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LINKING ADOLESCENTS' LEADERSHIP EXPOSURE  
TO TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP:  
THE MEDIATING EFFECTS OF LEADERSHIP SELF-EFFICACY  
AND SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

by

JACQUE-COREY CORMIER

Under the Direction of Gabriel Kuperminc, Ph.D. and Julia Perilla, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

Concepts such as positive youth development, leadership self-efficacy, and social intelligence are salient to understanding how transformational leadership behaviors manifest in adolescents. The primary investigator created the Youth Transformational Model to establish the positive relationship that leadership exposure (leadership experience and/or having a formal leadership role), leadership self-efficacy, and social intelligence have with transformational leadership skills (i.e. inspirational motivation and individualized consideration). High school-aged members of a youth leadership organization ( $N = 142$ ) completed a survey on leadership factors and social intelligence.

Leadership self-efficacy was the central component to the relationship between leadership exposure and behaviors. While having a formal leadership role was positively associated with leadership experience and self-efficacy, only leadership experience was related to leadership self-efficacy, social intelligence, and transformational leadership skills. Leadership self-efficacy and social intelligence partially mediated leadership experience and transformational leadership skills' relationship. These findings suggested that acquiring formal titles and power did not automatically translate to being a considerate and motivational leader. Furthermore, although female participants possessed more positive leadership experiences and higher transformational leadership skills compared to males, the literature did not reflect the current findings. Transformational leadership experience and training has encouraged young people not to lead forcibly or from a distance, but to lead by example, care about others' needs, be motivational, and bring out the best in people. Results highlighted the importance of leadership opportunities and training programs for adolescents.

INDEX WORDS: Positive Youth Development, Leadership Development Model, High School Students, Youth Training Program, Leadership Experience

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JACQUE-COREY CORMIER

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
in the College of Arts and Sciences  
Georgia State University

2017

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May 2017

## DEDICATION

I will first give all praises to God and my parents, DePorres and Barbara Cormier, for bringing me here into this space and time of existence. This dissertation is dedicated to the millions of adolescents, here and abroad, who have yet to fully realize their leadership potential. The skills used to work with people from diverse backgrounds and mindsets are becoming more indispensable in our global marketplace. One does not need a formal title or to be the most talkative person to make people feel valued, inspired, and part of a group.

To my brother and his wife, DePorres and Brandi Cormier, thank you you're your encouragement and showing me the value of education. To my niece Grace Renee Cormier, know that a degree is merely a stepping-stone for cultivating your professional skills. It is one's service to others, not a degree, which is the measure of one's worth. Thank you to my fiancée, Monica Patrice McKenzie, for being supportive and reinforcing high standards. I complete my doctoral studies in memory of my grandparents, family members, and friends who have passed on.

*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.*

- 1 Peter 4:10 New International Version

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Tsang, Hui, and Law (2012) declared that adolescents are the heirs to society as its future decision makers; yet the literature on leadership development disproportionately focuses on adult professionals compared to adolescents (Day, 2001; Day et al., 2014). Youth leadership training programs can be influential to young people's sense of competence to take on leadership roles. Many adults currently in the workforce could have benefitted from exposure to leadership and emotional intelligence training (Filan, 1999; Ghosh, 2016; Hasson, Holmstrom, Karanika-Murray, & Tafvelin, 2016; Surawicz, 2016; Zhang & Bednall, 2016). Brown and May (2012), Surawicz (2016), and Filan (1999) argued for the need of leadership training as a means to promote job productivity, retention, and advancement. Surawicz (2016) cited leadership training and institutional culture change as potential aids in reducing the structural barriers women face in academic medicine. Strategies to improve equitability and leadership position availability would positively impact men in medical school as well. Filan (1999) asserted that although college department chairs were vital to an institution's academic and career programs, the chairs of departments did not receive similar job training funding and resources as college presidents or deans. All three positions require administrative skills, advocating for others, and facilitating an inclusive learning environment. Zhang and Bednall (2016) found in a meta-analytic review of supervision research studies that supervisors' affective state and leadership style were antecedents to abusive supervision. The researchers concluded that more research is needed on the relationship between leadership styles and abusive leadership behaviors.

Some researchers examining adolescent leadership development have focused on recommendations for youth programs (Govan, Fernandez, Lewis, & Kirshner, 2015; Greensburg et al., 2003; Ricketts & Rudd, 2002) while others have emphasized basic competency skill-acquisition rather than focusing on exclusive leadership skill-building (Edelman et al., 2004; Fertman & Van Linden, 1999). More researchers should investigate adolescents' leadership experience and skills because young people are also stakeholders of leadership training programs and the future workplace (Anderson & Kim, 2009; De Vera et al., 2016; Mortensen et al., 2014).

At the root of leadership practices is a sense of self-efficacy and empowerment. Researchers should consider the ecological nature of empowerment when critically analyzing the scientific merits and real-world applications of leadership studies. Social settings and resources are instrumental to what adolescents are exposed to and the context in which they enhance their leadership skills. Peers and authority figures reinforcing leadership and prosocial skills in positive settings have built adolescents' sense of self. Accordingly, Oliver and colleagues (2011) found that adolescents' general self-concept mediated stimulating/supportive family environment and adult transformational leadership's relation. A stimulating and supportive family environment positively impacted adolescents' general self-concept which was related to transformational leadership skills in adulthood.

The primary investigator in the current study has expanded previous research by investigating the factors which influence youth leadership development. After reviewing literature on transformational leadership, leadership self-efficacy, social intelligence, and positive youth development, a description of the youth leadership development program, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders, was given as it is the context for the current



study. Numerous terms regarding leaders, leadership training and theory, positive youth development, social intelligence, self-efficacy, and measurements of said concepts were discovered through the literature search. Terminology used by research authors such as high school students, subordinates, or followers, were utilized when their findings were reported. Operationalized terms were incorporated when stating links between the research literature and the current study. The conceptual model linking leadership exposure, social intelligence, and leadership self-efficacy to transformational leadership was analyzed through structural equation modeling. The discussion on theories, limitations, and future directions related to the current study was concluded with implications for youth leadership development.

### **1.1 Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leaders have been impactful to their group because they facilitated followers' empowerment, job satisfaction, and organizational learning (Brown & Douglas, 2012; Hasson et al., 2016; Yukl, 1999). Transformational leadership has been described as a style of leading others by inspiring a shared vision, considering individuals' goals, encouraging innovation, and serving as a role model (Northouse, 2016). From a behavioral approach, transformational leaders have served as visionaries who built followers' intrinsic motivation and facilitated their positive development (Bass & Riggio, 2006). This leadership style, in turn, has influenced followers to be more engaged, innovative, and productive with their tasks (Toor & Ofori, 2009). Transformational leaders have positively influenced others on the individual, dyadic, group, and organizational levels because transformational leaders create an environment of empowerment by fostering more effort from followers and the development of their leadership skills (Bass, 1985; Searle & Barbuto, 2013; Tims,

Bakker, & Xanthopoulou, 2011). Avolio and Gardner (2005) highlighted how transformational leaders' self-awareness of emotions and positive social exchanges were internalized as followers began to behave in a similar manner. American and international researchers have found transformational leaders to be associated with enhanced human capital, creativity, organizational commitment and innovation, and lowering employee absenteeism in followers (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009; Ismail et al., 2011; Zhu, Chew, & Spangler, 2005).

Posner (2009) utilized the Student-Leadership Practice Inventory to demonstrate how college students' longitudinal participation in a leadership seminar increased their transformational leadership behaviors compared to a control group of students. The leadership seminar entailed a yearlong engagement in transformational leadership theory, impact, and application. The two data time points were before the leadership seminar and three years after the seminar. Before the seminar, males were more likely to report Modeling the Way, specifically idealized influence, compared to females whom were more likely to report Challenging the Process (i.e. searching for opportunities and conquering challenges). College students in the leadership seminar displayed significant increases in transformational leadership skills compared to pre-seminar and the control group. Seminar participants benefited from learning about transformational leadership skills and having a space to develop those associated behaviors. Furthermore, there were no significant gender differences found in any of the student-leadership practices post-seminar. Other researchers have also not found major gender differences in perceived leadership skills (Goktepe & Schneier, 1988; Thompson, 2000; Zacharatos, Barling, & Kelloway, 2000).

### ***1.1.1 Components of Transformational Leadership***

The four qualities of transformational leaders that researchers have utilized throughout the leadership literature are inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, idealized influence, and intellectual stimulation (Bass & Riggio, 2010; Searle & Barbuto, 2013).

Renowned speakers such as Reverend Dr. Martin L. King Jr. and President Franklin D. Roosevelt incorporated inspirational motivation into their leadership styles (McGuire & Hutchings, 2007). Transformational leaders have communicated a shared vision that allowed individuals to recognize their self-interest in working towards the group's goals (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989). Displaying optimism, giving meaning to tasks, and providing expectations were behaviors associated with inspirational motivation (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 2004; Bass & Riggio, 2010). Bass (1997) stated that inspirational leaders expressed a standard of obtainable excellence through symbols and imagery to convey messages aligned with the group's purpose.

Individualized consideration has referred to a leader's ability to engage group members through enhanced member buy-in and goal setting. A leader who embodied individualized consideration would take the time and effort to give each group member personal attention. Behaviors associated with this transformational leadership quality have included personalized interactions, acting as a coach or mentor, and supporting the development of followers (Bass & Riggio, 2010). Being considerate has allowed transformational leaders to serve the group by ensuring that the emotional, self-fulfillment, and self-actualization needs of members are met (Bass, 1997; Covey, 2007).

Based on Kouzes and Posner's (2010; 2015) interpretation of transformational leadership within their Student-Leadership Practices Inventory model, individualized consideration and inspirational motivation has similarities with the practices entitled Encouraging the Heart and Inspire a Shared Vision respectively. In the Student-Leadership Practices measurement, Encouraging the Heart referred to setting cooperative goals to build group rapport and strengthen intrinsic incentives to collaborate. Inspire a Shared Vision was represented by ennobling group members with a common vision based on shared aspirations. The other two components of transformational leadership, idealized influence and intellectual stimulation, referred to one's ability to appeal to group members through charisma and openness to innovative ideas respectively.

### ***1.1.2 Influence of Transformational Leaders on Followers***

Transformational leadership behaviors have consistently been associated with higher daily work engagement of employees, increased employees' optimism and effort, and increased satisfaction with one's leader compared to other styles of leadership (Tims et al., 2011; Toor & Ofori, 2009). Such findings could be due to transformational leaders' ability to reinforce followers' strengths as a means to stimulate innovative thinking, convey a shared vision, and perform tasks above expectations. Non-profit organizations and business companies' decision makers can benefit from incorporating and teaching a leadership style that has encouraged followers to think creatively and be dedicated to their deliverables (Brown & May, 2012; Hasson et al., 2016).

Toor and Ofori (2009) found transformational leadership to fully mediate the relationship between psychological capital and leadership effectiveness, followers' satisfaction with the leader, and extra effort put in by the group. Leaders possessing

higher levels of self-efficacy were associated with higher usage of inspirational motivation, idealized influence, and intellectual stimulation. These findings suggested that leaders' behaviors and beliefs (i.e. if a leader taught he/she could be inspirational and influential) can transform followers' behaviors and beliefs. Tims, Bakker, and Xanthopoulou (2011) found employees' level of daily work engagement positively reflected managers' transformational leadership skills. This relationship was fully mediated by followers' optimism such that transformational leaders boosted followers' optimism that in turn drove their dedication and engagement in work-related tasks. The charisma associated with transformational leadership, the idealized influence, has shown to be influential in perceived effectiveness and positive regard of a leader even when controlling for the other qualities of a transformational leader (Bono & Ilies, 2006). The four leadership qualities associated with transformational leaders have been central to the development of others and completion of tasks (Breevaart et al., 2014; Zacharatos et al., 2000).

### ***1.1.3 Assumptions of Leadership Proficiency***

Gender-based expectations and roles can have an impact on perceived leadership readiness. In Riggio, Riggio, Salinas, and Cole' (2003) study, participants were asked to choose a group leader after discussing the purpose of the group task. The leader they chose was responsible for managing the group process, providing the experimenter with their answers, and giving an oral presentation for video recording. Despite the sample group being primarily female (70.60%), group members disproportionately chose males over females to be group leaders. The most apparent behaviors of leaders' verbal communication were task-related statements (e.g. giving instructions, summarizing, or stating facts and opinions). Riggio and colleagues (2003) suggested that participants

associated male qualities to leadership skill, which is aligned with traditional views of how leadership is expressed. The amount-of-speaking variable and extraversion significantly contributed to the variance in leader potential score (15%) and leadership emergence (38%). Riggio and colleagues (2003) expected group members to nominate a group leader based on potential leaders' developed communication skills; however, participants relied on who was the most charismatic and talkative.

Professionals and researchers should not misinterpret leadership as solely based on one's personality type or public speaking skills. Bass (1990) suggested that outspoken individuals are more likely to receive positive evaluation and attention. This "babble-hypothesis" within the context of leadership implied that people would assume extraverts and those who talk a great deal to be the best choices for leadership roles, even if they are not competent leaders. Introverted individuals may be skipped over or go unnoticed when leadership roles are formally assigned or informally granted. Early exposure to different leadership styles can help adolescents develop a broader perspective of who is a leader and what makes one fit to lead.

#### ***1.1.4 Transformational Leadership in Adolescents***

Zacharatos, Barling, and Kelloway (2000) found adolescents to possess transformational leadership skills. The researchers surveyed high school athletes on their self-perceptions of transformational leadership skills and perceptions of their parents' transformational leadership skills. Peers and coaches also evaluated the athletes on their leadership effectiveness. Athletic skill and the perceptions of the father's transformational leadership skills predicted the adolescent's self-report of transformational leadership skills. This study highlighted the influence positive adult figures can have on youth prosocial skills and productive behaviors. Zacharatos and

colleagues (2000) explained the findings based on Bandura's (1977) social learning theory. Both male and female high school athletes relied on how their father addressed them to inform how they addressed others. They learned transformational leadership skills vicariously through their parents. Adolescent transformational leadership skills partially mediated how coaches and peers assessed their leadership effectiveness. Athletic adolescents' physical abilities were not the only reason team members and coaches rated them effective leaders; rather they modeled their father's leadership style of how to transform others. Simultaneously entering the perception of fathers and mothers' transformational leadership style into the model created high overlap. This may explain why mothers' transformational leadership was not significant in that model. Zacharatos and colleagues (2000) revealed that perceptions of both parents' transformational leadership style significantly predicted adolescents' transformational leadership skills when analyzed separately. More researcher should conduct research on parental influence and adolescent leadership expression because Zacharatos and colleagues hypothesized that multicollinearity, rather than gender explanations, could be the rationale for their different model findings.

Adolescents have the ability to be inspirational, considerate of others, model good behavior, and provide a safe environment for the discussion of new ideas. Zacharatos and colleagues (2000) alluded that although leadership skills can be malleable, these skills would remain relatively stable over time in the absence of training. Examining and intervening on adolescent transformational leadership skills could be indicative of leadership efficiency in adulthood. The manifestation of transformational leadership skills in adolescents is promising for youth organizations and future employers as well. Based on Popper and Mayseless' (2007) leadership

model, youth must have opportunities to lead and possess the psychological capacity to develop leadership skills. Young people's accumulation of leadership experience have cultivated their leadership self-efficacy and helped them determine how to lead others productively. Early leadership opportunities for adolescents fostered their prosocial skills, optimism, and caring orientation, which can positively influence adult leadership (Popper & Mayseless, 2007).

