VALUES-BASED LEADERSHIP:

COLLEGE LEADERS' PERCEPTIONS ON

MAINTAINING VALUES IN DECISION MAKING

By

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Title of Study: VALUES-BASED LEADERSHIP: COLLEGE LEADERS'
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Major Field: HIGHER EDUCATION

Scope and Method of Study: The purpose of this study was to explore college leaders'
experiences of negotiating conflicts between their personal values and
those of the institution and its stakeholders. This qualitative study utilized
symbolic interactionism and involved interviews with five college campus
leaders from various institutions along with observations, and analysis of
artifacts including photographs, mission statements, resumes, and
organizational charts.

Findings and Conclusions: Analysis of interviews, observations, field notes and artifacts
revealed that leaders experience conflicts in personal and organizational
values in ways that involve emotions. The emotional aspect experienced
by the leaders as they negotiated instances of conflicting personal and
organizational values was unanticipated during the design of this study. As
participants discussed the role of values and differentiated between
personal and organizational values, emotions were an undeniable factor in
negotiating conflicts. Emotions are involved in the moment of conflict,
resolution of conflict, and the coping process that ensues. Cognitive
Motivational Relational Theory (Lazarus, 1991) provided a perspective
that allows understanding of the emotional side of leadership. The
influence of personal values on the organization and the influence of
organizational values on the leader have been identified in existing
literature (Hood, 2003; Buell, 2008; Grojean, Resick, Dickson & Smith,
2004; Fernandez & Hogan, 2002) and the study participants confirmed
that a relationship between the two exists. What has not been well-
documented is the emotion involved in maintaining this relationship. From
happiness to guilt to anger, emotions play an undeniable role in decision
making involving personal and organizational values. These campus
leaders shared instances of conflicting values that give readers insight into
the nuances of maintaining values during critical decision making
moments and the emotions involved.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A simple review of current events reveals that stakeholders in companies, schools, and political organizations have all recently experienced disappointments in their leaders (Buchko, 2007; Reilly & Ehlinger, 2007; Woods, 2007). As Woods summarizes, "In today's business ethics climate, it seems that a majority of people have lost faith in the ability of those chosen to lead (whether it be corporations, governments or even religious organizations) to do the right thing when it comes to ethics and morality" (2007, p.5). While reasons for the gap between expectations and job performance vary, the conflict leaders experience between personally-held values and those of the organization is rarely addressed.

The topic of values and ethics often find their way into leadership discussions. Values, as defined by Haydon (2007) are "conceptions of what is right or desirable" (p. 20). Ethics, according to Johnson (2012) are judgments about behaviors in terms of right and wrong. This study focuses solely on the values involved in the decision-making process and not the outcome of the decision (i.e. ethical versus unethical). The process of negotiating the angst and uncertainty along the decision-making continuum and the

influence of deeply-held personal values and core organizational values informs the research questions in this study.

Establishing organizational values is a common occurrence (Buchko, 2007; Haydon, 2007). It is not difficult to find literature or seminars addressing how organizations develop a shared vision that forms their unique organizational culture (Buell, 2008; Frankel, Schechtman & Koenigs, 2006; Maloney, 2006). Organizational culture aids in developing organizational values and influences the behavior of its leaders. Haydon (2007) posits that organizational culture can create conflicts between personal and organizational values and shape leaders' decision-making activities. Conversely, newspaper articles and the evening news support the notion some researchers put forth that the personal values of leaders can have a devastating impact on organizations (Marsh, 2008; Petran, 2008; Scalise, 2007). However, one rarely hears the stories of how organizational leaders who are committed to the organization's growth and prosperity deal with conflicts between their personally-held values and those of the organization. London (1999) is emphatic that leaders can successfully incorporate values-based leadership principles into their preferred leadership style, whether that be moral leadership, transformational leadership, or another style, that will result in a positive outcome for both the individual and the organization. Still, discussion of the role of personal values and how they affect leadership and job performance appears to be anomalous. Fernandez (2002) states, "Values are important to understanding leadership because they explain the focus and direction of people's actions" (p. 25). It would be naïve to assume that personal values are always perfectly aligned with organizational values and that leaders never find themselves wrestling between the two.

A disconnection among personal values, organizational values, and leader decision making can sometimes cause individuals and organizations to go awry. Understanding the role of leaders' personal values, the meaning they assign to conflicts between personal and organizational values, and learning from those experiences can be used to shape future leaders' decision making.

Statement of the Problem

As public servants, college and university leaders are expected to make ethical decisions with integrity while upholding the mission of higher education. Students and parents rely on college officials to provide advice and direction on securing funding for college education while providing a quality educational experience. Donors, state legislatures, and federal agencies expect college administrators to exercise prudence and good judgment in financial management and educational decision making.

In spite of federal, state, community, and individual expectations for higher education leaders to exhibit integrity in all aspects of higher education, college scandals involving administrators prove that behaviors often do not meet expectations. Revelations of kick-backs to financial aid officers from student loan companies led to regulatory legislation in 2007 (Jaschick, 2008). College officials have lined their pockets and exchanged political favors by awarding unearned degrees (Jaschick, 2008; Lederman, 2008). Scandals involving athletic programs have brought disgrace to college campuses (Freeh, Sporkin & Sullivan, 2012).

It is clear that public expectations cannot control corrupt leaders and force them to make decisions aligned with the mission of education to prepare citizens for their role in society. "Because a significant portion of the practice in educational administration

requires rejecting some courses of action in favour of a preferred one, values are generally acknowledged to be central to the field" (Willower, 1992, as cited in Haydon, 2007, p. 6) yet the core personal values of leaders, which are rarely discussed, are at times found to conflict with those of the institution (Woods, 2007).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore college leaders' experiences of negotiating conflicts between their personal values and those of the institution and its stakeholders. Narratives of participants' real-life leadership experiences as they moved along the decision-making continuum will provide thick, rich description from which other leaders can learn. The findings of this study can contribute to the existing research by illuminating the role of values in leadership and the process of negotiating conflicts in personal and organizational values.

Research Questions

1. What is the role of personal values and organizational values in leadership decision making?

2. How do educational leaders describe conflicts they have experienced between personal values and those of the organization?

3. In what ways do leaders differentiate between personal and organizational values?

Epistemological Stance and Theoretical Perspective

The research problem presented in this study lends itself well to a qualitative study based on a constructionist epistemology and an interpretivist and symbolic interactionism theoretical perspective. Epistemology deals with knowing, or as Crotty (2003) so clearly states, "How we know what we know" (p. 8). The constructionist

epistemological paradigm holds that meaning is constructed by the individuals who experience a particular event. Krauss (2005) postulates, "There is no objective reality. Rather, there are multiple realities constructed by human beings who experience a phenomenon of interest" (p. 760). The constructionist epistemology, according to Crotty (2003), focuses on the meaning made by individuals in relation to their environment. He posits that the meaning individuals assign to the interaction with the things and the others they encounter cannot be described without taking into account the uniqueness of the individual doing the describing. Meaning is constructed, layer by layer, as individuals positioned in a particular social setting encounter and interpret the events in their lives. Only after an encounter has occurred can an individual make, or construct, the meaning of the encounter. Construction of meaning is influenced by social context, other participants, and prior experiences. With this understanding, listening to stories of leaders' experiences as they negotiate conflict between personal and organizational values provides a clearer understanding of the contextual influences leaders see, report or experience during the decision-making process. Under the constructivist epistemological stance, there is not a definitive interpretation of a single event but there are useful interpretations that can serve readers and enhance learning.

Crotty (2003) describes theoretical perspective as a researcher's basic set of assumptions, influenced by epistemological stance, brought to the research process and reflected in the methodology of the project. It is the philosophical position that supports the methodology used to carry out the study. He states that theoretical perspective "is a way of looking at the world and making sense of it" (p. 8). The way in which a researcher views the world shapes the way in which the researcher investigates a phenomenon and

communicates findings to the world. Within a constructivist epistemological position, the interpretivist paradigm includes a series of theoretical perspectives focused on understanding of the phenomenon being studied. The research design is positioned within a certain social context at a particular moment in time. Stories from individual leaders involve decidedly unique interpretations of their experiences in facing conflict between personal and organizational values and include meanings that are culturally and experientially derived.

Situated within the interpretivist paradigm, symbolic interactionism is a specific theoretical perspective underlying studies focused on gaining understanding of how the things and others in one's environment contribute to meaning-making and influence actions. This theoretical perspective stands in contrast to postitivism and post-positivism which imagine a research design that can control the research environment, predict outcomes of a sample population, and generalize those to a larger population. Symbolic interactionism, according to Blumer (1969), assumes action is based on meaning, meaning is produced by the individual from social interaction with others, and meaning is derived from interpretation of the things and others in a contextual setting. In creating the symbolic interactionism framework, Blumer (1969) suggests that individual behavior can be ascribed to "status, position, cultural prescriptions, norms, values, sanctions, role demands, and social system requirements" (p. 7). Denzin (1992) describes symbolic interactionism as an "approach to the study of human group life and conduct" (p. 1). Individuals engage with and react to the things and the others in their environment based on the meaning those things and others have for us and interpret those experiences in relation to contextually-created meanings. Krauss (2005) states, "Human beings have a

natural inclination to understand and make meaning out of their lives and experiences" (p. 762). Conversations with leaders from a variety of organizations enlightens readers on the role of personal values in an organizational context and what leaders see to be instances where their personal core values and those of the institution collide.

Researcher background and experiences are positioned in the epistemological stance and theoretical perspective outlined. Researcher reflexivity is required to identify past experiences and to openly identify researcher positionality. Patton (2002) describes reflexivity as a process of triangulation where the researcher reflects on how her/his knowledge was gained and influenced, then reflects on the knowledge and worldview of the participants, and finally reflects on the perspectives of potential readers. Triangulated reflexivity during analysis and reporting is essential to identifying personal epistemologies, relaying the intended voices, and identifying anticipated audience response.

Reflecting on my own leadership experiences allows readers to understand ways in which my experiences and preconceived notions may influence the study design and representation of participant experiences. Reflexivity was ongoing from research design through data analysis and representation.

Along with reflexivity, researcher and respondent relationship should be considered in developing a qualitative study. In establishing a relationship between researcher and respondent, the values of the investigator influence the design of the inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In addition, by having a level of familiarity with the respondents and their natural environment, the investigator develops a sense of trust that encourages the respondents to open up and explore the personal meaning they assign to

the phenomenon under study. This process allows the researcher to understand the respondent's point of view and personal experiences through free-flowing dialogue. As a leader in a community college, I share a common background with the respondents that was used to build the level of trust necessary in conducting a study of college leaders. I have experienced conflict between my core values and the expectation of the job. These experiences were shared by other college leaders as they faced the same type of dilemma.

Conducting a study within a constructivist epistemology and a symbolic interactionism framework allows pursuit of the constructed realities and sense-making of individual leaders in various organizations as we explore conflicts between personally-held values with those of the organization. Conceptual fit (personal communication, Bailey, 2011) is achieved through triangulation of epistemological stance, theoretical perspective, and methodology. The meaning making that resulted from this study will illuminate the role of personal values in leadership, how campus leaders face conflict between personal values and those of the organization, how they differentiate between personal and organizational values, and the personal and professional growth that occurs as a result of these activities.

Researcher's Statement

Researcher reflexivity encourages the researcher to acknowledge personal experiences and the possible impact on the story being told. The foundation of interpretivist qualitative research is developed on the realization that researcher knowledge of the subject matter being studied cannot be ignored or set aside. Researcher interpretation is influenced by past experiences and may influence the understanding that is born out of a qualitative study. Reflexivity requires continued self-reflection

throughout the study to minimize the impact of preconceived notions on the final interpretation of participants' experiences. Pillow's (2010) description of researcher reflexivity includes being self-reflexive to thoroughly know ourselves, reflecting on the position of others, reflexivity of truth to legitimate and validate the text, and reflexivity as transcendence that provides clarity to see beyond preconceived notions. In reflecting on my personal and professional background, I am able to make sense of the experiences that have shaped my perspectives and how those may have influenced the study. While researchers in a positivist framework may work diligently to prevent personal background from influencing the study, many qualitative researchers working within other theoretical perspectives suggest it is important to understand that life experiences shape the way we see and interpret every facet of the world. These life experiences will inevitably shape data gathering, interpretation and representation of findings. Along with reflexivity, researcher and respondent relationship should be considered in developing a qualitative study. In establishing a relationship between researcher and respondent, the values of the investigator can influence the design of the inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). However, awareness of this tendency will aid in collecting, analyzing, and representing data from the participants' point of view.

The importance of attaining an education was instilled in me at an early age. Both of my parents worked in public school systems and raised me to believe that success in school directly correlates to success in life. My mother was adamant that, as a woman, I would need to be self-reliant and an education was the way to achieve this goal. By earning a bachelor's degree in Business Education, I was preparing myself for personal independence and professional success in either business or education. I have used both

sides of that degree throughout my career. While I have loved teaching, I have spent an equal number of years working in the business sector. This combination of education and business makes for a nice fit in my current role as the Vice President of Business Operations at a community college. As idyllic as this career preparation may seem, I have at times found myself struggling with the complexities of making decisions that pit my personal value of helping others gain an education against the expectations of the job to secure funds.

It seems that my role as the 'money person' in an educational organization invites automatic conflict. As an open-door institution, our mission is to educate all those who wish to learn and provide them an opportunity to improve their lives. Helping others achieve their educational goals is a passion—a personal value of mine. As the fiscal officer, my role in the institution is to make sure that money is available to provide that education. That means collecting tuition and fees from students that generally come from low-income, rural families in our region. I have experienced numerous angst-ridden situations that required me to do soul-searching before coming to peace with the action that I ultimately chose to take. Sometimes making the right decision feels wrong. How does a campus leader who deeply values education turn away students who cannot pay their tuition bill? Was I prohibiting them from being self-reliant and successful?

I believe other campus leaders have faced similar conflicts in their personal values and those of the institution. My goal in this study was to discover the role of personal values in leaders' decision making, how they have faced conflicts between personal and organizational values, and how we may learn from these experiences. My interest in listening to their narratives was two-fold: to educate myself toward becoming a stronger

leader and to provide that same opportunity to other leaders. The types of dialogues that were captured through this study are rare in leadership literature and texts. While reading leadership theory is helpful to both aspiring and seasoned leaders, practical application will help them deal with conflicts in values when theory falls short.

