

HUMAN RESOURCES PROGRAMMING AND ITS IMPACT ON LEADERSHIP WITHIN
GOVERNING BOARDS OF ONTARIO COMMUNITY COLLEGES

by
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for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the direct experiences and preferences of Ontario community college board members and board secretaries to determine how specific programming related to governor recruitment, selection, training and performance evaluation assisted, or may contribute to, governance and leadership experiences during their term in office. These experiences and viewpoints were referenced against the scholarly literature in the domains of contemporary human resources management as well as board governance and leadership. Particular attention was paid to two recent models developed by Leblanc and Gillies (2005) and Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005) which focus attention on desired leadership and governance practices in not-for-profit institutional settings.

Two principal research groups, including college governors and board secretaries, at twenty-two provincial community colleges were invited to complete separate on-line questionnaires which addressed their experiences in four specific human resources management program areas as well as their preferences for how such activities should be carried out. Trends in survey results for both groups were then explored via telephone interviews with five board leaders at community colleges that had participated in the on-line surveys.

The results of the study identified several areas where Ontario community colleges utilized contemporary human resources management processes in dealing with members of their boards of governors. The research results also confirmed opportunities for strengthening certain board management practices, through the sharing of expertise with the college's human resources staff or with the assistance of third party expertise, to strengthen the individual and collective leadership of those serving in governing roles at these higher education institutions.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
LIST OF APPENDICES	viii
CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	1
Background of the study	3
Problem statement	11
Professional significance of the problem	13
Overview of the methodology	14
Limitations of the study	15
Definition of key terms	16
Organization of the dissertation	18
CHAPTER 2 – REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	20
Structural characteristics of governance	20
Leadership concepts in the not-for-profit milieu	31
Contemporary theories of governance in not-for-profit organizations	37
Human resources management programming	59
Summary	77
CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY	79
The general perspective	79
The research context	80
The research participants	81
Data collection instruments	84
Procedures used in this study	89
Data analysis	92
Summary	96

CHAPTER 4 – PRESENTATION OF RESULTS	97
Introduction	97
Summary of survey participation rates	98
Board recruitment	99
Selection of board candidates	112
Board orientation, training and development	121
Board performance evaluation	132
Summary	142
CHAPTER 5 – SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION	143
Review of the problem statement	143
Review of the primary and subsidiary research questions	144
Review of the methodology	145
Discussion of results – Primary research question	146
□ <i>Recruitment</i>	147
□ <i>Selection</i>	159
□ <i>Orientation, training and development</i>	164
□ <i>Performance evaluation</i>	170
Discussion of results – Subsidiary research questions	175
Limitations of the study	179
Areas for further research and actions	180
BIBLIOGRAPHY	194
APPENDICES	205

LIST OF TABLES

#	Title	Page
TABLE 4.1	Recruitment processes experienced by board members for governance vacancies.	100
TABLE 4.2	Preferred recruitment processes for board of governor candidates.	102
TABLE 4.3	Preferences of board members and board secretaries on the courses of feedback for college governor performance.	137

LIST OF FIGURES

#	Title	Page
2.1	The interrelationship between board and director effectiveness	39
3.1	Qualitative research framework	93
4.1	Percentage of board of governor roles included in recruitment messages	106
4.2	Percentage of board of governor roles desired in recruitment messages	108
4.3	Sources used by Ontario community colleges to identify potential candidates for board of governor vacancies	111
4.4	College materials received, and those materials preferred, by board of governor candidates	115
4.5	College materials sent, or preferred to be sent, by board secretaries to candidates for CAAT governor vacancies	116
4.6	Response time by college to board of governor candidates	118
4.7	Percentage responses regarding board of governor experiences and preferences regarding selection interview scheduling	119
4.8	Scheduling by college of new board of governors' orientation session	123
4.9	Board secretaries actual and preferred scheduling of orientation sessions for new college governors	124
4.10	Degree of responsibility perceived by college governors for an investment in training and development board colleagues re: governance and leadership	127
4.11	College board members' experience and preferences for training and development activities	128

LIST OF FIGURES

#	Title	Page
4.12	College board secretaries reporting of offered and preferred training and development topics to boards of governors	130
4.13	Board secretaries reporting of when governance training and development (T&D) activities do and should occur	131
4.14	College board members' experiences and preferences regarding the timing of training and development events	132
4.15	Board member perceptions of the focus of performance reviews for college governors	134
4.16	Board secretary perceptions of the focus of performance reviews for college governors	134
4.17	Board member reports of the last performance review by college	135

APPENDICES OF DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

A. LIST OF ONTARIO COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY (CAAT) INSTITUTIONS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY	205
B. LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH STUDY SENT TO CAAT PRESIDENTS	206
C. LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH STUDY SENT TO CAAT BOARD MEMBERS	208
D. LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH STUDY SENT TO CAAT BOARD SECRETARIES	210
E. LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY SENT TO CAAT BOARD OF GOVERNORS	212
F. LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY SENT TO CAAT BOARD SECRETARIES	214
G. RESEARCH SURVEY FORMAT USED TO SOLICIT FEEDBACK FROM CAAT BOARD OF GOVERNORS	216
H. RESEARCH SURVEY FORMAT USED TO SOLICIT FEEDBACK FROM CAAT BOARD SECRETARIES	225
I. FIRST REMINDER LETTER TO CAAT BOARD OF GOVERNORS TO COMPLETE THE RESEARCH SURVEY DOCUMENT	233
J. SECOND REMINDER LETTTER TO CAAT BOARD OF GOVERNORS TO COMPLETE THE RESEACH SURVEY DOCUMENT	235
K. FIRST REMINDER LETTER TO CAAT BOARD SECRETARIES TO COMPLETE THE RESEARCH SURVEY DOCUMENT	237
L. SECOND REMINDER LETTER TO CAAT BOARD SECRETARIES TO COMPLETE THE RESEARCH SURVEY DOCUMENT	239

APPENDICES OF DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

M. REQUEST TO CAAT PRESIDENTS TO ENCOURAGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS TO PARTICIPATE IN A TELEPHONE INTERVIEW AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE RESEARCH SURVEY	241
N. INVITATION LETTER TO CAAT BOARD MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN A TELEPHONE INTERVIEW AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE RESEARCH SURVEY	243
O. GUIDE FOR ONE-TO-ONE TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS WITH CAAT BOARD MEMBERS	246
P. PROFILE OF THE SURVEYED MEMBERS OF ONTARIO COMMUNITY COLLEGE (CAAT) BOARDS OF GOVERNORS	251

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Post-secondary education in Canada, while having unique characteristics in terms of historical development, social mandate and organizational structure, holds in common the involvement of community volunteers along with university or college management, faculty and staff representatives as well as students in roles associated with institutional governance and leadership. Governance and leadership in such settings are two challenging human activities that rely on the utilization of individual and group skills, abilities, knowledge and experience. These characteristics, which are referred to in this dissertation as “human capital”, serve as particularly important ingredients in realizing a corporate organization’s vision, goals and strategic efforts. The professional discipline known as human resources management (HRM) has, over the last one hundred years, developed theories and practices aimed at securing, developing and evaluating such human capital in corporate and other work settings (Mathis, Jackson and Zinni, 2008; Schwind, Das and Wager, 2010; Dessler, Rekar-Munro and Cole, 2011). However, these professional paradigms have tended to focus attention on those who are engaged in salaried or hourly paid jobs, not on persons whose talents and abilities are utilized in an institutional governance capacity, namely the community volunteer board member.

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore possible solutions that may be afforded to community college governance through the application of certain human resources management principles and programming in order to strengthen corporate practices as well as promote role satisfaction among volunteers, staff and students who serve as board members in these higher education institutions.

At the outset, it is important to note three key points related to governance in such contemporary Canadian higher education institutions. Firstly, community colleges and universities

differ from one another based on their history and ideals. The history of Canadian universities has been well described in the higher education scholarship (Jones, 1997). Canadian community colleges are relatively newer, having been founded in different provincial jurisdictions beginning in the 1960s-to-early-1970s period. Secondly, these colleges have been described as sharing common ideals such as the democratization of opportunity, accessibility, adaptability and comprehensiveness (Levin and Dennison, 1989). Owen (1995) commented that such ideals have allowed community colleges to distinguish themselves from other components of Canada's higher education system, in particular universities, by adopting cultural characteristics that foster curriculum development focused on education and training, a commitment to teaching and student service as well as an orientation to the community. These characteristics are important to keep in mind in the context of governance and leadership in the study of Ontario community colleges. As Owen also stated, community colleges were established to directly serve their community and wider society, while universities throughout their history played the role of social critic without a strong orientation to the ideals of accessibility and comprehensiveness (p. 146). This more direct link between such colleges and their wider communities should drive boards of governors and senior management of such institutions to engage in sound strategic decision making and stewardship of resources. These institutional financial, human and capital resources help meet the articulated and anticipated needs for general post-secondary education programming as well as provide the skills and occupational training which serve as key contributors to the social and economic prosperity of the community. Thirdly, Canadian community colleges differ from universities in their governance structures. The "dual authority" structure in universities, also known as bicameralism (Jones, 1996), acknowledges the historical tradition of faculty influence in post-secondary decision making. This feature is not a founding structural component in the

governance paradigm of community colleges in Canada (Owen, 1995). However, Owen also notes that community colleges in this country do share, to a limited degree, some attributes of the “collegial” model of faculty influence on senior management and board governance matters (p. 144). Internal stakeholder groups, such as college academic councils, advise senior management on current and proposed programs of study as well as college academic policies. Current provincial government regulations, which apply to all Ontario community colleges, also allow for one academic representative to serve on the institution’s board of governors. However, these sources of academic input within community college governance and management structures are not equivalent to the separate and parallel body (senate) of scholars that is balanced against the administrative representatives in the bicameral model found in most Canadian universities.

This first chapter will present the background of the study, including perspectives on the development of leadership and governance theory, along with the central problem statement and related research questions to help direct the research. An overview of the methodology employed in this research study will then be stated along with any limitations. The chapter will conclude with definitions of selected key terms which are intended to help avoid any obfuscation caused in the realms of governance or human resources management concepts as either may be applied in higher education institutions and other corporate settings in North America.

Background of the Study

This dissertation is a mixed methods study of the perceptions and experiences of those who serve as members of board of governors and board secretaries, as well as an examination of current institutional programs that are intended to support governance and leadership practices within the publicly funded community colleges in Ontario.

Interest in the topic of institutional governance of both private and not-for-profit organizations has risen in the last two decades in Western democracies. Public media attention during this period has been directed at several high profile cases of failure in corporate governance practices. These examples have led some scholars to characterize such scandals as the bursting of the “corporate governance bubble” similar to earlier debacles seen in the stock market and high technology industries (Leblanc and Gillies, 2005). In these documented cases, corporate boards in both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations exercised poor judgment, engaged in unethical conduct and failed in their leadership responsibilities regarding their governance roles. While higher education institutions in North America managed to avoid such dark forms of notoriety in the public press during this period, there is perhaps no better time than now to explore what applications of contemporary theories and practices may be introduced at both the institutional and system levels to promote quality governance and leadership among community college boards.

Theoretical discussions of leadership and governance each have well-established lineages. Leadership is a trait that many persons would ascribe to personages of historical or contemporary significance. While many definitions exist, Antonakis, Cianciolo and Sternberg (2004) have suggested that scholars in this area would generally concur with the following meaning of leadership as:

The nature of the influencing process – and its resultant outcomes – that occurs between the leader and followers and how this influencing process is explained by the leader’s dispositional characteristics and behaviours, followers perceptions and attributions of the leader, and the context in which the influencing process occurs.

(p. 5)

These same scholars have set out the chronological development of the major schools of leadership theory starting with the trait or “great man” theory at the turn of the 20th century and evolving through seven additional orientations, of which the contextual and relational schools are noted at being most relevant in contemporary circles (p. 7). For the purposes of this study, Hunt (2004) notes two important considerations when looking at the topic of leadership. He states that one must distinguish between “*leadership of*” and “*leadership in*” organizations. The former type is attributed to those individuals typically at the pinnacle of the organizational hierarchy, which in the context of this research would refer to board members and senior administrative officials at community colleges. Studies of this form of leadership are attuned to matters of corporate strategy, organizational design and culture. The latter orientation involving “*leadership in*” organizations focuses more on management and supervisory incumbents below this strategic level that engage in more “face-to-face” encounters with those serving in subordinate work roles (p. 26).

It has been noted that boards of directors were little discussed by the popular press or academia and were not well regarded by business people until the 1960s (Leblanc and Gillies, 2005). However, the scholarship in higher education provides a rich historical look at university and college governance practices and related leadership styles. This retrospective on approaches to governance in higher education dates back to 12th century Italian city-states where lay appointed boards of citizens served as intermediaries between students and their professors (Zwingle, 1980). John Calvin’s notion was that the public interest was best guarded through citizen involvement in boards of lay trustees for a number of public institutions such as school boards and universities since the time of the Reformation (Kerr and Gade, 1989). Jones (1996) provides a comprehensive historical depiction of Canadian university development dating back to

early settlements in both New France and British North America. In that account, three types of universities were identified just prior to the time of Confederation (1867) including: private non-denominational institutions (McGill); public institutions with governing boards composed of government officials (Universities of Toronto and New Brunswick); and sectarian institutions controlled by church appointed members, particularly in Quebec. Jones also pointed out that tensions surfaced between provincial legislatures and these sectarian universities and colleges in early Canada on the matter of accessing public funding along with public suspicions of government favours being paid back through university board appointments. Such concerns were resolved by the 1906 Flavelle Commission (p. 344). This commission, in order to avoid public confusion and concerns as to the role of government in the operations of public universities, made two ground breaking recommendations regarding the University of Toronto's governance structure in the early 20th century. It outlined a need for the delegation of direct provincial authority over the University to a corporate board comprised of government-appointed members. The Commission also suggested the retention of the University of Toronto Senate, and in doing so clearly laid the rationale and framework for bicameralism (p. 348).

Cindi Smith, an American governance scholar, has commented that community colleges are celebrated for their intimate connection with their communities (2000). She goes on to say that trustees who serve on local college boards come from the community and thus have an immediate interest in assuring that their institution's educational and training efforts benefit the needs of fellow residents (p. 49). Ingram (1993) wrote that community members are willing to serve on boards of higher education for a variety of reasons including the fact that they were asked to do so and that such persons believe that a college or university is more consequential to future generations than any other type of institution (p. 11). Baldrige, Curtis, Ecker and Riley (1977)

described the universities and colleges as “people processing” institutions with unique characteristics that distinguished them from other types of industrial, government and business organizations. They articulated three main governance models for these higher education institutions: bureaucratic, collegial and political. Corresponding leadership styles to each of these models, while also described by these scholars, reflected more on the roles of university or college presidents than on those of a community college board of governors. Similarly, their collegial model was more in keeping with the role of the academic senate in a university than that of a community college governance paradigm. Dennison’s account (1995) of the development of Ontario community colleges of applied arts and technology (CAAT) articulated several important considerations that relate to the scope of the discussion of governance and leadership. The CAAT system was centralized in terms of its regulatory and administrative ties to the provincial government, yet was intended as a clear alternative to universities. This was reflected in distinctions in governance frameworks utilized in both of these higher institutional settings. He also noted that a new college mandate emerged in The Report of the Advisor to the Minister of Colleges and Universities on the Governance of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (1986) also known as the Pitman Report. Key elements of that report, in regards to this research study on CAAT governance and leadership, called for the inclusion of governor representatives drawn from the community college’s internal and external communities, as well as a voice for faculty and students through a college council that was to advise the college president. Other scholars have suggested that in the last several decades higher education institutions have had to respond to external challenges and constraints much in the same manner as business and industry, with particular attention paid to financial and human resources. Levin (1995) noted that community colleges in particular due to their role in training, were suitably prepared to embrace values and

practices seen in the commercial sector rather than traditional academia. This business orientation seems to be consistent with an emphasis on board roles tied to strategic and fiduciary governance responsibilities.

Leadership and governance of public higher education institutions is exercised by individuals, through solitary or collective action. It is shaped and controlled through blended exercises of institutional procedures, individual vigilance and monitoring by state and regulatory agencies. Yet, it is also true that such checks and balances are developed and maintained by people either in paid or volunteer roles with varying responsibilities and levels of authority in such organizations. As human beings serving in these capacities, there is an element of risk to the successful performance of such duties by those serving as board members. This may be due to a lack of knowledge or experience in the governance role, or conflicting personal motives, which in either case may lead to sub-optimal decision making and governing abilities by those in institutional positions of leadership. Such outcomes, due to a lack of vision or strategic direction, the misappropriation of public resources, or failing key performance indicators, may drive disenchantment and disengagement among the general community, key financial supporters, as well as the staff and students whose efforts and energies are at the fulcrum of such learning environments.

This study asserts that a critical approach to establishing, developing and sustaining effective leadership among boards of governors in Ontario community colleges involves the institutional use of proven human resources management (HRM) programming strategies. Such efforts are focused on persons wishing to serve, or who are currently acting, in a governance and leadership capacity in such organizational settings. The particular HRM programming applications involved in this study included recruitment activities, selection processes, orientation

and training programs, and performance evaluation feedback mechanisms as each may be applied to board members serving in a governance role at Ontario Community Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. While the professional literature on human resources management has generally focused its attention on those engaged in some form of paid employment, many of the underlying principles and practices are transferable to those serving as unpaid volunteers, in this instance as directors or governors of a not-for-profit corporation. A resource entitled *Volunteer Management: Mobilizing all the Resources of the Community* (McCurley and Lynch, 1996) has indeed used similar programming labels (recruitment, screening, training and evaluation) as seen in numerous contemporary human resources management textbooks (Mathis et al., 2008; Schwind et al., 2010; Belcourt, Bohlander, and Snell, 2011; Dessler et al., 2011).

Current institutional frameworks and approaches designed to develop and nurture quality leadership and governance in CAAT institutions were examined in this research study through the “lens” of such contemporary human resources management theories and practices as experienced by Ontario community college board members and board secretaries. This analysis explored the experiences of these volunteers and employees who participated in, or administered, board recruitment, selection, training and evaluation programming at their community college. In addition, the participants in this study were asked to compare these direct experiences against their perceptions of what should be emphasized in such related HRM practices in order to enhance the potential for quality governance and leadership within their board of governors.

In addition to this HRM program paradigm, the study utilized two contemporary theoretical models related to governing boards of not-for-profit organizations. The first such framework was described by Leblanc and Gillies in their book *Inside the Boardroom* (2005). This qualitative study involved over 200 interviews with directors in corporations of varying purpose

and size, as well as observations of board and committee meetings that took place over a five year period. Their model, as will be described in more detail in the next chapter of this report, focuses on the inter-relationship between board effectiveness and director effectiveness. The model suggests that board effectiveness is dependent upon three variables: board structure; board membership; and board process. These scholars further hypothesized that the behaviours and behavioural characteristics of these corporate directors has a major impact on the decision-making of such leaders and by extension the effectiveness of governance in the organization (p. 139). They also suggest that director effectiveness is the sum of three elements: director independence; director competence and director behaviours. These three components are noteworthy as each has a bearing on processes and interaction involved in group decision making processes that are at the centre of any corporate board's purpose (p. 157). As will be explained later in this paper, not all elements of this theoretical model were used in this study, but attention was paid to the concepts of board structure and processes along with director competencies and behaviours as seen in this governance framework. The second theoretical paradigm referred to in this study was taken from the governance publication entitled *Governance as Leadership: Reframing the Work of Nonprofit Boards*, by Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005). The choice to utilize this second model in this research of CAAT institutions was due to the unique perspectives of these scholars regarding their belief in the value in considering the interplay of both governance and leadership as combined realities in meeting the contemporary challenges facing boards of directors of not-for-profit corporations. Again, as will be detailed further in the next chapter, this model looks at the necessity of considering three types of governance in such settings: fiduciary, strategic and generative (p. 7). In today's not-for-profit corporate settings, this model suggests that not only do we need to develop a board's ability to "generatively" govern their institution, alongside the more traditional

roles of fiduciary oversight and strategic planning, but such governing bodies need to be able to call on any combination of these three approaches to governing in response to present and anticipated challenges from their external environment. Such actions help demonstrate a sense of leadership which college governors are summoned to exercise in concert with other key stakeholders in such settings. In this “governance as leadership” approach, many human resources management programs that are focused upon in this study are clearly referred to as supporting mechanisms. Reference to certain elements of these scholarly models may help not only with the interpretation of the research data obtained from participating college governors and board secretaries, but may also provide practical applications of proven HRM interventions to help support college boards and staff engaged in institutional governance roles. Conclusions drawn from this data may also serve as a model for process improvements in governance and leadership on a national higher education stage.

Problem statement

This study focused on a key constituency within the not-for-profit domain: specifically the higher education sector and within this group, publicly-funded community colleges in Ontario. It examined the opinions and perceptions of current serving board members and the practices of administrative personnel in Ontario community colleges as each related to supporting governance processes that serve to strengthen the capacities of these college boards to carry out their leadership mandate.

Given that human resources management (HRM) programming, in regards to community college governance in Ontario, is currently provided through a combination of institution-specific methods, as well as with the assistance of third party regulatory and professional agencies, it is

reasonable to conclude that there was likely a variation in how well these various supporting HRM programs were used at the specific institutional level.

The measure of any such variation in these HRM programs was obtained in this study through the use of structured surveys and individual interviews. The research framework focused on the perceptions of board members and board secretaries as to how current recruitment, selection, training and evaluation programs contributed to the role performance of governors within the provincial CAAT system. The design of survey and interview instruments focused on the following key research questions.

Primary research question

To what degree do volunteer members, who serve on Ontario community college boards, perceive current recruitment, selection, training and evaluation programs as contributing to their role performance in governance and institutional leadership?

Subsidiary research questions

- a) To what degree do board members believe it is their responsibility to invest time and resources in developing fellow board colleagues as well as themselves?
- b) To what degree do community colleges differ in their approaches to recruitment, selection, training and evaluation of board members?
- c) To what degree do community colleges utilize third party resources in their efforts to sustain and enhance governance and leadership among board members?

Professional significance of the problem

It has been noted that boards of colleges and universities hold in trust the physical and financial assets of the institution over which they have legal control and the power to direct and supervise operations and programs in the best interests of the intended beneficiaries (Nason, 1980). A more contemporary view of the obligations of such not-for-profit boards included the assurance that an organization's resources and capacities are deployed in ways that benefit its stakeholders (Pointer and Orlikoff, 2002). Tyler-Scott (2000) described a "parallel-process" that was necessary for such boards to grasp and in doing so afforded an opportunity to apply human resources management programming to support the strengthening an organization's governing body.

Virtually every board knows it is responsible for hiring, evaluating and firing the executive director, but few understand the responsibility they have for a parallel process: their own formation, evaluation, development and termination. (p. 146)

This understanding of a board's responsibility for its own talent acquisition, development and evaluation, along with assisting in the development of not-for-profit boards in these key areas, are challenges Tyler-Scott noted as facing contemporary boards responsible for governance and leadership in such organizations.

Contemporary human resources management (HRM) practices have evolved and been applied in a wide range of corporate settings in Western industrialized societies over the last one hundred years (Dessler et al., 2011). The strategic use of HRM practices has been recognized as helping organizations to successfully meet economic, technological, political, social and legal challenges (Schwind et al., 2010). While the application of such HRM theories is widely understood and well adapted in a "paid work" or employment context, it may not always be the case that these professional frameworks and practices are applied consistently to voluntary governance roles in the not-for-profit sector. However, Carver noted in his book *Boards That*

Make A Difference: A New Design for Leadership in NonProfit and Public Organizations (2006) that while governing boards do not exist in nature, it is virtually impossible for most members of Western societies to escape some direct or indirect encounter with such group decision making bodies: “The purpose of governance is to ensure, usually on behalf of others, that an organization achieves what it should achieve while avoiding those behaviours and situations that should be avoided” (Prologue).

It is anticipated that research findings from this study will help develop “best practice” approaches for HRM programming that will be positively received by community college board members in exercising their institutional leadership role. The data should also be of interest to Ontario community colleges, the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and those related third party provincial organizations (e.g. Colleges Ontario) that provide and support governance programs and services in higher education.

Overview of the methodology

There are presently twenty-four community colleges in Ontario, each with its own board of governors. Twenty-two of these higher education institutions were approached to participate in this research study. The other two community colleges are francophone institutions and were excluded from the research design as funding was unavailable for the translation of research survey documentation. A confidential electronic survey was distributed, through each college board secretary, to current-serving board members at each of these twenty-two provincial higher education institutions in Ontario. Individual board members responded directly to an electronic data repository that could only be accessed by the study’s primary researcher. The survey sought

information on the use of recruitment, selection, training and evaluation programs in the college's governance practices as well as the board member's preferences for the way such programs should be offered at their institution. A companion electronic survey, completed by each college board secretary, was also used to examine the institution's policies and practices related to HRM programming in support of board governance.

The final research element in this study involved structured telephone interviews with board chairpersons or chairpersons of the board's nominating committee from participating community colleges in this study. The focus of these direct interviews was to gain insight into the findings from both surveys and to allow further personal commentary on the utility of the range of HRM programming that may support and strengthen board governance and leadership.

Limitations of the study

The boundaries of this particular research study were limited to publicly-funded community colleges of applied arts and technology in Ontario and did not include the two francophone institutions within the twenty-four CAAT provincial system. Private colleges and public universities in Ontario were also not included in the research design.

As will be explained later in this dissertation, the decision by some colleges to not participate in one or the other electronic survey prevents the generalization of certain findings to all Ontario community colleges with respect to institutional size and geographic location. The regulatory frameworks for Canadian higher education institutions, as set out within different provincial and federal statutes for higher education institutions, may also deter the application of this study's findings and recommended programming approaches to community colleges found in other Canadian jurisdictions.

Definition of key terms

The governance and post-secondary institutional lexicons, as broadly applied throughout North America, sometimes cause misinterpretation or questions regarding who or what is the focus of a research question. What seems to be a generic term such as a “director” of a board may nonetheless result in a survey or interview respondent questioning whether the researcher indeed meant a “governor” at their college. Without clarification, such distinctions may be ambiguous as to whether the processes and outcomes of research efforts are applicable to other institutional settings, even as subtle as in this case between a university and community college in the same province. This challenge is made more intriguing when the scholarly literature in the field of governance and leadership has emerged from international sources where corporate nomenclature may not necessarily be used in other organizational paradigms. In this research study, the following governance and human resources management terminology requires such clarification.

Governor: This term flows from the OCAAT Act + Ontario Regulation 34/03 wherein Sections 4 through 10 deal with various requirements for the “Board of Governors” at each provincial community college. While the term “governor” is not therein defined, it may be seen as analogous to other governance labels such as “director” or “regent” as may be recognized in other higher education institutional settings in North America. These other jurisdictions may support or oppose certain HRM programming strategies found in the Ontario CAAT system due to historical trends or legislative requirements for institutional governance.

Community college: Again, as is seen in the OCAAT Act + Ontario Regulation 34/03, a community college is a publicly-funded, post-secondary institution but is different from universities and private colleges that are also found in the Province’s higher education system. In this study, a community college should also be distinguished from governance models in colleges

in the United States. Smith (2000) has noted the diversity of governance models within that country as well as indicating that more than one governance model may exist within a particular state.

Recruitment: This is a process of searching out and attracting qualified job applicants which begins with the identification of a vacant position that should be filled and is completed when resumes and/or application forms are received from an adequate number of applicants (Dessler and Cole, 2011). It should be noted in the context of this study the applicants are not serving in a paid job but rather in a governing role that is voluntary and thus without remuneration. Attention in this research study was paid to the recruitment methods that were used to attract external candidates from outside the community college's institutional staff complement and student body.

Selection: This is a process for choosing individuals who have relevant qualifications to fill existing or projected job openings (Belcourt et al., 2011). Again, the choice of candidates in this study refers not to community college job vacancies in administrative, academic or support employment, but rather individuals who wish to volunteer as an external governor on a CAAT board.

Orientation: This is a formal process of familiarizing new employees with the organization, their jobs and their work units (Belcourt et al., 2011). Another source more closely aligned to new community governors serving on CAAT boards defines this HRM programming area as making the volunteer feel comfortable with, and providing for, an understanding the workings of the organization (McCurley and Lynch, 1996). In the HRM literature sometimes the topic of orientation is linked to the final stages of the selection process, but in the majority of cases is seen as a component of the training function in an organization.

Training: This process relates to people acquiring the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform jobs (Mathis et al., 2008). Again, here the reference to jobs is synonymous to paid employment, however in the context of this study it relates to the voluntary role of a community college governor. In the HRM literature, training is frequently linked to a companion programming area known as development. While training refers to the acquisition of skills or knowledge where there is an immediate need (e.g. training to acquire knowledge of key governance responsibilities as set out in provincial government regulations which apply to community colleges), developmental programs (Pointer and Orlikoff, 2002) aim at preparing an individual director for some future role or situation (e.g. grooming a board member for a leadership position to fill in two years – such as the role of board chair).

Performance appraisal: This is a process by which organizations evaluate employee job performance (Schwind et al., 2010). What is the application of this HRM programming area in dealing with volunteers? In the case of community college board members, who are not remunerated for their governance work, it has been suggested that a lack of focus on volunteer performance assessment may convey a message to these volunteers that their work is not valued and the organization does not care about those involved in such important roles (McCurley and Lynch, 1996).

Organization of the dissertation

The remaining chapters of this dissertation will cover: a review of the theoretical literature related to governance and leadership as applied in higher education settings (Chapter 2); the methodology of this study as witnessed through the use of electronic surveys and one-to-one telephone interviews (Chapter 3); the results of the study (Chapter 4); and a discussion of the

significance of the study's findings as well as possible directions for future research that may enhance governance and leadership within Ontario's network of community colleges (Chapter 5).

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The primary and secondary research questions which underpin this study may be best explored and ultimately answered in reference to scholarly discourse and research in the domains of higher education governance, institutional leadership and human resources management developed over the last four decades. This chapter is organized into four parts: (i) a description of the structural characteristics of governance frameworks found in Canadian universities and colleges; (ii) the development and application of leadership concepts in such not-for-profit milieux; (iii) the salient aspects of two contemporary theories on governance models that may lead to improvements in college board processes and outcomes; and (iv) the use of prescribed human resources management activities in support of board governance that help support the achievement of mission, goals and objectives in higher education settings such as community colleges.

Structural Characteristics of Governance

The evolution of contemporary approaches to higher education governance in Canada, and Ontario in particular, is best understood through two “lenses” that reflect historical and structural dimensions. The following section looks, in turn, at how both of these perspectives have shaped governance frameworks in Ontario’s community colleges.

There are well-documented histories of the evolutionary trail of governance paradigms in higher education in the United States (Baldrige, Curtis, Ecker and Riley, 1986; Duryea, 1986; Kerr and Gade, 1989) and in Canada (Dennison and Gallagher, 1986; Jones, 1996). In these historical accounts, there are two important elements which have bearing on institutional governance: the notion that the state has the authority to establish a college or university through

statute, charter or constitutional provision (Birnbaum, 1988); and the conceptual development of the corporation which permitted an effective transfer of power from the state to various social institutions including universities, municipalities and charitable organizations in order to establish rules and regulations that provide a form of internal corporate authority (Duryea, 1986).

In the Canadian context, the unique frameworks for university and college governance have been shaped by dynamic political, cultural and social influences. Early colleges in the pre-Confederation era of Canada came in four distinct institutional models. In what was then known as Upper Canada, two of these models were seen in the creation of King's College (1827) and the denominational colleges which were established in the 1840's. The former institution, which became the University of Toronto in 1849, was governed by a public board comprised of government appointed officials. Sectarian colleges, which were more prevalent in number at the time, were overseen by an external board made up of church appointed directors (Jones, 1996).

The British North America Act (1867) did not expressly address whether the federal or provincial governments had authority over higher education. Thus the responsibility for education evolved to be within the domain of the provinces. One political consequence of this constitutional fact was the existence of both shared and unique structural features in post-secondary governance that emerged as Canada developed as a federation of provincial and territorial jurisdictions over the next fifty years. This evolutionary course within federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions led to the assertion that indeed what we have in Canada is not a "system" of higher education but rather a set of "quasi-systems" that have few shared features (Dennison, 1995). Yet, within a myriad of such post-secondary frameworks, one comparable and contemporary feature across Canadian jurisdictions is the reliance on some form of "public" governance function for these colleges and universities. The degree to which such institutions have, over time, been publicly

governed delves more into the history of universities in Canada than is the case with community colleges.

External regulatory influences have historically been a concern for higher education institutions. Since the 12th century, universities have had to adjust to the demands of first religious, and then secular agents, each seeking to direct the intended purposes of the university. In their quest for independence, sustained in part from their academic guild-like heritage, the universities of the modern era dealt with expressed desires for external controls by either agreeing to commence some form of “self-management” rather than have state-induced regulations, or to institute self-regulatory measures previously administered by an external authority. Such measures succeeded in affording the desired degree of institutional independence while recognizing a degree of accountability that arises from external sponsorship (Kells, 1992).

Each Ontario university has been the creation of unique legislation that affords a tradition of autonomy including the specific governance structure and related procedures assigned to a university board. This reality was greatly influenced by the Flavelle Commission (1906) which was the public enquiry dealing with the suspicion of political patronage and interference in the operations of the University of Toronto by the provincial government of the day. After extensive examination of institutional governance frameworks in Great Britain and the United States, the Commission recommended a “bicameral” board structure. This included two separate, but equal, lines of authority for institutional oversight that assigned responsibility for administrative and financial matters to an “arms-length” board of appointed government officials and delegated responsibility for all academic matters to the University of Toronto Senate comprised of faculty representatives. While not a new concept to Canadian higher education at the time, a bicameral structure became firmly established as the preferred, but not exclusive, governance structure for

successive universities, particularly new post-secondary institutions being established in Western Canada at that time. Bicameralism was seen as a response to the demand for the university's accountability to government while maintaining the notion of institutional autonomy for the university (Jones and Skolnik, 1997). This bicameral paradigm, although not present in Ontario's twenty-four community colleges, has been adapted elsewhere in Canada, for example in British Columbia where educational councils, operating under statutory authority, are similar in some respects to university senates (Dennison, 1995).

The political will to support the competing notions of public accountability and institutional freedom from government interference for universities has been attributed to the fact that between provincial legislators and those in charge of university administration, there was a consensus on the role and objectives of the public university. As Neatby (1987) noted, such higher learning institutions served the sons and daughters of political elites to assume their respective place in the modern social order. This understanding discouraged more direct government scrutiny in the affairs of early 20th century Canadian universities (Jones, 1996).

In 1965, the Honourable William Davis, Ontario Minister of Education, introduced legislation establishing a new community college system that reflected a more "direct hand" by government in strategic direction and operations as compared to the Province's universities (Ontario Department of Education, 1965). The establishment of the proposed colleges of applied arts and technology (CAAT) was based on three realities of the 1960s: the demographic bulge of "baby-boomers" who were finishing high school and faced the prospect of an under-capacity for post-secondary education spaces; the Government's changing policy position that it should be an "investor" in human capital as a means to propel economic growth and prosperity; and an

emerging public perception that technology would be an increasingly important constituent part of the Province's workforce (Gallagher and Dennison, 1995).

While each Ontario university was created by a distinct act of the provincial parliament, community colleges were established and continue to be governed by a more centralized legislative framework. Dennison (1994) noted the significance of such means for corporate formation in an account of two separate court cases involving a British Columbia university and a community college. The judicial decisions in each case underscored the legal interpretation of each institution's governance framework in relation to the government; the university being seen as independent of the provincial legislature while the community college was an agent of government. This interpretation may also be applied to the current higher education context in Ontario.

The most recent legislation applying to the Province's community colleges is the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act (2002) + Ontario Regulation 34/03. It sets out a balance of appointment authority between each Ontario community college ($\frac{2}{3}$ rd of external governors) and the Lieutenant Governor in Council (LGIC) of the provincial government ($\frac{1}{3}$ rd of external governors). This new regulation, which was introduced in October 2010, replaced the use of the College Appointments Council (formerly known as the College Compensation and Appointments Council) that served for a number of years as a third party agency for vetting all community college board nominees for external governor vacancies. While such "third party" agencies are also seen among universities within various provincial jurisdictions (Jones, 1996), the role of this council vis-à-vis Ontario's community colleges was, prior to this latest regulatory reform, one of more direct involvement in terms of institutional governance and administrative authority. All external governor nominations submitted by a community college prior to October,

2010 were reviewed by this Council as the final step to a formal appointment to a community college. The Council could, and did, reject candidates who did not conform to Ministry guidelines and public policy matters such as the balance of gender representation and cultural diversity on community college boards. The subsequent removal of direct involvement by this “arms-length” agency in the approval of board of governor appointments for each college was the outcome of a study commissioned by Ontario’s Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) and completed by the Institute on Governance (IOG). It was noted in this review that Ontario’s community colleges should be seen as “mature” institutions capable of identifying and recruiting their own board talent. The IOG recommended a new appointments process that would retain the recruitment and nomination protocols for external governor candidates as had been done by the CAAT board prior of the regulatory change. In that respect the Government remained committed to a college’s choice of recruitment strategies and selection protocols for assembling a list of nominees to fill all external board vacancies. However, the new regulations (2010) called for one-third of the external board members to be appointed by the LGIC and two-thirds of appointments to be made by the community college. Thus, the college board secretary now prepares a Public Appointment Secretariat application for up to three candidates per external governor vacancy to be filled through LGIC appointment and forwards it to the Colleges Unit at the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. The Colleges Unit prepares a briefing on all such nominees for review and approval by the Minister of Training Colleges and Universities. The nominated candidates from each college then proceed to the Public Appointments Secretariat (PAS) and, following security checks, an Order in Council is sent to the Ontario Cabinet for approval. Members of the general public are also allowed to directly apply to the PAS to be considered for a CAAT governor LGIC appointment (Colleges Ontario, 2011). The significance

of these procedural changes is in keeping with the notion advanced by the Institute of Governance's study that identified Ontario's community colleges as "mature" organizations. These regulatory amendments for external board appointments move closer to what is seen in provincial universities which have for longer periods seen a blended external governance appointment protocol that included institutional self-determined board appointments for external governors coupled with LGIC appointees (Jones, 1996). What is significant in the 2010 regulatory changes is the recognition that community college boards are similarly entrusted to control a majority of their external governance appointments while at the same time allowing the provincial government to appoint its own nominees in accordance with its own institutional and public policy directives.

The second interpretative lens that may be considered in developing an understanding of university and college governance in Ontario deals with organizational or structural characteristics of these learning institutions. A major assumption in support of using such an interpretative lens is that a structural framework can be designed and implemented to improve the effectiveness and functioning of social institutions such as higher educational institutions (Kezar and Eckel, 2004). Three common structural frameworks in regards to academic post-secondary governance, known as bureaucratic, collegial and political models, have been advanced to explore such assumptions (Baldrige et al., 1986; Birnbaum, 1988; Downey, 1996).

Universities and colleges display a number of bureaucratic features owing to their complex nature as organizations. In the context of Weber's (1947) description of bureaucratic organizations these include: creation of the institution by government charter or legislation; the existence of a formal institutional hierarchy starting with a board of governors along with the existence of

formal policies and procedures to direct the work of the institution and its members; and bureaucratic decision making processes (Baldrige et al., 1978).

A distinctive feature of the bureaucratic model in the context of institutional governance is that the right to make authoritative decisions within the organization is enabled by the constitutional or legislative charter or act issued by the state authority. The board of trustees or governors of a higher education institution is thus empowered to delegate administrative authority to the university or college president who in turn may issue specific directives to subordinate administrators. This sets up a unique leadership “trickle-down” dynamic between those in a position of authority (e.g. Vice President of Student Services) and their direct reports (e.g. Registrar) who, if he or she believes and accepts their supervisor’s authority to delegate tasks and assignments, will sustain the authoritative bureaucratic relationship. The challenge associated with such settings, particularly in a university milieu more so than in a community college, is that eventually when the act of delegation descends to the level of the academic staff, that group’s professional orientation sustains a “zone of indifference” which allows varying degrees of attention to bureaucratic directives depending on the status or level of expertise held by the academic organization member (Birnbaum, 1988). In universities, the risk of such indifference is moderated by the bicameral governance framework which allows professors to influence institutional policies and direction through the university’s senate. However, in community colleges, there are few examples of such bicameral governance in Canada and certainly none yet in Ontario. Hence the academic groups in these post-secondary settings, unless supported by a collective bargaining agent, may pay closer attention and allegiance to the bureaucratic directives sent from administrative leaders of the academy. So, if certain academic institutions cannot fully

rely on a bureaucratic model to explain authoritative allegiance and operational effectiveness, what alternative structure may help to do so?

The notion of a collegium or a community of scholars offers alternative insights in answering this question. A collegial organization in higher education settings involves less of a focus on the university as bureaucracy, which relies more on a notion of official competency derived from one's authority in a corporate structure, and more on a sense of technical competency associated with scholarly expertise (Baldrige et al., 1978). Status in such an organizational model is seen as less of a pyramid and more of a "community of equals" in the sense that authority is derived from a hieratic rather than hierarchical authority (Downey, 1996). This equality is strongly tied to the notion of professionalism adopted in the collegial operational setting. Self-regulation of behaviours, with a stronger allegiance to a scholarly peer group or professional association, serves as a more significant regulator of organizational conduct than bureaucratic dictates. If this were entirely the case, the need for governance and leadership in such institutional settings would be but a shadow of what is seen in the more widely-accepted notion of how a university or college operates in today's dynamic environment.

The collegial model has been described as an attempt to retrieve a "paradise lost" for scholars who no longer find themselves in an earlier time where the staffing complement of a university was indeed small and the incumbents were in more direct control of all facets of the academy's operations. This sense of longing has caused advocates of this model to present a somewhat disjointed argument which wanders between a normative or desired organizational structure versus a sense of what is indeed happening in the hallways of higher educational settings. The model also struggles in its unclear description of how conflict is mediated among faculty peers in reaching consensus on key organizational issues. Are such agreements resolved

among a community of equals or in fact determined through some other form of organizational dynamic (Baldrige et al., 1978)?

In the context of this dissertation, the collegial model, as a means for understanding college governance and leadership, may have some credence. The academic influence seen in the bicameral mode of institutional governance and the historical precedent of the faculty collegium within Canadian universities did influence models in some early community college governance systems in Canada. It has been pointed out however that this is not to be construed as being similar to the collective authority held by professors in a university environment (Owen, 1995). Specifically in Ontario, college faculty, while pursuing collegial relations within their departmental or school relationships, lack in the majority of instances, a formal structural body that parallels a senate structure in the university governance model.

The complex organizational structures of post-secondary institutions in the United States and Canada and limitations for the application of bureaucratic and collegial models of academic governance have led to a final structural paradigm which embraces a sense of power, territory and inter-group dynamics referred to as the political model (Baldrige et al., 1978). Of relevance to this research effort, the political model focuses on processes related to institutional policy formation. In contemporary university and college settings, policy formation according to the political model experiences periods of inactivity in the involvement of organizational members along-side “fluid” participation depending on the institutional member’s degree of interest in the prevailing topic. Interest groups, which sometimes are engaged in conflict as to the nature or application of institutional policies, are another hallmark of the political model. Finally, not only do such internal pressure groups raise the possibility of challenge to the organization’s bureaucratic authority, but external agents may also be drawn into policy decision-making

activities (Baldrige et al., 1978). Of particular note here is the influence of a provincial government, for example the Ontario legislature, in shaping community college policy, academic or otherwise, than is the case in provincial university governance matters.