Researchers have not found a direct link between general intelligence and leadership skills (Gottfried et al., 2011; Reichard et al., 2011). Consequently, young people's access to training in leadership skills should not be contingent on their academic ability or intelligence. Transformational leadership exposure has shown to affect the leader and those he or she works with in formal and informal settings (Posner, 2009; Tims et al., 2011; Toor & Ofori, 2009; Zacharatos et al., 2000). Providing a space to practice transformational leadership can build competence in one's ability to transform others.

## **1.2 Self-efficacy**

The term self-efficacy has referred to how individuals rate their level of experience, preparedness, and skills to complete a given task (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy has been the most studied form of psychological capital and examined as a state-like trait that is malleable to interventions (Rani, 2015). Self-efficacy has referred to coping self-efficacy related to general conditions or task self-efficacy performed in particular conditions (Tsang, Hui, & Law, 2012). Williams and colleagues (2014) examined the patterns among continuing education medical students to be motivated to change, practice change, and change self-efficacy. The significant path coefficients in their model demonstrated a path from "self-efficacy to create change" to "motivation to



change,” and then to “intent to implement change.” Williams and colleagues (2014) suggested that an organization interested in designing program activities should consider how participants' self-efficacy and motivation have affected their intention to engage in training programming.

### ***1.2.1 Adolescents' Self-efficacy in Career Exploration***

High school is a pivotal time for young people to begin planning career paths (Sadler, Sonnert, Hazari, & Thi, 2014; Williams, 2016; Xiao, Newman, & Chu, 2016). Some states have required high school students to select a career area that influence which classes they take such as the 2011 Georgia House Bill entitled “College and Career Clusters/ Pathways” legislation (Cahill, Hoffman, Loyd, & Vargas, 2011). Steinberg and colleagues (2009) averred, “the period between 13 and 16 [years old] may be especially important for the development of the specific capacities that underlie discounting behavior and...affect individual's relative preference for longer term versus immediate rewards” (p.39). When children grow into their young adult years, they have gained autonomy and independent thought. Peers, media, and group affiliations have started to play a significant role in young people's identity development and behaviors into young adulthood (Giles & Maltby, 2004; Moran et al., 2017). Joireman and colleagues (2012) provided insight into the internal processes affecting desirable behaviors such that future orientation was associated with initiated proactive health behaviors for college students. Chen and Vazsonyi (2013) found that the school context, where adolescents spend much of their time, was associated with problem behaviors. School climates that promoted future orientation had a stronger, negative relationship between students' future orientation and problem behaviors compared to its counterparts. Individuals who considered the future consequences of

their actions were more likely to adopt behaviors that are more positive and a positive outlook on the future.

Conceptualizing one's career interests and engaging in career exploration activities have been particularly vital for young people of underrepresented groups or from disenfranchised communities. Potential barriers have included discrimination, poverty, or sociopolitical factors. Gushue, Scanlan, Pantzer, and Clarke (2006a, b) highlighted the relationship between specific task self-efficacy, career decision-making, and engagement in career decision-making for high school students of color. African American and Latino American high school students possessing a greater sense of career decision-making self-efficacy were more engaged in career exploration compared to their respective peers lower in career decision-making self-efficacy. The former also reported having a greater sense of vocational self-concept compared to their peers. High school students who were confident they could learn the necessary skills and abilities to succeed in their career field of interest were more likely to seek out professional development opportunities. Gushue and colleagues (2006a, b) suggested that education professionals considered how high school students from underrepresented groups or disadvantaged backgrounds perceive their ability to pursue career interests when contemplating career pathways.

Stringer, Kerpelman, and Skorikov (2011) illustrated how career preparation started with career planning and decision-making processes. Career planning and decision-making have been decisive to building one's competence to pursue a career field. The researchers in this study explained how career confidence increased with adolescents' developmental process. Stringer and colleagues (2011) highlighted the importance of new experiences for high school students considering college. Career

indecision decreased rapidly after high school and the researchers explained this finding by parents typically pressuring young people to make a lifelong career decision when they entered college. The researchers concluded with the advice to increase career confidence and decrease career indecision in adolescents by providing career planning and exposure opportunities.

Trommsdorff, Lamm, and Schmidt (1979) illustrated the complexities of how life situations and personal growth influenced young people's future orientation. Participants listed their hopes, fears, and assessment of their prospective life situation in five years. The researchers found that two years later young people cited their personality development in more detail and focused less on physical appearance and relationships. Working young people, compared to their high school peers, reported more confidence in the possibility of reaching their goals and greater internal locus of control over their hopes and fears. Trommsdorff and colleagues (1979) suggested that working young people's independence from parental figures could explain these findings. Adolescents' work opportunities and independence influenced personal goal achievement based on increased perceived internal locus of control.

Adolescents' career exploration is a part of the cycle that encompassed career interest understanding, self-efficacy, and self-reflection. Effective youth career development skill-building interventions influenced young people's academic and career planning success (Choi, Kim, & Kim, 2015; Stringer, Kerpelman, & Skorikov, 2011). Super (1980) conceptualized career development as a life-span process incorporating concepts of self-concept, developmental stages, decision-making skills, and capacity development. By the time adolescents reached high school, they have moved from the growth stage and entered into the exploratory stage. The transition marked the

development of self-concept regarding careers and the beginning of focusing on potential career paths. Positive youth development includes afterschool, extracurricular, skill building, mentoring and niche-focused programs, and all have been geared towards the personal and professional success of participants. As young people gained more life experiences and self-efficacy, they became future orientated and motivated to pursue larger goals. Adolescents' sense of self-motivation and future orientation could have influenced how they incorporate transformational leadership qualities into their leadership style.

### **1.2.2 Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory**

Self-efficacy has been central to Bandura's (1977; 1986) social cognitive theory and the medium by which individuals translate desire into action and practice into performance: *I think I can, I know I can, I will* (Piper, 1930). Vicarious experience has referred to a way of learning by modeling others' behaviors and social norms. Self-efficacy has affected goal setting, goal achievement, and how much effort one puts into goals (Bandura & Cervone, 1986; Stajkovic & Luthans, 2003). Bandura's (1977) social learning framework has been utilized to explain how youth leadership programming can contribute to leadership development. When youth organizations' staff members and associates have acted as mentors, coaches, and supporters of adolescents, they embodied transformational leadership skills that encourage extra effort and inclusiveness. These actions, in turn, have helped to establish transformational leadership skills in young people and positively reinforced leadership and prosocial behavior. It is imperative for youth organizations seeking to promote transformational leadership to provide the activities, resources, and social norms associated with transformational leadership skills. Whether organizations' decision makers designed

programs to be a more targeted, problem-centered or positive youth development-oriented intervention, there is a necessity for adults and participants to be aware of how suited activities and approaches are for a given population (National Research Council, 2002). The norms presented by an organization shape how young people perceive their locus of control, ability to be active determinants, and actions regarding leadership.

Bandura's (1986a; 1989) social cognitive theory was an expansion of social learning theory and highlighted how essential the determinants of behavioral change (personal, environmental, and behavioral factors) are to actions. One's behaviors, environment, and cognition are entwined in a reciprocal deterministic relationship. Self-efficacy has been pertinent to the conceptualization of social cognitive theory, as it is the linkage between abilities and performance (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998b; Villanueva & Sanchez, 2007).

Bandura (2009) added a leadership concept into social cognitive theory declaring that individuals become active determinants when they have direct influenced on those around them and do so with purposeful actions (Burt, Patel, & Lewis, 2012). Modules of the active determinant have included regulating behavior, having stated goals and objectives, and understanding how behaviors affect short and long-term outcomes. Self-efficacy has played a pivotal role in cognitive, motivational, affective, and selective processes related to social cognitive theory. Based on social cognitive theory, task-related competency and immediate social context has affected behavioral outcomes (Bandura, 1986a; Bommer, Rubin, & Baldwin, 2004; Pajares, 1996). A leader's self-efficacy has shown to be beneficial to positively reinforcing followers' optimism. Conversely, a leader with cynical views towards organizational change and innovation was less likely to exhibit transformational leadership skills (Bommer et al.,

2004). Such leaders were less likely to create a shared vision, consider individual concerns, inspire followers, or intellectually stimulate group creativity. Bommer and colleagues' (2004) findings of peer performance's negative relationship with cynical leadership suggested that more positive leadership skills exhibited by others in an organization diminished the negative effect that cynical leaders had on the group. Aligned with transformational leadership skills and self-efficacy, even those individuals without formal titles who considered and motivated others had a more positive impact on a group than those with formal titles who displayed negativity.

Meyers and colleagues (2015) suggested that strength-focused, professional development interventions were more likely to contribute to increased personal growth initiative, intentional efforts to seek out opportunities, and future-orientation than those interventions that focused on overcoming deficiencies. Participants, mainly female (79%;  $M = 22.9$  years old), were randomly assigned to either a strength-focused or deficit-focused intervention. Participants completed pre and post-intervention surveys as course evaluations. Strength-focused intervention participants were told by researchers to focus on their personal strengths and professional development during group discussions and activities. Deficit-focused intervention participants were told to discuss their "pitfalls" and to act out their deficiencies for constructive feedback. The 1-month follow-up indicated that increases in personal growth immediately after the strength-focused intervention were short-lived. Hence, Meyers and colleagues (2015) included in the second study a short self-reflection task two weeks after the intervention and a related journal task two months after the intervention as follow-up assignments. The benefits of the strength-focused intervention lasted longer when there was further engagement in personal development after the initial in-person

training. Meyers and colleagues (2015) suggested that although minimal training may seem transformative, longer exposure to strength-focused interventions could be more beneficial to the participants. Although they did not explicitly include a measure of self-efficacy, Meyers and colleagues' (2015) findings of increased personal growth initiative and seeking-intentions related to how participants rated their ability to build skills and seek out opportunities. Furthermore, Bandura's social learning and cognitive frameworks provided additional explanation for the researchers' findings. Both interventions provided a constructive environment for learning, self-reflection, and skill-building social interactions to occur. Participants became active determinants in their life by modeling professional behaviors from feedback and seeing others with similar strengths and deficiencies working towards improvement.

### ***1.2.3 Leadership Self-efficacy***

McCormick, Tanguma, and Lopez-Forment (2002) defined leadership self-efficacy as a self-judgment of task-related capabilities regarding group management and goal setting. This definition was distinct from self-confidence as confidence referred to a personal trait, and did not directly contribute to a leader's effectiveness. In a similar way, youth-development organization decision makers should be inclined to examine how adolescents perceived their ability to be a leader and pursued leadership roles. Mechanisms of transformational leadership have paralleled the basis of self-efficacy in that inspiring a shared vision and modeling desired behaviors are salient to the development of both concepts (Pillai & Williams, 2004). Transformational leaders model the way through the idealized influence that have provided group members with verbal persuasion and vicarious learning experiences. Furthermore, transformational leaders' individualized consideration of fellow group members has cultivated an

inclusive environment for members to become empowered and self-aware of their abilities. These leadership skills fostered followers' commitment to the organization and trust in the leader (Bass, 1985). Through a strong sense of leadership skills, effective leaders have understood their strengths and weaknesses in ways that served the group. Self-aware leaders have encouraged group members to acknowledge their strengths, and weaknesses as well, and that each member can contribute to innovative processes and task completion.

Paglis and Green (2002) defined leadership self-efficacy as one's sense of competency to exert direction and power within a group setting, maintain a rapport with followers to have them committed to the group's efforts, and manage obstacles which impede group members' ability to complete their tasks. Ng, Ang, and Chan (2008) stated that leadership self-efficacy and general self-efficacy were distinctive concepts such that the former pertained solely to beliefs regarding leadership behaviors. Some antecedents to leadership self-efficacy included leadership exposure, sense of competence, and personality traits (Chan & Drasgow, 2001; Cho, Harrist, Steele, & Murn, 2015; Ng, Ang, & Chan, 2008).

Retail-business managers in a self-efficacy intervention displayed greater increases in transformational leadership self-efficacy and skills compared to their control group (Fitzgerald & Schutte, 2010). The intervention consisted of managers prompted to reflect and write on "their deepest thoughts and feelings relating to transformational leadership" based on experiences during the workweek. Specifically, the instructions in the intervention group were for managers to reflect on the personal examples of when they experienced transformational leadership in the workplace (e.g. engaged in and observed others incorporating transformational leadership behaviors).



Fitzgerald and Schutte (2010) concluded that self-efficacy is critical to one's expression of transformational leadership. The expressive writing task utilized in the intervention was a form of focused self-reflection, which further connected leadership self-efficacy building to social cognitive theory.

Cho, Harriot, Steele, and Murn (2015) found college students' leadership self-efficacy to link their desire to satisfy basic needs, autonomy, competence, and relatedness to their motivation to lead. They discussed how leadership self-efficacy and meeting other personal factors were essential to one's leadership motivation. Thus, an individual became more motivated to assume leadership training and roles when he or she felt competent in his or her ability to lead others and has had several opportunities to express autonomy as a leader. For adolescents living in urban settings, a greater sense of leadership self-efficacy was associated with less aggressive behaviors (Leff et al., 2014). Active career training, sports program participation, and leadership development with caring adult mentors were all catalysts toward positive youth development (Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005; Gushue, Scanlan, Pantzer, & Clarke, 2006a, b; Larson, 2006; Stringer et al., 2011). Involvement in enrichment activities or experience-building opportunities affected malleable skills such as leadership self-efficacy and prosocial behaviors (Morrissey & Werner-Wilson, 2005; Chan & Drasgow, 2001).

Ng and colleagues (2008) created a leadership self-efficacy moderated mediation model with military leaders to demonstrate the centrality leadership self-efficacy has on predicting leadership behaviors. Leadership self-efficacy mediated the relationship between leaders' personality and leadership effectiveness such that more extraverted and conscientious military leaders' effectiveness ratings were due to their greater sense

of leadership self-efficacy compared to their less extraverted and conscientious counterparts. High leadership self-efficacy was only a significant factor for military leaders who experienced low job demands (e.g. lower workload, problem-solving demands, and task difficulty). Ng and colleagues' (2008) moderated mediation model implied that high job demand and work-related stress could diminish the impact one's sense of self-efficacy has on performance outcomes. Company employers should consider how difficult tasks and stressful decision-making processes could affect training efforts and the overall workplace atmosphere. Youth leadership and professional training have helped young people prepare for work-related demands and the stressors of group management.

Villanueva and Sanchez (2007) examined the relationship between one's leadership self-efficacy and group performance. They found that leadership self-efficacy predicted task self-efficacy, which in turn predicted the group's task efficacy and subsequent group performance. The individual who has few leadership skills, but possessed high leadership self-efficacy, would be more likely to seek out leadership roles and task-specific training opportunities compared to an individual with few leadership skills and possessed low leadership self-efficacy. Researchers suggested that leadership self-efficacy was a vital precursor to one's sense of competence to take on leadership roles, belief in task-related competence, and impact on group-related outcomes (Komives et al., 2006; Murphy & Johnson, 2011; Ng et al., 2008; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998a; Villanueva & Sanchez, 2007). The previously reviewed research studies illustrated how increased sense of leadership self-efficacy explains the positive relationship between leadership exposure and expression.