Procedures and Methods

Warren & Karner (2010) describe qualitative research participants as social actors that "create emergent social worlds specific to time and place" (p. 7). Understanding the unique leadership experiences of participants from different college campuses can lead to rich, descriptive narratives while providing a variety of viewpoints and perspectives on dealing with conflicts between personal and organizational values. This study uses individual interviews, observations, and demographic data of campus leaders from various colleges as well as analysis of documents from each institution.

Research Sites

Gaining insights from leaders at different colleges in a Midwestern state reveals how individuals deal with conflict of values within various environments. Statewide dynamics such as economy, geographical location within the country, and state regulations provided a common base for selecting leaders that share similar opportunities and constraints in serving their institutions. The higher education governance structure in this state and its relationship with the state legislature plays an important role in public funding of these institutions and therefore provides a common framework from which each of these campus leaders must operate. A controlling state board of trustees requires that each of these leaders must deal not only with their immediate governing board but also with a state higher education governing board. Despite their commonalities, colleges

in this state do exhibit a considerable amount of diversity. Whether rural or urban, each institution in this study is unique in its campus culture, student body population, and geographic service area. The leaders of these institutions have diverse leadership backgrounds that provided a rich research study.

Participants

This study focuses on the experiences of five leaders at the vice presidential or presidential level at Midwestern colleges. Study participants were recruited through personal connections established as a result of my position as a community college leader. Purposive selection of participants was based on two criteria: years of leadership experience and location of campus. By selecting participants that represent different campus locations (rural or urban) and have varied years of leadership experience, the study represents diverse leadership perspectives and experiences. One participant is retired from higher education after serving in numerous positions over a twenty year span. Two leaders are relatively new to their presidencies with one serving for five years and one just completing the first year. The remaining two campus leaders have served in their current or similar capacities for ten to twenty years. This range of higher education leadership experience will provide a wide base of perspectives that will offer readers with varied years of leadership service a relevant example of negotiating conflicting values.

Data Collection

One-on-one Interviews. Semi-structured interview questions were focused toward understanding the phenomenon of negotiating conflicts between personal core values and those of the organization. The interview questions soliciting participants' leadership experiences marked the beginning of the inquiry process. Using open-ended

questions that allowed participants to follow their own thought paths during discussions

revealed unexpected insights and meanings for the phenomenon being studied (i.e.

conflict between personally-held values and those of the institution). I prepared a set of

prompting statements and questions to encourage participants to share stories of

negotiating conflicting values should the conversation lag. Since I assumed respondents'

experiences were likely to vary, the research design remained flexible and adaptable

during the investigation. A rich tapestry of the leadership experience was woven by

paying close attention during interviews to participant surroundings, body language, and

hesitations in answering questions. Jottings taken before and during interview sessions

along with the use of probing questions helped capture facets to the stories being told.

Values-sorting exercise. During the interview session, participants were asked to

identify three personal and three organizational values that depict their leadership

philosophy and experiences. They recorded each value on an index card. These cards

were used in a sorting exercise during the data analysis phase that will aid in moving the

copious amount of general data into more specific categories and themes. At the

conclusion of the interview, participants were asked to review their index cards and make

any changes they desired as they contemplated how their own perspectives may have

shifted as a result of openly reflecting on their perspectives of values. This activity

ensured that the participants' experiences were forefront in the study and drove not only

data collection but also data interpretation and representation.

Observations. Attending a leadership team meeting provided an opportunity to

observe the participants interacting with others from the organization. This type of forum

provided valuable insight into the dynamic relationships between individuals that contributed to understanding campus culture and contextual realities.

Observations of each campus setting in terms of geographical setting, appearance, and activity helped paint a portrait of campus culture. Jottings that described the leaders' body language and facial expressions during interviews helps the researcher develop a deeper understanding of the leadership experiences shared.

Follow-up Questioning. Email conversations were utilized to ask follow-up questions that emerged from transcribing and analyzing data from the one-on-one interviews. This helped insure participant experiences were correctly interpreted and represented in this study.

Demographic data of participants. Data was collected from each campus leader regarding background and experience in the field.

Document analysis. Campus websites were utilized to obtain mission, vision, and value statements along with organizational charts and information pertaining to campus administration and governance. Presidential messages, also found on the websites, were reviewed and compared to the mission statements.

Data Analysis

Data analysis begins with the researcher understanding him/herself. Bott (2010) postulates that researchers must move with their data as they "locate and relocate themselves in their work" (p. 160). This movement with the data allows the researcher to identify her/his positionality in relation to the findings. This was accomplished through researcher reflexivity through all stages of data collection and analysis with reflective notes kept in a researcher journal. With participant permission, the interviews were

recorded and later transcribed verbatim by the researcher, which allows for data immersion (personal communication, Bailey, 2011). Movement with the data began with transcribing each interview to capture the pauses and utterances that provided additional meaning to the data as suggested by Bloomberg & Volpe (2008). Using these techniques along with member checking ensured accuracy of representation and were documented in a trustworthiness table (see Table 1).

Coding data was a time-intensive exercise that required moving through the data with a keen eye and ear as well as an open mind. Carefully dissecting data units that appeared significant to the research questions as well as those data units that emerged from participant reflection on experiences led to general coding activities. Open coding was utilized to capture as many themes and categories as possible. Wolcott (2009) suggests, "To sort your data, begin with a few categories sufficiently broad to allow you to sort *all* your data" (p. 38). By doing so, I was able to identify themes that connected participants across categories as well as within categories. Jotting in a spiral notebook provided an opportunity to identify members' terms, metaphors, and exogenous meanings as the data was analyzed. This process helped identify the need for follow-up conversations through member checking. Writing analytic statements and memos as recommended by Patton (2002) and Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw (1995) aided in making connections in the data that provided insight into the personal and professional experiences shared by the participants and the meaning that was made of those experiences. This type of inductive analysis brought forward participant meaning-making and illuminated researcher questions as I moved with the data and discovered members' terms and theories.

Saldana's (2009) diagram (see Appendix A) for moving from codes to theory was utilized to visually represent the data as it was developed from general collections to more specific categories and themes. This exercise took the massive amount of data that was collected through several stages of analysis and aided in further making sense of the participants' individual experiences as leaders of a campus. Codes, categories, and themes that are used to complete the diagram were inductively derived from participant data.

Significance of Study

Leadership theory and practice transcend traditional organizational boundaries. Lessons learned in business can be incorporated into educational leadership and those applied to nonprofit leadership and those applied to political leadership, and so on. A qualitative study of college leaders retrospectively recalling their leadership experiences and the meaning made from conflicts between personal values and organizational values contributes thick, rich data to the existing body of literature, something that is currently lacking in this area. Crotty (2003) suggests that open-ended questions asked in a natural environment will allow participants to construct their own meaning of their experiences and this will in turn generate greater social knowledge and a multi-dimensional understanding of the possible dilemma involved in making leadership decisions. These leadership dilemmas were best investigated through personal conversations with leaders to understand the role of personal values in leadership, experiences of conflicts between personal and institutional values, and the meaning they assign to their experiences.

Summary

Recent events have caused stakeholders in various organizations and the general public to question leadership decisions. While there may be many explanations for this scrutiny, this study focused on examining the role of personal values in leadership decision making, how educational leaders deal with conflict between their personal values and those of the institution, how they differentiate between personal and organizational values, and what leaders learned personally and professionally from these experiences.

There is an abundance of leadership literature that addresses organizational values as well as values-based leadership principles for leaders to incorporate into their decision making. However, there is very little information available that aids in understanding the role of personal values in decision making, conflicts between personal and organizational values, how they differentiate between the two, and the lessons learned from those experiences. This study connects participants' real-life leadership experiences to the existing scholarship, supporting, contradicting and extending the existing scholarship. This research design provided a valuable learning experience not only for the researcher but will also enrich existing leadership literature that can be used by many others in leadership positions.

Chapter Two of this study consists of a thorough review of existing literature pertaining to personal and organizational values in leadership. Chapter Three includes a comprehensive description of the methodology employed to answer the research questions that form the basis for this inquiry. Chapter Four provides a narrative portrait that introduces the reader to the study participants, the setting, and researcher encounters

during the study. Chapter Five is utilized to present the findings. Chapter Six situates the

findings of this study with existing literature and theory while illuminating identified

needs for further research on the topic.

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Organizational crisis or success can stem from a number of factors. Corporate, educational, and religious organizations have all faced the devastating effects of leaders' poor decision making while other organizations have thrived due to their strong leadership. Leadership has become recognized as critical to organizational success or failure and has been studied, scrutinized, and theorized from a variety of viewpoints over the past few decades. The impact of values, personal and organizational, on organizational leadership and performance has been the topic of numerous studies (Graber & Kilpatrick, 2008; Brandes & Stuber, 2004; Buell, 2008; Buchko, 2007; Marsh, 2008).

The tumultuous campus environments of the late 1960s and early 1970s presented many previously unthinkable challenges to college campus leaders. Decisions often had to be made quickly and under immense pressure. The consequences of those decisions had lasting impacts on institutions and careers. In his book reflecting on campus leadership during this time, Nelson (2012) recalls, with help from the campus leaders of the time, some of the gut-wrenching decisions that had to be made and the positive and negative outcomes those decisions had on individuals and institutions. Many college

presidents of those days faced on-campus protests on racial equity, foreign policy, and

the Vietnam War. Some presidents witnessed angry students occupying and burning

buildings on their campuses. These presidents faced challenges so vastly different from

their predecessors that they had no place to turn for sage advice. They only possessed

their wits and gut instincts in the face of each crisis. A fortunate few had a military

background that gave them some experience with combative situations. Others who had

entered the presidency from the classroom had no such benefit. As Nelson (2012) states,

"College presidents cannot afford failure to grasp the reins when confronted by crucial

leadership challenges" (p.54). University presidents experienced varying degrees of

success in maintaining control of their campuses during this historical period.

President Perkins of Cornell University may be one example of a president who

failed to grasp the reins in a crisis. Armed students stormed and took control of a building

on the campus of Cornell in 1969. Although out of town when the event took place,

Perkins attempted to diffuse the situation by sending two college administrators in to

negotiate with the students. The outcome was that the students agreed to vacate the

premises with their weapons in tow. While no persons were harmed during the incident,

newspapers across the country splashed pictures on their front pages of the students

smiling and brandishing their weapons as they exited the building. The fallout for Perkins

was a loss of public confidence. Although he attempted to regain college and public trust

through public addresses, he failed miserably and ultimately lost the presidency. Even

though this president displayed his value for human safety through negotiating a peaceful

resolution without casualties, public perception determined his efforts were a failure.

According to Nelson (2012), it took Perkins' predecessor years to overcome the dramatic

events of 1969 and restore faith in leadership to the Cornell community. Perkins himself later recalled feeling helpless in the face of the conflict (Nelson, 2012).

While one can argue that the social unrest experienced during the sixties and seventies has subsided dramatically, there are a plethora of new challenges for college presidents. It is no secret that most colleges face much tougher fiscal situations today than in the past. With the recessionary economy's impact on gifts and endowment funds coupled with a reduction in federal and state funding, colleges turned in the early twenty-first century to raising tuition at rates many people perceive as excessive. Managing the fiscal health of the university has required many presidents to become fund raisers and business-oriented leaders (Nelson, 2012). Parents, business leaders, and legislators have questioned the value of a college education and continually challenge its viability. Increased scrutiny by the news media and the incredible pace of social media for communicating any number of campus gripes and issues has often forced the modern day president to think and act quickly. Another interesting development on college campuses since the 1960s and 1970s is the growth of collegiate powerhouse athletic programs and the effect a successful program can have in terms of campus prestige, recruitment, revenues, and donations. If one was to Google "college scandals" on the internet, one would find story after story of college athletic programs gone awry.

A recent collegiate scandal that is particularly relevant to the study of values-based leadership is that at Pennsylvania State University. The investigation of child sexual abuse committed on the campus of this esteemed university from the late 1990s and continuing for over a decade rocked the campus, the community, and the nation. From a special investigative report issued by Freeh, Sporkin & Sullivan (2012), it became

alarmingly clear that persons placed in positions of authority and trust can potentially

devastate an organization through the failure to employ a socially-acceptable values-

based approach to decision-making. This unprecedented case has given pause to campus

administrators around the nation to review practices, policies, and procedures that

effectively align values with actions. Campus leaders are asking themselves how such an

infected culture can spread to the point of disregarding human rights in the name of

protecting a prestigious reputation. Are athletics, or other programs, of such importance

that crimes against the innocent can be overlooked and, in fact, dismissed and covered up

and allowed to continue for more than a decade? If ever there was a time to address

alignment of personal and organizational values, it surely is has become more imperative

in the face of such egregious institutional failure.

In an attempt to provide leaders and other interested readers insight into the

balance of personal and organizational values, this study elicits comments, theories, and

insights from former and currently active campus leaders. To provide a firm foundation

to begin these discussions, a literature review that focuses on different aspects of values

is necessary. This literature review focuses on six aspects of values: the definition of

values as presented in the current literature, the development of values-based leadership,

ways in which personal values affect the organization, ways in which organizational

values impact the individual, alignment of personal and organizational values, and

conflicts between the two.

While various definitions of organizational values share similar features, they also

tend to take into account specific organizational needs and goals. The same can be said

for defining personal values. The literature contains lists of organizational and personal

values that are quite similar yet not identical. Some leaders approach decision making in a manner that reflects clearly-defined personal core values. Those values can be perceived as beneficial or detrimental to the organization. On the other hand, organizations may have a well-established set of values within their organizational culture and this culture may, in turn, influence the decisions of leaders. Sometimes the two sets of values overlap and work in unison. At times situations arise that may cause conflicts between personal and organizational values. However, there does appear to be a level of consensus that suggests that alignment of personal and organizational values produces optimum organizational effectiveness (London, 1999; Fernandez & Hogan, 2002; Frankel, Schechtman & Koenigs, 2006; Marsh 2008).

What are Values?