A variation on this threefold paradigm outline of university governance structures is a somewhat complementary “university as trinity model” as advanced by Downey (1996). His notion is inclusive of two of the three previously-discussed structural elements, but then substitutes the idea of “community” in place of Baldrige’s construct of “power” (1971) as a way of understanding the idea of the university. Not only is this a unique approach to understanding how contemporary governance in higher education may be interpreted, but it also recognizes criticisms of Baldrige’s initial research design and conclusions. However, this concept of community is somewhat ambiguous in that it does not refer to the geographic realm in which, for example, an Ontario college is situated nor is it solely the sum total of internal stakeholders who daily frequent the campus. Rather, it is a somewhat amorphous blending of the physical infrastructure of a college, the range of educational, training and student services provided by the institution, along with the encompassing dynamics of everyone who visits, works, studies and believes in the purpose of such a learning environment. This higher education community is also described as elastic and accommodating as well as seeing absurdity, vulnerability and differences witnessed in the culture of its communal experience (Downey, 1996). This conceptual framework parallels the notion of a governance and leadership model described within the metaphor of an “organized anarchy” (Cohen and March, 1974). In such settings, there is an orientation to: client (student) service; a greater degree of fluidity and engagement by members regarding participation in policy formulation; and the possibility of environmental vulnerability (Baldrige et al., 1978).

This description of the vantage points of historical development and structural design regarding the functions of governance in higher education must now be aligned to a discussion of the meaning and interpretation of leadership models which have blanketed North America both historically and in recent times. This affords the ability to eventually assess a more developed model of both governance and leadership functions in contemporary board structures and processes within Ontario's community college system in the early 21st century.

Leadership concepts in the not-for-profit milieu

The enigma of leadership is twofold. On the one hand, despite significant historical discourse, it conceptually remains difficult to explain (Roueche, Baker and Rose, 1989). The word "leader" comes from the old English word "*laedan*" meaning "to show the way." The ensuing implication involves two related notions: the first being the necessity of "others" to whom the way is shown; and secondly, that these others are seeking the shown way in a voluntary manner rather than as a result of the leader's use of coercion or force (Salacuse, 2006). The second dimension to this puzzle is in the intertwining of the concepts of the leader and leadership (Ulrich and Smallwood, 2007).

Despite this conundrum, the examination of institutional governance necessitates attention to both the "process" and "property" dimensions of the leadership construct. The former aspect of "process" relates to organizational activities that help direct group members to the achievement of agreed-to goals. The notion of "property" encompasses those attributes and behaviours seen among leaders who initiate and sustain a directed collective effort which perpetuates and safeguards the organization (Roueche et al., 1989). Our contemporary notion of leadership, up until the last two decades, has been drawn from large institutional settings other than universities and colleges. (Birnbaum, 1988; Roueche et al., 1989) Before discussing the literature which

addresses how colleges and universities are indeed distinct from large private and government bureaucracies, it is useful to outline the trends in leadership theory that have permeated the North American organizational landscape. Where possible, this account will be tied to the earlier described structural frameworks of university and college governance.

Van Wart (2010) concisely summarized the historical trends in leadership theory into six “eras” dating back to the nineteenth century. The interplay in his account between a focus on the individual leader and the influence of external factors on aspects of leadership, helps sketch a path to more contemporary applications of these trends to universities and community colleges.

The first era of leadership, witnessed in the 19th century, focused on the theory of the “great man” as leader. It was believed at this time that an individual in possession of certain unique attributes could direct or propel a nation or social institution to a desired state of well-being and prosperity. The dawning of the 20th century and the growth of scientific management saw a more specific search for personal attributes and characteristics which leaders seemed to share. Despite a substantial inventory of personal attributes ascribed to leaders by the time of the Second World War, this second era of leadership characterized by “trait” theory failed to link personal characteristics as predictors of success in various organizational situations.

These images of the heroic leader, who was endowed with the right mix of key leadership attributes and therefore had the power to muster internal resources and support for organization success as well as the inherent ability to both ward off external threats and devise appropriate response strategies, was said to be deeply engrained in the psyches of both the average citizen and organizational theorist. However, the projection of a leader as an all-powerful hero in a business or industrial hierarchical context was undercut by the unique structural characteristics of universities when compared to private corporate entities. These features included a more diffused

sense of the power held by the leader and the fact that the university or college was not a closed system, impervious to external influences or pressures for change (Baldrige et al., 1978). It should also be noted that while trait-based theories waned in the 1940s under the criticism of being too “one dimensional” to explain complex leadership activity (Van Wart, 2010), there has been a resurgence since 1990 in examining the array of personal attributes possessed by contemporary leaders in organizations. A number of studies have demonstrated greater methodological soundness and statistical rigour in promoting the sense that although traits in and of themselves are not sufficient for success, when organizational leaders utilize key groupings of personal attributes including cognitive capacity, personality and motivation along with other trait dimensions such as emotional and situational intelligence, problem solving skills and tacit knowledge, their related actions strongly support the outcome of leadership effectiveness (Herracleous, 1999; Zaccaro, Kemp and Bader, 2004).

With the demise of trait-based theories of leadership after World War II, there was a shift from what characteristics a leader possessed to how they behaved. Key research flowed from the Ohio State University leadership studies based on questionnaires presented to the “followers” to help determine the preferred “style” of their organizational leaders. Two categories served as a basis for this model: consideration; and initiating structure. However, this leadership model was plagued by a number of difficulties including the fact that some subordinates favoured leaders and as a result performed better for those who attended to structuring the work settings. Others were found not only to prefer, but to achieve more for organizational leaders who gave consideration to their feelings and needs (Heracleous, 1999).

Alongside this human relations mode of leadership theory emerged another approach which focused attention on several factors including the influence of the external environment, as

well as the nature of the work performed by, and personal characteristics of followers. Of particular note was the work carried out by Hersey and Blanchard (1969) who tied the dimension of effectiveness to the earlier elements of consideration and task which was used in the Ohio State study. Their theory set in place a transition to the fourth leadership era known as transformational leadership (Roueche et al., 1989).

The emergence of transformation, or charismatic leadership, in the early 1980s linked some of the concerns seen in the contingency leadership paradigm to do with environmental influences, but suggested that the organization's response to such external situations was to develop a compelling vision, mission and set of values as a means for motivating followers (Heracleous, 1999). These latter features are hallmarks of an organization's culture which is a relevant variable in a post-secondary institutional setting where there is no monolithic cultural imprint but rather a series of sub-cultures within the academy. The role of the leader in this instance is to design interactions with followers that are characterized as either transactional or transformational in nature. The former interaction is one of exchange where, for example, the leader rewards the follower for a task completed or not completed (Roueche et al., 1989). In the university milieu this may be seen through rewards such as tenure in return for prolific research accomplishments or the allocation of a private office to a professor who has excellent research performance. On the other hand, transformational leadership reflects a leader-follower dyad that is driven by the former partner finding ways and means to appeal to the latter's higher level of human needs as defined by Maslow. Research evidence has also indicated that transformational leadership has significant impact on the performance of followers and thus on organizational success (Heracleous, 1999).

The penultimate era in contemporary leadership studies involved the notion of the “leader as servant”. The origins of this fifth period of leadership theory is attributed to Robert Greenleaf who in 1970 wrote an article entitled “Servant as Leader” which was inspired by his forty years of executive experience in large American corporations coupled with his reading of Herman Hesse’s novel “Journey to the East.” He noted in the article that great leaders must first learn to experience what it means to serve others. Greenleaf’s ideas were adopted by contemporary leadership proponents including Covey, Senge, Depree and Blanchard (Van Wart, 2010).

The sixth and final period in public sector leadership, which began in the 1990s, is referred to as the “multi-faceted” era. As implied by the name, this period embraced many of the paradigmatic elements seen in earlier leadership genres, but with specific emphasis on the transactional and transformational schools. It has been suggested that this more “integrative” approach to understanding leadership is the outcome of an increasingly global business perspective where sophisticated and holistic solutions are required (Van Wart, 2010). Storey (2004) has suggested that corporate executives, as a result of economic shocks in the first decade of the 21st century, will need to embrace a more balanced approach to leadership that is inclusive of both transactional and transformative. This orientation supports a more prudent approach in business dealings while still seeking inspirational goals and means that can rally followers in organizations. Finally, it has also been noted that perhaps a new leadership genre is seen in the writings of scholars such as Fullan (2004) who proffer a “post charismatic” leadership framework that focuses on a need to engage organizational members in a more developmental way, with a focus on solving challenges that have yet to be conquered.

The research encompassed in this evolutionary framework of leadership has shown two key findings: effective and ineffective leaders may be distinguished from one another; and that the

relationship between leadership style and presenting context is important. Yet, the question of how such research may be applied to particular corporate leadership roles, including members of a board of directors, may require a dichotomy in practical application. It has been suggested that a focus on leadership traits and competencies may be appropriate in the selection and nurturing of corporate directors. Leadership style, transformational and charismatic leadership and the study of leadership in a particular context are suggested as areas of further research regarding the role of the chief executive officer (Heracleous, 1999). Levin (1995) has stated that the unique nature of Canadian community colleges has witnessed a shift in leadership approaches from a hierarchical model based on the qualities of the president to a management dimension, which despite its label, does not solely focus on an individual such as the college's chief executive officer, but rather is aimed at a group of authority figures. However, it should be noted that Levin's notion of this group is unclear as to whether the college's board included in such a collective leadership ensemble.

So, in light of such scholarly perspectives, is it the case that the matters of higher education governance and leadership are separate and distinct functions attributed to either the college board or its president, or is there some other understanding of these institutional dynamics? It has been noted that the recent balance of power discussions in the modern corporate world have caused a re-thinking of the role of leadership between executives and boards of directors (Daily and Dalton, 2001). Yet, colleges and universities have been described as distinctly different from these kinds of complex organizations, where policy making is best handled through a political model of leadership (Baldrige et al., 1978). Leadership in Canadian community colleges has also been described as not being within the purview of a solitary individual (i.e. a college president) but rather in a sharing of governance (Levin, 1995). The

following section of this chapter examines two recent models for governance that help to interpret developmental paths for improved governance in community college environs.

Contemporary theories of governance in not-for-profit organizations

Two recent scholarly efforts provide a unique perspective on how leadership and governance may be applied in contemporary not-for-profit organizations, including community colleges. *Inside the Boardroom* (Leblanc et al., 2005) is based on a five year research effort that involved extensive interviews with corporate directors regarding the strengths and gaps in governance found within a variety of corporate settings. The key elements in their model focus attention on both the effectiveness of boards and those individuals serving in a governance role. The model can provide an important “lens” or viewpoint for approaches that support developing effective leadership via application of human resources management principles to the governance of community colleges in Ontario. The model focuses on board structure and processes as well as attending to the matter of director competency and will be outlined later in this chapter.

The second scholarly work, entitled *Governance as Leadership* (Chait, Ryan and Taylor, 2005), narrows its scope of application from the wider corporate horizon taken by LeBlanc and Gillies (2005) to the realm of not-for-profit organizations, in which provincial community colleges are found. The unique thesis proffered by Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005) is that it is necessary to think of governance as a form of leadership which causes both the board and staff constituents to assume a combined pathway in support of the organization’s mission, goals and values rather than to truncate these intertwining functions between two organizational camps. Their notion of “leadership as governance” offers a somewhat less structured model for institutional governance, but is utilized in this dissertation for its references to a three-staged governance model which, in many instances, also relies on the support of human resources

management processes aimed at those who serve as external directors on college boards. This second model will also be further discussed later in this chapter.

As today's higher education institutions are regarded as places for the creation of knowledge through research and the exploration of thought, undergraduate and graduate education and various forms of public service, it is fair to say that these universities and colleges attract a significant degree of investment and interest from key stakeholders including government, private companies, students and the communities in which these academies are found.

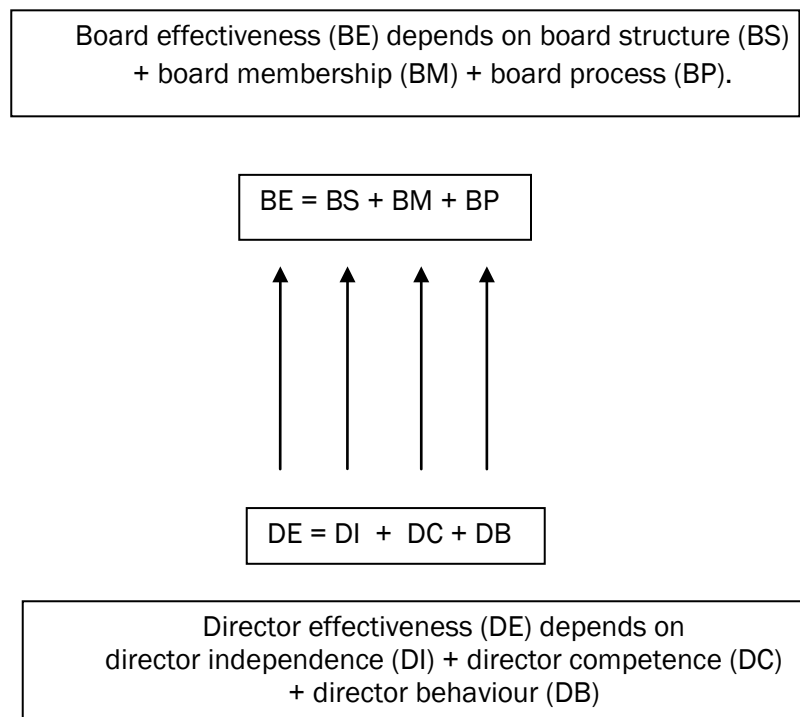
Organizational processes and results in not-for-profit settings are typically carried out through the efforts of volunteers and paid employees. Each of these contributing groups tends to pursue the goals and objectives of the corporation through particular role assignments that outline their individual and collective responsibilities and duties. Certain roles in these instances are associated with formal leadership status, particularly those serving as corporate governors and the chief executive officer. This declaration of specific roles within the corporation is a central feature in the organization's chances of success or failure as participating members must have a clear sense of what is expected of them as a contributor to a wider group effort. These corporate roles, whether held by volunteer or paid staff member, not only give the individual participant a sense of what he or she is expected to do, but also help to identify what sub-components of the organization are functioning well or require attention to improve supporting processes and desired results.

As is the case for many not-for-profit organizations, colleges and universities are established under the aegis of the state through the process of incorporation, creating a "fictitious person" in law (Hatton, 1991). The founding members of these corporations are typically named as its first directors who assume responsibility for the effective running of the newly-formed

entity. The board takes on a self-regulatory function, in lieu of direct government interventions, through the creation of by-laws, policies and rules that guide the institution along a desired path in keeping with the corporation's mandate, as seen in its letters patent and for the benefit of those for whom the organization was established.

Such corporate boards have been described as small decision-making groups that collectively determine the fate of an organization. The quality of such board decision making is tied to the calibre of group interaction and the behavioural characteristics of individual directors. Leblanc and Gillies (2005) have articulated an effectiveness model (See Fig. 2.1) that helps explain the dynamics that are in play when it comes to board and director effectiveness.

Figure 2.1 The Interrelationship Between Board and Director Effectiveness



For the purposes of this research effort three elements within this model are of particular relevance including board structure, board process and director competence (Leblanc et al., 2005).

Board structure, in this model, embraces several characteristics. The first of these is ensuring there is a non-executive board chairperson, thus avoiding the concept of CEO duality. This concept has more application among private or share capital boards as opposed to university or community college governance models such as found in Ontario. Secondly, there is a necessity to ensure sufficient outside and independent directors; again a hallmark that applies more to corporate boards rather than those found in Canadian post-secondary institutions. Additional structural elements, referenced in Leblanc and Gillies research (2005), included the need for a board of workable size and one that has clear job descriptions for all director positions. In the former instance, those interviewed in their study concluded that an ideal size for a corporate board was ten-to-fifteen members (p. 119). There appears to be little consensus on this point in the current literature. Carver (2006), in commenting on corporate by-laws, suggests such a range in board size is too large and works against shared responsibility and consensus-building. American community colleges have boards of varying sizes depending on state legislation with an average size of between eight and nine members (Smith, 2000). Others have challenged the relevance of board size as a determining factor for good governance (Sonnenfeld, 2002). In the case of Ontario community colleges, provincial regulations associated with the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act (2002) prescribe a range between twelve and twenty appointed external board governors and representatives of four internal stakeholder constituencies (student, faculty, administrative and support staff) plus the college president who serves in an ex-officio capacity (Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002). Perhaps the sagest advice on this matter is that there is no “magic number” for the size of a board and that factors such as the organization’s mission, culture and the required work for directors should dictate the number of allocated positions for governance positions (BoardSource, 2007).

On the matter of job descriptions for board members, Leblanc and Gillies (2005) stated that if it is the responsibility of all directors to exercise a duty of care and loyalty to the corporation, such obligations can hardly be met without a full and complete articulation and understanding of the inherent duties and tasks associated with the board role (p. 86). On this point, the current literature is fairly consistent in the expressed need for some form of written statement or description of key responsibilities to be held by corporate directors (Henderson, 1967; Nason, 1980; Ingram, 1993; Smith, 2000; Pointer and Orlikoff, 2002; Collis, 2004; Gill, 2005; Leblanc et al., 2005; BoardSource, 2007). While there is much diversity among these detailed articulations of a corporate director's job description, it is possible to point to four main areas of leadership responsibility for board members of higher education institutions. These governance roles include: strategic direction setting; institutional stewardship; oversight of the performance of the college's president; and liaison with key external stakeholders. In regards to this last point, and of relevance to a focus on community colleges, it has also been suggested that the job of a board member is to maintain a clear focus on the mission of the institution in its community (Carver and Mayhew, 1994). Finally, a description of the job of the board also permits a much-needed reference point against which the evaluation of board performance and possible training and development programming may be mapped to help foster stronger governance and leadership.

Leblanc and Gillies (2005) also set out a general notion of "board process" in their effectiveness model of governance. Although their description is somewhat circuitous, they do describe elements that are closely aligned with what may also be referred to as human resources management functions; except in this case such activities are applied to governing boards which may or may not include volunteer members. This model emphasizes the importance of finding

(recruitment and selection), retaining (feedback and rewards) and maintaining (training and development) the type of directors needed for an effective governing board.

There are two key points to note in the literature on board recruitment. The first deals with the rationale for directing sufficient organizational energy and attention to attracting candidates to board vacancies. The second addresses how such recruiting efforts may be carried out. Both factors are central to the notion of board process in the Leblanc and Gillies model. It is suggested that if an organization is serious about how it should be governed, the recruitment of board candidates should also be taken seriously. This involves, as previously noted, working with a detailed job description for governors, setting out qualifications for various board roles and establishing responsibilities within the board structure for recruitment and selection functions (BoardSource, 2007). Mustering board attention to sound recruitment and selection procedures has been ascribed to the role of either past chair or vice-chair of the board (Gill, 2005). The role for taking charge of overseeing such activities is typically placed with the board's nominating committee which, through the corporate by-laws, is typically responsible for replenishing the board and its officers (Carver, 2006). Although the governing legislation for higher education institutions may set out specific procedures dealing with board recruitment and selection, it has been suggested that universities and colleges make known their specific requirements associated with board vacancies (Gale, 1980). In addition to specific talent requirements, and independent of regulatory stipulations, Smith (2000) has provided a comprehensive listing of recruitment and selection criteria for excellent trustees (p. 175).

In regards to particular methods for the selection or appointment of board members to universities and colleges, the literature demonstrates varying degrees of involvement by state and provincial governments in such institutional processes (Jones and Skolnik, 1997; Smith, 2000).

With respect to the recruitment and selection of board candidates for any public community college in Ontario, there is allowance for variation in how board candidates are recruited at the local institutional level. However, as noted earlier in this chapter, regulatory changes enacted by the Ontario legislature in 2010 gave the provincial minister in charge of universities and colleges the right to consider a limited number of additional candidates for Lieutenant Governor in Council appointments to a community college board. This provided a means for assuring conformity with the provincial government's policy agenda tied to ethnic and gender diversity (Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2011). Such a mechanism also served to deter nepotism resulting from any casual or informal recruitment and selection procedures by incumbent governors at these institutions. The regulatory changes also reflect the scholarship in higher education governance that has noted the evolution of broad-based board representation in such academic settings (Dennison, 1995).

The final element of the Leblanc and Gillies effectiveness model for boards and their directors deals with the issue of competency among those who serve in a governance capacity. As directors, such individuals must not only safeguard the investment of shareholders through the monitoring of corporate operations, but must also oversee the work of management to assure that business operations are in the best interests of the organization. To meet these two key areas of responsibility, it is suggested in this model that corporate boards should be built around director competence, desired behavioural characteristics of directors and sound decision making processes (Leblanc et al., 2005). While these authors argue that all three elements contribute to director effectiveness, this particular research effort will focus only on the issue of individual competencies among board members.

The Leblanc and Gillies model (2005) recognizes that the complexity in the oversight of any large, modern corporation requires an array of individual and interpersonal competencies shared among its ensemble of board members. It recommends that the first step in building an effective board is having the leader of the board's nominating committee, in consultation with the board chair and perhaps other key members, construct a matrix listing all required competencies to support the work of the entire board. This listing can then be used as an inventory mechanism to plot out which desired competencies are now seen in each individual board member (p. 226). Moreover, such profiles also assist the board in filling talent gaps through future volunteer recruitment activities (BoardSource, 2007) or in plotting out board development sessions to enhance an individual's competency profile.

It has also been suggested that board competencies may be divided into "general" and "special" categories; the former dealing with attributes such as intelligence, the ability to articulate one's ideas and group interaction capabilities, while the latter array includes specialized professional skills and knowledge such as financial expertise and prior board experience. These competencies may also be considered alongside what have been termed foundational qualifications for board members such as the willingness to serve in a governance role, and demographic characteristics such as residency requirements or one's identification with a particular ethnic or cultural population (Pointer and Orlikoff, 2002; Gill, 2005).

Fryer and Lovas (1991), in their research on American community colleges, concluded that effective governance in these post-secondary settings included widely-held perceptions that decision making and communication processes possess three characteristics: clarity, openness and fairness. Such perceptions are strongest, they claimed, in colleges that demonstrate the key attributes of competence and stability. This central element of competency has been ascribed not

just to the institution's president or administrative team, but also to the college's governing board. In a similar vein, longitudinal studies of leadership by Kouzes and Posner (2007) have shown that competence has been consistently rated the fourth-most admired leadership characteristic behind the attributes of being honest, forward looking and inspiring (p. 31). Sixty percent of Canadian respondents in that study chose competence as a key aspect of leadership. Kouzes and Posner (2007) go on to note that the followers' belief in a leader's competence is linked to that person's relevant experience, sound judgment, track record and the ability to get things done (p. 35). The challenge in the application of this particular thesis is that it is framed more in line with the role of a senior administrative leader, such as the college president, rather than the corporate board of directors. It may, however, serve in the measurement of individual director competency levels, for example in the performance of the role of a board chair or the leader of a standing committee.

Howard (2001) has discussed three methods for developing competency models. The first approach is focused on the particular "job" the person in an organization holds with attention paid to a job holder's duties, tasks and responsibilities. The underlying assumptions in this "job-driven" model are the relative stability of the job and little change in the surrounding environment. In the second competency model, job information serves to supplement business strategy in light of an uncertain external environment. Jobs here are viewed as a combination of core competencies which exist in all organizational positions and specific job competencies assigned to one or a limited number of jobs. Competencies are closely aligned with company values and culture, serving as a motivating force for members, but also posing risks due to concerns for rigour in measurement of performance, content validity concerns and ambiguity as to group members' interpretation of competency profiles for their assigned area of responsibilities. The third approach, known as "role-based" competency modeling, describes roles which the

incumbents must perform to successfully support agreed-to corporate strategies and defined targets for organizational success. These roles are linked to competencies through articulated behavioural descriptions or expectations, thus reducing ambiguity in how the person in that role is to perform in their assigned set of responsibilities. It is this third variety of competency modeling which appears to most closely conform to Leblanc and Gillies framework (2005) for outstanding board and corporate performance. Such role competency modeling is also well supported through the application of contemporary human resources management practices including recruitment, selection, training and development and performance evaluation for college board members.

The articulation of clear roles, framed in a competency-based manner and possessing more elasticity than a traditionally defined “job” for the college governor, may assist in not only in diminishing ambiguities in governance responsibilities for board and administrative leaders (BoardSource, 2005), but also can help a board to define or redefine their purpose in both governance and leadership capacities in light of externally driven demands (Carver, 2006).

Governance models have been referred to as a framework within which to organize thoughts, structures, activities and relationships of governing boards (Carver, 2006). As noted earlier in this chapter, governance models in higher education settings have been described in bureaucratic, collegial and political typologies (Baldridge, 1971). Boards in the not-for-profit sector have also been represented in terms of their primary focus which may range from operating boards whose members serve as both governors and day-to-day managers to policy setting and fundraising boards (Gill, 2005).

In *Governance as Leadership*, Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005) have raised the interesting challenge that such governance models have left board development untouched by several generations of learning about leadership and organizations. A central focus in their research study

attempts to conjoin theories and research on both leadership and governance to engender new concepts and practices related to a sense of governance as leadership for not-for-profit boards. This model may shed light on improvements that could be made in related human resources management practices applied to volunteer directors in provincial community colleges and related agencies at this time and in the years ahead.

The “governance as leadership” model is comprised of three modes: fiduciary (Type 1); strategic (Type 2); and generative (Type 3). It suggests that effective leaders move seamlessly among these three modes, referred to as “tri-modal” (p. 9) according to circumstances faced by the organization. However, they also state that board members of not-for-profit organizations unfortunately do not always engage in tri-modal governance, but rather tend to apply one mode of thinking and acting to all situations they encounter. The question that emerges related to higher education governance from this assertion is how Ontario community colleges may utilize human resource management strategies to create broadened opportunities for a more tri-modal orientation to governance as leadership utilizing the Chait, Ryan and Taylor (hereinafter referred to as CRT) model. To answer this question, it is necessary to explore the aspects of three governance “types” (fiduciary, strategic and generative) used in the CRT model and to draw on commentaries from the prevailing literature, where such exist, as to the importance and limitations of each type.

Type 1 (fiduciary) governance is associated with the stewardship of the corporation’s tangible assets. This governance mode illustrates a key responsibility of the board for ensuring the organization’s financial health, through its role performance in organizational oversight (Pointer and Orlikoff, 2002). Board members in this context are also viewed as trustees of a not-for-profit organization that serves society at large. Their duties of loyalty and care are manifested in three ways: the conservation and optimal deployment of the corporation’s assets; the effective use of

such resources in support of the agency mission; and the promotion of lawful and ethical behaviour by leaders and members of the organization. It is suggested that without fiduciary governance, the organization could be irreparably tarnished or even destroyed (Chait et al., 2005). The importance of Type 1 governance in community colleges may be attributed to their public nature, specifically regarding the institutional use of publicly-funded operating grants. In the United States, public support for tax increases or bond issues associated with community college budgets are closely linked to the health of local and state economies, the reputation and esteem of the college and the sense that post-secondary educational programming will respond to workforce preparation and training (Smith, 2000). Higher education reform in Ontario in the 1990s faced a similar set of expectations due to predicted economic and social forces along with an uncertain fiscal environment, particularly with respect to the depth of the public purse (Dennison, 1995).

In some instances, the focus of a board may be solely on fiduciary matters which Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005) point out as having two major limitations in contemporary times. Firstly, a narrow focus on fiduciary matters tends to limit attention to only internal matters of the organization while ignoring the dynamics of the external environment. This orientation to governance, as pointed out by Kezar and Eckel (2004), ignores the notion of colleges and universities as “open systems” which are heavily influenced by external realities such as decreasing level of operating grants, demands for particular types of graduates to meet emerging economic needs and the changing demographic trends that shape student enrolment. The second limitation of a solitary focus on fiduciary governance is that it relies on a bureaucratic interpretation of the university or college as an organization. Although Weber (1947) would feel quite comfortable with this orientation, the proponents of the governance-as-leadership model point out that too much attention to the bureaucratic systems in such settings ignores the political

dynamism at work among key internal stakeholders and power brokers. These political dynamics have been described as key in understanding how various interest groups, inside and external to the post-secondary setting, pressure decision makers such as boards of directors, in the formulation of policy (Baldrige et al., 1978).

It is not unusual for individuals in an organizational context to create a personal interpretation of what is happening around them. Weick (1995) has termed this “sense-making” which in the CRT model is referred to as “mental maps” (p. 26) or personal conjectures which in addition to organizational charts and structures provide insights as to what makes an organization “tick”. It is such sense making, according to Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005), that affords the board members with an opportunity to exercise true leadership in a not-for-profit organization. Sole focus on fiduciary responsibilities places too much emphasis within the board’s role on oversight at the expense of inquiry. This diverts opportunities for board leadership due to the predominant position of the college president and key staff providing facts and recommendations supporting, for example, operating and capital budget proposals while the board members passively listen and ultimately approved management’s recommendations. The CRT model suggests the governance as leadership remedy here may be found in a revised mental map for such Type 1 dominant boards; that being a Type 1 form of governance which replaces passive and reflexive board behaviours with a new orientation to inquiry that attempts to seek a link between resource-type discussions and broader conceptual realms such as the college’s mission and priorities in the short and long terms (Chait et al., 2005). This shift in sense making with respect to Type 1 governance not only helps college directors to be more proactive with respect to the fit between their fiduciary responsibilities and the institutional context, but also recognizes the board’s reality; that while having ultimate institutional accountability, they cannot do all of the necessary work on their own.

This sharing of workload with senior corporate staff necessitates that the board “think upward and outward rather than downward and inward” particularly in the context of the difference a college should make beyond the physical, asset-based boundaries of the institution (Carver and Mayhew, 1994). The implications for related human resources management programs supporting Type 1 governance must then recognize that while there is the necessity to meet statutory and corporate responsibilities associated with duties of loyalty and care, the board that wishes to exercise its leadership role must be able to function in a tri-modal governance orientation. This focus helps to clarify actions taken, either by a specific college or on a broader provincial perspective, regarding the recruitment, selection, training and evaluation of all college board members.

In the CRT model, the focus on board activity next turns from a fiduciary (Type 1) mode to a strategic one, referred to as Type 2 governance (Chait et al., 2005). Strategic planning was identified in the early 1980s as a more comprehensive approach to governance than had previously been seen in higher education up to that time. It was referred to as a means for developing and maintaining a fit between the college or university and its changing environment (Kotler and Murphy, 1981). The scope of change witnessed in the external environment was described as having possible effects on institutional governance depending on the degree of autonomy possessed by the respective academy, ranging along a “captured” to “independent” continuum (Baldrige et al., 1978). This changing environment has been described as more important to the contemporary community colleges than to universities (Levin, 1995). A series of provincial government studies and reports linked to community colleges in Ontario illustrated such ties by making reference to key external factors including: the anticipated increases in economic expansion in light of new world markets (Pitman, 1986); government policy directions

aimed at raising the overall educational and skill levels of the provincial workforce (Council of Regents, 1990); and the under-resourcing of provincial post-secondary funding (Rae, 2005).

Strategic planning has been regularly recognized as a common responsibility of public governing boards including universities and colleges (McGuinness, 2001). Boards have been seen as being in a distinctive, yet paradoxical position in that regard. External college governors, in focusing on the community college's mission, are able to span the boundaries between their organization and the environment through a variety of social networks. This affords opportunities for external board members to engage in persuasive communications and assume cross-appointments with key external constituencies that may assist in supporting key strategies tied to the college's mission. At the same time, the volunteer board member's institutional leadership ability may be constrained due to their "part time" involvement in the governance role at the college (Wood, 1996).

As one might expect, opinions on the degree of board involvement in formulating corporate strategy range along a participatory continuum. In part this may be attributed to the type of corporation in question and the concomitant legal duties of the governing board (Leblanc et al., 2005). Involvement in governance by corporate directors is also linked to the degree of external regulation that may be imposed by the state or the economic nature of the organization (Carver, 2006). A high degree of direct involvement by board members in strategy setting has been characterized as the normative view, although role compliance in such instances is rare due to the belief by many board members that they should rather look to senior staff within the organization to craft strategic pathways that lead to the accomplishment of mission and support for the values and culture of the organization (Heracleous, 1999). The challenge as one moves along the participatory continuum is whether the board's direct involvement diminishes by degree to

nothing more than giving its tacit approval to the strategic proposals advanced by the institution's management team. As one nears the terminal point at the other end of this involvement scale, Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005) suggest that governance more closely resembles a monitoring function rather than active engagement in determining the correct pathways towards the organization's imagined future.

It has been suggested that the governing board's role in formulating corporate strategy is under-developed or confined compared to its fiduciary duties. The claim for such limitations is attributed to either a conscious reluctance by corporate CEOs to avoid board involvement in such activities or a focus on regulatory requirements aligned more on structural governance activities rather than any expectation that fosters strategic competencies among corporate boards (Leblanc et al., 2005). Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005) advance the notion that boards of directors in the Type 2 or strategic governance mode seek to construct a consensus, along with senior management, as to what the organization's strategy should be. This prescription for strategic collaboration is supported by Tierney (2005) who calls on board members and administrators to form a more cohesive culture where there is not only affiliation, but an agreement to disagree as well as to commit to creatively moving forward in adapting the organization to the challenges presented by the dynamics of the external environment. This requires a shift in orientation from how boards traditionally have treated their responsibilities in regards to strategic planning for their organization. Their new mental map, according to the CRT framework, requires the board's oversight of management's strategic planning proposals (Type 2 governance), as well as the governors asking themselves what they think about the corporation's future (p. 65). This is the essence of governing in the Type 2 model; to cause board members to perform as if they were

architects rather than general contractors in this strategic planning mode, meaning it is their active engagement in strategic formulation that helps drive governance as leadership (Chait et al., 2005).

To accomplish this shift, the CRT model for Type 2 governance suggests amending board structure and processes which involve how board committees are structured, how board meetings are executed and their communications with internal and external stakeholders. There is ample discussion in the literature on the types of committees required for effective governance (Ingram, 1980; Pointer and Orlinkoff, 2002; Gill, 2005; Carver, 2006; BoardSource, 2007). The criticism of such structural models associated with governing boards is that they tend to align with various administrative responsibilities assigned to staff roles in organizations and thus are destined to delve into operational rather than strategic issues with the resulting blurring of the accountability lines between the chief executive officer and the governing body (Smith, 2000; Chait et al., 2005; Carver, 2006). The CRT model suggests an alternative and more flexible committee framework which sees the utilization of more task forces and ad hoc committees to assist with the board's governance role (Chait et al., 2005, p. 71). This does not avow a complete dismantling of board committees that may be required by statute, but rather recognizes the board's role in such cases at being in a Type 1 or fiduciary role aligned to their overall governance responsibilities. The Type 2 strategic governance role must be more adaptive in nature with the lead responsibility for such tasks or ad hoc assignments being within the mandate of a board's governance committee.

The strategic thinking dimension in governance as reflected in the Type 2 mode of the CRT model is perhaps best witnessed in how board meetings should be structured. Again, the focus of Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005) here is to allow sufficient time to discuss what is strategically important rather than on trivial and historical matters. If board members are expected to think in a strategic mode, there must be sufficient time for them to interact and discuss the

important organizational issues that support or threaten achievement of a community college's mission and defined goals. Thus the board agenda is then structured and managed to allow for both fiduciary oversight and strategic governance elements to occur. Active and regular participation in strategic thinking should help contribute to the board member's expectation of making a meaningful contribution by focusing on key organizational issues that are aligned to high-level decision making (Carver, 2006).

The third and final shift in traditional governance practices that support Type 2 governance involves the nature of interaction and communication by board members with key stakeholders, associated in this case with the community college. The CRT model suggests that this involves constructing ways and means to find out what such groups think about organizational mission, goals and strategies. Such opportunities for dialogue, in the Ontario community college system, are enabled by statutory regulations that permit board representation from three internal staff groups. There is also an expectation that CAAT programs are supported by local advisory committees which serve as external sources to help gauge the relevance of post-secondary educational program offerings in the contemporary marketplace. These measures, along with other reforms flowing from the *Vision 2000* study (Ontario Council of Regents, 1990), have helped in creating opportunities for Type 2 governance through external stakeholder interaction. For example, in the case of the college where this researcher is employed, the board of governors regularly meets with the chairpersons of each of the college's program advisory committees to discuss topics linked to the relevancy of current academic programs and to explore the benefits and risks associated with new program development among other such strategic topics. Not only is this re-framed governance role for board members helpful in motivating the volunteer governor through engagement in such experiences, but it also satisfies the notion that strategic choices

cannot be determined as if the post-secondary academy exists in a vacuum, devoid of consideration of factors in the surrounding environment (Baldrige et al., 1978).

The final mode of the CRT model is referred to as generative or Type 3 governance which involves an approach to thinking that is aligned with the concept of “sense making” advanced by Weick (1995). In their fiduciary or strategic roles, college governors must attempt to discern meaning from information that may indicate a variance in planned actions or reveal an unsuspected course of events that could threaten the institution. Indeed, as Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005) note, generative thinking commences prior to the more widely recognized board functions of mission setting, strategic planning or problem solving (p. 80). This is because board members or the college executive will tend to ask themselves, “What does this mean?” in attempting to make sense, for example, of an emerging environmental threat to the institution’s financial security. The exercise of sense making relies on the leader’s awareness of clues, the use of interpretative frames of reference and retrospective thinking. The awareness of clues in large part is associated with the leader’s professional training or affiliation, or their “frame” of sense making. This frame for interpreting clues facilitates understanding and the subsequent decision making which may or may not lead to action by the leadership of the organization. Such situations may be “framed” in one of four orientations, structural, human resources, political or symbolic (Bolman and Deal, 2008). Three of these frames are aptly described in the literature on governance and leadership in higher education. Structural frames permit the expectations of organizational leaders in post-secondary institutions to be realized through a somewhat more diffused network of delegated authority, to use rational decision making and exercise their hierarchical power to respond to problems and opportunities in an efficient and prescribed manner (Birnbaum, 1988). The political framework of understanding clues sees those in leadership

positions not necessarily as heroes, but rather as mediators among a network of organizational sub-groups that must reach a consensus on what actions are required to deal with corporate challenges (Baldrige et al., 1978). Interpreting clues through symbolic frameworks means the leader needs to consider factors such as the college's culture, history and rituals to explain present patterns of behaviours that are aligned or not with demands from internal or external constituencies (Kezar and Eckel, 2004). The human resources interpretative framework, which is described as looking at the "fit" between the structural and cultural elements of the organization vis-à-vis its members, is one that has not been as adequately synthesized in the scholarly literature as applied to governance as leadership in higher education settings. However, that is not to say that it has not been applied as an interpretative framework, particularly in descriptions of the degree of labour conflict witnessed in Ontario's community colleges in the late 20th century (Skolnik, 1986; Owen, 1995).

At the heart of Type 3 or generative governance is a more dynamic interaction among not-for-profit trustees and senior administrative leadership in sense making. Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005) suggest that in most institutional situations, generative governance should occur at the time when clues indicating changing situations are new and not fully understood. They go on to say that such opportunities are often missed by board members due to the traditional roles associated with Type 1 (fiduciary) and Type 2 (strategic) governance modes of thinking. In both instances, the board members' interpretation of their role and past practice furnish only opportunities to receive information in a pre-packaged manner, wrapped in the interpretative framework of the CEO and her management team. This in effect is "leadership as governance", one of four generative thinking scenarios described in the CRT model, where the board is in a passive state, serving more as bystanders to the governance process (p. 92). Two other scenarios in the model

are equally problematic. One possibility sees the board dominate the generative thinking process to the exclusion of the agency's staff. This is neither an appropriate nor a likely option for community colleges, due to the highly sophisticated staffing models for administrative, teaching and support roles seen in present Canadian higher education systems. The other possibility deals with situations where both board and senior administrative leaders abdicate their opportunities for sense making. This may be the result of a lack of cohesiveness or cooperation between board members and management, leading to a predominance of individualized opinions rather than a consensus as to what is the presenting problem facing the organization. Alternatively, board and management leaders may be swayed by powerful external influences who lend their own interpretation of what is happening to the not-for-profit organization. In this case, government regulators have been viewed as influencing such sense making, more so in community colleges than universities, as the former is more dependent on provincial funding, while at the same time faces the political rhetoric regarding the population's lack of job readiness and the waning competitiveness of the labour force in the global marketplace (Owen, 1995).

Generative governance calls for more collaborative leadership, or a "fusion of thinking", between institutional board members and their administrative executives. This partnership is bolstered by the fact that a community college's board not only has the authority to provide institutional leadership, but the composition of a board of governors affords what Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005) have termed "plurality" given the fact that membership is drawn from a public cross-section of expertise and experienced citizens. This plurality affords differing perspectives or frames of reference that are seen as central to the board's sense making abilities in exercising the governance role (p. 100). As all Ontario community colleges require the appointment of a majority of board members from the external community, such volunteer members are placed in

the unique position of being on the boundaries with the institution's staff and student populations as well as being situated on a permeable border between the organization and the external environment. This positioning provides opportunities to interact with stakeholders to help with the sense making that is a precursor of governance work. When board members access opportunities for direct participation with those external to the college, the information and further clues that surface provide grist for the sense making mill which is tied so closely to the tri-modal notion of governance as leadership (Chait et al., 2005).

The governance paradigms of both Leblanc and Gillies (2005) and Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005) are premised on a desired set of personal characteristics and behaviours seen in board members as well as a set of structures and processes that develop and guide governance functioning, both in the name of institutional leadership in a highly complex and dynamic external environment. Marshalling and directing the needed human capital to support successful governance and leadership strategies is dependent upon a professional approach to the acquisition, development and motivation of talented individuals who desire to serve successfully in an institutional governance role. The final section of this chapter will turn to professional programming found in many such organizations, but traditionally focused on those in an employment relationship to the corporation. Such programming, as will now be discussed, can also support those volunteers serving in a governance capacity on not-for-profit, higher education boards.

Human resources management programming

The final section of this chapter will examine three key HRM programming clusters: recruitment and selection; orientation and training; and performance evaluation as may be applied in support of strengthening board governance in Ontario's community colleges. College board members are individuals who seek, or who are sought out for, opportunities which broaden their experience in governance and leadership in an organizational context. In the review of contemporary human resources management (HRM) literature, there are methods and procedures traditionally used in the context of employment situations that may be applied to improve the experiences of those serving in a voluntary governance role at a not-for-profit organization. The goals of HRM are four-fold: attracting qualified applicants to an organization; motivating the individual to commit themselves to a contributing role; creating meaningful opportunities whereby the person may maximize their professional talents; and retaining experienced members for a sufficient period of time in order to capitalize on their competencies and experiences. If done well, such HRM programming may stimulate strategic applications for the organization where such efforts are aligned with the mission, values and goals of the institution (Dessler, Rekar-Munro and Cole, 2011). Such HRM programming goals, when applied to a not-for-profit governance context, must realize certain unique characteristics regarding incumbents in such roles. College board members typically serve in a part-time or occasional role capacity. They also must meet the expectations of diverse stakeholders, who often present competing demands that may be distinct from those raised by a group of private sector, corporate shareholders. Finally, such volunteers are increasingly experiencing a higher set of expectations in performance of their roles which in many instances has replaced the traditional position of honour linked to serving on a community board (Pointer and Orlikoff, 2002). Nevertheless, it is suggested here that these

factors merely serve to shape rather than prevent the application of HRM programming to such constituencies.

