

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF
NON-INSTRUCTIONAL APPLICATIONS OF THE
LET ME LEARN PROCESS®

by
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A Research Study

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
Procedures and Evaluation in Research
of
The Educational Leadership Department
at
Rowan University
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May 3, 2007

ABSTRACT

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Master of Arts in Higher Education

The intention of this study was to explore non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn Process® of nine individuals who held leadership positions at Rowan University in Glassboro, NJ. The study examined recurring themes that may warrant further research. Data were collected via in-person interviews. The interview schedule consisted of seven questions and the researcher encouraged each participant to share specific examples and personal stories regarding his/her first-hand use of the Let Me Learn Process® outside the classroom. The researcher identified common themes among participants included use with teamwork, collaboration and communication. Data analysis also suggested a positive correlation between exposure to the Let Me Learn Process® and applications in family and personal life, especially use with a spouse, child, or grandchild. In addition, nearly all participants discussed the connection between the Let Me Learn Process® to self-reflection and self-worth. In regards to the application to supervisory or managerial tasks, there emerged negligible statistical significance.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many thanks go to my friends and colleagues Debbi, Denise and Georgette who endured my unrelenting angst throughout the learning process. Thank you for your patience, understanding, and kind words.

A heart-felt thank you to my husband, Dave, for supporting me through many weekends and evenings dedicated to my studies. I appreciate your understanding, encouragement, and willingness to nuke frozen dinners without complaint.

My gratitude goes to Dr. Christine Johnston for all her support. I truly appreciate your responsiveness to my frequent, detailed questions and willingness to share information and resources throughout this process. I also appreciate your words of encouragement.

Finally, I give many thanks to Dr. Burton Sisco, who read numerous drafts with gusto and gently guided me towards this final work which I am delighted to submit.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Research Problem

The Let Me Learn Process® is rooted in the primary and secondary education setting as a holistic approach to student-centered learning, providing a hands-on guide for teachers and school practitioners to implement interactive, cooperative learning in the classroom (Johnston, 1996; Johnston, 1998; Johnston & Johnston, 1998). The literature reveals similar student-centered applications are taking hold within higher education institutions as well. In exploring non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn Process®, the emerging research in intentional team building (Marcellino, 2005, 2000; Pearle & Head, 2002; Newell J., Dahm, Harvey, & Newell H., 2004) and professional development (Johnston & Johnston, 1998) demonstrates potential for broader-reaching applications, yet the research is significantly lacking. Speculative applications of the Let Me Learn Process® in both professional and personal life are being introduced anecdotally throughout the field (Campbell, 2007; Hersh, 2007; Grahm, 2007). Although the unsubstantiated evidence is noteworthy, more research is needed to explore the common themes of non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn Process® and identify fruitful topics for further research.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn Process® which may have been discussed anecdotally, yet not formally

introduced in the literature. The study investigated applications of the Let Me Learn Process® in the professional and personal lives of individuals who hold leadership positions at Rowan University and have previously completed the Learning Connections Inventory (LCI) and a subsequent awareness workshop.

Significance of the Study

This exploratory study examined the speculative applications of the Let Me Learn Process®, those discussed informally amongst inner circles of colleagues and friends, identifying recurring themes researchers may wish to study in more depth. The findings of this study may provide insight for future research into applications in the workplace, home life, and recreation.

Assumptions and Limitations

This qualitative study was limited to an available population of 154 individuals who hold leadership positions at Rowan University, completed the Learning Connections Inventory (LCI), and have participated in some form of Let Me Learn Process® awareness. Although attention was given to prepare a comprehensive list of individuals who met the above criteria, the purposeful sample of nine participants was selected to provide content-rich information. Participation in the study was voluntary. Findings of the study were limited to responses to semi-structured interview questions conducted in person with the researcher. The study was conducted under limited time constraints to meet the requirements for the Procedures and Evaluation in Research 3-credit course. It was assumed that participants were candid regarding their personal and professional applications of the Let Me Learn Process®. Rowan University's teaching-centered

culture and philosophy toward the Let Me Learn Process®, in addition to researcher perspective, may have demonstrated potential bias in the findings.

Operational Definitions

1. Bridge Learner: Individual who uses each learning pattern as needed, typically serves as interpreter, moderator or peacemaker. Approximately 1 in 50 individuals.
2. Dynamic Learner: Individual with one or two use-first learning patterns, most common learning behavior.
3. Forge Learning Pattern: To intentionally push forward or accelerate use of learning pattern when called upon by a situation.
4. Interactive Learning Model (ILM): Theoretical framework of the Let Me Learn Process® based on research conducted in multiple intelligences, brain science, and cognitive science; portrays the interaction of cognition, conation, and affectation mental processes.
5. Learning Connections Inventory (LCI): A statistically valid self-report instrument, with 28 Likert-scale items and 3 open-ended questions, which measures the degree to which an individual uses or avoids a learning pattern.
6. Learning Pattern: Unique pattern of predicted behavior formed by mental processes indicating individual's preference for assimilating information and behavioral patterns.
 - a. Confluent: Learning pattern that prefers uniqueness, imaginative ideas, and unconventional approaches.

- b. Precision: Learning pattern that prefers detailed information and accuracy.
- c. Sequence: Learning pattern that prefers organization and clear, step-by-step directions.
- d. Technical: Learning pattern that prefers hands-on discovery and time to work alone figuring things out.