How does one define a concept such as values that is intangible and based on individual perceptions? We can gain a sense of the difficulty in developing a concrete definition for values by examining what those in the field report. Graber & Kilpatrick (2008) recognize the difficulty of attaining a unified definition when they state, "There appears to be considerable overlap, but no real consensus, on what should be included in a list of values. There also is considerable heterogeneity among values, and some appear to be more achievable by human effort than others" (p. 189). The authors point out leaders may very well espouse a set of preferred or idealized values yet practice an entirely different set. The disconnection causes confusion not only in defining organization values, but also in practicing those values throughout the organization. Inconsistent definitions and representations of values by those in the organization may cause conflict within the organization and leave employees in a quandary when it comes

to decision-making. When reviewing causes of campus scandals over the years, readers can often see that unclear or conflicting messages regarding the organization's definition of values is at the root of the problem. However, campus leaders who clearly define organizational values and lead by example are more likely to find their constituents not only have a better understanding of those values but also respect and even emulate them. Such was the case for President Bollinger of Columbia University when he held steadfast to his belief in academic freedom and the right to free speech. A 2007 visit to Columbia University by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad proved quite unsettling for many of Columbia's supporters but particularly the Jewish constituents (Nelson, 2012). In supporting Ahmadinejad's campus visit, Bollinger stood firmly on his value for free-flowing ideological thought and the tenet of open debate of controversial topics. By clearly defining these values on multiple occasions at campus and public events, Bollinger was able to clearly articulate values that had a long-standing tradition not only in the academy but also in the foundation of the country. The values that he espoused and displayed were in alignment and difficult to argue against.

Because observable actions are often not reflected in the values publicized by the organization or individual, Szabo, Reber, Weibler, Brodbeck & Wunderer (2001) categorized values as far-from-action as they are difficult to define and observe and are not always predictors of decisions or behaviors. Nearly every organization has a published set of values for the public to review, but leaders often take contradictory actions which make it difficult for followers in an organization to truly define the organizational values that drive actions. It is not uncommon for college campuses to initiate a mission and values campaign on their campuses before an accreditation visit.

The reason campus leaders feel the need for an all-out advertising assault of mission and values is because they realize employees at all levels of the organization as well as external stakeholders may be unaware of the institutions' guiding mission and values. In the months preceding a campus visit from an accreditation team mission and values statements are printed, framed and displayed throughout the campus as a visual reminder of these important foundations of the college or university. The fact that this takes place at this strategic time alerts one to the difficulty of defining values simply by observing daily actions and the challenge of ingraining values into campus culture.

The literature suggests values provide the framework from which the individual and the organization can successfully operate. There is an array of definitions of values. Values, as defined by Haydon (2007) are "conceptions of what is right or desirable" (p. 20). "Values connect minds, hearts, and the collective work of the organization" (Brandes & Stuber, 2004, p. 2). "Values are beliefs that people have about what is important or worthwhile to them" (Crossan, Gandz & Seijts, 2012, p.2). Buchko (2007) defines values as ". . . what is most desirable in social life; in effect, values are the 'glue' that binds people together into organizations" (p.37). "Values represent notions about what 'ought' and what 'ought not' to be and have both content and intensity attributes" (Sosik, 2005, p.223). On and on we go with definitions of values. Hot values-based buzz words are injected into mission statements. Mission statements are designed to describe to internal and external constituents what the organization stands for; what their existence is to achieve. Many times organizational values displayed in or along with mission statements become convoluted or confusing and have little meaning to those expected to uphold them while serving the institution.

To further elaborate on the extent to which values are individualized and personalized, a look at how others categorize values will aid in better understanding why values are not always successfully transferred throughout the organization. In his study of principles that guide social behaviors, Bellon (2006) used descriptors to identify values that can help a leader such as honesty and integrity. While many of us have our own idea of what honesty and integrity mean, it may be difficult to determine what those mean for functioning within a particular organization. Burns (1978) differentiates end values such as justice and liberty from modal values such as fairness and due process. Russell (2000) regards trust, appreciation of others, and empowerment as three attributes of instilling a values-based organizational environment. Marsh (2008) developed a values-based leadership framework that included leadership traits such as mindfulness, engagement, authenticity, and sustainment. Murray (2008) identified competence, commitment, collaboration, shared purpose, and respectful disagreement as values that are most beneficial in higher education leadership. As many people as there are describing values, so are the number of definitions to be found. Definitions that make sense to seasoned organizational leaders may have less meaning and clarity for those at lower levels in the organization who are often not included in the discussions involving the establishment of organizational values.

Some researchers suggest the proliferation of definitions can be attributed to different cultural factors. Concepts that are important in one setting may be less important in another. Bellon (2006) pinpoints culture as the underlying determinant in defining values. "Culture demonstrates the values to members of the organization and to outsiders in very visible ways" (Buchko, 2007, p. 36). Culture influences the development of

values and as Szabo, et al (2001) concludes, values bring the individual and the organization into alignment. Shared experiences or commonalities encourage people to come together and develop a culture. Organizations are comprised of individuals. Individuals established the foundation for the collective. Values are developed in a circular pattern that involves the individual and the organization interacting in a reciprocal fashion. Therefore, one may be led to believe that a standard list of values may be impossible to develop and define in a manner that all individuals and organizations can follow. It is incumbent upon leaders to build an organizational culture with clearly defined and attainable values.

Values-based leadership

If it is difficult to define values, then how does one build organizational culture that encompasses a set of values? Why should we try? Many have written about this dilemma. In addressing the "why" first, Kraemer (2011) believes that organizations need to strive to take on a greater global awareness. This requires doing the right thing because it contributes to the greater good. Kraemer believes doing what is right is based on values that make a positive contribution not only to the organization but to society as well. He suggests that doing what is right means being the best organization you can be for the employees, customers, stakeholders, and community. According to Kraemer (2011), values-based leadership will restore ethics, regain trust, and build confidence in a time when all those things have severely suffered. How do the leaders in organizations who have lost these things, or want to start out with them, make it happen?

Burns (1978) posits that leaders in values-based organizations must attend to the lower-level needs and values of followers. Fairness is one example of a lower-level value

that Burns believes must be established and met before leaders can move followers from focusing on personal gain to incorporating organizational values into their actions. Treat others as you would like to be treated. These ideals seem easy enough, almost elementary, yet the downfall of many organizations can be traced to the fairness principle and their failure to embody a socially acceptable set of values. Graber & Kilpatrick (2008) postulate that the successful values-based leader will (1) recognize personal and professional values, (2) determine how much variance from established values will be tolerated, and (3) understand the values of internal stakeholders. This model relies heavily on recognition of the individual's role in upholding personal and organizational values. After all, an organization may have established values, but it is up to the individuals in that organization to embody them. Prilleltensky's (2000) model for values-based leadership focuses on personal wellness, collective wellness, and relationship wellness that together indicate that understanding one's own values, understanding the values of the group, and building relationships to bind the two are the foundations for operating through a values-based framework. Prilleltensky asserts that failure to address these three areas of wellness leads those in an organization to focus on individual gain, and the concept of doing what is best for the collective becomes lost.

Bogue (2006) asks,

What happens to seduce the vision, to sear the conscience, and to seal the empathy of officers in executive suites so that they take the men and women of their colleges and corporations and the customers/clients of those organizations into harm's way with behavior both duplicitous and arrogant? (p. 314).

He calls for values-based leadership training that replaces the emphasis on personal or

organizational gain with that of developing a collective conscience. In reading the Freeh

Report (2012) one can ascertain that Penn State's collective conscience was lost in its

leaders' desire to protect a strong football tradition. The emphasis on personal and

organizational gain overshadowed the leaders' and institutions' commitment to upholding

values and allowed innocent children to be taken into harm's way for over a decade.

When football traditions and personal incentives are placed above the well-being of

others it is obvious that the collective conscience of an organization and values-based

leadership are not priorities.

Bellon (2006) posits that current leadership training is devoid of important

discussions regarding the importance of values and how those may influence the

individual and the organization. He suggests values can be developed, even learned,

through a comprehensive values-based leadership program in which participants learn to

model behaviors and have opportunities to work through simulated situations with

instructor guidance and feedback. He suggests that this type of training is imperative to

achieving sustainable changes and is currently lacking in most leadership programs. The

concept of leader values influencing others fits with Buell's (2008) findings that the

leadership behavior modeled by others in the organization. He seconds Bellon's (2006)

findings that values-based leadership requires continued development and betterment of

the individual in order to effectively lead the organization. Cangemi, Burga, Lazarus,

Miller & Fitzgerald (2008) echo this sentiment by stating, "Personal and professional

growth is a journey, not a destination" (p. 1030). Muscat & Whitty (2009) assert that a

strong values-based leadership program is necessary to create a strong sense of social

responsibility among leaders. They state, "The emergence of more values-based topics is called for in order to achieve a true long-term global ethic for people and planet . . ." (p. 39). A common thread woven through the various models of values-based leadership development is that it must reach all levels of the organization, be ongoing, and respect the individual and the organization. A comprehensive values-based leadership training program will identify personal values of the leaders while developing a set of values for the organization; both of which will shape actions.

Personal Values of the Leader Influence the Organization

Leaders can influence the development of the organizational climate or culture. Hood (2003) states, "The leadership style of the CEO thus serves to communicate and exhibit the values that lead to an ethical orientation in the organization" (p. 264). The Freeh Report (2012) concluded that Penn State President Graham Spanier failed in his duty to report a decade of abuse to the Board of Trustees. This unethical behavior and misguided leadership influenced others at the university who, in turn, also neglected to report what they heard or saw thereby building on a foundation of bad leadership and decision-making. As horrendous as it sounds, one can possibly understand how those in lower ranks of the college were too paralyzed to take action. Despite the university mission statement and a set of guiding values, leaders at the top of the organization were not embodying them creating a climate of uncertainty. In a particularly poignant statement Channing says, "If I'm articulating a plan of where the institution will go, I have to live that myself. I can't be separate and apart from that" (in Buell, 2008, p. 24).

Penn State is certainly not the only example of leadership failure where the personal values of leaders overshadowed those of the organization. Reilly & Ehlinger

(2007) note that the personal values of Ken Lay and Jeffrey Skilling at Enron brought

that organization to its knees and had far-reaching implications for the business world.

Political leaders have made front-page headlines numerous times in recent years due to

failing to display a set of personal values considered socially appropriate. The same can

be said for leaders of religious organizations. However, some leaders and organizations

get it right.

Robert Galvin took the helm of Motorola in the 1950s. His vision was to re-create

the company by including employees in all decisions that affected their work and to tie

bonuses to the efforts they put forth. O'Toole (1996) classifies Motorola as the first large

company to empower frontline workers to become leaders themselves. The results were

that employees gained a sense of ownership through their sharing of ideas, and the

company became known as a producer of some of the best American-made products of

the time. By valuing his employees' abilities, empowering them to take action, rewarding

them for their effort, and being a leader of leaders, Galvin practiced values-based

leadership before the concept had become popular.

President Robben Fleming led the University of Michigan through the tumultuous

1960s and 1970s by valuing open dialogue and expression of opposing ideas (Nelson,

2012). Although the university experienced more than one protest during this era,

Fleming was able to diffuse violence by respecting students' views, some of which he

agreed with and some he did not. So strong was his commitment to free expression that

when student protesters gathered on the front lawn of the presidential home, Fleming

joined them and spent hours sitting on the lawn listening to their concerns and answering

their questions. In excerpts from his memoirs, Fleming describes the tense situation and

the relief he felt when the group left peacefully (Steinberg, 2010). Fleming was so consistent in his values and smooth in his approach to unrest that he was able to protect the institution from experiencing the devastating events many of his contemporaries encountered.

Consistency between words and actions is a common theme in literature exploring values-based leadership. In establishing values-based organizations, leaders should set the example, establish clear expectations, and provide feedback (Grojean, Resick, Dickson & Smith, 2004). Fernandez & Hogan (2002) theorize that leaders with values that closely match those of the organization will be most effective, even over leaders with greater experience and industry knowledge. This theory is supported by the findings of Buchko's (2007) study. Through a survey, Buchko examined the values of two leaders in a manufacturing business and their subordinates. The two groups varied significantly in their rating of the importance of shared values. He found that of the seven core values represented in his survey instrument, those most clearly modeled by the leader were most often emulated by subordinates. The identified organizational values were (1) Creativity, (2) Dedication, (3) Initiative, (4) Motivation, (5) Respect, (6) Teamwork, and (7) Trust. Using interviews to gain further insight from individual leaders and team members, Buchko was able to determine the difference between the two groups' survey results was due to the individual team member's perception of how their leader's demonstrated the seven values. Those that witnessed values-based leadership rank the values as quite important while those that did not perceive values as important to their leader did not rate them as highly.

Often leaders' values trickle down through the organization (Trevino, Brown & Hartman, 2003; Buell, 2008; Buchko, 2007; Grojean, Resick, Dickson, & Smith, 2004). However, those at bottom levels of the organizational chart are more disconnected from organizational values as the importance of values becomes diluted through the trickle-down process (Trevino, et al, 2003). Mussig (2003) emphasizes the importance of the leader's spiritual and emotional intelligence in developing a model of leadership that focuses on followers' changing needs and workplace relationships. He makes an interesting observation when asserting that followers can be as influential in establishing corporate values as are leaders. Mussig (2003) asserts followers play a pivotal role in establishing organization culture, and culture influences values as discussed earlier. Therefore the circular nature of values inculcation is further solidified. While there is an opportunity for this circular pattern to be fluid and harmonious, it is also possible that the circle becomes disjointed as specific values espoused at one level of the organization are not supported at other levels.

Organizational Values Influence the Leader

What makes organizational values valuable? This is the question addressed by Parker & Rippey (2011). Marketing and promoting a set of values counts for very little if they have no relevance to individuals or the institution. The authors outline seven points to consider in establishing organizational values that may be useful to both the organization and the individual:

1) Survival—select values that will aid the organization in surviving difficult times

2) Authenticity—make sure organizational values reflect what is most important to the individuals

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3) Tension—provide clarity but expect tension from divergent viewpoints

4) Internalization--choose values that encourage personal commitment

5) Individualism--employees should be able to determine their fit within the organization

6) Timing—promote organizational values when the right leaders are in place to model them

7) Reinforcement—consistently reward behaviors that support the organizational values

An example of the impact solid organizational values have on a leader can be found in story of the Malden Mills textile manufacturing company's fire in 1995 (French & Holden, 2012). This company had recently undergone a restructuring process that allowed them to be a viable market competitor and avoid moving its operations oversees for cheaper labor as many of their competitors had recently done. The company valued its employees and was committed to keeping their jobs at home. In 1995, a devastating fire destroyed their production facility in an impoverished New England town. Although this family-owned company received an insurance settlement of roughly $300 million and could have kept those proceeds the CEO, Aaron Feuerstein, chose to reinvest the money in new facilities and keep the family business that had been the economic foundation of this community for forty years. Within two years after the fire, the facility reopened and rehired nearly all employees. The organization's value of individual and community betterment is evident from the top of the organization to the bottom. Feuerstein found that employees understood organizational values and were as committed to the company as

the company was to them. Feuerstein and Malden Mills have been described as "a public icon of corporate responsibility" (French & Holden, 2012, p.215).