### 1.3 Social Intelligence

Enhancing skills to manage conversations and regulate emotions have prepared leaders to be aware of group members' needs and address them appropriately. Social intelligence has referred to the ability to facilitate positive interactions with others and be adaptive to various social situations (Riggio & Carney, 2003). Shekarey and colleagues (2013) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to identify and control one's emotions. Peterson and Seligman (2004) expounded on social intelligence as "being aware of the motives and feelings of other people and oneself; knowing what to do to fit into different social situations..." (p.29). This form of intelligence is related to the interpersonal strength of humanity as both denoted one's ability to build a positive rapport with others. On their scale designed to examine 24 value in action strengths in youth, Peterson and Park (2004) found adolescents to score highest on humanity strengths compared to the other 24 strengths such as temperance. Their social intelligence subscale loaded onto a factor represented by humanity and some leadership strengths (Park & Peterson, 2009; Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2004; Toner et al., 2012; Ruch, Weber, Park, & Peterson, 2014; Weber et al., 2013).

Peterson and Seligman (2004) described social intelligence as a humanity strength and character virtue in which emotional intelligence has been a component. Emotional intelligence has been consistently linked to leadership self-efficacy and the individualized consideration and inspirational motivation qualities of transformational leaders (Ashkanasy & Tse, 2000; Barling, Slater, & Kelloway, 2000; Gardner & Stough, 2002; Mathew & Gupta, 2015; Palmer, Walls, Burgess, & Stough, 2001; Sivanathan & Fekken, 2002; Riggio & Pirozzolo, 2002; Villanueva & Sanchez, 2007; Yitshaki, 2012). In Fitzgerald and Schutte's (2010) intervention study, managers possessing high

emotional intelligence displayed greater increases in transformational leadership and self-efficacy compared to those with lower emotional intelligence after a self-efficacy expressive writing intervention. This growth could be due to those with higher emotional intelligence being more open to change and recognizing the role self-efficacy has in behavior. Psychological capital, such as self-efficacy, has demonstrated a positive relationship with emotional intelligence, which was a significant predictor of student leadership competencies (Greenberg et al., 2003; Mozhgan, Parivash, Nadergholi, & Jowkar, 2011; Weber et al., 2013; Yitshaki, 2012). These findings of emotional intelligence's association with self-efficacy could be due to a positive appraisal of one's life and life-domain satisfaction (Rani, 2015; Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2015).

Measuring emotional intelligence alone however has not captured the entirety of people's ability to regulate emotions and social setting (Lopes, Salovey, & Straus, 2003). Social intelligence has encompassed the capacity to express social skills and emotional regulation. Riggio and Carney (2003) conceptualized basic social skills as part of one's social and emotional competencies, which signified social intelligence. Social expressivity referred to one's verbal ability to engage other people in social discourse. Individuals high in social expressivity have shown the willingness to start conversations and express outgoingness and gregariousness. Nonetheless, Riggio and Carney (2003) explained that social expressivity is not reflective of a personality trait but referred specifically to verbally expressing oneself. Social control referred to social tactfulness, being self-confident, and playing a role. Individuals high in social control are good discussion moderators, facilitators, and versatile enough to act in a variety of social settings. Thus, others have perceived individuals high in social

expressivity but low in social control as being unfiltered, candid, and vocal with less regard for content.

Lubit (2004a, b) similarly discussed social intelligence as two major components, social and personal competencies. While personal competencies referred to self-awareness and self-management skills, social competencies referred to empathizing with others, managing team efficacy, and building relationships. High social intelligence has been linked to skills for conveying messages to others, receiving and interpreting others' messages, and managing communication processes. Possessing high social skills contributed positively to group member-based, task-related, and behavioral evaluations of leader effectiveness (Riggio, Riggio, Salinas, & Cole, 2003).

### ***1.3.1 Development Perspective of Social Intelligence***

Ciarrochi, Forgas, and Mayer (2001) differentiated social intelligence from concrete or abstract intelligence as it is more strongly associated with success than academic abilities. Chan and Drasgow (2001) distinguished social abilities from cognitive abilities through a model in which cognitive abilities were not significantly related to motivation to lead. Possessing social intelligence has related to soft skills essential in not only the workplace but also personal relationships. In Erikson's (1982) psychosocial stages of development, puberty to 18 years old was when social intelligence was cultivated and heightened compared to before puberty. This age range has been signified by adolescents' middle to high school years and when they began to form their personal values and identity through peer and adult interactions. Erikson (1982) meant for his psychosocial model, though a very rigid and linear perspective of personal growth, to reiterate the presence and development of social intelligence in adolescents. Cunha, Heckman, and Schennach (2010) suggested that as children

develop into teenagers their noncognitive skills, such as social skills, become more malleable and substitutable while cognitive skills have not displayed this level of flexible growth.

Being socially aware of team members' emotions, motivations, and barriers have been salient to transformational leadership and molded during one's formative years. As depicted in Guerin and colleagues' (2011) full mediation of extraversion and transformational leadership by social skills, the impact extraversion has on transformational leadership is contingent on the development of social skills. Adulthood leadership and social skills stem from traits expressed during adolescence and temperamental approach/withdrawal as an infant. Gottfried and colleagues (2011) examined the relationship between adolescent traits and adult motivations. They found that high academic intrinsic motivation (desire to learn in general) during adolescence was related to taking on leadership roles in adulthood. Adults with a history of high academic intrinsic motivation were also more receiving of both positive and negative feedback on their performance. Mentoring young people and fostering their intrinsic motivation fueled their active participation in leadership roles. These two longitudinal studies suggested that leadership development is a process that begins in childhood. Opportunities and support for young people to take on leadership roles provided by youth organizations motivate them to take on leadership roles in the future.

## **1.4 Positive Youth Development**

### ***1.4.1 Research Terms Regarding Adolescents***

Several researchers, who focus on populations under the age of 25, have clearly defined terms for different age groups in their respective publications. Operationalize

the World Health Organization declared 10 – 19 years of age as adolescence; beginning at puberty and ending at the onset of adult identity (Sacks, 2003). The terms youth and young people have been used generally to describe the 15 – 24-year-old range age in research on culture and subcultures, global unemployment rates, biological models, social frameworks, and health interventions (Farrugia, 2013; Hodkinson, 2016; Seddon, Hazenberg, & Denny, 2013; Villa-Torres & Svanemyr, 2015). In leadership literature, Murphy and Johnson (2011) utilized the term youth broadly ranging up to 22 years old when mapping out leadership skill development with maturity. Other leadership researchers also have used the term youth when describing a sample of approximately 15 – 24 year-old participants (Can, 2009; Dormody & Seevers, 1994; Fongkaew, Fongkaew, & Suchaxaya, 2005). Topping and Ehly (1998) described a peer as someone possessing equal status or matched companions (Bishop and Verleger, 2013). Calaguas (2012), along with Card and Hodges (2008), made the distinction in their research on peer aggression and victimization that peers referred to similarly school-aged children or adolescents and not adults. If the research study or intervention is within the context of learning institutions, then the researchers typically have referred to participants as college or high school students.

Vieno and colleagues' (2014) research validating an Italian version of the Sociopolitical Control Scale for Youth used the term adolescents when referring to their sample size. The average age was 17.24 years old. Researchers who published data from the Fullerton Longitudinal Study data refers to participants' data at 17 years old as adolescent personality, intelligence, and antecedents (Guerin et al., 2011; Reichard et al., 2011). The primary investigator of the current study used the terms adolescence and

adolescents to define the target population, high school-aged young people. The primary investigator used youth to signify concepts related specifically to adolescents.

#### ***1.4.2 Youth Leadership Development***

Adolescents have been viewed as in constant need of adult supervision, incompatible to lead, and lacking the maturity to carry out leadership roles (Hastings, Barrett, Barbuto, & Bell, 2011; Jackson, 2014). Deficit modeling of youth skill development has tended to frame adolescents as passive recipients of and heirs to their parents' social capital. This modeling has not referred to adolescents as independent and active contributors to their social capital. Libby, Sedonaen, and Bliss (2006) defined youth leadership as young people providing guidance, managing team members, establishing a culture of group membership rules and expectations, and being central to the completion of group activities. Tsang and colleagues explained (2012) that adolescents' environments, both physical and psychosocial, have provided rules, values, resources, and opportunities to enact behaviors that influenced their overall identity development. Hine (2013) highlighted adolescent leaders reporting their positive experiences being in a leadership position. These young leaders spoke highly of being able to work with other peers, act as a role model to younger peers, and contribute in a meaningful way to their organization. Other positive experiences from the school's leadership program included: becoming a role model, building confidence, helping other leaders, and encouraging prosocial while discouraging antisocial behaviors amongst peers. Some of the negative and challenging experiences reported by participants included time management to participate in the program, concerns about academics and grades, and feeling under-appreciated by others. Understanding leadership self-efficacy and social intelligence's influence on leadership behavior was pertinent to



positive youth development and apparent to adolescents as well as researchers. Peterson and Seligman (2004) frankly stated:

*Rather than adopting a 'more is better' approach to the activities programmed for our children, we should stop and ask what we want an activity to accomplish...and whether the details of this activity indeed accomplish its stated goal vis-a-vis a targeted character strength (p.61).*

Though Rehm (2014) called for more high school-based research, there has been a lack of knowledge on youth leadership development outside of formal youth programs and the relationship between developmental trajectories and leadership development (Hastings et al., 2011). There has been national-level leadership training resources created for college students (i.e. National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs) but no national-level resource for implementing leadership training geared towards high school students (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Rehm, 2014). Environmental, sociocultural, and developmental contexts have affected variations in goal expectations, actualization, and future orientation. Compared to young people from urban regions, those from rural regions experienced a decrease in future occupation interest, suggesting that the lack of availability to actualize career goals may have dampened young people's outlook and motivation (Steinberg et al., 2009). Many adolescents have shown interest in community leadership and formal team building as seen in the literature (Turkay & Tirthali, 2010). Young members of more active teams were more likely to agree that anyone could be a leader compared to less active teams. The young people highlighted determination, communication, organization, and persuasiveness as key leadership skills. Positive correlations between being a leader and improvement in leadership skills

aligned with the cyclical nature of self-efficacy building (e.g. set goals, achieve it, set higher goals, and achieve it).

Social settings and resources have been instrumental to adolescents' exposure to leadership skill building and training. Solansky (2010) stated:

*Leadership training programs should be realistic, practical, provide an opportunity for growth, and should provide new knowledge to participants all while facing the reality that people come into the program with diverse skills, learning styles, and experiences. Because of these challenges, it is essential that more time is spent on evaluating the methodologies of such programs than has in the past (p.675).*

Leadership training have focused on skill assessments and associated with higher communication skills, self-confidence, and enhanced leadership. Leadership training programs have provided opportunities for youth to learn and apply transformational leadership skills in a positive environment.

Positive learning environments also have cultivated young people's networking skills and dedication to civic engagement. Hastings and colleagues (2011) incorporated grounded theory to explore the development process of youth empowerment affecting civic engagement. Civic leadership has referred to community-level programming geared toward youth involvement. Hastings and colleagues (2011) highlighted the importance of adult–youth mutual relationships and the conditions that fostered or hindered youth leadership. These researchers argued for the need to investigate leadership development within informal and community settings. Observations were used along with interviews to ensure that information received in the interviews were reflective of what could be observed. The resulting paradigm model illustrated how

social resources, individual connections, and common sentiments led to community engagement (Hastings et al., 2011).

Engagement in one's community led to social capital, individual, and community-level development. Adults treated adolescents as equals and provided them with opportunities to take on meaningful roles and validating their ideas. This sense of responsibility and validation reinforced young people's sense of self-efficacy to voice their ideas (Mitra, 2006). However, one mediating factor to the programs' action strategies success was members' public speaking skills. The other two mediating factors Hastings and colleagues (2011) reported were more resource focused (i.e. having a designated individual for coordinating efforts and access to resources). Youth outcomes included increased feelings of ownership, empowerment, and responsibilities. Youth participants reported that their social resources came from having optimistic adults ask them to participate as mutual partners. The fact that young people considered community engagement as being involved in the real world compared to being engaged in school-based programming was crucial to understanding the impact that leadership program setting can have on youth empowerment. For rural communities, in particular, youth civic engagement and social capital building could be utilized to counteract the trend of brain-drain; in which the rate of young people leaving rural areas is dramatic (Apaliyah, Martin, Gasteyer, Keating, & Pigg, 2012; Carr & Kefalas, 2009; Larson, Wilson, & Mortimer, 2002; Wiesinger, 2007). The National Research Council (2002) recommended that community programs tailor involvement opportunities to the goals and desires of their target population. If decision makers wanted program participation from underserved, disadvantaged young people, then they should be thoughtful about accessibility and the how to address needed services.

Larson, Eccles, and Gootman (2004) stated that along with providing a safe, consistent, and inclusive environment, youth organizations should provide supportive adult relationships, positive social norms, support for efficacy and skill building, and opportunities for community and family engagement.

Youth organizations should serve to foster adolescents' transformational leadership skills even if participants' aspirations did not include formal leadership roles. Understanding one's abilities and encouraging others to believe in themselves has contributed to a positive, productive, and inclusive workplace environment. Building adolescents' personal capital gave them a sense of self-efficacy and resiliency, which affected relational and structural social capital (e.g. network sociability and connectivity respectively; Tamer, Dereli, & Saglam, 2014). Ng and colleagues (2008) stated that leadership self-efficacy was a significant motivational factor that linked personality types to leadership outcomes and behaviors. For organizational decision makers, these findings have been significant because they provide interventions geared towards building specific task self-efficacies.

## **1.5 Literature Review Summary**

Concepts such as positive youth development, leadership self-efficacy, and social intelligence have been salient to understanding how transformational leadership behaviors manifested in adolescents. Transformational leadership training has allowed for individuals of varying personality types to present themselves in a proactive and empowering manner that garnered support and dedication from group members. Leadership behaviors such as inspiring a shared vision, inspirational motivation, and building rapport with group members by understanding their needs and goals, individualized consideration, has shown to be related to group members'

assessment of the leader, commitment to the group's efforts, and work-related outcomes.

Youth organizations interested in leadership training initiatives must consider opportunities to engage in and positively reinforce leadership skills. Leadership self-efficacy is has been unique to one's confidence in her/his ability to lead. Thus, individuals possessing high self-esteem, self-worth, or general self-efficacy could still have been reluctant or discouraged from pursuing leadership roles. Individuals possessing high leadership self-efficacy were not naturally better leaders but were more willing to pursue leadership roles and utilize leadership behavior. Taking on more leadership roles could make one a more efficient leader and feel more confident in identifying oneself as a leader.

Social intelligence has enabled people to read situations, regulate one's emotions, and others. Individuals high in social intelligence have displayed a greater capability to interpret social and emotional cues and regulate the expression of emotionality about one's situational circumstance. Researchers have illustrated how pivotal a leader's social intelligence is to their rapport with followers and expression of transformational leadership skills. Positive youth development programming has fostered social intelligence by providing supportive and inclusive settings for young people to cultivate their social skills.