7. Learning Pattern Preference

- a. Avoid Learning Pattern: Score of 7-16 on the LCI, individual avoids using this learning pattern if at all possible.
- b. Use-as-needed Learning Pattern: Score of 17-25 on the LCI, individual uses this learning pattern when necessary.
- c. Use-first or Leading Learning Pattern: Score of 26-35 on the LCI, individual uses this learning pattern first and most naturally.

8. Let Me Learn Process®: The process of self-awareness that reveals the interaction of learning patterns and tools for how to use them with intention.

9. Rowan Leader: Individual who holds a leadership position at Rowan University, such as a center director or division head, classified under employee class A1 (out-of-unit manager) or F1 (senior faculty).

10. Strong Willed Learner: Individual with three or more use-first learning patterns, typically serve as their own team, preferring to work alone.

Approximately 1 in 10 individuals.

11. Tether Learning Pattern: To intentionally hold back or restrict use of use-first learning pattern when called upon by a situation.

Research Questions

This study explores the following research questions:

1. What are the recurring themes of non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn Process® that are being discussed anecdotally?
2. What non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn process may be of interest for future research?

Overview of the Report

Chapter two provides a frame of reference, discussing the assessment of literature applicable to the study. This chapter describes a brief history of the Let Me Learn Process® and pertinent studies of instructional applications in primary and secondary education, intentional team building in higher education, and non-instructional applications.

Chapter three outlines the methodology of the study including a clear description of the context, population and sample selection and composition, and data collection instrument and validation. This chapter also describes the procedure used to gather and analyze data and the protection of human subjects in accordance with federal law.

Chapter four presents analysis of the study findings within the context of the research questions discussed in chapter one. This chapter also includes a profile of the study participants, statistical information, and relevant summarizing tables.

Chapter five summarizes the major findings of the study, interprets the findings to the literature review presented in chapter two, and discusses the extent to which the research questions were answered. This chapter also provides conclusions and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Brief History of Let Me Learn

The Let Me Learn Process® was designed to help individuals identify who they are as learners and to use this awareness with intention (Johnston, 1998). Johnston (1996) attributes the Interactive Learning Model (ILM) as the theoretical basis of the Let Me Learn Process®. The ILM, based on research conducted in multiple intelligences, brain science, and cognitive science portrays the interaction of cognition (I know), conation (I act), and affectation (I feel) mental processes. Researchers observed that these three mental processes formed unique patterns of predicted behavior within each learner including Sequence, Precision, Technical reasoning, and Confluence.

Table 1.1 describes the basic interaction of each pattern. The sequential pattern identifies the need for clear directions and the desire to complete activities step-by-step from beginning to end without interruption. The precise pattern identifies the need for information and facts. Precise learners take detailed notes and ask many questions. The technical pattern identifies the need for hand-on discovery and an inclination to work alone figuring things out. The confluent pattern identifies the need for uniqueness, including imaginative ideas and unconventional approaches. Confluent learners are not afraid to take risks, fail and start again. Each pattern exists in each learner to some degree and contributes to his or her unique learning combination (Johnston, 1996, 1998).

Table 1.1

Characteristics of Use-first Learning Pattern

Learning Pattern	How I think	How I do things	How I feel	What I might say
Sequential	I organize information. I mentally categorize data. I break tasks down into steps.	I make lists. I organize. I plan first, <i>then</i> act.	I thrive on consistency and dependability. I need things to be tidy and organized. I feel frustrated when the game plan keeps changing. I feel frustrated when I'm rushed.	Could I see an example? I need more time to double-check my work. Could we review those directions? A place for everything and everything in its place. What are my priorities?
Precise	I research information. I ask <i>lots</i> of questions. I always want to know more.	I challenge statements and ideas that I doubt. I prove I am right. I document my research and findings. I write things down.	I thrive on knowledge. I feel good when I am correct. I feel frustrated when incorrect information is accepted as valid. I feel frustrated when people do not share information.	I need more information. Let me write up the answer to that. I'm currently reading a book. . . Did you know that . . . Actually . . .
Technical	I seek concrete relevance – what does this mean in the real world? I only want as much information as I need – nothing extraneous. How does this work?	I get my hands on it. I tinker. I solve the problem. <i>I do!</i>	I enjoy knowing how things work. I feel self sufficient. I feel frustrated when the task has no real world relevance. I do not feel the need to share my thoughts.	I can do it myself! Let me <i>show</i> you how . . . I don't want to read a book about it, I want to <i>do</i> it! How can I <i>fix</i> this? I could use a little space . . .
Confluent	I think outside the box. I brainstorm. I make obscure connections. Unique ideas.	I take risks. I am not afraid to fail. I try new things. I might start things and not finish them. I will start a task first – <i>then</i> ask for directions.	I enjoy improvisation. I feel comfortable with failure. I feel frustrated by people who are not open to new ideas. I feel frustrated by repetition.	Why do we have to do it that way! Can we try this? Let's bend the rules. I have an idea . . . I have another idea . . .

Adapted from Learning Connections Resources & Let Me Learn, Inc. Proceedings of the 2007 Let Me Learn Conference in Higher Education, January 7-9, 2007, Philadelphia, PA. Copyright © 2001, Let Me Learn, Inc.