In his study of Edmund Burke's leadership philosophy, Haque (2004) suggests that organizations have a responsibility to set the tone for individual ethical behavior, such as the example set by Malden Mills. Burke recognized that unbridled power often leads to a focus on individual gain rather than organization and social gain. To address this concern, he recommended developing an institutional foundation based on guidelines that would allow the use of prudent discretion and minimize the abuse of power. To combat the potential for abuse, Burke suggested developing an organizational framework to create standards of excellence and create a reference point for prudent decision making. He suggested that this framework should be built on common interest, friendship, and personal support. The outcome of creating such an institutional framework would be individuals working for the good of the collective through united strength. This institutional binding would discourage leaders from making decisions based solely on the potential for personal or professional gain.

Organizational values can influence employee behaviors. In fact, this experience is most likely the desired outcome of establishing a set of values. In deconstructing the concept of values, Crossan, et al. (2012) suggest that individual values are influenced by the environment in which someone lives and works. They contend that value frameworks are influenced by the companies individuals work for and, thereby, influence work-related actions. This theory is proven to be at least partially true by those at Penn State that knew things were not right but were reluctant to come forward to report the wrongdoing. It was also proven to be true at Columbia when President Bollinger was able to rely upon and

effectively communicate the value of freedom of expression held by his academic

institution in order to diffuse conflict surrounding his decision to bring a controversial

political figure to campus.

Reilly & Ehlinger (2007) emphasize the importance of companies selecting

leaders whose values closely match those of the organization. "To an individual

employee within an organization, the firm's values system represents a touchstone to

personal values" (p. 246). They contend that organizations who selected leaders with

values very closely matching those of the organization had leaders with longer tenure.

Manz, Manz, Adams & Shipper (2010) contend that organizations with a culture of

shared leadership realize a higher level of employee performance. Recognizing each

individual as an important contributor empowers employees when "they can feel free to

bring all their dimensions, their whole selves, to the workplace" (p. 288). The result is an

organization comprised of individuals committed to a set of core values and actions that

reflect those core values. Cohesiveness and consistency improve individual performance

or organizational outcomes. The involvement of employees in the decision-making

process at Motorola and the dedication of the Malden Mills employees epitomizes the

benefits of alignment of personal and organizational values.

Alignment of Values

London (1999) suggests that leaders can rely on their personal values to work

through difficult or challenging situations within the organization. This process,

according to London, requires the alignment of personal and organizational values. By

aligning organizational and personal values and basing actions on these values, leaders

are able to influence others to behave in a similar manner. Once both leaders and

followers have aligned values, they can improve organizational effectiveness and achieve desired performance outcomes through a cohesive group effort. This proposition proved to be true for President Fleming at University of Michigan as he allowed, in fact encouraged, students to express their opinions while preventing a full-scale campus takeover or incident.

Fernandez & Hogan (2002) argue that leaders whose values are aligned with those of the organization are most effective in leading employees toward shared goals. They state, "The ultimate destination becomes something people in the organization want to reach; therefore, effective leadership taps into people's core values and ensures everyone is striving toward the same goal" (p.25). Employees at Malden Mills textile manufacturing company witnessed the organization's commitment to them after the disastrous fire and reciprocated the commitment by returning to work with a strong dedication to and appreciation for the company.

The results of a study by Frankel, Schechtman & Koenigs (2006) suggested that leaders pay close attention to the values held by followers and balance those values with those of known effective leadership models. Conflict in the organization's and followers' values may be faced in achieving this balance. They stated, "The effective combination depends upon a circular linking of values that do not go together automatically, and in fact are often separated" (p.522) indicating that individual values may not seamlessly align with those of the organization resulting in difficult decision-making situations.

According to Marsh (2008), alignment of values requires leaders' recognition that they must contend with a variety of forces in an organization; over some of which they have no control. Alignment of personal and organizational values may be complex and

not always successful. As Nelson (2012) points out, many college presidents in the 1960s and 1970s attempted to align personal and organizational values with varying degrees of success.

Conflict in Values

McCrory (personal communication, February 5, 2011) in his course on conflict resolution defines conflict as "a state of opposition, disagreement or incompatibility between two or more people or groups of people . . .". McCrory goes further to outline five common causes of conflict as: (1)communication-lack of skill in communicating and misperceptions of intentions, (2)emotions-fear, hurt feelings or anger may drive and sustain conflict, (3)values-deep rooted concepts tied to core beliefs, (4)structural conflicts-rules, distribution of resources, political system or physical setting, and (5)history-bringing past conflicts into present day situations.

Organizations, including higher education, are prone to experience conflict in any one of these five areas. The deeply personal nature of values makes them particularly prone to influencing individual actions. Success or failure of an organization often rides on individual actions. McCrory elaborates on this point by reminding others that "deeply held commitments on the part of some people may create conflict with the values held by others" (p. 162). Unclear organizational values or values that are inconsistent with employee and stakeholder values cause confusion and magnify conflict. This is the problem President Perkins of Cornell faced as he struggled with gaining control of the campus environment in 1969.

Even when individuals and organizations have well-defined sets of values, actions may betray those values. After all, even Enron had a set of very clearly-defined corporate

values, yet the personal greed of corporate leaders rendered employee retirement accounts and investor portfolios worthless while the leaders reaped millions (Buchko, 2007). In their study of the role of values in leadership, Trevino, Brown & Hartman (2003) interviewed internal compliance officers regarding successful alignment of values within an organization. One of their respondents commented , "I have seen examples of people who would never dream of doing anything that they would view as unethical but in the heat of the battle they can sometimes lose their compass" (p. 20). This statement may well apply to Enron executives as they attempted to save their own fortunes as the company began to sink.

Sometimes the pressure to make decisions contrary to personal or organizational values comes from outside the gates. Joshi & Pushpanadham (2002) allow that the need to satisfy external stakeholders sometimes leads decision making to become an action of bargaining rather than an action based on core values. The authors assert that society often has a set of expectations for an institution yet will tolerate discrepancies between espoused values and actual practices if it proves to be beneficial on the individual level. One can think of stockholder expectations for dividends or a group of college alumni expecting football championships to envision how external expectations can skew leaders' behaviors causing conflict in values. Leading through a set of established values will often lead to conflict, and leaders must be willing to accept this conflict and the resulting unpopularity (Burns, 1978). Bogue (2006) emphasizes,

> It is in the crucible of ideological conflict, in the arena of competing moral principles, in the negotiation of breakpoint moments that the vision and

values of an individual, of a profession, and of an organization are tested

and forged (p.10).

Brady & Hart (2006) postulate that leaders must not let their fear derail them as they face uncomfortable elements in decision-making situations. It is the process of overcoming and working through conflict that helps individuals and organizations grow. These authors argue that conflict in administrative ethics is not necessarily a situation to avoid. Rather, conflict is an essential part of developing ethics and is fundamental to good administrative practice.

Summary

This literature review examined the definition of values, values-based leadership ideals, the influence of personal values on organizations, the influence of organizational values on the individual, alignment of values, and conflicts in values. Information was gleaned from qualitative studies, quantitative studies, and writings from experts in the field of leadership. Examples from higher education as well as the business sector have shown that there is much overlap in the way values, or the lack thereof, can impact an organization. What appears to be missing in the literature are studies giving prominence to leaders' experiences with conflicting values. Those conversations may further illuminate the role of personal values in decision making, how they differentiate between personal and organizational values, how they deal with conflicts between those values, and the personal and professional lessons learned from their experiences. These conversations will not only enrich the literature but will also offer practical guidance to leaders who may be facing some of the same struggles. Learning from the successes and mistakes of leaders who have been on the front line of difficult situations and decision-

making and hearing how they maintained personal and organizational values in the

process is an invaluable educational experience for leaders from all types of

organizations.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter includes a review of the problem statement, the purpose of the study, the research questions, a discussion of epistemological stance and theoretical perspective, an overview of methodology, a description of research participants and research setting, and explanation of the methods of data collection and analysis techniques. A summary concludes this chapter.

Statement of the Problem

As public servants, college and university leaders are expected to make ethical decisions and display integrity in the operation of higher education institutions. Students and parents rely on college officials to provide advice and direction on securing funding for college education while providing a quality educational experience. Donors, state legislatures, and federal agencies expect college administrators to exercise prudence and good judgment in financial management and educational decision making.

In spite of federal, state, community, and individual expectations for higher education leaders to exhibit integrity in all aspects of higher education, college scandals involving administrators prove that behaviors often do not meet expectations. Revelations of kick-backs to financial aid officers from student loan companies led to regulatory

legislation in 2007 (Jaschick, 2008). College officials have lined their pockets and exchanged political favors by awarding unearned degrees (Jaschick, 2008; Lederman, 2008).

It is clear that government regulation and public expectations cannot control corrupt leaders and force them to make ethical decisions. "Because a significant portion of the practice in educational administration requires rejecting some courses of action in favour of a preferred one, values are generally acknowledged to be central to the field" (Willower, 1992, as cited in Haydon, 2007, p. 6). Woods (2007) contends leadership has a dark side where leaders may project adherence to a socially acceptable set of personal values but are effective in masking deviance from their prescribed set of values in their decision making. He goes further to argue that perhaps organizations don't provide support for the type of behavior they wish employees to exhibit. The disconnection between employees and organization may cause values conflict. There is very little literature available that addresses how leaders negotiate this type of conflict.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore college leaders' experiences of managing conflicts between their personal values and those of the institution and its stakeholders. Narratives of participants' real-life leadership experiences provide thick, rich description that facilitated researcher understanding and from which other leaders can learn.

Research Questions

1. What is the role of personal values and organizational values in leadership decision making?

2. How do educational leaders describe conflicts they have experienced between personal values and those of the organization?

3. In what ways do leaders differentiate between personal and organizational values?

Overview of the Design of the Study

Qualitative research design champions conducting research within the participant's world. Warren & Karner (2010) aptly describe the difference between quantitative and qualitative research by stating, "While quantitative research can capture important statistical relationships—such as the relationship between gender and income—it is not well adapted to interpretive or social constructionist relationships" (p. 5). The uniqueness of participant interpretation and meaning making is celebrated in qualitative studies as an avenue to deeper understanding of a phenomenon. Cultural context and social structure illuminate the overall participant experience. Including the nuances of the environment in which leaders work is critical to understanding how they manage conflicts between personal and organizational values. Often, when people struggle to find solutions to problems, they seek guidance from others who have faced similar situations. For many interested in a particular phenomenon, first-hand advice on what worked and what didn't work is more useful than statistical information. For these reasons, the research questions included in this study were answered through a qualitative design. Gaining a deeper understanding of solutions to leadership dilemmas can best be achieved through hearing directly from leaders who describe their experiences in detail taking into account their social world and other players in that world. Qualitative methodology produced first-hand accounts of real-life leadership experiences in

managing values conflicts that will be useful for other leaders as they face similar struggles.

Denzin & Lincoln (2005) describe qualitative research as an opportunity for the researcher to become situated in the world of the participants. Creswell (2007) emphasizes that incorporating the natural participant setting into the study design and data collection allows the researcher to be "sensitive to the people and places under study" (p. 37). Blumer (1969) refers to this type of data collection as naturalistic inquiry. Placing oneself in the participant's natural surroundings provides an opportunity to capture the distinct social context of the setting along with the nuances of organizational culture that would otherwise be missing from data collection, analysis, and representation. This allows comparisons to be made that highlight differences and similarities in participants' leadership experiences. Designing a research study, according to Crotty (2003), begins with acknowledging researcher epistemology; which in turn influences the theoretical perspective that underpins the study; which then determines the methodology used; and finally determines the method of data collection. Conceptual fit is essential in a well-designed qualitative study and is achieved through alignment of epistemology, theoretical perspective, and methodology (personal communication, Bailey, 2011). This alignment assures that the research problem can be adequately addressed through the research design in line with the foundational assumptions of knowledge governing the study.

Achieving conceptual fit in a qualitative study begins with recognition of the researcher's epistemological stance. This provides insight into the beliefs about knowledge that drove the research design. Crotty (2003) defines epistemology as "how

we know what we know" (p. 8). He elaborates on the epistemological stance of constructionism as "the view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world . . ." (p. 42). He postulates that, in the constructionist paradigm, the relationship between an individual and an object is so intertwined that an object does not have meaning until an individual determines the meaning based on cultural and contextual factors. Likewise, human experience cannot adequately be described without understanding the meaning of an object to the individual. Warren & Karner (2010) describe epistemology as the emergence of knowledge that is specific to time and place; an occurrence that cannot be exactly duplicated and therefore cannot be generalized. A constructionist epistemology recognizes that there are no "true" interpretations of phenomena rather there are only individualized interpretations from multidimensional actors. Individual meaning is constructed by actors in relation to interaction within their world. As surely as campus leaders are unique human beings, so their leadership experiences are constructed with singular and unique perspectives shaped by the contextual relationship with their environment.

Theoretical perspective is the researcher's view of the world that influences the research design and their assumption about what knowledge the methodology can deliver. Crotty (2003) defines theoretical perspective as ". . . the philosophical stance lying behind a methodology" (p. 66). It is a researcher's assumption about how knowledge is gained and how a particular methodology can bring that knowledge forward. An interpretivist theoretical perspective is a philosophical stance that embraces the

individualized experience of understanding our social world. In this perspective, understanding is most likely to be gained by seeking participants' interpretations of their worlds through qualitative methods rather than through statistical analysis. Interpretive research opens the door to learn from the lived experiences of others in a personal, emotional way. As such, interpretivists seek understanding from the viewpoint of the individual. Individuals are complex beings that make meaning of the world through a personalized lens.

