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EMOTIONS AND EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP: NARRATIVES FROM THE INSIDE

The future, whether we look from the perspective of school to work, school to learn, or from the tensions inherent in an ever-changing society, demands a rich complement of tools, skills, and strategies to support a high level of emotional literacy. (Bocchino, 1999, p. 9)

Introduction

One reason that many educational leaders are leaving the field may be related to the emotional price that they have had to pay to be successful in their work (Beatty, 2000). Some studies have pointed out that the stress levels of many professional educators have increased significantly in recent years and are a continuing focus of major concern (Goldstein, 1992; Romana & Wahlstrom, 2000; Seldin, 1991). Although theories and studies related to emotionality and "emotional intelligence" have been popularized in recent literature (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Beatty, 2000; Loader, 1997; Gardner, 1993; Goleman, 1995), they have yet to make an adequate impact on the valued knowledge base and skills needed for successful school leadership.

A few studies have looked at the relationship between emotionality and educational leadership. Beatty (2000), for example, examined the emotionality of educational leaders, looking deeply at the individual's philosophy of leadership and his/her experience of emotionality. Her findings bring strong support to the need for leaders to understand their emotional selves and how these insights shape their leadership behaviors and actions and foster strong collaborations and effective teams in schools (pp. 352–354). Other studies have unleashed new understanding about emotional intelligence in leadership and how it can contribute to the vitality and overall performance of an organization and how, by repressing emotions, good judgment can be negatively affected (Combs, Miser, & Whitaker, 1999; Fullan, 1997; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002).

In spite of these ideas, the emotional skills and competencies required are just beginning to be given the needed attention in educational research and in leadership preparation. In this article, we expand upon the recent studies related to emotional intelligence, and offer insights into how to build emotionally intelligent leaders and organizations.

Context for the Study

Although Goleman's1995 book, *Emotional Intelligence*, was perceived as "groundbreaking" upon its release, interest in emotional and social intelligence can be traced back to the work of E. L. Thorndike who suggested in 1920 that "social ability was an important component of intelligence" (Hedlund & Sternberg, 2000, p. 137). Since Thorndike's time, other researchers have pursued studies related to what has often been referred to as social intelligence, looking at interpersonal develop-

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ment, motivational training, and effective social functioning. This work has resulted in a proliferation of conceptual definitions about emotional intelligence (Hedlund & Sternberg, 2000). Emotional intelligence and emotional literacy are viewed in the literature and in practice as a set of abilities that involve the adaptive processing of emotions and the relevant information that one can apply toward solving personal and organizational problems (Cooper & Sawaf, 1996; Fullan, 1997; Gardner, 1993; Goleman, 1995; Goleman et al., 2002). These abilities suggest that individuals who are emotionally competent can accurately assess and express emotions in themselves and toward others, manage emotions well individually and in relationships, integrate emotions with other cognitive processes to solve problems, and develop accurate social perceptions of human and organizational behavior and respond accordingly (Goleman et al., 2002).

Recent works on emotional intelligence and the concept of emotional literacy offer a framework for inquiry into this aspect of leadership and provided the theoretical framework upon which this study was based. We were interested in understanding leadership emotionality as both an internal capacity and an external strategy—effectively applying both to the daily professional milieu in which one finds himself or herself as a leader. Although not entirely new, studies about dimensions of wellness for educational leaders that look at the integration of social, mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical well-being have become more visible in recent years and are linked to the concept of emotionality (Sackney, Noonan, & Miller, 2000). Administrators work an inordinate amount of time, which "leaves little time for personal fulfillment and personal wellness" (p. 46), which can in turn affect their performance. Leadership work in educational institutions has become more stressful and complex with multiple demands and complex relational dynamics influencing leadership behavior each day. How to support leaders through these turbulent times has grown in importance, and answers cannot ignore the emotional side of leadership (Bolman & Deal, 1995; Brock & Grady, 2002; Fullan, 1997; Linsky & Heifetz, 2002; Sergiovanni, 2000; Sernak, 1998). Moreover, studies that look not only at the emotional dimensions of stress, but at emotionality as a leadership attribute, may provide new opportunities in how to strengthen leadership practices and personal success (Fullan, 1997). Cooper and Sawaf (1996), for example, talk about "opportunity sensing" (p. 235) as having a place in the literature and providing alternative ways of understanding leadership. They see emotions as a "way to extend one's opportunity horizon" (p. 240), and believe emotional literacy can serve as an additional source of insight and understanding to guide leadership actions and behaviors. They lend support to the idea that leaders need to learn to acknowledge and value feelings—in themselves and others. In other words, emotional intelligence is the ability to sense, understand, and effectively apply the power and acumen of emotions as a source of human energy, information, connection, and influence (Cooper & Sawaf, 1996, p. xiii).