An individual's distinct learning combination is measured by the Learning Connections Inventory (LCI). This statistically valid self-report instrument, with 28 Likert-scale items and 3 open-ended questions, measures the degree to which an individual uses or avoids a learning pattern. The scores are categorized into ranges including avoid (7-16), use as needed (17-25), and use first (26-35). "It is the mixture of these interactive patterns – all acting simultaneously within the blink of an eye – that results in our learning" (Johnston, 1998, p. 31). For instance, Figure 1.1 describes an individual with patterns of use-first sequence and precision and use-as-needed technical reasoning and confluence.

Figure 1.1

Sample Dynamic LCI pattern

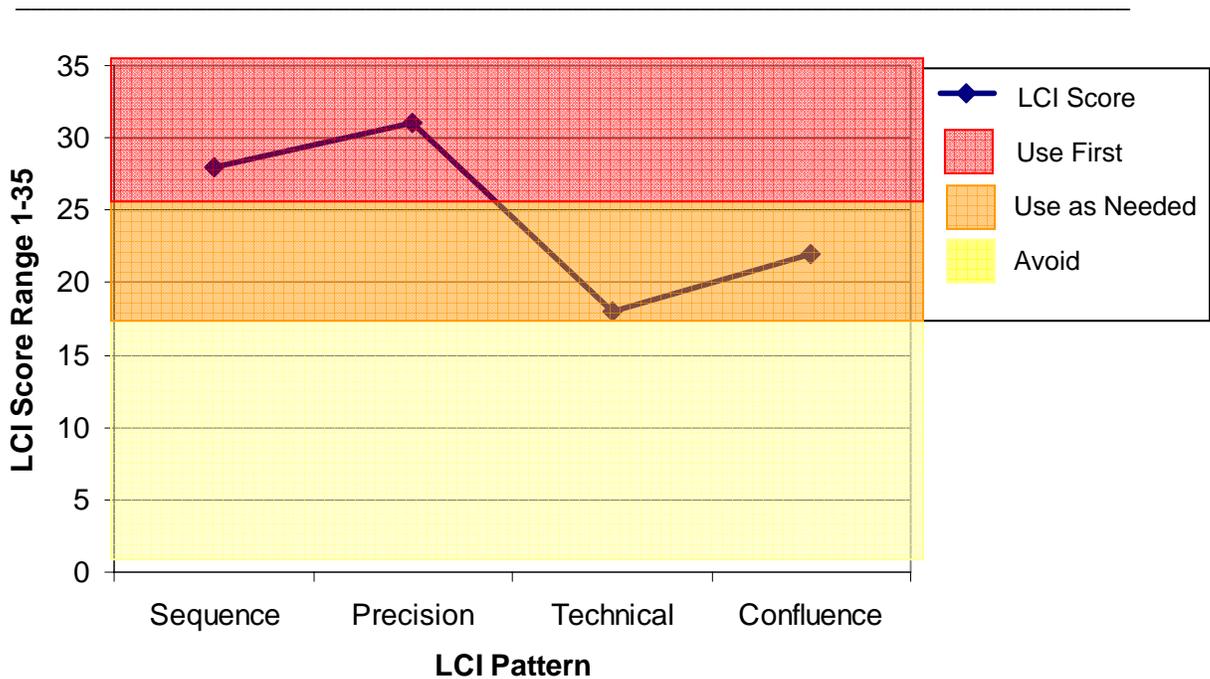


Figure 1.1. Sample dynamic LCI pattern indicating use first (26-35) patterns sequence and precision and use-as-needed (17-25) patterns technical and confluence.

Adapted from online LCI results. Personal communication, February 21, 2006.

By the time a child enters school at age 5 he or she has established a unique learning pattern which is not likely to deviate significantly into the adult years. With some effort, an individual may learn to tether or forge a pattern temporarily, but the drive can not be maintained indefinitely (Johnston, 1996, 1997b).

Instructional Application in Primary and Secondary Education

The Let Me Learn Process® introduced a student-centered learning approach primarily in the elementary and secondary school environment in the 1990s. Johnston's (1998, 1996) foundational works *Unlocking the Will to Learn* and *Let Me Learn* present a hands-on guide for teacher and school practitioners to implement interactive, cooperative learning in the classroom. She discusses the need to put the learner "center stage," acknowledging that the teacher has held this role throughout the history of schooling. Consequently, the cycle of teacher-directed learning is perpetuated as students who are a product of schooling, and typically flourished in a school environment, then become teachers themselves.

An individual who candidly discusses her struggle with schooling, Johnston (1998) writes:

It is very important for us to understand that children learn apart from school. In fact, when children first enter school, they have already spent the first 5 years of their lives using their natural learning patterns. We receive these experienced learners into our schools, and then we attempt to form them into students who can function in the school setting successfully. (Johnston, 1998, p. 8)

A review of the literature suggests awareness and understanding of a student's preferred learning patterns, via the LCI, leads teacher and student to a more learner-

centered approach (Johnston, 1997a; Johnston & Johnston, 1998; Nickels, 2002). For instance, Nickels (2002) found that students within his world geography class at Shawnee Mission East High School who mirrored his learning patterns earned better grades than those with opposite learning preferences. Nickels reported when he made intentional changes to assignments to meet different learning patterns, there were “strong positive results” with some. He noted mixed results regarding efforts to assist specific students “expand their learning style reliances,” yet indicated signs of improvement in many cases. Nickels concludes, “It is a valuable tool for understanding students’ and teachers’ learning strategies and pointing the way to both modify instruction and amplify students’ scope of strategies available” (Nickels, 2002, ¶4).