Symbolic interactionism is a methodology based on interpretivism. This particular form of interpretivism posits that individual interpretations of the things and others in an environment influence actors' actions. Each actor will have a contextually-derived perspective of the things and others they encounter and will therefore take action based upon a perspective that may be quite different from other actors. Blumer (1969) refers to the methodology as a "down-to-earth approach to the scientific study of human group life and human conduct" (p. 47). Human group life is described as the ongoing process of interaction among people, interpretation of interaction, and resulting actions. Individuals are always in relation with other individuals and base conduct on their interactive relationship. Human conduct is any action taken by any actor. Approaching a research problem with a symbolic interactionist mindset allows the researcher to "see social action in terms of the actor since it is only the actors that act" (Blumer, 1969, p. 55). In order to achieve this level of insight and clarity, the researcher must see things from the standpoint of the actor and study action in terms of how it is formed within specific contexts and communities. Blumer's position is that interpreting objects and meaning making is a formative process upon which actions are based. This formative process is

heavily influenced by social structure, status, culture, and values. Blumer champions using exploratory methods that allow the researcher to interactively move with participants as they weave their personal accounts; changing directions in the path of inquiry as the conversations evolve. He suggests exploring topics and issues broadly in initial stages but narrowing as specific points of interest are introduced by either the participant or the researcher. The purpose of the exploration is to move closer to understanding a phenomenon in relation to a particular set of circumstances that is bound by time and place.

Denzin (1992) describes symbolic interactionism as "a theory of experience and a theory of social structure" (p. 3). He posits symbolic interactionists are interested in the here-and-now of personal interactions that connect people to each other. Like Blumer, Denzin believes this methodology will allow the researcher to unveil the nuances of the organization in which college leaders' must operate. Following Blumer, Denzin posits that symbolic interactionism not only allows but requires the researcher to assume that humans create their worlds through interaction with the others and the things in their environment. It is the researcher's task to "write texts that remain close to the actual experiences of the people they are writing about" (Denzin, 1992, p. 25). Through the researcher's intense exploration and interpretation, participants' personal experience and processes of meaning making are more fully understood in context of structure and culture. At times, actors may have an experience that is epiphanic and possibly life-altering. The deeply felt emotions resulting from these intense experiences give dimension to the narratives as they unfold and deepen understanding of leadership struggles.

Crotty (2003) succinctly describes symbolic interactionism as being ". . . all about those basic social interactions whereby we enter into the perceptions, attitudes, and values of a community, becoming persons in the process" (p. 8). One of the factors that must be considered when designing a study based on symbolic interactionism is culture. Crotty (2003) refers to culture as irreducible and incomparable. The impact of culture on human behavior is undeniable. "A person is a personality because he belongs to a community, because he takes over the institutions of that community into his own conduct" (Mead as cited in Crotty, 2003, p.74). Blumer (1969) posits that culture is derived from the actions of individuals based on conceptions of values, norms, rules, and the like. So, it appears that individuals shape culture and culture shapes individuals.

Procedures and Methods

One method that allows researchers to enter the participant's world and to make cultural observations is by conducting interviews. To understand the unique experiences of college leaders who have managed conflict between personal and organizational values, I conducted personal interviews with current and former campus leaders. In-depth interviews with a limited number of participants is common in qualitative inquiry. Employing a wide variety of data collection and analysis techniques with a smaller number of participants allows the researcher to establish an intimacy with both participants and the data (?) that enhances every facet of the study. Spending one-on-one time with the participants allows the thick, rich descriptions to develop that are the hallmark of qualitative studies. Meeting with participants in their own environment enabled me to make essential observations and have a better understanding of the

contextual environment in which the participants work and make decisions. This design is the foundation of symbolic interactionism.

Warren & Karner (2010) suggest that conversations with participants lead to rich narratives that tell a collective and an individual story. Denzin (1992) encourages one-on-one encounters to allow participants to relay accounts of their actions and motives. He argues that intimate conversations situated within the participant's environment will encourage participants to share personal stories and struggles. In order to encourage spontaneous dialogue, open-ended interview questions were utilized that allow participants to share their experiences and perspectives regarding negotiating conflict between personal values and organizational values. Since respondents' perspectives were likely to vary, participants were encouraged to explore avenues that are specific to their leadership experiences and illuminate their personally held core values. A constructionist approach fits this project well as the discussions are allowed to unfold by the participants rather than by the researcher. The process of collecting qualitative data in this manner allowed the process to be fluid; the researcher moving with the participants as they relay and make meaning of their leadership experiences.

This study was conducted by collecting qualitative data from five current or former campus leaders at the Vice Presidential or Presidential level. Each participant served or is serving a different college campus in the Midwest. The researcher conducted, recorded, and transcribed interviews of approximately two hours in length. Member checking and follow-up questions helped to expand and enrich data collection. Document analysis was conducted through examination of organizational charts and vitas. Observation of participants in a meeting setting revealed important organizational and

cultural dynamics at the institution. Triangulation of data was achieved by examining

data from multiple sources and perspectives.

Study Sites

Four of the interviews were conducted on community college campuses in a

Midwestern state. The community colleges in this study vary greatly in location as well

as size and characteristics of the student body. One common feature found among the

community colleges is the open door admission policy that offers admittance regardless

of high school GPA or ACT scores. This open admittance opportunity separates

community colleges from regional and research institutions in the state and often attracts

students who would otherwise have limited higher education options. Community

colleges in this Midwestern state offer technical certificates and associate's degree

programs that are terminal as well as degrees that can be transferred to bachelor degree

awarding institutions.

One interview was conducted at an urban community college with multiple

locations within a large city and a student population of over 10,000 students. Three

interviews were conducted on the campuses of community colleges located in small, rural

towns in separate regions of the state. The fifth interview was conducted with a retired

regional college president at the location of his choosing. As emphasized by Blumer

(1969) and Denzin (1992), entry into the natural environment of the participants, when

possible, is most desirable when conducting qualitative research. Observation of

participants in their situated environment and culture enriches representation of

experiences.

Study Participants

The participants in this study were selected purposefully. College leaders who are currently or have previously served as Vice President or President were identified. Diversity in length of leadership experience and variance in size and location of campus was also sought in order to allow for a wide range of experiences and perspectives to be included in this study. Participants were contacted by email or telephone to verify interest in participating. During these conversations, the purpose of the study was explained and the time commitment for participants outlined. Approval to conduct research with these individuals was sought from Oklahoma State University's Institutional Review Board before interviews or data collection began (See Appendix B).

One study participant is a rural community college president in the fifth year of presidency. Prior to holding his current position, he served in various capacities in higher education and career technical schools. The second participant is the Provost at an urban community college. He has served in higher education leadership for approximately twenty years. Two participants are female serving in different capacities at different institutions. Finally, the fifth participant is a retired college president with a lengthy tenure at a college in this Midwestern state. Great effort was taken to select a group of participants that represent diversity in gender, length of service, and institutional characteristics.

Due to the sensitive nature of the discussions that unfolded during this study, it was critical that participants be reassured of anonymity. Confidentiality was further protected by using pseudonyms for both the leaders and the institutions and references to individual are sufficiently vague to prevent identification. Assurance of anonymity

encouraged leaders to openly discuss experiences without fear of repercussion or harm to their current positions. This was essential to both gaining access to campus leaders and creating a safe avenue for sharing leadership experiences that led to conflicts in values and difficult decision-making.

Data Collection

Blumer implores researchers to utilize a variety of investigative techniques as they study the research problem in an attempt to fully understand the elements that shape participants' experiences. Bloomberg & Volpe (2008); Gay, Mills & Airasian (2009); Wolcott (2009) refer to this process as triangulation as an avenue for creating a strong study that can help answer the founding research questions guiding the study and consequently establishing the validity of the data. Since a single session with an individual cannot possibly capture the nuances of each individual's leadership experiences, multiple data collection methods were employed.

One-to-one Interviews. Individual interviews were held in the participant's environment. With the participants' permission, I audio taped the interview sessions. Open-ended questions were used that allowed participants to describe the meaning they make of managing conflicts in values and lessons learned while doing so (see Appendix C for interview guide). During each two-hour session, I took jottings of surroundings and other observations that may have been missed in the recordings. I asked follow-up questions and probed for deeper responses when necessary. I transcribed each session verbatim to capture the utterances and pauses of each participant. Additionally, I included observations of facial expressions and body language that may enhance or emphasize the spoken words. Perhaps most importantly, I remained flexible in my interview protocol to

allow participants to use their own terminology while making meaning of their experiences and explore paths that I did not initially anticipate. Chapter Four consists of a detailed narrative that introduces readers to each participant.

Values-sorting exercise. In order to gain deeper insight into participant meaning-making, a hands-on exercise was introduced during each interview session. Six blank index cards were given to each interview participant following question one of the interview guide. Participants were asked to identify three personal values and three organizational values that best depict their leadership philosophy or experiences. This exercise aided in transitioning to talks of values and whether the leaders experienced conflicts between personal and organizational values. The cards were used by the researcher as prompts if dialogue waned, in analyzing data, and completing Saldana's (2009) diagram for moving from codes to themes to theory (see Appendix B). This exercise ensured participant experiences and perspectives were driving data collection and analysis. Before concluding the interview, participants were asked to review the value cards and definitions they provided earlier in the session in order to reflect on their original responses and make alterations if they so desire. This encouraged participants to think deeply about the values they discussed and contemplate how sharing personal stories may have illuminated their own perspectives on values.

Demographic documentation. Demographic data was collected from each participant prior to the interview by requesting individual resumes that contain specifics about background and experience. If resumes were not received from participants prior to the interview, the opening discussions included a verbal description of background and experience.

Observations of leadership meeting. I observed an executive team meeting with one president following our interview only ten days earlier. I pulled into the parking lot on an unusually warm, but windy, December day. I followed the familiar curving sidewalk to the administration building and dodged groups of students on the sidewalk. I entered the Presidential suite of offices and was greeted warmly by his assistant. The President greeted me from his desk and motioned me to take a seat at the large conference table where we sat during our interview. I declined the offer to sit at the table and positioned myself a few feet away from the table in a leather chair. From there I would be close enough to observe facial expressions and general interactions but was not so close as to make the team members feel I was inserting myself into their meeting. Three females and one male entered the room one by one and extended warm greetings to me. There was little ethnic diversity. During the meeting, the group's relaxed appearance and free-flowing conversation made the exchange of ideas among the members seem natural and effortless. The president indicated during our interview that a sense of team was an important value to the organization and that seemed to be reflected in the leadership meeting. When the Vice President of Academic Affairs was addressing an academic issue, all team members listened attentively and freely asked questions or offered suggestions. The same was true when the interim Vice President of Student Affairs addressed student-related issues for discussion. During this exchange the president asked, "Is this good for the students?" This was a point he brought up during our interview: organizational values placed great emphasis on what was best for the students. The group met for over an hour before adjourning for a ten minute break, at which point I left the meeting.

Blumer (1969) postulates that symbolic interactionism focuses on human group life and human conduct. Observation of campus leaders in a strategic meeting allowed me to get a sense of how the actors interpret their environment and formulate a course of action while also allowing for observation of individual and organizational values.

Campus visits. I met with four of the five participants on their respective campuses with the fifth interview being held at the home of the retired president. I observed and soaked up the scenery making jottings regarding geographic location, size, first impression, architectural style, and campus activity. I made note of the office spaces where I met with the participants. Each campus presented a unique landscape as I pulled into the parking lot. No two were the same.

Follow up methods. Following the initial interview sessions, emails were utilized for asking additional follow-up questions. Member checking improved clarity and accuracy of representation. Journal books were given to each participant at the conclusion of the interview for them to record thoughts that develop after the session.

Mission Statements. Despite my personal questions about the utility of mission statements, they are a staple of most organizations, and colleges are no exception. The four mission statements I examined contained the expected elements of excellence, student learning and community betterment. One mission statement for a metropolitan location also included the phrases "creative energy" and "innovation". I was struck by its polished appearance. Would I see a level of sophistication in appearance and operations at the metro campus that was reflected in the mission statement that set it apart from the rural campuses? The metropolitan website, along with one rural website, also contained a list of organizational values. I made note of the values "collaboration", "service",

"stewardship", and "diversity" in order to look for these phrases in interactions with campus leaders.

Organizational Charts. Organizational charts, located at the colleges' websites, gave me a feel for the formal structure of each institution. All shared a similar structure within the top tiers of the organization: the President reported to the local Board of Regents who reported to the state governing board for higher education. There were considerable differences in numbers of immediate subordinates with the titles, depth and width of the charts showing surprising variation. I was reminded of a one statement one vice president made during our interview: "I report to one boss, the President. He reports to seven." I previously viewed the organizational charts as a pyramid supported by the placement of "Board of Regents" in one box above the President. However, when I visually replaced the single box for "Board of Regents" with seven boxes, one for each regent, and did the same for the state level governing board I realized that the pyramid was now more of an hourglass shape with the president located at the most narrow point of the structure. The illustration below depicts the hourglass organizational shape.

Illustration 1

State Regent	State Regent	State Regent	State Regent	State Regent	State Regent	State Regent	State Regent	State Regent	State Regent

Local Regent	Local Regent	Local Regent	Local Regent	Local Regent	Local Regent	Local Regent

College President

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Vice President	Vice President	Vice President	Vice President	Vice President

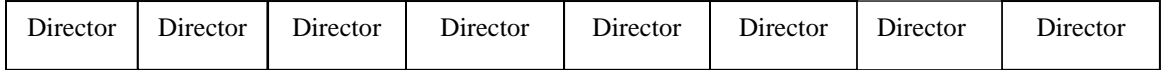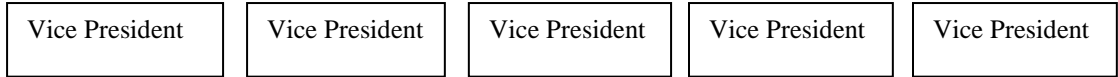| Director	Director	Director	Director	Director	Director	Director	Director

Illustration 1 is a visual representation of the inherent struggle the president may face. Being positioned between the governing level and the operational level may inherently place the President in the chasm between what is mandated and what is practical in terms of operations. Being in the middle results in many individuals and needs to satisfy where, as the participant illuminated, a Vice President only has one boss.