In sum, Goleman et al. (2002) and others have outlined emotional intelligence domains and associated competencies to include: (a) self awareness, (b) self-management, (c) social awareness, and (d) relation-

ship management (p. 39). These competencies are translated into dispositions and abilities, suggesting that leaders can acquire these competencies through intentional and direct learning. It also appears that these attributes have the potential to contribute to the feelings of wellness that support leadership. Thus, how leaders acquire and express this "constellation of understandings, skills, and strategies" (Bocchino, 1999, p. 11) and how these skills and dispositions can be nurtured and developed toward leadership awareness and understanding are the foci of this study.

Purpose of the Study

Inquiring more deeply into emotional intelligence theory and the leadership abilities associated with the concept of emotional literacy offers new insights into leadership competence and understanding. In this article we present perspectives of emotional intelligence and emotional literacy as derived through a study of leaders from public school, higher education, and policy arenas about their own sense of their emotional selves. Specifically, we present findings about the emotional experiences, emotional challenges, and strategies of these leaders, and how these emotional sets define their leadership styles and behaviors. Of particular interest is how leaders unite feelings, thoughts, and actions in ways that define their sense of competence as leaders. We close with a list of four recommendations for leadership preparation and development. The study's purpose was addressed through the following major research questions:

1. What are leaders' internal experiences of emotions on the job, and how do these feelings contribute to their sense of professional competence?

2. What are the strategies leaders use to work through the emotional rigors, demands, and expectations of their work and of their co-workers?

3. What are key recommendations for leadership preparation and development?

Research Design and Method

This article reflects a qualitative approach to understanding leadership and emotionality. For us, the research questions raised above suggested a design that would allow the investigators to probe with educational leaders events and situations that created particularly emotional responses and reactions from them. It would be important to compare and contrast this information among all study participants and to identify patterns, practices, and insights related to emotionality employed by these leaders. It would then be important to move toward developing a collective understanding of leadership and emotionality, the relationship of emotionality and leadership style, and ways to enhance the emotional literacy of educational leaders.

Toward these ends, a modified form of critical-incident analysis (C-IA), or personal story, was used to frame the study. The C-IA technique is an exploratory, qualitative method used to generate descriptive, self-reported data on human activity and behavior (Flanagan, 1954). In a sense, this technique is situated within the larger methodology known as narrative inquiry which is a research approach that allows the investigators to understand experience as "lived and told stories" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 1). Storytelling as a means of learning about leadership can provide rich insights into how and why leadership is exercised. As stated by Quong, Walker, and Bodycott (1999):

> Stories are seen as tools for understanding systems, structures, and processes. In a sense, they are artifacts, which provide a vehicle for exploring personal and professional understanding about both the generic and particular nature of organizations and leadership…Leadership stories hoard knowledge, influence, and understanding developed throughout an individual's personal and professional life. (pp. 442–443)

Preliminary Self-Study

The starting point for this study was our own inquiry into leadership and emotionality by sharing our own critical incidents or stories drawn from our experiences as educational leaders. We felt we needed to surface our own cognition about "emotionality" and create a language around which we could better shape our interview questions and engage with our participants. We anticipated that the topic and methodology may induce stress among our participants as we invited leaders to reveal personal stories and talk about sensitive, emotional issues from their practice. Thus, by building upon our own collaborative and respectful relationships as colleagues, we felt we could not only more openly discuss critical incidents that challenged us from our respective positions, but could better enter into an authentic social situation in which we could comfortably analyze and critique our stories and improve our own interview techniques and analysis with respect to emotionally charged data (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Finally, by engaging first with each other, we believed we could better experience how to sustain the kind of rapport necessary for the research relationships we intended to form with participants from the field. This personal narrative sharing and analysis supported and informed our research inquiry and methodology with our field-based participants.

