills when dealing with media, students, faculty, staff, and the community being served. Moreover, they often possess a strong ability to lead campaigns, and experience in developing strong alliances with business, industry, and government agencies to benefit their institution. According to Murphy (1997), these are skills that make a college and university president an effective leader.

With so many competitive choices to provide educational services, presently, one of the major challenges that colleges and universities face is one of recruitment and retention. A study conducted by Diamond (2002) revealed that professionals with student affairs backgrounds were being increasingly considered for president positions. Governing boards have reported that professionals in this field have an excellent background in terms of recruitment and retention of students using related technological tools. According to Diamond, because media and technology is so advanced, there are no boundaries when it comes to the recruitment and retention applications colleges and universities utilize. Student flow can be from anywhere in the world, making recruitment and retention critically important especially when the institutions rely on student tuition as a source of funding.

Laidlaw (1998,p.1) indicated that the recruitment of business school deans to be presidential candidates has increased. Their experience is vital when institutions experience financial difficulties with budgets, raising funds, or when universities simply want to avoid future financial dilemmas. In addition, Laidlaw, (2008) believes that these individuals possess a rare combination of scholarly achievement and managerial expertise. They possess the ability to oversee, manage, and balance a budget. In fact, if the institution is experiencing difficulty with economic issues, a president with a business background will most likely know the related

survival skills, making them excellent and very effective college and university presidents (Mangan, 1988).

Mangan (1998) stated that business deans are viewed as leaders who have a better understanding of the skills necessary to manage and balance a budget which can be vital to the survival of any institution as well as the ability to bridge business and academics. Individuals with business backgrounds interact with diverse groups of people keeping corporate donors happy while improving educational programs (Laidlaw, 1998). According to Mangan, (1998) many professionals serving as presidents are individuals who at one point held positions as business faculty members, vice presidents for finance, and deans of schools of business. In addition, Mangan,(1998) revealed that these professionals have much to offer to an institution in terms of administrative skills and will often have excellent human resources skills. Human resources skills become critical and are needed when recruiting faculty and to retain top faculty and an effective staff.

Others considered for the job in the non-traditional realm are those in politics. According to Fisher and Koch (1996), politicians have the ability to work very effectively with legislators when dealing with college and university appropriations. Among those who have left the political arena to become college and university presidents are: Washington's Governor Daniel Evans (Evergreen State College), former U.S. Secretary of Treasury Lawrence Summers (Harvard University), and U.S. Senator David Boren (University of Oklahoma). There are many other examples of individuals who took the helms of universities drawn from the political arena. In addition, Wilson (2000) reported that politicians possess the skills of fundraising, networking, and policy development. These abilities are certainly required of university presidents in today's environment. However, gaining trust from faculty and staff can be problematic for politicians turned administrators of institutions of higher education. Even

though these individuals bring many unique skills to the position, there are times when their political pasts can overshadow their role as educational leaders (Fisher and Koch, 1996; Wilson, 2000).

Pressure coming from the public, leaders, and legislators has been one of the greatest factors contributing to the increase of new presidents without an academic background. It is these challenges among others that have led institutions to seek individuals with specific skills to lead a university. Effective selection processes call for focusing on those leaders who can think “out of the box”, but yet are well versed administratively, fiscally, and have the community-building skills that are so desirable in a president (Atwell & Wilson, 2003).

Proponents of non-traditional applicants argue that scholars or individuals with other traditional orientations may lack the skills required and qualifications needed to lead a complex organization.

Furthermore, according to Fain (2007), as a result of the Virginia Tech shootings, search committees of many colleges and universities are in fact placing higher value on crisis-management skills when hiring a president.

The advertisements for president positions are commonly found in The Chronicle of Higher Education. Listed below are some skills and expectations that selection committees are looking for in their candidates:

- visionary and dynamic leader
- superb academic credentials
- track record of successful leadership in a world-class institution
- highly values both research and teaching

- ability to develop and promote a vision based on the unique identity of the institution
- ability to drive institutional excellence academically, administratively and financially is essential
- the successful candidate will combine an understanding of mission, a commitment to cutting-edge research
- the ability to inspire and relate to students, faculty, staff, alumni, trustees and other university stakeholders
- must have an earned doctorate
- a record as a distinguished teacher and scholar
- academic credentials necessary for appointment as a full professor (Careers, Chronicle, 2008).

It is evident that institutions are no longer interested only in academic excellence; rather administrative and financial knowledge and skills are emerging as the primary attributes that search committees seek in a candidate. Moreover, search committees are focusing on identifying individuals that are ready to act like corporate executives and have the ability to take visible control of a campus in crisis (Fain, 2007). The following depicts what institutions who have suffered a form of crisis will look for in their candidates:

- Vision
- Strategic planning and thinking
- Dedication to the land-grant mission
- Orientation to action
- Commitment to diversity
- Dedication to students and academic excellence (Careers, Chronicle 2008).

Searching for non-traditional individuals to fill the roles of university presidents is clearly an emerging trend for the reasons stated in this section of this report.

Personal Demographics and Characteristics

Even though candidates cannot change most of their demographics and characteristics, they may use them as advantages when being considered for a university presidency. It is common to think that hiring a president from outside the region will bring fresh and new ideas to the institution. On the other hand, presidents who are employed from within their respective geographic regions are likely to have local ties to the community and, in some cases, this close proximity may compromise their ability to be the most effective leaders. Hiring a president with high level of mobility can suggest that the candidate has a wide variety of professional experiences and a comfortable distance from the community from which more objective decisions can be rendered.

Cohen & March, (1986) reported that college and university presidents are selected from a national search. In addition, they stated that the majority of presidents selected are almost always external candidates. Furthermore, Cohen & March (1986) conducted a study on the geographic origins of college and university presidents. Faculty and administrators purposely move from one institution to another in order to gain experience as they advance in their professional careers (Cohen & March, 1986; Ferrari, 1970;, and Burton 1986). In addition, Ferrari (1970) and Barr (1981) looked at geographic origins to determine if there were certain regions within the United States producing a higher number of college and university presidents than other regions. According to Ferrari (1970), more presidents come from the

East North Central, West North Central, Middle Atlantic, and South Atlantic regions than other regions of the country.

In addition, Barr (1981) concluded that New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Ohio are the states that produce the highest number of college and university presidents. Moreover, in many cases, larger institutions prefer to hire a president that will provide the institution with a fresh start and new ideas. Therefore, the new president is most likely to come from another region (Barr, 1981). On the other hand, small colleges tend to prefer the local connection. Aspiring individuals will have a better chance of being selected if there is a geographical connection to their current or previous institution (Cohen and March, 1986). Mobility is a key factor when seeking this position, recognizing that in order to advance on the professional ladder it is sometimes necessary to move from one position to another or, in many cases; promotion requires moving from one university to another.

According to Corrigan (2002), candidates filling the presidential positions are becoming more mobile than they were in the past. She reported that at least 76% of current presidents have moved as they progressed through their careers. Furthermore, Barr, (1981), Corrigan, (2002), Ferrari, (1970), Ross & Green, (1988; 2000), and Vaughan, (1989) reported that individuals seeking the presidency must be willing to relocate as evidenced by the finding that the majority of university presidents selected were external candidates.

In addition, Barr, (1981), Corrigan, (2002), Ferrari, (1970), Ross & Green, (1988; 2000), and Vaughan, (1989) indicated that personal demographics and characteristics are also important considerations in terms of university president selection. The typical college or university president is a male, in his late 50s, married, and is likely to have earned a Ph.D. in the social sciences (Williams, 2007). Other scholars indicate, however, that in recent years this common profile is changing.

It is important to understand that the typical age of an individual assuming the role of president could vary depending on the institution and time of service. For example, ACE (2007) reported that those serving the role of presidents in 2006 were older than their counterparts in 1986. In addition, it was found that only 8% of the presidents were 50 years old or younger compared to 42% in 1986. Furthermore, according to the ACE study, at least half of the presidents serving office in 2006 were 60 years old, compared to only 14% in 1986 (Williams, 2007).