Research on leadership typically has been conducted with working individuals and those in managerial roles (Bommer et al., 2004; Li, Arvey, & Song, 2011; Murphy & Johnson, 2011; Vaculik, Prochazka, & Smutny, 2014). The lack of research focused transformational leadership expression in high school-aged adolescents has demonstrated the perceptions in the leadership research field that young people are

passive recipients to leadership influences (Turnnidge & Côté, 2016; Vella, Oades, & Crowe, 2013). Conceptualizing leadership as being malleable, the primary investigator viewed adolescents as being capable of learning and building leadership skills in an incremental fashion (Dweck, 1988). The previously mentioned research regarding leadership and social skills development all pointed to the ultimate goal of youth development programs; to build young people's capabilities so they can have a clearer sense of self and life plans.

### **1.6 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders Organization**

Started in 1991, business professionals designed 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders (21CL) to connect high school students with business and professional leaders across the state of Georgia. Coca-Cola Company, Turner Broadcasting System, and Georgia Power are a few of the many partners and sponsors of 21CL programming. On the organization's website, 21CL was described as, "a collaboration of business and professional leaders inspiring high school students to take on leadership positions, seek out opportunities, and give back to their communities...through training and hands-on experiences (<http://21stcenturyleaders.org>).” 21CL has made an effort to populate the program with youth from a myriad of backgrounds. According to their 2015 Annual Report, 74% of members identified as youth of color and 50% of members faced socioeconomic barriers to success. Young people have expressed an appreciation for structured programming and being able to engage in new, stimulating activities (Hine, 2013). Organizations such as 21CL have promoted young people's openness to new experiences, psychological well-being, new social skills, and self-esteem. 21CL decision makers have desired for members to gain a better comprehension of their resourcefulness, leadership passion, inclusiveness, compassion, and innovativeness.

To apply to be a 21CL member, a high school rising sophomore, junior or senior must live in Georgia, complete an application form, and have a recommendation letter from a counselor, teacher, mentor, or youth leader. The application form has short-answer essay questions regarding one's leadership style, academic and volunteer experiences, and other similar questions. 21CL members have not been required to attend all of the programs offered throughout the year. The organization has provided an inclusive, diverse setting for Georgia youth to engage their peers and professionals from sponsored companies based in Georgia. By exposing high school students to different industries, leadership skills, and career opportunities, 21CL has invested in the future business leaders of the world. There are also considerable benefits for the state of Georgia as well. Presenting youth with real-world team projects faced by Georgia-based companies could be an incentive for these young Georgians to consider starting their careers in their home state.

21CL has planted the seed of leadership and cultivated high school students' budding aptitude. For adolescents involved in leadership training, there was an appreciation for meaningful opportunities to organize and work with peers to create change in their environment (Hine, 2013). Professionals who have volunteered their time for 21CL have positively commented on the high intrigue and diverse skill sets presented by 21CL members. The current Board Chair of 21CL Kevin Sessions explained:

*“My first exposure to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders was as a panelist at one of their events. While I had no clue what to expect going into the event, I walked away completely amazed by the quality of the students. Their maturity, passion, willingness to lead and desire to learn was truly inspiring. These students are*

*our future leaders and it is absolutely critical that they have access the types of resources that 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders provides*

*(<https://www.21stcenturyleaders.org/about-us/leadership/>)."*

Over 10,000 Georgian high school students have matriculated into 21CL and testified to the impact the organization had on their self-concept and leadership skills (<https://www.21stcenturyleaders.org/blog/>). 21CL alumni discussed in blog posts how their conceptualization of leadership expanded while attending 21CL events:

*If there's one thing that we can all improve on as young professionals, it's the art of conversation. Knowing when to let other people guide the discussion or speaking up when it makes sense is a skill that I'm still honing to this day, but it never would have started without my experiences in 21CL. For that, I'm forever grateful* (<https://www.21stcenturyleaders.org/alumni-spotlight-manny-elsar-jr/>).

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders was my first exposure to professionalism and networking. It's important to continue to create opportunities to meet new people in your field. 21CL taught me that leaders aren't born, they are made. You may be a great leader already, but there is always an opportunity for growth* (<https://www.21stcenturyleaders.org/alumni-spotlight-natasha-walker/>).

21CL members have gathered on college campuses and at major business headquarters to foster their leadership skills with their fellow Georgian peers. The diversity of ethnicities, personalities, and worldviews has exposed 21CL members to their peers' different leadership, learning, and communication styles. Adolescents' racial/ethnicity attitudes and knowledge have shown to be malleable and influenced by exposure. Their understanding and respect for other racial groups significantly



increased after being involved in a residential institute program (Boulden, 2007). The members of 21CL likely would have spent their working career in a growingly more diverse United States of America with non-White populations steadily increasing into the year 2060 (Colby & Ortman, 2015). Concepts such as having high social intelligence, cultural humility, and consideration of other individuals' needs have been relevant to building one's professional networks and human capital.

### ***1.6.1 21CL programming***

21CL member has included programming the Summer Leadership Institutes, Leadership Training Opportunities, Youth Leadership Teams, Youth Leadership Centers, and Leadership Connect.

The Summer Leadership Institutes have been three exclusive opportunities to cultivate leadership and professional networking skills. As of 2016, Emory University's Goizueta Business School (Summer Leadership Youth Institute), Berry College (EarthCare), and Georgia Institute of Technology (Turner Voices Youth Media Institute) hosted the Summer Leadership Institutes. 21CL members stayed on a college campus for a week of intense workshops, corporate tours, networking events, and small-group projects. Though the daytime schedule consisted of professional development, the evenings were informal as summer staff members facilitate icebreakers, group activities, and recreational time. For some adolescents this camp was their first time away from home for an extended time, on a college campus, or networking with professionals in their career field of interest.

In 2016, 238 21CL members from 127 high schools attended the three summer institutes. With many summer institute participants being the only student from their high school, there was a gradual development of socialization from Day 1 to Day 6 of the

camps. These young leaders went through a week of rigorous professional development sessions, comprehensive leadership training, and fun team building activities. By the sixth and final day, some 21CL members have come to tears talking about how this one-week intervention changed their perspective of themselves and others. More quiet and reserved individuals have stated that the skills learned did not negate their personality but made them more comfortable speaking in small groups and publicly. More talkative and candid individuals have openly reflected on how to engage team members in a way that was not overbearing. 21CL members from demographically homogenous communities have displayed an appreciation for the exposure to peers of different ethnicities, races, and religious orientations. One high school senior member stated, “I learned that my personality may be different from others, and that my ideas aren’t always the same as theirs but we can work together and be friends despite the differences we share (<https://www.21stcenturyleaders.org/about-us/>).”

The Leadership Training Opportunities included the Summer Orientation for the institutes, Goizueta Youth Leadership Summit, 21CL Fall Summit, 21CL Meets-Ups, and Leadership Webinars. These opportunities provided unique professional, social, and service-based experiences that contributed to their positive youth development and resumes. The summits, webinars, and other events all related to supporting personal and leadership development, exploring career opportunities, and fostering professional networks (<https://www.21stcenturyleaders.org/student-programs/>).

21CL has provided its members the opportunity to contribute to the organization as representatives and committee members through the Youth Leadership Teams. 21CL Youth Ambassadors have been the faces of the organization, the Youth Leadership Council the voices of the organization, and the Youth Task Force for organizing special

projects. These committees have allowed for 21CL members to express their concerns and address issues that directly affect their experience within the organization.

21CL has Youth Leadership Centers in schools where a 21CL club was present. The purpose of the centers was to aid 21CL members in service projects and personal developments. There have been volunteering opportunities, online lessons (e.g. learning about personal branding, decision-making skills, and career interest), and live workshops available for members. Volunteering and civic engagement have been associated with desirable outcomes for adolescents and young adults such as leadership, self-esteem, and multicultural competence (Brennan, Barnett, & Baugh, 2007; Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Simonsen et al., 2014).

Leadership Connect has been an advanced three-year program in which 21CL members participated in online workshops to receive digital certificates of leadership training and hands-on business experiences. The EPIC high school leadership talent development model was the basis of Leadership Connect. Members finished the first year (Discovery) learning about their potential career passions and finished the last year (Mastery) becoming eligible for paid summer internship placement and career planning support (<https://www.21stcenturyleaders.org/student-programs/leadership-connect/>).

## **1.7 Conceptual Model**

Youth behaviors and attitudes regarding leadership have been malleable and explored before adulthood. The purpose of 21CL offering different leadership programs throughout the year has been to connect, inspire, and transform its members. Some of the 21CL programming was based on the Student-Leadership Practices Inventory, which is akin to qualities of transformational leaders. These qualities included leading individuals by instilling a shared vision and considering group members as competent

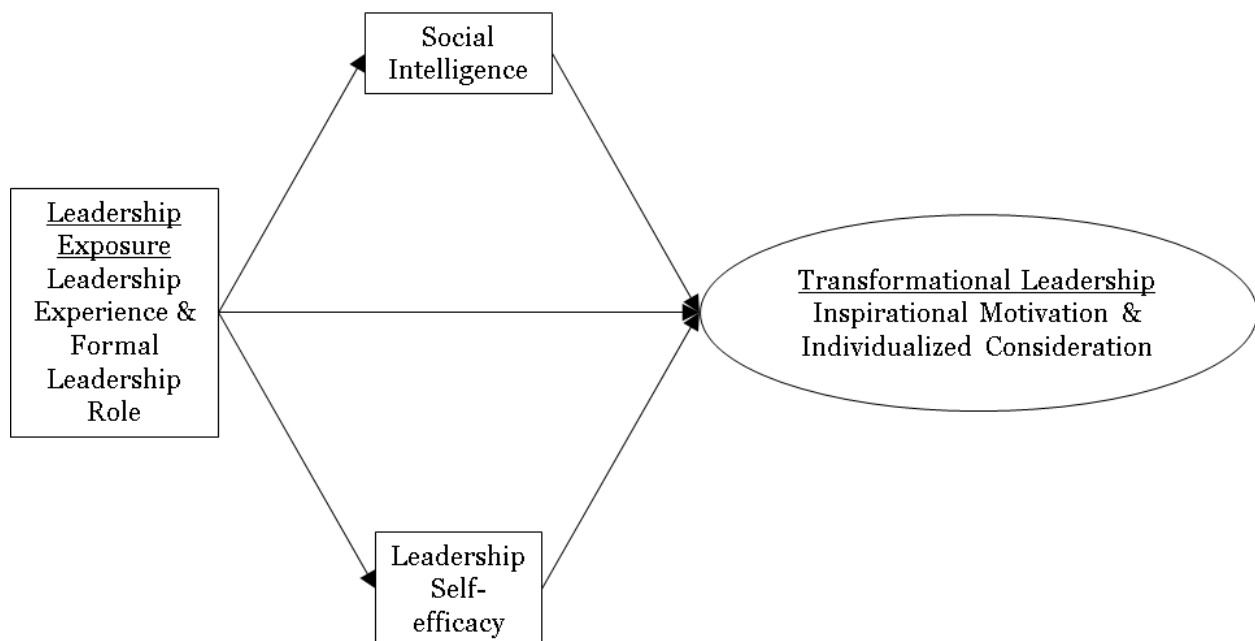
contributors (Vito, Higgins, & Denney, 2014). One's sense of leadership self-efficacy and utilization of social intelligence could promote transformational leadership behavior. Using data obtained from 21CL members, the primary investigator examined a conceptual model that explained associations among key processes considered to contribute to transformational leadership. Figure 1 has depicted the conceptual model for understanding transformational leadership in adolescents; leadership exposure directly links to transformational leadership and indirectly through social intelligence and leadership self-efficacy.

21CL has provided settings and contexts in which cooperation, compassion, and communication skills are valued and positively reinforced. Ikesako and Miyamoto (2015) illustrated how learning context influenced skill development through direct inputs, environmental factors, and policy levers. Direct inputs from 21CL to enhance young people's skills have included year-round summits, summer institutes, and other meet-up events. The social norms of inclusion, teamwork, openness to opportunities, and professional networking for 21CL are environmental factors that contributed to the organization's learning context. 21CL organizational policy levers have been the projects 21CL members must complete at 21CL events and the training adult volunteers go through to facilitate the Summer Institutes. Measures of 21CL events attendance and leadership experience were included in the current study.

Leadership self-efficacy referred to a self-judgment about one's leadership capabilities, and one's evaluation of previous leadership experiences and sense of social skills are the basis for one's confidence in their ability to lead others. McCormick and colleagues (2002) found leadership self-efficacy to correlate positively with leadership experience and leadership role seeking. Researchers have considered a sense of self-

efficacy necessary for inspiring others by displaying confidence in one's abilities and a shared vision for followers. Providing team members with a shared vision and positive reinforcement could have built a team's overall efficiency and dedication to completing tasks. Toor and Ofori (2009) found that higher levels of transformational leadership, specifically inspirational motivation, were due to higher levels of self-efficacy.

Soft skills such as communication, emotional regulation, and being cognizant of others' emotions have been valuable and malleable. Ikesako and Miyamoto (2015) suggested that social and emotional skill-building interventions could benefit high school-aged adolescents. These researchers defined social and emotional skills in their framework as latent factors that manifested mentally, emotionally, and behaviorally through formal or informal learning situations. Higher levels of emotional intelligence facilitated greater understanding of one's leadership self-efficacy and transformational leadership skills (Fitzgerald & Schutte, 2010).



*Figure 1: Conceptual Model of Youth Leadership Development*

### **1.7.1 Methodological Concepts**

The focus of the current study was on inspirational motivation and individualized consideration. Inspirational motivation and individualized consideration represented the transformational leadership construct as the predictive latent variable to leadership self-efficacy, social intelligence, and leadership exposure. Researchers have specifically reported participants' inspirational motivation and individualized consideration subscale scores as related to emotional intelligence and self-efficacy (Barling et al., 2000; Palmer et al., 2001; Toor & Ofori, 2009).

Reichard, Riggio, and Smith's (2009) subscale items for idealized influence and intellectual stimulation had lower Cronbach alphas compared to inspirational motivation and individualized consideration. The six items, which loaded into the second factor of the transformational leadership two-factor scale, were from the idealized influence and intellectual stimulation subscales, and those items were slightly higher in social desirability bias. Furthermore, idealized influence and intellectual stimulation subscale items included phrases such as, "My followers look to me as a role model for their own leadership," and "I wish my followers would just do what I tell them to do." The power differential between professional leaders and followers are vastly and conceptually unique from adolescent interaction dynamics because minors have less power compared to adults (Adler & Adler, 1998; Qvortrup 1999; 2000). The primary investigator modified and utilized items from the inspirational motivation and individualized consideration subscales as the transformational leadership scale due to it better representing the purpose of the current study and the context of current participants.

## 1.8 Purpose

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the relationship between social intelligence, leadership skills, and leadership exposure in adolescents. Specifically, how did adolescents' exposure to leadership roles and experiences, sense of leadership self-efficacy, and social intelligence contribute to transformational leadership skills?

21CL members completed an online survey comprised of social intelligence, leadership self-efficacy, leadership experience, and transformational leadership measurement scales. Data from this correlational research study informed the creation of a path analysis model illustrating the antecedents to youth transformational leadership expression (Kline, 2015). The investigation of transformational leadership demonstrated how high school students of varying leadership exposure could become better leaders through positive youth development.