In addition, an intensive Let Me Learn Process® staff development program conducted with six elementary school teachers over a 16-week period found that increasing a teacher’s awareness of his/her learning patterns in comparison to those of the students, may result in “(1) an increase in the use of alternative teaching methods; (2) an increase in tolerance of students’ varied learning behaviours; and (3) an increase in both teacher and students’ willingness to work on teaching-learning strategies which facilitate student success” (Johnston & Johnston, 1998, p. 43). In addition to measured success in applying a student-centered approach in the classroom, anecdotal comments were observed regarding the professional growth of the participating teachers and removal of the “state of semi-isolation” among the professional staff. Although more extensive research is necessary, Johnston and Johnston (1998) discuss the potential long-term impact of the Let Me Learn Process® on staff development.

The outcomes of the study . . . strongly make the case for staff development which is job-embedded and steeped in practical application . . . Focusing on how the learner learns proved to be a powerful means of bringing about an enduring invigoration of the teacher. (Johnston & Johnston, 1998, p. 44)

Intentional Team Building in Higher Education

Initial research exploring the use of the Let Me Learn Process® on team building within an educational environment has found indications of increased student success (Marcellino, 2005, 2000; Pearle & Head, 2002; Newell J., Dahm, Harvey, & Newell H., 2004).

Marcellino (2005, 2000) suggests the Let Me Learn Process® is an effective tool to expedite assignment of team roles and hasten team identity. Conducted with graduate students throughout a 15-week course within an MBA program at Adelphi University, 14 teams comprised of 4-5 participants were intentionally formed to comprise a balance of individuals who represented each of the four learning patterns. Individuals who avoided a pattern were paired with someone who led with the same pattern to ensure each learning pattern was represented across teams. By suggesting team roles in alignment with leading learning patterns, such as a sequential learner becoming the team organizer and scheduler, shared leadership was demonstrated rather than one designated team leader in each of the 14 teams studied. Marcellino concludes,

The LCI engaged adult learners in developing self-awareness and a beginning awareness about team members in regard to their learning patterns. The application of a learning instrument that focuses on learning pattern theory may help management and educational professionals increase their team learning skills

by working through their differences. It is conceivable that the application of the LCI may be widened to other disciplines as well and might also be applied at worksites. (Marcellino, 2005, p. 204)

Newell J., Dahm, Harvey, and Newell H. (2004) found undergraduate students who participated in intentional team-building within the Junior/Senior Clinics throughout a 15-week course in the College of Engineering at Rowan University, experienced increased academic success. Similar to Marcellino (2005, 2000), each team was intentionally formed based on obtaining a balance of learning patterns. Newell et al. (2004) noted limitations to designing balanced teams, as only one student avoided the technical pattern. It is also prudent to highlight an individual who leads with the technical pattern is likely to prefer working on his/her own, limit communication with other team members, and demonstrate a resistance to writing; all attributes the course wished to address. Due to the likelihood of this imbalance, participants were counseled on the barriers presented by the strong preferences for the technical learning pattern.

An overall increase in student use of writing was observed in addition to faculty observation that no team experienced “crippling team dynamic issues,” whereas semesters prior at least one team failing to meet its goal was attributed to poor team dynamics. Researchers conclude,

From these data, it appears that combining an awareness of their own learning styles and those of their teammates with a continual written dialogue focused on identifying barriers to success and identifying priorities resulted in increased student success measured in terms of both individual and team performance. (Newell et al., 2004, p. 320)

Pearle and Head (2002) reported mixed results in the study of intentional team building in the freshman and Sophomore Clinics throughout a 15-week course in the College of Engineering at Rowan University. Like Marcellino (2005, 2000) and Newell et al. (2004), teams were intentionally formed to maximize individual and collective use of learning patterns. Of the 220 participants, teams of four students consisting of a different leading learning pattern were constructed. Like Newell et al. (2004), Pearle and Head (2002) noted an unbalance of technical and precise learning patterns given the engineering discipline. Data from exit surveys indicate 68.8% of freshman responded that their team was successful or highly successful, whereas 48.8% of sophomore students, who had expected to self-select teams, indicated a successful rating. Anecdotal data revealed extraneous variables may have impacted study results such as complaint from one team not intentionally constructed due to late class registration, negative response from strong-willed learners who were grouped into a separate team, and no consideration for gender when designing teams resulting in unbalanced ratio of men to women.

Non-Instructional Applications of the Let Me Learn Process®

Although literature regarding the use of the Let Me Learn Process® with intentional team building gains momentum, the study of non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn Process® is significantly lacking. Anecdotal evidence regarding its use in both professional and personal life is evident, yet little research has been conducted in this area. Campbell (2007) discusses application of the Let Me Learn Process® for women functioning in a male-dominated production plant at DuPont Corporation. She notes women may be attracted to the field of engineering for different reasons than men,

and that recognizing differences in learning patterns may be the first step to improve working relationships. Campbell (2007) concludes “LML can make women more successful by helping them understand how their learning patterns may differ from the male-dominated culture where they work” (Campbell, 2007, p. 2). Hersh (2007) suggests the Let Me Learn Process® impacts leadership and supervisory skills within the Information Resources division of Rowan University, such as managing workload by assigning projects in alignment with use-first learning patterns, teaming staff with complimentary patterns, and recognizing when an assigned task will require staff member to forge or tether preferred learning patterns. Gram (2007) discusses the use of the Let Me Learn Process® in hiring personnel in the College of Fine Arts and Communication at Foothill College. He suggests determining the learning pattern combination that will best compliment the existing team of staff leads to a more successful hire. Although the anecdotal evidence is intriguing, more research is needed.