Barr (1981), Boggs (1988), Corrigan (2002), Ferrari (1970), Vaughan (1989), and Wessel & Keim (1994), conducted a similar study on individuals all between the ages of 51 and 60. This study indicated that the average age of a college and university president is usually in the mid-50s. In addition, Cohen and March (1986) supplemented this study and reported that the average age of a college and university president increases depending on the type of institution they are serving. For example, presidents at a doctorate granting institution had a median age of 60, at a master's granting university the median age was 59, the median age at a baccalaureate level institution was 58, and 57 for a two-year college.

It is apparent that as the institution classification level increases so will the number of years of experience expected (Corrigan, 2002). Considering that presidents are getting older, they are also serving longer in office. For example, the average tenure has moved from 6.3 years in 1986, to, 6.6. years in 2001, and to 8.5 years in 2006 (Williams, 2006).

In addition, gender is a factor that should be considered when examining the demographics of the college and university presidents. Many people are intrigued by gender differences. In fact, in society it is common to think that higher administrative roles are always given to males for the sake of tradition. The finding of male bias in hiring has been widely supported (Barr, 1981; Budig, 2002; Corrigan, 2002; Ferrari, 1970; Green, 1988; Slimbene,

1982; Sturnick, Milley, & Tisinger, 1991; Wessel & Keim, 1994). In a recent study conducted by the American Council on Education (2006), 86% of the presidents were white and 77% of them were males.

Mancini (1993) conducted a study to identify those differences in gender. One of the focus areas in Mancini's study was to identify the similarities and differences in career paths. Even though there were similarities, the study indicated a larger number of differences. For example, family status and educational level were two of the main highlights. Mancini reported that 96% of the female presidents were more likely to have a doctorate degree as opposed to 91% male presidents. Furthermore, it was also reported that while 94% of the male presidents were married and 98% had children, only 49% of the female presidents were married and 58% had children.

In addition, Brown (2000) also reported on various factors that contributed to more males serving as presidents. For example, female presidents had followed a different path after their undergraduate career. For example, some chose to follow public schools or private business. In some cases, females took time off to raise their children. In a study done by ACE (2006), it was indicated that at least 15% of the female presidents had altered their careers to care for their children and, in some cases, a spouse (Williams, 2007). Male presidents, on the other hand, were more likely to follow the traditional academic career path of faculty, department chair, dean, vice president, and finally the presidency (Brown, 2000). In fact, only 5% of male presidents who responded to the ACE (2006) study indicated altering their career to care for children or their spouse (Williams, 2007).

There is emerging evidence that the tradition of selecting white males for the presidency is changing. According to Williams (2007), the number of female presidents has doubled in the

last 20 years. In 1986, it was reported that one out of 10 presidents was a female. This is now being compared with one in four presidents being a female in 2006. In a study by Corrigan, (2002) it was indicated that the percentage of presidents who were female had doubled since 2001 and this research also revealed that the chances for a female to get appointed president are much greater. In addition, in the 2001 American Council on Education (ACE) study it was found that there was a significant change in presidential profiles as evidenced by the fact that there was an increase in female presidents from 9.5% in 1986 to 21.1% in 2001.

Furthermore, it is essential for individuals seeking this leadership position to recognize that female presidents do tend to be younger and even more educated than male presidents. According to Mancini (1993), unlike their male counterparts, female presidents have far more career experience outside of higher education institutions and have tallied higher mobility rates in order to gain the presidency of either a public or private university.

According to Ross & Green (1998), their study which derived from the 1986 ACE study, found that the majority of the presidents were male, in their fifties, had doctorate degrees, and had the academic traditional background. Later, Green's study in 1993 consisted of 2,423 presidents indicated very small change from the study conducted in 1986. According to Ross and Green (1998) the 1995 profile was 2,297 presidents had initiated a change. It was revealed that number of women and minorities in college and university presidencies had substantially increased. At this time, women were filling 16.5% of the president positions, in comparison to 9.5% in 1986. Furthermore, minorities made up 11.3 of presidents in 1995, having an increase from 8.1% in 1986. In addition there was another study which comprised of 2,380 presidents which was performed three years later by Ross & Green. This study surprisingly indicated small change from the statistics reported in 1995. However, the following study analyzed data on 2,594 presidents. In this study, she found that the largest change in the

presidential profiles was an increase in female presidents from 9.5% in 1986 to 21.1% in 2001. At this time, the average age was late fifties compared to early fifties in 1986 (Ross & Green, 2000).

Ethnicity is another important factor to consider in relation to the employment demographics of college and university presidents. Research by Corrigan (2002) indicated that 87.2% of presidents are white in comparison to other ethnic groups in presidential ranks. It is important to know that over the past decade, the number of minority presidents has increased. However, it is not common to find minorities at white serving institutions. Minority applicants have a better chance of attaining a university presidency at a minority serving institution.

In addition, marital status is a variable that can also have an impact on the likelihood of being selected as a university president. Research indicated that married applicants may have a better chance of being selected given an assumption that they have better emotional support systems. In fact, Vaughan (1987) stated that boards and search committees have an “assumption” that a married president means a happier president.

Unlike many professional careers, there are trade-offs when given the opportunity to take on leadership roles. Williams (2007) reported that 89 % of the male presidents were married in 2006 compared to only two-thirds of the female presidents. Just five years earlier, Corrigan (2002) reported that 89.6% of male presidents were married as opposed to only 58.9% of the female presidents. In addition to this study, Corrigan added that 17.2% of the females are more likely to be divorced compared to only 3.5% of the males. Furthermore, in 2006, 68% of the female presidents had children compared to 91% of the male presidents (Williams, 2007). Additionally, Corrigan reported that 98% of the male presidents had children

as opposed to 58% of females. In an effort to determine a cause for this wide gap, Mancini (1993) offered that having a family or being married is not a great priority for female presidents. Most females aspiring to the university presidency focus on their professional careers in order to effectively fulfill various professional responsibilities in order to gain the top position.

Levels of education certainly play a role when seeking the presidential position. Even though there is no specialized preparation program for college and university presidents, there are certain levels of education expected as well as preferred fields of study (Barr, 1981; Boggs, 1988; Corrigan, 2002; Ferrari, 1970). Ferrari found that 75% of the presidents had earned a doctorate degree. According to Mancini (1993), 96% of the females had doctorate degrees as opposed to 91% of the males.

Studies on university presidents performed by Cohen and March (1986), Ferrari (1970), Brown (2000), Green (1988, 1993), Ross & Green (1998, 2000) over the past thirty years have provided a solid knowledge base on this topic. However, replication of this research is important in view of constantly changing demographics, evolving social issues and ever changing contexts. This study seeks to update the literature on this very important subject.

Chapter III

Methodology

As previously stated in chapter 1, the purpose of this study was to obtain a better understanding of the career paths and demographic profiles of university presidents. This chapter outlines the quantitative procedures, techniques, and methods used to obtain and analyze data from public university presidents in all fifty states. Furthermore, matrices were developed through the use of professional vitas and profiles of the presidents' personal, educational, and career experiences. This study was guided by the following questions:

- RQ1. What are the demographic characteristics of current university presidents (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, and geography)?
- RQ2. What academic and non-academic career paths did presidents take to their current appointment?
- RQ3. Are the demographic characteristics and career paths of current presidents different from those outlined in previous studies?
- RQ4. What are the demographic characteristics of the institutions that selected non-traditional presidents?

Research Design

Through the extensive review of literature, it was evident that a majority of studies on presidential career paths and personal profiles were quantitative studies. The greater number of these studies provided a vast amount of information, however, a number of them were not

very specific in terms of personal demographics, educational backgrounds, and career experiences prior to the presidency. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, a quantitative method was applied. This study was set to be exploratory in nature, using mainly descriptive statistics to describe the demographics and career paths of the current university presidents while using the most complete demographic and job history data compiled to date. Data was obtained from existing public records maintained by the colleges and universities selected for inclusion in the study.