The Field-Based Interviews and Critical Incidents

The six field-based leaders who served as respondents in the study were selected to represent gender and ethnic diversity as well as different leadership positions. We selected those who had served in a leadership role for at least five years in the position of school principal, career service director, higher education administrator, health educator, special education director, and political leader/secondary teacher. Critical inci-

dents were uncovered through two-hour, semi-structured interviews with the six participants, which enabled the open sharing and exposure of the personal stories and individual interpretation that each of our participants experienced. The critical incidents were collected through a narrative interview process at each leader's work site with follow-up telephone communication as needed. The interviews were conducted one-on-one and included a taped recounting of each of the narratives. Participants were also asked to read the transcripts and add, delete, or change the transcripts as they felt was necessary to better reflect their experiences. Each narrative began in response to the statement: "Recollect a particular experience that created a meaningful association between leadership and emotion for you" followed by additional questions and probes. As part of the interview process, the researchers asked questions to help cull out information related to the experiences of the participants. For example:

1. What kinds of feelings were exposed through the story and what provoked those feelings? Were there any particular emotional displays that the leader expressed at the time—private and/or public? How did that make him/her feel?

2. As each participant recalled this emotional time, what were some of the underlying reasons or particular aspects about the individual that may have caused him or her to feel and/or react the way he or she did at that time? Did this individual encounter any particular emotions or emotional displays on the part of the other person or persons? How did he or she respond?

3. How did and does the participant believe leaders should or shouldn't deal with emotions in the workplace such as those he or she experienced? How did he or she work through these feelings, and what are some of the strategies that were used to handle this situation or other similar ones that provoke much emotion in the leader and/or others? What is the leader's role in all this?

4. What words would describe the emotional and social culture of the participant's organization at that time? What challenged this person? Does he or she think there is a relationship between the leadership's sense of emotional well-being and that of other members in the organization? In what ways? How can leaders build and develop emotional competence to deal with such situations?

The tape-recorded data were transcribed and then analyzed in a group meeting by the three researchers to explore experiential narrative information as a resource for understanding emotionality. This led to more in-depth conversation about the actual experiences, the data generated, and the feelings associated with the critical incidents. A second purpose

for the analysis was to isolate patterns or themes within each of the stories and begin to inquire into how emotions informed our participants' identity and behavior as leaders and in relationships with those with whom they worked. We also sought to understand the strategies leaders used to work through these situations. Such an analysis provided a filter through which we could uncover additional themes and patterns in the data. Once the emergent themes were formed, we reread each story carefully, marking particular lines or phrases that were related to emergent themes. However, the analysis was not simply to identify the emotions and how they affected leadership, but to probe for deeper understanding about what the stories mean and what the narratives were telling us about leadership and emotionality.

Emergent Findings and Emergent Themes

In response to our critical incident analysis approach and the semi-structured interview questions that we used to probe more deeply the critical incidents of our field participants, a number of emotional feelings and various displays of those emotions emerged among our participants. We learned about the context and environments in which our leader-participants found themselves, as well as the particular and difficult challenges they faced that caused strong emotional responses. Participants also talked about strategies they used to "work through" these emotional challenges and how these experiences shaped their emotional behaviors in the future as leaders. They also revealed how these emotionally-charged experiences, upon reflection, allowed significant values and convictions about their leadership practice to emerge as they recounted their experiences. Through our interviews we began to hear that emotions were expressions of some deeper and conflicted feelings leaders experienced when their own sense of "good" or "right" was being challenged. What emerged, too, was understanding about how one's cultural upbringing and socialization, especially with respect to leadership development, influenced emotional feelings and expressions.

Based on our analysis of our interviews, four primary themes emerged: (a) crossing emotional boundaries, (b) value-driven emotions and leadership tools, (c) adaptive emotional capacity, and (d) subjectivity and emotional competence. These themes are expanded below.