*H<sub>1</sub>: Leadership exposure will be positively associated with transformational leadership skills.*

*H<sub>1a</sub>: Formal leadership role will be positively associated with transformational leadership skills.*

*H<sub>1b</sub>: Leadership experience will be positively associated with transformational leadership skills.*

Past experiences of leadership, social intelligence, and leadership self-efficacy were the predictive factors hypothesized to associate with self-reports of transformational leadership behaviors significantly. Leadership exposure referred to the formal leadership role and leadership experience variable. Holding a formal leadership role overlaps with leadership experience, but all leadership experiences have

not came from being the individual with an entitled position. More positively rated leadership experiences have been associated with higher leadership self-efficacy and transformational leadership in previous research (Chan & Drasgow, 2001; Fitzgerald & Schutte, 2010; McCormick, Tanguma, & Lopez-Forment, 2002).

*H<sub>2</sub>: Leadership self-efficacy will be positively associated with leadership exposure and transformational leadership skills.*

*H<sub>2a</sub>: Leadership self-efficacy will mediate the relationship between formal leadership role and transformational leadership skills.*

*H<sub>2b</sub>: Leadership self-efficacy will mediate the relationship between leadership experience and transformational leadership skills.*

One aim of the current study was to examine the leadership self-efficacy's mediating effect on leadership exposure and transformational leadership skills. Based on Bandura's (1989) social cognitive theory, leadership self-efficacy has been essential to the effective expression of leadership behaviors. Adolescents could have learned how to engage people and give uplifting statements; nonetheless, leadership behaviors have been contingent on whether one felt competent executing said behaviors. Self-efficacy has demonstrated a relationship between student leadership competencies, transformational leadership, the human dimension of intelligence capital, and relational dimension of social capital (Fitzgerald & Schutte, 2010; Guerin et al., 2011; Tamer et al., 2014; Toor & Ofori, 2009). Ng and colleagues (2008) also declared a significant relationship between leadership self-efficacy and leadership behaviors.

*H<sub>3</sub>: Social intelligence will be positively associated with transformational leadership skills.*



*H<sub>3a</sub>: Social intelligence will mediate the relationship between formal leadership role and transformational leadership skills.*

*H<sub>3b</sub>: Social intelligence will mediate the relationship between leadership experience and transformational leadership skills.*

Socially intelligent individuals have shown competent interpersonal skills and read group members to assess their group's social climate, commitment to the task, and expectations (Gardner & Stough, 2002). For adolescents, being in a formal leadership role usually entailed managing peers and having to report to an adult. These student leaders had to negotiate how they socialized with peers informally versus how they took command and delegated tasks. They likely had to report to an authoritative body and acted as a liaison between them and the adults with power. Formal leaders could have more chances to develop social intelligence while navigating both peer and youth-adult relationships compared to their counterparts. Effective leaders with experience could have read others and situations allowing them to provide group members with a shared vision and a feeling of consideration for their needs (i.e. inspirational motivation and individualized consideration). High social and emotional intelligence have been associated with greater increases in transformational leadership, particularly inspirational motivation and individualized consideration, and self-efficacy after a training intervention (Barling et al., 2000; Fitzgerald and Schutte, 2010; Gardner & Stough, 2002).

## **2 METHOD**

### **2.1 Research design**

This study employed a correlational research design to examine transformational leadership in adolescents involved with a leadership development organization.

Specifically, leadership self-efficacy and social intelligence were examined as mediators of the association between leadership exposure and transformational leadership.

## **2.2 Procedures**

All members of a youth leadership organization, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders, were invited to participate. Caregivers of adolescents who were under 18 years of age received an institutional review board approved permission form. On the last day of each summer institute program, the primary investigator introduced the study to parents/guardians who were present and asked them to consider allowing their child to be invited to take the online survey. The consent forms were sent out through the 21CL member's parent/guardian email address listed in 21CL records for typical correspondence regarding news from the organization. Given that the study involved minimal risk to participants, the consent forms were designed to enable caregivers to opt out of allowing their child to participate; no parents/guardian returned a signed opt-out form. All 21CL members were then invited to complete the online survey that was created on Qualtrics Survey Platform. All measurement scales and items within the respective scales were randomized to control for test fatigue and attrition. The only order to the survey was that the youth assent form was always first and the demographic questions were always last.

There were 828 21CL members contacted about the study with 238 of them receiving in-person invitations to the study at the 2016 Summer Institutes. There were 111 21CL members who finished the survey and 31 participants who partially completed the survey. The current sample totaled to 142 participants with a 17.15% response rate from all 21CL members.

The primary investigator completed missing data on demographic variables including age, gender, and race based on class lists from the 2016 Summer Institutes (19 adolescents listed on the class lists did not show up to the programs). The gender and race of 257 21CL members were analyzed to examine if there were significant differences between study participants and those whom did not participate in the study.

Historically, research participation literature has highlighted African Americans as especially having a distrust of the medical research field (George, Duran, & Norris, 2014). Twine and Warren (2000) examined the depth of considerations needed when attempting to conduct research with people of varying backgrounds and ethnicities. Although their focus was on race-related research, the idea of asking questions on personal regard and identity may be comparable to one's sense of leadership abilities and identity.

Because two cells in the chi-squared tests were expected to count less than five, the Latinx, Asian, and other race participants were grouped together as AOL. Pearson chi-square test revealed a significant difference in survey participation based on race,  $\chi^2 = 10.899$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .004$ . While 12 Asian, three other race, and four Latinx 21CL members did not participate, 23 Asian, 18 other race, and three Latina 21CL members did participate in the survey. It is important to note that the other race category included study participants who reported multiple racial groups along with only chose the other race option. Some of the multiracial participants may socially identify with one primary racial group (Davenport, 2016). There were no statistically significant differences on survey participation based on gender,  $\chi^2 = 4.257$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .12$ .

## 2.3 Multiple Imputation

Little's MCAR test was conducted and revealed no significant pattern in the missing data ( $\chi^2 = 42.533$ ,  $df = 53$ ,  $p = .848$ ) indicating that data were missing completely at random. There was much variance in the missing data because of the randomization of measurements and scale items presented in the survey. Multiple imputation allowed for missing data to be filled in by generating multiple possibilities for missing data points using existing data (Dong & Peng, 2013; Rubin, 1987). Multiple imputation was justified as it allowed researchers to perform essential statistical analyses that would not be possible before the imputation step (Little et al., 2013; Reinecke & Weins, 2013). The primary investigator utilized the multiple imputation procedure in MPlus 7.0 to create 30 imputed datasets for the 31 cases that contained missing data. The variables used to create data for the missing cases were the measurement items for inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, leadership self-efficacy, social intelligence, leadership experience, and formal leadership role.

## 2.4 Measures

### 2.4.1 Transformational Leadership

Oliver and colleagues (2011) validated and used the Transformational Leadership scale in other leadership development research. Participants completed the 12-item Inspirational Motivation (IM;  $\alpha = .94$ ) and 9-item Individualized Consideration (IC;  $\alpha = .91$ ) subscales of the original 40-item Transformational Leadership measure ( $\alpha = .96$ ; Reichard, Riggio, & Smith, 2009). Participants answered items based on their experiences in organizations, team activities, and group settings. The answer choices were on a 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree) Likert scale. Some sample

items included “My followers would agree that I excel at getting the best out of people” and “My followers would say that I bring positive energy to work.” Items were worded to reflect the youth context. For example, “followers” was replaced with “peers/group members” and “work” was replaced with “group activities/working with others.” Higher composite scores on the two subscales indicated more leadership skills associated with being inspirational and considerate of others.

A self-report form for transformational leadership skills was beneficial to the current study due to the focus on participants’ perceived leader qualities and the potential for leadership training to foster a greater sense of possessing transformational leadership skills (Reichard et al., 2009). Transformational Leadership composite and subscale scores have shown to have adequate internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Participants in the current study reported levels of transformational leadership skills comparable to those reported by Reichard and colleagues (2009) for Inspirational Motivation and Individualized Consideration ( $M = 5.47$ ). The alpha levels for Inspirational Motivation (.91), Individualized Consideration (.86), and the combined score (.93) in the current study were acceptable and consistent with previous research. The measurement model fit for the latent variable including all of the scale items for inspirational motivation and individualized consideration was inadequate,  $\chi^2(188) = 395.867$ ; CFI = .83; SRMR = .70; RMSEA = .09. Removing items from both subscales (kept 7 inspirational motivation-items and 6 individualized consideration-items) resulted in a measurement model with adequate fit to the data,  $\chi^2(64) = 128.864$ ; CFI = .91; SRMR = .05; RMSEA = .08 (Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, & McKee, 2007; Irshad & Hashmi, 2014; Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006).

### **2.4.2 Leadership Self-efficacy**

Participants completed Chan and Drasgow's (2001) 6-item Leadership Self-efficacy scale ( $\alpha = .76 - .83$ ) which has been validated amongst college students across countries. Answer choices ranged on a 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) Likert scale. A sample item from the questionnaire included, "I feel confident that I can be an effective leader in most groups that I work with." A higher score on the leadership self-efficacy scale indicated that an individual possessed a high sense of self-efficacy in their ability to be a leader. Leadership Self-efficacy's reliability ( $\alpha = .66$ ) in the current study was still constructive to the creation of the path analysis model.

### **2.4.3 Social Intelligence**

Participants completed items from the Values in Action Inventory of Strength for Youth scale (VIA-Youth; Peterson and Seligman, 2004). The VIA-Youth is comprised of 24 subscales of characteristics of strengths with a Cronbach alpha of .83 and has been associated with positive youth development (LaFollette, 2010; Park, 2004; Park & Peterson, 2008; Park & Peterson, 2009; Weissberg & O'Brien, 2004). This scale has been specifically made for youth populations and was translated into other languages with similar reliability. The Social Intelligence subscale ( $\alpha \geq .65$ ) contained eight items with answers on a 0 (Not like me at all) to 5 (Very much like me) Likert scale. Numerical scores of self-efficacy strength, compared to efficacy magnitude, has proven to be an adequate measure of self-efficacy (Bandura & Cervone, 1986). Sample questions include, "In most social situations, I talk and behave the right way" and "I always know what to say to make people feel good." A higher score on the scale indicated a high level of intelligence regarding social situations, other's emotions, and

self-regulation. The alpha level for Social Intelligence (.67) in the current study was similar to that found in previous research.

#### **2.4.4 Leadership Experiences**

Participants were asked about their leadership experiences to date and how they perceived the experiences (Chan & Drasgow, 2001). The Past Leadership Experience scale (alpha = .82) has been shown to be associated with leadership self-efficacy and motivation to lead (Bobbio & Manganello, 2009; Mutalib & Ghani, 2013; Popper et al., 2007; Tafero, 2007). The 3-item scale included questions regarding the amount and quality of leadership experiences one has had to date compared to others. The Likert scale was from 1 (Almost no leadership experience/Extremely negative leadership experiences) to 5 (top 10% of leadership experience compared to peers/Extremely positive leadership experiences). Higher scores indicate having more and positive leadership experiences. The alpha level for Leadership Experience (.74) in the current study was acceptable.

#### **2.4.5 Demographic Variables**

Participants provided demographic information such as gender, race, and age. Two additional questions were created for the current study. Participants reported their attendance at 21CL events and whether they held a formal leadership title from a community or school-based organization in the past year.

### **2.5 Plan of Analysis**

Table 1 is a list of scale reliability and means. Internal consistency estimates were acceptable (alpha  $\geq$  .70) for Transformational Leadership and Leadership Experience, but marginal for Social Intelligence (alpha = .67) and Leadership Self-efficacy (alpha = .66). The social intelligence and leadership self-efficacy scales were low in internal

consistency estimates and composed of few items (Bean & Forneris, 2016).

Furthermore, the estimates observed in the current sample were similar to those found by past researchers when incorporating these measures (Toner et al., 2012). It should be noted that the Leadership Self-efficacy scale has been validated amongst young adults (17 - 25 years old range), but has not been extensively utilized with younger adolescents (Chan & Drasgow, 2001). The similar psychometric data in this sample compared to previous research supported its utility in further analyses.

*Table 1: Measurement Reliability and Means*

	Cronbach alpha	M	SD	Range
Transformational Leadership	.93	5.74	.77	3.57 – 7.00
Inspirational Motivation	.91	5.86	.79	3.67 – 7.00
Individualized Consideration	.86	5.57	.84	3.00 – 7.00
Leadership Experience	.74	4.24	.62	2.00 – 5.00
Social Intelligence	.67	3.83	.62	1.67 – 5.00
Leadership Self-efficacy	.66	4.39	.56	2.80 – 5.00

Preliminary analysis included screening all variables for outliers, skewness, kurtosis, and normality. Skewness statistics were within an acceptable range (-1.00 to 1.00) for leadership self-efficacy, social intelligence, and transformational leadership. Leadership Experience was non-normally distributed, with marginal



skewness of -1.06 ( $SE = .23$ ) and kurtosis of 1.31 ( $SE = .45$ ); thus, the scale values were squared to decrease the skewness to -.59 ( $SE = .23$ ) and kurtosis to .00 ( $SE = .45$ ).

Path analysis was utilized to examine the contributions of leadership experience and formal leadership role in explaining transformational leadership score variance and the role leadership self-efficacy and social intelligence play as mediators of those associations. When  $N \leq 250$ , Hu and Bentler (1999) recommended considering values of CFI  $> .96$  and SRMR  $< .06$  in combination as indicators of adequate model fit. The combined cutoffs recommended by Hu and Bentler (1999) were satisfied in the model of youth transformational leadership,  $\chi^2(14) = 7.132, p = .93$ ; CFI = 1.00; SRMR = .047 (Table 2; Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008). All analyses were reported based on maximum likelihood estimation as provided in MPlus (Geiser, 2012; Muthen & Muthen, 2004). Furthermore, unstandardized estimates were reported rather than standardized estimates to illustrate the direct and indirect relationships that the predictor variables had on transformational leadership skills (Dufur et al., 2016; Schreiber, 2006).

*Table 2: Path Analysis Goodness of Fit Indicators for Youth Transformational Leadership Model (N = 142)*

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$\chi^2$	7.132 ( $p = .93$ )
$\chi^2 df$	14
CFI	1.000
TLI	1.048
RMSEA	< .001 (<.001, .024)
SRMR	.047
AIC	1381.260

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### 3 RESULTS

#### 3.1 Preliminary analysis

##### 3.1.1 Participants

Most participants ( $n = 89$ ; 63.60%) were female and the largest racial group was Black or African American ( $n = 57$ ; 40.70%). The average age was nearly 16 years old ( $M = 15.99$ ,  $SD = .92$ ). Most participants ( $n = 80$ ; 69.60%) reported having a formal leadership role in the past year (Table 3). Slightly more than half of participants ( $n = 76$ ; 53.90%) only attended one 21CL event at the time of the study, with 19 (16.50%) of them reporting no formal leadership role in the past year. The current study sample was comparable to the current 21CL membership. Based on the organization's 2016 report, which was released after the current study data was analyzed, 21CL served 1017 high school students. Most members were female (60%), 51% were African American

(followed by 26% Caucasian Americans), and 50% face barriers to success (<https://www.21stcenturyleaders.org/about-us/impact-and-results/>).