Photographs. In seeking pictures of the administrative teams, I looked for the age, gender, and ethnic mix of the colleges' leadership. I was surprised to find that the board of regents of the metropolitan institution consisted entirely of what appeared to be white, mid-aged males; the listing of executive cabinet members contained a larger percentage of names with PhD or EdD credentials than did the rural colleges. The executive team of one of the rural colleges showed a mix of gender and age but no apparent ethnic diversity. The other three rural colleges had a more diverse board of regents than the metropolitan college and it also contrasted with the preconceived notions I had of colleges located in cities having a more diverse leadership body than those in rural areas. This finding also contradicted the metropolitan college's mission statement that identified diversity as an essential element to the organization.

Presidential Messages. Website messages from the President mostly consisted of soft sales pitches, however one message from the President was markedly different and

presented a brief synopsis of the leader's career and qualifications. I was eager to see if I found something equally unexpected during our conversation.

Resumes. Examining resumes (with the exception of the retired president) provided a more detailed description of each participant's leadership background including a sense of educational backgrounds and timelines of participants' career path. In addition to a resume, one participant gave me a handout summarizing his leadership philosophy that he uses in campus presentations to reinforce his commitment to the institution and to emphasize his expectations for his followers. I found this handout to be a useful tool as we talked about values during the interview and also later as I reviewed our conversation and began coding data.

Field notes and memos. In field notes I jotted notes about my drive to the campus, my thoughts on the way, my observations once on the college property, and my thoughts immediately following each interview. I made note of office appearances, atmosphere, body language, interesting remarks, and topics that arose in which I wanted to delve further.

At times during the interview, transcription, and coding processes thoughts would beg me to stop and ponder more deeply. I wrote memos, as suggested by Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (1995), in my spiral notebook that helped me sort through my own background. I wrote about certain phrases participants used that caught my attention. When something struck me as odd or out of place I wrote a memo to try to understand how the inconsistency fit into the study. I found that taking time to write through things I struggled with during the analysis phase helped me wrestle with my angst until I felt I was able to accurately represent participant meaning. Sometimes I was forced to accept

that there were things still left to understand about this complex matter of values and leadership.

Data Analysis

Following data collection, I used open coding to inductively analyze data for recurring themes and patterns that I found in participants' comments. As I listened and re-listened to the recorded interviews and scoured the transcripts I identified common words and phrases used by participants, explored indigenous meanings as suggested by Patton (2002), and made note of those. Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (1995) suggest ". . . the ethnographer should seek to generate as many codes as possible, at least initially, without considering possible relevance either to established concepts in one's own discipline or to a primary theoretical focus" (p. 152). In order to generate as many codes as possible, I created a coding board out of Saldana's (2009) diagram for coding (see Appendix B) for each interview participant's set of index cards as well as for my own. I began the coding exercise by placing each participant's handwritten index cards in a row on the left side of their individual coding board with the personal values cards preceding the organizational values. From there, the cards were grouped into a set of personal and organizational "category" boxes. As I read the interview transcripts and studied the handwritten cards, I looked for emerging themes within each participant's data. As similarities and differences in the data emerged, I created subcategory boxes to further organize participant data. From this point in the coding exercise, I grouped the cards into more comprehensive "themes/concept" box that I labeled with the emergent themes as I moved across the coding board.

I created a separate data display from my own set of index cards that I compiled from interview transcripts of all five participants. This allowed me to depict information gleaned from the participants' words that may reveal something different than the individual's set of cards. The end result is that I had one data display board from each participant and one that was a compilation of all interviews.

The individual data display boards served as a visual representation of the data that enhances the written description of my findings and increases the validity of the project. Wolcott (2009) recommends coding all data collected and then searching for themes and categories that allow the data to be grouped in a logical, yet representative, manner. The data display board developed from Saldana's (2009) discussion of coding allowed me to use participant-developed concepts and themes in tying the data to existing leadership research and theory. From there, I was able to make connections or distinctions between the participants' experiences and existing literature. This allowed me to discover additional knowledge and provided an opportunity to identify gaps in literature that may require further research. Developing a coding board for my own set of index cards was instrumental in identifying a theory to utilize in understanding participant experiences.

In addition to searching for indigenous meaning of each participant's experiences, coding and sorting the data allowed me to find connections and distinctions in the experiences of the group of leaders. I looked for participants' thick, rich description that offered the readers insight into the conflict they faced between personal and organizational values—the experiences that are similar and those that are unique. There were times when I needed to dig deeper into a concept or statement that was introduced

by interviewees. Writing analytic statements and memos, as recommended by Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (1995), aided in understanding members' terms and theories while focusing on data pieces that connect or separate experiences. The coding and analysis exercises were designed to create multiple opportunities to view and work with the data. Working with the data from various perspectives enabled me to accurately represent the participants' perception of the role of personal values in leadership, how they dealt with conflict between personal and organizational values, how they differentiate between the two, and the personal and professional lessons learned from these experiences. Data immersion as described by Bailey (personal communication, 2011) and an open-minded approach to the data allowed me to better understand the meaning each participant assigned not only to personal and organizational values, but also the meaning they made of the events that created conflict between the two, the process of coming to a resolution, objects and others that influenced the decision, and the contextual environment in which the decision was made. It is the role of values, the tension in decision-making, the influence of others and the environment that makes the experience meaningful to the individual. This is the foundation of symbolic interactionism as it was designed to explore the dynamic relationship between an individual and the things and others encountered in life and the meaning that is made from the relationship.

Trustworthiness of research findings must be a concern for all qualitative studies. Lincoln & Guba (1985) suggest utilizing a set of evaluative criteria that will substantiate researcher efforts in producing a reliable and trustworthy study. Due to the emergent flexible design (Patton, 2002) used in this study, it was essential to allow information to be freely given and collected and then confirm data trustworthiness during the analysis

and discussion phase. Data from multiple sources was collected early in the study,
however confirmability and triangulation did not occur until the analysis phase. Member
checking is one avenue to credibility, but is completed as the researcher reviews data
collected and finds it necessary to reconnect with participants to ensure accurate
representation. Likewise, transferability of data cannot be determined until the data has
been collected, coded, analyzed and presented for reader synthesis during the findings
and discussion chapter. Therefore, the greatest opportunity for ensuring some aspects of
trustworthiness of findings happens after data collection. With this in mind, the
trustworthiness table below was developed to confirm trustworthiness of data collection
and analysis.

Table 1--Trustworthiness Table

Criteria	Technique	Outcome
Credibility	Member checking	Verify findings with participants
Transferability	Thick description	Sufficiently deep discussion that will allow readers to apply findings to their particular situations
Confirmability	Triangulation	Use of multiple data sources to produce a comprehensive study and increase understanding

Implications for Research, Theory, and Practice

This study was designed to gain insight into conflicts between personal and organizational values campus leaders may have faced in their leadership roles. What was learned through conversations with college leaders can be utilized by leaders in many different types of organizations by enriching existing research, theory, and practice.

Research

Leadership research has been conducted on personal values and organizational values. Studies have been conducted that include leaders from diverse types of organizations. This study is unique in that it seeks to gain first-hand accounts of situations where leaders may have faced conflicts between personal values and organizational values. Existing leadership research is lacking this type of inquiry.

Theory

Leaders and aspiring leaders will have no problem finding literature on various leadership theories. This study contributes to existing leadership theory through the personal narratives offered by top-level leaders. Lessons learned by a relatively new campus leader as well as seasoned campus leaders illuminate areas of leadership theory that may need to be expanded in order to aid current and potential leaders cope with conflicts between personal and organizational values.

Practice

What appears to be lacking from existing literature is straight talk from leaders on the role values play in decision-making, how they have dealt with conflicts in values, how they differentiate between the two, and the lessons that they have learned from those conflicts. The personal experiences, problems, and solutions of new and seasoned leaders

offers practical guidance to readers as they face their own leadership struggles. This study provides an insider's perspective on how to deal with conflicts in values that leaders of today and tomorrow may face.

Summary

When seeking to understand how college leaders manage conflicts between personal values and those of the institution, individual experiences and perspectives are most useful to readers. Qualitative research is designed to elicit just such narratives. The inductive nature of symbolic interactionism allowed leaders' experiences to be illuminated in light of the environment in which they interact with others. The complexities of leadership were captured through in-depth conversations, observations, values-sorting exercises, and document analysis.

In order to develop a deep understanding of a particular phenomenon, the researcher must enter the setting when possible to conduct interviews and make observations. Fieldwork provides an opportunity to engage with participants in their natural environment. The fieldworker "is concerned with 'getting into place' to observe interesting, significant events in order to produce a detailed written record of them" (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995, p. 18). A research design based on a constructionist epistemology and interpretivist theoretical perspective requires this type of immersion as the experiences of participants are constructed and interpreted in a naturalistic manner. Understanding the phenomenon of campus leaders managing conflicting values is most effectively realized through one-on-one conversations where they are allowed to share their experiences and make meaning in a manner that captures uniqueness and individuality.

Coding and analyzing data is a time-consuming yet vital process that offers multiple opportunities to look at the data; working and re-working the data each time. Data analysis included immersing myself in the data through interview transcription, coding board activities, document analysis, review of interview notes and jottings, and memo writing. Immersion in the data and using multiple tools for analysis aided me in gaining understanding and fully representing the participants' experiences in the written text.

This chapter highlighted the research design that was implemented in order to address the research problem. It included a review of the purpose of the study and research questions. Details of data collection and analysis techniques were outlined. Efforts to ensure credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of data were established in order to prove trustworthiness of findings. Chapter Four will present a narrative portrait of participants and the research settings. Chapter Five integrates the findings of the study while Chapter Six explores the application of theoretical perspective and ties the data to existing theory.

CHAPTER IV

NARRATIVE PORTRAIT

The purpose of this study was to explore college leaders' perceptions of conflicts between personal and organizational values. Developed within the constructionist epistemology and symbolic interactionism framework, this study is a look at the lived experiences of leaders as they reflect on their experiences interacting in their environments and negotiating values conflicts. Denzin & Lincoln (2005) champion the researcher who places her/himself in the participant's environment in an attempt to gain a fuller understanding of the social and cultural context within which such interaction occurs.

This chapter incorporates not only the data collected through one-on-one interviews but also utilizes analysis of documents and observations. Due to the importance in a study based on symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969), of recognizing the individual and relationships with the things and others in their environment a narrative portrait was developed of each participant (using pseudonyms and avoiding titles). A rich description of the environment and the encounters between participant and researcher draws the reader into the lives of those involved in this study as the story unfolds. Researcher reflexivity, as suggested by Patton (2002), is re-introduced near the

end of the chapter to assist the reader in understanding researcher positionality and its potential influence on data collection and analysis.

Meeting the Participants

Owen

I arrived on Owen's campus, full of excitement and nervousness, on a crisp fall day. It was the last day before an extended break for students and that fact was evident by the empty parking lots and quiet campus. Bright red Christmas bows hanging from lamp posts and doorways moved softly in the breeze; three young adults meandered down a sidewalk in no apparent hurry to arrive at their destination. It appeared that the campus and its inhabitants were ready for some rest, and I felt a twinge of guilt for taking up Owen's time when he may himself be ready for some much needed rest. I had been on this campus before and felt a sense of comfort in that familiarity as I followed the uninhabited curving sidewalk toward the executive's office.

Owen was a casually dressed man with a bright, welcoming smile who immediately approached me with an extended hand and words of welcome. I felt more at ease as we walked through the reception area to his bright office decorated with memorabilia from the college. Owen motioned me to sit at the head of the large conference table, and he seated himself immediately to my left. As we shared pleasantries, I made a mental note that he appeared a few years younger than me. His high level of energy and enthusiasm belied the streaks of gray in his hair. One thing was certain: Owen's enthusiasm was contagious, and I began to feel myself relax.

For over two hours, Owen spoke openly about his journey into higher education administration and some of the successes and challenges he faced along the way. For

most of our time together, Owen sat comfortably in his chair with his hands resting in his

lap or on the chair arms. As with all of the participants in this study, I asked Owen to

participate in the values exercise. While he contemplated the task at hand, Owen shifted

forward in his seat, bent over the cards in front of him with furrowed eyebrows and

seemed to be a little uncertain. I began to worry that the cordial atmosphere that had been

established may become threatened as we shared the following exchange:

Owen: You're giving me a test! [chuckled nervously]

Owen: So if they are the same, it's okay? [lifted his head to make eye

contact while still bent over the cards]

Me: That is okay. It is whatever you think it is.

Owen returned his gaze to the blank cards in front of him and I leaned back in my

chair to avoid seeming to peer over his shoulder as he wrote. He spoke softly in

broken phrases as he appeared to be talking his way through the exercise. I chose

to remain silent while he thought through the activity. He finished the task and

slid the cards to me as he leaned forward in his chair with his forearms resting on

the edge of the table. He was not smiling. From his body language, I felt certain

the tone of the interview had changed.

Me: So, you have groups here that, if you think about, well this is what I

stand for as a person. This is what is important to me individually [I slid the

three cards with personal values in front of him where he could read them in

a single row] and this is what my organization represents [I made a second

row of three cards in front of him]. This is what I am looking at. Instances of

situations where maybe you thought there were challenges in making the

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two work together [I pointed to the two separate rows of cards: one row of personal values and one row of organizational values]. Can you describe a situation for me where maybe your personal values were in conflict with what you had to do to satisfy the organization? [Owen leaned back in his chair and rested his elbows on the chair arms with his hands clasped in front of him.]

Owen: Yes! I have a great example. [the smile on his face returned]

Owen seemed to relax and the enthusiasm returned to his voice and body language as he began to tell a story of his early days in administration.

It was the worst four years of my life because I was being pressed constantly and I never did compromise my principle and values but I had to find ways to basically keep my job [laughs] and do things with integrity even though you are asked to do to do things that you felt were discriminatory towards employees. Being dishonest towards employees. Not coming from you, but when your supervisor says I want you to carry, you know, my message to your level of the people you supervise and this is what I want you to tell them. And you tell them it is coming from you. If you are a person of integrity and you have strong values, and you are being asked to do those types of things, it is going to going to eat you alive. So, you either stay there and suffer through it or you move on down the road.