Crossing Emotional Barriers

According to Maslin-Ostrowski and Ackerman (1999), narratives from leaders who have experienced a serious conflict, dilemma, or critical incident in their leadership practice reveal that it can have a profound way of affecting or "wounding" (p. 216) them. Their study resulted in what they term the "wounded storyteller" (p. 216) and points to the fact that these voices of pain have rarely been heard and have been left out of the professional dialogue. Yet, the emotional displays participants reported that they experienced during the time of the critical incident were often manifested

in private, apart from colleagues and organizational employees, and took various forms such as negative self-talk, tears, sleeplessness, and angry, critical descriptions of others when with safe friends, colleagues, and family members. Many respondents expressed feelings of not wanting to come to work to face those involved in the situation, a general "malaise," and a desire to avoid having to deal with the situation at all. Yet the realities of leadership today are such that these mental and emotional demands are part of the leadership context, and to be successful leaders must "work on self-guidance and self-knowledge" and see this emotion as an integral part of the "leadership landscape" (Kegan, 1996, p. 217).

Like these writers, the participants in our study exposed their sense of "woundedness" that they all experienced in practice when emotional boundaries were crossed. Feelings related to anger, frustration, safety, resentment, anxiety, sadness, and disillusionment surfaced in our narratives. One participant stated it this way:

> The incident that occurred and the situation I found myself in was so hurtful and not something I was truly prepared for. I felt so hurt and somewhat debilitated by the fact that not only could an employee treat me this way, but that she could find support among some of the board members. And, they all expressed such anger toward me...my decision. I didn't expect to have to deal with this kind of behavior and it really crossed into a space that was difficult...so difficult for me to handle.

Another participant expressed it this way:

> My buttons were pushed and I felt attacked by her. I didn't think I antagonized her. But, she took it that way. Then, I lost it. I told her she was being extremely insulting. I was brutal in this meeting...so angry...and mouthed off in an unprofessional way in front of others. I felt so terrible...I left...I felt we both had crossed some lines resulting in such emotional outbursts. In some ways, our barriers were broken.

Yet feelings of growth and hope also surfaced. These leaders talked about how they have come to learn from those experiences in ways that expand their leadership competence. Thus, we found that many of our participants crossed over emotional boundaries in ways that contradict how leaders have been taught to act and perform in a certain way—that is, to be devoid of emotion and to approach matters in a clinical manner. One respondent in our study, for example, stated, that "one of the first things I learned as I was going down this professional path was that in professional sort of situations...it's really important that you remove yourself from the equation. That was what I was doing, removing myself, removing my emotions, stepping back, and responding to it as from my position." However, the truth of the matter is that leaders are human and emotionality is part of who they are and it may not be possible to erect boundaries and barriers around our emotional selves. A comment from one participant reflects this idea:

> I am a very different person now, as a leader. I show a great deal of emotion with my staff. Even though the lure of showing no emo-

tions still haunts me. I credit this change in my leadership style due to my graduate studies. I believe that I and other leaders just need permission to lead with emotions. A fish doesn't know that it is in water until it is out of water. You just can't keep it hidden.

And, in the words of another respondent:

It seems that you use those emotions to get grounded and centered...it's not as though you run away from them or suppress them or hide from them. You use them...when you step back into that leadership role that requires some decision, some direction, you cross over so to speak...and allow some part of your emotionality to show.

Value-Driven Emotions and Leadership Tools

Beatty (2000) points out that the "cognitive and emotional dissonance that occurs in situations that clash with our beliefs and values demands a change of view or action" (p. 338). As we probed into the critical incidents, it became clear that what is associated with the affective domain of human response was not so much about feelings of comfort or pain but about the importance of approaching matters from a perspective of goodness or from that sense of conviction about what a leader values as the "right thing to do." Thus, emotions most often arise in response to some inner conflict with one's inner values. According to Hoyle and Crenshaw (1999), people use cues from their environment to judge what kinds of goals and opportunities to pursue that are likely to lead to good outcomes. They go so far as to suggest that it is a leadership responsibility to be able to work through difficult conflicts and interpersonal dynamics by using the emotional intuitive way of knowing within ourselves what is important to us as leaders. Often underrepresented and devalued, emotions provide those cues and can play a key role in making clear what we as leaders perceive to be good, right, equitable, and just. Thus, the anguish our participants felt was representative of a deeper conflict between their feelings and their own values clashing with those of others in the organization as well as of cultural-social conditions that were out of tune with their own values and beliefs. Several comments during the interviews reflected these ideas. As one leader discussed when describing an incident involving student unrest on a college campus:

My identity as a leader is based on coming from a biracial home. Thus, during this student unrest, I wanted to represent the University, but I also wanted to represent the students, especially since I served as the advisor for the Alianza Latina. I was emotionally torn, in some ways between two worlds, but I knew where my ethical stance was...it was hard but it is also what caused so much emotional pain for me.