*Table 3: Demographic Information*

	Male	Female	Chose not to answer	TOTAL
White	12	27	--	39
Black	24	32	1	57
Latina	--	3	--	3
Asian	7	16	--	23
Other race*	6	11	1	18
TOTAL	49	89	2	140
	M( <i>SD</i> )	Range		
Age	15.99 (.92)	14 – 18		
	years old	years old		
Held a formal leadership role	Yes	No		
	80	35		
21CL events attended	One	Two	Three or more	
	77	40	20	

Note: Two participants' race were not able to be determined

\*Includes multiracial individuals

### 3.1.2 Correlations and Demographic Analyses

Transformational leadership was significantly and positively associated with social intelligence, leadership experience, and leadership self-efficacy (Table 4). Leadership experience was positively correlated with leadership self-efficacy ( $r = .59, p < .001$ ) and social intelligence ( $r = .32, p < .001$ ). Leadership self-efficacy and social intelligence were also significantly correlated ( $r = .21, p = .02$ ).

*Table 4: Correlations amongst Variables of Interest (N = 142)*

	1	2	3	4
1 Transformational Leadership	1.00			
2 Social Intelligence	.58**	1.00		
3 Leadership Experience	.50**	.32**	1.00	
4 Leadership Self-efficacy	.46**	.21*	.59**	1.00

\* $p \leq .05$ , \*\*  $p \leq .001$

Females and males significantly differed in transformational leadership [ $t(115) = -2.015, p = .045, d = .36$ ] and leadership experience [ $t(110) = -2.860, p = .004, d = .51$ ]. Females ( $M = 5.88, SD = .71$ ) reported higher levels of transformational leadership than males ( $M = 5.53, SD = .81$ ). Females ( $M = 4.40, SD = .55$ ) also reported more leadership experience than males ( $M = 4.05, SD = .58$ ). There was an effect of race on leadership self-efficacy,  $F(2, 127) = 2.949, p = .007$ . LSD post hoc test showed White participants ( $M = 4.61, SD = .41$ ) to significantly differ from Black ( $M = 4.38, SD = .55$ ) and AOL ( $M = 4.22, SD = .61$ ) participants. Black participants did not differ from AOL participants in leadership self-efficacy ( $p = .14$ ).

Participants with a formal leadership role ( $M = 5.90$ ,  $SD = .65$ ) reported more transformational leadership skills than those without a formal leadership role ( $M = 5.37$ ,  $SD = .86$ ), [ $t(113) = 3.616$ ,  $p < .001$  ( $d = .73$ )]. Formal leaders ( $M = 4.42$ ,  $SD = .45$ ) also reported more leadership experiences than their counterparts ( $M = 3.84$ ,  $SD = .75$ ) [ $t(112) = 5.150$ ,  $p < .001$  ( $d = 1.05$ )]. Participants who held a formal leadership role in the past year ( $M = 4.58$ ,  $SD = .41$ ) reported a higher sense of leadership self-efficacy compared to those without a formal leadership role ( $M = 4.02$ ,  $SD = .63$ ), [ $t(113) = 5.643$ ,  $p < .001$  ( $d = 1.14$ )]. Participants' age was not significantly associated with any of the research study variables.

To account for potential bias in estimating the associations among the primary study variables, gender, race, and formal leadership role were included as covariates in the structural equation model examining leadership experience and self-efficacy, social intelligence, and transformational leadership skills. Because of the relationship and similar nature of having a formal leadership role and more past leadership experiences, formal leadership role and leadership experience were allowed to correlate with one another ( $r = .41$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

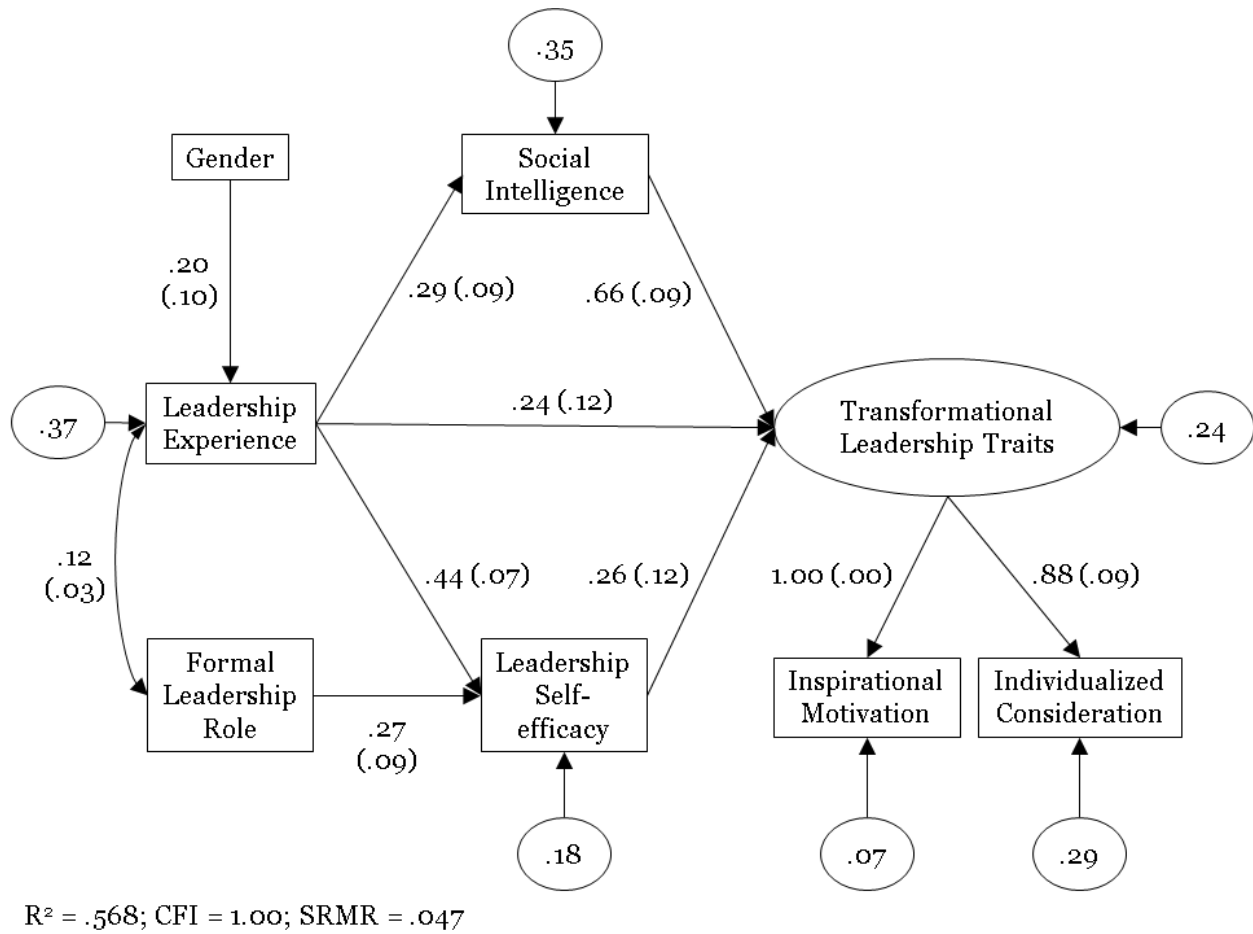
### **3.2 Primary data analysis**

#### **3.2.1 Youth Transformational Leadership Path Analysis**

The structural model accounted for 56.80% of the total variance in youth transformational leadership. Gender ( $b = 0.20$ ,  $p = .049$ ) was associated with leadership experience while race did not significantly contribute to the model. Table 5 summarized and Figure 2 displayed the total, direct, and indirect effects of formal leadership role and leadership experience on transformational leadership. A Sobel test was conducted to determine the statistical significance of the indirect effects of leadership experience and

formal leadership role on transformational leadership as mediated through leadership self-efficacy and social intelligence (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Preacher & Hayes, 2004; Sobel, 1986). The indirect effect of leadership experience – transformational leadership's relationship through leadership self-efficacy was significant ( $z = 2.09, p = .037$ ). Furthermore, the association of leadership experience with transformational leadership was also mediated by social intelligence ( $z = 3.09, p = .002$ ). After accounting for the indirect effects, the direct effect of leadership experience on transformational leadership remained significant ( $b = 0.24, p = .033$ ). Additionally, the direct paths from social intelligence ( $b = 0.66, p < .001$ ) and leadership self-efficacy ( $b = 0.26, p = .027$ ) to transformational leadership were significant. The total effect of leadership experience on transformational leadership was significant such that for every unit increase in leadership experience, transformational leadership increased by .55 ( $p < .001$ ).

Formal leadership role was significantly linked to leadership self-efficacy ( $b = 0.27, p = .002$ ), but not transformational leadership ( $b = .07, p = .558$ ). The indirect effect of formal leadership role on transformational leadership through leadership self-efficacy was also non-significant ( $z = 1.79, p = .073$ ). Specifically, the Sobel test indicated that although having a formal role was associated with higher leadership self-efficacy, leadership self-efficacy did not significantly mediate the formal leadership role – transformational leadership relationship. Furthermore, the total effect of formal leadership role on transformational leadership was not significant ( $p = .23$ ).



*Figure 2: Significant Paths for the Youth Transformational Leadership Model*

*Table 5: Decomposition of Effects of Leadership Experience and Formal Leadership Role on Transformational Leadership*

Leadership Experience		B	SE	Z
Direct	Transformational Leadership	.24*	.12	--
Indirect	Social Intelligence	.19**	.06	3.05
Indirect	Leadership Self-efficacy	.12*	.06	2.09
Total Effect		.55**	.12	--
Formal Leadership Role		b	SE	Z
Direct	Transformational Leadership	.07	.12	--
Indirect	Leadership Self-efficacy	.07	.04	1.79
Total Effect		.14	.18	--

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$



In sum, two of the three main hypotheses regarding the relationship leadership exposure, leadership self-efficacy, and social intelligence had with transformational leadership were supported. The first hypothesis was partially supported such that adolescents with more positive leadership experiences reported incorporating more transformational leadership behaviors compared to those with less positive leadership experiences. Having held a formal leadership role in the past year was associated with leadership experience and self-efficacy; however, it did not have a significant effect on transformational leadership scores directly or indirectly. The second hypothesis was partially supported in that leadership self-efficacy served as a mediator to leadership experience – transformational leadership’s relationship. Previous leadership experience contributed to adolescents feeling more comfortable in their ability to be leaders, specifically, transformational leaders. The third hypothesis was also partially supported in that social intelligence was an additional mediator of leadership experience’s link to transformational leadership. Adolescents who had previous leadership experience, not necessarily from a formal leadership role, were more likely to inspire and consider individual group members’ needs due to their ability to manage others and social situations. Overall, the observed data supported the conceptual model.

#### **4 DISCUSSION**

The aim of this study was to examine adolescents’ leadership exposure, leadership self-efficacy, and social intelligence association with transformational leadership skills in the context of a leadership development program. The current data findings supported most of the hypotheses. While having a formal leadership role was positively associated with leadership experience and self-efficacy, only leadership experience was related to leadership self-efficacy, social intelligence, and

transformational leadership skills. Leadership self-efficacy and social intelligence partially mediated leadership experience and transformational leadership skills' relationship.

#### **4.1 Leadership Exposure and Self-efficacy**

Leading a group can cultivate adolescents' optimistic vision and consideration for others. The majority of 21CL participants have held formal leadership roles and rated past leadership experiences positively overall. The current Youth Transformational Leadership model provides clarity on how formal leadership roles were not related to transformational leadership skills. Being a formal leader was associated with a more positive perspective of past leadership experiences and a higher sense of leadership self-efficacy, but did not link to transformational leadership skills. Intuitively, allowing someone the opportunity to engage in an activity can demystify and normalize that activity. Visceral experiences such as being appointed or elected into a formal role could lead to less cynical or apprehensive attitudes towards one's quality and quantity of leadership opportunities. These findings suggest that acquiring formal titles and power does not automatically translate to being a considerate and motivational leader. Research conducted with managers in natural and experimental work settings have displayed a myriad of leadership styles; however, those who embodied transformational leadership had better rapport with employees and more productive outcomes compared to leaders of other styles (Bono & Ilies, 2006; Tims et al., 2011; Toor & Ofori, 2009). The results of the current path analysis suggest that previous research findings from business organizations may also apply to the development of leadership among adolescents.

The complementary nature of human-functioning determinants illustrated in Bandura's (1986a) social cognitive theory are present in 21CL programming as it encourages adolescents to self-reflect on leadership behaviors and self-efficacy, potential career pathways, and commitment to self-improvement. 21CL programming consists of interventions focused on leadership skill improvement, professional environment optimization, and self-efficacy reinforcement. Within the framework of social cognitive theory, current study participants' environmental factors would include leadership exposure while social intelligence and leadership self-efficacy would contribute to their personal factors. Expression of transformational leadership is the behavior that interconnects environmental and personal factors into a triadic reciprocity. 21CL members are proactive agents of self-development and commodore building within a diverse, inclusive environment. The fundamental human capabilities of creating symbolism and forethought (inspirational motivation), experiencing vicarious learning (exposure), having self-regulatory mechanisms (social intelligence), and reflecting on the self (leadership self-efficacy building) are akin to the constructs investigated in the current study. The Youth Transformational Leadership model illustrates how adolescents' environmental factor of experience links to transformational leadership skills and is partially mediated by personal factors related to social intelligence and leadership self-efficacy.

Researchers have viewed past leadership experience as an antecedent to leadership self-efficacy (Chan & Drasgow, 2001; Paglis & Green, 2002; Simonsen et al., 2014; Tafero, 2007). Leadership experience is the catalyst for people's beliefs about their leadership abilities and performance (Pajares & Miller, 1994). Bandura (2012) revisited the concept of self-efficacy suggesting that past experiences guide an

individual's belief in her/his efficacy in a given task based on the reinforcement received. Mastery experiences, social modeling, and social persuasion are decisive influences to the reinforcement of self-enabling or self-debilitating beliefs. Allen and colleagues (2014) acknowledged that not focusing on past leadership experience when illustrating leadership self-efficacy as a mediator for personality and leadership outcomes was a limitation to their study. Task self-efficacy has been regularly associated with task opportunities/exposure and task performance (Pajares & Miller, 1994). Emboldened by past positive leadership exemplars, experiences, and encouragement, one can rationalize that she or he possess the basis to be an effective leader. These types of experiences and competencies are linked to 21CL members acting as transformational leaders by inspiring group members and considering them as valued contributors that stride towards a shared goal.

#### **4.2 Social intelligence**

Social intelligence did not significantly differ based on participants' demographic information or formal leadership role. Peterson & Seligman (2004) also found no significant racial differences in social intelligence scores. Petrides and Furnham (2000) found that females possessed higher levels of social skills than males, but tended to underestimate their emotional intelligence. Males, on the other hand, rated themselves as high in emotionally intelligent compared to females. Other researchers have found mixed results of social intelligence based on gender, typically citing significant differences on subfactors of social intelligence. Some of these subfactors included perceptions and management of emotions, thought facilitation, social competence, and interpersonal skills (Bar-On, 2006; Brackett & Mayer, 2003; Brackett et al., 2006). Mandell and Pherwani (2003) found emotional intelligence to relate to

transformational leadership but no significant gender differences in these two factors. Nonetheless, other researchers have found gender to be a contributing factor to self and meta-perceptions of leadership (Paustian-Underdahl, Walker, & Woehr, 2014).