Summary of the Literature Review

The Let Me Learn Process® is rooted in the primary and secondary education setting as a holistic approach to student-centered learning, providing a hands-on guide for teacher and school practitioners to implement interactive, cooperative learning in the classroom. The literature reveals similar student-centered applications are taking hold within higher education institutions. In exploring non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn Process®, the emerging research in intentional team building and professional development demonstrates potential for broader-reaching applications, yet the research is significantly lacking. Speculative applications in both professional and personal life are being introduced anecdotally throughout the field. Although the

unsubstantiated evidence is noteworthy, more research is needed to explore the common themes of non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn Process® and identify fruitful topics for further research.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Context of the Study

The study was conducted at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. Rowan University, founded as a normal school in 1923, is a medium-sized, 4-year public university which enrolls nearly 10,000 full- and part-time students (Rowan University, 2007). The university meets the Carnegie classification of Master's (comprehensive) Colleges & Universities I (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2006). The Center for the Advancement of Learning was established in 2001, is directed by Dr. Christine Johnston and is located on Rowan University's main campus (Center for the Advancement of Learning, 2002). All Rowan faculty, staff and administrators have access to complete the Learning Connections Inventory (LCI) and participate in a variety of Let Me Learn Process® awareness programs at no or minimal cost. Beginning with the incoming class of 2010, all Rowan freshmen were administered the LCI during freshman orientation in conjunction with a University initiative to facilitate students' success in the classroom. Freshman students have the opportunity to understand their learning patterns, while parents and students are presented with strategies to maximize their learning potential (Rowan University, 2006).

Population and Sample Selection

The target population for this study was all individuals who (a) hold a leadership position, (b) completed the LCI, and (c) participated in some form of Let Me Learn

Process® awareness. The available population was all individuals who met the above criteria at Rowan University. A list of 154 individuals was obtained from the Human Resources department noting Rowan leaders, identified as all individuals who hold a leadership position at Rowan University. The list of Rowan leaders was then reviewed by the director of the Center for the Advancement of Learning, and a purposeful sample of individuals was identified who met the above criteria. The researcher then made a random selection, choosing names out of a hat, and performed sampling with replacement to construct the final sample of study participants. A total sample of nine participants was selected to provide the most comprehensive, yet manageable, amount of data within the time constraints of the study.

Potential participants were contacted (Appendix B) via electronic and interoffice mail between March 26, 2007 and March 28, 2007. Volunteer participants were asked to respond to the researcher to schedule an interview at a time and place of convenience. All participants responded to the request to participate at the first communication. All interviews were conducted in person at the Rowan University main campus between March 28, 2007 and April 13, 2007. Interviews were audio taped with the participants' consent to ensure comments were recorded accurately and completely.

Instrumentation

The instrument (Appendix D) to explore non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn Process® consisted of seven items designed to facilitate in-depth discussion regarding participant's use of the Let Me Learn Process® outside of the classroom, in a collaborative or team environment, in a leadership capacity, and in personal and family life. The instrument was self-designed by the researcher to guide discussion of non-

instructional applications of the Let Me Learn Process® and was structured to collect data relevant to the research questions.

Following approval from the Institutional Review Board of Rowan University (Appendix A), the instrument was pilot tested with three individuals with the purpose of determining its validity and question interpretation. None of the individuals who participated in the pilot test reported any misinterpretation of the interview questions. To ensure the protection of human subjects in accordance with federal law, participants were assigned participant IDs (number assigned based on order of which they were selected randomly) for discussion of findings and researcher notes. All sessions were audio taped to ensure participant comment was recorded accurately and completely. The audio records were held in locked storage, not shared, published, nor reproduced in any way. Signed consent forms (Appendix C) noting these protections were collected prior to each interview.

Data Collection

Each study participant was asked to contact the researcher to make an interview appointment at a time of convenience. In-person interviews were conducted in the participant's personal office at the Rowan University main campus. Interviews ranged in length from 27 to 53 minutes, averaging 40 minutes. Each interview began with a five-minute introduction regarding the purpose of the study, signing the consent form, and acknowledging permission to audiotape the session. The researcher then asked pre-determined interview questions as noted in the interview schedule (Appendix D) and encouraged specific examples and personal stories regarding the participants' first-hand use of the Let Me Learn Process®. Based on the flow of the interview, the questions

may have been presented in a different order than what is noted on the interview schedule. The researcher recorded observations and transcribed notes within 12 hours of conducting each interview.