And another leader talked about how he felt when a colleague was being treated unfairly:

I knew I was going to do something about this situation because it was so unfair. My values told me to do so...Even now it makes

> me crazy, I want to throw something…frustrated, it actually brought me to a place of tears…My motivation for taking action had everything to do with justice, brothers can be cruel, insensitive to each other. Yet, if I had to do it again, I would handle it the same way. I realize that my anger and frustration were based on the injustice of the situation.

What began to surface from our analysis and discussion is that emotions can serve as resources and venues for understanding leadership motives and how emotions are often expressions of a sense of injustice or inequity for others. This is not to say that the stories did not sometimes display emotionality as an unwelcome intruder on leadership practice. But deeper analysis helped us to see that emotions are fundamental to leadership and decision-making and as motivation to continue to pursue what leaders value and believe is in the best interest of the organizations and people they serve. In some respects this reflects the ideas of Linsky and Heifetz (2002) where they explore the importance of "listening to oneself as data" (p. 271) and probing more deeply into how one processes information and into the values, biases, and beliefs against which the data derive their meaning. From our analysis, it appears that feelings can provide "clues" into a leader's "own particular mesh of internal drives and social forces" (Linsky & Heifetz, 2002, p. 272). Thus, emotions can become leadership resources and/or tools for enacting a more effective leadership practice. A participant comment reflects this notion:

> I had to take action. I knew this was wrong, and it seemed like the only way to work through these feelings toward a just and equitable result. I got home that night and called my closest friend. We talked it through and I felt better. I then contacted, strategically I admit, the regional director to process what had occurred and what I was feeling. I also acknowledged that others were experiencing some emotional challenges as well. I could see this was how folks in this particular culture behaved and I had to adapt or the situation would get worse. This process seemed to help me organize where I was and the next steps I had to take.

Adaptive Emotional Capacity

According to Goleman et al. (2002), the ability to recognize one's emotions, and to realize that emotionality can provide cues into understanding our purposes as a leader, can result in greater ability to manage emotions and expand or adapt our emotional capacity. Yet, many respondents reported that, based on their training and process of "becoming a leader," they learned that emotions and emotionality did not have a legitimate place in the leadership environment. As one participant stated, "I learned early that subjective emotions did not add to one's perceived competence as a leader." Thus, they had to learn on their own or not at all that these "emotional ways of knowing" can work hand-in-hand with the more objective forms of intelligence associated with skills of problem-solving and decision-making.

In these narratives, it became apparent that all of our participants were able to engage in what Goleman and his colleagues refer to as a process of "self-management," although each leader engaged in using varied and different coping or emotional management strategies. In our interviews, we heard respondents refer to a number of techniques, such as "getting alone and quiet," "writing poetry, journaling," or "processing with a respected colleague or friend," and how these strategies allowed them to arrive at a place with the necessary energy and skills to work through the critical event. What is valuable is the recognition that adaptive emotional capacity can take various forms and may be conditioned by the culture of the context in which the situation occurred, the level of experience of the leaders, and the anticipated outcomes of the situation (Cherniss, 2000). A participant's comment captures the essence of adaptability:

> After meeting with my staff I had to go off to be by myself for a while...a long walk to clear my thoughts. Afterwards I felt emotionally strong enough to see this situation from my staff's point of view. The experience was a learning experience for me, and I felt like a better leader. Because I found out that being a good leader did not always mean being right or having the last word. Being a good leader means having the capacity to listen and to change. Part of emotional management is being able to keep emotions from throwing us off track from the work we need to do as leaders.