Social intelligence mediated the association between leadership experience and transformational leadership but did not significantly contribute to the overall model. It is important to note that social intelligence was associated with the highest unit increase and correlation with transformational leadership scores. The correlations for social intelligence with leadership self-efficacy were minimal and the lowest compared to the other variables. A path analysis excluding leadership self-efficacy still revealed social intelligence to not significantly contribute to the Youth Transformational Leadership model ( $R^2 = .082, p = .08$ ). After splitting the current data by gender, the Youth Transformational Leadership model retained adequate model fit for adolescent females ( $\chi^2[10] = 6.845, p = .74$ ; CFI = 1.00; SRMR = .031) but not for adolescent males ( $\chi^2[10] = 11.897, p = .29$ ; CFI = .98; SRMR = .122). Social intelligence for females partially mediated ( $z = 2.53, p = .01$ ) the leadership experience – transformational leadership relationship, but still was non-significant to the model ( $R^2 = .106, p = .12$ ). Rehm (2014) alluded that the social intelligence variable should be removed from the Youth Transformational Leadership model as to focus concisely on leadership-exclusive elements of leadership training.

Self-reporting levels of social intelligence may be a limited perspective of one's true embodiment of transformational leadership skills. Additionally, in a study conducted with American elected officials and their staffers, Barbuto and Burbach (2006) found elected officials' self-reports and staffers' ratings of their transformational

leadership skills to be positively correlated with emotional intelligence. While officials' self-reports of emotional intelligence correlated with all four transformational leadership qualities, only the staffers' ratings of elected officials' individualized consideration and inspirational motivation were correlated with their ratings of elected officials' emotional intelligence. Barling, Slater, and Kelloway (2000) found pulp and paper organizational managers with higher self-reports of emotional intelligence received a higher subordinate rating of transformational leadership compared to those of lower emotional intelligence.

### **4.3 Gender**

Female participants possessed more positive leadership experiences and higher transformational leadership skills compared to males, yet the literature does not reflect the current findings (Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008; Kickul, Wilson, Marlino, & Barbosa, 2008; Thomas, 2000; Melcher et al., 1992). Young females involved in 4-H activities scored higher on youth leadership life skills compared to young 4-H male members (Dormody & SeEVERS, 1994). After participating in 4-H leadership activities, Hoyt and Kennedy (2008) found that adolescent females were apprehensive at considering themselves as leaders because they viewed leadership as a traditionally masculine trait. Researchers have found that males are more likely than females to be motivated to lead based on the incentives and extrinsic rewards of being a leader (Cho et al., 2015). Similarly, adolescent females showed more intrinsic work values than adolescent males, and intrinsic work value endorsement was more predictive of positive career development than extrinsic work value endorsement (Hirschi, 2010). Wilson, Marlino, and Kickul (2004) stated that girls' access to positive youth development programming is salient to

creating women entrepreneurs due to the role that leadership exposure plays on self-efficacy.

21CL provides a positive social learning setting, where many of the current female 21CL members are confident transformational leaders, for potential female members to cultivate their skills and make social connections. This setting could lead to the positive reinforcement and role modeling of transformational leadership skills. The sizeable amount of variance in Inspirational Motivation and Individualized Consideration explained in the Youth Transformational Leadership model could reflect how 21CL members are relating many of their leadership experiences and schema of a leader to being a visionary with a personal touch. 21CL members, and possibly adolescents in a wider sense, believed that being a person who brings positive energy to group settings, motivates people to do their best, and supports the continuous learning of their peers is a person whom others will follow and respect.

#### **4.4 Leadership Training Participation**

Even though the current measure for 21CL events attendance was not a significant contributor to explaining transformational leadership, youth organizations should include tracking organization participation and its relationship to leadership development along with other desired outcomes. 21CL events greatly vary in time spent and intensity of programming. While the summer institute programs are weeklong, residential college campus experiences, the volunteering opportunities and Summer Institutes Orientation are one-day events. Event attendance was quantified and not qualified as formal leadership training occurs at some events more than at other events; nonetheless, informal skill building opportunities occur at all the events. Only 46.10% of participants attended more than one 21CL event. A sample of more seasoned 21CL

members may have significantly linked 21CL event attendance to the constructs of the current study.

In an evaluation of a peer leadership development program for HIV prevention, Fongkaew, Fongkaew, and Suchaxaya (2007) found young youth leaders, mainly 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students, to increase in communication skills and leadership self-efficacy as defined by confidence in expressing themselves and leading peer-group activities. Peer and teachers' evaluations also reflected the perception of increased leadership skills. The HIV prevention curriculum included a leadership component akin to social cognitive theory (e.g. defining what makes a good leader, decision-making and problem-solving processes, opportunities to lead peer activities, and time to reflect on leadership behaviors). The youth leaders held HIV prevention activities in and outside of the classroom. Due to their increased sense of leadership skills and knowledge of HIV prevention after the program, students felt more apt to give HIV information to family members. This vital information would have been lost if Fongkaew, Fongkaew, and Suchaxaya (2007) decided only to evaluate HIV prevention knowledge and the amount of HIV prevention activities held by program participants.

Adolescents involved in a two-day leadership institute for Chicano-Latino youth experienced an increase in self-confidence, leadership skills, and social skills two months after participation (Bloomberg et al., 2003). Furthermore, leadership institute participants stated a greater sense of community responsibility, more potential role models, and were likely to graduate high school with intentions to go to college. The institute's staff and stakeholders designed the program logic model based on respecting young people's capital, autonomy, culture, and ability to improve. Exposure to positive role models, culturally relevant learning opportunities to led community service



projects, and prosocial interactions with peers align with social cognitive theory and self-efficacy building. Both of the previous studies highlight that program participation influences young people's civic engagement and knowledge sharing behaviors beyond the structured setting.

#### **4.5 Limitations**

The limitations of the current study are data generalization and resources. 21CL membership is an extracurricular activity with merit-based opportunities. The findings and suggestions from this current study likely do not generalize to all American high school students. The sample was mainly adolescents of color; nonetheless, Latinx adolescents were severely overrepresented. Hispanic/Latinx youth accounted for 13% of Georgian students enrolled in a primary or secondary school during the 2015 – 2016 school year (<https://gaawards.gosa.ga.gov/analytics/saw.dll?PortalPages>). The Latinx population is steadily increasing in the United States and projected to increase by 114.80% to become 28.60% of the American population by 2060 (Colby & Ortman, 2014). 21CL, and all youth organizations, should consider expanding their efforts to recruit Latinx students through community-based organizations and providing the option for parental information in Spanish. This could increase parents' awareness of the organization and willingness to allow their children to participate in positive youth development activities.

On average, participants rated themselves as having more and higher quality leadership experiences compared to their peers. Participants consisted of an array of exceptional young people, and relatively high scale score means could be due to the social norms of being engaged in a leadership organization (Allen et al., 2014). Some researchers have stated the potential limitation to self-report bias in organizational

behavior measures such as leadership skills (Donaldson & Grant-Vallone, 2002; Solansky, 2010). For instance, the means for transformational leadership subscales and social intelligence were comparable to previous research with adult populations (Kim, Seo, & Cho, 2012; Park & Peterson, 2006; Toner et al., 2012; Reichard et al., 2009). Approximately two out of three participants held a formal leadership role, making this sample pool relatively high in leadership experience. Nevertheless, the Youth Transformational Leadership model is still applicable regarding positive youth development by illustrating the relationship leadership experience and self-efficacy has on leadership skills.

## **4.6 Future Directions**

### ***4.6.1 Youth Version of Scales***

The survey scales and scale items were set to display in random order to control for testing fatigue or other potential biases. The use of multiple imputation to maximize the use of all available data and reduce bias in estimates of statistical associations was critical to the validity and utility of the current study results. The transformational leadership, leadership self-efficacy, and leadership experience measurement scales had not been utilized with adolescent samples before this current study. Although the transformational leadership subscales and leadership experience scale reached standard Cronbach alpha levels, measures of social intelligence and leadership self-efficacy were on the cusp of .70. The latter two scales still proved to be beneficial to social intelligence and leadership self-efficacy's mediation of leadership experience association with transformational leadership.

The word modifications to the transformational leadership subscales did not have an adverse effect on the validity of the Inspirational Motivation and Individualized

Consideration scores and would be useful when creating a youth version of Reichard and colleagues' (2009) Transformational Leadership measure. The research design of the current study was correlational and not true experimental due to the nature of the sample pool and limited resources to conduct the study. Gathering a control group of adolescents comparable to 21CL members, tracking both groups throughout their high school tenure, and retaining an adequate sample size to minimize the need for multiple imputation would require research participation incentives and additional time to collect data. Future directions for the current study extend to longitudinal designs, including other scales, and including a control group.

#### ***4.6.2 Transformational Leadership Training and Personality***

Investigating the influence that adolescent personality types and transformational leadership-focused training has on leadership development could be a potential research study (Judge & Bono, 2000; Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002). Bono and Judge (2004) indicated that extraversion was the strongest personality trait predictor of transformational leadership via idealized influence followed by agreeableness' association with individual consideration. Extraversion has been operationalized as a latent construct with lower order qualities: enthusiasm (being informal, cheerfulness, optimism, and sociability) and assertiveness (dominance, high-energy stimulation, and sensation seeking; Judge et al., 2002). This enthusiastic and assertive personality trait prompts people to lead conversations amongst others, pursue new and challenging tasks, and encourage others to be optimistic when working towards a goal. Guerin and colleagues (2011) found an association between extraversion and leadership skill building; adulthood leadership potential stemmed from high adolescence extraversion, which was higher due to temperamental

approach/withdrawal as an infant. Reichard and colleagues (2011) reported adolescent personality traits' relationship to leadership: extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness positively correlated with transformational leadership while neuroticism was negatively correlated.

Though researchers have illustrated personality to be linked to expressions of social intelligence (Birknerová, Frankovský, & Zbihlejová, 2013; Lopes, Salovey, & Straus, 2003; van der Zee, Schakel, & Thijs, 2002), Guerin and colleagues (2011) have asserted that social skills can fully account for why extraverted personality has been associated with leadership skills. More research is required to illustrate how transformational leadership training builds speaking, listening, and empathy skills in adolescents of varying personality types. The mission statement of youth development organizations typically alludes to facilitating prosocial skills and discouraging exclusion behavior. Social intelligence building can occur by teaching adolescents the importance of understanding social settings, communication skills, and adaptive responses to stressful situations. High school is an optimal period to intervene on leadership and social skill development through positive youth development programming.

#### ***4.6.3 Familial Factors and Age on Leadership Expression***

Although 50% of 21CL members face barriers to success, current study participants were not asked to report their annual household income or living situation. Nonetheless, the current study sample did reflect the organization's overall racial and gender demographics. Familial factors such as socioeconomic status, household structure, parents' leadership style, and access to youth development programs can affect whether an adolescent is able to attend leadership training events. Zacharatos, Barling, and Kelloway (2000) highlighted that adolescents' perception of parents'

transformational leadership style had an influence on their expression of transformational leadership skills. Ratings of those young athletics' leadership skills by coaches and peers further demonstrate the aura which adolescent transformational leaders bring into group settings. Nwanzu (2017) found that growing up with authoritative parents had the most influence on Nigerian college students' enterprise potential. Fongkaew, Fongkaew, and Suchaxaya's (2007) study with 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students illustrated the aptitude for leadership that young adolescents possess when given an opportunity to learn information and teach others. There are ways for students as young as elementary school to be engaged in leadership training through games, gaining responsibilities, and other techniques (Bisland, 2004; Myrick & Bowman, 1991). Bisland (2004) provided leadership education activities for elementary school students associated with concepts from social cognitive theory (e.g. identifying leader characteristics from fairy tales and children's literature, defining leadership in their own words, dyad and group tasks, and thinking about their future as a leader). Future directions for transformational leadership research with adolescents should examine the impact which parental figures' leadership style, socioeconomic status, and adolescents' age has on transformational leadership expression. These familial factors to early exposure of leadership training could be examined longitudinally with the outcomes being adulthood career trajectory and transformational leadership emergence (Gottfried et al., 2011; Guerin et al., 2011; Reichard et al., 2011).

#### ***4.6.4 360-Degree Assessments of Factors***

Although it was the purpose of the current study to investigate self-assessments of transformational leadership skills in adolescents, a 360-degree assessment of the study variables could have demonstrated a different perspective of participants'

personal factors and leadership skills (Barbuto & Burbach, 2006; Spano-Szekely, Griffin, Clavelle, & Fitzpatrick, 2016). 360-degree assessments are when stakeholders besides the individual or outside of the organization report on the same constructs as said person or organization (Poister, Thomas, & Berryman, 2013; Tee & Ahmed, 2014). Wang, Wilhite, and Martino (2015) revealed that leaders who over-estimated their transformational leadership skills received lower ratings of emotional intelligence by their subordinates compared to leaders whose self-reported transformational leadership skills were more aligned with subordinates' ratings of their leadership. Self-biases can influence one's survey responses, endorsement of behaviors, and other's perception of one's abilities.

Like many intensive training programs, 21CL events are scheduled with little time to add additional activities for members to be responsible for at the conclusion of a day or weeklong program. In addition to meeting other Georgian high school students, 21CL members are encouraged to network with the professional volunteers after sessions and at the multiple business luncheons. A session defining social intelligence, time to familiarize adolescents with 360-rating protocol, and participation incentives would be necessary for 360-peer raters to be properly attentive to other members throughout the programming and not rate based on likeability or popularity. The assessment of an individual based other's evaluation of their behaviors can provide a more holistic and less self-serving perspective of feedback (Bergman, Lornudd, Sjöberg, & Von Thiele Schwarz, 2014; Ladyshevsky & Taplin, 2015). Future researchers should examine how peers, teachers, or others whom encounter adolescents in group settings may perceive a young people's social intelligence, leadership self-efficacy, leadership

experience, and transformational leadership skills in relation their self-report of those measures.

## **5 CONCLUSION**

One of the goals of transformational leaders is to cultivate the development of others. The Youth Transformational Leadership model demonstrates how adolescents' learned experiences, belief in their skills, and understanding of people and situations were linked to how they lead others in a transformative manner (Barling et al., 2000; Fitzgerald & Schutte, 2009). Leadership researchers frequently refer to research participants and the people they interact with as subordinates, followers, employees, and other professional terms. For many formal and informal youth-led activities, adolescents are typically leading others around their age if not younger. Current participants were high school-aged adolescents, and are likely to interact and complete tasks with their peers. The findings from the current study illustrated the partial mediations of leadership experience and transformational leadership by leadership self-efficacy and social intelligence.