Characteristics of Quantitative Research Design

The usage of quantitative techniques allowed the researcher to become the main data collector, code, measure, and interpret the data in a descriptive way providing a better understanding of the areas being studied. According to Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996), these techniques enabled the researcher to identify trends of certain data through frequency counts. Furthermore, it allowed the researcher to code items according to a scheme followed by the arithmetical counts. For example, the researcher coded and searched for the word “tenured” in each curriculum vita and personal biography. Later, the word tenured was tabulated the number of times and recorded for purposed of reporting frequencies. Frequency counts were used to determine gender, ethnicity, degrees earned, marital status, and years in office tenured, and career positions. Furthermore, it allowed the researcher to evaluate the incidents and uncover trends making the findings more dependable.

This population was selected because it is often times perceived that even though presidents of universities tend to have a well defined career and educational background (Cohen & March, 1986). In fact, they are also expected to have earned an advanced if not a terminal degree. Therefore, selecting a president from a flagship institution as well as a president from the mid-size university allows the researcher and those aspiring leaders to

determine if there is a significant difference in the career pathways as well as in personal demographics.

Data Collection & Analysis

All material gathered from participating institutions became data for the research study (Bogdan and Knopp Biklen, 2003). Furthermore, the information was considered concrete and measurable in terms of the number of years a person has been at an institution, years in a presidency position, prior professional positions, and in other areas of study. Therefore, when the researcher began to collect data from the participating institutions, it was very important to establish a trustworthy relationship between the subjects and the researcher (Arminio & Hultgren, 2002). In addition, the researcher had the obligation and responsibility to protect the rights of those participating in the study (Locke, Spirduso & Silverman, 2000). In order to accomplish these goals, the researcher had to do the following: (1) the identities of the participants were kept confidential and only known to the researcher (2) the researcher assigned participants a number. As it is the case in any research study, protecting the identities of participants is vital. For the purpose of this study, all identities were kept confidential. Written reports and any oral presentations were referred to as numbers.

Participant Selection

The participants examined within this study were university presidents of large research universities (Doctoral/Research Universities-Extensive) and mid-size state universities (Comprehensive University) from each state. In addition, the researcher also studied a sample of large private research institutions. Institutions which specialize in arts, medical, and the military were excluded.

Data Collection

The participants of this study were identified by visiting the universities' websites and, when necessary, contacting the universities and asking for the names of their presidents and requesting their professional vitas and personal biographies. Once presidents were identified, information was collected for the study, which came from the personal documents of the participants. In addition, the researcher decided that any data used in this study had to be concrete and measurable; to include specific items or instances that could be concrete and measured, such as age, years in office, and career paths. It is at this point that the researcher compiled a database that include institutions by category and number assigned, title, and institution's name, telephone number, and email address of each participant. This information was later utilized for contacting the institutions when further information was needed. Curriculum vitas and personal biographies were requested only after The University of Texas at El Paso's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved this study.

As previously stated, the identities of all participants were protected by the assignment of numbers to each participant. Curriculum vitas and personal biographies were considered personal documents which provided the researcher with valuable information about the personal, education, and professional career experiences of presidents.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of organizing the data gathered by the researcher. Therefore, as the study progressed and more data were collected, the analysis became more extensive. Constant analysis of the data therefore allowed the researcher to broaden or narrow the focus of the study (Merriam, 2001). For the purpose of this study, the researcher chose to extend the data analysis in order to create categories, identify trends and frequencies to interpret the meaning of the data.

Content Analysis

The content was analyzed for recurring patterns and themes, thus utilizing a quantitative technique. A common use of content analysis in qualitative research is when word and number frequency count are used (Merriam, 2001). In addition, Manning and Cullum-Swan (2000), referenced the use of content analysis as a quantitative oriented research technique by which standardized measurements are applied. Stemler (2001), made reference to content analysis as a systematic, replicable technique for gathering many words and compressing into fewer categories based on the different codes being used. Coding is the assigned designation to data so that it can be retrieved easily and also assigned to categories. The designations can be words, phrases, letters, symbols, and numbers. Once the documents were coded, all words recorded into a spreadsheet beside the participant's corresponding number and in the columns that corresponded to the various categories. Once data was coded, the researcher was able to compare the career pathways and profiles of the presidents.

Matrices

Once the data was coded and placed into the different categories of the spreadsheet, the researcher then developed various matrices which consisted of descriptive statistics. In order to analyze data and gather report findings, a matrix was created for each category in the study. For the purpose of this study, the matrices created were a set of rows and columns that contained numeric, statistical, or text information. The rows were labeled with the appropriate subcategories. For example, the demographics matrix includes the participants' numbers listed in the rows down the left-hand side. At the top of the columns the demographic subcategories include gender, age, marital status, ethnicity, and birth state. The data was extracted from the participant's personal document and inserted in the column beside the correct participant number.

Validity and Reliability

This researcher sought to produce valid and reliable knowledge. According to Merriam (2001, p. 198), quantitative research, validity and reliability are viewed differently. In terms of quantitative research, validity is viewed in light of the research findings and based on measurable outcomes. Reliability was determined by obtaining consistent outcomes from the repeated applications of some means of measure. In addition, through quantitative research, reliability is viewed as obtaining a consistent outcome from repeated applications of some means of measure, meaning that if others were to conduct the same study, the results would be the same.

Chapter IV

Research Findings

This study was designed to investigate the career paths and demographic profiles of university presidents. Specifically, data were extracted from publicly available curriculum vitae from a sample of 200 of public flagship institutions in each state, medium size regional state universities, and private research institutions. The information gathered could provide guidance to those aspiring leaders as they prepare for presidency positions as well as to those academic programs that will seek to better prepare them.

The data that was generated throughout this study are presented and analyzed below. This chapter will provide an overview of the demographics and profiles of presidents and the findings of the study. The questions guiding the study were:

- RQ1. What are the demographic characteristics of the current university presidents (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, and geography)?
- RQ2. What academic and non-academic career paths did presidents take prior to their current appointment?
- RQ3. Are the demographic characteristics and career paths of current presidents different from those outlined in previous studies?
- RQ4. What are the demographic characteristics of the institutions who selected a non-traditional president?

The findings are presented in several formats to include descriptive statistics, tables, narrative descriptions, and matrices while providing an overview of the full research process. In addition, it will describe the participants, the use of matrices, and the research process.

Research Overview

An overview of the entire research process is specified in this section, including a description of the participants, research process, the creation of a database and software utilized for the creation of matrices.

Participants

Approval was granted to pursue this research by from the Institutional Review Board. With this approval, we begin gathering and searching curriculum vitas and personal biographies of 200 university presidents via university websites. Of the total sample of 200 university presidents selected, 104 are currently overseeing a flagship institution with very high research activity. There are 60 presidents serving regional institutions with high research activity, and 36 presidents from large private research institutions. This sample provides a broad range of cases from which to draw conclusions.

Research Process

Due to the size of the sample and availability of extensive electronic data sources, this study utilized a qualitative multiple-case study design to examine the educational, professional, and personal backgrounds and profiles of university presidents. We began the data analysis process by generating codes to be used to categorize the data. Those codes included a number of primary categories and subcategories. Primary demographic categories consisted of: age, gender, ethnicity and marital status. Each of these primary demographic categories

was subdivided into subcategories with the exception of age. Those subcategories consisted of: male, female, married, not married, Caucasian, African American, Asian, and Other.

The categories and subcategories in education background were very significant to the findings. For example, the highest degree earned included various subcategories to include: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Education (EdD), Doctor of Medicine (MD), Juris Doctor (JD), Master of Educational Administration (MEd), Master of Public Administration (MPA), and Master of Science (MS). In addition, the major fields of study were also identified and divided into different sections: engineering, education, law, health sciences, fine arts, business, military, government and or politics. These categories and subcategories were used to answer Research Question 1 and 2.

We also wanted to determine how many of the current university presidents have a traditional career pathway having risen through the academic ranks. Therefore, the subcategories were: faculty, chair, dean, vice president, and provost. In addition, the researcher was also interested in discovering those university presidents with a non-traditional career path. Those outside of academic were divided into: business and industry, government and politics, K12 education, law, medical and health, military, and ministry. The subcategories used in order to identify the characteristics of their geographical background were: home state. These categories along with the subcategories assisted the researcher in answering question 1.