College boards are entrusted with full institutional authority and responsibility for the organization as set out within a state's statutory frameworks as well as in regards to the corporation's constitution and by-laws (Henderson, 1971). As noted earlier, the role of a board member in such not-for-profit settings has been widely articulated in scholarly efforts to date (Nason, 1980; Ingram, 1993; Smith, 2000; Pointer and Orlikoff, 2002; Collis, 2004; Gill, 2005; Leblanc et al., 2005; and BoardSource, 2007). The Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act (2002) and its supporting regulations including Regulation 34/03 set out the composition of the board of governors at each of the twenty-four community colleges. While there remains a decreased element of government involvement in board appointments at each institution, the individual community college is left by and large to detail the "job" of its board members. In HRM parlance, such a description is seen as a statement of tasks, duties, responsibilities and working conditions associated with the job to be performed (Schwind, Das and Wagar, 2010; Belcourt, Bohlander and Snell, 2011). While such board job descriptions may use a more employee-oriented template to articulate these key elements, it has been suggested that volunteer job descriptions reflect four key underlying themes; ownership, authority to think, responsibility for results and a focus on evaluating what has been achieved (McCurley and Lynch, 1996). This articulation of the board member's roles and responsibilities may be seen as an all-important precursor to the institution's efforts to fill governance vacancies that arise through planned attrition or unanticipated departure. The significance of a well-crafted role profile for the board member is that it aids in the creation of the appropriate message that informs the community of the governance opportunity and also assists in subsequent deliberation regarding

the choice of suitable candidates who responded to such a call. This facilitates the essence of the first set of related HRM programming activities focused on in this study: recruitment and selection of board candidates.

In an employment context, the term “staffing” relates to the acquisition, deployment and retention of a workforce of sufficient quantity and quality that helps the organization achieve desired outcomes (Heneman, Judge, Smith and Summers, 2010). The function of staffing in organizations may also be commonly defined as encompassing two specific subsets of HRM activities, recruitment and selection. The former activity is seen as a process of finding and attracting capable candidates for a job vacancy, while the latter process involves the use of tools and methods to choose the best qualified individuals from among the recruited pool of candidates (Schwind et al., 2010). For the purposes of this study, a focus on board recruitment and selection will be pursued in the following discussion of the professional literature.

Recruitment in an HRM context involves two focal elements: message and candidate location. It may be argued that this not only applies in the case of paid employment but also to volunteer opportunities such as the role of a not-for-profit board member. The message has two key components in regard to board recruitment: the state of the organization and the required governance duties and incumbent skill sets. Potential board members are more likely to be attracted to organizations that have not only a good reputation in the community, but also present a realistic picture of the financial health of the corporation (Gill, 2005). The specifics related to the desired skills or competencies of board candidates may be gleaned from a role profile, as developed by the governance committee of the board, which focuses on desired characteristics along with group composition requirements tied to demographic or geographic variables as prescribed by government policy or college cultural values (BoardSource, 2007). Once crafted,

and depending on whether the board vacancy is for an internal or external board representative, the governance committee will pursue HRM recruitment strategies as seen in employee-based searches including internal and external advertising. Since the focus of this study is on volunteer board members as opposed to those who are selected by staff constituencies in Ontario community colleges, the remaining discussion will focus on considerations tied to external board candidate searches.

The choice of external recruitment methods by the HRM professional in a typical work place is driven by the nature of the vacancy or type of position to be filled (e.g., a data systems technician or a vice-president, marketing) and considerations of the prevailing labour market (Belcourt et al., 2011). To a degree, both elements also exist in recruitment messages for volunteer board candidates. While it is possible that some not-for-profit organizations may be pursuing a competency model, as discussed in the LeBlanc and Gillies model (2005) or based on the CRT “triple helix” paradigm of fiduciary, strategic and generative governance, given the newness and complexity of the latter model it is more likely that not-for-profit recruitment messages are tailored to competency models for board candidates that are framed against line management portfolios (Chait et al., 2005). Thus, if the community college anticipates a vacancy on the board’s finance and audit committee, it is likely to direct recruitment messages to specific locations where such competencies reside such as in contacting local financial consulting firms or banking institutions. The effectiveness of such recruitment strategies may be challenged by the supply and demand seen within occupational and technical labour markets in the organization’s service area (Mathis, Jackson and Zinni, 2008). A paucity of candidates with the desired financial competencies may lead the board’s governance or nominating committee to broaden its original search area, modify its original choice of recruitment method or engage in development

activities to increase the skill level of current members to fill the talent gaps within the board membership.

It should also be noted that given the size of most community college boards, it is possible that recruitment messages may be delivered in a variety of ways, including the practice of not having a formal nominating committee process, but rather calling on existing members to contact persons they know in the community who may be interested in a seat on the governing body. Such a practice, also witnessed in recruitment methods known as employee referrals, may lead to nepotism which results in the replication of sameness in a group in terms of their viewpoints, traits or demographic characteristics that may work against the values of diversity held by the organization (Belcourt et al., 2011). Finally, a key consideration for the not-for-profit board in assessing its search efforts for candidates is to adopt evaluation metrics that help in determining the success of such recruitment efforts. These measures may include examination of the number of suitable candidates that came forward through a particular search method, the quality of such persons as dictated by board need and whether particular recruitment methods lead to high-performing role incumbents (Heneman et al., 2010).

When a number of candidates have responded to a recruitment message, the board's nominating committee is faced with devising and executing a process for screening applicants to answer two basic questions, "Can this person do the job?" and "Will this person do the job?". The former question delves into the balance between the individual's competencies placed against the requirements of the board member's role. The latter and more difficult question deals with the motivation and ambitions of the candidate in a volunteer governance position. In the HR literature this is referred to as the "person-job" fit (Heneman et al., 2010). Again, it should be remembered

in this context that the notion of job here is used in relation to a voluntary governance role in a not-for-profit organization.

Also in the context of board candidate selection, and in keeping with the concepts of governance and leadership, one of the challenges for contemporary nominating committees necessitates a congruency between the candidate's values and beliefs and those of the organization. This notion in the prevailing HRM literature, described as "person-organization fit", not only considers a candidate's personality and competencies in relation to the role to be filled, but expands the comparison of the person's values and beliefs to a match on a number of corporate cultural dimensions along with personal preferences and desires for new roles and future assignments in the organization (Heneman et al., 2010). This approach to candidate selection has also been discussed in the volunteer management literature (McCurley and Lynch, 1996). Attention to these wider considerations may provide an opportunity for a progressive organization to embrace the governance as leadership model and to separate itself from the hierarchical, corporate setting that favours gaining advantage and a command-and-control approach to organizational life. It has been noted that such board selection strategies may also replenish the leadership reservoir with persons who embrace egalitarian relationships and an interdependent approach to sense making that will help organizations, including community colleges, to cope with future challenges (Tyler Scott, 2000).

Selection procedures for job vacancies in organizations typically rely on several screening steps in looking for potential candidates. This sequencing in decision making, as identified in the professional literature, ranges in the number of activities from five to eight successive steps (Heneman et al., 2010; Schwind, Das and Wagar, 2010; Belcourt et al., 2011). While not all of these steps may be appropriate for the selection of candidates for volunteer board roles, there are

certain parallels in the suggested screening procedures. Two selection activities, involving some form of face-to-face interview and the use of reference checks on a candidate's background, are examples of the more commonly referred to duties assigned to a board's nominating committee (McCurley and Lynch, 1996; Gill, 2005; BoardSource, 2007).

Interviewing candidates for job vacancies may be categorized according to the degree of structure, the nature of questioning and number of persons participating in the interview itself. These human resources management considerations may also be applied to filling volunteer vacancies in a community college governance context. Interviewers will typically follow one of two styles in conducting a meeting with a candidate, either an unstructured or a structured approach. A nominating committee using a structured interview format will develop and employ a series of agreed-to questions when meeting with all candidates for a board vacancy. This is useful not only in any preliminary screening of a large number of candidates, but also effective as the organization proceeds to a short-list of finalists. Such consistency in approach raises the validity of the decision making regarding candidate selection and also helps to avoid claims of discrimination or bias in the selection process (Mathis et al., 2008). The formulation of such pre-determined questions is also seen as a positive pre-interview planning step in volunteer management (McCurley and Lynch, 1996; Gill, 2005; BoardSource, 2007).

The nature of questions that may be posed in a selection interview should be focused on helping to answer the questions of "*can*" the person perform the duties and responsibilities of the position and "*will*" they do so if offered the position. In seeking answers to the employer's concerns related to the former area, which is tied to the individual's skills and abilities, and the second area which is linked to the person's motivation towards their duties, the interview format should adopt the use of situational and behavioural descriptive questions. Situational questions ask

the candidate to project themselves into typical scenarios likely to be encountered by a board member and then to answer how they would act or respond to the situation. This helps the organization look for a match in role performance and the person's likely fit with the culture of the board and the larger organization. Behavioural descriptive questions call on the candidate to reflect back on previous experiences and describe how they dealt with a presenting circumstance or problem. The assumption here is that the best predictor of future role performance is how one handled a similar situation in the past (Dessler et al., 2011). This combination of retrospective reflection and behavioural forecasting against role-based questions would help a nominating committee of a board understand the motivation and likely "fit" of the person to the organization as well as to clarify any questions that may remain about the suitability of the volunteer candidate in terms of desired governance competencies (McCurley and Lynch, 1996).

A common procedural consideration in candidate selection is how many organizational representatives should be involved in those face-to-face interviews. While there is again a range in the number of persons that could be involved in meeting candidates in a typical job interview situation, there is agreement that panel interviews offer several advantages, such as: speeding up the selection process as opposed to hosting serial interviews; offering an opportunity for inter-rater reliability and the increased likelihood of acceptance of the decision by the candidate involved in a group process (Belcourt et al., 2011). Since the responsibility for filling board vacancies typically falls to a nominating or governance committee, it is likely that a small group or panel interview would be used with a short-list of potential candidates for board vacancies. Depending on the nature of the governance vacancy, the nominating committee may seek related peer involvement for a specialized board role while still maintaining an efficient group-based process. This approach has also been shown to meet expectations of those being interviewed for a

vacancy including the provision of task-relevant information and offering a socially acceptable means for providing feedback on the candidate's suitability for the vacancy (Heneman et al., 2010).

Reference checks for potential board candidates might at first seem inappropriate for persons seeking a volunteer governance role. However, given the scope of governance responsibilities, particularly in regards to fiduciary duties, the confirmation of a candidate's claims of expertise and experience along with past accounts of role performance in other organizations are prudent measures for a nominating committee to take in filling a board vacancy. Such investigations of a candidate's background have also been described as multi-purposed. It demonstrates due diligence on the part of the organization, confirms information presented by the candidate during the selection process and encourages the candidate to be honest in their declarations to the selection committee (Mathis et al., 2008). Board procedures in such matters may parallel guidelines used by HR professionals in contemporary selection methods. It is likely the case that such reference checks would be conducted via telephone using a list of references provided by the volunteer candidate. The designated member of the board's nominating committee should focus direct questions to the external contact regarding governance-related behaviours of the candidate that are linked to expected role performance in their new setting. It is recommended that such detail be sought from credible sources tied to previous governance or leadership experiences rather than personal references. Most importantly, data gained from reference sources should be used in combination with other selection information in reaching a decision on the candidate's suitability for the vacancy (Schwind et al., 2010).

It is worth noting that while the HR management literature has dealt with various strategies to link the success of corporate hiring practices to employee performance, there appears

to be little discussion of similar attempts to measure the utility of volunteer selection methods. The metrics used in an employer-job candidate context examine issues such as: person-job fit and productivity; the cost and added work of selection procedures to the organization; and whether there are ways of streamlining existing selection protocols (Dessler et al., 2011). The lack of such evaluative rigour among the not-for-profit sector is perhaps explained in part by the perception of the short-term nature of volunteer tenure in the governance role and a personal hesitancy among board peers to judge the performance of another volunteer board member – a subject that will be dealt with later in this chapter.

Once a selection decision for a new or replacement governor has been reached by the college board, it is important that this member is provided with an orientation program that acquaints the individual with a sense of their role, peer group and wider organization. In an employment context, orientation programming has been shown to increase productivity, lower anxiety and facilitate learning for new organizational members (Belcourt et al., 2011). The HR literature often places orientation programming within the broader portfolio of training and development. This combined focus has received considerable attention recently in the literature dealing with governance and leadership in not-for-profit organizations.

Part of the problem with the use of the term “orientation” in this context is that it is often perceived as a “light” or pro-forma activity such as showing the new governor the new auditorium, student athletic facilities or clinical laboratory space on the college campus. While this is helpful, it is a far cry from the more substantial preparation for the strategic leadership role of the board (Carver, 2006). A recent study of how corporate boards work has indicated that new governors are often disadvantaged due to a lack of orientation programming. In that study, it was often mentioned that such novice directors were expected to learn what they needed to know

through direct involvement “around the board table” (Leblanc et al., 2005). It has also been shown that while some organizations pride themselves on their board orientation efforts, incoming governors have difficulty recalling the details of the experience soon after the event (Gill, 2005). So, what measures have been shown to help avoid what has been referred to as the missed opportunity for an optimal teaching moment for new board members (Tyler Scott, 2000)?

Orientation programs are typically included within the wider scope of training and development services offered by a corporate human resources department. Although the focus in this study is on volunteer board members, many of the same principles seen in optimizing orientation efforts for new employees are easily transferred to a volunteer context. Orientation services typically include familiarizing the new employee with the organization, their specific job and their work unit. Such programming is designed to influence the new member’s attitudes about work they will be performing and their role in the organization (Belcourt et al., 2011). It also affords an opportunity to introduce key elements of corporate culture along with policies, procedures and unique terminology and symbols used in the organization; all of which may be referred to as a form of socialization for those new to their role (Mathis et al., 2008). Such programming helps to reduce any gap between the abilities of the new organizational member and the experiences they will encounter in their newly assumed role (Schwind et al., 2010). High quality orientation programming has been described as offering numerous benefits to new employees (Belcourt et al., 2011). While some of these benefits are not transferable to a volunteer governance position, there are other close parallels which may accrue to new board members including reduction of role anxiety, improved role performance and the avoidance of early turnover.

Responsibility for employee orientation has been frequently described as a partnership between a company's human resources staff and the line managers to whom the new employee is accountable (Belcourt et al., 2011; Dessler et al., 2011; Schwind et al., 2010). In situations of corporate governance, the responsibilities for board orientation are typically assigned in a different manner. Traditional orientation responsibilities have been ascribed to the board chairperson and chief executive officer of the company. It has been suggested that this obligation is rather the collective responsibility of the board with task leadership entrusted to a nominating or governance committee (Gill, 2005). Orientation of new board members, much like the socialization of new employees, may also be viewed as an ongoing process during the first year of service (Pointer and Orlikoff, 2002). Checklists have been suggested to guide a board's nominating or governance committee in developing and sustaining quality orientation programming for new members. Such lists, often developed based on feedback from more experienced board colleagues, describe key information and procedures to the new governor candidate prior to their appointment and in the period immediately after assuming their role (Smith, 2000; BoardSource, 2007). Such feedback from previous directors also contributes to the stated intent that governance orientation programming be tailored to the new board member's needs according to the unique features of the industry in which the business is situated (LeBlanc et al., 2005). Thus orientation program for community college board members may be different from programming for board representatives in other types of not-for-profit corporations. Advances in the study of orientation programming by human resources professionals have drawn attention to the need to evaluate the efficacy of such efforts through the use of various assessments. Again, while certain measures may not be transferable between the employment and volunteer experiences, there is merit in not-for-profit boards seeking: the reactions of new board

members to orientation efforts; an interpretation of the cost-versus-benefits of such programming; and examination of the criterion validity of such programming as a contributing factor in the performance of organizational members (Dessler et al., 2011).

Carver (2006) has noted that continued education for all corporate governors is a fundamental means for a board to have the needed skills and insights into governance. Although orientation may be seen as a component of a wider developmental strategy for board members, there is a concomitant obligation for attending to the ongoing training needs of those serving in a governance capacity. In the professional literature, training has been described as an effort by the organization to ensure that people acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to perform jobs (Mathis et al., 2008). Training is frequently distinguished from the development of employees which focuses on the future or long term human capital needs of organizational members. Again, while the discussion of such HRM programming concepts in the literature is typically focused on an employment relationship, it may be argued that elements of such applications do have a place in how such efforts can improve the quality of those serving in both governance and leadership capacities (Gill, 2005).

A systematic training program, as articulated in the human resources management literature, includes four phases: assessment, design, delivery and evaluation (Mathis et al., 2008; Schwind et al., 2010; Belcourt et al., 2011). Assessment precedes all other elements in such programming based on the premise that before any learning experience is constructed for a single person or group of individuals, it should be clear as to what is the particular learning need in question. Three forms of assessment are typically used including a focus on either all organizational members, a selected number of individuals performing a similar role or a specific individual in the corporate setting (Dessler et al., 2011). Once the need for training has been

assessed, the second step in training involves the preparation of the required program. There are a number of considerations within this phase including: learner readiness; a person's learning style; principles of adult learning; and the transfer of newly acquired skills or knowledge to the role or job setting (Mathis et al., 2008). The third phase in such HR programming reflects considerations for the actual training event. Practical considerations here involve the location site for training, delivery sequencing, decisions to arrange self-paced or directive training interactions and the costs for materials, facilitation, travel and related event considerations (Mathis et al., 2008). Following the completion of any organization-sponsored training, an evaluation of the learning experience should be conducted. The evaluative approach used may vary among several options such as the measuring of participant reaction, gauging the actual knowledge acquired in the training event, subsequent alterations in job or role behaviours and a quantitative examination of results desired by the sponsoring body of the training program (Belcourt et al., 2011).

Although some of these elements are reflected in scholarly commentary on volunteer board training, such efforts appear to either lack a consistent application or a comparatively well-developed schema as seen in the HRM literature. While providing ongoing education and development opportunities to board members as a means for effective leadership has been called for (Gill, 2005), the detailing of a similar structured, systematic approach to the training for board members is not clearly reflected in the governance literature. Perhaps this is due to the reality as noted by Smith (2000) that the educational needs of board members serving in not-for-profits are challenged by their different desires, goals, learning styles and personal time constraints. Yet the same challenges could be advanced for any group of individuals within a corporate setting, whether such persons are drawn from the staff or volunteer leadership ranks.

There has also been a call for an increase in time and energy devoted to development initiatives for boards, based on the fact that those in contemporary governance positions can make more of a difference and add greater value to their organizations than is presently the case (Pointer and Orlikoff, 2002). Tyler-Scott (2000) has noted that current board development approaches have placed an emphasis on administrative and managerial skills, strategic planning competencies and fundraising at the expense of developing the abilities among governors to respond to complexity and to engage in critical analysis and thoughtful decision making, all of which reduces the board's leadership effectiveness. Such statements among governance scholars appear to point to the need for a more comprehensive use of proven human resources management approaches in the manner of training and development activities for those involved in governance and leadership matters in the not-for-profit sector.

The topic of performance evaluation for those serving as board members in corporate settings, as seen in contemporary publications, emphasizes its importance but does not offer clear, preferred procedural techniques for the application of such evaluation programs. Such ambiguity may be resolved through a review of the HR management literature in this area. Performance measurement includes a series of processes that are structured to identify, measure, communicate, develop and reward the individual's work efforts. Such measures should be aligned with business strategies and organizational culture (Mathis et al., 2008). The foundation of any performance management system is a formal appraisal of the individual's efforts against the stated responsibilities and expectations associated with a defined job or organizational role. The appraisal is comprised of sequential steps including: the defining of performance expectations; an assessment of the person's performance against the expectations; and communication of the assessment to the incumbent in the role that has been evaluated. When appraisals are negatively

viewed by organizational members, it is usually due to the failure of one or more of these three key steps (Dessler et al., 2011).

The actual approach to the appraisal has three important considerations: methodology; identification of the person responsible for providing feedback; and communicating the results of the evaluation. Three common methods are reflected in the formats for appraisals used in contemporary business environments. The trait method focuses on desired personal attributes that the corporation has identified as being closely linked to the desired role performance. Notions such as creativity, decisiveness, conceptual ability and leadership may be traits that are looked for in candidates for board vacancies. Trait-based systems, which are usually depicted in graphic rating scale format, are easy to develop but are often problematic due to the fact that such traits, unless well described, are prone to subjective interpretation which may lead to confusion and dissatisfaction among those participating in the appraisal process (Belcourt et al., 2011). Behavioural appraisal methods seek to articulate desired behaviours to be exhibited by those in a job or role. This approach has several variations such as the critical incident method, behavioural observation or checklists and the behavioural-anchored rating scale. A focus on appraising defined and observable job or role behaviours avoids the vagaries of subjective traits and can set the groundwork for fruitful discussions related to developmental needs of the incumbent. Such systems however involve considerable time and expense to establish, and are not as responsive to rapid changes in the external environment that influence corporate role performance (Mathis et al., 2008). A final appraisal method deals with performance outcomes or results. Here, the person in the role and a person in authority to whom the incumbent reports, discuss and agree on role performance outcomes for a defined period. Throughout the established time frame, both parties meet regularly to discuss progress on defined performance targets and make adjustments to

expectations as required by changing circumstances. Management by objectives and balanced scorecards are two popular approaches to a results-based appraisal methodology (Belcourt et al., 2011). As noted earlier, the scholarly literature in not-for-profit governance is not clear on a preferred method for appraising director performance. Certain authors suggest that the board is responsible for its own performance (Pointer and Orlikoff, 2002) but provide no guidance in how such responsibilities should be executed. Others prescribe methods that focus on the “collective” performance of a board along with a self-evaluative approach by the individual member (Smith, 2000; Gill, 2005). The emergence of the policy governance model (Carver, 2006) and its focus on board activities linked to desired corporate “ends” may provide an opportunity for board evaluation strategies that are aligned with a results or outcome methodology, although details of such an approach are underdeveloped.

In terms of the person responsible for leading the performance management process in a workplace the literature is clear; it is the employee’s line supervisor (Mathis et al., 2008; Dessler et al., 2011; Belcourt et al., 2011). This source may also be supplemented through performance feedback by: the incumbent (self-appraisal); peers; team members and subordinates (360 degree); and external contacts (Mathis et al., 2008). Multi-sourced inputs on the incumbent’s performance received from others who work with the job holder help to avoid common problems associated with the supervisor as the sole evaluative source such as rater error, personal bias and the lack of regular contact between the evaluator and the job incumbent (Belcourt et al., 2011). In the volunteer management literature, there is a parallel in terms of designating responsibility for performance feedback to the manager of volunteer services in the organization. There are also good examples of tools and resources that may aid such a person in carrying out this important responsibility (McCurley and Lynch, 1996). The governance literature suggests that

responsibilities for feedback on the performance of board membership should be assumed by the board chair, based on both each governor's self-assessment and feedback from board committee chairpersons who have witnessed the director's governance efforts (Smith, 2000; Gill, 2005). An alternative model calls for the board's governance committee to oversee such evaluations (BoardSource, 2007). In the latter example, the chair of the governance committee may lead the feedback process with individual board member.

The final dimension of performance management deals with the communication of feedback from the organizational authority to the person serving in the position or role. It is not uncommon, when listening to what employees dislike most about any corporate performance management system, to hear them articulate concerns about the lack of regular feedback, how such discussions focus on personality rather than performance and a lack of professionalism on the part of the supervisor in providing such commentary (Belcourt et al., 2011). While some of these shortcomings may be a by-product of organizational circumstances, such as the reduction of middle management ranks and the concomitant challenge of regularly meeting with their subordinates for such performance discussions, other concerns can be resolved through dedicated training and experiential exercises for supervisors to improve their communication skills and the conducting of successful appraisal meetings (Schwind et al., 2010). The dearth of focus within the literature as to how board chairs or others in a leadership position should effectively communicate with their peers on both the positive aspects and areas of concern related to an individual governor's performance may be attributed to the tendency to favour group rather than individual evaluations of boards. Perhaps it may also revolve around the assumption that since the person serving as board chair has attained that status, she must possess the full range of assessment and communication skills to carry out such responsibilities. This may be less of a

concern if the incumbent chair's performance meets or exceeds key qualifications for that leadership role (Pointer & Orlikoff, 2002).

Summary

This chapter has examined the salient scholarship dealing with structural and political orientations to governance approaches in Canadian universities and colleges. A typology in the leadership literature has also been highlighted over the past century starting with the initial theoretical construct of the "great person" as leader to a contemporary and more complex viewpoint that recognizes the interplay between both the leader and followers in organizations as well as how all such persons may be influenced by dynamic external environments. Contemporary models in corporate governance as developed by LeBlanc and Gillies (2005) and Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005) were also reviewed to illustrate conceptual understandings of board and individual director effectiveness as well as how institutional governors may use their positions to exercise leadership in not-for-profit contemporary settings such as post-secondary centres of learning. The discussion concluded with a review of the professional literature dealing with contemporary human resources management practices that may be applied in the creation and development of support systems to enable the acquisition, development and retention of competent individuals to serve in positions of governance and leadership on provincial community colleges boards in Ontario. Such applications were identified as important due to the fact that certain gaps existed in the literature as to the application of these HRM practices that are herein argued as being important to support role performance of those volunteers serving in a key leadership role as community college governors.

The next chapter will describe the research methodology used in this study of opinions, policies and practices associated with the current governance system for Ontario's community

colleges. A description of the construction, delivery and evaluation of survey instruments and interviews, which reached out to over seventy provincial community college board and staff representatives over a seven month period beginning in November, 2009, will help set the stage for the analysis and conclusions that follow.

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methods used in carrying out the research study. A general overview on the research design will be followed by a description of the specific context of the study. The next section will provide a profile of those engaged as participants in both the survey and interview stages of this research project. The selected instruments and procedures used to gather data from these participants shall then be outlined. The steps in these descriptions are arranged in a chronological order according to the research schedule used for the preparation and execution of the data collection. A discussion of how the data were analyzed will then occur followed by a concluding summary statement of the methodology.

The General Perspective

As a mixed methods study this research effort took on characteristics of both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. As described by Cresswell (2009), the research procedures involved a “*qualitative primary, quantitative first*” approach (p.209) meaning that the research strategy called for the collection of quantitative data through the use of on-line surveys directed at two distinct participant groups within the provincial community college system, followed by interviews with representatives of one of these survey cohorts to further explore themes that were found in the quantitative results.

The primary and secondary research questions associated with this study required an investigation of both the direct experiences and the perceptions of those occupying governance and key supporting administrative roles in Ontario’s community colleges. These responses to survey questions related to board recruitment, selection, training and evaluation experiences were then examined against evidence gathered from surveyed college board secretaries to discern

procedural steps taken by participating higher education institutions regarding human resources management programming available to board members. Trends in these survey findings were then further explored through telephone interviews with a selected group of volunteer governors at participating colleges in order to gain further insight into the interpretation of the collected research data.

The Research Context

The context for this study involved active members on boards of governors in twenty-two of the twenty-four community colleges in Ontario. The two francophone community colleges in the Province were not part of this study due to the prohibitive expense and lack of funding sources associated with translation of survey instruments, and interview responses.

The data collection process was orchestrated by the use of on-line based surveys. These surveys were administered during an eight week period from September to November, 2009. During this time line, two separate survey instruments were distributed to two distinct participant audiences: those who were serving as board members at twenty-two Ontario community colleges; and to persons serving in the role of board secretary at each of the same twenty-two institutions. The former included not only community volunteers but internal staff and student appointees to their college's board. This was due to the fact that the research design for this survey was open to all those deemed to be current board members at participating colleges. The breadth of the research context, in terms of its geographical scope within the Province of Ontario, was intended to test whether there were variations in the experience of board members or procedural differences that could be attributed to such variables as institutional size or geographic location of the college. After an interval of four months, telephone interviews were sought with six senior board volunteers from community colleges that had participated in the initial surveys. The board

secretaries at all responding colleges were asked to identify a current board leader at their institution who was willing to participate in a telephone interview. It was suggested to the board secretaries that the ideal candidate would be someone who was currently in, or had recently occupied the role of either the board chairperson or the chair of the governance or nominating committee. An initial list of six board leaders was secured from among the participating colleges. Five interviews were completed during a six week period from April – May, 2010.

During the period of this research effort, it came to light that the College Compensation and Appointments Council (as it was referred to at that time) had engaged an external consulting firm to review current responsibilities and practices associated with the recruitment of external directors to community college boards. The resulting report from the consulting firm, presented in the spring of 2009, made a number of recommendations that will later be discussed in the analysis of current perceptions of leadership and governance among college board members. In the telephone interviews with college board leaders, which took place in the spring of 2010, participants also referenced an apparent shift in the provincial government's procedural position on the appointment of external governors to individual community college boards in Ontario. Although no firm policy statements or guidelines were published at the conclusion of this research study, comments during the telephone interviews with participating governors revealed a sense of anticipation and caution among the board leaders as to how such changes would influence college board composition and governance dynamics.

The Research Participants

Since the focus of this research examined how certain human resources management programs and procedures appeared to influence the perceptions of current board members in their roles of governance and leadership at Ontario's community colleges, two primary research cohorts

were identified in the design phase of this study. A focus on the governance experience as well as the perceptions of how HRM programming may assist in leadership development necessitated the engagement of those serving as board members at these higher education institutions. As noted earlier in this chapter, the use of electronic survey instruments with current governors at twenty-two community colleges did allow for both external volunteer members, internally selected staff and student representatives and ex-officio members of the board to submit survey responses. A copy of this survey questionnaire is found in Appendix “G”. On the individual questionnaire, the participants were asked to identify their board representation status as an external governor, an internally elected staff, a student representative or an ex-officio member (the latter status in all cases was that of the college president or CEO). If the individual participant made such an indication, this allowed for the analysis of perceptions by external governors and other board members on specific questions related to supportive programming by their college or an external agency in regards to governance and leadership themes included in this study.

Representatives from twelve of the invited twenty-two provincial community college boards responded to the invitation to participate in this study. The number of survey participants per college ranged from one to twelve persons. At the time of the surveys, there were one hundred and ninety seven (197) active internal and external board members among these twelve colleges. Of this potential respondent pool, fifty-two (52) individuals agreed to participate in the board of governors’ survey. Thus a response rate of only twenty-six percent (26%) was witnessed among the college governors’ cohort in survey portion of this study.

The second cadre of research participants was composed of the board secretary at each Ontario community college. Incumbents in this particular role served as a paid staff member, typically in the college’s president’s office, for the purpose of supporting a wide range of

activities associated with the roles and responsibilities of the college's governing body including: handling board correspondence; scheduling board and committee meetings; discussions with the board chairperson and the college president; administrative support services to the board and its committees; and communication with various external and college stakeholder groups as well as the general community served by the institution.

Board secretaries from nineteen of the twenty-two community colleges agreed to take part in the on-line survey associated with this study. However, a log-on system error allowed up to four participants to be recorded for one participating college. This was revealed when the maximum number of responses to any of the survey questions completed by board secretaries was equal to or less than fifteen (15) total answers. Thus the participation rate for the board secretaries among invited community colleges was sixty-eight percent.

Participants for telephone interviews were drawn from community colleges that participated in either the board member or board secretary on-line surveys. As this research study was interested in both the governance and leadership dimensions of college boards, those governors invited to be interviewed were drawn from those serving in formal leadership roles on their respective boards, defined as being the chairperson or the chair of the nominating or governance committee of the board. Six board leaders, each at a different responding Ontario community college, were invited to take part in a one-to-one telephone interview. Of this invited group, five of the six governors agreed to take part in a telephone interview (86%) with this researcher. The remaining board member failed to respond to repeated contacts aimed at scheduling an interview.

Data Collection Instruments

Three instruments were used in this research effort to facilitate the collection of data regarding practices and viewpoints tied to community college governance and leadership. Two distinct survey tools were constructed for data retrieval from two different audiences within the Ontario's community college system: current serving members of boards of governors at twenty-two community colleges and board secretaries serving at these same higher education institutions. The purposeful selection of such participants is recognized as a means to best help a researcher understand the research questions at the heart of the qualitative inquiry (Cresswell, 2009). In addition to these two survey tools, a structured interview guide was developed for use in telephone conversations with up to six current governors serving in a board leadership role at community colleges that participated in either of the earlier surveys.

Survey design involves several basic issues which were considered in this study. The design paradigm focused not only on who participated in the survey, as described earlier in this chapter, but how responses from participants were gathered, what was asked and what resources were needed to complete the data collection (Robson, 1993). The content and structured design of the surveys presented to the community college board members and board secretaries was based on contemporary theoretical paradigms of human resources management (Belcourt, Bohlander and Snell, 2011; Dessler and Cole, 2011; Mathis, Jackson and Zinni, 2008). Distinct sections were constructed in the board members' survey to measure their experiences and views on recruitment, selection, training and evaluation methods deployed by their college to support governance and leadership in the performance of board roles. This same theoretical framework was utilized in the survey of board secretaries as well as in the structured interview guide for follow-up telephone interviews with college board leaders.

In addition to guidance provided by the researcher's advisor and committee members, input on the survey design was obtained by piloting the questionnaire with several individuals experienced in governance practices at Ontario's community colleges. These advisors included a current college board secretary, a former community college board chairperson, the former governance staff resource person with the College Compensation and Appointments Council and staff representatives from the Ontario Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities. Their collective input helped to refine certain survey questions, modify questionnaire terminology and phrasing as well as clarifying the intent behind various aspects of both the questionnaires and telephone interview frameworks. All three data collection tools were then reviewed and approved by the University of Toronto's Office of Research Ethics. All three data collection instruments may be found in the Appendices of Data Collection Tools in this dissertation and will now be more fully described as to their design and linkages to the primary and secondary research questions associated with this study.

A challenge in surveying governors at Ontario's community colleges is that incumbents and candidates for board vacancies are drawn from two distinct cohorts, community volunteers and internal staff nominees. Yet both groups should be similarly engaged in, or exposed to, the spectrum of human resources management activities regarding board recruitment, selection, development and evaluation. All college governors, for example, should be involved in developmental activities to promote their performance as an institutional leader. However, the processes involved in recruiting internal and external directors may be quite different among the participating community colleges. To accommodate this reality, the survey instrument was designed to have each respondent self-identify as to their respective role or representative status on their board (e.g., community nominee or representative from the college's faculty). This

identifier would then help in the analysis of data related to specific HRM programming activities for board members (e.g., selection procedures for college board vacancies based on the nominee's status).

The survey for board members was designed to capture the individual governor's experiences with all of the human resources management supporting activities referenced in this study that may have been provided to them by their college, a supporting agency or a contracted external consultant. If certain supporting activities were outside the experience of the participant (e.g. if a newly nominated director had yet to take part in a self-administered board evaluation procedure) the participant could move to the next section in the survey. This survey was also designed to obtain two perspectives from board participants: their recollections of the experiences of being recruited, selected, trained and evaluated by their community college; as well as their views on how such human resources management activities should be orchestrated to promote quality governance and leadership at Ontario's community colleges. Blending these experiential and normative accounts of a board member's involvement in the various human resources management protocols was designed to see if there were gaps between what board members experienced in any of these HRM programming areas and what they perceived would be of value to strengthen role performance in their governance experience. By identifying these gaps, the study could provide recommendations for strengthening such programming where apparent weaknesses existed, particularly in the context of the two governance models referenced in this study.

Each of these HR programming topics was dealt with separately and in sequence to parallel the typical movement of a volunteer or elected director through their governance experience with the college (e.g., recruitment of an interested community citizen, the selection

process undertaken by the college's administration, the orientation and training of new board members and the ongoing or an annual evaluation of performance of such persons in their governance role). At the end of each of these subsections in the board questionnaire, and at the conclusion of the survey document, there was space for the participant to include narrative comments to add perspectives and opinions on their experiences with the specific human resources management programming area. These survey questions of board members were designed to help answer the primary research question, as well as the first of the three subsidiary research questions posed in this study.

Participants in the board survey were asked to identify themselves by college affiliation, board role and stakeholder representative status. Those responding to the board secretary role were asked to identify only their college affiliation. Governors approached for structured individual telephone interviews were chosen based on the participation of their college in either the board member or board secretary on-line survey process. As all survey responses were directly sent from the participants to the researcher and not through a third party coordinator at the college, the anonymity of the respondent was assured. Tracking the identity of the college where the governor or board secretary served would facilitate the identification of trends in governance practices and whether such activities were correlated to variables such as college size or geographic location.

In the last section of the board member survey, there were questions related to demographic information of the participants. While other post-secondary governance research efforts have captured such information from university boards in Canada (Jones and Skolnik, 1997), there is a paucity of such information related to those serving as governors within Ontario's network of community colleges.

The construction of the board secretary survey was aimed at collecting existing policies and procedures related to the recruitment, selection, training and evaluation of college governors; which was the focus of the remaining two subsidiary questions in this research study. This second survey was intended to see to what degree provincial community colleges had developed institutional frameworks and practices that supported leadership and governance practices among their boards. Its design was also used to corroborate claims made by board secretaries regarding current or planned human resource management practices as well as the experiences and perceptions of governors with such supporting activities aimed to support governance and leadership within a community college's board.

The board secretary survey also included a contiguous pairing of questions asking the participants to account for what current board policies and practices were in place, and to then respond to what they felt should be done in terms of structure and processes to secure improvements in governance practices at their college. The survey also asked the participants whether their college availed itself of external resources, such as government, agency or third party sources in the development and delivery of supporting services for institutional governance at their college. As with the college governor board survey, the board secretary survey was designed to allow participants to comment at the end of each subsection as well as at the conclusion of the survey in order to enrich or expand on their selected answers to the structured questions in each human resources management topic area.

The college board secretaries involvement in the survey was very important in this research project as such persons often provided both a continuity and institutional perspective on such practices. Drawing on the experience and organizational history of board secretaries could help gauge whether current human resources programs related to college governance were well

established or undergoing a period of renewal or experimentation to improve the board's leadership role at their college.

The structured interview questionnaire for board members in a leadership role within their college's board was designed to mirror the five basic human resources management programming categories used in both the board member and board secretary surveys. The format provided open-ended questions in each HRM programming area to allow for a board representative's insights and perspectives not only on what trends had emerged through an analysis of received survey responses but also to capitalize on the viewpoints of the interviewed participant in their board and leadership experiences at their own college.

The design and content of the board member and board secretary surveys as well as the interview guide used in telephone interviews are seen in Appendices "G", "H" and "O" of this volume.

Procedures used in the study

Both the board member and board secretary surveys were designed for electronic delivery to, and the return of completed responses by, each intended group of participants involved in this first stage of data collection. From a protocol standpoint, the president at each of the twenty-two community colleges involved in the study was first approached to inform him or her of the research project's intent and scope in hopes of having them facilitate the participation of board members and the board secretary at their institution.

To encourage the participation of a maximum number of board members from these Ontario community colleges, and in anticipation of the possible reluctance of college representatives to reveal the board members' personal contact information to an outside

researcher, the distribution of the surveys was designed to flow out to current-serving governors at each college via the office of their institution's board secretary. This protocol would thus neither reveal telephone contact numbers nor postal or e-mail addresses of board participants to this researcher. The use of the office for board secretary for the distribution of the board members' survey also afforded the researcher an expedient route regarding the "reminder" protocol used for delinquent board participants at each college during the survey period.

The electronic design of both surveys was constructed with the assistance of a college staff member at the researcher's employer using a SurveyMonkey platform structure. In September, 2009, separate letters were sent to current serving board governors and board secretaries explaining the purpose of the research study and inviting their participation. Copies of each of these introduction letters are included in Appendices "C" and "D". A URL link was placed in each set of letters enabling the participant to access the questionnaire and providing an asynchronous opportunity to complete their survey at a time and location determined by the participant. Once connected to the survey web site, the participant was asked for their consent to participate in the survey and to then indicate their community college. This latter indicator was intended to measure the extent of participation among the twenty-two community colleges throughout Ontario. It also enabled the distribution of reminder letters to be forwarded to those colleges with low or no survey responses in one or both of the research subject cohorts.

There was a need for two reminders to be sent to all potential board participants during the survey period. Following the initial invitation to college governors, distributed on September 24, 2009, a "first reminder" letter was forwarded to board members at the twenty-two colleges on October 29, 2009. A "second reminder" letter was subsequently forwarded to all college governors on November 16, 2009. In that second letter, a cut-off date of November 24, 2009 for

all survey responses to be received was announced to participants. With respect to the board secretary survey, an initial contact letter, dated September 24, 2009, was addressed to persons serving in this role at each of the twenty-two identified colleges in Ontario. Due to higher preliminary participation levels among this smaller cohort there was need for only one reminder letter which was sent out on October 29, 2009 to this second survey audience.

As referenced earlier in this chapter, a structured telephone interview questionnaire was designed to guide an individual discussion with up to six board members, each serving in a leadership position at different colleges that had participated in the board survey. College presidents of these participating institutions were asked in advance to support the interview of a board leader, preferably a person who served in the position of board chairperson or the chair of the board's nominating or governance committee. The researcher then contacted those colleges that affirmed their participation, asking the board secretary to identify the board representative and to forward introductory correspondence and the proposed structured interview questionnaire to that person. A copy of this correspondence and survey framework is included in Appendices "N" and "O". This correspondence outlined the purpose of the interview and provided assurance of the confidentiality of the participant's identify and viewpoints in subsequent research publications. The intended interviewees were also asked if they would allow their telephone interview with the researcher to be recorded and subsequently transcribed in keeping with the ethical parameters set out by the University of Toronto. At the time of the interview, the researcher shared with the participating board member the preliminary findings from both on-line surveys used in the data collection as a means for probing the participant for their views and opinions regarding the structured interview topics. This was done in order to add insight and meaning to trends that appeared in the survey data. This was seen as important in coming to terms

with certain evidence that suggested an emphasis on, or absence of, institutional activity regarding any of the specific human resources management programming activities supporting governance and leadership within community college boards in Ontario at this point in time.

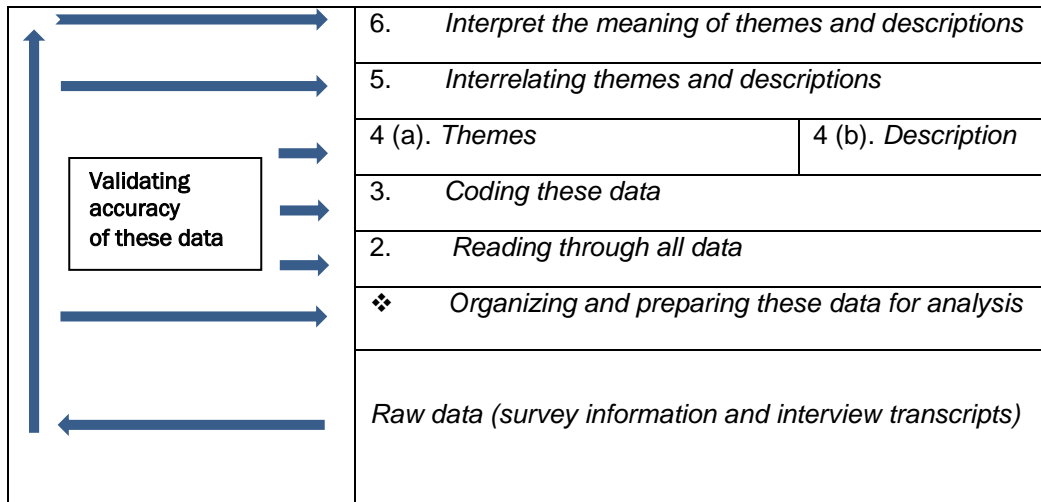
Data Analysis

In keeping with Cresswell's characteristics of qualitative research (2009), there are several aspects of this particular study that are worth noting regarding the analysis of data gleaned through both participant surveys and telephone interviews. An inductive approach is at the heart of qualitative analysis (p. 175) and was seen in this research design. Categories related to human resources management protocols and practices regarding college governance were constructed to capture and organize responses to survey and interview questions received from governors and board secretaries.