In the words of another participant:

> I learned a lot from this early difficult experience. Today, I know I would respond quite differently. When I approach a situation and can feel some emotion about it, even in advance, I do my homework. I write...I look for potential traps, holes, depending on the situation. I always tell myself to get the facts, before responding too quickly. I pause, get control, seek clarification, and avoid reactionary statements. I also have observed other leaders in similar situations and watch what they do, how they stay calm and diffuse these kinds of situations. Sometimes it is about silence and listening.

Other respondents became reflective during the interview and made comments that revealed how they have come to realize that "emotional progression evolves" and that understanding "motives and cultural conditions all seemed to affect one's response." Thus, through these stories, we began to see that these leaders were cognizant of the need to adapt and expand their emotional capacity, which seemed to grow from opportunities to reflect upon their experiences and their emotional responses to them. It also became clear that, "quite simply, leaders cannot effectively manage emotions in anyone else without first handling their own" (Goleman et al., 2002, p. 46). One of our respondents clearly surfaced this idea for us:

> I think a lot of that comes from my background and training. In order to deal with such emotionally charged situations in our work, and having to manage the emotions of other folks...we are

all learning and trying to understand how we deal with situations and how we emotionally respond to different issues...I don't cry in front of groups that I am responsible for...they need someone who is calm and able to manage the situation...so my system has found other ways for me to deal with that kind of thing. It's really important to focus attention on dealing with your emotions, dealing with your own personal wellness and general health, staying centered to take care of others.

Subjectivity and Emotional Competence

In some ways, the stories revealed a kind of inter- and intra-subjectivity as we interrogated emotional expressions, encouraged deeper personal exploration among participants, and surfaced common themes drawing from the data that spanned across the social, emotional, and cultural worlds of these leaders. By inviting our respondents to look at past practice, examine it, and give words and verbal descriptions to their experiences, participants were able to reconstruct meaning about their effectiveness as leaders and able to shape more positive plans for future practice. This theme fits with some of the work of Saarni (2000), who suggests that emotional competence entails "accepting one's emotional experiences as justified and worthy" (p. 80) but also being able to "emphasize with other's emotions" (p. 81). In other words, some research shows that emotional intelligence is acquiring the capacity for self-efficacy that facilitates a sense of well-being for oneself and others, versus expressing feelings of negativity or engaging in actions that are emotionally aggressive towards oneself or others. Emotional competence may also be described as being resilient or being able to cope or recover from adverse experiences (Goleman, 1995). Several comments reveal this insight:

I think my ability to be in touch with my own emotions and to accept that there is a place for emotionality in higher education leadership has made me more effective and successful in my job. For me, it is sometimes supervising others, but sometimes it is being in partnership with them. When they go home, they take a lot of stuff with them, I know this...I need to give them space to talk about, express it, and not feel as though those feelings don't have a place and importance in the workplace. People being allowed to process through their emotions...in the end, we can all be more productive.

Another stated:

I feel empowered to do a better job because I now lead with emotion. This has caused me to have better relationships with my staff. I believe that leaders who don't understand their own emotions are deficient in their ability to understand colleagues and students. A leader who allows emotions, understands them, shows them, does a better job and feels better about herself. Emotions bring forth compassion. Comfort to show them? This was a hard lesson to learn as a woman.

This last respondent and other participants also expressed how their own cultural upbringing and socialization influenced their emotional feelings and expressions. Cultural differences and the "cultural modes" (Dominice, 2000, p. 183) we internalize serve as guides or cues, but often go unrecognized or suppressed. Participants all talked about how they were trained to believe that "emotions had no place in the workplace," especially in regard to "being a woman" or "coming from the margins with respect to race or sexual orientation." As one participant stated:

> Although I thought about myself as a feminist, I still felt, to be taken seriously, I had to keep my emotions in check. One comment by the board when I wanted to move forward and dismiss the employee was telling. He said that it "sounded like a cat fight to him." It really made me stop and think, although it hurt. So, emotions do play out when we interact with others in the work environment and, regardless of training, I knew that my feelings mattered and so did his. It was a turning point and made me realize that we can't run from these situations, but can learn from them. I am different today, much stronger emotionally as a leader.