Matrices

In order to analyze and organize data, the researcher developed a series of matrices using the Microsoft Access software program. Matrices within the database were created for the following areas: (a) personal demographics, (b) education, (c) higher education experiences, (d) and non-academic professional experiences. University presidents were

identified by a randomly assigned number and listed down the left hand side while the categories to the content are were listed across the top. As data was gathered and extracted from the curriculum vitas and personal biographies, they were placed beside the appropriate participants' number and in the column under the appropriate category.

The matrices, once completed, enabled averages, percentages, and frequency counts to be generated. This particular arrangement allowed the identification of trends among the university presidents in the educational, professional, and demographic areas.

Analysis of Data

The following discussion of data is organized to respond to the research questions guiding the study. In each case data is presented and then followed by brief interpretation and discussion of the significance of the finding for this study.

Question #1

The first question this study attempted to answer was: What are the demographic characteristics of the current university presidents (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, and geography)? The following discussion provides data describing each of these demographic characteristics.

Table 1 displays information by frequency and percentage on gender and institution type of those university presidents who made this characteristic accessible through their professional vita or personal biography.

TABLE 1: Frequencies And (Percentage) By Gender and Institution Type

	Male	Female	Total
All Institutions	162 (81%)	38 (19%)	200 (100%)
Flagship	84 (81%)	20 (19%)	104 (100%)

Regional	50 (83%)	10 (17%)	60 (100%)
Private	28 (78%)	8 (22%)	36 (100%)

We found that among the 200 university presidents studied, 81% are male and 19% female. There were 104 presidents overseeing flagship institutions with very high research activity. Of these, 81% are male and 19% female. There were 60 presidents serving regional universities with high research activity. Of these, 83% are male and 17% are female. There were 36 presidents managing a private research institution. Of these, 78% are male and 22% female. This study discovered a small difference between male and female presidents in comparison to previous studies. For example, in a study by Alejandro(2004) and Corrigan (2002) there were 87% male and 13% female presidents according to the study and The American College President 2002 edition. Another study by Ulloa (2001) found that 83% were male while 17% were female presidents.

While the number of women in president positions is still considered small especially in private institutions, there does appear to be greater willingness to hire women, especially in private schools is noticeable. Our data indicate that there has been an increase of 6% in the number of women presidents. We should note, however, that given the small number of women presidents in this study (as well as in previous studies) an increase of only one or two women presidents will appear as a large percentage increase.

Table 2 provides the frequencies and percentages by age for those presidents who provided this information in their vitae or personal biography.

TABLE 2: Frequencies And (Percentage) By Age and Institution Type

Presidents reporting age (N=28)

Age	All Institutions	Flagship	Regional	Private
40-44	0	0	0	0
45-50	1 (4%)	1(6%)	0	0
51-55	1 (4%)	1(6%)	0	0
56-60	9 (32%)	5 (29%)	3 (37%)	1 (33%)
61-65	11 (39%)	7 (41%)	2 (25%)	2 (67%)
66-70	5 (17%)	3 (18%)	2 (25%)	0
71 and older	1 (4%)	0	1 (13%)	0
Total	28 (100%)	17 (100%)	8 (100%)	3 (100%)

It is noteworthy that the majority of presidents 86% did not indicate age on their vita or other available documents. Among those presidents reporting their age we found that there were no reports on the category of age between 40-44 years of age. There was 4% in the age group of 45-50 years of age. In 51-55 years of age group we found 4% , there were 32% of the presidents were 56-60 years old, 39% were 61-65 years old , and 17% found in the 66-70 years old. The last category was 71 and older years old with 4%. Of those presidents who provided their ages, it was determined that the average was 59 years of age. In comparison to previous studies, Barr (1981), Boggs (1988), Corrigan (2002), Ferrari (1970), Vaughan (1989), and Wessel & Keim (1994), all presidents were between the ages of 51 and 60. This study

indicated that the average age of a college and university president is usually in the mid-50s. Through this study, it was found that the average age is closer to 60 years of age.

In 2007, ACE indicated presidents in 2006 were older than their counterparts in 1986. In addition, it was found that only 8% of the presidents were 50 years old or younger compared to 42% in 1986. This study revealed a significant difference of 4% of the presidents being 50 years old or younger. In other studies by Williams (2007) it was indicated that 14% of the presidents were 60 years old, compared to 11% in this study.

Cohen and March (1986) reported that the average age of a college and university president increases depending on the type of institution they are serving. Therefore, we wanted to determine the age of the university presidents in relation to the type of institution they are serving. For example, among presidents who reported their age, those overseeing flagship universities indicated 6% were 45-50 years old, 6% was 51-55 years old, and 29% were 56-60 years old, 41% were 61-65 years old, and 18% were 66-70 years old. For those presidents overseeing regional institutions, 37% were 56-60 years old, 25% were 61-65 years old, 25% were 66-70 years old, and 13% were 71 and older. Furthermore, of the presidents overseeing private research universities we found 33% was 56-60 years old, and 67% were 61-65 years old. For the purpose of this study, we found that presidents overseeing flagship institutions were more willing to disclose age as part of their personal demographics either in their vitas or biographies in comparison to those in regional and private universities.

Table 3 provides age data for all presidents that were generated by estimating age based on year of attaining the bachelors or similar degree. The assumption was made that the presidents entered college immediately following high school and graduated from college at 22 years of age. This allowed an estimate of age to be generated by first determining the number of years elapsed since attaining the degree and adding 22 years to that figure. While these

data are based on estimates, it does allow comparison of the age of presidents in this study with previous studies.

TABLE 3: Frequencies And (Percentage) By Age and Institution Type

Estimated Age of Presidents (N=97)

Age	All Institutions	Flagship	Regional	Private
40-44	0	0	0	0
45-50	0	0	0	0
51-55	4 (4%)	4 (5%)	0	0
56-60	9 (9%)	8 (10%)	1 (6%)	0
61-65	60 (62%)	46 (60%)	12 (75%)	2 (50%)
66-70	24 (25%)	19 (25%)	3 (19%)	2 (50%)
71 and older	0	0	0	0
Total	97 (100%)	77 (100%)	16 (100%)	4 (100%)

There were no estimated age reports in the age group of 45-50. In 51-55 years of age group we found 4% , there were 9% of the presidents were 56-60 years old, 62% were 61-65 years old , and 25% found in the 66-70 years old. No estimated age was found in the 71 and older.

In addition, we wanted to determine the age of the university presidents in relation to the type of institution they are serving. For example, the estimated age for presidents overseeing flagship universities indicated 5% was 51-55 years old, and 10% were 56-60 years old, 60% were 61-65 years old, and 25% were 66-70 years old. For those presidents overseeing regional institutions, 6% was 56-60 years old, 75% were 61-65 years old, and 19% were 66-70 years old.

Furthermore, we found the estimated age for presidents overseeing private research universities to be 50% were 61-65 years old, and 50% were 66-70 years old.

Table 4 lists the frequencies and percentage of the 150 university presidents who reported their ethnicity on their professional vitae or personal biography.

Table 4: Frequencies and (Percentages) of Ethnicity by Institutional Type

Presidents reporting ethnicity (N=150)

Ethnicity	All Institutions	Flagship	Regional	Private
Caucasian	125 (83%)	48 (82%)	48 (84%)	29 (83%)
African American	4 (3%)	0	3 (5%)	1 (3%)
Asian	3 (2%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	1 (3%)
Other	18 (12%)	9 (16%)	5 (9%)	4 (11%)
Total	150 (100%)	58 (100%)	57(100%)	35 (100%)

Through this study we found that 83% of the current university presidents were Caucasian, 3% were African American, 2% was Asian, 12% were Other. There were a 25% of presidents who did not report their ethnicity through their professional vitae or personal biography. We were also interested in the frequencies and percentages of ethnicity by university type. This study found that of those presidents overseeing flagship institutions 82% were Caucasian, 2% was Asian, and 16% were Other. Of those administering regional institutions, this study found 84% were Caucasian, 5% African American, 2% was Asian, 9% were Other. Frequencies and percentages on ethnicity for those presidents in private research institutions indicated 83% were Caucasian, 3% was African American, 3% was Asian, and 3% were Other.