The research design also reflects two other characteristics of a qualitative investigation. Multiple sources of data were used to gather facts, opinions and practices related to community college governance. Current serving governors on college boards participated in a survey process as did board secretaries at these same post-secondary venues. A selected number of board leaders were also involved through direct telephone interviews to provide their perspectives on what the survey data may indicate about how community colleges used human resources management programming to support governance and leadership in board roles and functioning. This focus on participant meaning is another key element of qualitative research as discussed by Cresswell (2009). The data were then examined in the context of themes regarding leadership as reflected in the contemporary scholarly literature so as to identify opportunities for an institutional or system-wide response to strengthen governance practices among provincial community colleges in Ontario.

The research design used in this study is modelled after the basic qualitative research framework presented by Cresswell (2009). The following figure represents the approach taken by this researcher.

Figure 3.1 Qualitative Research Framework



Raw data The research data gathered in this study came in two distinct formats: data gathered in separate, on-line surveys of college board governors and board secretaries; and telephone interviews with a selected number of board members in a leadership role at a community college that had participated in the on-line survey process. Summaries of the collected survey data from both governors and board secretaries were saved and exported into a spreadsheet format for both respondent groups. Qualitative comments provided by survey participants were also recorded for subsequent coding procedures. The participant commentaries, gathered through tape recorded telephone interviews, were subsequently transcribed for planned coding and analysis.

Organizing and preparing these data for analysis Data from both survey groups as well as from the five telephone interviews with board leaders was read by the researcher. This preliminary review provided an overarching perspective of the respondents' experiences and normative views

regarding their level of satisfaction with, or expressed need for, specific human resources management programming associated with supporting board governance and leadership at either an institutional specific or systemic level within Ontario's community college system.

Coding, Themes and Descriptions Cresswell (2009) suggests that qualitative data gathered in a research study should be coded in a topical manner that the reader would expect to find based on past literature and common sense (p. 186). In that regard, the organization of the board member and board secretary surveys provided a coding framework specific to both the participant's experience with, and their normative views on, the main human resources management programming areas being investigated in this research. Further coding identifiers were also applied throughout these two data sources with respect to survey responses and commentaries that indicated a link to the larger theoretical themes seen in either of the board leadership models (Chait, Ryan and Taylor, 2005 and Leblanc and Gillies, 2005) used in this study. The same coding identifiers tied to these two board leadership models were also used in the review of board interview transcripts. A secondary coding framework involving process, activity and strategy category codes was also applied to the telephone interview transcripts and any narrative comments made in survey responses from either survey cohort. This secondary framework, as articulated by Bogdan and Biklin (1992), was intended to gain insight into the current focus of thinking regarding governance and leadership among community college board leaders. These codes would also assist in examination of any thematic development from participant commentaries. For example, did college governors perceive gaps in particular human resources management programming, and if so, could filling these missing elements strengthen their leadership role as a board? To add meaning to these viewpoints on college board governance and leadership, the research methodology adopted the use of short written commentaries seen in the survey responses

or the recorded narratives in the telephone interviews with board members. Such content is seen as a popular means in qualitative research in findings of a study (Cresswell, 2009). This approach was used by Leblanc and Gillies (2005) in their research on governance as a way of demonstrating the range of perspectives from institutional trustees on matters related to board structure, membership and processes.

Interpretation of themes and meaning This final stage of data analysis in this study sought to find meaning in the relationship between two theoretical governance frameworks, and the experiences and views of governors and board secretaries associated with the concepts of governance and leadership as applied to Ontario's community college system at this point in time. This interpretation serves not only to confirm or reject prior understanding in the research topic's domain, but may also cause new questions to emerge (Cresswell, 2009). Given the short history of Ontario's community college system, this interpretation could provide an opportunity to drive further research initiatives in support of strengthening governance and leadership practices within the provincial higher education system.

Limitations The lower-than desired response rate to the board survey among college governors, along with a total participation rate by just over half of the English speaking community colleges in the province, places some restrictions on the generalization of data from this study. The offsetting factor here was the higher response rate within the board secretary survey cohort. This group's increased level of participation offered insights into college practices where there was no or limited survey respondents from a college.

Summary

The mixed methods research approach used in this study solicited responses from board secretaries and governors at twenty-two community colleges in Ontario. The experiences and perspectives of both of these cohorts were captured using electronic-based questionnaires and follow-up telephone interviews during a five month period from September, 2009 to May, 2010. The structure of the asynchronous electronic survey had responding board members and board secretaries select one or more responses to questions that focused on both their actual experiences and normative views regarding participation in, or a desire to have, human resources programming intended to support governance and leadership practices at their college. An analysis of this survey data, using a qualitative research model, permitted a further exploration of the results that were then further explored in telephone interviews with five board representatives from participating colleges. The findings from this mixed methods data gathering methodology will now be presented in the following chapter.

4. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Introduction

As noted in Chapter 1, the primary research question in this study was to investigate to what degree current board members serving in a governance capacity at Ontario community colleges perceived current recruitment, selection, training and evaluation programs as contributing to their role performance. Three subsidiary questions were also tied to this research effort. The first additional area explored participating governors' beliefs as to whether it was their responsibility to invest time and resources in developing fellow board members. Secondly, the surveys of both community college board members and the board secretaries examined the range of policies and procedures used in each of the above human resources management programs in regards to board governance. These programming areas included board recruitment, selection, orientation, training, development and evaluation. The final subsidiary query looked for evidence that participating community colleges engaged third party agents or resources in efforts to maintain and enhance governance and leadership among board members. This chapter is thus organized in a manner that explores, after an introductory summary of the participation levels among the two key surveyed groups (college board members and college secretaries), the answers to the primary and subsidiary research questions indicated via survey results and interview commentaries.

Primary headings in this chapter will focus attention on the specific human resources management (HRM) activities used to support the institutional dealings with board members at an Ontario community college – starting with their recruitment and selection, followed by orientation, training and development activities and concluding with a sense of how they receive

feedback on their role performance. This chapter will utilize survey findings, interview comments and other source materials to answer the primary research question which explores the perceptions and experiences of board members and board secretaries regarding such HRM programming. The focus on all three supplementary questions will also be included in the description to help round out the remaining foci of this research effort. From time to time, tables and figures will be inserted to support the chapter's narrative and to illuminate key points derived from this quantitative and qualitative data. The interpretation and meaning of the data will be presented in the final chapter of the dissertation. From time to time, the reader will be referred to particular appendices at the end of this paper for details related to survey and interview protocols, data gathering instruments and related correspondence to participants in the study.

Summary of survey participation rates

Twenty-two of twenty-four Ontario public community colleges (two francophone colleges were not included) were sent separate electronic surveys for two different target audiences: current serving board of governor representatives and current board secretaries. As noted in Chapter 3 of this dissertation, there was a potential survey cohort of board members of 550 participants, according to the parameters set out under Ontario Regulation 34/03, Section 4, made under the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002, as well as 22 board secretaries. Regulation 34/03 states that each community college shall be composed of an even number of members, as established by the by-laws of each college, of not less than twelve and not more than twenty appointed individuals. In addition, the college's president along with one student, one academic staff member, one administrative staff member and one support staff member are also considered to be part of the governing board. While twenty-two of the twenty-four community colleges were invited to participate in this study, board representatives from

twelve institutions and board secretaries from fifteen CAAT sites provided survey responses. An audit of each participating college at the time of the survey showed that there was a “potential” survey cohort of board members of one hundred and ninety-seven (197) governors. Although responses were received from board members at only twelve of the twenty-two community colleges, board secretaries at these same twelve institutions along with three additional secretaries at CAAT institutions that did not draw any board participation raised the institutional response for this second cohort to fifteen respondents. The research findings from both groups to their experiences and preferences as board members and board secretaries with respect to the impact of related human resources programming on community college governance will now be presented.

Board Recruitment

The initial perception one develops towards an organization, as either a candidate for a paid employment vacancy or as a volunteer wishing to serve in some helping capacity, is frequently shaped by the messages, methods and timing associated with their recruitment experiences. The recruitment message that is hopefully directed to a targeted audience must supply sufficient content that piques the interest of the reader or listener and causes them to start forming a connection between the soliciting party and themselves. Such a connection ultimately leads to the point where energy is committed by the interested respondent to reply to such a call to serve in the advertised capacity. Recruitment messages, whether for employment or voluntary service purposes, can be delivered through various media and be channelled through public or private means, each of which balances the interests of transparency and expediency. The initiation of such recruitment efforts is fostered by an identified need for new or replacement human capital. In an employment context, this may see cyclical recruitment processes linked to established ebbs

and flows of consumer demand or as a result of an unplanned vacancy that must be urgently filled. In a volunteer context, particularly with respect to those serving as governing board members in Ontario community colleges, the need for human capital is more cyclical, based on prescribed terms of office as set out through provincial government regulations or institutional by-laws and procedural requirements.

Various recruitment efforts by organizations carry particular advantages while also incurring limitations in the possible quality and sheer yield of candidates. In the board member and board secretary surveys used in this study, a range of recruitment options currently deployed by participating community colleges was explored with both respondent cohorts. This range of options is seen in Table 4.1 with the survey results expressed in terms of the response totals to the question and the corresponding percentage for each responding groups.

Table 4.1 Recruitment processes experienced by board members for governance vacancies

Board member survey (n = 48)	Response percentage & (number of responses)	Board secretary survey (n = 14)	Response percentage & (number of responses)
Which of the following recruitment methods was used to attract you to your current board position at the community college?		Which of the following recruitment methods is used to attract interested individuals to a vacancy on the board of governors at your community college? (Check as many as applicable).	
Direct solicitation from a current college board member or representative.	48% (22)	Direct solicitation from a current college board member.	93% (14)
Direct solicitation from the college CEO.	13% (6)	Direct solicitation from the college CEO.	67% (10)
Direct solicitation from a personal contact not associated with the college.	2% (1)	Direct solicitation from a personal contact not associated with the college.	27% (4)
Employer-supported community involvement initiative.	7% (3)	Employer-supported community involvement initiative.	13% (2)
Public notification by the college (such as an ad in a newspaper).	15% (7)	Public notification by the college (such as an ad in a newspaper).	60% (9)
Self-initiated inquiry from an interested community member to the college.	4% (2)	Self-initiated inquiry from an interested community member to the college.	73% (11)
Other	15% (7)	Other	7% (1)

Forty-eight percent (48%) of responding governors indicated that they were directly approached by a current board member or representative regarding their interest in serving in a governance role at the college. A further thirteen percent of board members indicated their recruitment to a leadership position at the college had commenced with an invitation from the college president (CEO). The preference for these particular recruitment methods was also seen in the board secretary survey results where the two most cited methods for board recruitment used among participating community colleges involved direct approaches to potential board recruits being made by a current board member (93%) and the college's president (67%).

Beyond these two leading recruitment approaches as identified by the participants in both surveys, there were other noteworthy findings regarding the solicitation of prospective candidates for board vacancies. In responses from current serving governors, the next most common recruitment method was to have the incumbent view some form of public notification of the governance opportunity (15%) at their community college. The utilization of such public means for advertising board vacancies was strongly reinforced in the results of the board secretary survey (60%). There are clearly differences in the recruitment efforts identified by board secretaries and the experiences reported by board members, and this gap will be addressed in the following chapter. The high indication of self-initiated enquiries from interested community members (73%) in regards to recruitment efforts by participating colleges is more likely to be a function of the board secretary's role in that they would most often be identified as the designated contact to whom such an interested community member would be directed regarding an expression of interest in such voluntary service.

This study utilized a particular format in the survey design for both respondent groups to provide input not only on their direct experiences in the various human resources management

techniques utilized by their community college regarding board governance, but also what the respondent felt such higher education institutions should do regarding these same processes (See Appendices “G” and “H”). The results of such preferred recruitment methods for governors are seen in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Preferred recruitment processes for board of governor candidates

Board member survey (n = 45)	Response percentage & (number of responses)	Board secretary survey (n = 15)	Response percentage & (number of responses)
In your opinion, which of the following methods for recruiting candidates for a college board of governors would be most effective in your community?		In your opinion, which of the following methods for recruiting candidates for a college board of governors would be most effective in your community?	
Direct solicitation from a current college board member or representative	60% (27)	Direct solicitation from a current college board member	60% (9)
Direct solicitation from the college CEO	11% (5)	Direct solicitation from the college CEO	20% (3)
Direct solicitation from a personal contact not associated with the college	2% (1)	Direct solicitation from a personal contact not associated with the college	0% (0)
Employer-supported community involvement initiative	7% (3)	Employer-supported community involvement initiative	0% (0)
Public notification by the college (such as an ad in a newspaper)	16% (7)	Public notification by the college (such as an ad in a newspaper)	13% (2)
Self-initiated inquiry from an interested community member to the college	0% (0)	Self-initiated inquiry from an interested community member to the college	7% (1)
Other	4% (2)	Other	0% (0)

What is interesting in the results of this normative dimension of board recruitment is that the relative ranking of the top three methods experienced by the board members in their recruitment sees the same scoring compared to their preferred methods for soliciting volunteer candidates (i.e., current board member, public notification and college CEO). The preferences among board secretaries for recruitment approaches for new volunteer governors were different when compared to their actual experiences. Certain recruitment options now seen by board secretaries would not be their preferred method of soliciting interest for governor vacancies. Yet, in terms of the relative ranking of these direct experiences and preferred approaches to recruitment of external volunteer candidates, board secretaries overwhelmingly supported an approach to a prospective board member by a current serving college governor. The relative change in the second and third positions in recruitment techniques between the actual experiences and preferred methods by board secretaries in this regard was not significant enough to indicate any key gap between actual and desired recruitment methods.

The survey findings, in the matter of board recruitment, were further explored in the telephone interviews conducted with five board members holding leadership positions at their community college. A question was raised with these individuals to determine why there was not a stronger preference for a more public or transparent board recruitment process by their college board. Answers from two board leaders referenced concerns related the sheer volume of responses that may arise from a public call and skepticism as to whether such methods would yield better results than the current personal solicitation methods used at their college.

We'd probably have to have an external headhunter or someone of that sort to deal with the volume of applications that you would get..... There are high profile people who want to be on boards and then there's the large number of people that would apply on "spec". So I really think it is the volume of applicants that we would get that is the limiting factor.

College Governor #2

What I don't know, and what you don't know, is that if you go out through a public notification, could you find better individuals or different individuals that you hadn't considered because you are only limiting yourself to who's known around the board table or who the president (of the college) knows in some cases is an active member of the community and the college.

College Governor #3

A third board leader indicated the challenge of striking a balance between internal sourcing of candidates by the incumbent governors and a more public approach to the recruitment of external board candidates.

So I understand that it is perhaps easier to tap someone on the shoulder, a colleague. I also understand that it's a way of ensuring you have someone that you believe will work in the context of the group. But I do think it raises some issues around bringing the diversity to the table that's required; looking at any sort of systemic barriers that might occur when that is the case.

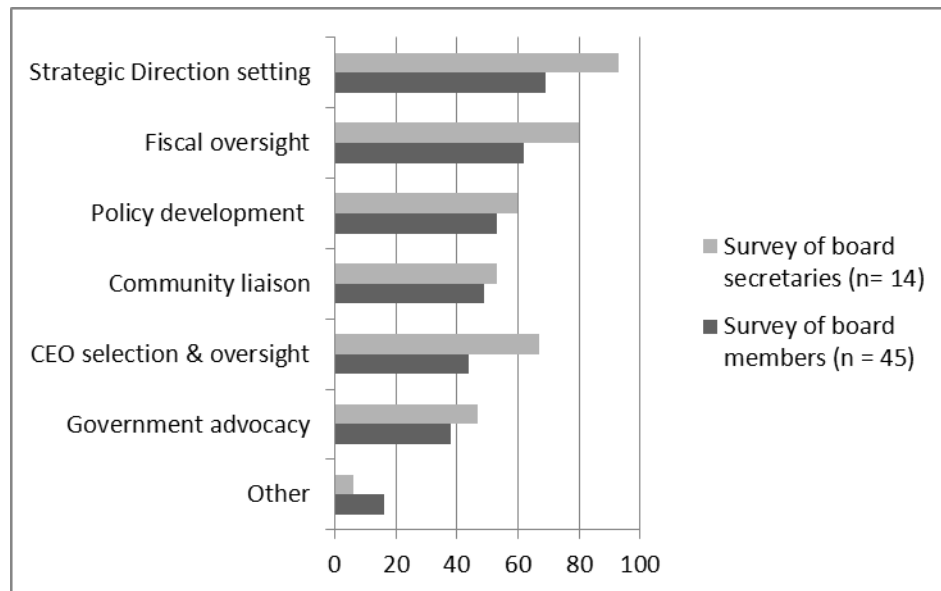
College Governor #1

Binding protocols and procedures for the nomination and appointment of college governors are set out in a Ministry of Training, Colleges and University policy framework (January, 2011). Such processes are to be open and transparent to internal stakeholders at the college as well as to the institution's surrounding community (p. 5). These same Ministry

protocols require the college to use its website and other media sources as it determines to advertise vacancies for vacant external governor positions.

The recruitment of candidates for paid employment and unpaid volunteer positions is aided in large part by the quality of the messages linked to such opportunities. This is due in large part to the necessity of the organization which is seeking such human capital to persuade potential applicants as to the benefits of applying to the posted vacancy rather than pursuing other interests or simply not responding to the call for applicants. The more detailed the recruitment message is regarding the nature of the assigned work and information about the organization and its culture, the better the chances for “person-job fit” and the “person-organization fit” (Heneman et al, 2010). Whether a community college decides to use its own board members as the sole recruiting agents for new governance talent or agrees to use a more diversified and public means for securing such leadership, the question remains, “How do we describe what the incumbent director is expected to do?” This research study then posed questions to both current serving governors and board secretaries, in separate surveys, as to what board roles were described in recruitment messages sent by their college. Six general governance categories were developed from the scholarly literature as outlined in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. These role headings included: strategic direction setting; policy development; fiscal oversight of institutional assets; selection of, and guidance and direction to the college’s CEO; community liaison: government advocacy; and “other”. Table 4.1 indicates the number of participants in either survey who identified any of these role categories as being used in recruitment messages during their tenure as governors or board secretaries.

Figure 4.1 Percentage of respondents (board of governors and secretaries to board of governors re: description of governor roles included by community colleges in recruitment messages



Survey question of board members: *Which of the following components of a board member's role were included in the recruitment messages you received about the vacancy at your community college? (Check as many as appropriate).*

Survey question of board secretaries: *Which of the following components of a board member's role are included in the recruitment messages provided to interested parties concerning a governance vacancy at your community college? (Check as many as applicable).*

Current governors participating in the survey indicated three dominant roles that were highlighted in recruitment messages received when being solicited for vacancies with their community college's board: strategic direction setting (69%); fiscal oversight of institutional assets (62%); and policy development (53%). The author of this study chose to coin these dominant role assignments for board members as the "Big 3" due to their frequent reference in the governance literature regarding board roles or job descriptions linked to institutional governance. Of note in the board secretary survey results, strategic direction setting and fiscal oversight were among the top three role categories referenced in community college recruitment messages to

candidates for governance vacancies at their institution (93% and 80% respectively). The board secretaries who responded to the questionnaire placed duties of CEO selection and providing oversight to their college president as a slightly more frequently cited role over policy development (66% v. 60% respectively) in recruitment messages sent to candidates for such leadership roles at their college.

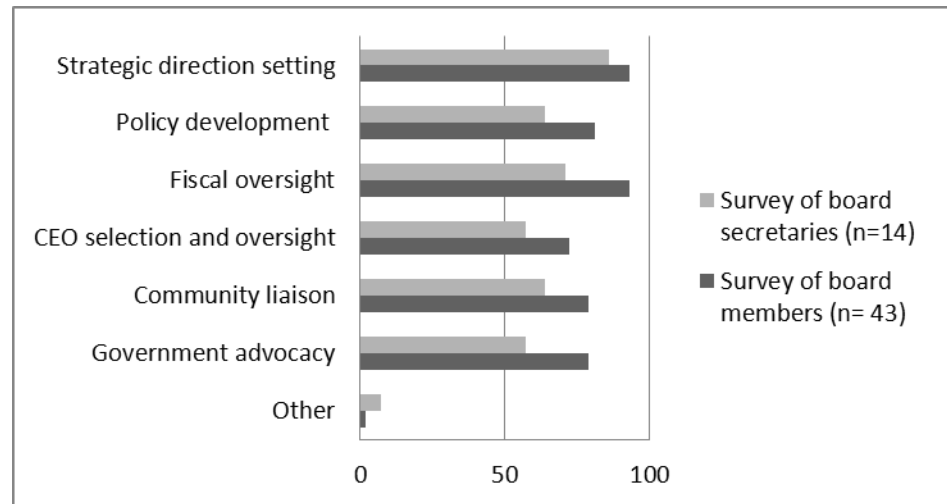
The number of respondents in both surveys who indicated the importance of including other governance roles outside of the “Big 3” responsibilities was noteworthy. One board leader commented in their telephone interview on the transition to a more diversified set of governance roles than may have been the case in the past.

I would say when I joined the board it was more of a figure head – a high court – and we have evolved. Everyone on the board right now is a passionate community advocate, really, and they want to get more involved. They want to do some more government advocacy because it is not only good for the college, it is good for the community and some of the businesses and sectors that we serve as well.

College Governor #3

The participants in this study were then asked what role content should be included in any calls for volunteers seeking to serve in a governance capacity. Figure 4.2 lists the ranking in importance of roles and responsibilities, as reflected in the scholarly literature, which according to the survey respondents should be included by colleges in their efforts to fill vacancies on boards of governors.

Figure 4.2 Board of governor roles desired in recruitment messages (% of respondents)



Survey question of board members: *Which of the following components of a board member's role should be included in the recruitment messages received by persons interested in governance vacancies at a community college? (Check as many as appropriate).*

Survey question of board secretaries: *Which of the following components of a board member's role should be included in the recruitment information your college provides to interested parties concerning a governance opportunity at your institution? (Check as many as applicable).*

This query of what board members and board secretaries would prefer in recruitment messages yielded comparable results in terms of the relative importance of board roles and responsibilities stated in verbal or print communication to potential candidates for governance vacancies. In the board members' survey responses (n=45) to preferred governing roles, the relative importance of the "Big Three" areas of responsibilities involving strategic direction setting, fiscal oversight and policy development matched the participants' actual experiences (69%, 62% and 53% respectively) in received recruitment information about their job duties as college governors. The board secretaries also showed similar preferences for messages on policy development and fiscal oversight compared to current practices. This latter group indicated a slightly higher emphasis on the selection and oversight of the college president compared to a board member's role in policy

development, but only by a slight margin (67% to 60% respectively). One comment seen in the board secretaries' responses added a realistic perspective that may explain these slight variations in ranking of board responsibilities between the two surveyed groups. The respondent noted, "It depends on the vacancy." This was taken to mean that if a participating college respondent in this research study was involved in the search for a new president, that board role may have received a higher percentage of emphasis due to that cyclical institutional event.

The final aspect in looking at evidence related to board recruitment practices in Ontario's community colleges included qualitative data gained from telephone interviews with board leaders at institutions that participated in this study and through the earlier-referenced consultant's report commissioned by the Colleges Compensation and Appointments Council (2009). Telephone interviews with five board leaders at community colleges that participated in this study focused on the question of whether leadership is receiving emphasis in recruitment messages aimed at potential board candidates. Their comments illustrated an increasing emphasis on leadership qualities in potential board candidates, but that leadership may not always be the key consideration when seeking board members for their colleges. In three particular interviews, this range in perspectives was seen among the following college governors who were interviewed. One college governor stated that there is a collective discussion among the board as to what sectors and industries in their community are not represented on their board at this time. They then ask who among the board knew someone in any of the identified areas that could bring "value" to their college's governing body. It was noted that representatives in such identified sectors were now tending to be not just any company representative, but rather someone who serves in a key leadership role.

Now I would say that recruitment is done more in that method that we talked about, but the quality and the level and positions of the people we are trying to recruit now are much different than they were.....really trying to go after higher levels of individuals

College Governor #3

Another board member noted,

In my experience, no, it (leadership) is not experiencing more emphasis. There is some emphasis on it, but still the emphasis on that supportive role that in some case (includes) mentoring and oversight.

College Governor #4

A third CAAT governor stated that their nominating committee developed a framework that defined internal organization realities and external factors that may influence the college. An analysis of these factors sometimes shifted attention in recruitment to areas that are not primarily focused on leadership traits.

We have certainly emphasized the leadership role as being a key element in our members, at the same time.....there are some trade-offs....given the look at our board members' matrix around skills, abilities, experiences etc. and against the college's needs. I would say leadership does surface frequently but it may not be the primary (one) at a certain time and place.

College Governor #1

The interviews provided insights into a current broadening of recruitment practices utilized by college governance committees that go beyond the leading recruitment strategies reflected in the two sets of survey responses gathered in this research effort. The following interview responses from two board leaders illustrate this intention to change current practices or seek alternatives to traditional recruitment of board candidates:

If we are going to use the direct referral system, board members have to be very sensitive to the changing community and bring forward candidates. If that didn't happen.....I would change my view on whether we need to go external.

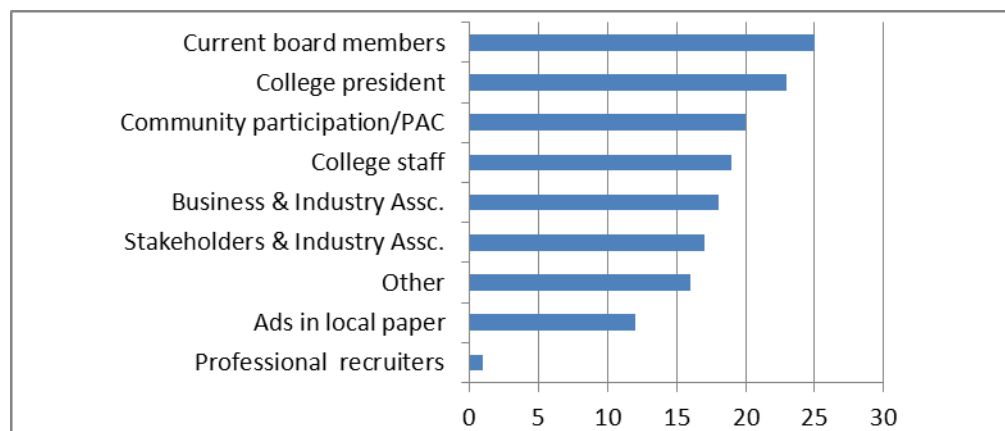
College Governor #2

One of the things we have done too is we've ensured that our community advisory committees are aware of our vacancies. We also have talked about utilizing our alumni as a way of advertising..... Certainly we use our First Nations' network..... I believe you need to use those diversity groups as well as the typical things you might use such as the ad in the newspaper.

College Governor #1

The Colleges Compensation and Appointments Council study (2009) of recruitment practices within Ontario's community colleges reinforced the popularity of using current governors and the chief executive officer as main sourcing agents of candidates for external governance vacancies. The CCAC report also moved beyond the limitations of this particular research study and illustrated a more diversified array of recruitment sources as seen in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3 Sources used by Ontario community colleges to identify potential candidates for board of governor vacancies (n=25) *



(*) Respondents were asked to respond to the following question: “New external board members are identified through the following means (check all that apply). *College External Board Members Recruitment Review, 2009, p. 7.*

It is noteworthy that this question within the CCAC study, as seen in Figure 4.3, indicated a broader range of “public” recruitment sources than one may conclude by looking only at the

category of “ads in local newspapers”. Examples of such public sources in this “Other” category included e-mail “blasts”, radio ads and responses to unsolicited resumes from interested candidates.

Thus, the focus on the content used in the various modes of recruitment messages for external candidates reveals a strong desire to emphasize three important responsibilities of board members as seen in the governance literature, these being strategic direction setting, fiscal oversight and policy development. There was an indication that other board roles such as government advocacy were increasingly understood by community college governors as also being an important board function in light of the provincial government’s funding and regulatory role in this segment of Ontario’s post-secondary market. An emphasis on leadership qualities in candidates for board roles was viewed by some current college governors as important, but not in a universal sense when compared to more traditional skill matrices as developed by individual boards.

Selection of Board Candidates

In human resources management theory, selection of a preferred candidate from among an assembled pool of applicants for a job vacancy is the next sequential task assumed by a supervisor in an employment situation. The same is true when there is a need for volunteers to fill a vacancy in an unpaid call to service at a not-for-profit or charitable organization. No matter how well scripted or designed the recruitment message and methods are, there is the need to sort out from among the assembled applicant pool who are the most qualified for the advertised vacancy. As noted earlier in this study, this sorting out process of applicants typically includes assessing a match between the job requirements and the person’s skills, abilities, knowledge and experience – otherwise known as the “person-job fit”. This has traditionally been the more dominant selection

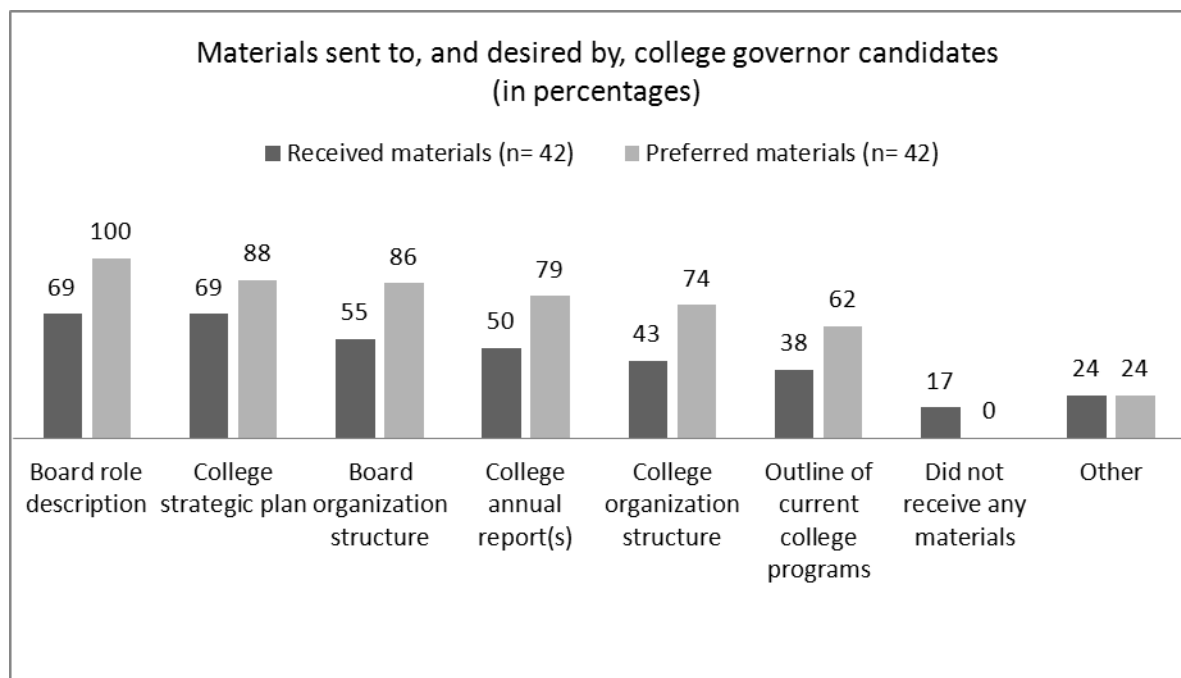
criterion used in hiring new employees and in many voluntary recruitment efforts. Another dimension in selection decision making adds focus to the degree of compatibility between the goals and values of the organization where the vacancy exists and the ambitions, values and beliefs of the candidate bidding on the job opening. This “person-organization fit” is an emerging phenomenon in the realm of successful selection of an organization’s human talent.

Selection procedures for provincial community college boards, as set out in Ontario Regulation 34/03 under the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act (2002), were modified during the period of this research study. Prior to October 1, 2010, the regulations authorized the College Compensation and Appointments Council to appoint all members of a college board of directors, except for the college president and those board members elected from college staff and student constituencies. From a practical point of view, this meant that a list of nominees to fill external board vacancies would be screened by the college and submitted to the Council for approval. The Council could intervene to deny any nominee submitted by a CAAT institution if there was a legitimate concern. In speaking to Council and college officials during the data collection period, it was mentioned that while such cases of rejecting a college’s nominee were rare, they did occur in situations where gender or ethnic representation on the board was not aligned with the demographic profile of the community served by the college. As of October 2010, further changes to Regulation 34/03 enabled each Ontario community college to take sole responsibility for appointing two-thirds of the external members to its board. The remaining one third of external members were appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council (LGIC). In such cases, administrative screening and processing of LGIC appointments is conducted by the provincial government through its Public Appointments Secretariat (MTCU, 2011).

Due to the regulatory framework historically directing Ontario's community colleges in approval of its recommendations regarding external candidates for board vacancies, it comes as no surprise that there was a fair degree of uniformity in selection methods used by community colleges at this time. In surveys of both board members and board secretaries, key selection methods and nuances in techniques regarding such methods were explored. The first set of questions related to board selection procedures looked at how individuals were contacted after submitting their expression of interest and what materials were provided to them by the college. As in other aspects of this study, the research interest focused on comparing the respondent's actual experience against what they perceived was the ideal way for handling a particular aspect of the selection experience, particularly in regards to the materials made available to candidates to help them confirm their intention to serve as college board members. The respondents in this section of the board members' survey (See Appendix "G", p. 4) indicated that they received either written correspondence from a staff representative (24%) or a personal phone call from a board member (22%) as their first contact with the college in response to their expression of interest in serving on a college board. Other methods reported telephone calls from the college's board secretary or another staff representative (15%), correspondence from a college board member (7%) or through a personal visit from a board member or a college representative. Survey respondents were then asked what information was provided to them by the community college when they had offered to volunteer in a governance role. Figure 4.4 indicates what information was received compared to the respondents' preferences for information that should be provided to a prospective candidate for such a vacancy. The number of additional comments in both questions made reference to specific resource materials that pertain to all colleges such as the relationship between a community college and the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Others indicated they would have preferred information dealing with the policy governance (Carver) model. Some board respondents indicated a desire to have received specific information about the college on such varied items as by-laws, business plans, major college issues and the time commitments expected of board members in their governance role.

Figure 4.4 College materials received, and those materials preferred, by board of governor candidates (in percentages)



In the board secretary survey the responses to the types of materials sent to prospective candidates were similar to the results seen in the board members' survey between what was actually sent out to candidates and what should be forwarded to prospective board members. This is seen in the following figure.

Figure 4.5 College materials sent, or preferred to be sent, by board secretaries to candidates for CAAT governor vacancies. (as a percentage)



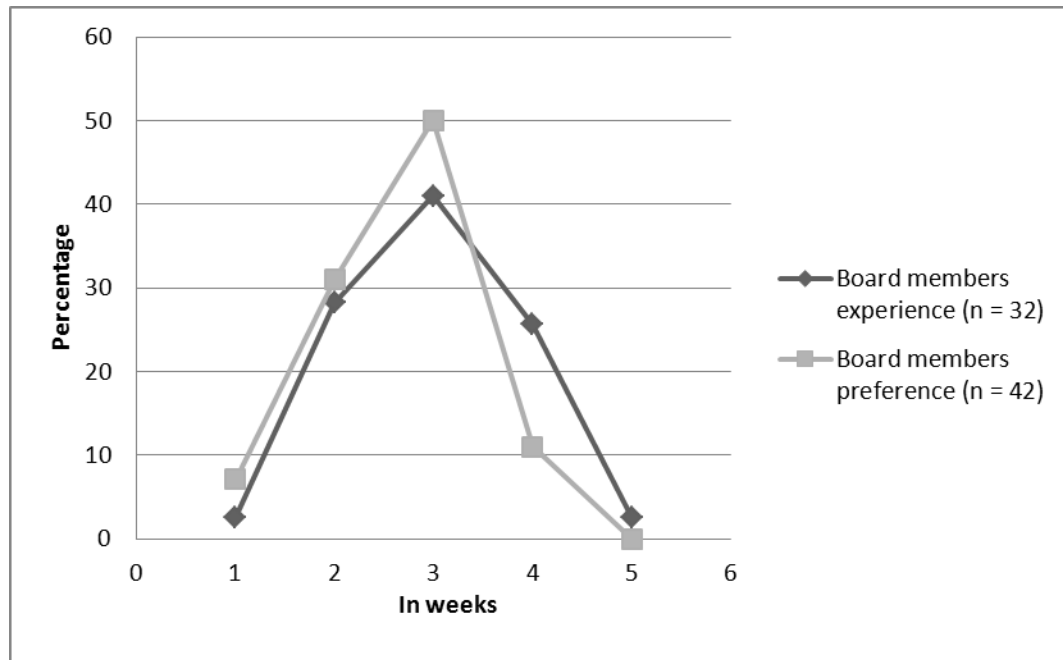
Survey respondents in both groups were asked to confirm their experiences and preferences regarding the type and timing of their first “face-to-face” encounter with an institutional representative. In human resources management parlance, this is often seen as a “preliminary screening interview” where potential candidates are examined through a direct personal encounter to ascertain their suitability for the vacant role. In such cases the corporate allocation of resources towards such screening is minimized through the use of one individual conducting a short direct conversation with the candidate. In the voluntary sector, such screening may also be with one organizational representative or in some cases a small committee within the governance structure.

In the survey of board members, one half of the respondents (n = 42) indicated that their first face-to-face encounter occurred in a meeting with one or more members of the college’s nominating committee. The next largest grouping of respondents (29%) indicated their experience within the survey category of “Other” which included meeting with those who served in

governance roles including internal staff or student constituents in the college. The survey of college board secretaries asked a similar question as to the most commonly used form of a face-to-face selection procedure between the college and a candidate for a board vacancy. Ninety-three percent of the respondents ($n = 15$) indicated the use of a personal interview with one or more members of the board's nominating committee as the most popular means for screening board applicants. In regards to the preferred arrangements for the first "face-to-face" meeting with institutional representatives, fifty-eight (58%) percent of board respondents indicated a desire to meet for a personal interview with one or more members of the board's nominating committee. A further (19%) of this respondent group preferred the choice of a personal interview with one or more board members and a college staff representative. A similar view was expressed by board secretaries for such selection screening. In their survey results, this cohort ($n=15$) indicated strong support (87%) for the use of a personal interview between one or more members of the board's nominating committee and the candidate.

The timeliness in responding to a person who had expressed an interest in serving as a college governor was also raised in both surveys in this research project. In a competitive market search for human capital in the private sector, a company looking for talent may lose out if it takes too long to reply to qualified job seekers. This could place the organization at a disadvantage due to its slowness in communicating back to interested candidates. In the volunteer talent realm, a college's responsiveness may be similarly important particularly in its search for seasoned leadership talent for governance vacancies, hence the interest in measuring the actual experiences and preferences among the surveyed board representatives. Figure 4.6 illustrates the results provided by the responding governors as to the time taken by colleges to their expression of interest in a board vacancy and their preferences for such communication.

Figure 4.6 Response time by college to board of governor candidates (as a percentage)

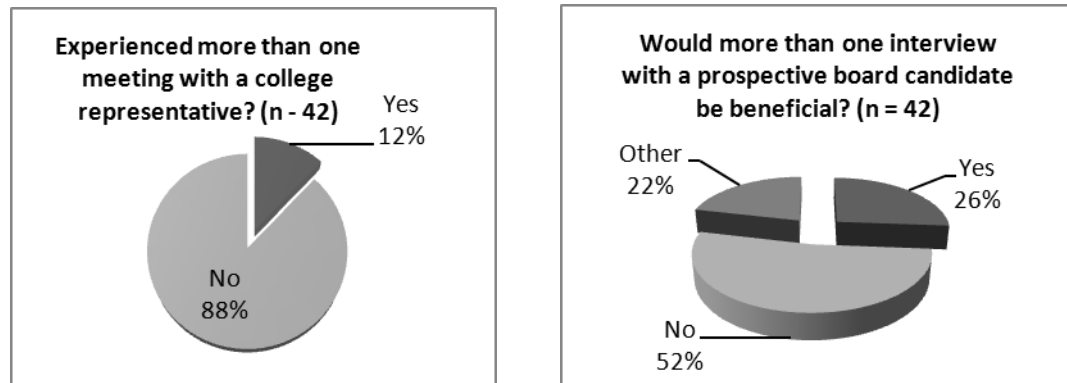


Similar results were gleaned from the board secretaries' survey findings, with just over one-third of the secretaries (37%) indicating that their experience in responding to board candidates occurred within a two-to-four week timeline (n=15). This group's preference for replying to board candidate's initial enquiry about governance vacancies at their college closely paralleled the preferences of board members with one-third of the board secretaries indicating a preference of between 1–2 weeks and another one-third of the respondents stating that an acceptance level of a 2-4 week response time.

This research study also sought insight into the practices and desired approaches to interviewing prospective board members. Board members were asked if their experience in screening included a single meeting with college representatives or more than one such encounter. Then the survey respondents were asked for their preferences for such screening

arrangements. Figure 4.7 shows the actual experiences compared to the participating members' preferences for such meetings with college members.

Figure 4.7 Percentage responses regarding board of governor experiences and preferences regarding selection interview scheduling



While the clear preference among board members was to have just one interview with college representatives concerning their interest in a governance vacancy, several comments raised by participants indicated that certain circumstances may warrant more than one face-to-face meeting between the parties. Multiple encounters may be used in situations where there are a number of candidates and the board plans a “two-staged” interview scenario: with an initial meeting with all candidates following a preliminary screening and then a subsequent interview with each “short-listed” prospective board member. Other respondents indicated that more than one interview may be necessary depending on the experience of the college board’s nominating committee or the particular requirements associated with the board vacancy. There was a similar indication among responding board secretaries that only one personal interview was now used in their college’s board selection procedures (93%, n=15). In asking this same cohort if there should be more than one such personal meeting between board representatives and the candidate, a majority of survey respondents (52%) did not think that multiple interviews were needed in this process. As in the case of college governors, board secretaries noted that multiple interviews may be necessary in

situations where special expertise was needed to augment the board talent base or in situations where there were a large number of candidates. In the telephone interviews with selected board leaders from participating colleges, the researcher explored the question as to why face-to-face encounters were a preferred part of the selection process for college governor vacancies. Responses from among the five participating board members revealed insights that are commonly reflected in the current human resources management literature in the area of recruitment and selection strategies. For example, one board leader replied,

I see the..... interviewing process as a “two way street” as much to identify the fit with the organization. It gives the selection committee the chance to make sure the person is a strong fit with: the existing board members; the model we’re trying to accomplish; and what their participation would be like. But it also gives the potential board member the opportunity to ask questions to determine if they are going to be a fit.

College Governor #4

Another insight into the challenges of board candidate selection and the need to be responsive to the representation balance on college boards was voiced by another board leader who noted,

People are concerned about getting a group of folks together on a college board who can work together.....There is a danger in that you end up picking people like yourself, but there is also a sense that the folks on the nominating committee are well aware that you want to have a gender balance, and you want to have a representative balance in terms of the community.....you support and want to have both business, industry and public sector.....The interview allows you to get a better understanding of why the person is making the application and what the person “brings to the table” and in some cases you get a very good sense that the resume and the person are congruent.