In some small ways and as suggested by Fullan (1997), this interview process enabled some of our participants to move from a place of despair to a sense of comfort in their ability to move and take action during these difficult times. They came to realize that, and how, they have developed emotional competence over time. The following comment illumines this idea:

> My identify as a white male felt out of congruence with the emotions I was feeling. In this situation, as I reflect upon it now, I realize that I experienced what it felt like to be marginalized for the first time and that sense of powerlessness that comes with it. I can look back and see that now, knowing how differently I would have approached it, how differently I approach such situations today.

Another participant became very reflective toward the end of the interview as revealed in this comment:

> Wow...yes, being African American...I hadn't thought about it until now...knowing so well what being excluded feels like...and now my own colleagues wanted to do it to another African American male...no, it just could not happen that way.... I know now that his management style was different, not what I thought it should have been, being an African American. This added to my emotional response at the time. But now I am thinking about it...I felt in conflict with him, but see that now I do embrace people for what they bring to the table, even it we feel differently about things.

In the interviews, we began to see that emotionality and expressions of such feelings had transpired within a particular context of time, but had found formation in the roots of subjectivities which, at times, could conflict with the thinking patterns and expected behaviors within the particular profession of educational leadership. One could say that, in the critical incident analysis, participants moved from describing the outer shape of their experiences to an exploration of its inner meanings. We also

began to see that as each individual story contributed to unearthing deeper understanding about leadership and emotionality, it was in some ways the interview process and reflective inquiry into their stories that enabled participants to gain, and us to deepen our, understanding about this topic. It also revealed to us that this opportunity to share personal narratives helped the participants to find words to talk about these challenging emotional experiences at both inter- and intra-subjective levels, which empowered them to construct new meaning about experiences, which could lead to future growth.

Summary and Conclusions

Through this investigation process, we became aware of the fact that many participants experienced a sense of emotional "woundedness" in their leadership practices, but found the experience of being interviewed to be one of the first times they had ever been asked to think about their own emotionality with respect to leadership. Several voiced how, through the critical incident story, they were realizing that understanding their emotions allowed them to think more clearly about the situations they faced, even those that had transpired several months or even years earlier. At the time of these challenging situations, some participants were relatively new in their roles and had not yet encountered similar situations in the past. Other respondents indicated how past histories and experiences provided a context for them to "get in touch with their feelings" and to use those experiences to become clearer about what it is they value and care about as leaders. The revelation that leaders could experience many kinds of emotional encounters with colleagues and subordinates took the participants to new, unexplored territory within their leadership practice as they endeavored to share their critical incidents and emotional feelings and responses with respect to them. The narratives also revealed how the kinds of emotional displays presented by staff members, colleagues, and employees, which were often manifested as anger and resentment, helped these leaders to realize their own sense of disempowerment and inability to exercise control over their subordinates' sense of frustration and anger. However, they realized such feelings cannot be denied or ignored either.

Through our field-based interviews, we saw that, at the time of the critical incident, many participants did not necessarily critically examine their behavior for underlying causes that may have provoked the emotion as much as the events in the course of the critical incident. At the same time, it was becoming obvious that it was within the leader's role and responsibilities to find strategies and pathways for working through the incidents and providing some sense of comfort and safety to others in the organization. And, although the narratives provoked old feelings for all participants in the study, in some respects, as we engaged with each other as researchers and research participants, we found our participants were expressing new feelings—feelings of compassion, responsibility, and validation for their own behavior.

What surfaced, too, is the recognition that emotions have the potential to serve as a resource, or, as described by Combs and his colleagues (1999), that they are a part of our added potential to learn as leaders. Questions related to the "proper role" of the leader with respect to emotionally charged situations revealed how one's socialization as male or female, or coming from a different ethnic background or sexual orientation, influenced not only participants' actions during the critical incident, but also how leaders in the study constructed subjective meaning about both the incident and their reactions to it. In addition, as we inquired more deeply into the transcripts of our participants, we realized that several participants acknowledged that how they had been socialized into leadership roles had influenced how they thought about the "proper way to feel" and the "correct way to respond" at the time of the incident. And, despite the incongruence that seemed to prevail about how different participants responded to a particular incident, leaders in this study all seemed to "know the rules of leadership demeanor" and applied them as each attempted to navigate the difficult times. Strategies for managing emotions—writing, getting quiet with oneself, talking with trusted confidants—allowed participants in the study to find some kind of emotional release, and allowed some participants to arrive at some sense of rational understanding about their own emotions.