After two hours, I put the tape recorders away and spent another twenty minutes talking about higher education. As we said our goodbyes, I noted that Owen still had a look of energy and enthusiasm at the end of a long day.

Twyla

Meeting with Twyla required I travel to a location I had never visited. The long drive gave me time to refocus my thoughts on the task at hand. I was worried about the hands-on exercise and wondered if Twyla would display the same level of discomfort with the activity Owen had displayed. At the campus, I found the buildings shared a mid-century architectural style, with the exception of a new building that appeared to be apartment-style dorms. The linear layout of the campus gave the appearance of consistency and well-thought out expansion plans.

I met Twyla, a middle-aged female with a straightforward manner, in her small neatly organized office. There were decorations on the bookshelves and walls that gave the room a comfortable, homey feel. We settled into her office for a working lunch. I introduced the hands-on exercise with trepidation as I recalled Owen's response to the activity. Twyla did not hesitate to begin writing. She wrote phrases on her cards to describe personal and organizational values in contrast to Owen's use of single words. As Owen had, Twyla also talked her way through the exercise. When I asked Twyla if she had ever experienced conflict between her personal values and those of the organization she became visibly upset, pushed her lunch to the side, and walked to her desk to retrieve a tissue. As her story unfolded, I listened carefully to tone of voice and watched as her body language changed dramatically right before me. The straight forward professional lady that had greeted me at her office was transformed into a vulnerable person sharing

with me some of her most challenging professional moments that were undeniably personal.

About three years ago we had to let some staff go. But for the health of the institution, we had no choice. Some of them had worked for me for years. I knew their families. And just looking at it we've got 100 employees and we need to get to 95. But if the five you are talking about, if you put a name to them and you put a face to them. . .[her voice trailed off and she wiped her eyes]. Then comes the board meeting. I made it through it professionally. I almost literally had to run down the hall. I had been dealing with it for quite a while, but that was final because they [the board] voted to do it. I probably spent 30 minutes or an hour in here just, you know. . . because it goes against my personal values because we should have never been in that position. And, so I began to second guess myself. Where did we go wrong that we did not budget properly, make the right income, [plan] expenditures properly? Because seeing this coming-- we could have prevented it. And the hardest part is when I had the answers, I gave the answers, and I was ignored. But yet through no fault of mine and no fault of theirs we all had the consequences. But my personal value was "I don't care what that project was unless it was going to directly impact the students and their ability to get a better education". Because the price we are paying is too heavy in human capital versus the money. And my value system is different than those who chose to do that. And I have never really reconciled to it and probably never will.

It was at this moment that I realized how badly I wanted to tell the story of how personal

values and organizational values sometimes collide. I wanted to (needed to) hear these

stories and share them with others who may very well find themselves in the same

struggle.

Marilyn

Marilyn is a leader at a small rural college settled in a beautiful part of this

Midwestern state. The small college town streets were lined with old Victorian homes.

The campus had a wide variety of building styles that made it very interesting to this

first-time visitor. I located the administration building in the center of campus and was

struck by its beautiful exterior. Inside the building I realized that although the deep cherry

wainscoting and stylish lounge furnishings were obviously new, the hallway floors

slanted slightly in places and creaked under foot. The building had the familiar scent of

an old library and I began to suspect that this was a very old structure that had recently

undergone a massive renovation.

Marilyn was a mid-aged female who exudes energy with a bright smile and

sparkling eyes. If I had to select one word to describe her it would be "vibrant." Her

bright jacket with a playful pattern matched her personality. I was eager to hear about the

journey that took her from faculty to administration through what she described as

leadership turmoil and some very difficult years.

> I served [several] Presidents myself and survived. So, anyway, we had
>
> been through about seven years of "floating" is what I call it. We had a
>
> president after Dr. Worth who had been here for [many] years. We had a
>
> president that stayed for [for a shorter time] and he did a really good job.

He was from [another region of the country] and was not well accepted,

but he was a great leader. I learned a lot from him. A great team of

administrators. Then, he retired and we hired another President who came

in and got off on the wrong foot, listened to some people that didn't really

know what they were talking about . . and it took us about two or three

years for him to trust me. Then, the rest of everybody he got rid of. That

was probably one of the most challenging things that we have ever been

through as an institution. I think it really set us back. The campus had

been polarized anyway through his leadership. You know, there were

huge supporters and huge dissenters. It was just right down the middle

pretty much. It was difficult. And, we had a [campus leader] who then

applied to be the President and then there were other people that applied

but one of the real issues was higher education leadership at the President

and Vice President's level, there is not a lot of people out there who have

experience and I'm not real sure that that guy wanted to be the President

but he thought, "Well, why not." And, actually came out on top and he

never really liked what he was doing. So, that hurt us. It took everything

that I had and some of my peers to try to hold him up. But at a board

meeting he got up and said, "I'm through."

She spoke openly about the challenges she faced in moving to different positions on the

organizational chart and how the relationships she had with others on campus changed as

she moved into administration. She described the difficulty she had in coming to terms

with letting go of some of the personal ties in order to fulfill professional expectations,

Terrible. It was terrible. I do realize from probably some of the

mistakes that I made. She was a friend. We had been very close for

several years and I recognized that when she was reporting to other

people and having trouble, struggling, that I probably socially

promoted her. But as I moved up and had to take on other

responsibilities, she suffered. And I blame myself to some extent

because I did take up the slack and I think that is pretty common,

honestly. There were again, six pairs of other eyes [on the leadership

team] looking at this stuff and there was no other way. She had been

given plenty of opportunities. But very, very difficult. This was just

three months ago. I'm still not over it.

Frederick

I arrived on the metropolitan campus in December weather that had turned from

warm to blustery. I pulled into the parking lot and spent a few minutes gathering my

thoughts while I watched the brutal wind whip the flags located in front of the

administration building. Once inside, Frederick arrived for our meeting wearing boots

and jeans. His casual appearance was unexpected, and I wondered if this signaled his

state of mind: I'm ready to go home. I had become acquainted with Frederick a few years

earlier and, as we exchanged pleasantries, he expressed that he was honored to be

participating in my study. Frederick responded easily to the opening interview questions.

Frederick: I had a President that basically--we had a campus group, a

lesbian/bisexual/gay group, that wanted to form and I had an executive

member come in and say "We're not going to do that. I don't know what

you have to do but we just won't do that. I'm not going to support it. I don't want it. Make it go away". And I can't do that. I had never done that. I don't feel one way or the other about the concept or the content of it but I just can't do that and it caused a tremendous amount of stress individually and amongst us. It was one of those pivotal moments in my career where I had to say "Okay. I may get fired for this, but I'll know I've done the right thing". . .And I just thought a lot about it. I prayed a lot about it, I talked with my wife about it, but at my core I knew that I couldn't just lie to those students and say "Look, everyone else can have an organized group but you guys can't. We have a policy in process and you have done everything but guess what? We can't let you have your group".

Me: How did your decision impact your working relationship with the President?

Frederick: You know, we had a period of about six months that was just very, very rocky. Very stressful. I actually started looking for other professional avenues. And I didn't want to do that. Didn't want to leave the college at all. And I started to question things a little bit more. It was within about six months that we parted ways.

During this segment of the interview Frederick shifted forward on the sofa placing his elbows on his knees and clasped his hands in front of him. He had a stern look on his face and his body language seemed to indicate great emotion. His eyes seemed glued to mine as he recalled the inner turmoil he faced in making a stand for his personal values and his decision to seek employment elsewhere after the conflict over values tainted his experience on that campus.

Larry

Larry is a retired administrator whom I had never met, but I had heard stories of his leadership legacy. He showed little enthusiasm as he conceded to meet with me. A tall gray-haired gentleman in casual attire who met me on the sidewalk in front of his home, he was cordial but not overly enthusiastic. We settled ourselves at a small round table in a living area where we spent a few minutes getting acquainted before I turned on the tape recorder and reminded Larry of the subject of my study. He leaned back in his chair with one leg across the other and began telling of his professional background along with some personal tidbits about his family and their influence on his values as he grew up. Larry completed the values exercise on index cards before I asked him if he had ever experienced a time when his personal values conflicted with those of the organization.

> Larry: No. [He leaned back in his chair, removed his glasses and folded his arms in front of him] I'm not going to help you much on that. But I just don't. [shrugged his shoulders] I never had that problem. I know you're going to think I'm not being square with you, but I didn't have that kind of thing. I thought through things really well. The hardest thing for me to do was to terminate somebody because my value is such that it's chaotic [waving his hands], the thought [of losing a job], and that came from my childhood. My dad worked seasonally, and he would work four or five months and then the money would be gone and we'd almost be on starvation and he would get another construction job. So, this idea of always having a job was a big deal for me and I felt that for the people I was dealing with when I had to let somebody go.

If you want to know something I feel guilty about, it's how I

handled the people following me where they stole from [the college] . .

Bad, bad deal. [shaking his head with sadness showing on his face] It's

hard to do, to get one that will click. You have to pick your predecessor

then you try to do it right and I screwed up, you know. Who I really

wanted, they [the board] didn't. I really wanted to get somebody in the

state I knew would do a good job. So anyway, I really messed up.

His experience and perspective was strikingly different than that of the other four

participants. He spoke of having no fear; of being unafraid to stand up for what he felt

was right. He seemed to delight in telling stories from his presidential days when he was

somewhat of a renegade. As I returned to the front sidewalk, I turned to shake his hand in

gratitude. Larry gave me a hug instead.

Special Author's Note

Shortly after completing one of the five interviews, I was saddened to learn of the

participant's unexpected death. I had written an analytic memo before hearing this news

based on the term "eaten alive" that was used by two participants. I felt a very strong

connection to this term given the turmoil I was facing on my campus and needed to

explore its meaning more deeply. Utilizing analytic memo writing as suggested by

Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (1995) allowed me to wrestle with these questions: What does it

mean to be eaten alive? How do you know if you are being eaten alive? How do you

know where to draw the line? These are questions that remain unanswered for me.

However, spending time with this participant and witnessing the emotion that was

brought forth during our conversation has certainly given me a new perspective on what Owen termed "Let it go."

Researcher Reflexivity

Before further analyzing the details of the interviews I conducted, I felt it was important to re-engage in researcher reflexivity as Patton (2002) recommends. I spent time reflecting on my own personal values and those organizational values I try to embody as I wrote an analytic memo (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995) regarding *What is currently preoccupying my mind as I begin my research?* At the time I was beginning my research interviews, my own campus was experiencing leadership turmoil. Writing this memo helped me come to terms with the influence my own leadership experiences may have on my research work. The following text provides excerpts of this memo so the reader may gain a sense of how my background and experiences may have shaped the overall feel and outcome of this study.

The topic of this study became deeply personal to me as I struggled with changing dynamics on my campus and my growing discomfort between my values and those of my institution. I worked well with our president, who was now leaving, and feared, and in fact was told, that my positive working relationship with him could be a detriment. I found myself preoccupied with these thoughts as I drove the many miles from my campus to the interview locations. I recall sitting in one parking lot before an interview thinking "Why would anyone want to be president of a college?" As the drama on my campus unfolded, I became more cynical in my leadership outlook. I worked hard on staying focused on my research questions, which was difficult as four of the five interviewees had already heard the news of unrest on my campus and each brought the

matter up in casual conversation when the tape recorders were turned off. As thoughts swirled in my head during one interview, I found myself wanting to turn off the tape recorder and ask this seasoned leader that I had known for a few years, what his experience told him happened to a campus going through such a dramatic transition. How could I protect myself in times of uncertainty such as these? I managed to keep the conversation on my topic but it was by far my biggest struggle. After that interview I became a little more settled and focused. My overall experience with the interviews was much more exhilarating than I had anticipated and the amount of wisdom and insight gained was absolutely priceless to a person dealing with real-life leadership issues.

Summary

Constructionism requires one to consider the social and cultural contexts when describing constructed realities. Creating a narrative portrait of each participant that includes details about the individual, the physical surroundings, and the feel of the campus allows readers to become acquainted with the social context, the individuals, and their constructed realities. Insight into the past experiences and current circumstances of the participants, as well as the researcher, adds dimension to the findings presented in Chapter Five as well as the discussion in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS

Against the contextual backdrop provided in the last chapter, this chapter provides
data analysis of findings gleaned through interviews and values identification exercises as
they relate to the research questions of:

1. What is the role of personal values and organizational values in leadership

   decision making?

2. How do educational leaders describe conflicts they have experienced between

   personal values and those of the organization?

3. In what ways do leaders differentiate between personal and organizational values?

Data Analysis

After collecting data through interviews, observations, and artifact searches I
conducted data analysis within and across data sources. Chapter Five focuses on analysis
of the hands-on activity that participants completed during the interview sessions and
data collected from each participant during interviews and observations. I also introduce
data that emerged from developing my own set of coding cards as I analyzed data across
participants. Wolcott (2009) recommends coding all data and searching for themes that
allow the data to be grouped in a logical manner. With this in mind, I analyzed and

and integrated the data sources to highlight the unique and shared experiences with

conflicting values that made my leadership study into a story of struggles and triumphs.

The chapter concludes with a synthesis of participant experiences and an introduction to

Cognitive Motivational Relational Theory that was utilized to help understand those

experiences.

Emergent Values

Presented in Table 2 are the personal and organizational values identified by each

participant on the six index cards they completed during the one-on-one interview

sessions.

Table 2—Participant Identified Values

Participant	Personal Values	Organizational Values
Owen	Loyalty	Professionalism
	Honesty	Accountability
	Integrity	Loyalty
Twyla	Reconcile faith, ethics & morals in each situation	Setting precedent
	Be able to live with the consequences of any decision	Is it legal, moral, ethical?
	Faith	Students first
Marilyn	Honesty	Quality product
	Self-motivated	Student centered

	Integrity	Good value
Frederick	Always inclusive	Supporting goals of the President
	Being part of a team	Ethical
	Service to others	Being part of a team
Larry	Truthfulness	Faculty/Staff harmony
	Genuine/Sincerity	Commit to students
	Commitment	Commit to public relations

Presenting the results of the hands-on activity in the format of Table 2 provides a clear depiction of the commonalities and the differences in participant response to my request to list three core personal values and three organizational values.

The leaders did not address all values during the interview session and as they explored their leadership experiences they introduced additional themes. The spontaneously introduced themes were identified through creation of my own set of index cards and those are depicted in Table 3.