College Governor #4

The interviewed board leaders were also asked to elaborate on any suggested ways that community college boards in Ontario could improve their selection procedures. This question was posed in keeping with the quantitative survey strategy used in this study which paired the

respondent's actual experience to their idealized view of how such human resources management strategies could be used to enhance talent acquisition in such leadership roles. One board member noted that while many current serving board members at a college may bring considerable expertise to their governance role, they may not have well developed skills in interviewing.

Maybe some training at the Colleges Ontario level about selection might be helpful in terms of making sure that when you ask questions everybody asks the same questions.....Maybe some professional development on how you score things and how you debrief a candidate and things of that nature....Nowadays, you want to make sure you're doing things fair for everyone.

College Governor #4

This perception of the need to assess the skills of current college board members in carrying out various human resources management tasks associated with board governance is an interesting one. It shows insight that while college governors may bring a wide range of skills, knowledge and abilities to their board role, there is likely a need for specific training in board selection procedures. This option will be further explored in the next section dealing with the orientation and training of college board members.

Board Orientation, Training and Development

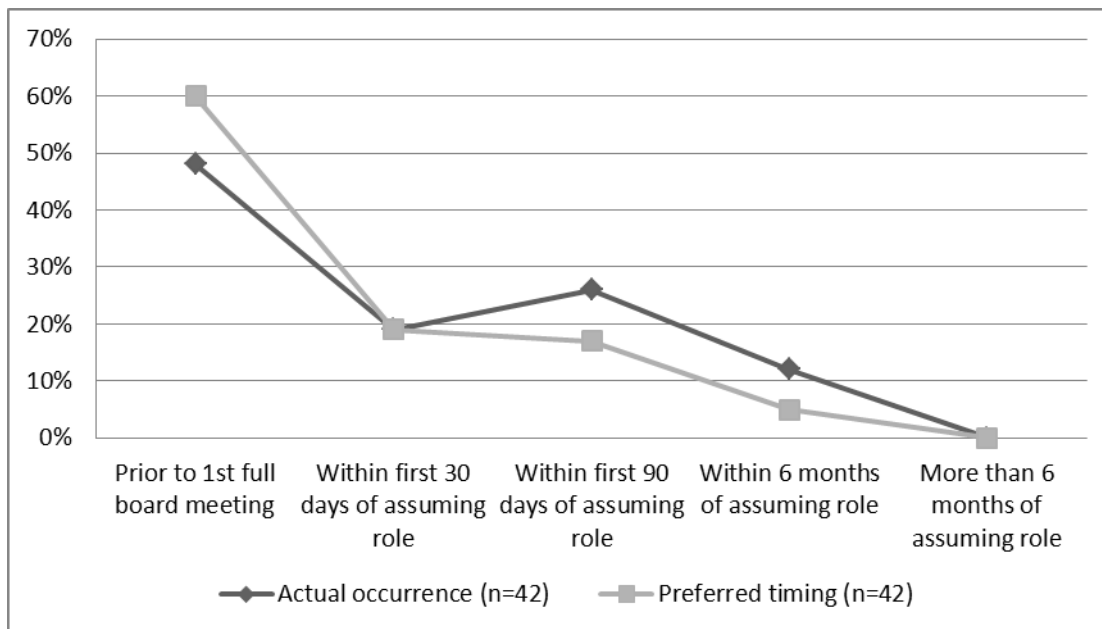
Once an organization has secured qualified staff or volunteers to support its various employment or service needs, it is incumbent upon internal leaders to reinforce the understanding and fit between the new person and their task assignments as well as to familiarize them with the wider organization. Orientation has also been referred to as a socialization process (Mathis, Jackson and Zinni, 2008). It typically begins with activities or meetings to familiarize the new person with the organization's purpose, history, customers and current challenges. In the case of volunteers, HRM programming should not be focused only on the corporate setting but also include specific training sessions that help prepare them for the work required in their new role

(McCurley and Lynch, 1996). In this section of the chapter, the research data taken from survey and interviews with community college respondents will illuminate their past experiences in the areas of board orientation and training along with their views as to how such programming should be offered to those serving as leaders in these higher education settings.

In Ontario's community college system, orientation programming for board volunteers is typically carried out by the individual college where the person is serving as a member of the governing board. Such programming is complemented by orientation sessions sponsored by Colleges Ontario (formerly known as ACCATO - Association of Community Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario). In the survey of college governors in this research study, a number of questions were posed in regards to the participants' engagement in such orientation programs or events. Thirty-four board members (n=42) indicated they had participated in their own college's orientation programs for new governors. Sixty percent of that same cohort reported that they had taken part in a Colleges Ontario orientation program. This overlap between programming events at local and regional session is not unusual as the focus of these orientation events is different. A specific college will typically cover aspects of its history, board operations and current leadership issues. The Colleges Ontario sponsored events direct attention to the role of community colleges within the provincial economy and higher education system, as well as the legal and regulatory framework pertaining to college governance. As orientation programs in employment and volunteer settings are recognized as contributing factors in motivating newly-acquired human resources as well as increasing productivity in their roles, this research survey asked the governors when they experienced an orientation program in support of their new position. The board member survey then asked the participants to indicate when they thought such an orientation process should take place in relation to them assuming their governance role at their

college. As seen in Fig. 4.8, the majority of responding governors indicated that it was their experience, and for the majority their preference, to participate in a board orientation session organized by their college prior to their first full board meeting. The research data points to a gap that begins to occur between governors' expectation and their actual experiences if such orientation programming does not occur within 30 days of assuming their board role. Figure 4.8 illustrates the range in timing for such orientation programs being offered at the responding members' colleges.

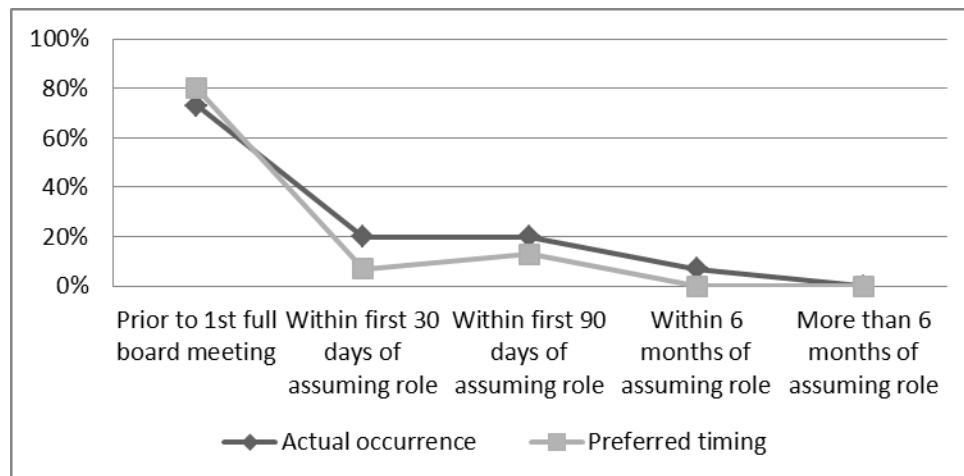
Figure 4.8 Scheduling by college of new board of governors' orientation session



Board secretaries were asked in their survey if a formal orientation policy existed at their college. Of the fifteen respondents, representing sixty-three percent of the community colleges in Ontario's higher education system, eight participants indicated they lacked such a formal policy for board orientation. This same group was then asked to indicate all parties involved in board orientation activities. A majority of respondents (67%) indicated that a combination of their own community college representatives and Colleges Ontario staff were used for such purposes. The

remaining percentage of board secretaries indicated either a specific group of board representatives (e.g. Board chair and College president; or senior board and college staff officials) or in one case an external consultant on policy governance) was used to facilitate their board orientation meetings. As was the case in measuring the board participants' experience and preferences for when an orientation should occur for new college governors, board secretaries were asked to identify their current scheduling of these events and their preferred timing for board orientation sessions. Figure 4.9 illustrates their responses to these two questions.

Figure 4.9 Board secretaries actual and preferred scheduling of orientation sessions for new college governors (n= 15)



These results indicate a timely practice among participating community colleges in offering orientation programming for new board members.

The issue of mentoring is often cited in contemporary writings as an important aspect of leadership development. However as a “stand-alone” topic, mentorship has yet to develop as high a profile in the governance literature. While this may be explained by the relatively short tenure of a board member with an organization, either by choice or through prescribed terms of office, the matter was nonetheless of interest to this researcher, causing him to explore the experiences and

preferences of college board members to see if mentoring was indeed occurring at their institution. The question of their desire to foster such developmental programming was also investigated in this study. The results of the survey of boards of governors revealed a strong preference for providing a “pairing” between a newly recruited board member and a more experienced college governor. Sixty-nine percent of governors (n= 42) indicated that such mentoring should be offered to all newly recruited board members. A further twenty-four percent said that such “pairings” should be offered if the new member requests it. Only seven percent of the participants said there was no need for such activity. One interviewed governor noted,

A mentoring program enables the new board member to make a contribution from the beginning of their term. Boards cannot afford silence.

College Governor #5

A similar trend in the use of mentoring programs for college governors was seen in the board secretary survey. Sixty-seven percent of the board secretaries indicated that such “pairings” are now actively made at their college. The same percent (67%) of the survey respondents said mentoring relationships should be offered in all cases while another twenty-seven percent indicated a preference to offer mentorship pairings if requested by the newly appointed governor.

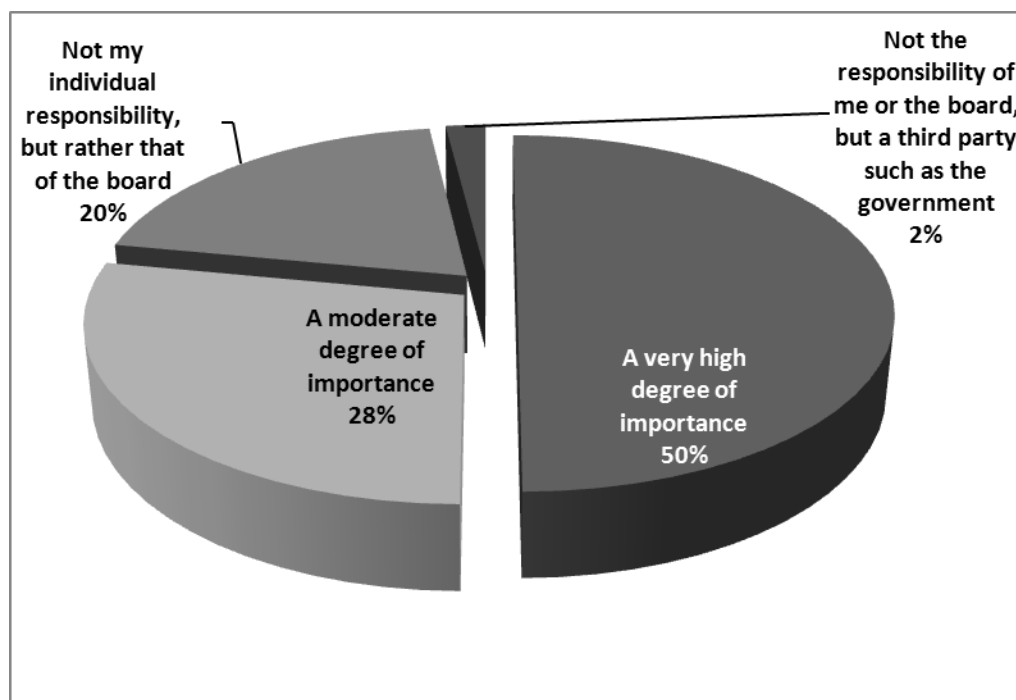
One of the secondary research questions for this study was whether current serving governors felt it was their responsibility to promote an investment of time and resources to train and develop fellow board colleagues as well as themselves in the areas of governance and leadership associated with their community college. Underscoring this question was an interest in seeing whether board members would be committed to some form of proactive measures to secure

excellence in governance and leadership behaviours and practices which in turn would benefit their higher education setting.

In human resources management vernacular, a distinction is made between training and development activities. The difference is a temporal one; with training seeking to close gaps in knowledge or skill related to the incumbent's short term performance in a role, while developmental activities are aimed at broadening the individual's skills for future responsibilities (Belcourt, Bohlander and Snell, 2011). Given the strategic importance of the role of a board of governors at a community college to ensure that the institution's responses to changing economic and demographic trends are properly met, it is realistic to assume that new and more experienced board members would be asked to participate in training or development activities depending on their previous experience and tenure in leadership and governance roles. Examples of such learning experiences would not only serve their immediate role demands as college governors, but also acquaint them with broader trends including emerging technologies, government policy regarding higher education and student expectations in today's post-secondary market. To assure continuity in the quality of governance, college boards would also need to take measures to assure that within their board ranks, certain individuals are exposed to developmental activities to help expand leadership potential that could be called upon as more experienced board members retire from their duties.

The following figure reflects the perceived importance identified by participants in the board of governors' survey regarding their college making an investment to train and develop board members in areas of governance and leadership.

Figure 4.10 Degree of responsibility perceived by college governors for an investment in training and development board colleagues re: governance and leadership. (n=42)



Over three-quarters of the responding college governors indicated a high-to-moderate level of personal and collective responsibility for the training and development for both themselves and their board colleagues in matters of governance and leadership. Evidence of this high level of commitment to board development was also seen in the recent College Compensation and Appointments Council's study (2009) of external board member recruitment. Eighty percent of all Ontario community college boards in that study identified that they provided ongoing training and development for their governors.

In this research effort, survey participants were also asked for their experiences and perceptions related to training and development activities that supported board governance. The results were then complemented by data obtained through direct telephone interviews with several board leaders from participating colleges. Ninety-one percent of respondents to the board survey

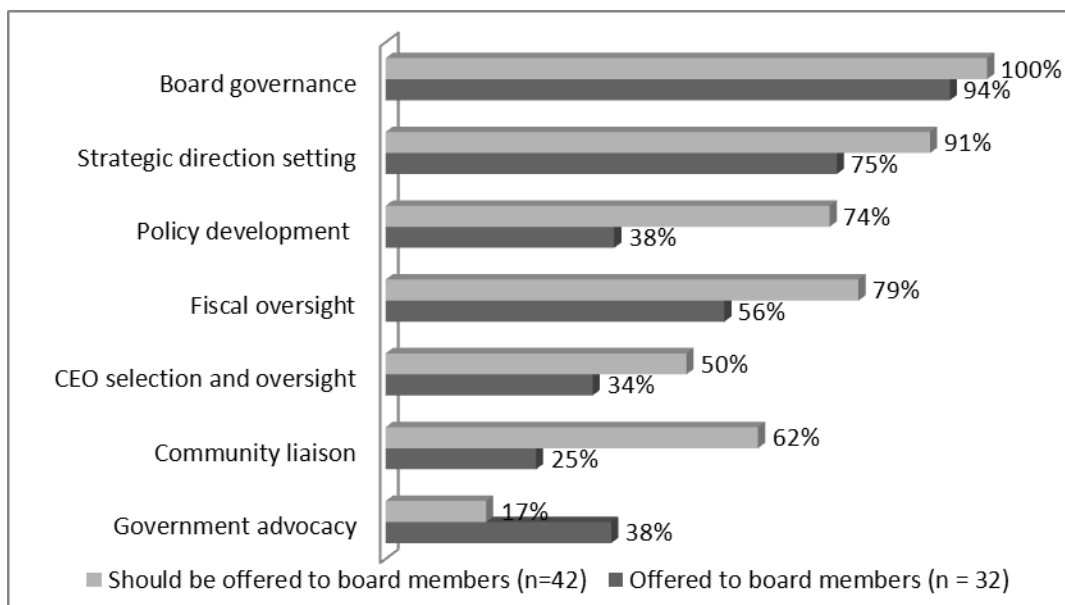
indicated that they had been exposed to training and development activities related to their board role at their college. The same survey indicated unanimous support among respondents that such training and development activities should be offered to college board members. In the telephone interviews conducted with five governors from different participating community colleges in this study, one board member noted,

Well, I think governance is not intuitive. I think that governance is something that you learn.

College Governor #1

Using board functions or roles that have been regularly identified in the scholarly literature on corporate governance, the respondents to the board survey were asked to identify what experience they had with such learning since joining their respective college board. This same cohort was then asked to identify what should be the focus of training and development for incumbent college governors at this time. This comparison is reflected in the following figure.

Figure 4.11 College board members' experience and preferences for training and development activities.



This apparent gap between what has been offered to college board members and what they desire in terms of training and development creates an interesting parallel in the evolving job description of contemporary governance bodies. There appears to be an interest among board members at Ontario community colleges in understanding and preparing for governance roles that move beyond the traditional “Big 3” role performance areas (strategy direction setting, policy development and fiscal oversight). This trend was particularly evident with respect to the increasing importance of the role of college board leaders in government advocacy.

It’s something that’s been a little more prominent now....I think as board members better understand the stakeholders, they do understand that one of the most important stakeholders is the government....and you have to work effectively with government in order for your college to be successful.

College Governor #2

Another college governor commented that skills and experience in an advocacy role needed to be developed for college governors, even if they have had previous professional experience in other advocacy roles.

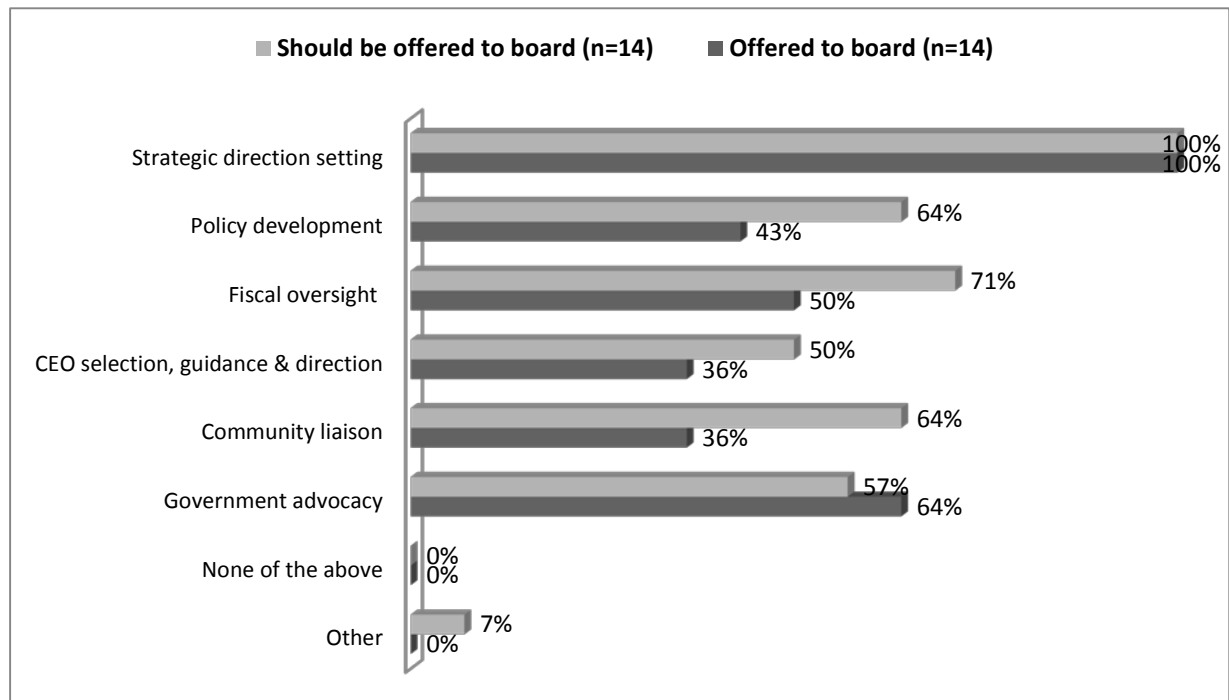
I know from personal experienceto sit down in front of a politician and talk confidently about the college is on a different level....Most people in the business world or industry, unless there are specific environmental issues, don’t necessarily get that opportunity very often, and it can be intimidating and it can be challenging to get your message across in a short period of time.

College Governor #3

The responses from board secretaries at participating Ontario community colleges showed a similar picture between the current types of training and development hosted for board members at their colleges and a normative perspective of what these board secretaries felt should be offered

to a board of governors. Figure 4.12 illustrates this comparison based on responses from fourteen board secretaries at participating community colleges.

Figure 4.12 College board secretaries reporting of offered and preferred training and development topics to boards of governors

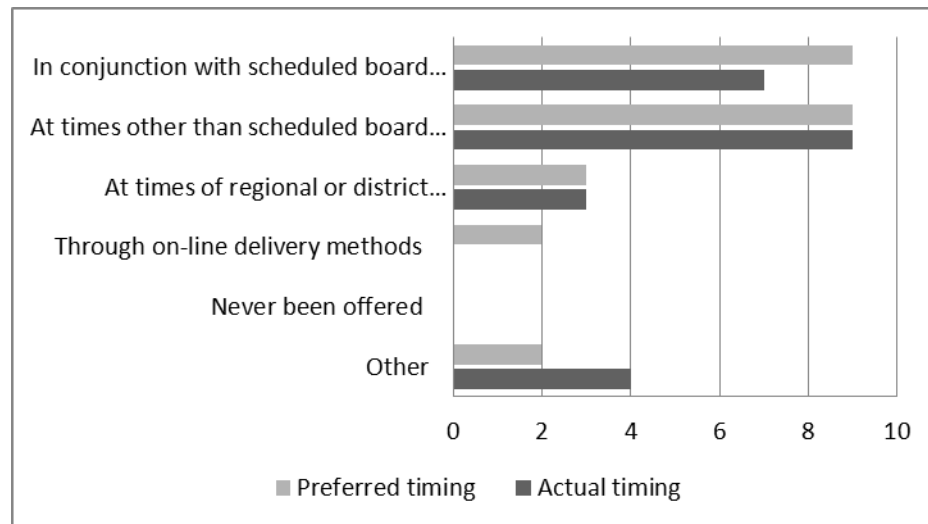


Of interest in the board secretary survey was whether such training and development activities were grounded in some form of institutional policy. Of the fifteen responding secretaries only forty percent indicated their college had a formal policy on board training and development.

In addition to training and development content for college boards, the timing, frequency and location of training and development activities are important factors to note when looking at board governance and leadership. Providing continuing education and developmental activities have been noted as successful strategies in developing board leadership (Gill, 2005). These logistical matters were explored in both surveys. The majority of board secretary respondents (85%) indicated that within the last twelve months between one and three training and

development activities were offered to their college's board members. They were also asked how and when such events had been offered as well as when, in their opinion, training and development events should be scheduled for their college governors. Figure 4.13 provides this comparison.

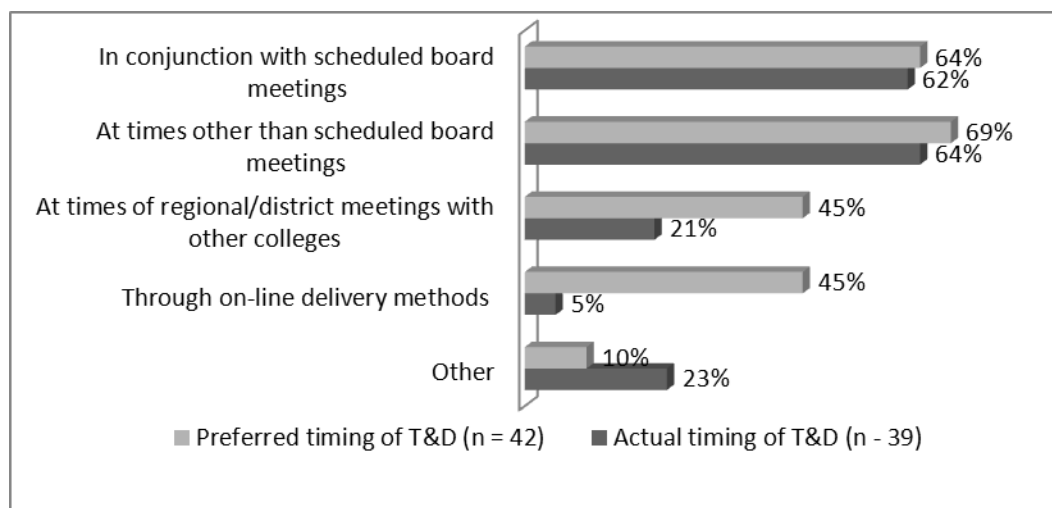
Figure 4.13 Board secretary responses on when governance training and development (T&D) activities do and should occur. (n = 12)



The “other” response category in the above figure included comments from board secretaries that governors’ training was also offered at a college’s annual board retreat or strategic planning events as well as at annual conferences sponsored by Colleges Ontario.

When college governors were surveyed about their actual experience and preferences for the scheduling of board training and development activities, a similar trend in responses was seen in comparison to the results of the board secretary survey. The actual experiences and preferences of community college board members, expressed as a percentage among all respondents, are seen in the following figure.

Figure 4.14 College board members' experiences and preferences regarding the timing of training and development events



Board members at participating colleges were also asked in the survey to identify the “provider” of training and development activities for their board. The most frequently cited sponsor of board training (84%) among the respondents (n=38) was the college’s president and staff. The second-most noted provider was identified by board members as Colleges Ontario (66%). To a lesser degree private consultants (37%) and the College Compensation and Appointments Council (21%) were named as sponsors for board training and development.

Board performance evaluation

The final area of investigation concerning the perceptions of both board members and board secretaries at Ontario community colleges dealt with the human resources management programming area of evaluating the performance of those serving in a governance role. The HRM literature identifies this programming area as a key contributor to organizational success. Performance management is seen as a broad ranging process that includes goal setting, incentives, training and development and corrective measures to help shape or change ineffective behaviours. A key foundational instrument in performance management is some form of appraisal process that

deals with the individual's productivity and work behaviours (Dessler and Cole, 2011). It has also been noted that organizations that seek to excel in their environment require a performance culture; one which necessitates a corporate commitment to monitoring and reinforcing desired performance by all organizational members. Such a culture is best developed through commitment and action to performance assessment and feedback that ideally cascades downward from the most senior level of the company (Mathis, Jackson and Zinni, 2008). The challenge to effective governance and board leadership is transferring such HRM programming concepts to this unique leadership cohort, who unlike many of their corporate brethren, serves in an unpaid, part-time capacity which involves sporadic organizational involvement and in the case of community college board members lasts for a relatively short period of time. Despite these strictures, the governance literature clearly points to the need for, and value of, periodic evaluation of those serving in a board capacity (McCurley and Lynch, 1996, Smith, 2000, BoardSource, 2007, Hanlon, 2009).

Questions on board evaluation were included in both surveys used in this research. The focus of survey questions explored the existence of institutional policies and practices regarding board evaluation as well as the participant's opinions on its importance to the area of governance. Of the forty-two board respondents in this section of the study, eighty-one percent indicated that their college engaged in a formal evaluation process for governors. When board secretaries were asked if there was a formal college policy on the evaluation of governors only twenty-seven percent indicated that such a policy was in place at their institution. Comments provided by board secretaries to this particular survey question helped to explain this lower-than-expected response level; referencing that their institution was either reviewing an existing policy or giving consideration to developing such a framework. In addition to knowing if such performance

evaluations were carried out in provincial community colleges, this researcher was also interested to learn if such feedback mechanisms were focused on an individual governor or rather compiled from a collective perspective, or both. Figure 4.15 and 4.16 respectively express in percentages the experiences and preferences of participating governors regarding the use of performance measures for college board members.

Figure 4.15 Board member perceptions of the focus of current performance reviews for college governors at their college. (n= 34)

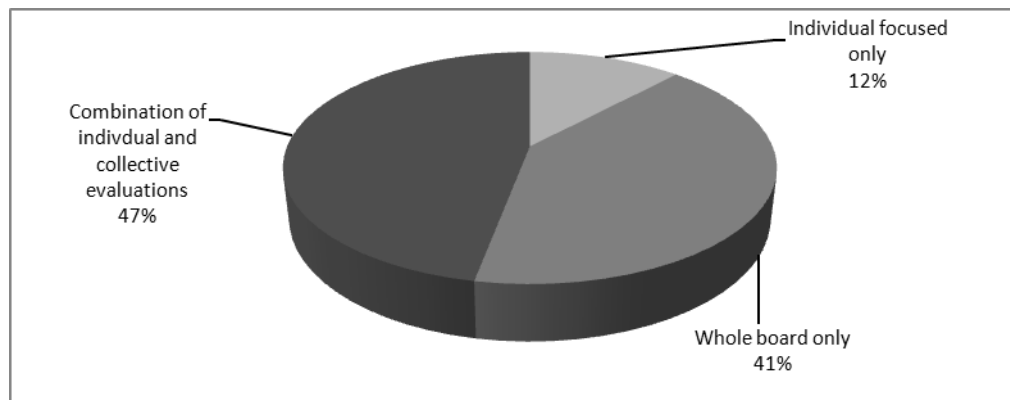
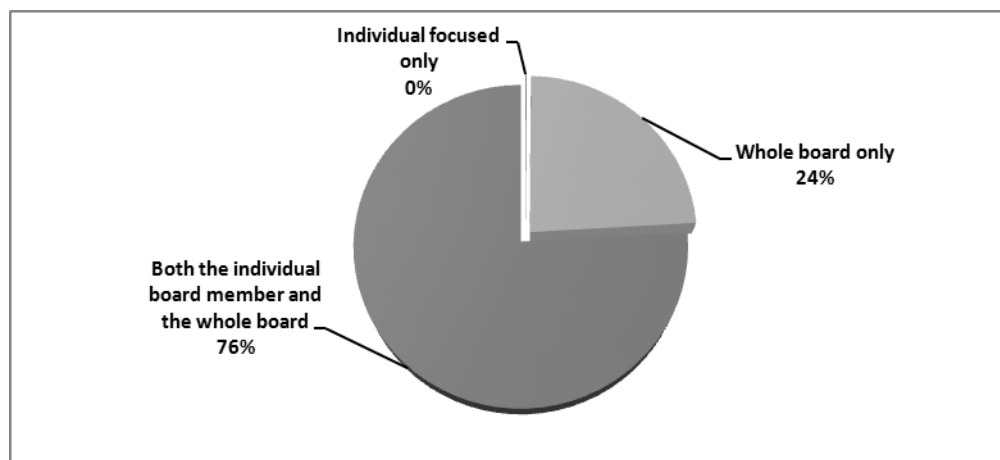


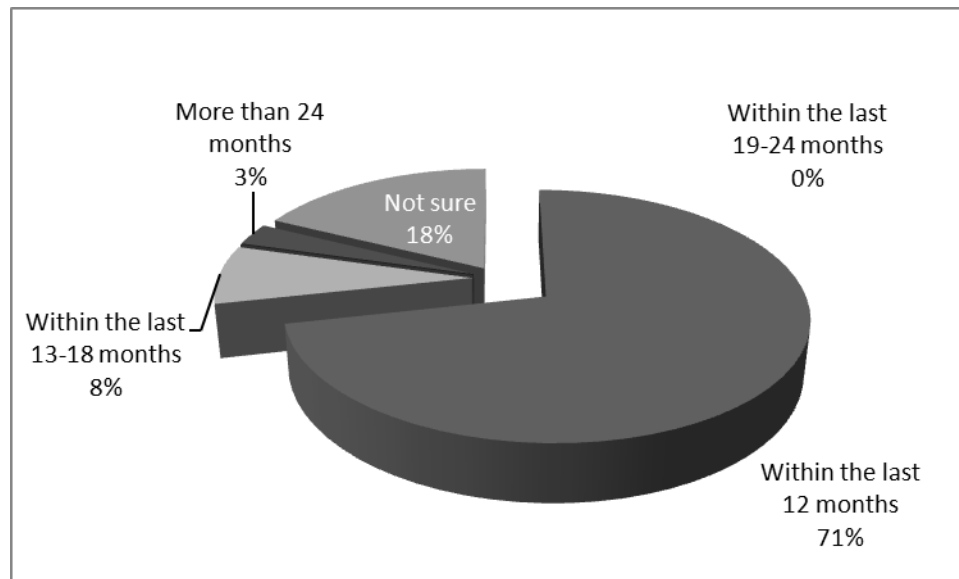
Figure 4.16 Board member preferences for the focus of performance reviews for college governors at their college. (n= 42)



Data from the board secretary survey indicated a similar weighting to the perceived experiences of college governors regarding the focus of current board evaluation practices. Forty percent of secretaries indicated a “whole board” practice only, while ten percent indicated their college only conducted individually-focused evaluations. The remaining forty percent of board secretaries indicated an approach that included both individual and group feedback to their college governors.

Community college board members serve a fixed term in office in Ontario as prescribed by provincial regulation. This term of office normally spans a period of three years with the opportunity for re-appointment for an additional three years. The study asked college governors to indicate when was the last time their board engaged in a formal evaluation of the performance of board members. Figure 4.17 reveals their responses (n= 40) as a percentage against each of the various time frames listed in the survey.

Figure 4.17 Board member reports of the last performance review by college (n=40)



This strong indication of board members experiencing some form of performance evaluation was supported by responses seen in the board secretary survey. Of the twelve responding secretaries

from participating colleges, seventy-five percent indicated that a formal board evaluation had occurred within the last twelve months at their institution. These findings were relatively consistent with another survey carried out under the sponsorship of the College Compensation and Appointments Council (2009). It showed that seventy-six percent of participating Ontario community colleges conducted an annual board evaluation which was used for various purposes including continuous improvement, planning and goal setting, board education and development and recruitment and succession planning. This same study also confirmed that eleven of the surveyed colleges included an annual self-evaluation for board members.

In the present study, the board members and board secretaries were also asked about the format or style of the evaluation process used for governors at their particular college. Although the number of responses was low from the cohort of board secretaries (n=9), a majority of respondents indicated the use of formal, written criteria for evaluating college governors. A larger response rate was seen from board members (n=39), of whom seventy-seven percent indicated the use by their college of a formal, written list of performance criteria in their evaluation. Both groups commented in their survey responses that their college used either an informal or conversational method for gathering feedback of board performance or in a few cases utilized an external consultant to conduct such evaluations. This study also examined both the experiences and preferences of governors and board secretaries as to who was charged with the responsibility of providing feedback to a board member. A difference in the source of feedback on performance to college board members was noted between the two survey groups. Table 4.3 provides this comparison.

Table 4.3 Preferences of board members and board secretaries on the sources of feedback for college governor performance (in percentages)

In your opinion, who should be the source of such performance feedback to the individual board member at the college?	Percentage of board members (n=40)	Percentage of board secretaries (n=10)
All board members through a confidential 360° process that in summarized form to the board member.	40	20
The board chairperson.	25	50
The board vice-chairperson	0	0
The board member's mentor	13	10
An external consultant	8	0
Other	15	20

The data indicated a majority of board members preferred a summary or collective report compiled from feedback given by a variety of persons who interacted with external governors. In a 360 degree performance review such input on an individual's role performance moves beyond the traditional feedback dyad in a corporate relationship characterized by self-reflection of the incumbent and feedback from his or her superior. It fosters a broader sourcing of feedback by turning to peers and subordinates along with external contacts if such exist, to provide a well-rounded view of the performance of the organizational member. A true 360° performance appraisal process would not be possible in such cases, due to the fact that college governors are viewed as the most senior authority within a post-secondary institution. This method could, however, closely replicate such an appraisal model through feedback from board peers, senior college staff serving in an ex-officio or advisory capacity as well as members of the external community who for example populate program advisory committees.

The next most popular choice by college governors and the preferred option for participating board secretaries was the board chairperson. There were unique responses from survey participants on the matter of board evaluation that are worth noting here. One respondent indicated that a governor's performance on various board committees should also be scrutinized. Another board member replied that in cases where the board utilized a mentoring program, the mentor may serve as both an input source as well as the chosen person to provide feedback to their new board protégé.

Additional perspectives on the role and utility of board evaluation were obtained through telephone interviews with senior board representatives at participating community colleges. One interviewee pointed to the classic debate about the evaluation of volunteers.

It is the thing that people loathe to do.....At the same time if expectations are well laid out and it is a discussion about meeting those expectations and it is done in a respectful way, then it can only help things get better.

College Governor #1

Another interviewed governor commented on a structured, paper-based evaluation system used at their community college which involved both an individually-focused element as well as a perspective on the entire board. The output of these two processes, as noted by the senior board official, was directed solely to the college board chairperson for consideration and action.

It was interesting to see people's response to it. I think when they see the questions, especially if they encounter it early on in their time; it helps them to think more about the true areas of governance that they're going to be involved in..... So I think it helps individual board members be stronger board members.

College Governor # 2

Another CAAT governor added to this perspective by indicating how such information can be utilized for improving overall board performance from year-to-year.

We have an individual reflective piece where we rate our own performance in terms of attendance, punctuality and contribution at meetings and that gets rolled up into a broad assessment. It is evaluated against previous years as well. So we have a trending on how we have rated ourselves in those areas and then we also rate ourselves in relation to our effectiveness in governance; in achieving our goals and those types of things as well.

College Governor #3

A final section of the board secretary survey sought information on two administrative matters related to completed performance reviews of community college board members. Eighty-two percent of participating college secretaries (n=11) indicated that no record of any board performance report was kept by the college. For the two community colleges who did keep such documentation, one college reported that the institution's board secretary was the sole custodian of the performance reports and another college reported that a copy of the summary of all evaluations was kept as part of the official board record.

Near the conclusion of each telephone interview the board representative was asked to address two specific questions: "What other recommendations would you make to improve the ability of community college board members to enhance their leadership capacity?" and "Who should take responsibility for making such changes on a college-specific and/or system-wide basis?" - (See Appendix "O" for the details of structured interview questionnaire used with board members). One board member provided an interesting perspective on the need for a type of triad arrangement regarding leadership development for CAAT governors.

I think the answer is ‘yes’, there is more that can be done there and I think it is a joint responsibility between, well it’s a three-way responsibility between the board, the president and Colleges Ontario to continue to educate people. For example, our funding level in Ontario is the lowest in Canada per student, and when you think about that, it makes it very difficult for the college to compete with other systems. You want to make sure you have that information that is out there and is consistently updated so that you’re comfortable in your role as an advocate; and when you say leadership, I really think advocacy.

College Governor #3

Another interviewed governor indicated a definite role for Colleges Ontario with respect to fostering leadership among community college boards on broad-based issues while realizing that individual colleges will require “fine tuning” based on their unique circumstances (e.g. serving a Francophone community).

There is an opportunity for Colleges Ontario to look at what the base requirements are right across the system and to broadly offer that to the colleges..... There’s the annual conference. They have annual board orientations. Last summer they had the Government Advocacy Learning sessions.

College Governor #1

Demographic profile data on CAAT governors

The board members’ survey provided board respondents with the option of providing demographic and governance service information to help establish a sense of who now serve as external governors at Ontario community colleges. There is a paucity of such data as applied to this sector of Ontario’s higher education system. While similar information has been collected in previous scholarly works (Jones and Skolnik, 1997) such data was drawn from Canadian universities. This researcher was interested in setting out an initial profile of external governors now serving in a leadership capacity at Ontario’s community colleges.

Between thirty-nine and forty-one college governors responded to the demographic portion of the research survey. The majority of these respondents (63%) were between fifty and sixty-nine years of age. There was a relative balance of genders (53% male and 47% female). No one dominant occupational group was seen in the responses from college governors. Thirty-three percent of them reported a primary occupation in the field of education while thirty percent of respondents referenced an occupation in business. Seventeen percent of the surveyed board members indicated that they were retired from their primary occupation. Ontario community college governors are a highly educated cohort with forty-four percent holding a master's degree while a further twenty-five percent have a bachelor's degree. In terms of annual family income, one quarter of respondents declared at the \$250,000 (+) level. A combining of the next three highest reporting levels revealed that fifty-nine percent of board members had an annual family income somewhere between \$100,000 and \$249,999. The majority of governor respondents indicated they had between one and three years of service with their current college board. A further twenty-nine percent indicated between four and six years of service with their college. It was particularly interesting to note that there was ample evidence that CAAT governors had additional board experience with other organizations. Twenty-one percent of respondents to the survey indicated between four and six years of board experience elsewhere in the community. An additional eighteen percent of the surveyed cohort indicated over sixteen years of governance experience outside their CAAT board tenure. The results of this data collection are seen in Appendix "Q" of this report.

Summary

This chapter has presented the findings related to the primary and secondary questions used in this research study of board governance and leadership practices among Ontario's community colleges. Findings drawn from this mixed-methods research approach set out to reflect both the participants' experiences and preferences regarding recruitment, selection, orientation, training and evaluation programming provided by colleges and participating third-party agencies to CAAT governors. The next chapter will provide an interpretation of these findings, a discussion of the limitations of this study and proposed areas for further research related to such HRM programming to support governance and leadership practices in community college boards of governors.

5. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The concluding chapter in this dissertation starts with a reprise of the problem statement along with a review of the research methods used in this study. This is followed by a brief summary of research findings and then a discussion of their implications. This discussion of findings will serve to highlight areas where community college governors in Ontario perceive strengths and identify areas for improvement related to board experiences from the start of their volunteer tenure through years of service in this leadership role. This chapter will also highlight a much-needed intersection between the scholarship on board governance, particularly in the not-for-profit sector, and contemporary human resources management (HRM) literature. The chapter will conclude with recommendations for those interested in pursuing policy development and programming which support excellence in board governance and leadership within the provincial community college system, as well as indicating areas for future research related to governance in such higher education settings.

Problem Statement

This study focused on a key constituency within the not-for-profit corporate domain; specifically Ontario's higher education sector and within this group, publicly funded community colleges of applied arts and technology (CAAT). Using two different analytical models involving governing bodies in public and private companies (Leblanc and Gillies (2005) and Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005), the research design sought, through the use of surveys and interviews, to examine the perceptions and opinions of current serving board members and administrative personnel from up to fifteen of twenty-two provincial community colleges on how institutional programming and processes served to strengthen the capacities of these governors to carry out

their leadership mandate. Given that human resources management programming with respect to community college governance in Ontario is currently provided through institution-specific methods, as well as with the assistance of third party regulatory and professional agencies, it was reasonable to conclude that there would likely be variations in how these various supporting HRM programs were deployed at the specific colleges around the province. It was posited that by making a comparison between what incumbent governors had experienced in their recruitment and selection, professional development and evaluation related to their leadership roles and what these college board members perceived as preferred options among these related HRM areas, such insights could provide the impetus to strengthen such programming in support of board governance and leadership.

The design of survey and interview instruments focused on the following key research questions.

Primary research question

To what degree do volunteer members, who serve on Ontario community college boards, perceive current recruitment, selection, training and evaluation programs as contributing to their role performance in governance and institutional leadership?

Subsidiary research questions

- a) To what degree do board members believe it is their responsibility to invest time and resources in developing fellow board colleagues as well as themselves?*
- b) To what degree do community colleges differ in their approaches to recruitment, selection, training and evaluation of board members?*

c) To what degree do community colleges utilize third party resources in their efforts to sustain and enhance governance and leadership among board members?

The answers to these latter questions will be explored in the discussion of results found later in this chapter

Review of the methodology

In Chapter 3, a full description of the mixed methodology used in this study was provided. This research effort took on characteristics of both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. It involved the collection of quantitative data through the use of on-line surveys directed at two distinct participant groups within the Ontario community college system: those currently serving as college governors; and an administrative staff group serving as the board secretary to their governing body. Beginning in late September, 2009 electronic board of governor surveys were sent to board secretaries at twenty-two of twenty-four Ontario community colleges for distribution to each college's board members. (Two French-language community colleges that are part of the provincial CAAT system were not included in the data collection). A separate survey was also sent at the same time to the board secretary at these same CAAT institutions. The period of the survey activity with each cohort lasted two months (September – November, 2009). This data collection process was then followed by one-to-one interviews, during the period of April – May, 2010, with a limited number of board leaders who were drawn from colleges that had participated in the on-line surveys. While a number of governors from participating CAAT institutions were invited to participate in this aspect of the study, only five board members agreed to individually take part in recorded telephone interviews. This qualitative aspect in the research design was

intended to further explore trends or unique findings that surfaced in the quantitative data drawn from the two separate surveys.