Data Analysis

In modeling analysis of qualitative data discussed by McMillan (2004), after summarizing the researcher's observations and transcripts of the interview into a written format, the researcher carefully examined the data for patterned regularities. The researcher identified code words, phrases, or observed behavior, that represented patterns or elements such as *provide others with what they need*, *understand myself*, *use with child*, and *use in meetings*. A total of 39 elements were identified, logged into an Excel spreadsheet, and counted by the frequency of participants in common. The elements were then organized into five categories including (a) family and community, (b) supervisory and managerial role, (c) personal reflection or insight, (d) teamwork, collaboration, or communication, and (e) other.

After summarizing the data, the researcher then looked for any suggestion of relationships among the definable elements, categories, and patterns that may indicate generalizations. Table 3.1 indicates how the researcher defined the significance of common elements in correlation to awareness of the Let Me Lean Process®.

Finally, the researcher synthesized the information and examined the data in regards to the research questions, drawing cautious inferences on the impact of the independent variables on the dependent variables. The independent variables in this study included holding a leadership position at Rowan University, completion of the LCI,

and participation in some form of Let Me Learn Process® awareness. The dependent variable was the non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn Process®.

Table 3.1

How Researcher Defined Relationship to Let Me Learn Process® (n = 9)

Frequency of Participants	%	Correlation to Let Me Learn Process®
9 to 8	78% or above	Strong
7 to 6	78% - 67%	Moderate
5 to 4	56% - 44%	Weak
3 or below	33% or below	Slight

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Profile of the Sample

Nine study participants were selected at random from a purposeful sample of individuals employed at Rowan University who (a) hold a leadership position, (b) completed the LCI, and (c) participated in some form of Let Me Learn Process® awareness. There were six females (67%) and three males (33%). The subjects were between the ages of 50 and 63, an average age of 59. The study participants averaged six years of awareness of the Let Me Learn Process®, all but one participant noted four or more years using the process. Eight of the nine participants were initially introduced to the Let Me Learn Process® within an academic or instructional context. Table 4.1 provides demographic data regarding the number of years an individual has had an awareness of the Let Me Learn Process®.

Table 4.1

Years of Awareness of Let Me Learn Process® (n = 9)

Number of Years	Frequency	%
1 to 2	1	11%
3 to 5	2	22%
6 to 9	5	56%
10 or more	1	11%

Analysis of the Data

Research Question 1: What are the recurring themes of non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn Process® that are being discussed anecdotally?

Overall, participants responded applications were used most prevalently within a team or collaborative setting, as is reflected in Table 4.2. Participants also indicated application within a family context, supervisory and managerial role, and personal reflection.

Table 4.2

Summary of Common Elements by Category and Frequency of Participants

Category	Total Elements	Frequency of Participants			
		8-9	6-7	4-5	3 or below
Family and Community	6	1	0	1	4
Supervisory and Managerial Role	8	0	2	0	6
Other	4	1	1	1	1
Personal Reflection or Insight	8	1	0	2	5
Teamwork/ Collaboration/ Communication	16	7	3	0	6

Table 4.3 demonstrates 100% of the participants indicated use of the Let Me Learn Process® to understand others, adjust style or method of communication to others, provide others with what they need, and facilitate effective communication. Eight of nine participants also discussed increased tolerance and respect for others. For instance, one participant revealed,

By understanding your learning patterns, and those you are interacting with, it allows you to adjust your delivery. Instead of asking them, ‘why don’t you get this,’ I can give them what they need to get it done. It is a language of communication; I am no longer scratching my head, wondering what happened, and blaming someone for not doing it right.

Table 4.3

Elements Identified by Category and Frequency of Participants (n = 9)

Category	Element	Frequency	%	Correlation
Family and Community	Use with child/ grandchild	8	89%	Strong
	Use with spouse/ life partner	5	56%	Weak
	Use at church	3	33%	Slight
	Use with parent	2	22%	Slight
	Use with friend	2	22%	Slight
Supervisory and Managerial Role	Encouraged others to take LCI	7	78%	Moderate
	Use with staff/ secretary/ subordinate	6	67%	Moderate
	Deliberate selection of team member	3	33%	Slight
	Change management/ change agent	3	33%	Slight
	Strategize	3	33%	Slight
	Shaped personal leadership style	2	22%	Slight
	Use with new employees	2	22%	Slight
	Delegation/ assign tasks	2	22%	Slight
Other	Use of patterns observed throughout interview	9	100%	Strong
	Participated in Let Me Learn Accelerated Certificate Program	6	67%	Moderate
	Compared to Myers-Briggs	5	56%	Weak
	Faculty Centers	2	22%	Slight
Personal Reflection or Insight	Understand myself, self-revealing	8	89%	Strong
	"Aha" transformational moment	5	56%	Weak
	Integration into every-day life	5	56%	Weak
	Internalize, internal reflection	3	33%	Slight
	Control myself, curb tendencies	3	33%	Slight
	"I'm not stupid"	2	22%	Slight
	Powerful personal connection	2	22%	Slight
Teamwork/ Collaboration/ Communication	Understand others	9	100%	Strong
	Adjust style or method of communication to others	9	100%	Strong
	Provide others with what they need	9	100%	Strong
	Facilitate effective communication	9	100%	Strong
	Use in meetings	9	100%	Strong
	Tolerance/ respect for others	8	89%	Strong
	Leverage strengths each team member brings to a group	8	89%	Strong
	Common, non-blaming language	7	78%	Moderate
	Resolve/ avoid conflict	7	78%	Moderate
	Use with committee/ board	6	67%	Moderate
	Use with colleague/ peer	3	33%	Slight
	Use with department	3	33%	Slight
	Caution about labeling, stereotyping, misuse of LML	2	22%	Slight
	Use of interpreter or mediator	2	22%	Slight
Decode behavior	2	22%	Slight	

Another participant contributed,

When I was a department chair I encouraged my entire department to take the LCI . . . we had a faculty member that was very precise and he was driving everybody insane because he needed to repeat everything three times and people would say, 'he's full of himself, he likes to hear his own voice.' After he got a 35 in precision we all understood he does that because that is who he is. It's not that he is enamored with himself, that is the way he processes information. Since then, I think people began to grow more tolerant of his need for repetition.