In previous studies ethnicity was referred to as a factor when considered for employment of college and university presidents. In fact, Corrigan (2002) indicated that 87% of presidents were white in comparison to other ethnic groups in presidential ranks. In this study, 83% of the presidents were identified as white indicating a 4% decrease in the past decade. Previous studies have also indicated that the number of minority presidents has increased. In this study, the percentage of minorities seemed equally distributed among the different university types.

Table 5 lists the frequencies and percentages on marital status as indicated in their professional vitae and biography.

Table 5: Frequencies and (Percentage) of Marital Status by Gender and Institutional Type

Presidents Reporting Marital Status (N= 109)

Marital Status	All Institutions		Flagship		Regional		Private	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Married	65(60%)	11(10%)	35(69%)	5(56%)	22(69%)	3(60%)	8(89%)	3(100%)
Not Married	27(25%)	6(5%)	16(31%)	4(44%)	10(31%)	2(40%)	1(11%)	0
Total	92(84%)	17(16%)	51(100%)	9(100%)	32(100%)	5(100%)	9(100%)	3(100%)

This study found that out of the 109 presidents who disclosed their marital status 70% were married. Of the 70% married, 60% were male and 10% were female. There were 30% who reported not married. Of the 30%, 25% were male and 5% were female. There were 91 (45%) presidents who did not disclose this information. There is a significant difference in the

percentage of presidents who reported being married. In a study done by Alejandro (2004), it was reported that 93% of the presidents were married and 7% were not married. Furthermore, in previous studies it was indicated that married applicants in some cases have a better chance of being selected given an assumption that they have better emotional support systems. Vaughan (1987) stated that boards and search committees have an “assumption” that a married president means a happier president. In a previous study, Williams (2007) reported that 89 % of the male presidents were married in 2006 compared to only two-thirds of the female presidents. Five years prior, Corrigan (2002) reported that 89.6% of male presidents were married as opposed to only 58.9% of the female presidents.

For the purpose of this study, we refer to Mancini (1993) when reference was made that having a family or being married is not a great priority for female presidents that could possibly support the 10% of females married in this particular study as opposed to 30% and 59% in previous studies. Furthermore, in a previous study by Mancini (1993) it was stated that most females aspiring to the university presidency focus on their professional careers in order to effectively fulfill various professional responsibilities in order to gain the top position.

Furthermore, we wanted to find out the marital status depending on the institution type. Of the presidents who were overseeing flagship institutions, there were 69% male who reported being married and 56% female married. There was also 31% male which reported not married and 44% female not married in flagship institutions. Presidents overseeing regional universities reported 69% married male and 60% female. There was also 31% male who reported not married and 40% female. Presidents in private institutions reported 89% married male and 100% female. There was a 11% male not married and zero female.

Data indicating presidents’ geographic origin was not available. Thus we were not able to address this question.

Question #2

The second question that this study attempted to answer was: What academic and non-academic career paths did presidents take prior to their current appointment?

Table 6 provides information in relation to the academic and non-academic career paths that presidents took prior to their current appointment.

Table 6: Academic or Non-Academic Career Path by Institutional Type

Presidents Reporting Career Path (N= 150)

Career Path	All Institutions	Flagship	Regional	Private
Academic	122(81%)	56(74%)	49(89%)	17(89%)
Non-Academic	28(19%)	20(71%)	6(11%)	2(11%)
Total	150 (100)	76 (100%)	55 (100%)	19 (100%)

Previous studies indicate that normally a presidents' background resides in academia; meaning they work their way up the academic ladder taking the normative career path. This study determined that 81% of the presidents had an academic (traditional) career path prior to their appointment. In other studies, it was revealed that in 2001, at least 85% of those serving as presidents followed the traditional academic path (Corrigan, 2002). We also found that the number of non-academic has increased by 4% and 19% followed a non-academic (non-traditional) career path.

Table 7 provides information to indicate the academic career paths that presidents had prior to their current appointment.

Table7: Frequencies and (Percentage) of Academic Career Path by Institutional Type

Presidents with Academic Career (N=185)

Academic Roles	All Institutions (N=185)		Flagship (N=104)		Regional (N=60)		Private (N=20)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Faculty	116(63%)	69(37%)	52(50%)	54(52%)	46(77%)	13(23%)	18(90%)	2(10%)
Department Chair	110(59%)	75(41%)	50(48%)	55(53%)	45(75%)	15(25%)	15(74%)	5(25%)
Dean / Director	112(57%)	73(43%)	50(48%)	54(52%)	47(78%)	13(22%)	15(75%)	6(25%)
Assistant Associate VP	111(57%)	74(43%)	50(48%)	55(53%)	47(78%)	13(22%)	14(70%)	6(30%)
VP / Provost	80(43%)	105(57%)	41(39%)	63(61%)	27(45%)	34(55%)	12(60%)	8(40%)
Prior President	20(11%)	165(89%)	11(11%)	97(89%)	9(12%)	68(88%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

For the purpose of this study found that out of 185 presidents that indicated their academic career paths, 63% had experience as faculty. In addition, the study found that 59% had served as department chairperson, 57% had served as dean/director, and 57% had served as assistant/associate vice president of advancement; university relations; finance;

health affairs; student affairs, and 43% as vice president of academic affairs/provost in comparison to previous studies which indicate at least 31% of the presidents had served as provosts.

Previous studies have indicated that there is no fixed career path for college and university presidents (Cohen and March, 1986). Furthermore, studies indicated that those presidents with an academic career path tend to follow what is described as the academic ladder: starting professor, advancing to department chair, dean, making progress to vice president for academic affairs or provost and culminating in the presidency (Birnbaum & Umbach, 2001; Boggs, 1989; Moore & et al. 1983). Other studies, reported that one out of five presidents had served a presidency prior to their appointment in 2006 (Williams, 2007). In addition, Corrigan (2001) reported that 20% of those serving as presidents had held presidencies at other institutions of higher education in comparison to only 11% found in this study which indicates a decrease of 9%.

Table 8 provides the information on frequencies of academic career path by gender and institutional type.

Table 8: Frequencies of Academic Career Path by Gender and Institutional Type

Academic Roles	All Institutions		Flagship		Regional		Private	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Faculty	101	15	44	8	36	3	21	4
Department Chair	88	22	41	8	35	10	12	4
Dean / Director	91	22	39	8	31	10	10	4
Assistant /Associate VP	62	18	31	7	17	8	7	3
VP / Provost	60	18	30	7	17	8	7	3
Prior President	18	2	10	1	6	1	2	0

Through this study, it is evident that males surpass females in the academic roles throughout their career paths. An observation in this study was the number of females overseeing regional universities is larger than those in flagship institutions. We also found that the number of presidents who have had prior experience as presidents is by far larger than females. In fact, the number of female presidents with previous presidential experience is minimal from 1% at flagship and regional institutions and zero in the private universities.

Table 9 lists the different types of non-academic positions held by presidents prior to their current appointments.

Table 9: Frequencies and (Percentage) of Non-Academic Career Path by Institutional Type.

Presidents with Non-Academic Careers (N=187)

Non-Academic Roles	All Institutions		Flagship		Regional		Private	
Business / Industry	65	35%	26	40%	28	43%	11	17%
Government/Politics	35	19%	16	46%	17	48%	2	6%
K-12 Education	2	1%	0	0	2	0	0	0
Law	11	6%	6	55%	2	18%	3	27%
Medicine/Healthcare	13	7%	6	46%	4	31%	3	23%
Military Service	9	5%	4	44%	4	44%	1	12%
Ministry	9	5%	2	22%	6	67%	1	11%

We were able to identify that 35% of the presidents had work experience in business/industry. This was a significant increase in comparison to previous studies where only 2% were in the business field prior to presidency. In this study, we also found 19% in government/politics in comparison to 2% from a study done by Corrigan (2002). It was apparent that a decrease in presidents with K-12 education experience. In 1998, there were 2% of presidents reporting this type of work experience in comparison to 1% in this study. 6% in law, 7% in medicine/healthcare, 5% in military service, remained the same as the numbers previously reported of 5%. There was 5% in ministry in comparison to 2% in studies by Corrigan (2002). Based on these findings it was determined that the number of presidents with ministry work experience increased slightly. This study also revealed a significant increase in

presidents who were previously government employed. In this study there were 19% reported in comparison to 2% from a previous study.