The primary and secondary research questions in this study sought to investigate both the direct experiences and perceptions of those occupying governance positions regarding the use of certain human resources management programs linked to their board experiences in the CAAT system. The participating board secretaries provided evidence of policy and procedural measures that supported such leadership and role performance among those serving in governance capacities at their college. At the same time as this mixed methods research design was underway, a separate study, carried out by an external consulting firm for the College Compensation and Appointments Council (*), was identified. This separate study, entitled *College External Board Members Recruitment Review* (2009), was made available to this researcher and helped in the validation, as well as expanding the scope, of certain areas of HRM programming evidence gathered in this research effort.

Discussion of the Results

The primary research question in this study focused on the perceptions of Ontario community college governors and their institution's board secretary in their encounters with recruitment, selection, orientation, training and evaluation programming as college governors. The word "perception" here is important from two perspectives. It firstly asks the respondent to recall input gathered primarily through visual and auditory stimuli related to their initial and subsequent experiences as a college governor. It also asks them to provide their perceptions as to how such programming could be enhanced or altered to make this volunteer leadership role more relevant

(*) CCAC wound down effective October 1, 2010.

and meaningful in support of their leadership roles at a community college.

To assist the reader, a discussion of the results of this primary research question will be presented using these main HRM program areas explored with college governors and board secretaries as sub-heading in the next part of this chapter. The discussion of the research findings regarding the primary research question through the “lens” of such an HRM paradigm will also help focus attention of where a closer integration of higher education governance practices and proven human resources management programming strategies are available to Canadian higher education institutions in this early part of the 21st century.

Recruitment

Recent studies in corporate governance have supported the difficulty in finding the right “mix” of competencies and behaviours that create an effective board of directors (Leblanc and Gillies, 2005). The current scholarship in human resources management stresses the fact that recruitment has a significant impact on an organization and its strategic success (Schwind, Das and Wagar, 2010). It has also been stated that while organizations seek leaders who have character and are competent, it is sometimes challenging when seeking out and preparing governance leaders (K. Tyler Scott, 2000). Recruitment, whether it is for a front line customer service job or for a seasoned corporate director, hinges on two key elements: the recruitment message and its means of being directed into the external environment. The significant findings from this research study concerning these two aspects in the recruitment of board talent will now be explored in answering the primary research question.

Survey responses from participating college governors and board secretaries indicated that prospective candidates for governance roles received recruitment messages about a college board

member's roles and responsibilities that closely mirrored the governance scholarship on the recognized duties and responsibilities associated with this leadership role (Henderson, 1967; Nason, 1980; Ingram, 1993; Smith, 2000; Pointer and Orlikoff, 2002; Collis, 2004; Gill, 2005; Leblanc et al., 2005; BoardSource, 2007). The top three responsibilities conveyed in recruitment messages as recalled by community college governors included strategic direction setting (69%), fiscal oversight (62%) and policy development (53%). Three other roles, also drawn from the scholarship on the role of board members, were noted by surveyed governors as being less frequently included in recruitment messages they received about a board vacancy at the college. These board functions included the selection and oversight of the college CEO (44%), community liaison (49%) and government advocacy (38%). There was also a very close matching of the ranking of these roles when compared to the results on recruitment message role content for college governors as provided by the surveyed board secretaries. The fact that perceptions among both groups of survey participants accounted for the highest rankings in the board roles of strategic planning and fiduciary oversight may be explained, in part, by the fact that these two responsibilities are prescribed by the Ontario government to be part of an expected clear message or "college charter" of the board's responsibility to involved stakeholders (Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2011). It is also noteworthy that the apparent prevalence of these specific board roles are also two of three key areas of responsibility included in the "*governance as leadership*" model (Chait, Ryan and Taylor, 2005) used in this study.

What was interesting in the research findings was that when these same college governors were asked about their perceptions of what roles should be included in board recruitment messages, an increased percentage of respondents identified a need for a greater focus on board duties related to community liaison (79%), government advocacy (79%) and CEO selection and

oversight (72%); roles that were not necessarily captured in the message content conveyed to candidates at the time of their recruitment. This gap between a governor's recollection of messages used in their recruitment experience, by whatever means, and their present view which suggests a fuller detailing of the governance role may be explained by their actual experiences in these 'under-advertised' roles. They appear to be expressing a perception that more needs to be said about governance beyond the dominance of strategic and fiduciary duties to prospective college governors. The benefits for performance of board leaders in community colleges is that a more complete role profile in recruitment messaging allows the applicant to better self-assess their human capital in relation to the scope and demands of all involved areas of board responsibility. For those potential board members who have developed skills and experiences in some but not all key governing responsibilities, the more complete description of duties may cause them to forego applying to such a leadership opportunity in their community.

The findings within the board secretary responses to the question regarding what content was revealed in recruitment messages to board candidates saw an emphasis on governance roles linked to strategic direction setting, fiscal oversight and policy development. These survey respondents also indicated that board roles tied to community liaison, government advocacy and CEO selection and oversight were indeed included in recruitment messages to external governors, but with a reduced frequency when compared to strategic direction setting and fiscal oversight in particular. What was striking in the board secretary responses to the normative perspectives on recruitment messages was that all six outlined role categories were seen by at least seventy-two percent of them as important to include in external board recruitment. So what explains this gap between what board members at community colleges recall their recruitment messages included in terms of the scope of duties of their governance duties? One reason could be linked to how the

recruitment message was conveyed to the candidate. For example, in a direct solicitation of a prospective board candidate by an incumbent CAAT governor, some aspects of the role description may be forgotten or not fully explained in a recruitment conversation. The gap may also be due to a personal “filtering” of the list of board responsibilities by the soliciting representative based on what they perceive as being important in the role of a college governor. Where such board role profiles are well drafted, the failure to transfer key aspects of the description in the recruitment message to the interested party itself could explain a less-than-complete sense of what was entailed in this voluntary leadership role. Such gaps provide an opportunity for the institution’s nominating or governance committee and their board secretary to ensure that a more complete recruitment message, as reflected in the contemporary governance literature, is prepared and utilized in future solicitation for college board vacancies. Developing a more complete, market ready profile of these key responsibility areas could come from a “best practices” model in keeping with binding policy directives and supporting policy statements made by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) and be developed by third party consultants experienced in contemporary board recruitment trends, particularly in the not-for-profit sector.

A contribution to the current governance literature dealing with community colleges is seen in the number of respondents in both surveys who indicated the importance of including other governance roles outside of the “Big 3” responsibilities for boards of governors. The higher education governance literature in the United States has shown considerable interest in recent years regarding college boards playing key roles in both community liaison and government advocacy. While the responses from participating board members in this study indicated a significant focus in recruitment messages that highlighted the “Big 3” governance roles (strategy

direction setting, policy development and fiscal oversight), it is noteworthy that surveyed CAAT governors felt that two other areas of governing responsibility should be given even more prominence in such recruitment messages than they experienced (community liaison at 79% and government advocacy at 79%) when seeking out external board candidates. These research findings suggest that Ontario community college boards, as well as their contributing partners such as Colleges Ontario (due to its related work in support of CAAT institutions), should further explore with community college boards and presidents the benefits of promoting the board roles of community liaison and government advocacy in their recruitment messages. Interest in the community liaison role is certainly not a “new” concept to the leadership portfolio at Ontario community colleges, as these institutions have historically been viewed as an important link to their local or regional service areas in support of economic development strategies as well as community-based post-secondary and general education training centres. The particular interest in the college board’s role in advocacy, as expressed in the survey responses, was further discussed in telephone interviews with selected CAAT board governors. They noted that their emerging role as institutional advocates was important at this juncture in Ontario community college history due to the dependence of these institutions on provincial government funding for post-secondary programs. An interviewed CAAT governor noted that with the apparent need for college boards to adopt a more intentional advocacy role on behalf of their colleges with the provincial government, it was important to not assume that a successful business leader seeking a seat on a college board may have had experience in advocating with their local member of parliament or a provincial government official. Having this expertise at the board level was seen by this interviewed governor to be increasingly important as such government contacts could influence key decisions that may affect current or future college program funding in their region.

As noted earlier in this section, the second key HRM aspect of successful recruitment is the choice of means for delivering the well-crafted invitational message to the potential candidate pool – wherever they may be. Recruitment strategies for acquiring organizational talent span a wide spectrum of institutional practices that embrace various outreach options. At one end of this spectrum is the provincial government minister’s policy directives requiring such messaging to be open, transparent and inclusive including posting external governor vacancies on a college’s website. The use of “other media” is referenced but not specified in the Government’s protocols. Thus, in the case of board recruitment, the range of approaches can spread from one-to-one searches by a college representative among her friends and acquaintances to the utilization of social networking media that presents work-related or volunteer opportunities to a potential global search zone for human talent. This study showed that not only was a significant percentage (61%) of current CAAT governors recruited directly by a current serving board member or representative (which could have included the college president), but a majority of this same respondent group (60%) indicated that such college representatives served as effective recruiting agents for board talent. This finding was also supported by board member responses (47%) to the *College Compensation and Appointment Council* survey (2009). Board secretaries in surveys linked to this dissertation indicated that the most effective means for recruiting college governors rested in three approaches: direct solicitation by a current college board member (60%); direct contact with the candidate by the college president (20%); and by using a public notification process (13%). Again, what is seen here in the first two reported preferences is the rather narrow casting of a search net for potential board talent by college leaders. The concern of using internal referring sources for recruitment new board leaders is that current governors acting as recruiters may refer candidates who are demographically similar to themselves (Dessler, Rekar-Munro and Cole,

2011). This point will be further discussed later in this section. What was interesting in examining the board secretary data was that seventy-six percent of the respondents noted a significant influx of community members initiating contact with the college to seek such a governance opportunity. However, a sense of the volume of such self-directed enquiries received from the external community was not included in the survey framework and thus there is a lack of perspective on the degree of such self-initiated community referrals or “walk-ins” for CAAT governance vacancies.

The evidence gathered in this study on the recruitment of external governance candidates for Ontario community colleges is consistent with suggested methods as seen in governance and volunteer management literature. It also offers an opportunity to ask if these predominant methods could also work against public policy initiatives as set out by the provincial government regarding its expressed interest in the diversity of representation on community college boards. This “practice versus policy” dyad will now be discussed in light of the scholarly literature both within the governance and HRM fields of study.

From the “practice” dimension, there has been a long-held perspective in the higher education governance literature of the importance that recruitment activity by college and university boards seek a balance in the need for diversity in group composition while keeping an eye on the depth and variety of needed talents possessed by prospective members to perform the work of the academy’s governing body (Nason, 1980). High-performance boards have more recently been identified as having the right composition of members who are actively recruited and selected on the basis of certain criteria (Pointer and Orlikoff, 2002). It has also been stated that the capacity of any board to “find” a mix of directors with the necessary competencies and appropriate behavioural characteristics is firstly not easy and secondly dependent upon a number

of factors including a well-developed process for recruiting directors (Leblanc and Gillies, 2005). The challenge to recruit the requisite talent has been also been noted as being a collaborative effort between the board and the chief executive officer, with the board leading such a recruitment process (BoardSource, 2007). To meet these practical challenges in recruiting board members in today's higher education market, it seems necessary to merge the thinking seen in the higher education literature more closely to the professional guidance provided by contemporary human resources management recruitment and selection theory and practices.

While the task of recruiting talented candidates who are a good "fit" in terms of their human capital and shared values in comparison with the desired qualifications to the board roles and culture of the college can be assigned to a governance or nominating committee, it still requires the full board's commitment to the agreed-to qualifications for candidates (Carver, 2006). Two related HRM concepts, targeted recruitment and concentric circles recruitment, are useful in this regard. Each seems to also reflect a degree of the current practices utilized by some Ontario community college governing bodies seeking to recruit new board talent. Among the four recruitment strategies discussed in the volunteer management literature (McCurley and Lynch, 1996), the approach that was seen in the findings of survey and interviews with CAAT governors in this study indicated a preference for what is known as a "targeted" recruitment strategy in the HR management literature (Heneman et al., 2010). This process involves an identification of desired qualities in the volunteer's role followed by a commitment to track down such persons. This particular external search strategy is more focused, but does not necessarily replace a general public call for new volunteers. Such a process is developed through a discussion among current organizational leaders as to where these candidates are likely to be found and what two-way communication is possible between the organization and the candidates. In this study, one

interviewed CAAT board member described a version of such a process involving a “wide conversation” that occurred among the current governors regarding what sectors of the community were not presently represented at their governance table. While this notion of “sectors” was not further explored in this study, it could be interpreted to mean industrial or other economic groupings as well as social or demographic groupings in the community. Once such gaps were identified, these governors were asked to suggest possible candidates who could be approached in the community to serve at their college. Such a process reflects positively on contemporary governance scholarship that calls on the entire board to actively engage in determining the kind of persons it desires to fill vacant board seats (Carter, 2006).

McCurley and Lynch (1996) also identified a method called “concentric circles recruitment” when seeking volunteer talent. This approach would involve a board identifying population groups to whom they have some affiliation and approach someone in that group to solicit their inclination to volunteer. Research has indicated that fifty percent of those who engage in volunteering do so in response to a direct request of a friend, co-worker or acquaintance (p. 44). In this study of CAAT board practices, one interviewed governor identified such an approach was utilized in their board’s recruitment procedures. This particular community college board had a well-developed skills and abilities matrix to anchor their external search approach. Using this framework, they then asked one another who knew of persons within their business or professional contact networks who could contribute to strengthening their board. Another interviewed governor indicated that such an approach was used by their board to enhance board diversity particularly with respect to the Aboriginal community that existed in their service area. The use of such a “concentric circles” approach within the Ontario CAAT system was also seen in the Strategic Leverage Partners survey (2009). A significant number of college representatives

identified networking for board candidates through associations that current governors or the college president had linkages to through business, industrial and other stakeholder groups. While this approach of involving the wider governing body in developing a list of talent requirements for candidates is helpful, it does not mean that such recruitment techniques will always yield a candidate pool to meet the replacement demands for board members in Ontario community colleges. In the *College External Board Members Recruitment Review* (2009), Strategic Leverage Partners indicated that the “best” source for board candidates was realized through those already known to the college, especially when referred by current or past governors. It should be noted here that the qualitative descriptor used in this 2009 study appears to be drawn not from any objective measure of governance performance but rather from the subjective perspective among the interviewed participants that dealt more with convenience of method than the quality of any such referred candidate who goes on to excel in their board duties and responsibilities.

The apparent preferences among college governors and board secretaries to utilize their board and administrative colleagues as primary recruiting agents for governance vacancies is certainly not a “new” practice or one that is regarded with any sign of inherent drawbacks by surveyed CAAT governors. However, internal recruiting, as discussed in the human resources management literature, indeed carries certain risks, one of which is described as allowing “no new blood” to be brought into the organization which in turn may limit creativity and prevent new solutions from coming forward (Schwind, Das and Wagar, 2010). This description is perhaps too “absolute” in that such self-referrals of prospective talent by current governors may indeed yield candidates who represent new strategic or fiduciary perspectives and different demographic characteristics. The control here would be to assure that self-referrals of potential new external

candidates were balanced off by more public recruitment approaches and some form of controlling mechanism by the board's nominating committee. Such controls are supported in Ontario by binding ministerial policies where the government assures some degree of public notification regarding community college vacancies. There are also new regulatory rules that mandate that a percentage of board members be named through Lieutenant Governor in Council appointments. There was evidence in telephone interviews with CAAT board leaders that they would consider additional recruiting methods for leadership talent. The challenge of balancing the expediency of "tapping someone you know on the shoulder" versus a more transparent public call for new board talent was raised by one interviewed college governor. A board member from another college indicated the practical challenge of having a totally public process that could produce a high volume of candidates which in turn tested the capacity of current governors and the board secretary at their college to effectively process a slate of candidates. This research data showed that almost half (47%) the responding college board secretaries noted their governing body had a formal policy on recruitment of new governors. Although such policies were not collected for analysis as part of this research effort, such recruitment frameworks at the board level may be seen as a positive step towards a more defined and transparent process that seeks governance talent from not only internally referred individuals, but also from interested community members to fill such leadership roles at CAAT institutions.

The influx of candidates resulting from increasing expectations on a more public and transparent recruitment effort by Ontario community colleges, particularly in larger urban centres, was raised by research participants in this study. In cases where an overwhelming response to a particular college is experienced by its board, alternatives for handling such volumes of governor applicants will need to be explored. A college board may decide to utilize a third party consultant

to screen and short list external applicants. Contemporary “open source” HR software, deployed in a board secretary’s office may also provide a means for culling the inflow of external candidates prior to the further screening of applicants by the board’s nominating or governance committees.

Finally, while this research study did not explore committee structures charged with responsibility for recruitment at community colleges, the previously cited College Compensation and Appointments Committee study (2009) on board recruitment showed that a significant number of CAAT institutions utilized a board committee to guide its recruitment efforts. The vast majority of respondents in that study indicated that recruitment fell within the purview of a nominating committee while other colleges utilized either their executive or governance committee for this purpose. The use of such a committee to drive the replenishing of board talent has been supported in contemporary governance literature (BoardSource, 2007). Such steps are also in keeping with procedural responsibilities of community colleges, as set out by the Ontario government to establish a “systematic approach to nominations” (Colleges Ontario, 2011). This focus of purpose, along with a deeper understanding of benefits and risks in recruitment methods for external board candidates as reflected in the contemporary HRM literature should yield a representative and diversified talent pool to serve the leadership needs of community colleges in the coming decades.

In regards to this research study’s primary research, the survey and interview data support to a degree the perceptions among CAAT governors that recruitment activities, both at the start of their board tenure and at present, have supported their leadership role on their college board. There was clear evidence from the study that college governors received a description of their board duties that was well developed, in keeping with preferred descriptions of duties as set out in

the governance literature. From the standpoint of leadership, as an attribute that encourages one to challenge the conventional and point to a future where better circumstances may exist, CAAT board member responses indicated a preference for more emphasis on the emerging board roles of community liaison, advocacy along with duties of the selection and oversight of the college president. Providing more emphasis on these roles in public and internal recruitment messages could position these higher education institutions in a positive light in their surrounding service areas and thus attract future CAAT board members with the requisite human capital to serve as future leaders. This attraction will no doubt continue to be handled through the clearly preferred means of interpersonal and professional networking for prospective governors, but should also seek clearer support for the value in balancing the more traditional use of board members and the CEO as primary recruiters of talent with a more open and transparent use of public means for sourcing board talent.

Selection

Whatever the preferred recruitment strategy for soliciting interest among external candidates for community college governor vacancies, the next sequential task for a CAAT board involves selecting preferred individuals from among the assembled pool of applicants. Of all the HRM programming areas carried out by Ontario's community colleges regarding board governance that were examined in this study, board selection policies and procedures showed considerable consistency in structure and practice when compared with contemporary HRM theoretical models. This section of the final chapter will continue to address the primary research question related to how study participants experienced the selection processes used in their screening as applicants for board services as well as their views on how past and current experiences prepare such an individual for this important leadership role.

As Gillies and Leblanc pointed out in their 2005 study of the coming revolution in corporate governance, an effective board must have a cadre of directors who collectively have the required competencies needed by the board to fulfill its duties along with a mix of behavioural characteristics that support effective group decision making (p. 145). While the demand for such competencies and behavioural characteristics has been echoed by other governance scholars, the details of how screening of interested candidates for governance positions should occur remains underdeveloped. It is at this point where insights from the business management realm of human resources may assist in the discussion of the findings of this research study.

It can be argued that, unlike universities in Ontario, the consistency in selection practices seen among provincial community colleges in this study is due to the provincial regulatory framework that more directly guides board structures and processes across all twenty-four institutional members in the CAAT system. While each college may develop its own screening methods regarding interested candidates for governance vacancies, the Ontario government, through the Lieutenant Governor in Council (LGIC), has historically played a significant role in the appointment of CAAT external board candidates. As of October 1, 2010, a new framework related to college board of governor appointments came into effect under Ontario Regulation 34/03. A community college now assumes responsibility for appointment for a majority of its board of governors in accordance with its by-laws and the new Ontario regulation. There is also under these recent regulatory changes, new provisions for external appointments of one-third of the external members to each CAAT board through a Lieutenant Governor in Council (LGIC) appointments. The formula for such appointments is set out in Ontario Regulation 34/03. A protocol for board nominations and appointments was revised by the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities in January, 2011 and affected many, but not all, selection

procedures for college governance appointments. For example, provincial regulations state that Ontario college boards are to establish a clear statement of board roles and responsibilities along with a board profile that supports the college's strategic directions and to develop and utilize a skills matrix for assessing potential board candidates (Colleges Ontario, 2011).

Several results from this study should help reinforce current strengths in, and foster improvements to, college governor selection processes. Firstly, board members believe that providing a job description of the board member's role is important in assisting with the person's decision to take on this particular leadership role. Only sixty-nine percent of the surveyed college governors received such a role profile, but one hundred percent of the respondents indicated such an outline should be included in candidate packages. Secondly, one-half of college governors experienced a personal interview with one or more members of the board's nominating committee. While there was not a significant call for committee interviews (57%) in the survey data, interviewed CAAT board members noted that screening of candidates by a committee of the governing body was preferred as part of the selection process. Thirdly, a helpful insight emerging from this study deals with the acceptable range of time that may lapse between the external community member contacting a college to express their interest in a board vacancy and the response received by that person from the higher education institution. This measure of efficiency can be useful to colleges, particularly those in relatively close geographic proximity to one another that may be drawing from a finite talent pool of board candidates. A majority of board respondents in this study experienced, as well as saw an acceptable response time by a college to their expression of interest as being within a two-to-four week timeline. Consistency in tracking of this span of time would also be important if a college board relied on several external recruitment strategies for board vacancies. For example, a college that utilized a current board member or the

institution's president as a primary recruiter could plan to have a formal response following an initial meeting with a candidate ready within a fourteen to thirty day period without harming the likelihood of maintained interest in the board vacancy on the part of the interested community member. Any CAAT institution relying on self-initiated expressions of interest to a publicly advertised board recruitment campaign could similarly set their response communiqués to take place within this two-to-four week time frame without undue risk of alienating the interested party. Responses from board secretaries to the on-line research survey indicated a preference for a somewhat "tighter" response time line of one week but less than two weeks in acknowledging such an expression of interest. Another thirty-three percent of these participants indicating that a two-to-four week response time by the college was acceptable.

With the increasing use of web-based technology in Ontario's post-secondary institutions, including for purposes of interacting with their boards of governors, it seems an optimum opportunity for community colleges to utilize such electronic repositories as a means to provide access for prospective board candidates to a wide range of information that may assist them in deciding on whether or not to pursue such leadership appointments. Rather than the college trying to "guess" what are the desired documents to send to a board candidate, information such as gained in this study could help build a wide ranging menu of relevant data sources tied to governance, strategic and operational themes that would be of interest to governance candidates. It is suggested that here lay an opportunity for all or at least a "pilot" group of CAAT members to identify a "best practices" model in terms of governance web design that would support board candidate selection in the province. As noted in the contemporary HRM literature, however, the reliance of web-based recruitment and selection modalities does not replace the need for

substantive selection activities such as interviews and reference checking (Dessler, Rekar-Munro and Cole, 2011) that fall within the mandate of the governing board.

A final thought in this discussion of board selection techniques deals with the important link between such screening protocols and subsequent measures of board performance. The human resources management literature makes clear reference to the utility of predictive validity when deciding upon the right blend of selection activities used in candidate screening (Mathis, Jackson and Zinni, 2008; Dessler and Cole, 2011). The argument is that only those candidate screening tools that provide scoring results that accurately predict actual role performance should be utilized by an organization when making selection decisions among competing applicants. Although the specific details related to the design and implementation of board selection tools was not part of this research design, it is worth noting an important “connection” between the HRM programming area of candidate selection and performance assessment activities to be examined later in this chapter.

In this study, the data revealed selection practices experienced by college board members were closely aligned with their normative perspectives on matter such as information sharing and interview methods and related scheduling of contacts between the involved parties. Evidence drawn from recorded interviews with several college leaders also indicated the use by their colleges of a skills matrix to help in their selection deliberations. Although not explicitly stated by governors in this study, and given that there is evidence of infrastructures to support selection decision making by college boards and that the level of satisfaction among directors with the various aspects of past and current selection protocols at their college, it is reasonable to say that Ontario community college board members feel that the ability of new and more seasoned CAAT

governors is sustained, if not enhanced, by current levels of selection programming seen in our provincial colleges.

Orientation, training and development

It has been noted in the governance literature that properly orientated and educated directors make for better board members, thus collectively strengthening a governing body which ultimately provides strategic value to the corporation (Leblanc and Gillies, 2005). The following section addresses the primary research question in this study by setting out three key findings from the data that should be of interest not only to individual community colleges in Ontario but also to the wider higher education network in support of institutional governance and leadership. These areas for discussion are tied to board orientation, mentoring, and professional development in the scope of governance roles for today's community colleges. This section will then address two areas for further consideration with respect to CAAT governor development.

❖ Orientation

Despite the fact that only forty-seven percent of surveyed board secretaries indicated their college had a formal policy on board orientation, other data from this study indicated it was an active area for governance activity among participating CAAT institutions. As noted earlier in this paper, many HRM programming initiatives designed for community college governors are delivered through a blended assembly of providers. The vast majority of respondents (81%) in this study noted their college as the primary sponsoring body for their governance orientation. Such programming was also complemented in the past by regional orientation sessions sponsored by Colleges Ontario. Recently, this provincial advocacy body has moved to a centralized board orientation program for new CAAT governors from around the province. One interview governor

noted the impact of such provincial orientation sessions on new governors at his college. He told of a new student governor who upon return from a regional orientation session sponsored by Colleges Ontario clearly showed a difference in their role performance by clearly asking the right kind of questions at board meetings and also showing improved leadership abilities by serving as a strong voice of students at governance meetings.

While not all governors participating in orientation at their community college necessarily attended at regional or central orientation programs sponsored by Colleges Ontario, a majority of surveyed governors (59%) had done so. This gap between institution-specific and wider system programming for new governors is an area that should be further explored by CAAT institutions and Colleges Ontario to assure that new governors not attending the latter type of regional or centralized events are still able to actively experience the content presented in such a forum. With the evolution of webinar training, this CAAT system-focused orientation for new governors seems a feasible option for such programming for incoming board members.

Another contribution to the community college governance literature from this study is that scheduling an orientation program for new members prior to their first board meeting was preferred by sixty percent of participating governors. This is a departure from fifty-two percent of surveyed board members who reported their orientation program at the college took place somewhere between the first thirty days and six months into their first year of service. An orientation program for new members prior to the actual commencement of formal board activities has been described as a benefit not only because it prepared the incoming governor for immediate participation (Carver, 2010), but also avoids new members bringing their previous governance experiences to the new role which may only serve to hinder the progress of current board practices (Carver, 2006).

❖ Mentoring

A second key finding from this research had to do with the level of mentoring found between more experienced college governors and newly recruited board members in Ontario community colleges. The scholarship on leadership in the not-for-profit and public sectors states that mentoring assists in leadership development. It has been noted that while a leader is not necessarily a mentor, “*all leaders should become mentors who help a few others learn to lead.*” (Blunt, 2010). Assessing the experience of college leaders in a mentoring process as well as their views on how mentoring should take place within their board may provide further insights as to the importance of this HRM programming activity at a college.

There was evidence that mentoring of college board members did exist among surveyed governors where sixty percent of participants indicated that such a pairing had taken place as part of their experience at their institution. What was interesting was a desire among respondents to further spread mentoring relationships for incoming Ontario community college governors. Sixty-nine percent of the surveyed cohort indicated that such mentoring relationships should be established for all new CAAT governors. A further twenty-three percent of this group indicated that such pairings should be made if the incoming board member requested it. Although the survey did not differentiate at the time between college-appointed and LGIC-appointed board members, it is appropriate to consider all new board members to be included in the mentoring policy agreed to at the particular CAAT institution. This level of interest in mentoring among college board members was also supported in the CAAT board secretary survey where sixty-seven percent of these respondents indicated mentoring was carried out for *all* newly-recruited governors. These board secretaries also overwhelmingly supported the idea of mentoring programs being scheduled for all new board members or at least offering such initiatives if the

new governor made a request for such a service. This suggests a readiness and indeed an expectation that Ontario community colleges should initiate and expand the use of such pairings as part of their developmental plans for their board members.

❖ **Professional development in the scope of the governance role**

A third contribution to the governance literature suggests HRM professional development activities may positively affect college governors in Ontario by the explorations and commitment to widening role sets expected of governors in contemporary community colleges. Given the strategic importance of the role of a college's board of governors is to assure the institution's responsiveness to changing economic and demographic trends in its surrounding service area, it is realistic to assume that new and more experienced board members would have to be trained not only in their immediate roles and responsibilities tied to governance, but also to develop their collective competencies be acquainted with, and respond to shifting trends in emerging technologies, government policy and student expectations in today's post-secondary environment. Participating board governors in this study showed a preference for further professional development in the key responsibility areas of policy development, government advocacy, community liaison and the selection and oversight of the college president. At the same time, to assure continuity in the quality of governance and leadership, college boards also need to take steps to assure that within their board ranks, certain individuals are exposed to developmental activities to help expand leadership potential that could be called upon as more experienced board members retire from their governance duties. There appears to be a readiness for accepting such responsibility as evidenced in this study. One hundred percent (100%) of all college governors agreed that training and development activities should be offered to CAAT board members and

ninety-one percent of the surveyed cohort indicated that they had been exposed to board activities related to their college governance roles.

This experienced professional development, according to surveyed CAAT governors, included board governance (94%), strategic direction setting (75%) and fiscal oversight of institutional assets (56%). Policy development, government advocacy and the selection and oversight of the college president were topics in which approximately one-third of these governors had participated in during their governance tenure. However, the research results also showed CAAT governors indicating a clear preference for further training and development in the areas of policy development, government advocacy, community liaison and the selection and oversight of the college president. Such findings appear to be consistent, in part, with the perceptions of the emerging roles for college board members to assume in the areas of government advocacy and community liaison.

Two additional contributions emerging from this study are in the areas of board training and development for community college governors in Ontario; just-in-time learning and board cross-training will now be discussed.

Personal development and skills-based learning in contemporary higher education has been greatly enhanced through the utilization of various learning management systems used in universities and community colleges. This investment in technology infrastructure raises the opportunity for college boards to use available personal computing technologies as an enabler of “just in time” learning and growth opportunities for CAAT governors. It has been noted in governance scholarship that the scarcest resource many board members have is time. Furthermore, few corporate directors seem unwilling to invest more of their time to take advantage of training programs offered by the organization with whom they serve as a corporate board member (Gillies

and Leblanc, 2005). Web-based, asynchronous delivery of orientation and other professional development materials is another consideration to add to the current discussion in CAAT governor development. For example, while there is value in attending formally scheduled orientation sessions designed by the individual college, as well as having an opportunity to meet with other new board members at regional or provincial CAAT orientation programs facilitated by Colleges Ontario, there is much to be said for the notion of individual convenience seen in the asynchronous delivery of orientation materials. In the case of orientation, such personal access could allow time for incoming governors to review and prepare for this important role prior to their first board meeting. Such access could be designed to be delivered by the college through a directors' web portal at their institution with related links therein to other key sources such as the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, the College Employer Council and Colleges Ontario. This design would also support the suggestion in the scholarly governance literature that board orientation should not be isolated to one event but occur throughout the new member's first year in that role (Pointer and Orlikoff, 2002). Asynchronous access to such on-line materials, perhaps augmented by relevant webinars, seems to be another interesting option for future consideration related to training and development programming for community college governors.

A final area for further exploration related to board development deals with a concept introduced in the contemporary governance literature by Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005), and tied to that discussion of their governance as leadership model. As noted in the literature review in Chapter 2, these scholars detail an opportunity for not-for-profit boards to develop a "tri-modal" approach to governance that embraces strategic, fiduciary and generative forms of governing behaviours. Their counsel on how to successfully implement such an orientation to governance is to offer "cross-training" sessions using these domains as each contributes to governance

situations. This is suggested because in their research, most not-for-profit organizations tend to osculate between strategic and fiduciary role sets where some leadership opportunities exist. Including an exposure of what generative governance looks like through delivering such cross training opens up far more opportunities for a board to carry out its leadership role (p. 9). This notion expands on the scholarly work by Carver (2010) who stressed that all board training and development activities should be designed around strategic leadership. Such cross-training, however may need to await greater conceptual development or at least a more easily grasped application of generative governance principles for not-for-profit leaders as it is a significant departure from the more readily understood notions of strategic and fiduciary board roles. While this research effort did not measure board interest in the concept of generative governance, it is worthy of future consideration among CAAT institutions owing to the paradigm's orientation to developing board leadership competencies.

Performance evaluation

The last HRM programming area examined in this study dealt with various aspects of performance evaluation used for board members at Ontario community colleges. In the CAAT system, external board representatives serve in an unpaid, part-time capacity lasting for a relatively short tenure (one, or possibly two consecutive, three year terms under provincial regulations). As noted in Chapter 4 of this dissertation, despite these strictures, the governance literature clearly points to the need for, and value of, periodic evaluation of those serving in a board capacity. In this section, an examination of the implications of what was learned from the survey and interview data gathered from both college governors and board secretaries including: evidence of appraisal activity; focus of performance measurement; use of role or task criteria; and sources for providing feedback will be discussed in light of the primary research question.

Katherine Tyler Scott (2000) noted that while almost every board of directors understands its duty for oversight of the corporation's CEO, including the performance evaluation of that individual; many boards fail to grasp a similar responsibility to evaluate their own governance and leadership efforts. It is worthwhile noting that based on survey results from this study eighty-one percent of college governors reported that their college had indeed engaged in a formal evaluation of board performance in the past twelve months. This high level of recent valuation activity among participating CAAT boards was confirmed by seventy-five percent of responding board secretaries. Thus, there appears to be some positive influences drawn from established practices and the corporate cultures among a significant number of CAAT institutions to support an assessment of governance performance despite the fact that only twenty-seven percent of participating colleges reported having a formal policy related to this HRM program area. Such a cultural climate, where board evaluation is seen as a natural way of improving its performance, has been noted as a commitment to good governance (BoardSource, 2007).

The "focus" on performance of corporate boards maintains a rather broad perspective in current governance scholarship, ranging from an orientation that evaluates individual board meetings (Carver and Mayhew, 1994), to self-evaluation by board members (Smith, 2000), as well as the scrutiny of achievement of "ends" as prescribed by the board (Carver, 2006). The underlying challenge here seems to be what is the proper "unit" of performance measurement (i.e. the individual board member, or the entire board, or a "hybrid" approach that includes both an individual and group evaluation components)? Recent scholarship in governance has noted interest in both individual and group behaviours (Hanlon, [2009], Chait, Ryan and Taylor [2005] and Leblanc and Gillies [2005]). An interesting addition from this study to the current college governance scholarship is that participating governors experienced, and increasingly supported, a

system that provided data to CAAT governors based on both group and individual performance measures. The inclusion of such individual feedback to CAAT directors would no doubt fill a void now experienced by many governors; eighty-one percent of whom indicated that they had not received individual feedback on their role performance from a college official. A blended focus on governor performance evaluation satisfies two important needs as seen in HRM and governance scholarship. Feedback related to efforts of an employee, and one could also suggest to those of serving in a volunteer role, has long been recognized as supporting that individual's motivation to perform well in his or her capacity. An awareness of such performance metrics has also been shown to provide a sense of personal satisfaction to individuals doing such work (Hackman and Oldham, 1976). Formal evaluation of board performance has been seen as valuable for a number of reasons including increasing the level of discussion on governance issues as well as signalling to other internal and external stakeholders that the board is an active and engaged entity which is leading by example; in this case demonstrating the importance of assessing its leadership and their attendant responsibilities and actions (Leblanc and Gillies, 2005).

The noted desire of participants in this study for a blending of individual and group evaluation processes may provide an opportunity for a third party organizations supporting CAAT institutions, such as Colleges Ontario, the College Employer Council, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities or possibly independent consultants, to develop pilot projects for individual and group forms of board appraisal systems. Data and experience gained from such trials could then support the evolution of "best practice" models for both types of performance assessment methods that would benefit not only Ontario community colleges but could also be applied to other North American higher education institutions.

Another strong indicator in this HRM programming area, which in part supports the suggestion of pilot programs for board appraisal systems, was based on study findings showing a majority of surveyed governors (77%) and board secretaries (56%) noted the use of formal criteria when judging governance performance at their college. This provides an opportunity for CAAT institutions to examine these current criteria against contemporary governance frameworks as advanced by Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005), Leblanc and Gillies (2005) and Carver (2006). While the latter model is familiar to some CAAT institutions which utilize a policy governance model, the former two theoretical frameworks would likely be of assistance to community college boards seeking ways and means to strengthen the leadership capacity among their governing structures. The use of such criteria in measuring board member performance also offers a means for determining the utility of selection methods used in choosing new college governors. Without subsequent assessment of a board member's performance following their appointment to serve in a key leadership role, a community college lacks an opportunity to determine the predictive validity of its selection methods. Although this point was not included in the research design used in this study, it could be an area for further consideration by CAAT institutions in looking at the interaction between the HRM programming areas of board selection and performance evaluation.

A final contribution from this research in this topic area is found in viewpoints of college governors regarding who should be "sources" for performance feedback to individual board members. The governance literature has historically noted the importance of boards conducting performance assessments of the carrying out of governing roles and responsibilities (Ingram, 1980). The scholarship in this area has also noted the important role played by the chairperson of the board, particularly in regards to non-performing directors (Leblanc and Gillies, 2005). CAAT governors who participated in telephone interviews in this study expressed a range of opinions as

to the utility of board evaluations. Some indicated that such a procedure was needed as leadership in a governing role was more than just “warming a seat” at the board table. Another senior board representative provided an account of how their college blended an overall evaluation for all governors alongside individual assessments; the latter document being only for the eyes of the board chair. It was noted that when such steps were used, new college governors became readily aware of what they would be involved in, which in turn helped strengthen overall board performance. A third interviewee spoke of the value of individual feedback to college governors. Such a process allowed the board member to receive feedback on their contribution to the governing body at the college as well as gauging whether they had truly accomplished their intended objectives as a governor of a higher education institution. When such feedback was blended with overall board performance ratings, one interviewed governor noted that such measures helped drive specific changes that were later examined during the college’s annual strategic planning retreat. This support for governor evaluation among participants in this study illustrates their perceived value in how such a tool can foster improved leadership within a college board.

It is here where contemporary human resources management theory may offer one innovative approach to long-standing, traditional notions of how such assessments should be carried out and communicated to board members. The concept of 360 degree performance evaluation utilizes various internal and external stakeholders, from superior, peer and subordinate perspectives, offering their perspectives on how an organizational member has carried out their assigned responsibilities and duties (Mathis, Jackson and Zinni, 2008). In this study, it was found that such an assessment method was favoured by forty percent of participating CAAT governors. Twenty-five percent of board members felt that the board chairperson should be the source of

performance feedback to other governors. Written comments gathered in the data suggested other alternative sources for the board performance measurements including a standing committee (e.g. the executive committee or the nominations committee), or the mentor of a new board member. When board secretaries were asked who should provide individual feedback on board member performance, one-half of all respondents indicated that this was the responsibility of the board chairperson. Twenty percent of board secretaries favoured a confidential 360° process that would summarize feedback from a variety of stakeholders and then be presented to the board member.

The data from this study clearly shows that college governors support institutional programming initiatives that capture and disseminate information on collective and in some cases individual board performance at their institution. This dedication to such assessment of role performance projects a positive signal to college staff groups that such evaluation must be regularly done and focused in keeping with developed skills matrices linked to role expectations. There also appears to be support among current college governors for their use of new approaches, such as the 360° feedback model, in assessing the board's performance in their leadership capacity. This indication of interest by college board members in widening the feedback network for gathering perspectives on individual governor behaviour, not only builds on the recent scholarship that focused on perceptions and practices in the area of self-evaluation by college governors in the CAAT system (Hanlon, 2009) but also demonstrates a commitment to further develop the board's leadership capacity in such post-secondary settings.

Subsidiary research questions

The research design for this study included three subsidiary questions to explore institutional differences in HRM programming among colleges participating in this survey, a measure of the commitment among college governors to training and development of their peers

as well as themselves and finally the usage of third party consultants engaged by colleges in carrying out related activities linked to any of the HRM programming areas examined in this study. Each area will be discussed under a separate sub-heading.

a) To what degree do board members believe it is their responsibility to invest time and resources in developing fellow board colleagues as well as themselves?

The survey data on this question indicated quite clearly that participating governors perceived some degree of responsibility for promoting an investment of time and resources to train and develop fellow board members as well as themselves in areas of governance and leadership associated with their board responsibilities and duties. Fifty percent of governor responses indicated they felt *a very high degree of importance* in that regard. The remaining cohort of respondents indicated they felt *a moderate degree of importance* (29%) in this regard while a further twenty-one percent indicated no sense of personal responsibility but rather recognized such a duty as being vested in the board. This finding among participating CAAT governors indicates a significant commitment to this aspect of institutional leadership that maintains and develops both the individual and collective human capital as each may pertain to traditional and perhaps emerging governance roles in community college governance.

b) To what degree do community colleges differ in their approaches to recruitment, selection, training and evaluation of board members?

The response rate to the college board survey made answering this subsidiary question difficult. Certain colleges had only one member take part in the survey while other colleges had up to twelve respondents. Other colleges had no board respondents but did see their board secretary reply to their survey of these same programming areas. Based on examination of data in

both surveys it is possible to show where there were certain differences in aspects of HRM programming areas related to governance practices.

1. First contact from a college representative to the applicant for a board vacancy.

Survey data showed no particular trend in how such contact was made by a college with the prospective candidate or who at the college was responsible for making such contact. There tended to be a relatively equal utilization of telephone calls and e-mail or direct mailings to applicants by the participating colleges. This variance may be explained in part the size of the college's service area and whether it was more cost effective to utilize e-mail or regular mailings to candidates as opposed to incurring long distance charges in responding to applicants where colleges may have had a larger number of telephone area codes that incurred such costs. The difference in who made the contact from the college to a prospective candidate was not clear from looking at the data. It is likely more a product of the "personal style" of the board member, the board culture of involvement in such activities, or the view that such contact is more efficiently done by college staff associated with the board's work.

2. Approaches to board evaluation methodology used by colleges.

There was evidence in the data of differences in how surveyed colleges approached the evaluation of board members. Forty percent of responding board secretaries indicating a focus on the whole board only while another forty percent of colleges blending both individual and group feedback systems into their governance feedback models. Only two board secretaries indicated the practice of providing only individual board member feedback. In this latter instance, it was not clear if these two boards were using a self-evaluation strategy only or not. Such differences could not be clearly correlated to the size of the participating college or its geographic location in the province. Such differences are likely the product of the organization's culture and the influence of

the college president in adopting one particular style in evaluating the performance of the governing board.

c) To what degree do community colleges utilize third party resources in their efforts to sustain and enhance governance and leadership among board members?