Eighty nine percent of participants also indicated the impact of the Let Me Learn Process® to leverage the strengths of each team member within a group. For instance, one participant discussed,

Although it was not done deliberately, each team member [on the committee] has a complementary pattern that we use to our advantage. We strategize based on our strengths. I focus on the big picture and strategy, the sequential person is a great scheduler, and is great at communicating because she will always be sure to follow up, the precise person is fantastic at research and getting us to all focus on its importance, and the bridge serves as a mediator and interpreter between all of us . . . I always look forward to going because we work well together and we get things done.

In addition, all of the participants noted use of the Let Me Learn Process® to facilitate meetings. For example, one participant indicated,

There are half a dozen people sitting around the table. By knowing and understanding what these people need, I have learned to develop more precise agendas that are laid out in terms of importance. If something really needs to get done it has got to go first. I have learned to verbalize . . . the expected outcome . . . because I need to provide the group with the sequence that we are going to have to go through, enough detail so that they know why we are doing this, and an end product to keep the confluent ones tethered . . .

Regarding application to family life, participants demonstrated a strong correlation (89%) to application of the Let Me Learn Process® with their children or

grand children. And over half of participants indicated its use with a spouse. One participant noted,

My wife has what I call *list-a-mania*. I have *list-a-phobia* . . . Something came up and she was running a list for me. A whole list of things and it was just too much. And I said, ‘Stop, would you do me a favor, tether your sequence for just a little while.’ That’s not an unusual exchange. Or she’ll say to me, ‘I’m having trouble with this, you know what my technical score is.’ She is not a hands-on person . . . She will say ‘you know what my technical score is, I need help with X or Y,’ so, it seriously gets used between us to help us understand each other better.

In addition, participants discussed a strong correlation (89%) to the Let Me Learn Process® and its self-revealing nature or *understanding myself*. One participant shared,

Looking back to my college experience . . . because I am not technical, there were times for me when it was hard to focus, shut my door, turn off the music, and focus on studying. I always loved studying with other people. Surprise! I really was able to decode myself as a learner; much of it was a revelation. I used to beat myself up over it. I was able to forgive myself.

Another participant revealed,

What is really important about this instrument, and the knowledge that it gives individuals is they have what you call an *Aha* moment like ‘that’s why I had trouble with math, that’s why I hate to read, that’s why I hate to write, that’s why it is hard for me. It is not that I am stupid, it is that I process information differently.’ You have the opportunity to take this and use it to change the way I process information. The self-awareness and self-esteem is really important about Let Me Learn. If you have been the right-brained kid in a left-brained educational system you have suffered.

Finally, a moderate correlation (78%) was demonstrated for the participants’ use of a common, non-blaming language and conflict resolution or avoidance. For instance, one participant discussed,

I have used Let Me Learn with my daughter. I did it the year after college that she moved back to live with me . . . We wrote out things that we tolerate and don’t tolerate and things that we can not change based on our patterns. We put it on the refrigerator not to get on each other’s nerves and have a good experience living together. It was awesome! . . . We understood when we did something it

wasn't to piss the other off, it was because that is who you are . . . For example, we divided the cleaning chores, and then I would complain about them not being done well. Then she would say, 'Mom, because you are very precise, done well for you means this. I am not as precise, done well for me means that . . .' That was a very interesting conversation. I can not impose my precision, my way of cleaning, on her. And she was right, it was a very good adult conversation.

Research Question 2: What non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn process may be of interest for future research?

All elements with a strong to moderate positive correlation to the Let Me Learn Process® were reviewed. The strongest relationship appeared to be in the area of teamwork, collaboration, and communication. There was also a significant positive correlation in its use in a family environment and personal reflection. The data indicates these common themes may benefit from further research.

Though the study participants each held leadership roles on campus, there was little positive correlation to typical supervisory or managerial tasks such as delegation of work, team assignments, change management, and strategic planning.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

This study researched the non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn Process®, of selected individuals who hold leadership positions at Rowan University in Glassboro, NJ. The study was designed to explore recurring themes that are being discussed anecdotally and identify applications that may warrant further research. The study participants were individuals who held a leadership position at Rowan, completed the LCI, and participated in some form of Let Me Learn Process® awareness.

In-person interviews were conducted with each participant in his or her personal office at the Rowan main campus. The interview schedule consisted of seven questions and the researcher encouraged each participant to share specific examples and personal stories regarding his/her first-hand use of the Let Me Learn Process® outside the classroom. Nine individuals were interviewed.

The researcher summarized interview observations and transcripts into a written format and carefully examined the data for patterned regularities. The researcher identified 39 common elements, organized them by theme, and determined the significance of the correlation to the Let Me Learn Process® by the frequency of occurrence among participants.