Recommendations for Leadership Preparation and Development

The initial goal of this study was to analyze the emotional cost of leadership and to link this cost to leaders leaving their respective fields. We found that through analysis of the narratives we were able to include the voices and experiences of leaders which allowed for a richer, deeper understanding of leadership and emotionality. In this section we revisit our research process and findings to provide insights into leadership and emotionality and to make recommendations for ongoing preparation and leadership development.

As a result of this study we are certainly more sensitive to this kind of research and the intersensitivity and emotion it can provoke. What was most important was how each of the participants experienced much of the same emotions even though some of the critical incidents transpired a number of years earlier. The study also suggests that leadership and emotionality are not mutually exclusive but rather are inextricably woven into our leadership lives. The lives of educational leaders and the experiences they have can be communicated through narratives such as critical incidents and these have value in this form of interpretative research. As we debriefed from the telling of our own critical incidents and those shared by field participants, and from our process of interpreting and analyzing together, we realized more deeply the potential for leadership learning and growth and how the methods of narrative inquiry have value both in learning about leadership and in sustaining leaders through difficult times.

We end this article by providing four recommendations for addressing leadership emotional preparedness. First, educational leaders

especially and leaders generally must learn to be responsible for knowing their emotional selves. A clear message from the study is that leaders do not believe that they are allowed to have emotional awareness. A professional leader must learn that it is important to be in touch with his/her feelings. Without this message, educational leaders will continue to suppress their emotional selves during critical incidents in their leadership lives. Leaders devoid of emotionality run the risk of creating an even more critical situation for themselves and other people working with them. This is because leaders who do not understand the significance of emotional awareness in themselves cannot begin to understand the emotional impact in others. Thus, opportunities to engage in autobiographical and personal narrative writing with trusted faculty, coaches, and mentors, and to engage in safe dialogue, need to be part of the learning context for leaders.

The second recommendation is for reform of college and university educational administrative curriculums. Historically, programs have sought to focus on content areas appropriate to specific fields of study and skill sets that advance a more technical leadership practice. However, here we argue that nurturing emotional awareness needs to be imbedded in certain courses, or courses on emotional awareness should be created as stand-alones. Courses on ethics should be required for graduation and case studies that allow students to engage in critical incidents and their analysis from a personal, social, and emotional context are needed so emotional competence as a leader can be strengthened. Refocusing or structuring curriculum will assist students in developing their emotional selves and will help to prepare them for the types of critical incidents that invariably occur in the workplace.

Professional development with support of mentors is a third strategy for addressing the issue of emotionality and leadership. In workshops or seminars, leaders will benefit from being with others who have experienced or are experiencing emotionally charged situations. These leaders will also have an opportunity to develop their emotional intelligence even further, thus being able to withstand the trying times that leaders must deal with. Such programs could help to bridge the preparation programs and inductive years of service. Such professional development could find form in "leadership apprenticeships," or partnerships among new leaders, veteran leaders, and faculty from higher education for "on the job learning" (Aiken, 2001, p. 159).

Finally, one of the main challenges of this study was finding a body of literature addressing the topic. Therefore, this has lead us to the conclusion that more scholars in the field of education, management, public administration, and policy studies should consider conducting research on this important topic. And of course college faculty can then use this research to help in reforming their educational programs.

As we think about the role of leaders today, their need to work with a diverse number of stakeholders and constituents, their call to convey a sense of energy and hope—regardless of current problems and challenges—and the expectation that they should create contexts built on principles of ethics, equity, and social justice, there is no doubt that the

abilities of emotional intelligence have clear implications for the improvement and enactment of educational leadership. As stated by Bocchino (1999), "to be able to coach oneself through the difficult times in life influences not only our own lives, but also the lives of our friends, family members, and others who are close to us" (p. xiii). This study suggests that emotional and social qualities are linked to leadership competencies such as self-confidence, empathy, self-management, negotiating conflicts, persistence, and the ability to engage in trusting, collaborative relationships that are necessary for leadership success.

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