Previous studies also indicated that a large number of college and university presidents were coming from outside academia (Covert, 2004; Moore, Salimbene, Marlier & Bragg, 1983; Salimbene, 1982; Wessel & Keim, 1994). In fact, in 2006, more than 13 percent of the presidents in office had held a prior position outside the academic field (Williams, 2007). In another study conducted by Corrigan (2002), it was reported that 14.8% of the presidents had a non-academic career path.

Question #3

The third question in this study was: Are the demographic characteristics and career paths of current presidents different from those outlined in previous studies? The results will be provided through tables and descriptive narratives.

Table 10 provides information on the frequencies and percentage of highest degree earned by institutional type.

Table 10: Frequencies and (Percentage) of Highest Degree Earned by Institutional Type
 Presidents Reporting (N=135)

Degree	All Institutions	Flagship	Regional	Private
Ph.D.	109(81%)	50(76%)	41(82%)	12(63%)
Ed.D.	5(4%)	2(3%)	3(6%)	0
MD	3(2%)	0	1(2%)	2(11%)
JD	14(10%)	8(12%)	2(4%)	4(21%)
MA, Education Administration	1(1%)	0	1(2%)	0
MA, Public Administration	2(1%)	0	2(4%)	0
M. Science	1(1%)	1(2%)	0	0
Total	135 (100%)	66 (100%)	50 (100%)	19 (100%)

Through this study, it was determined that the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is still the degree most earned by presidents. This study found the highest degree earned was Doctor of Philosophy (81%), Doctor of Education (4%), Doctor of Medicine (2%), Juris Doctor (10%), Master of Educational Administration (1%), Master of Public Administration (1%), and Master of Science (1%).

Of the 109 (81%) who indicated having a PhD, 21(19%) of those are female and 88(81%) are male. In comparison to previous studies, Mancini (1993) reported that 96% of the female presidents were more likely to have a doctorate degree as opposed to 91% male presidents. In this particular study, the majority with a PhD were male presidents. This study

revealed an increase in the percentage of those having a PhD in comparison to those found by Ferrari (1970) where only 75% of the presidents had earned a doctorate degree. In comparison to previous studies it was indicated that even though there is no specialized preparation program for college and university presidents, there are certain levels of education expected as well as preferred fields of study (Barr, 1981; Boggs, 1988; Corrigan, 2002; Ferrari, 1970).

Table 11 lists the different major fields of study by type that presidents focused on prior to their position.

Table 11: Frequencies and (Percentage) of Degree Major by Institutional Type

Presidents Reporting (N=140)

Field of Study	All Institutions	Flagship	Regional	Private
Business	10(7%)	5(7%)	5(10%)	0
Education	8(5%)	3(4%)	5(10%)	0
Engineering / Architecture	19(14%)	6(9%)	10(19%)	3(16%)
Health Professions	28(20%)	21(30%)	4(8%)	3(16%)
Fine Arts	75(54%)	35(50%)	27(53%)	13(68%)
Total	140 (100%)	70(100%)	51(100%)	19(100%)

The study shows that 7% were business majors, 5% were Education, 14% were Engineering/Architecture, and 20% were in Health Professions, 54% were from Humanities/Fine Arts. We found that the highest percentage of presidents focused on a degree related to humanities and fine arts. For the purpose of this study, we found 54% were from

Humanities and Fine Arts. Within those categories were majors in law, sociology, psychology, history, political science, linguistics, literature, and speech. Previous studies indicate that a university president position calls for an individual with strong leadership skills. Those skills include: proven administrative abilities, management expertise, fund-raising, media relations, community relations, legislative relations, union and collective bargaining, guiding an athletics program and many others (Sederberg, 1999). Therefore, presidents with this type of background have become more marketable when selection committees are searching for candidates.

In other studies, search committees focus very strongly on the applicant's most recent position and educational background instead of cumulative work experience Greenwood and Ross (1996). Through this study, we found that 20% of the presidents indicated their background studies to be related to Health professions. This category consisted of those with a background in biology, chemistry, medicine, agriculture, neurobiology, food science, zoology, botany, and forest science.

The third highest percentage found in this study was 14% in Engineering and Architecture. The majority of presidents with this background are overseeing regional institutions, followed by flagship institutions. This category consisted of civil, electrical, chemical, mechanical, and petroleum engineering. We also identified 7% of presidents with business background. In previous studies, some have even argued that those aspiring leaders with backgrounds in business, governmental or military experience are going to have a better handle of the challenges to come (Mangan, 1988). Previously Nelson (2008) reported that campuses are increasingly becoming battlegrounds. In fact, one of the most prevalent challenges a president has had to face: the deadly shootings at Virginia Tech that occurred on

Monday 16, 2006 (Fain, 2007) which could potentially be a factor to presidents with this background to be increasing.

Presidents with an education background only accounted for 5%. The majority are serving regional universities followed by flagship institutions. Previous studies indicated that a presidents' background resides in academia; meaning they work their way up the academic ladder taking the normative career path. In fact, publications revealed that in 2001, at least 85% of those serving as presidents followed the traditional academic path (Corrigan, 2002). Furthermore, prior studies indicated that search committees will tend to give special consideration to those individuals who have completed leadership training programs. Some of these programs work in collaboration with colleges of education where their focus on grooming those aspiring leaders for tomorrow. Considering the demands that institutions have in these days, presidents with this education background seemed to be overlooked.

Table 12 indicates the frequencies and percentages of whether the presidents earned their highest degree from a public or private institution of Higher Education.

Table 12: Frequencies and (Percentage) of Public or Private Institutional Degree Earned by

Institutional Type

Presidents Reporting (N=135)

Inst. Type Granting Degree	All Institutions	Flagship	Regional	Private
Public Institution	88(47%)	42(67%)	40(75%)	6(32%)
Private Institution	47(28%)	21(33%)	13(25%)	13(68%)
Total	135 (100%)	63 (100%)	53 (100%)	19 (100%)

The study indicated that 47% earned their degrees at a public university, and 28% were earned at a private university. Of 200 participants, 25% did not provide this information through their professional vita or biography. The majority of presidents are overseeing public institutions to begin with the high percentage at flagship institutions, followed by regional, and then private. Of the 28% of the presidents who earned their degrees at private institutions, the majority are overseeing flagship institutions and the same amount at regional and private. Previous studies did not provide enough information regarding the institution type granting degrees on presidents. Therefore, comparisons cannot be made.

Table 13 provides the findings relating to presidents who highlighted their participation in educational boards and in some cases public boards. Furthermore, if any presidents had experience of participating in committees, their vitas and biographies indicated that as well.

Table 13: Frequencies and (Percentage) of Service on Boards and External Committees by Institutional Type

Presidents Reporting (N=129)

Participation	All Institutions		Flagship		Regional		Private	
	Yes	%	Yes	%	Yes	%	Yes	%
Boards	129	100%	60	47%	52	40%	17	13%
Committee	129	100%	60	47%	52	40%	17	13%
Total	129	100%	60	100%	52	100%	17	100%

This study found that 65% of the presidents identified having experience or participating on a board, 35% of the presidents did not make this information available through their vitas or biographies. In addition, the study found that basically presidents who take part in committees

also belong to at least two different professional boards. Therefore, 65% of the presidents also identified experience or participation on committees. Previous studies did not provide enough information regarding the institution type granting degrees on presidents. Therefore, comparisons cannot be made. For the purpose of this study, it is evident that individuals overseeing higher education institutions have the involvement and participation of committees and boards as an expectation of their job description.

Question #4

The fourth, and final, research question this study attempted to answer was: What are the demographic characteristics of the institutions who selected a non-traditional president? Answers to this question are presented in the following descriptive narratives and tables.