The final subsidiary question in this research study asked to what degree community colleges utilized third party resources in their efforts to sustain and enhance governance and leadership among board members. A range of consultants, who work with not-for-profit organizations such as community colleges, has been noted in the governance literature. Such service providers have been recommended to conduct a range of specialized assignments, based on their objectivity and lack of any vested interest in the organization (BoardSource, 2007).

To determine the extent of usage of third party consultants for related human resources management programming by college boards, specific questions were included in questionnaires sent to both survey audiences (college governors and board secretaries). As was noted in Chapter 4 of this dissertation, there was limited use of third party consultants reported by governor respondents in the areas of training and development (37%) and one noted occasion by another governor who referenced consulting help in the area of board performance assessment. A slightly higher percentage (10%) of CAAT governors indicated a preference for utilizing external consultants to gather board performance data. Thus, there is evidence of third party consultants being used, albeit in a limited manner, by individual community colleges regarding the key HRM programming areas of board training and development, as well as to support board performance evaluations. As referenced earlier in this paper, the College Compensation and Appointments Council engaged an external consulting group, Strategic Leverage Partners in 2009 to survey

recruitment, selection and orientation practices among CAAT members. Thus, although the inclusion of HRM professional or board consultants have not typically been included among the range of external expertise identified in the governance literature at this time, research findings and reported use of consultants by agencies serving the CAAT system illustrate a trend in accessing such assistance to aid in the growth or improvement in HRM programming to support governance and leadership among community college governing bodies in Ontario.

Limitations of this study

The intended design of this research study sought to embrace a broad sampling of human resources management (HRM) practices used by individual community colleges of applied arts and technology in Ontario and third party agencies supporting this CAAT system regarding the governance and leadership structures in this higher education network. The principal data collection methodology was aimed at a “user friendly” approach that allowed all current governors at twenty-two of these twenty-four post-secondary institutions to respond via an on-line survey that could be completed at a time and place convenient to the respondents. While such a strategy proved successful for the survey of CAAT board secretaries (15 of 22 possible college respondents), the rate of return for community college board members was lower than anticipated. Since the main focus of this research was on the perceptions of these CAAT board members regarding their experiences with human resources management practices tied to the recruitment, selection, training and evaluation activities used by their college, along with their perceptions of how such HRM programming should take place, the interpretation of the survey data is not necessarily a true representation of what may exist at community colleges that did not participate in the study. For example, it is possible that a non-participating CAAT institution indeed offers

an exemplary publicly focused recruitment process that attracts a diverse range of board candidates and thereby bears little resemblance to the “old boys’ club” style of institutional recruitment practices cited in the HRM scholarly literature. Similarly, it may be the case that several non-participating community colleges offer a “best practices” model combining both a collective and individually focused feedback system for their board of governors. There is also caution that the findings of this study may not be representative of those large community colleges that exist in the province as such institutions did not comprise a significant portion of responding individual board of governors to the on-line survey. In part, some indication of current practices at larger CAAT members was seen in the responses received from board secretaries at these institutions; however this does not override the low response rate of CAAT governors from the larger provincial community colleges.

Areas for future research and actions

The final section of this concluding chapter will outline suggested areas for scholarly research in the field of governance and leadership within provincial community colleges in keeping with research data framed by the primary and secondary research questions used in this study. The presentation of these recommended areas for scholarly study and institutional collaboration will be set out using the same human resources management program sub-headings already seen in this chapter.

Recruitment

The acquisition of talent by any organization to enable it to produce goods or services that meet the needs or desires of interested parties, be they consumers or citizens, starts with an organizational call for talent referred to in this study and in the HRM literature as recruitment. The

two key aspects of recruitment that facilitate talent acquisition include the development of a message that conveys the opportunity to work or volunteer for the organization and a sense of where to direct such messages in the corporation's external environment. While a community college's human resource department possesses professional expertise in the design and execution of recruitment programming to assure the attraction of qualified candidates for board vacancies, there is the potential for perceived conflict of interest by utilizing internal staff resources to secure the ultimate governing authority in that institution.

Leblanc and Gillies (2005) noted that due to numerous governance scandals in the 1990s, public policy initiatives in Canada, the United States and Great Britain emphasized structural reform for corporate governing bodies. One theme seen in these reports called on boards of directors to strike committees of its members to provide certain functions including the nominating of new directors (p. 22). The contemporary governance literature also addresses the necessity for not-for-profit governing boards to have conflict of interest policies in place. It has been noted while circumstances involving a "duality of interest" will inevitably arise for board members and executives in such organizations, these situations must be managed. Such conflict of interest policies not only guide board members' conduct but also help to avoid improper staff involvement in the work of the governing body. For example, the human resources management executive's involvement in recruiting an external CAAT governor may be motivated by the possibility of future favourable treatment in terms of compensation or acceptance of policy proposals in return for her participation in such activity. It has been suggested that guidelines for handling such potential conflicts of interest should not only be identified by board members, but should also require corporate staff to review and sign conflict of interest forms binding them to remove themselves from such circumstances where personal gain could arise through their

involvement with the governing body (BoardSource, 2007). The current provincial policy framework for CAAT board of governor nominations and appointments requires recruitment activities for college governors to be guided by probity and include individuals free from conflict of interest (Colleges Ontario, 2011).

There is an opportunity for more research in the extent to which current CAAT board recruitment messaging is consistent with board role profiles as reflected in the contemporary governance literature. In particular, there are opportunities to use the competency profiles as advanced Leblanc and Gillies (2005), which focus on certain combinations of key behaviours for board members, to help drive board effectiveness and leadership in governance. Further research in this area could prove useful in terms of the choice of behavioural characteristic descriptors used in recruitment ads for external CAAT governor vacancies. In a similar vein, additional research in recruitment message content could further test the application of the “governance as leadership” model proffered by Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005). This would be of particular interest in furthering the current understanding of one aspect of that model described as “generative” governance as it may be applied to CAAT board leaders.

There is also an opportunity, as a result of this research study, to investigate the merits of having selected community colleges collaborate, with the assistance of a third party consultant, in looking at a “best practices” model regarding the recruitment of external board members. Such a model could be encouraged with project funding made available from the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities or the College Employer Council. A “best practices” recruitment model for external governor candidates could be first tested in several regions of the province to capture the recruitment challenges witnessed in geographic areas where there are high density and diversified urban populations as well as in more rural and sparsely populated regions

of Ontario. The development and refinement of such a model could then be followed by designing a training program, with the assistance of an organization such as Colleges Ontario, to help maximize the recruitment efforts for new talent along with supporting provincial government policy initiatives designed to assure a diversity among external applicants for vacancies on CAAT governing boards that indeed reflect the demographics of their surrounding communities.

A final dimension for further research in the area of college board recruitment could include a focus on how current computer software programs are utilized to solicit external candidates for board vacancies. The research findings indicated that current CAAT governors have certain expectations regarding access to information related to prospective board roles and responsibilities along with a better understanding of the challenges and organizational design of the community college that is recruiting them. While it is not surprising that between fifty and seventy percent of the respondents in the study indicated they had received materials related to the advertised board vacancy such as a job description, college strategic plan, a recent college annual report and an outline of the board structure, it was interesting that when asked for their preference for such materials, these same items were identified as desirable by a higher percentage (ranging from an 18 – 31% increase on any of these information items named in the survey). There is an opportunity here for further research as to how such information could, for example, be assembled on a web portal that is accessible to board candidates once they had been contacted by a college board representative. Electronic access to such information could be coupled with welcoming messages, in video or printed format, from key board and college leaders to provide information to candidates and, at the same time, allay commonly held concerns linked to copying and mailing expenses along with trying to determine the type of information to send to candidates. Further study of the pervasiveness of web-based recruitment technologies used by each Ontario

community college could lead to recommendations for a “best practices” model in soliciting external talent to fill board vacancies at such institutions. Such strategies, particularly if associated with each college’s website, would also ease the burden on college board nominating committees and board secretaries in terms of the dissemination of such information as well as fostering a positive perception among the general public that such recruitment practices were transparent and proactive.

Selection

Once the recruitment cycle has furnished a supply of qualified candidates, the searching organization must then engage in some form of selection procedures, winnowing down the large number of applicants to a more manageable size of preferred candidates for consideration. This study showed that participating colleges had well-developed protocols for vetting external board candidates. Survey results and descriptions articulated in telephone interviews with CAAT board leaders consistently showed the use of structured procedures in dealing with board selection. Candidate screening was generally done based on written criteria drawn from internally framed board role descriptions. Although there was some evidence of variation in how many college representatives participated at the different stages of any board screening process, the data showed selection procedures not only were timely in their responsiveness to the candidate’s expectations, but there was sufficient structure in procedures used by participating colleges that would match HRM programming standards as set out in the contemporary business management literature. An area for future research to help develop applications for each of the governance models referenced in this study would involve examination of current selection tools used by Ontario community colleges in structured screening techniques for external board candidates. This would be particularly useful in further investigating the concepts of generative governance (Chait, Ryan and

Taylor, 2005) and director effectiveness (Leblanc and Gillies, 2005). A study of such structured screening techniques would also permit the content validation of such processes when compared with performance evaluations of CAAT governors' competencies and role behaviours.

It is fair to say that encouraging a more public recruitment process by Ontario colleges may not necessarily encumber the related screening of new board talent. Concerns raised by CAAT governors as to the anticipated high volume of responses resulting from an increased emphasis in the public advertising for external board candidates could be obviated in two ways. Recruitment messages used in such public searches would need to be clear about the attending qualifications for the college governor's role. While this does not prevent unqualified candidates from applying, it can serve as a means for limiting inappropriate applications which drain the time and energies of those in charge of screening incoming expressions of interest. There is an also opportunity here for further study of screening templates now in use by CAAT governing bodies to learn which designs favour improved quantitative and qualitative indicators of governance and leadership. Each Ontario community college has access to third party advice on a collective (e.g., Colleges Ontario) or independent (private 3rd party consultants) basis in making amendments to current screening procedures used for board applicants. This degree of expertise would also facilitate the validation of a community college's screening methodologies against concomitant group and individual performance assessments of their governing board members.

A final consideration for further study of selection processes used in screening CAAT board candidates relates to the earlier referenced concern regarding a greater emphasis on a more public means for advertising external CAAT board vacancies and the anticipated high influx of applicants. In addition to the already-mentioned option of using HRM technologies where such exist to permit candidate screening, a further investigation of the degree to which college board

secretaries utilize third party recruiting agencies to perform the vetting of external applicants may offer options to CAAT institutions, on an individual or collective basis, to expedite governor selection procedures. As the recruitment of governance talent is an annual activity, the nominal cost, particularly if it is tied to other candidate screening services completed by such an agency for college employment candidates, would be a reasonable expense for a CAAT institution to absorb in return for a properly assembled pool of board candidates. In such cases, agreed-to leadership attributes, as well as the traditional aspects of the governance role in higher education, could be looked for in an applicant's cover letter and resume by the contracted agency. Any study of the use of these technologies or third party providers of board screening services would be an interesting sequel to this research effort. In such instances, the participant cohort sample would likely necessitate an expansion beyond the Ontario system of community colleges due to a need for a wider institutional sample of post-secondary settings, including universities, where increased access to shared HRM automated screening technologies and the higher utilization of external staffing agencies by such institutions is likely to be seen. Colleges Ontario may also serve as a catalyst to explore with CAAT members the use of contemporary applicant screening technologies, some of which may now be in use at member institutions. The caution here again is that any college's HR department should not provide such screening services due to the perception of a conflict of interest on the part of the human resources management executive.

Orientation, Training and Development

This research study indicated that a majority of new board members received their governance orientation at their own community college. Such local activity was supplemented to a lesser degree by regional or central orientation programs provided by Colleges Ontario. Given the

potential disparities in content and participant engagement within these program delivery models, there appears to be a benefit in further research into a “best practices” opportunity for delivering board orientation content to new CAAT governors. With the evolution of technical delivery modalities there is also an opportunity to gauge the current use of, or at least the interest in, asynchronous orientation programming for incoming governors. Such flexibility in access to such orientation materials would likely be favoured by incoming governors, many of whom carry out their profession non-governing roles with such supporting technologies.

Commitments to allocate resources in support of training for those serving in either employment or volunteer roles within an organization provide tangible evidence of corporate awareness of the need and ability to respond to externally imposed challenges vis-a-vis the current skill and knowledge sets of the organization’s human resources complement. The results of this study showed that while there was a wide array of training topics offered to Ontario community college governors, the surveyed CAAT members indicated a desire to have more training in each of the seven role content headings, as reflected in the scholarly literature, ranging from board governance to community liaison responsibilities. While there may be an assumption that college board members are already “talent rich” individuals, who bring considerable knowledge and experience to the governance table, it should be noted that the purpose of training and development activities in any corporate setting is to help close gaps between the expertise of incumbent organizational leaders and the called-for responses in role performance presented by the external environment that often require change management initiatives by the organization. For example, one interviewed CAAT governor pointed out that while many college board members are quite capable of advocating for their business interests with private or public investors or external regulators, these same persons may lack exposure to the nuances of lobbying

skills in the political arena when such advocacy is tied to the college governance role. An assessment of the utility of further training and development for CAAT governing bodies linked to advocacy and community liaison should be areas for further study among Ontario community college boards. This particular training and development topic of government advocacy, once more clearly defined, is a related area for further exploration with a third party provider such as Colleges Ontario which already advocates for the twenty-four community colleges in the province. This agency's established training and development role among this network of post-secondary institutions would help strengthen the "grass-roots" community-based lobbying efforts by local CAAT boards when dealing with their area members of the provincial parliament as well as with senior officials at the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Such training initiatives for college board leaders is especially important in today's fiscal environment where there are numerous signals of further provincial government "belt tightening" in areas of public spending including post-secondary education.

A final recommendation for future research in the area of board development is to examine what forms of mentorship programming are now utilized by CAAT institutions for new internal and external governors. Based on evidence from this study, Ontario college board members clearly felt both a personal and collective obligation for their professional development as governors. This level of commitment brings an opportunity to "build capacity" in order to sustain the quality of governance efforts via some form of mentorship program that could be modelled and utilized among all twenty-four CAAT institutions. The likelihood of such capacity would be enhanced through the study of successful mentoring programs among Ontario colleges. These examples could also serve as a platform to further develop desired governance competencies and behaviours among governors at Ontario community colleges, such as those advanced in the two

scholarly models developed by LeBlanc and Gillies (2005) and Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005). Additional study of higher education institutions in North America where either of these governance models is being used may lead to new and enhanced mentoring programs at CAAT institutions that develop internal capacities to focus on governor competencies and behaviours as well as examine how college boards may move seamlessly among their fiduciary, strategic and generative governing roles.

Performance evaluation

Of all the human resources management programming areas examined in the context of their contribution to governance and leadership in this study, the most intriguing area for further research is in the realm of measuring board performance and giving feedback to governors on how they do their collective and individual jobs. In the study of corporate governance by Leblanc and Gillies (2005), the lack of evidence for board evaluation caused the authors to question why such activities were so infrequently used by corporate governing bodies when such leadership groups were in the “assessment business” (p. 99). The reasons for low utilization of such measures in that scholarly study included common excuses by corporate leaders such as a lack of performance assessment criteria, uneasiness in data collection methods, the impact on performance feedback on the group dynamics within the governing body and the confidentiality of assessment results. The results of research gathered for this dissertation, which involved over half of the public community colleges in Ontario, illustrated that while regular assessment of board performance was carried out; it was not necessarily always a well-established practice. Where such evaluation of governors’ performance took place, the research data showed a range of methods now in use by participating colleges. In the majority of cases, such evaluations tended to be of a collective rather than an individual nature; meaning that indicators were focused on group measures rather than

whether an individual governor was performing at a superior, average or inadequate level. This may be due to the fact that board members see themselves as individual contributors to a collective governing process and may be sufficiently satisfied with measures along dimensions of group achievement. However, the governance model advanced by Leblanc and Gillies (2005) devotes considerable attention to functional and dysfunctional behaviours of board members which, they suggest, are determining factors to under-performing corporate governance. Such personal feedback, while in evidence in the survey results, tended to be the exception rather than the rule among participating CAAT members. It is recommended that further research be done to look for ‘best practices’ not only in Ontario community colleges, but in other higher education institutions in North America where a “blended” strategy of group and individual performance measures is carried out by institutional governing bodies of post-secondary institutes.

A second point under this topic relates to a need for more research of assessment methods that focus on the individual CAAT governor and the degree to which she exhibits competencies in carrying out her key governance roles and responsibilities. Here again there seems to be an opportunity for HRM program experimentation by CAAT institutions that seek correlations between individual governor performance ratings against earlier selection decision indicators used when screening new board candidates. The reinforcing principle here is that while community colleges appear to have sound mechanisms for selecting candidates for board vacancies, it may be argued that without some means for formally evaluating the individual performance of college governors, one can never fully know the weaknesses that may exist within the institution’s recruitment and selection procedures. Leblanc and Gillies (2005) noted that competent chairs and board members intuitively know when another director is not fulfilling his or her responsibilities; that is to say that there is a performance concern with that board member. They further stated that

only when other structural elements, such as clear job descriptions and well-understood measurement standards, are in place can such intuitive notions of role performance be factually substantiated to even the most skeptical of incumbent governors (p. 97).

With two recent models advanced by separate teams of North American scholars in the area of board governance, Ontario's community colleges have opportunities to further study and utilize ideas that flow from the research of Leblanc and Gillies (2005) as well as Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005) with respect to key human resources management techniques and wider leadership issues for board governance. In particular, the study of the latter group's tri-modal model of governance, which calls for the closer intertwining of the scholarly writings in both governance and leadership, may be a healthy prescription to the challenges facing CAAT institutions at a time of troubling economic news for publicly funded agencies and shifting societal demographics both of which now challenge the resiliency of Ontario's public community colleges. In the current era, the notion of generative governance as a key ingredient for survival of this segment of the province's post-secondary system may never be timelier. Yet it is this aspect of the current theoretical model developed by Chait, Ryan and Taylor (2005), that needs further study and discussion as it is not as readily understood as are the companion elements of fiduciary and strategic leadership in that governance paradigm. Providing more practical applications of generative governance, through board development programs, would be worthwhile as it appears to be an important innovation in governance and leadership at a time when the external environment demands such an orientation from higher education institutions, including Ontario's community colleges and its governing structures.

In its conclusions to the 2009 study of the review of recruitment of external board members for Ontario's community colleges, the consulting firm Strategic Leverage Partners noted the strength of these institutions in their volunteer recruitment processes and a commitment to training and development, succession planning and evaluation. The consultants urged CAAT boards of governors to continue to do what they were doing well while committing to address issues related to time constraints and diversity challenges. They also called on the new governance oversight body (College Employer Council) to support initiatives that continue excellence in governance of these post-secondary institutions. Such development seemed likely in the opinion of these consultants due in large part to the willingness of college governors and presidents to share successful policies and practices with others in the CAAT system. Thus, there appears to be an opportunity for further research and development of governance practices within Ontario's community colleges. Colleges Ontario, with its historical involvement in facilitating board orientation programming on a regional basis and most recently through a centralized forum, is nicely positioned to serve as a "lead" agency working in partnership with the College Employer Council and the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to promote further research and pilot programming in key HRM applications as applied to board governance and leadership.

This research study of governance and leadership at participating Ontario community colleges has illustrated sound fundamental "building blocks" for the development and strengthening of CAAT boards of governors in carrying out their important mandate reflected in the legislative and regulatory frameworks set by the Ontario government. Research data collected in the two companion surveys used to canvass the experiences and preferences of board members and board secretaries at these participating higher education institutions illustrated that while gaps

may exist between what these participants have experienced in certain areas of human resources management practices related to their recruitment, selection, training and evaluation as governors, there is a clear willingness among CAAT leaders to assume an individual and collective responsibility to make improvements in areas of board structure and processes to enhance the overall effectiveness in community college governance and leadership in the province. Further scholarly research in these HRM applications to college board structures and processes, along with the collaborative investigations of both the Leblanc and Gillies and Chait, Ryan and Thomas models on governance and leadership, will be of considerable assistance to CAAT board leaders as they continue to encounter a myriad of externally imposed challenges related to emerging economic trends, constrained public funding and shifting stakeholder expectations of the purpose of Ontario community colleges.

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APPENDIX A

LIST OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY IN ONTARIO INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY

Algonquin College of Applied Arts and Technology
Cambrian College of Applied Arts and Technology
Canadore College of Applied Arts and Technology
Centennial College
Conestoga College Institute of Technology
Confederation College of Applied Arts and Technology
Durham College of Applied Arts and Technology
Fanshawe College of Applied Arts and Technology
Fleming College
George Brown College of Applied Arts and Technology
Georgian College of Applied Arts and Technology
Humber College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning
Lambton College of Applied Arts and Technology
Loyalist College of Applied Arts and Technology
Mohawk College of Applied Arts and Technology
Niagara College of Applied Arts and Technology
Northern College of Applied Arts and Technology
St. Clair College of Applied Arts and Technology
St. Lawrence College of Applied Arts and Technology
Sault College of Applied Arts and Technology
Seneca College of Applied Arts and Technology
Sheridan College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH STUDY SENT TO CAAT PRESIDENTS

OISE

ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

September, 2009

Dear College President,

Your college board of governors and board secretary will soon be asked to participate in a doctoral research project related to governance and leadership. Interest in this topic within contemporary higher education institutions is gaining importance in light of today's dynamic social, economic and political environments. However, there has been limited research in this area within community colleges in Ontario.

This research is planned to occur in September and October, 2009. Data will be collected using two separate survey instruments: one for current-serving board members within Ontario's community colleges; and a second survey directed to the board secretary at each college. The survey is electronically based for the participant's convenience and should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. An identification system, on the cover page of each survey, will be used to track responses received from governors and secretaries at each college. However, I as the sole researcher will be the only one who sees a participant's individual responses. This identification system will permit me to conduct follow-up interviews, if necessary, with up to six college board members and board secretaries to clarify trends revealed in the survey responses. Not every college will require interview participants.

This research is associated with my doctoral (PhD) thesis at the University of Toronto – Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. My thesis supervisor is Dr. Glen Jones, Ontario Research Chair in Postsecondary Education Policy and Measurement, University of Toronto (gjones@oise.utoronto.ca). The title of my thesis is *“Human resources programming and its impact on leadership within governing boards of Ontario community colleges”*. The use of the term “human resources programming” in this study relates to various processes used by community colleges and related agencies in their recruitment, selection, orientation, training and evaluation programs for members of a college's board of governors.



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The surveys are designed to explore board members' experiences as well as the governance practices at your community college in each of these programming areas. Respondents will also be asked for their opinions as to how such services should be provided to boards of governors in Ontario's community colleges. With the widespread participation of college board members and board secretaries at twenty-two colleges in the Province, it is anticipated that my research findings will shed light on how current board recruitment, selection, training and evaluation programs are perceived and utilized, as well as whether current initiatives in this area may be further developed to enhance leadership in governance in our community college system. It is my intention to publish and make presentations on this research endeavour and its significance to the field of governance in higher education.

Board members will be contacted through your college's board secretary. The board member will be able to respond directly, using the provided electronic survey link, to the research data base. Board secretaries will be contacted directly by the researcher via e-mail and will be provided with a separate link to their own survey which they can complete and submit directly to the research data base. Participation in these surveys is voluntary. Should a participant elect to withdraw from participation in this research study once having submitted survey data, they may contact me at the below-indicated telephone number or e-mail contact address to have their questionnaire stricken from the research data base.

I ask for your support in this research project by promoting the voluntary participation of members of your board and your board secretary in a timely manner when their surveys are delivered. Your support to contact board members with the assistance of the board secretary would also be appreciated. I look forward to responses from board members with a thirty day time frame and from board secretaries within two week period, following receipt of their respective surveys. If I require any specific assistance in regards to this research project, I trust that I may directly contact you in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,

Gary L. Gannon

Gary L. Gannon, *PhD Candidate*
Community College Leadership Cohort 3, Higher Education Program
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto
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APPENDIX C

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH STUDY SENT TO CAAT BOARD MEMBERS

OISE

ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

September, 2009

Dear Board Member,

You are invited to participate in a province-wide, academic research study dealing with the topic of board governance and leadership within Ontario's community colleges. All board members from all of the province's English community colleges will be invited to participate in this study. This project will explore the perceptions of boards of governors at, and the administrative practices in, Ontario community colleges of applied arts and technology as each relates to strengthening leadership in institutional governance in higher education.

Data will be collected using two separate survey instruments: one for current-serving board members within Ontario's community colleges; and a second survey directed to each board secretary at each college. The survey is electronically based for your convenience and should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. An identification key system, at the beginning of the survey, will be used to track responses received from governors and administrators at each college. However, my thesis supervisor and I will be the only ones to see your individual responses. This coding system will permit me to conduct follow-up interviews, if necessary, with a selected number of college board members or board secretaries to clarify trends revealed in the survey responses. If you are selected for an interview, I will contact you.

This research is associated with my doctoral (PhD) thesis at the University of Toronto – Ontario Institute of Studies in Education. My thesis supervisor is Dr. Glen Jones, Ontario Research Chair in Postsecondary Education Policy and Measurement, University of Toronto gjones@oise.utoronto.ca. The title of my thesis is *“Human resources programming and its impact on leadership within governing boards of Ontario community colleges”*. The use of the term “human resources programming” in this study relates to various processes used by community colleges and related agencies in their recruitment, selection, orientation, training and evaluation programs for members of a college's board of governors.



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The survey is designed to ask you about your experiences at your community college in each of these programming areas, as well as your views on how such services should be provided to board members in Ontario's community colleges. With the widespread participation among current board members at your college and among the other member institutions in the Province, it is anticipated that my research findings will shed light on the how current board recruitment, selection, training and evaluation programs are perceived and utilized, as well as whether current initiatives in this area may be further developed to enhance leadership in governance in our community college system.

Your participation is voluntary and you may elect to withdraw from participation in this research study by contacting me at the below indicated telephone number or e-mail contact address.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to your response to this electronic survey within the next thirty days. See the following link to access the survey.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=45oIS7vBUeN_2bmA3_2bDjkFoA_3d_3d

Sincerely,

Gary L Gannon

Gary L. Gannon, *PhD Candidate*
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APPENDIX D

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH STUDY SENT TO CAAT BOARD SECRETARIES

OISE

ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

September, 2009

Dear Board Secretary,

You are invited to participate in a province-wide, academic research study dealing with the topic of board governance and leadership within Ontario's community colleges. This study will explore the perceptions of boards of governors at, and the administrative practices in, Ontario community colleges of applied arts and technology as each relates to strengthening leadership in institutional governance in higher education.

Data will be collected using two separate survey instruments: one for current-serving board members within Ontario's community colleges; and a second survey directed to you as the board secretary at each college. You will be asked to help relay an introductory letter and the e-link to the first survey to all current members of your college's board of governors. The second survey is to be completed by you. It is electronically based for your convenience and should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. An identification key system, at the beginning of the survey, will be used to track responses received from governors and administrators at each college. However, I as the sole researcher will be the only one who sees your individual responses. This coding system will permit me to conduct follow-up interviews, if necessary, with a selected number of college board members or board secretaries to clarify trends revealed in the survey responses.

This research is associated with my doctoral (PhD) thesis at the University of Toronto – Ontario Institute of Studies in Education. My thesis supervisor is Dr. Glen Jones, Ontario Research Chair in Postsecondary Education Policy and Measurement, University of Toronto (gjones@oise.utoronto.ca). The title of my thesis is "*Human resources programming and its impact on leadership within governing boards of Ontario community colleges*". The use of the term "human resources programming" in this study relates to various processes used by community colleges and related agencies in their recruitment, selection, orientation, training and evaluation programs for members of a college's board of governors.



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The survey is designed to ask you about your experiences at your community college in each of these programming areas, as well as your views on how such services should be provided to boards of governors in Ontario's community colleges. With the widespread participation of you and your colleagues among current board secretaries at the other community colleges in the Province, it is anticipated that my research findings will shed light on the how current board recruitment, selection, training and evaluation programs are perceived and utilized, as well as whether current initiatives in this area may be further developed to enhance leadership in governance in our community college system.

Your participation is voluntary and you may elect to withdraw from participation in this research study by contacting me at the below indicated telephone number or e-mail contact address.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to your response to this electronic survey within the next two weeks. See the following link to access the survey.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=JtGm33RXK7ix_2b0STgiBDIQ_3d_3d

Sincerely,

Gary L. Gannon

Gary L. Gannon, *PhD Candidate*
Community College Leadership Cohort 3
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APPENDIX E

LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY SENT TO CAAT BOARD MEMBERS



ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

September, 2009

To the participants in this study,

You are invited to participate in an academic research study dealing with the topic of board governance and leadership within Ontario's community colleges. This study will explore the perceptions of boards of governors at, and the administrative practices in, Ontario community colleges of applied arts and technology as each relates to strengthening leadership in institutional governance in higher education.

The title of my thesis is "*Human resources programming and its impact on leadership within governing boards of Ontario community colleges*". The use of the term "human resources programming" in this study relates to various processes used by community colleges and related agencies in their recruitment, selection, orientation, training and evaluation programs for members of a college's board of governors.

This provincial study will be carried out in Ontario under the supervision of Dr. Glen Jones, PhD, Ontario Research Chair in Postsecondary Education Policy and Measurement, Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto. The data is being collected for the purposes of a PhD thesis and perhaps for subsequent research articles.

Data will be collected using two separate survey instruments: one for current-serving board members within Ontario's community colleges; and a second survey directed to the board secretary at each college. The survey is electronically based for your convenience and should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. An identification key system, at the beginning of the survey, will be used to track responses received from governors and administrators at each college. However, I as the sole researcher will be the only one who sees your individual responses. This tracking system will permit me to conduct follow-up interviews, if necessary, with a selected number of college board members or board secretaries to clarify trends revealed in the survey responses.

Your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. You may at any time refuse to answer a question or withdraw from the interview process. You may request that any information placed by you in the survey be eliminated from the project. At no time will value judgments will be placed on your responses nor will any evaluation be made of your effectiveness in your role at the college. Finally, you are free to ask any questions about the research and your involvement with it and may request a summary of the findings of the study.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Gary L. Gannon

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OISE/University of Toronto
Telephone (905)721-2000 ext. 2279
email: gary.gannon@durhamcollege.ca

Dr. Glen A. Jones

Professor, Theory and Policy Studies in Education
OISE/University of Toronto
Telephone: (416) 978-8292
email: gjones@oise.utoronto.ca

By clicking the “I Agree” button below, you are indicating that you are willing to participate in the study, you have received a copy of this letter, and you are fully aware of the conditions above.



I AGREE

_____.



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APPENDIX F

LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY SENT TO CAAT BOARD SECRETARIES

OISE

ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

September, 2009

To the participants in this study,

You are invited to participate in an academic research study dealing with the topic of board governance and leadership within Ontario's community colleges. This study will explore the perceptions of boards of governors at, and the administrative practices in, Ontario community colleges of applied arts and technology as each relates to strengthening leadership in institutional governance in higher education.

The title of my thesis is "*Human resources programming and its impact on leadership within governing boards of Ontario community colleges*". The use of the term "human resources programming" in this study relates to various processes used by community colleges and related agencies in their recruitment, selection, orientation, training and evaluation programs for members of a college's board of governors.

This provincial study will be carried out in Ontario under the supervision of Dr. Glen Jones, PhD, Ontario Research Chair in Postsecondary Education Policy and Measurement, Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto. The data is being collected for the purposes of a PhD thesis and perhaps for subsequent research articles.

Data will be collected using two separate survey instruments: one for current-serving board members within Ontario's community colleges; and a second survey directed to the board secretary at each college. The survey is electronically based for your convenience and should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. An identification key system, at the beginning of the survey, will be used to track responses received from governors and administrators at each college. However, I as the sole researcher will be the only one who sees your individual responses. This tracking system will permit me to conduct follow-up interviews, if necessary, with a selected number of college board members or board secretaries to clarify trends revealed in the survey responses.

Your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. You may at any time refuse to answer a question or withdraw from the interview process. You may request that any information placed by you in the survey be eliminated from the project. At no time will value judgments will be placed on your responses nor will any evaluation be made of your effectiveness in your role at the college. Finally, you are free to ask any questions about the research and your involvement with it and may request a summary of the findings of the study.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Gary L. Gannon

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Dr. Glen A. Jones

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Telephone: (416) 978-8292
email: gjones@oise.utoronto.ca

By clicking the “I Agree” button below, you are indicating that you are willing to participate in the study, you have received a copy of this letter, and you are fully aware of the conditions above.



I AGREE

_____.



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APPENDIX G

RESEARCH SURVEY FORMAT USED TO SOLICIT FEEDBACK FROM CAAT BOARDS OF GOVERNORS

The following questionnaire is part of a research study to explore the perceptions of boards of governors at, and the administrative practices in, Ontario community colleges of applied arts and technology as each relates to strengthening leadership in institutional governance in higher education.

The research is associated with a doctoral (PhD) thesis at the University of Toronto – Ontario Institute of Studies in Education. The thesis supervisor is Dr. Glen Jones, PhD, Ontario Research Chair in Postsecondary Education Policy and Measurement, University of Toronto gjones@oise.utoronto.ca. The title of the thesis is *“Human resources programming and its impact on leadership within governing boards of Ontario community colleges”*. The use of the term “human resources programming” in this study relates to various processes used by community colleges and related agencies in their recruitment, selection, orientation, training and evaluation programs for members of a college’s board of governors.

Your participation is voluntary and you may elect to withdraw from participation in this research study by contacting the researcher, Mr. Gary L. Gannon at (905)721-2000 ext. 2279 or gary.gannon@durhamcollege.ca. All survey responses are confidential and will be accessed only by the researcher in this study.

Institutional identification and Participant Categories

This opening section of the survey is designed to assist with the monitoring of rates of return from each provincial community college and to facilitate possible follow-up interviews with a selected number of board chairpersons or chairpersons of board nominating committees to discuss general trends seen in the collected survey data. There is no need for identifying yourself by name as a participant in this survey.

All survey responses will be submitted directly to the primary researcher for this study and such information will be kept in confidence by that same person.

<p>Check the community college that you are currently associated with as a board member.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Algonquin College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Cambrian College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Canadore College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Centennial College <input type="checkbox"/> Conestoga College Institute of Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Confederation College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Durham College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Fanshawe College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Fleming College <input type="checkbox"/> George Brown College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Georgian College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Humber College Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Lambton College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Loyalist College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Mohawk College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Niagara College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Northern College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> St. Clair College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> St. Lawrence College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Sault College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Seneca College of Applied Arts & Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Sheridan College Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning 	<p><i>Indicate your board membership “type” from the following categories</i></p> <p>(Check one only)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Board chair</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Board Nominating Committee chair</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Board member (volunteer)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Chief Executive Officer (President)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Staff-appointed board member</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Student-appointed representative</i>
--	---

Part 1 – Recruitment

These questions deal with processes linked to you learning about the board governance opportunity at a community college.

1. Which of the following recruitment methods was used to attract you to your current board position at the community college?
 - ☐ direct solicitation from a current college board member or representative
 - ☐ direct solicitation from the college CEO
 - ☐ direct solicitation from a personal contact not associated with the college
 - ☐ employer-supported, community volunteer involvement initiative
 - ☐ public notification (such as an ad in a newspaper)
 - ☐ self-initiated inquiry from you to the college
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →

2. In your opinion, which of the following methods of recruiting candidates for a college board of governors would be the most effective in your community?
 - ☐ direct solicitation from a current college board member or representative
 - ☐ direct solicitation from the college CEO
 - ☐ direct solicitation from a personal contact not associated with the college
 - ☐ employer-supported community volunteer involvement initiative
 - ☐ public notification (such as an ad in a newspaper)
 - ☐ self-initiated inquiry from you to the college
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →

3. Which of the following components of a board member's role were included in the recruitment messages you received about the governance vacancy at your community college? (**Check as many as appropriate**).
 - ☐ strategic direction setting
 - ☐ policy development
 - ☐ fiscal oversight of institutional assets
 - ☐ selection of, and guidance and direction to, the college CEO
 - ☐ community liaison
 - ☐ government advocacy
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →

4. Which of the following components of a board member's role **should** be included in the recruitment messages received by persons interested in governance vacancies at a community college? (**Check as many as appropriate**).
 - ☐ strategic direction setting
 - ☐ policy development
 - ☐ fiscal oversight of institutional assets
 - ☐ selection and supervision of the college CEO
 - ☐ community liaison
 - ☐ government advocacy
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →

5. Additional comments regarding recruitment of college board members. (**Please feel free to add your additional comments here**).

Part 2 - Selection

These questions deal with processes associated with your selection as a board member at a community college.

6. Which of the following was your first point of contact with the community college in response to your expression of interest in serving as a board member?
 - ☐ telephone call from a board representative
 - ☐ correspondence (letter or e-mail) from a board member
 - ☐ telephone call from the board secretary or a college staff representative
 - ☐ correspondence (letter or e-mail) from a college staff representative
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →

7. Indicate what materials you received from the college regarding the role and responsibilities of a board member. (**Check as many as appropriate**).
 - ☐ board role description
 - ☐ college strategic plan
 - ☐ college annual report(s)
 - ☐ board organization structure
 - ☐ college organization structure
 - ☐ outline of current college programs
 - ☐ did not receive any materials to assist in my decision making
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →

8. Indicate what materials a board member **should** receive from the college to assist in making an informed choice to assume the role of board member. (**Check as many as appropriate**).
 - ☐ board role description
 - ☐ college strategic plan
 - ☐ college annual report(s)
 - ☐ board organization structure
 - ☐ college organization structure
 - ☐ outline of current college programs
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →

9. What was the form of your first face-to-face contact with the college following your decision to seek a seat on the college board?
 - ☐ personal interview with a single board member
 - ☐ personal interview with one or more members of the board's nominating committee
 - ☐ personal interview with more than one board member at the same meeting
 - ☐ personal interview with a one or more board members and a college staff representative
 - ☐ personal interview with a single college staff representative
 - ☐ personal interview with more than one college staff representatives
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →

10. What form of face-to-face contact **should** be made first by the college with a person seeking a seat on the board?
 - ☐ personal interview with a single board member
 - ☐ personal interview with one or more members of the board's nominating committee
 - ☐ personal interview with more than one board member at the same meeting
 - ☐ personal interview with a one or more board members and a college staff representative
 - ☐ personal interview with a single college staff representative
 - ☐ personal interview with more than one college staff representatives
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →

11. What was the average estimated time taken by the college, from your first contact with them, to arrange a face-to-face meeting to discuss your interest in serving on the board of governors?
- ☐ less than 1 week
 - ☐ more than 1 week, but less than 2 weeks
 - ☐ more than 2 weeks, but less than 4 weeks
 - ☐ more than 4 weeks, but less than 3 months
 - ☐ more than 3 months
12. In your opinion, what is the desired time frame within which to contact a prospective candidate for a college board vacancy?
- ☐ less than 1 week
 - ☐ more than 1 week, but less than 2 weeks
 - ☐ more than 2 weeks, but less than 4 weeks
 - ☐ more than 4 weeks, but less than 3 months
 - ☐ more than 3 months
13. Did your experience in the selection process for a board vacancy include more than one personal interview with a college representative?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Comments →
14. Do you feel that more than one interview with a prospective candidate for a college board vacancy would be beneficial?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Comments →
15. Additional comments regarding selection of college board members. ***(Please feel free to add your additional comments here).***

Part 3 – Orientation, Training and Development
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These questions deal with processes associated with the orientation, training and development opportunities received in conjunction with your role as a board member at a community college.

16. Who was the sponsoring body for your orientation to the college board of governors? ***(Check as many as appropriate).***
- ☐ the community college on which I serve as a board member
 - ☐ Colleges Ontario (formerly ACCATO)
 - ☐ I did not receive an orientation (If answered, go to Q # 18)
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →

17. When did your orientation process occur in relation to you assuming your board responsibilities at the college?
- ☐ prior to the first full board meeting of my term of office
 - ☐ within the first 30 days of assuming my term of office
 - ☐ within the first 90 days of assuming my term of office
 - ☐ within the first 6 months of assuming my term of office
 - ☐ more than 6 months of assuming my term of office
18. When **should** an orientation process occur in relation to a new board member assuming their governance role at the college?
- ☐ prior to the first full board meeting of the term of office
 - ☐ within the first 30 days of assuming the term of office
 - ☐ within the first 90 days of assuming the term of office
 - ☐ within the first 6 months of assuming the term of office
 - ☐ more than 6 months of assuming the term of office
19. As a newly-recruited director, were you “paired” with a more experienced board member at the college in a form of mentoring program at the beginning of your governance experience?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
20. In your view, **should** a newly-recruited director be “paired” with a more experienced board member at the college in a form of mentoring program at the start of the governance experience?
- ☐ Yes, in all cases.
 - ☐ Yes, if the newly recruited member requests it.
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Comments →
21. To what degree do you believe that it is your responsibility as a board governor to promote an investment of time and resources to train and develop fellow board colleagues, as well as yourself, in the areas of governance and leadership associated with the college board?
- ☐ A very high degree of importance
 - ☐ A moderate degree of importance
 - ☐ Not my individual responsibility, but rather that of the board
 - ☐ Not the responsibility of me or the board, but of a third party such as the government
 - ☐ Comments →
22. In your experience as a board member, have you been exposed to board training and development activities related to your role at the college?
- ☐ Yes (***If answered, go to Question #23***)
 - ☐ No (***if answered, go to Question #24***)
23. What types of training and development sessions were offered to you as a college board member? (***Check as many as appropriate***)
- ☐ board governance
 - ☐ strategic direction setting
 - ☐ policy development
 - ☐ fiscal oversight of institutional assets
 - ☐ selection of, and guidance and direction to, the college CEO
 - ☐ community liaison
 - ☐ government advocacy
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →

24. In your opinion, **should** there be training and development opportunities for college board members?

- ☐ Yes (**if answered, go to Question 25**)
- ☐ No (**if answered, go to Question 29**)

25. What **should** be the focus of training and development sessions that are offered to college board member?

(Check as many as appropriate)

- ☐ board governance
- ☐ strategic direction setting
- ☐ policy development
- ☐ fiscal oversight of institutional assets
- ☐ selection of, and guidance and direction to, the college CEO
- ☐ community liaison
- ☐ government advocacy
- ☐ Other (please indicate) →

26. If you have participated in training and development activities for board members at the college, when have such opportunities be offered? **(Check as many as appropriate).**

- ☐ in conjunction with scheduled board meetings
- ☐ at times other than scheduled board meetings
- ☐ at times of regional or district meetings with neighbouring colleges
- ☐ through on-line delivery methods
- ☐ Other (please indicate) →

27. How and when **should** a college make training and development training activities available to board members? **(Check as many as appropriate).**

- ☐ in conjunction with scheduled board meetings
- ☐ at times other than scheduled board meetings
- ☐ at times of regional or district meetings with neighbouring colleges
- ☐ through on-line delivery methods
- ☐ Other (please indicate) →

28. In your experience, who has been the “provider” of training and development activities for the college board?

(Check as many as appropriate).

- ☐ college CEO and staff
- ☐ the College Compensation and Appointments Council
- ☐ Colleges Ontario (formerly ACCATO)
- ☐ private consultants
- ☐ Other (please indicate) →

29. Additional comments regarding orientation, training and development of college board members.
(Please feel free to add your additional comments here).

Part 4 – Board evaluation

This section focuses on measures taken by the college board to evaluate the individual governor's contributions as well as the collective board performance in the area of governance.