Discussion of Findings

The most common themes among participants included application to teamwork, collaboration and communication. Examples included understanding others, adjusting

method of communication as needed, facilitating effective communication, tolerance or respect for others, and leveraging the strength each team member brings to a group. This finding supports the emerging research in intentional team building (Marcellino, 2005, 2000; Pearle & Head, 2002; Newell J., Dahm, Harvey, & Newell H., 2004) and improved working relationships (Campbell, 2007).

The results of this study also suggested a positive correlation between exposure to the Let Me Learn Process® and applications in family and personal life. For instance, all participants noted use of the Let Me Learn Process® with a family member such as spouse, parent or sibling with eight of nine participants discussing use with a child or grandchild. In addition, nearly all participants discussed the connection between the Let Me Learn Process® to self-reflection and “understanding myself” which supports potential professional growth and staff development outcomes discussed by Johnston and Johnston (1998).

The study found no statistically significant relationship between awareness of the Let Me Learn Process® and application to supervisory or managerial tasks such as delegation of work, team assignments, change management, and strategic planning.

Conclusions

Although the Let Me Learn Process® began as a holistic approach to student-centered learning, the outcome of this study suggested themes of teamwork, collaboration, and communication were repeatedly applied outside of the traditional classroom experience and student-teacher relationship. Application was found to extend repeatedly into work, family, and personal life, specifically in areas where effective relationship-building and communication are central.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. Further studies should be conducted regarding the use of the Let Me Learn Process® and teamwork, teambuilding, and collaborative work to confirm the findings of this study.
2. A study could be conducted researching application of the Let Me Learn Process® to supervisory and managerial tasks to compare findings of this study.
3. This study should be replicated using a different population of participants outside of Rowan University to compare and contrast study findings.
4. An additional study could be conducted that focuses on family dynamics and the use of the Let Me Learn Process®, specifically use with spouse, child, and/or grandchild.
5. A historical analysis of the Let Me Learn Process® and its evolution may be constructed.
6. A study could be done comparing the attitudes of individuals and self-efficacy and application to the Let Me Learn Process®.
7. An analysis of the outcome of participation in the Let Me Learn Accelerated Certificate Program may be of interest.

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APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board Disposition Form

APPENDIX B

Request to Participate

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE

Dear Colleague,

I am conducting an exploratory study regarding non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn® process in fulfillment of the Procedures and Evaluation in Research course with Dr. Burton Sisco in the Educational Leadership department of Rowan University.

Your name has been selected as a potential study participant as you serve in a leadership capacity at Rowan University, completed the Learning Connections Inventory (LCI), and have participated in some form of awareness workshop regarding application of the Let Me Learn process.

It is my interest to conduct a one-hour personal interview at a time of your convenience between March 30, 2007 and April 13, 2007 to discuss application of the Let Me Learn process in your professional and personal life. Participation is voluntary and all details regarding the study participants will be held in confidence.

To arrange an interview appointment, please contact Susan Hersh at hersh@rowan.edu or extension 4481. I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan O. Hersh
Information Resources Training Services
Rowan University

APPENDIX C

Participant Consent Form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Dear Colleague,

I am conducting an exploratory study regarding non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn® process in fulfillment of the Procedures and Evaluation in Research course with Dr. Burton Sisco in the Educational Leadership department of Rowan University.

Your name has been selected as a study participant as you serve in a leadership capacity at Rowan University, completed the Learning Connections Inventory (LCI), and have participated in some form of awareness workshop regarding application of the Let Me Learn process.

By signing this consent form you grant permission to discuss the application of the Let Me Learn process in your professional and personal life. Participation is voluntary and all details regarding the study participants will be held in confidence. With your consent, this interview will be audio taped to ensure participant comment is captured accurately and completely. The recording will not be shared, published or reproduced in any way.

Please direct any questions regarding this study to Susan Hersh at hersh@rowan.edu or extension 4481.

Sincerely,

Susan O. Hersh
Information Resources Training Services
Rowan University

I give my consent to participate in the exploratory study regarding non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn® process.

Printed name

Signature

Date

APPENDIX D
Survey Instrument

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

I am conducting an exploratory study regarding non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn® process in fulfillment of the Procedures and Evaluation in Research course with Dr. Burton Sisco in the Educational Leadership department of Rowan University. I appreciate your candor in answering a series of 7 questions regarding your personal and professional applications of the Let Me Learn Process.

May I audiotape this interview to ensure your comments are captured accurately and completely? Yes _____ No _____

Date: ____ / ____ / 2007 Time: ____ : ____ am / pm

Interview location: _____

Observation of location: _____

1. How did you come to be involved with the Let Me Learn ® process?

2. What is your LCI pattern?

Sequence	Precision	Technical	Confluence
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3. Thinking back over the last few months, have you encountered a situation outside of the classroom from which you drew from your Let Me Learn experience? If so, please describe.

4. Please discuss any applications of the Let Me Learn process you have employed in your supervisory or leadership capacity at Rowan University.

5. How would you articulate the impact of the Let Me Learn process on your working in a collaborative or team environment?

6. Have you engaged in application of the Let Me Learn process in your personal or family life? If so, please elaborate.

7. Do you have any further thoughts you wish to share regarding the topic of non-instructional applications of the Let Me Learn process?