Table 14 provides information in relation to the academic and non-academic career paths that presidents took prior to their current appointment.

Table 14: Academic or Non-Academic Career Path by Institutional Type

Presidents Reporting Career Path (N= 150)

Career Path	All Institutions	Flagship	Regional	Private
Academic	122(81%)	56(74%)	49(89%)	17(89%)
Non-Academic	28(19%)	20(26%)	6(11%)	2(11%)
Total	150 (100%)	76 (100%)	55 (100%)	19 (100%)

Previous studies indicate that normally a presidents' background resides in academia; meaning they work their way up the academic ladder taking the normative career path. The study determined that 81% of the presidents had an academic (traditional) career path prior to their appointment. In other studies, it was revealed that in 2001, at least 85% of those serving as presidents followed the traditional academic path (Corrigan, 2002). We also found that the

number of non-academic has increased by 4% and 19% followed a non-academic (non-traditional) career path. Based on that information, 74% of the presidents with academic background were hired by flagship institutions and 26% non-academic. In addition, 89% of the presidents with academic background were employed by regional institutions and 11% from non-academic. There were 89% of the academic hired through private institutions and 11% selected by private research universities.

Table 15 lists information to indicate the percentages on the year in which university presidents were appointed to their current position.

Table 15: Frequencies and (Percentage) on the year in which University Presidents Were Appointed to their Current Position (N=158)

Year Appointed	All Institutions	Flagship	Regional	Private
Prior to 2000	40(20%)	24(60%)	15(38%)	1(2%)
2000	8(4%)	2(25%)	2(25%)	4(50%)
2001	8(4%)	2(25%)	2(25%)	4(50%)
2002	9(5%)	6(66%)	1(11%)	2(23%)
2003	10(5%)	4(40%)	3(30%)	3(30%)
2004	16(8%)	7(44%)	2(13%)	7(43%)
2005	8(4%)	4(50%)	1(13%)	3(17%)
2006	18(9%)	5(28%)	8(44%)	5(28%)
2007	24(12%)	15(63%)	7(29%)	2(8%)
2008	17(9%)	8(47%)	7(41%)	1(12%)

The findings indicate that 20% of the presidents were appointed to their position prior to the year 2000, 4% in the year 2000, 4% in the year 2001, 4.5% in the year 2002, 5% in the year 2003, 8% in the year 2004, 4% in the year 2005, 9% in the year 2006, 12% in the year 2007, and 9 % in the year 2008. There were 21% of the vitas and biographies that did not make clear the year of appointment.

In comparison to previous studies, it was indicated that the average age of a college and university president is usually in the mid-50s having an impact on the years in office Barr (1981), Boggs (1988), Corrigan (2002), Ferrari (1970), Vaughan (1989), and Wessel & Keim (1994). In addition, prior studies by Cohen and March (1986) reported that the average age of a college and university president increases depending on the type of institution they are serving. Other studies indicated that when institution classification level increases so will the number of years of experience expected (Corrigan, 2002). Considering that presidents are getting older, they are also serving longer in office. For example, the average tenure has moved from 6.3 years in 1986, to, 6.6. years in 2001, and to 8.5 years in 2006 (Williams, 2006). Through this study we found that the president with most years in office based on this study was appointed in 1986 making this year 22 of service to an institution.

Chapter Summary

The data presented in this chapter showcases the personal, educational, and professional experiences that had an impact in the career development of university presidents. In addition, the data used in this study were extracted from curriculum vitas and personal biographies of university presidents from every flagship university, mid-size universities, and private research universities. Furthermore, data were analyzed through content analysis and comparative methods in order to determine the experiences that some

presidents had prior to their current positions. Once experiences were determined, they were utilized to create the career and personal profiles of the presidents.

In the following chapter we will focus on providing a complete summary of the study as well as recommendations for individuals aspiring to become university presidents. Furthermore, we will also provide suggestions for additional research and practice.

Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions, And Recommendations

The purpose for this study was to better understand the career pathways and demographic profiles of university presidents. This chapter presents a summary of the study, conclusions, and recommendations for individuals aspiring to become university presidents and for programs who seek to prepare such leaders. This chapter will commence by reviewing the need for the study, followed by a concise review of conclusions. Finally, it will provide suggestions for additional research and practice.

Review of Research Problem

While there is a wealth of information on college and university presidents, there is little recent information in the professional literature specifically on the personal, educational, and career paths that affect this career development. Individuals aspiring to become university presidents would benefit from the information that has been gathered in this study. Furthermore, those preparing for this career need to have a better understanding of who the current presidents are, where they came from, and how they prepared for this position. The vast majority of literature on university president's entails summaries, case studies, and in some cases memoirs of retired presidents. In addition, data was gathered to indicate if there has been a significant increase in the number of new university presidents with a non-traditional background to include military and business. Given the outcome, it would call for discussion of the factors impacting this trend that could have an effect on culture, traditions of faculty governance, the status of traditional and emerging academic disciplines, and the power and influence of various administrative units.

Research Questions

In order to generate the study on profiles and career pathways of university presidents, the following research questions were addressed.

- RQ1. What are the demographic characteristics of the current university presidents (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, and geography)?
- RQ2. What academic and non-academic career paths did presidents take prior to their current appointment?
- RQ3. Are the demographic characteristics and career paths of current presidents different from those outlined in previous studies?
- RQ4. What are the demographic characteristics of the institutions who selected a non-traditional president?

Conclusions

The following were conclusions drawn from the data collected in this study. Each conclusion is supported by the findings in the study.

Demographic characteristics of university presidents in flagship, mid-size, and private research institutions were significantly different compared with previous national studies. In fact, from the data gathered, the researcher was able to determine that the median age of a university president was 59 years old. Previous studies by Barr (1981), Boggs (1988), Corrigan (2002), Ferrari (1970), Vaughan (1989), and Wessel & Keim (1994), revealed that the average age of a college and university president is usually in the mid-50s. This study however, found that the average age is closer to 60 years of age indicating that presidents are taking longer to retire from their positions.

Furthermore, in 2006, ACE also reported that presidents were older than their counterparts in 1986. In fact, only 8% of the presidents were 50 years old or younger compared to 42% in 1986. This study revealed a difference of 4% of the presidents being 50 years old or younger. In 2007, Williams indicated that 14% of the presidents were 60 years old, compared to the 11% in this study.

This study found that the reported ethnicity among presidents was different from previous studies. In previous studies ethnicity was referred to as a factor when considered for employment of college and university presidents. This study found that 83% of the presidents were Caucasian, 3% were African-American, and 2% were Asian. In 2002, Corrigan reported 87% of the presidents from her study identified themselves as Caucasian, 6% African American, 1% Asian American, and 6% other. From the results in this study, it is evident that there was a 4% decrease in Caucasian population, 3% decrease in African American, a 1% increase in Asian. The study also found that 81% of the presidents were male and 19% were female. In this study however, the percentage of minorities seemed equally distributed among the different university types.

From the data collected, we also determined that 135(81%) of the university presidents held doctoral degrees. In fact, this study found that the highest degree earned by presidents were Doctor of Philosophy (81%), Doctor of Education (4%), Doctor of Medicine (2%), Jurist Doctorate (10%), Master of Educational Administration (1%), Master of Public Administration (2%), and Master of Science (1%). This finding is consistent with previous studies such as (Barr, 1981; Boggs, 1988; Corrigan, 2002; Ferrari, 1970). In other studies, Mancini (1993) reported that 96% of the female presidents were more likely to have a doctorate degree as opposed to 91% male presidents. In this particular study, however, the majority with a PhD were male presidents.

Furthermore, based on those presidents who indicated their marital status, 70% were married, 30% indicated not married. Previously, Williams (2007) indicated that 89% of the presidents were married in 2006. In 2004, Alejandro reported that 93% of the presidents were married and 7% were not married. Two years prior, Corrigan (2002) reported that 90% of male presidents were married as opposed to only 59% of the female presidents. A study by Vaughan (1987), indicated that married applicants have a better chance of being selected given an assumption that they have better emotional support systems. Those studies further stated that boards and search committees have an “assumption” that a married president means a happier president. Furthermore, Mancini (1993) stated that having a family or being married is not a great priority for female presidents which could possibly support the 10% of females married in this particular study as opposed to 30% in previous studies. In fact, it further stated that most females aspiring to the university presidency focus on their professional careers in order to effectively fulfill various professional responsibilities in order to gain the top position.