30. Does your college board engage in a formal evaluation of board performance?
- ☐ Yes *(if answered, go to Question 31)*
 - ☐ No *(if answered, go to Question 32)*
31. Is such an evaluation focused on the individual board member or the whole board?
- ☐ individual board member only
 - ☐ collective board only
 - ☐ both the individual board member and the whole board
32. In your opinion, **should** an evaluation focus on the individual board member or the whole board?
- ☐ individual board member only
 - ☐ whole board only
 - ☐ both the individual board member and the whole board
33. When was the most recent time that your board engaged in a formal evaluation of the performance of individual governors and/or the whole board?
- ☐ Within the last 12 months
 - ☐ Within the last 13-18 months
 - ☐ Within the last 19-24 months
 - ☐ More than 24 months ago
 - ☐ Not sure
34. How is the evaluation process conducted at your college?
- ☐ using a formal set of criteria outlined in printed form
 - ☐ using a narrative method compiled by the individual director
 - ☐ using an informal conversational feedback method between board members
 - ☐ using an external consultant or company
 - ☐ Not sure
 - ☐ Other *(please indicate)* →
35. What method for gathering board members' viewpoints on board performance **should** be used at the college?
- ☐ using a formal set of criteria outlined in printed form.
 - ☐ using a narrative method compiled by the individual director
 - ☐ using an informal conversational feedback method between board members
 - ☐ using an external consultant or company
 - ☐ Other *(please indicate)* →
36. Have you received individual feedback on your performance as a college board member?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
37. In your opinion, **should** individual board members receive performance feedback in their role as a college director?
- ☐ Yes *(If answered, go to Question #38)*
 - ☐ No *(if answered, go to Question #39)*

38. In your opinion, who **should** be the source of such performance feedback to the individual board member at the college?
- ☐ all board members through a confidential 360 degree process in summarized form to the board member
 - ☐ the board chairperson
 - ☐ the board vice chairperson
 - ☐ the board member's mentor
 - ☐ an external consultant or company
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →
39. Other comments related to your college governance experience in regards to board recruitment, selection, orientation, training, development and evaluation at your community college? (**Please feel free to add your additional comments here**).

Part 5 – Board member profile

*This final section of the research survey is designed to capture a contemporary profile of a community college board member. **It is completely voluntary and will be used only to illustrate the diversity among those currently serving as volunteer directors.***

40. Complete the following demographic items:

- (a) Age
- ☐ Under 30 years
 - ☐ 30-49 years
 - ☐ 50-69 years
 - ☐ 70 + years
- (b) Gender
- ☐ male ☐ female
- (c) Primary occupation (**check current status**)
- ☐ Education
 - ☐ Business
 - ☐ Professional Services
 - ☐ Other _____
 - ☐ Retired
- (d) Highest level of education achieved:
- ☐ Less than high school diploma
 - ☐ High school diploma
 - ☐ College diploma
 - ☐ University (Bachelor's degree)
 - ☐ University (Master's degree)
 - ☐ University (Doctoral degree)
 - ☐ Professional degree
 - ☐ Other _____

(e) Annual family income

- ☐ < \$50,000
- ☐ \$50,000 - \$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000 - \$149,999
- ☐ \$150,000 - \$199,999
- ☐ \$200,000 - \$249,999
- ☐ \$250,000 or more

(f) Years of service as a board member with ***your current community college.***

- ☐ < 1 year
- ☐ 1 - 3 years
- ☐ 4 – 6 years
- ☐ 7 – 9 years
- ☐ 10 -12 years
- ☐ 13 – 15 years
- ☐ 16 or more years

(g) Years of service as a board member with ***any other organization.***

- ☐ < 1 year
- ☐ 1 - 3 years
- ☐ 4 – 6 years
- ☐ 7 – 9 years
- ☐ 10 -12 years
- ☐ 13 – 15 years
- ☐ 16 or more years

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Survey results from all community colleges in Ontario will be analyzed to assist in my doctoral thesis concerning how human resources management processes available through individual community colleges and supporting organizations foster individual leadership among board members performing in a governance role. The defence of my thesis is anticipated later this year (2009).

APPENDIX H

RESEARCH SURVEY FORMAT USED TO SOLICIT FEEDBACK FROM CAAT BOARD SECRETARIES

The following questionnaire is part of a research study to explore the perceptions of boards of governors at, and the administrative practices in, Ontario community colleges of applied arts and technology as each relates to strengthening leadership in institutional governance in higher education.

The research is associated with a doctoral (PhD) thesis at the University of Toronto – Ontario Institute of Studies in Education. The thesis supervisor is Dr. Glen Jones, PhD, Ontario Research Chair in Postsecondary Education Policy and Measurement, University of Toronto giones@oise.utoronto.ca. The title of the thesis is *“Human resources programming and its impact on leadership within governing boards of Ontario community colleges”*. The use of the term “human resources programming” in this study relates to various processes used by community colleges and related agencies in their recruitment, selection, orientation, training and evaluation programs for members of a college’s board of governors.

Your participation is voluntary and you may elect to withdraw from participation in this research study by contacting the researcher, Mr. Gary L. Gannon at (905)721-2000 ext. 2279 or gary.gannon@durhamcollege.ca. All survey responses are confidential and will be accessed only by the researcher in this study.

Institutional identification and Participant Categories

This opening section of the survey is designed to assist with the monitoring of rates of return from each provincial community college. **There is no need for identifying you by name as a participant in this survey.**

All survey responses will be submitted directly to the primary researcher for this study and such information will be kept in confidence by that same person.

Check the community college that you are currently associated with as a board secretary.

- ☐ Algonquin College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ Cambrian College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ Canadore College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ Centennial College
- ☐ Conestoga College Institute of Technology
- ☐ Confederation College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ Durham College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ Fanshawe College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ Fleming College
- ☐ George Brown College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ Georgian College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ Humber College Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning
- ☐ Lambton College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ Loyalist College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ Mohawk College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ Niagara College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ Northern College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ St. Clair College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ St. Lawrence College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ Sault College of Applied Arts & Technology
- ☐ Seneca College of Applied Arts & Technology

<input type="checkbox"/> Sheridan College Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning

Part 1 - Recruitment

These questions deal with processes linked to the recruitment of candidates for board vacancies at a community college.

25. Which of the following recruitment methods is used to attract interested individuals to a vacancy on the board of governors at your community college? **(Check as many as applicable).**

- ☐ direct solicitation from a current college board member
- ☐ direct solicitation from the college CEO
- ☐ direct solicitation from a personal contact not associated with the college
- ☐ employer-supported community volunteer involvement initiative
- ☐ public notification by the college (such as an ad in a newspaper)
- ☐ self-initiated inquiry from an interested community member to the college
- ☐ Other (please indicate) →

26. In your opinion, which of the following methods for recruiting candidates for a college board of governors would be the most effective in your community?

- ☐ direct solicitation by a current college board member
- ☐ direct solicitation from the college CEO
- ☐ direct solicitation by a personal contact not associated with the college
- ☐ employer-supported community volunteer involvement initiative
- ☐ public notification by the college (such as an ad in a newspaper)
- ☐ self-initiated inquiry from an interested community member to the college
- ☐ Other (please indicate) →

27. Which of the following components of a board member's role are included in the recruitment messages provided to interested parties concerning a governance vacancy at your community college?

- ☐ strategic direction setting
- ☐ policy development
- ☐ fiscal oversight of institutional assets
- ☐ selection of, and guidance and direction to, the college CEO
- ☐ community liaison
- ☐ government advocacy
- ☐ Other (please indicate) →

28. Which of the following role components **should** be included in the recruitment information your college provides to interested parties concerning a governance opportunity at your institution?

- ☐ strategic direction setting
- ☐ policy development
- ☐ fiscal oversight of institutional assets
- ☐ selection and supervision of the college CEO
- ☐ community liaison
- ☐ government advocacy
- ☐ Other (please indicate) →

29. Does your college have a policy on board member recruitment?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other (please indicate) →

30. Additional comments regarding recruitment of college board members. (***Please feel free to add your additional comments here.***)

Part 2 – Selection

These questions deal with processes used by your college in association with the selection of individuals for vacancies on the board of governors.

31. Does your college have a policy on how board members are selected?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other (please indicate) →

8. Indicate what materials from the college you provide to assist the candidate in their decision making to assume the role of board member.

- ☐ board role description
- ☐ college strategic plan
- ☐ college annual report(s)
- ☐ board organization structure
- ☐ college organization structure
- ☐ outline of current college programs
- ☐ do not send any materials to assist in candidate's decision making
- ☐ Other (please indicate) →

9. In your opinion, what materials ***should*** a board member receive from the college to assist in making an informed choice to assume the role of board member? (***Check as many as applicable.***)

- ☐ board role description
- ☐ college strategic plan
- ☐ college annual report(s)
- ☐ board organization structure
- ☐ college organization structure
- ☐ Outline of current college programs
- ☐ Other (please indicate) →

10. In your experience, is a face-to-face meeting arranged with the prospective candidate for a board vacancy at your community college?

- ☐ Yes (***if answered, go to Question #11***)
- ☐ No (***if answered, go to Question #12***)

11. What is the most commonly used form of face-to-face contact, for selection purposes, between the college and a person who is interested in serving as a board member?
- ☐ personal interview with a single board member
 - ☐ personal interview with one or more members of the board's nominating committee
 - ☐ personal interview with more than one board member at the same meeting
 - ☐ personal interview with a one or more board members and a college staff representative
 - ☐ personal interview with a single college staff representative
 - ☐ personal interview with more than one college staff representatives
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →
12. In your opinion, what form of face-to-face contact **should** be used by the college with a person seeking a seat on the college board?
- ☐ personal interview with a single board member
 - ☐ personal interview with one or more members of the board's nominating committee
 - ☐ personal interview with more than one board member at the same meeting
 - ☐ personal interview with a one or more board members and a college staff representative
 - ☐ personal interview with a single college staff representative
 - ☐ personal interview with more than one college staff representatives
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →
13. What is the average estimated time taken for the college to make contact to discuss a candidate's interest in serving on the board of directors?
- ☐ less than 1 week
 - ☐ more than 1 week, but less than 2 weeks
 - ☐ more than 2 weeks, but less than 4 weeks
 - ☐ more than 4 weeks, but less than 3 months
 - ☐ more than 3 months
14. In your opinion, how long **should** it take, on average, for a college representative to contact a prospective candidate for a college board vacancy?
- ☐ less than 1 week
 - ☐ more than 1 week, but less than 2 weeks
 - ☐ more than 2 weeks, but less than 4 weeks
 - ☐ more than 4 weeks, but less than 3 months
 - ☐ more than 3 months
15. Does the experience at your college in the selection process for a board vacancy include more than one personal interview by a college representative with the prospective director?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Comments →
16. Do you feel that more than one interview with a prospective candidate for a college board vacancy is beneficial?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Comments →
17. Additional comments regarding selection of college board members. **(Please feel free to add your additional comments here).**

Part 3 – Orientation, Training and Development

18. Does your college have a formal policy on board orientation?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Comments →
19. Who is involved in providing an orientation to new board members at your college? (**Check as many as appropriate**).
- ☐ one or more community college representatives
 - ☐ Colleges Ontario (formerly ACCATO)
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →
20. When does the orientation process occur in relation to new members being appointed to the college board? (**Check as many as appropriate if more than one choice indicated in Question 19**).
- ☐ prior to the first full board meeting
 - ☐ within the first 30 days of assuming board role
 - ☐ within the first 90 days of assuming board role
 - ☐ within the first 6 months of assuming board role
 - ☐ more than 6 months of assuming board role
21. When **should** an orientation process occur in relation to a new board member assuming their governance role at the college?
- ☐ prior to the first full board meeting of board role
 - ☐ within the first 30 days of assuming board role
 - ☐ within the first 90 days of assuming board role
 - ☐ within the first 6 months of assuming board role
 - ☐ more than 6 months of assuming board role
22. For the newly recruited board member, is there a “pairing” process with a more experienced board member at the college to serve in a mentoring capacity from the beginning of the governance experience?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
23. In your view, **should** a newly recruited board member be “paired” with a more experienced board member at the college in a form of mentoring program at the start of the governance experience?
- ☐ Yes, in all cases.
 - ☐ Yes, if the newly recruited member requests it.
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Comments →
24. Does your college have a formal policy on board training and development?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Comments →

25. In your experience as a board secretary, how many training and development activities have been offered for your board of directors in the last 12 months?
- ☐ No activities have occurred
 - ☐ 1-3 events
 - ☐ 4 or more events
26. What types of training and development sessions have been offered to the college's board members within the last twenty-four months? **(Check as many as applicable).**
- ☐ Strategic direction setting
 - ☐ Policy development
 - ☐ Fiscal oversight of institutional assets
 - ☐ Selection of, and guidance and direction to, the college CEO
 - ☐ Community liaison
 - ☐ Government advocacy
 - ☐ None of the above
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →
27. In your opinion, what types of training and development sessions **should** be offered to college board member?
- ☐ Strategic direction setting
 - ☐ Policy development
 - ☐ Fiscal oversight of institutional assets
 - ☐ Selection of, and guidance and direction to, the college CEO
 - ☐ Community liaison
 - ☐ Government advocacy
 - ☐ None of the above
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →
28. In your experience as board secretary, when have training and development activities at the college been offered to board members? **(Check as many as applicable).**
- ☐ In conjunction with scheduled board meetings
 - ☐ At times other than scheduled board meetings
 - ☐ At times of regional or district meetings with neighbouring colleges
 - ☐ Through on-line delivery methods
 - ☐ Never been offered
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →
29. How and when **should** a college make training and development training activities available to board members? **(Check as many as applicable).**
- ☐ in conjunction with scheduled board meetings
 - ☐ at times other than scheduled board meetings
 - ☐ at times of regional or district meetings with neighbouring colleges
 - ☐ through on-line delivery methods
 - ☐ should not be offered
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →
30. Additional comments regarding the orientation, training and development of college board members. **(Please feel free to add your additional comments here).**

Part 4 – Board evaluation

31. Does your college have a policy on the formal evaluation of board performance?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Comments →
32. If your college evaluates board performance, is such an evaluation focused on the individual board member and/or the whole board?
- ☐ individual board member only
 - ☐ whole board only
 - ☐ both the individual board member and the whole board
33. Has your board engaged in a formal evaluation of board performance within the last 12 months?
- ☐ Yes (*if answered, go to Question 34*)
 - ☐ No (*if answered, go to Question 35*)
34. How is the evaluation process conducted at your college?
- ☐ using a formal set of criteria outlined in printed format
 - ☐ using a narrative method compiled by the individual director
 - ☐ using an informal conversational feedback method between board members
 - ☐ using an external consultant or company
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →
35. What method for gathering board members' viewpoints on board performance **should** be used at the college?
- ☐ using a formal set of criteria outlined in printed format
 - ☐ using a narrative method compiled by the individual director
 - ☐ using an informal conversational feedback method between board members
 - ☐ using an external consultant or company
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →
36. In your opinion, **should** individual board members receive performance feedback on their role as a college director?
- ☐ Yes (*if answered, go to Question #37*)
 - ☐ No (*if answered, go to Question #38*)
37. In your opinion, who **should** be the source of such performance feedback to the individual board member at the college?
- ☐ all board members through a confidential 360 degree process in summarized form to the board member
 - ☐ the board chairperson
 - ☐ the board vice chairperson
 - ☐ the board member's mentor
 - ☐ an external consultant
 - ☐ Other (please indicate) →
- Is there a record kept by the college of the performance review conducted on a board member?
- ☐ Yes (*if answered, go to Question #39*)
 - ☐ No (*if answered, go to Question #40*)

38. Who is the custodian of the completed performance reviews for college board members?
- ☐ board secretary
 - ☐ the board chairperson
 - ☐ the board member's mentor
 - ☐ Other (please indicate)
39. Other comments related to your experiences in regards to board recruitment, selection, orientation, training, development and evaluation at your community college? **(Please feel free to add your additional comments here).**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Survey results from all community colleges in Ontario will be analyzed to assist in my doctoral thesis concerning how human resources management processes available through individual community colleges and supporting organizations foster individual leadership among board members performing in a governance role. The defence of my thesis is anticipated later this year (2009).

APPENDIX I

1ST REMINDER LETTER TO CAAT BOARD MEMBERS TO COMPLETE THE RESEARCH SURVEY DOCUMENT

OISE

ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

October 29, 2009

Dear Board Member,

On September 24, 2009, you were invited to participate in a province-wide, academic research study dealing with the topic of board governance and leadership within Ontario's community colleges. This study is designed to explore the perceptions of boards of governors at, and the administrative practices in, Ontario community colleges of applied arts and technology as each relates to strengthening leadership in institutional governance in higher education.

Data is being collected using two separate survey instruments: one for you as a current-serving board member at an Ontario community college; and a second survey directed to the board secretary at each college. The survey is electronically based for your convenience and should take no more than 30 minutes to complete.

This research is associated with my doctoral (PhD) thesis at the University of Toronto – Ontario Institute of Studies in Education. My thesis supervisor is Dr. Glen Jones, Ontario Research Chair in Postsecondary Education Policy and Measurement, University of Toronto gjones@oise.utoronto.ca. The title of my thesis is “*Human resources programming and its impact on leadership within governing boards of Ontario community colleges*”.

Please take time today and complete the survey. If you have already completed it and submitted your responses, thank you for your participation. An improved response rate among participating community colleges will help with the analysis of trends in the range of activities used to support governors in their leadership role.



Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
252 Bloor Street West, 6th Floor
Toronto, ON, Canada M5S 1V6

www.oise.utoronto.ca/tps

Thank you for your consideration of this reminder. Use the following link to access the board member survey.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=45oIS7vBUeN_2bmA3_2bDjkFoA_3d_3d

Sincerely,

Gary L. Gannon

Gary L. Gannon, *PhD Candidate*
Community College Leadership, Cohort 3
Higher Education Program
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto
gary.gannon@durhamcollege.ca
 (905)721-2000 ext. 2279



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APPENDIX J

2nd REMINDER LETTER TO CAAT BOARD MEMBERS TO COMPLETE THE RESEARCH SURVEY DOCUMENT

OISE

ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

November 16, 2009

Dear Board Member,

On September 24, 2009, you were invited to participate in a province-wide, academic research study dealing with the topic of board governance and leadership within Ontario's community colleges. A reminder letter dated October 29, 2009 was also sent to you to help promote wider participation among governing board members. This study is designed to explore the perceptions of boards of governors at, and the administrative practices in, Ontario community colleges of applied arts and technology as each relates to strengthening leadership in institutional governance in higher education.

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Please take time **today** to complete the survey. The survey period will close on **November 24, 2009**. If you have already completed your survey and submitted your responses, thank you for your participation. An improved response rate among current board members will help with the analysis of trends in programming and activities used to support college governors in their leadership role.



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APPENDIX K

1ST REMINDER LETTER TO CAAT BOARD SECRETARIES TO COMPLETE THE RESEARCH SURVEY DOCUMENT

OISE

ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

October 29, 2009

Dear Board Secretary,

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Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to your response to this electronic survey within the next two weeks. See the following link to access the survey.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=JtGm33RXK7ix_2b0STgiBDIQ_3d_3d

Sincerely,

Gary L. Gannon

Gary L. Gannon, *PhD Candidate*
Community College Leadership Cohort 3
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APPENDIX L

2nd REMINDER LETTER TO CAAT BOARD SECRETARIES TO COMPLETE THE RESEARCH SURVEY DOCUMENT

OISE

ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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APPENDIX M

REQUEST TO CAAT PRESIDENTS TO ENCOURAGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS TO PARTICIPATE IN A TELEPHONE INTERVIEW AS A FOLLOW-UP TO RESEACH SURVEY

OISE

ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

_____, 2010

Dear College President,

I wish to thank you for your support of the current research project related to board governance and leadership. As a follow-up to the initial survey phase, a board member from your college will soon be asked to participate in a one-to-one interview in conjunction with this research effort. Six board members have been selected from those colleges that participated in the survey phase of this study.

Only one individual on your board will be approached for this one-to-one interview. They have been chosen because of expressed opinions and perspectives that reflected, or challenged, trends in the overall research findings. Based on their feedback in the survey, I believe an opportunity to explore the board member's views in more detail would be beneficial in understanding the preliminary research findings.

The interview is planned to occur in October or November, 2009. The interview will help in the data analysis based on two separate survey instruments used in this study: one for current-serving board members within Ontario's community colleges; and a second survey directed to each board secretary at each college. The interview will be conducted in person or by telephone at a mutually-agreed-to time and location in the next thirty days. It should take approximately 45-60 minutes to complete. The board member will be given the option of having the interview tape recorded or captured by note taking according to his or her preference.

If tape recording is done, any recordings will be identified by a separate coding identifier that makes no reference to the board member's name or college affiliation on the electronic file. Only I as the researcher and my research supervisor will have access to the data.



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This research is associated with my doctoral (PhD) thesis at the University of Toronto – Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. My thesis supervisor is Dr. Glen Jones, Ontario Research Chair in Postsecondary Education Policy and Measurement, University of Toronto (gjones@oise.utoronto.ca). The title of my thesis is “*Human resources programming and its impact on leadership within governing boards of Ontario community colleges*”. The use of the term “human resources programming” in this study relates to various processes used by community colleges and related agencies in their recruitment, selection, orientation, training and evaluation programs for members of a college’s board of governors.

The interview is designed to ask the board member about their experiences at the community college in each of these programming areas, as well as their views on how such services should be provided to board members in Ontario’s community colleges. At no time will any value judgements be placed on their responses. With the participation of college board members in this follow-up interview, it is anticipated that my research findings will shed light on how current board recruitment, selection, training and evaluation programs are perceived and utilized, as well as whether current initiatives in this area may be further developed to enhance leadership in governance in our community college system.

Participation in this interview is voluntary and participants may elect to withdraw from participation in this research study by contacting me at the below indicated telephone number or e-mail contact address.

I ask for your support in this research project by encouraging the member of your board to participate in a timely manner when the contacted to arrange the interview. If you have any further questions regarding this matter, please contact me using the information provided below.

Sincerely,

Gary L. Gannon

Gary L. Gannon, PhD Candidate
Community College Leadership Cohort 3
Higher Education Program
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APPENDIX N

INVITATION LETTER TO CAAT BOARD MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN A TELEPHONE INTERVIEW AS A FOLLOW-UP TO RESEACH SURVEY

OISE

ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

_____._____ 2010

To the participants in this study,

You are invited to participate in a one-to-one interview associated with a province-wide, academic research study dealing with the topic of board governance and leadership within Ontario's community colleges. This study will explore the perceptions of boards of governors at, and the administrative practices in, Ontario community colleges of applied arts and technology as each relates to strengthening leadership in institutional governance in higher education. Interviewees have been identified based on their college's participation in this research study and that the board member's comments and expressed perspectives reflected, or challenged, trends in the research findings.

The title of my thesis is "*Human resources programming and its impact on leadership within governing boards of Ontario community colleges*". The use of the term "human resources programming" in this study relates to various processes used by community colleges and related agencies in their recruitment, selection, orientation, training and evaluation programs for members of a college's board of governors.

The interview is designed to ask you about your experiences at your community college in each of these programming areas, as well as your views on how such services should be provided to board members in Ontario's community colleges. Your interview feedback will assist in the interpretation of trends seen in the gathered survey data. This will help to shed light on the how current board recruitment, selection, training and evaluation programs are perceived and utilized, as well as whether current initiatives in this area may be further developed to enhance leadership in governance in our community college system. The interview is estimated to take 45 to 60 minutes.



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This provincial study will be carried out in Ontario under the supervision of Dr. Glen Jones, Ontario Research Chair in Postsecondary Education Policy and Measurement, Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto. The data is being collected for the purposes of a PhD thesis and perhaps for subsequent research articles. Your responses will be kept confidential throughout the research and in any publications.

Please note the following points to assist you with your decision to participate in this research study.

1. Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary and your refusal to participate is without penalty.
2. You may refuse to answer a question in the interview or withdraw from the research study at any time.
3. You may request that any information stated by you in the interview be eliminated from the project.
4. At no time will value judgments be placed on your responses nor will any evaluation be made of your effectiveness in your role at the college.
5. You will be asked to identify yourself only by the college and your board role.
6. While data will be collected from individual colleges, all such information will be aggregated over all colleges which participated in the survey. Any comments provided by you in the interview will be identified, in any report dealing with this research, by a generic reference to a board role only and not directly attributed to the college with which you are affiliated in your present governance capacity.
7. Interview recordings, if permitted by you or notes from the interview will be numerical coded and secured in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office. Any tape recorded interviews, transcription of tape recorded interviews and interview notes will be destroyed after 5 years.
8. You will have an opportunity to review the transcript within 30 days of the interview to confirm the accuracy of your comments and to allow any additions, amendments or deletions to the transcript document.
9. You may contact the Office of Research Ethics at ethics.review@utoronto.ca or 416-946-3273, if you have questions about your rights as a participant.
10. A summary of the research results will be made available to you upon request following the successful defense of the thesis.



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Thank you in advance for your participation.

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 in Education
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Dr. Glen A. Jones
 Professor, Theory and Policy Studies
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 Toronto, Ontario M5S 1V6
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 email gjones@oise.utoronto.ca

By signing below, you are indicating that you are willing to participate in the study, you have received a copy of this letter, and you are fully aware of the conditions above. A copy of this form shall be presented to the researcher prior to the start of the interview.

Name: _____ Community College: _____
 Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please initial if you would like a summary of the findings of the study upon completion: _____

Please initial if you agree to have your interview audio-taped: _____

Please print and keep a copy of the information letter and this form for your records.



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APPENDIX O

GUIDE FOR ONE-TO-ONE TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS WITH CAAT BOARD MEMBERS

Board representative's name: _____
College: _____
Contact phone number: () _____
Date: _____

Introduction

- Welcome _____. I want to thank you for your support in encouraging your board colleagues @ _____ in completing my survey used in Phase 1 of the data collection.
- This interview is part of my research in looking at how colleges utilize various HRM activities such as recruitment & selection; orientation and training; and performance feedback to support leadership and governance capacities within their boards.
- I will use the interview guide provided to you and will highlight certain questions that occurred to me in looking at the survey feedback from board members and board secretaries carried out in the Fall, 2009.
- I understand that I do / do not have your permission to tape this conversation for qualitative analysis?
- I also assume that you have seen the participant's consent form and agree to all its conditions as set out in the University's ethical standards protocol for such research? You do not need to return it to me, but simply keep it for your records.
- Thank you and let's proceed.

Leadership

1. What does leadership mean in the role of a community college board member at this point in time and in the foreseeable future?

Recruitment of board members

2. The survey results from this study revealed a (gap / consistency) between the experience of how board members were recruited and the perception of how they should be approached to serve on a community college board. Please comment on why such a (gap / consistency) exists based on your experience as a community college board governor. What current or alternative recruitment methods might serve to broaden the expertise and quality of board candidates to strengthen governance and leadership in community colleges?

- 2(a) In your view, why is there not more actual reliance on public means for recruitment of college directors or at least the perception that there should be more emphasis on public notification for board vacancies?
- 2(b) In recruitment messages, board members noted the role was described as emphasizing involvement in strategy planning, fiscal oversight and policy development for the college (*which I refer t as the “Big 3”*).

From your experience, why should colleges expand the description of board roles beyond the traditional “Big 3” – strategic planning, fiscal oversight and policy development?

- 2(c) In your experience, is the “leadership” aspect for a board member’s role receiving increasing emphasis through college board recruitment messages? Why or why not?
- 2(d) What current or alternative recruitment methods might serve to broaden the expertise and quality of board candidates to strengthen governance and leadership in community colleges?

Selection

3. The survey results from this study revealed a (gap / consistency) between the experience of how board members were selected by college and how they should be chosen for this leadership role. Please comment on why such a (gap / consistency) exists based on your experience as a community college board governor. What specific steps could community colleges take to enhance selection procedures for their boards?
- **There was much consistency in board experiences and expectations related to how they were selected to serve in a governance capacity. I would like to ask you about a few points that emerged from the survey.**
- 3(a) Why do board members like to use interviews with prospective candidates for governance vacancies at their colleges?
- 3(b) What specific steps could community colleges take to enhance selection procedures for their boards?

Orientation, Training & Development

Views expressed on the subject of orientation and training opportunities for college board members revealed a (gap / consistency) between the respondent's direct experience and how they thought such orientation and training opportunities should be offered to college governors.

4 (a) Why do you think such a (gap / consistency) exists?

4 (b) What specific steps could community colleges take to enhance orientation and training procedures for their boards?

60% of surveyed board members have participated in a mentoring relationship when they joined their college board, while 69% said all new board members should be paired with a more experienced board member and another 24% indicated this should be done if asked by the newly recruited volunteer.

4(a) In your opinion, what value does a mentoring program afford a new board member in the areas of leadership and governance at a community college?

Read all as intro to the next question:

In the survey, board members were asked to what degree do you believe that it is your responsibility as a board governor to promote an investment of time and resources to train and develop fellow board colleagues as well as yourself, in the areas of governance and leadership associated with the college board?

It was noted in the survey responses that 50% (21) a very high degree of importance; 29% (12) a moderate degree of importance; 21% (9) no my individual responsibility but rather that of the board; and 2% (1) not the responsibility of the board or me but of a 3rd party such as government.

These responses may be seen as a positive sign of commitment felt by surveyed board members in terms of them assuming responsibility to promote an investment in time and resources to train and develop fellow board colleagues as well as themselves in the areas of governance and leadership.

4 (b) How is this explained from your vantage point? (e.g. perception of the individual's responsibility to promote T&D resources and activities)

- 4(c) In the survey, there was also a question that asked “What should be the focus of training and development sessions that are offered to board members?”

It was noted:

- 100% (42) board governance; 91% (38) strategic planning; 78% fiscal oversight of financial assets; 74% (31) policy development; 62% (26) government advocacy; 50% (21) CEO selection; 50% (21) community liaison.
- If we interpret this question as a board member’s preference for training, some categories showed a greater preference that perhaps was part of the board members experience to date, (e.g. strategic planning (91% preferred v. 75% who experienced it); fiscal oversight (78% preferred v. 56% who experienced it). ***But let’s look at some other role areas where the gap between experience and preference was seen: policy development (74% v. 38%), government advocacy (62% v. 38%); and community liaison (50% v. 25%).***

- Q. What do you believe may be causing an interest in these “other” training topics for boards? (e.g. may it be simply not a ‘gap’ in such training topics, but a desire for more training in these areas?)

- 4(d) In the survey, it asked participants “What types of training and development sessions have been offered within the last 24 months?”

It was noted:

- 100% (14) strategic planning; **64% (9) government advocacy**; 50% (7) fiscal oversight; 43% (6) policy development; and 36% (5) each for community liaison and selection of CEO.

- Q. In your opinion, why has training in government advocacy become an important focal area for board training and development?

- Q. In your opinion, how may such training contribute to the board member’s role in leadership and governance?

- 4(e) What specific steps could community colleges take to enhance orientation and training procedures for their boards?

Board evaluation

- 5(a)** As a board member, what benefits are associated with placing formal emphasis on evaluating the contributions of a board member in their assigned governance role?
- 5(b)** How would such a formal process enhance “leadership” in a board member’s role performance? What, if any, risks may be associated with such an approach?
- 6 (a)** What other recommendations would you make to improve the ability of community college board members to enhance their leadership capacity?
- 6 (b)** Who should take responsibility for making such changes on a college-specific and/or system-wide basis?

Wrap-up

- 7** Do you have any additional points you wish to make at this time regarding this research project or your own views as a board member in a higher education setting?

Closing

- *Thank you very much for taking the time to speak with me on these governance matters.*
- *Do you have any questions of me at this time?*
- *Your input will be most helpful in further analysis of the current trends and practices in promoting advances in leadership and governance practices within our community college system.*
- *Good-bye.*

Time expired _____ min.

APPENDIX P

PROFILE OF SURVEYED MEMBERS OF ONTARIO COMMUNITY COLLEGES (CAAT) BOARDS OF GOVERNORS

Fig. P.1

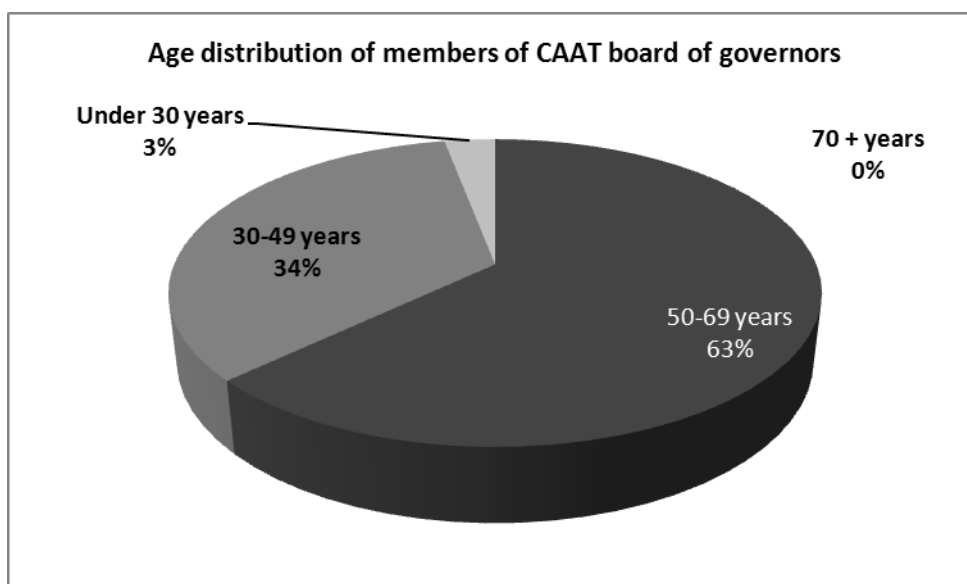


Fig. P.2

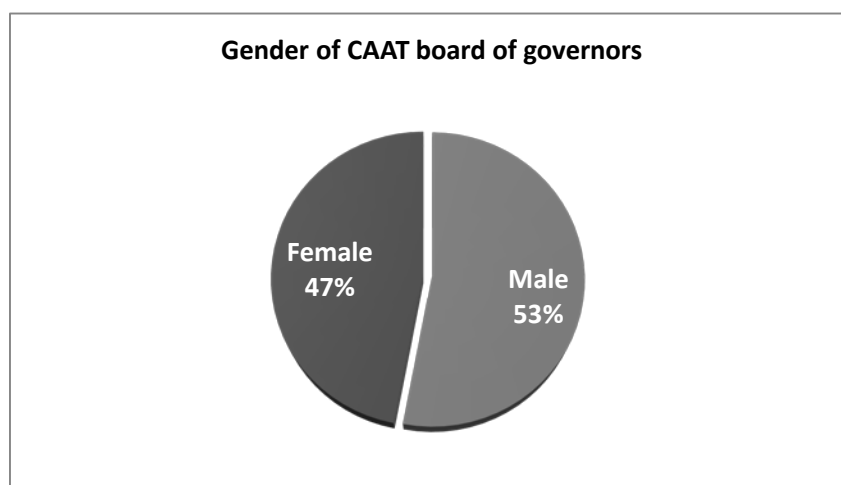


Fig. P.3

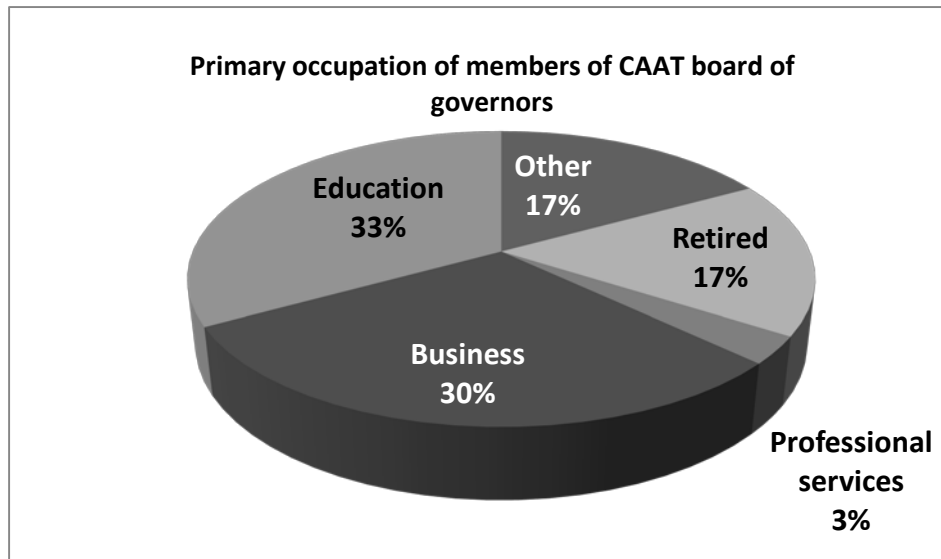


Fig. P.4

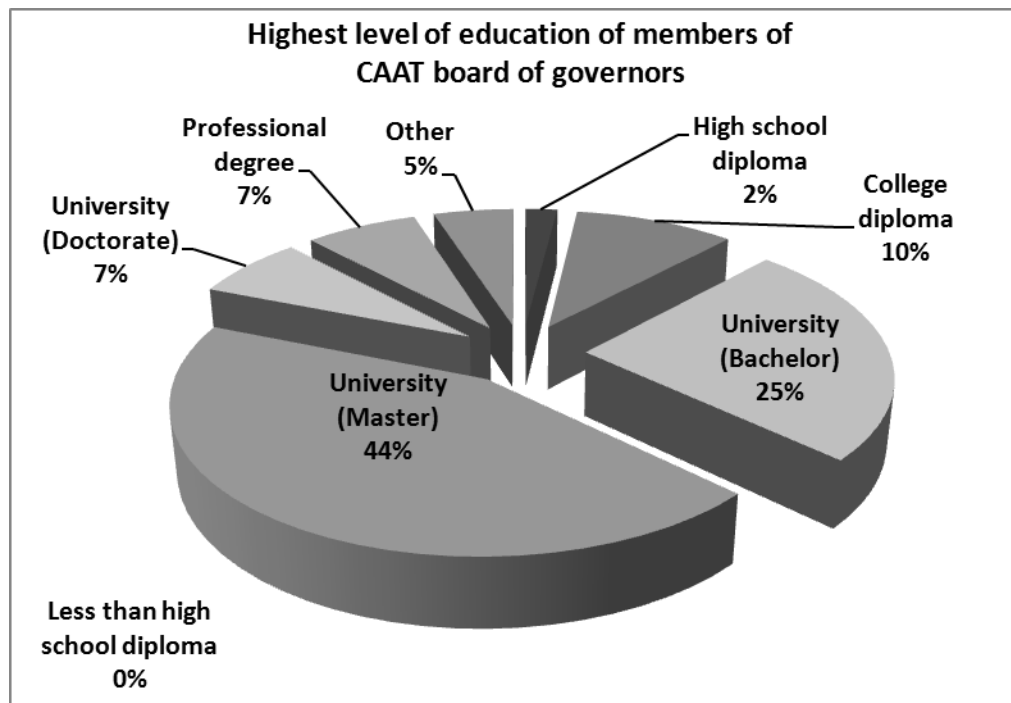


Fig. P.5

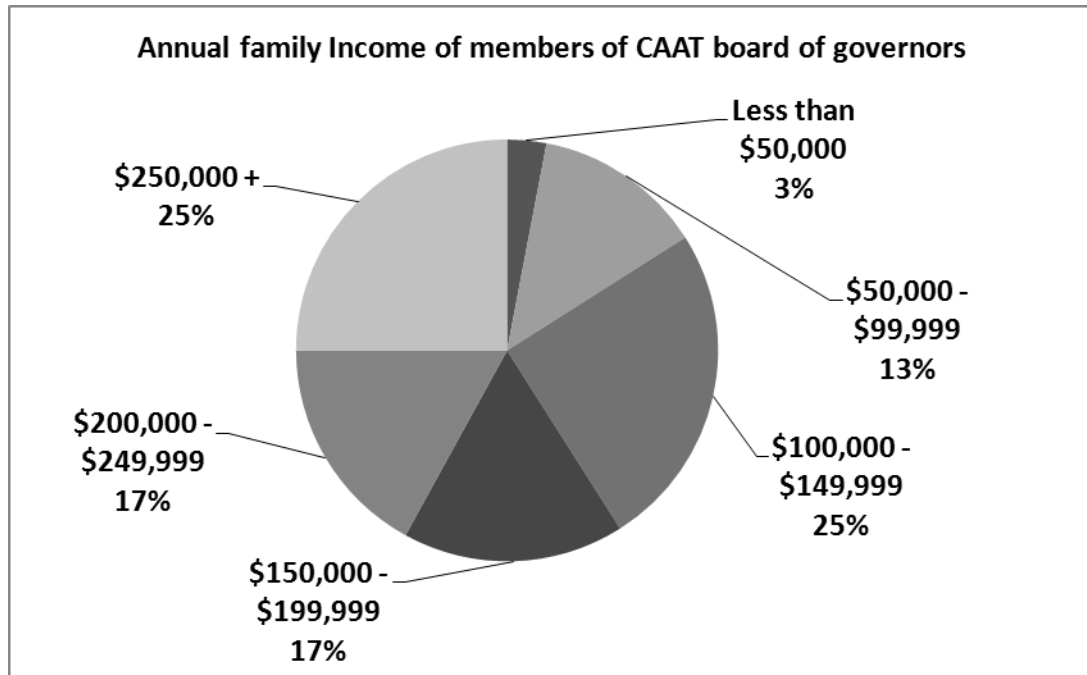


Fig. P.6

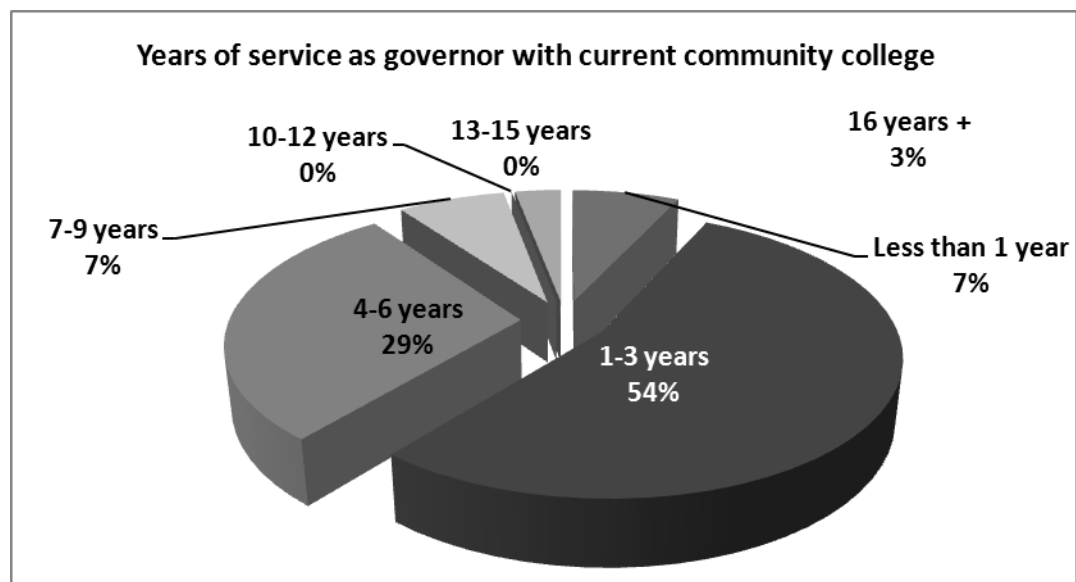


Fig. P.7