### **5.1 Positive Youth Development in 21CL**

The lack of dramatic differences in social intelligence amongst the participants is a positive finding for the 21CL organization, as they can bolster facilitating an environment that includes highly social intelligent individuals. 21CL members create a climate that new members can feel understood, listened to, and encouraged to incorporate transformational leadership skills in their emerging leadership style. 21CL programming is aligned with social cognitive and social learning theory as program officials provide opportunities to build leadership skills mainly through group activities and professional situations. Adolescents engaged in 21CL leadership training are

competent transformational leaders and effectively interact with others in social situations. Within the 21CL organization, members have the opportunity to join councils and committees, lead service projects and 21CL sessions, network with professional and peers, obtain internships with the top companies based in Georgia, and take online leadership-related training classes. 21CL members can spend their high school tenure developing their leadership skills and professional networks with peers and adults in their career field of interest. The Youth Transformational Leadership Model exemplifies the important lesson instilled in 21CL members; leadership titles can provide one the authority and opportunity to lead others, but the knowledge and competence realized are the true reward of leadership experience.

## **5.2 Incorporating Transformational Leadership Elsewhere**

The findings from the current study expand further than just an evaluation of 21CL members but to the development of adolescents engaged in positive youth development programming. Youth organizations' decision makers, education officials, and all stakeholders to the success of young people should value leadership and self-efficacy development as a component of overall programming (Hine, 2013). Decision makers of youth leadership programs should focus on providing valuable skills not typically provided within school curriculum such as exploring the four qualities of a transformational leader and fostering social intelligence. Rehm (2014) argued for adolescent leadership development models to differ from typical high school curriculum that hone in on general skill building activities related to academics. An evaluation of numerous positive youth development programs found that the most effective programs addressed self-efficacy, prosocial norms, and competence building (Catalano et al., 2004).



School officials should consider the impact that transformational leadership training for staff could have on systematic-level factors and students-related outcomes. On a systematic level, Griffith (2004) found that a school principal's transformational leadership skills indirectly affected staff turnover and school-aggregated student achievement through staff job satisfaction ratings. Teachers in Blase's (1987) qualitative study reported principals who attended to their social-emotional (providing support during conflicts, recognition, and opportunities for others to lead) and managerial (i.e. setting clear goals and expectations, following through with tasks, and being problem-solving oriented) needs be to more effective leaders than principals who ignored those needs. These findings point to principals as pivotal figures who set the professional climate for teachers and staff to do their jobs which can impact student achievement. Overall, school officials trained to utilize transformational leadership behaviors can create or modify settings to promote professional collaborations and retention, opportunities for student-driven initiatives, education reform, and positive student-teacher relationships (Bemak, 2000; Blase, 1987; Darling-Hammond, Meyerson, LaPointe, & Orr, 2009; Dollarhide, 2003; Griffith, 2004; Marks & Printy, 2003).

### **5.3 Leadership Exposure and Social Skill-building**

Some researchers place great emphasis on personality type affecting leadership effectiveness, but it is malleable social skills that are the true measure of leadership effectiveness (Guerin et al., 2011). More talkative adolescents can learn through leadership training that their quality of speak is more salient to being a good leader than their quantity of speak. The adage to "listen twice as much as one speaks" can be meaningful words to adolescents who may be modeling their leadership style from authoritative, talkative parents or adult figures. Less boisterous adolescents can

recognize their strengths as observant, critical thinking listeners in group settings. Individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation are not related to charismatic communication skills as idealized influence and inspirational motivation are on transformational leadership expression (Bono & Ilies, 2006). By building young people's self-efficacy in tasks they are capable of doing, youth leadership training personnel can then introduce techniques for young people to cultivate other relevant skills.

Leadership exposure enables adolescents to be active determinants and influence their surroundings. The direct influence a purposeful person has on others, which Bandura (2009) discussed, is revealed not to be contingent on bestowed titles and formal recognition of power, but from the skills gained acting as an observant, engaging leader. Transformational leadership behaviors are not second nature for most people. One's increased sense of being able to be a leader and social intelligence partially explains the relationship between leadership experiences and transformational leadership skills. A positive trajectory for adolescents' sense of self-efficacy is an essential tenet to student leadership development models (Rehm, 2014). Training programs are not exclusive to adults, as researchers and decision makers continue to comprehend the benefits of supporting earlier leadership and professional training initiatives. Murphy and Johnson (2011) illustrated leader development from a longitudinal, lifespan approach in which early learning experiences from practice and exposure preceded self-efficacy and self-schema of leadership. Youth leadership experiences provide learning opportunities and the potential of mastery, which incrementally shapes adolescents' skills and competencies (Seddon et al., 2013). In addition, incorporating leadership and professional development into youth

programming promotes youth people's career planning and competence to become leaders in their industry of interest (Stringer et al., 2011).

#### **5.4 Adolescents' Transformational Leadership and Relational Power**

This current study contributes to the limited research conducted with adolescents regarding transformational leadership. This leadership style of transforming others is one of the most effective forms of leadership and practical for adolescent leadership positions compared to more authoritative leadership styles. For high school students, there is a greater necessity for young people to lead than there are formal leadership roles to accommodate them. Relative power compared to adults and sociometric dynamics amongst peers affect the extent adolescents can give substantial input or decide outcomes (Adler & Adler, 1998; Qvortrup 1999; 2000). Transformational leadership skills encourage young people not to lead forcibly or from a distance, but to lead by example, care about others' needs, be motivational, and get the best effort out of people. This style of leadership serendipitously works within the confines of youth's relative lack of structural power and access to resources. Teaching and fostering adolescents' sense of transformational leadership skills prepare them to excel in adulthood where these prosocial behaviors, such as bringing positive energy and considering others in the workplace, can build their personal brand and rapport. This level of competence and prosocial behaviors will propel their career trajectory quicker than less competent or engaging leaders.

In conclusion, positive youth program personnel should be cognizant of how participants' prior experiences and self-assessment of their abilities relate to their behaviors and efforts. The Youth Transformational Leadership model provides

additional support to adolescents' leadership experience, social intelligence, and leadership self-efficacy direct and indirect links to transformational leadership skills.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix A**

#### ***Appendix A.1 IRB Assent Form for Online Survey***

Georgia State University (GSU) Department of Psychology

Assent to Participate in a Research Study Youth Assent (Online)

Title of Study: Investigating Leadership Development in Youth Principal Investigator

(PI): Gabe Kuperminc, Ph. D Co-Investigator (CI): Julia Perilla, Ph. D

Student PI: Jacque-Corey Cormier, M.S. Sponsor: None

- I. **Introduction** This research study is about how youth become leaders over time. You are invited because you applied to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders (21CL). About 200 youth will be in this study.
- II. **Procedures** Your parent/guardian were informed about the study and the option of not inviting you. If you decide to share, we will ask you about yourself. This includes social skills, being a leader, and sense of self. There are also some questions about your age, high school, and zip code. You will be asked to complete the online survey twice. The first time is now and then again in about nine months. Each survey should take no more than 15 minutes. This research study will take about 30 minutes total. If you agree to be in this study, you can start the survey by clicking “Yes, I wish to continue” at the end of this form.
- III. **Risks** This study has minimal risk. You might feel distressed answering questions about yourself and being a leader. There are links to mental health services at the end of the survey if you feel distressed.
- IV. **Benefits** You may not benefit from taking this survey in a direct way. This research study helps 21CL see how youth build their leadership skills.
- V. **Voluntary Participation** You will not be forced into this research study. You decide whether you take the survey. You may omit any question you do not want

to answer or stop without penalty. This will not change how 21CL or GSU staff treats you.

- VI. **Confidentiality** We will keep your records private to the extent of the law. The PI, CI, and Student PI listed above will have access to your survey answers. We may share the data with the GSU Institutional Review Board and Office for Human Research Protection as they make sure research is done correctly. We may also share the data set with 21CL staff and others. This includes professionals and researchers. Any data sets shared will not have your identifying information. You will complete the survey online through Qualtrics. Data sent over the web may not always be secure, but Qualtrics software is trusted and sponsored by GSU. Physical copies of forms and data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the student PI's lab on GSU main campus. Confidential information collected via paper will be stored in a locked cabinet with the key kept away from the cabinet, elsewhere in the lab. Only the research team knows where the key is. Research ID numbers, not your name, will be used in the data set. Your name and email address will be kept on a different file from the data. All files from this research study need passwords to open them. All data files will be stored on the Qualtrics server or research lab computers at GSU. These computers are constantly being checked for viruses. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when we present this study or publish its results. The findings will be summed up and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally.

- VII. **Contacts** Please call Jacque-Corey (404-538-7822) or email (jcormier1@gsu.edu) with questions, concerns, or complaints about this



study. You can also call if you think you have been harmed by the study. Contact Susan Vogtner if you want to talk to someone who is not part of the study team. Susan Vogtner is in the GSU Office of Research Integrity. You can call her (404-413-3513) or email her (svogtner1@gsu.edu). You can contact Susan Vogtner to ask questions or offer input about the study. You can also call if you have questions or concerns about your rights in this study. Please select whether you choose to be part of the study or not.

VIII. IRB#: H16501 IRB APPROVAL: 7/25/2016 IRB EXPIRATION: 4/28/2017

## ***Appendix A.2 Survey Measures***

### ***Appendix A.2.1 Leadership Self-efficacy***

LSE1 I am not confident that I can lead others effectively.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

LSE2 Leading others effectively is probably something I will be good at.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

LSE3 I believe that leading others effectively is a skill that I can master.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

LSE4 I do not expect to become very effective at leading.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree

- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

LSE5 I feel confident that I can be an effective leader in most of the groups that I work with.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

LSE6 It probably will not be possible for me to lead others as effectively as I would like.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

### ***Appendix A.2.2 Social Intelligence***

SI1 In most social situations, I talk and behave in a way that is appropriate to the situation.

- ☐ Does not describe me
- ☐ Describes me slightly well
- ☐ Describes me moderately well
- ☐ Describes me very well
- ☐ Describes me extremely well

SI2 I always know what to say to make people feel good.

- ☐ Does not describe me
- ☐ Describes me slightly well
- ☐ Describes me moderately well
- ☐ Describes me very well
- ☐ Describes me extremely well

SI3 I know what to do to avoid trouble with others.

- ☐ Does not describe me
- ☐ Describes me slightly well
- ☐ Describes me moderately well
- ☐ Describes me very well
- ☐ Describes me extremely well

SI4 I am good at getting along with all sorts of people.

- ☐ Does not describe me
- ☐ Describes me slightly well
- ☐ Describes me moderately well
- ☐ Describes me very well
- ☐ Describes me extremely well

SI5 I often make other people upset without meaning to.

- ☐ Does not describe me
- ☐ Describes me slightly well
- ☐ Describes me moderately well
- ☐ Describes me very well
- ☐ Describes me extremely well

SI6 I usually understand how I feel and why.

- ☐ Does not describe me
- ☐ Describes me slightly well
- ☐ Describes me moderately well
- ☐ Describes me very well
- ☐ Describes me extremely well

SI7 I am good at knowing what people want without asking.

- ☐ Does not describe me
- ☐ Describes me slightly well
- ☐ Describes me moderately well
- ☐ Describes me very well
- ☐ Describes me extremely well

SI8 I often get in arguments with others.

- ☐ Does not describe me
- ☐ Describes me slightly well
- ☐ Describes me moderately well
- ☐ Describes me very well
- ☐ Describes me extremely well

### ***Appendix A.2.3 Inspirational Motivation***

IM1 My peers would agree that I excel at getting the best out of people.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

IM2 My peers would say that I bring positive energy to group tasks and settings.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

IM3 Others seem to easily follow my lead.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

IM4 I have found that motivating people to do their best is the primary way to success.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

IM5 My peers would say that I have an extremely high level of motivation.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

IM6 I am quite effective in boosting my peers' self-confidence.

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Somewhat disagree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Somewhat agree

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

IM7 My peers have told me that my enthusiasm (energy and passion) excites others.

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Somewhat disagree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Somewhat agree

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree



IM8 Inspiring others has always come easily to me.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

IM9 I work hard to provide my peers with an inspirational vision.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

IM10 My peers would say that I have cheered them up when they were in a bad mood.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

IM11 Other people look to me for direction.

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Somewhat disagree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Somewhat agree

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

IM12 My peers would say they admire the energy I bring.

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Somewhat disagree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Somewhat agree

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

#### ***Appendix A.2.4 Individualized Consideration***

IC1 My peers would say that I am a good mentor.

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Somewhat disagree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Somewhat agree

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

IC2 In group/team settings over time, my peers would tell you that I check in with them on almost a daily basis to find out how they are feeling and thinking.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

IC3 Peers that I have worked with (group projects, organizations, etc.) would say that I know them personally.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

IC4 One of my primary goals as a leader is to support the continuous learning of my peers.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree

- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

IC5 My peers (not including close friends) would tell you that I care about their needs and concerns.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

IC6 My peers (not including close friends) would say that I am very attentive to their individual needs and concerns.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

IC7 I spend a great deal of time getting to know my peers individually.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

IC8 My peers have often told me that they appreciate my attention to their feelings and concerns.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

IC9 My peers would say that I create a supportive environment.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

### ***Appendix A.2.5 Leadership Experience***

PLE1 Looking at your life to date, how would you rate the AMOUNT of leadership experience you have compared to your peers?

- ☐ Almost no leadership experience compared to my peers.
- ☐ Very little leadership experience compared to my peers.
- ☐ Average leadership experience compared to my peers.
- ☐ Above average amount of leadership experience.
- ☐ I am in the top 10% in terms of leadership experience compared to my peers.

PLE2 In your past experience working in groups and teams, how often did you become the leader?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Very seldom
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Quite often
- ☐ Almost always

PLE3 Looking back at your life to date, how would you rate the QUALITY of leadership experience you have compared to your peers?

- ☐ Extremely bad/negative experiences. Didn't enjoy it at all.
- ☐ Quite bad/negative experiences. Didn't really enjoy leading.
- ☐ Average, some good some bad.
- ☐ Quite good/positive experiences. Did quite enjoy leading.
- ☐ Extremely good/positive experiences. Enjoyed it very much.

***Appendix A.2.6 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders Attendance***

Please select all of the 21st Century Leaders' program you have attended in the past.

- ☐ 2015 Summer Institute SYLI @Emory University
- ☐ 2015 Summer Institute EarthCare @Berry College
- ☐ 2015 Summer Institute TVYMI @GA Tech
- ☐ 2015 Fall Summit @GE Headquarters
- ☐ Any 21CL Meet Ups (Service opportunities) since June 2015
- ☐ 21CL Webinars since June 2015
- ☐ Youth Leadership Centers since June 2015
- ☐ 2016 Goizueta Youth Leadership Summit @Emory University
- ☐ 2016 Summer Orientation
- ☐ 2016 Summer Institute SYLI @Emory University
- ☐ 2016 Summer Institute EarthCare @Berry College
- ☐ 2016 Summer Institute TVYMI @GA Tech

How many 21CL Meet Ups (service projects) since June 2015 have you been a part of?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6+

How many 21CL Webinars since June 2015 have you been a part of?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6+

How many Youth Leadership Center events have you been a part of since June 2015?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6+

Since June 2015, have you had any formal leadership roles in other school-based or community-based organizations?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

### ***Appendix A.2.7 Gender***

Gender.

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ I choose not to answer



***Appendix A.2.8 Race/Ethnicity***

Race/Ethnicity. You are allowed to select more than one.

- ☐ White
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Latino or Hispanic
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Other

***Appendix A.2.9 Age***

Your age as of today.

- ☐ 12
- ☐ 13
- ☐ 14
- ☐ 15
- ☐ 16
- ☐ 17
- ☐ 18