While most of the presidents had followed the traditional academic career path, some university presidents had work experience external to higher education. According to the data gathered and analyzed, 81% of the university presidents had followed an academic career path. As this study compares to others, Corrigan (2002), reported 85% of presidents had followed the academic career path in 2001. In 1998, however, Ross & Green (1998) indicated 80% of the presidents following the academic career path. Therefore, through this study, we found that there was a 4% decrease compared to Corrigan’s study but a 1% increase to the study done in 1998 by Ross and Green. In addition, of those with an academic background, 100% of the presidents served as faculty members being their first appointment in higher education. Other academic administration positions held by university presidents were

department chairperson (59%), dean/director (57%), assistant/associate vice president of academic affairs (57%), and vice president of academic affairs/provost (43%).

Previous studies indicated that a large number of college and university presidents were coming from outside academia (Covert, 2004; Moore, Salimbene, Marlier & Bragg, 1983; Salimbene, 1982; Wessel & Keim, 1994). In fact, in 2006, more than 13 percent of the presidents in office had held a prior position outside the academic field (Williams, 2007). In another study conducted by Corrigan (2002), it was reported that 14.8% of the presidents had a non-academic career path.

We were able to identify that 35% of the presidents had work experience in business/industry. This was a significant increase in comparison to previous studies where only 2% were in the business field prior to the presidency. In this study, we also found 19% in government/politics in comparison to 2% from a study done by Corrigan (2002). We also found a decrease in presidents with K-12 education experience. In 1998, there were 2% of presidents reporting this type of work experience in comparison to 1% in this study. Other non-academic positions included 6% in law, 7% in medicine/healthcare, 5% in military service. These percentages remained approximately the same compared to previous studies. There were 5% in ministry in comparison to 2% in studies by Corrigan (2002). Based on these findings it was determined that the number of presidents with ministry work experience increased slightly. This study also revealed a significant increase in presidents who were previously government employed. In this study there were 19% reported in comparison to 2% from a previous study.

Recommendations for Aspiring Presidents

Based on the findings and conclusions in this study, the following are recommendations which were developed in order to assist in identifying and creating career development

opportunities for aspiring leaders of university presidencies, and for academic programs which are designed to better prepare individuals, and educational researchers.

Individuals aspiring to university presidencies should accept the responsibility of a career development process while seeking, and accepting opportunities that will sharpen the managerial and leadership skills. As previously mentioned, research has indicated that there is no specific career path to a presidency (Brown, 2000; Burton, 2003; Ferrari, 1970). Therefore, those interested candidates are responsible for the professional grooming and professional development that will allow that opportunity. Furthermore, aspiring individuals should make an effort to expand current job skill levels, to include financial management, communications, human resource management, strategic planning, policy development, and leadership. Because the pathways into higher education administration are so varied and the backgrounds of leaders are so diverse, Davis (2003), reported that continuing to learn through professional development for administrators and educational leaders is vital.

Recommendations for Academic Preparation Programs

The following are recommendations which were developed for the academic preparation programs designed to better prepare aspiring leaders for the careers in higher education administration and leadership.

In order to increase female and minority representation in the presidential ranks, these programs will need to aggressively recruit and retain female and minority students. To better understand the role of higher education administration, academic programs should make a strong effort to hire faculty from the various areas of administration within a university.

Furthermore, in order to increase students' understanding of higher education administration roles and to better prepare them, the academic programs should seek to hire faculty from diverse areas of administration within an institution. In the study done by Corrigan

(2002), it was revealed that university presidents had previous experiences with handling academic issues, strategic planning, student affairs, and legislative issues. In addition, after reviewing the documents on participating institutions, it was discovered that there were similar experiences too. Realistically, it is not possible to learn in detail every position in higher education; however, gaining basic knowledge of the administration roles a university environment will foster continuous discussions and interactions with content experts.

Moreover, it has been suggested that adults will benefit greatly from experiences of other classmates, colleagues, and professors than from textbooks (Brookfield, 1994). It is through the interaction that adults will have the ability to apply theories in their current positions. Academic preparation programs carried on by faculty who possess diverse experiences in areas of higher education administration are greatly beneficial to aspiring leaders. In addition, those pursuing a presidency position could gain valuable insight information from learning experiences via internships with current and former university presidents.

Academic preparation programs should incorporate as part of their curriculum, courses in the following areas: (a) budgeting in higher education, (b) process of strategic planning, (c) leadership development, (d) fundraising, (e) grant funded projects, and (f) internship experience in an area of higher education administration. This study found that 75% of the presidents have had financial management skills in their vitas.

The review of literature indicated that there is no career pathway to the university presidency and other senior level positions. Academic preparation programs should become more active in facilitating career guidance to aspiring leaders by creating logical career plans that will lead to senior level positions in higher education to include that of university president.

Moreover, academic programs can assist those interested in identifying and securing internships, fellowships, and special trainings.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study allowed the assessment of career paths manifest by university presidents. There remain a number of research questions that have not been addressed. For example, it may be advantageous to aspiring leaders and academic programs to know which experiences of current university presidents (traditional and non-traditional) were most beneficial to their career development.

Utilizing a survey may allow presidents to determine the career experiences they feel best prepared them for a president position. Experiences can be in the areas of budget management, personnel, policy, media relations, military, overseeing an organization as CEO, etc. Aside from experiences, presidents can also indicate their participation in leadership institutes and whether they feel their participation has had a positive impact on their career.

Furthermore, in this study it was determined that 14% of the presidents had a non-traditional career pathway to presidencies. Therefore, conducting a series of case studies to focus strictly on presidents who are considered non-traditional could prove to be beneficial. A case study would be extremely significant especially to those individuals who have no academic career experience but yet aspire to become university presidents. In addition, it would prove very helpful to include information such as experiences, barriers, required skills, and the availability of advancement within administrative opportunities.

Summary

As there is no prescribed career path nor degree plan for university presidents, it is therefore useful for those aspiring individuals to have some knowledge of the demographic characteristics, background information on career paths for academic and the non-academic of

current university presidents. Taking into consideration the lack of professional literature specifically on the personal, educational, and career paths that affect this career development, it was important to examine current university presidents with the expectation of discovering distinctive commonalities that may set individuals apart when applying for university president positions.

Subsequent to this study on the curriculum vitas and personal biographies of 200 university presidents, a series of commonalities were then used to draw conclusions on current presidents' personal, educational, and career experiences. Furthermore, among the significant conclusions were personal demographics, highest degree earned, academic and non-academic career paths.

Having a better understanding of who the current presidents are, and the various career pathways to this earned position, will allow those aspiring leaders to plan their own pathways to presidencies. Furthermore, armed with this knowledge will allow individuals to focus concisely on identifying and participating in opportunities that will help develop the skills necessary in order to assume a president position.

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Lourdes Sánchez was born on October 31, 1969 in Ciudad Juarez Chihuahua, Mexico. She is the second child to Gloria S. Gonzalez and the late Carlos F. Gonzalez. She has three sisters and three brothers.

Upon graduation from Riverside High School in 1989, she entered El Paso Community College and transferred to the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) in the spring of 1992. At UTEP, she earned her first B.A. in Chicano Studies and Bilingual Education in the spring of 1998. She earned a second B.A. in Sociology in the spring of 1999. She also earned her M.Ed. in the fall of 2002 from UTEP. This educator has been in the education field since 1989. She has worked for Ysleta Independent School District, El Paso Independent School District, The University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso Community College in El Paso, Texas. Lourdes has been a clerk, secretary, administrative assistant, program coordinator, program director, assistant evaluator, research associate, lecturer, and teacher. The author is currently a fourth grade monolingual teacher with Canutillo Independent School District.

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