Table 3—Spontaneously Introduced Themes

Trust	Relationships	Communication	Politics
Owen	Owen	Owen	Owen
Twyla	Twyla	Twyla	Twyla
Marilyn	Marilyn	Marilyn	Marilyn
Frederick	Frederick	Frederick	Frederick
Larry	Larry		Larry

Below is a discussion of how the participant-identified and spontaneously introduced values connect to the research questions and presentation of additional concepts introduced by participants.

Making Connections to the Research Questions

The following sections present conceptual themes that emerged from analysis of the values-sorting exercises and the related interviews and their connections to the research questions.

The Role of Values

Several participants defined their personal values in terms of honesty and truthfulness. The participants shared stories to support the role honesty and truthfulness played in their personal and professional lives. One participant shared that truthfulness was an easy personal value to maintain. The stories he shared while describing the role of truthfulness along with my perception of his personality during our meeting made it easy to believe that he was able to comfortably maintain this value. He offered that being honest while being sensitive to difficult situations was a key element in being an effective leader. It appeared he was indicating that being honest does not equate with being mean-spirited. This sentiment was echoed as another leader spoke of the struggle she faced in being honest with a coworker that was ultimately terminated after years of avoiding the reality: the coworker was a friend but was not meeting job expectations. Another participant spoke of honesty being a fundamental guiding value, yet also shared a story of a professional experience that challenged this personal value. While he was able to uphold honesty as a personal value to some degree, the ongoing challenge he faced in doing so created conflict with his other personal values. It appeared that while some

leaders found it relatively easy to maintain a sense of honesty, others found it more challenging as they interacted with the things and others in their environments and in fact were not always able to maintain this core value.

The term "integrity" was listed by two participants but addressed in some form during conversations with each leader as they defined their personal values. Owen and Marilyn spoke using this term while Larry spoke of integrity as he described being "sincere and genuine." Larry stated that he avoided using the term "integrity" as he was completing his values cards because he felt the term was overused and misunderstood. Yet he made similar references to those of Owen and Marilyn as he described being raised to believe your word should stand for something. In the stories of conflicting values that Twyla and Frederick shared, they also included "integrity" in their description of conflicts even though they did not list this term on their cards. Twyla was speaking about maintaining her core of morals in decision making when she used the term and Frederick was addressing a situation of conflicting personal and organizational values as he reflected on protecting his own integrity in a difficult professional situation.

The most observable definition of organizational values came through on the values cards as "commitment to students," "student centered," "service to others," and "students first." The one leader who did not list an organizational value containing the word "student" spoke of this concept as he addressed the organizational value of accountability. In fact, he spoke at great length about making decisions with this question at the forefront: Is it good for the students? The values cards and ensuing conversations undergirded the student focus found in organizational mission statements. Passion for helping students was apparent as each leader described events and circumstances

throughout their leadership careers that required decision making that shaped students'

educational experiences. This passion seemed to overlap into a personal area making the

line between organizational values and personal values indistinguishable in relation to

students.

Distinguishing Between Personal and Organizational Values

As with the organizational values relating to students, other organizational values

were difficult to separate from personal values. I found that leaders' descriptions of

values, professionalism, accountability, and staff harmony were presented in such a way

as to suggest that these organizational values were extremely important to the individuals.

It appeared from our discussions that some of the organizational values that were

included on index cards could have easily appeared on the personal index cards. In fact,

Frederick listed "being part of a team" as both a personal and an organizational value.

Owen listed "loyalty" in both categories. Many leaders spoke of how their personal

values were not only important to them as individuals but were also important in leading

their organizations. There appeared to be some overlapping of values that would suggest

personal values and organizational values may be initially defined separately, but the

definition becomes blurred operationally. This assertion is supported by many pieces of

literature presented in Chapter Two that outlined the influence leaders' values have on

the organization (Reilly & Ehlinger, 2007; Buell, 2008; Nelson, 2012; and Buchko, 2007)

and the influence of organizational values on leaders (French & Holden, 2012; Haque,

2004; and Manz, Manz, Adams & Shipper, 2010). It seems that the study participants

took on values that are important to the organization and in turn influenced the

organization through their personal values. It appears this overlapping is what London

(1999), Fernandez & Hogan (2002), and Marsh (2008) refer to as alignment of values. The influence of both types of values on participants' interactions is in line with Blumer's (1969) description of symbolic interactionism in that social context must be taken into account in how leaders understand "values" and in understanding how leaders reconcile conflicting values.

Conflicts in Values

In order to understand the difficult situations college leaders face in maintaining their personal values and organizational values, I asked them to share stories of times when the two collided. Four of the participants described what Patton (2002) terms "critical incidents" or those pivotal moments when one must decide to uphold personal values or abandon them. Owen's story involved an experience from the early days in his leadership career when a supervisor expected him to lie to subordinates. He felt pressured to comply with the supervisor's mandate in order to keep his job. This created conflict for Owen as he struggled to maintain his personal value of honesty. If he was honest with employees, he was directly defying his supervisor. Defying his supervisor compromised the value of "loyalty" which he listed on both the personal and organizational values cards. The collision of values was not a one-time event but rather an ongoing situation that he dealt with. Bogue (2006) suggests that competing values test both the individual and the organization. It seems Owen felt his supervisor was representing the values of the organization, and there was a misalignment between those represented values and Owen's personal values. The test of competing values led Owen to state, "It was the worst four years of my life."

Frederick's critical incident came as his supervisor told him to "make it go away" when a group of gay/bisexual/lesbian students petitioned to form a club on campus. Frederick was forced to evaluate the role his personal value of "service to others" played in decision making. It appeared it was difficult for him to reconcile this personal value with what was being represented as an organizational value with the "make it go away" mandate from his supervisor. If he complied, he was not fulfilling his goal of helping students. If he did not comply, his job was in jeopardy. The angst he felt during this critical incident spanned several weeks as he interacted with the others in his environment and developed a course of action. Ultimately he chose to support the student group (and his personal values) but left the institution within six months due to the tension created over conflicting values.

Marilyn faced conflicting values as she grappled with the realization that she had for years protected a colleague that was a personal friend. Previously, she helped the friend move from position to position across campus in an effort to find a place where she could be successful and avoid termination. Marilyn realized that by protecting the friend, she was harming the institution by keeping an employee who was not fulfilling the organizational value of delivering a quality product. It became apparent to Marilyn as she moved up through the organizational ranks that she must place the needs of the college over her personal alliance with the colleague. The realization was not an easy one to accept, and the conflict created by terminating her friend was a difficult one to reconcile. Her statement of "I'm still not over it" sums up the difficulty of maneuvering through critical incidents.

Twyla experienced similar difficulties in a critical incident when the president and board at her institution chose to move forward with a construction project to which she objected. Taking on the project created great financial difficulties for the college and, as a result of these financial tensions, employees were eventually terminated. Twyla described this as going against the organizational value of moral conduct. This critical incident was avoidable in Twyla's opinion and it forced her to make decisions after the fact that created even greater conflict in values. Twyla shared that she felt she had failed the employees and the institution by being powerless to prevent what she considered poor financial decisions.

The four leaders facing a pivotal moment, or critical incident, were forced to make a difficult decision or to accept the decisions made by others and find a way to move forward. Some leaders stuck by their values the best they could but eventually terminated employment. Others remained at their institutions after the critical incident and were coping with the realities of their environment.

Spontaneously Introduced Themes

After thoroughly analyzing participants' values cards and interview transcripts, I compiled my own set of index cards in order to analyze values that spontaneously emerged from our conversations. The following four themes were not initially introduced by participants in the hands-on exercise but surfaced during their dialog.

Trust

All five leaders addressed trust as an important factor in establishing or upholding organizational values. Four participants described times at their institutions when trust among employees and administration was missing and the negative effects this had on

campus culture and operations. Financial difficulties leading to employee lay-offs and transitions through numerous presidents left campus employees with little trust in the leadership team. How important is trust to effective leadership? One president summed it up this way,

> You have to trust the people in those positions, and then you have to
> develop a relationship and they need to be your allies. There is just no
> question. If you don't have them in your pocket or on your team, then you
> are in trouble. You surround yourself with a group of people that you
> could trust. You have to have trust within your executive team or people
> will constantly be working against each other.

It appears this president is communicating that a set of organizational values is useless without trust within the organization. Another president shared the same sentiment and offered this strategy for building trust across campus, "I'd do so much talking and visiting and had such a process of involvement that primarily was functioning around what I'd say and do that they trusted me". This leader seems to tie building trust back to modeling behavior that was addressed earlier. It seems that organizational values are most observable in actions when employees trust each other and the administration. One way to build that trust is to model organizational values at the top of the organization. A second president verified this by saying,

> I guarantee that all depends on who is sitting at the top. Because if that
> person is not a mediator, and is not saying 'you all get along' [it won't
> work]. Sometimes, I have had supervisors that wanted people to fight and
> fuss. They liked the drama.

This comment connects personal values to organizational values when

considering the personal values of a leader who enjoys seeing employees

bickering and the influence this may have on campus culture. It also ties to the

behavior modeling that several of the leaders recommended as a means to

operationalize organizational values and build trust.

Relationships

Along with trust, development of relationships was introduced by participants as a

critical strategy for aligning personal and organizational values. Besides building

relationships on their campuses, four leaders spoke of the importance of building external

relationships. Relationships with constituents in the community and the state legislators

were presented as essential to realization of both personal and organizational values. One

president had this to say about the role of relationships,

I think the relationship part of it is huge. You know, I had trouble with this

over time. . . I always felt like when I was younger that you needed to

keep a real strong barrier between you and everybody else. And I learned

that that is really not the right way.

Another leader addressed attending to relationships as he discussed an organizational

value he included on one of his cards: Faculty/Staff Harmony.

My values would suggest to me that I needed to be the company

cheerleader and keep everybody feeling good about themselves and happy

to come to work and minimize anxieties on campus. And if you don't

create harmony, if you do not as president, in your values if you don't

create harmony, then acrimony will take over. It's just - you are going to

have one of two. There is not any in between.

From a positive working relationship with the faculty, staff and the governing board to

well-established relationships with state legislators, relationships were depicted as aiding

the alignment of values and achievement of goals. The leaders' appeared to realize that

they alone could not fulfill organizational values. One participant made a point of

distinguishing between power and relationships when it comes to achieving fulfillment of

personal and organizational values,

It's all about relationships. It is not necessarily about the power broker or

the amount of power someone has. We all have power to a different

degree. I may have a whole lot today, but it may be zero tomorrow.

Communication

Overwhelmingly the participants identified communication as the key to building

the trust and relationships necessary to fulfill personal and organizational values. Leaders

elaborated on ways communication, or the lack thereof, contributed to attaining values.

One leader shared,

More than anything else, you see the behaviors that are not consistent with

the values of the team, or the values of the project, or values of the job

description. Whatever it is, you need to confront it and address it. The

more you let things sit, whether they are relationship based, between those

two people, or they are productivity based or whether they are even,

obviously if there is any kind of ethical thing, the longer you leave that

unaddressed the more it is going to fester and the worse it is going to be.

Another participant stated,

> If you present that [institutional values] right, they are going to do what
>
> you want because you sell it that way. We force cuts, well then you get
>
> resentment, because it is never communicated properly. So, I think you
>
> have to communicate.   Yes, we HAVE to.

Communication, while important to each leader in fulfilling values, is not always

effective and the problem is not always the same in each environment. On this

matter participants shared two very different perceptions of how others on campus

respond to communication challenges with Owen stating,

> Communication is number one. Communication is the toughest. Most of it
>
> is about the communication aspect, as you'll see. When you are a leader,
>
> you need to be a listener. People that come in and they need your help or
>
> they want this and want that, most of the time, well they want to be heard.
>
> They want their voice to be heard, number one.

Marilyn had a very different perception on the effectiveness of communication,

> And what I have really found is that we have communicated not as well as
>
> we could have . . .we are not getting communicated to. It is not coming up
>
> [through the organization]. We are pushing all kinds of stuff down but we
>
> are not getting anything from the bottom up.

Both Owen and Marilyn agree that communication is important to the

organization, but Owen's experience tells him that people just want to be heard—

to be given a voice in fulfilling organizational values. Marilyn's experience in her

social context was quite different. She, as a leader of the organization, was

actively pushing communication down through the organization, but she was not

receiving feedback. This contradiction in experiences may suggest to readers that

while we may all agree that communication is an important avenue for attaining

organizational values trust, relationships, and campus culture influence the

effectiveness of communication. These leaders seem to suggest that

communication shapes trust, relationships, and campus culture creating a circle

that at times may become disjointed.

Politics

Each leader identified "politics" as a determining factor in attaining personal or

organizational values. The depth of the conversations centered on politics influenced me

to include this as the final emergent theme that was not identified in the participants'

values sorting cards. Twyla identified internal politics as a roadblock to achieving her

personal values,

It's a political nightmare. [It's a] huge amount of heartburn.

This leader fought the "higher ups" to prevent taking on an expensive construction

project and lost the fight. She indicated that politics between the president and governing

board were influential in the construction decision and that institutional politics were also

involved in decisions about employee lay-offs. It seems she was indicating that politics

influenced the institution to abandon its values of helping students and this action was

detrimental to the college mission and culture.

Marilyn described both internal and external politics as being influential. When

addressing internal politics, she said

It's a battlefield. You talk about politics. I think it's the same everywhere.

Sometimes I do get a little discouraged thinking, "Oh, my gosh. Do others

have this problem?" They do.

This portion of our conversation was related to the upheaval the institution experienced

as it transitioned from president to president over a relatively short period of time. This

dialogue appeared to indicate that politics become prevalent during organizational change

and impact fulfillment of both personal and organizational values.

In discussing the political realities faced by leaders as they negotiate

conflicting values, Frederick had this insightful advice to share:

You have to be able to navigate the political pitfall or the political

avenues of every situation. You know, the politics of any

organization are such that if you are not keenly aware or you can't

see relationships and scenarios and power differential and

potentials and understand concepts of the history, [if] you can't

understand all of that - particularly in higher education, to really be

successful because you have to be keenly aware of . . . how you

responded to something or someone else. They might tell someone

else who has a lot more power on that issue and it could impact

you or it could impact your college. Who is going to be at the end?

How do they feel about a certain thing? And, if you don't know

that you could say the wrong thing or you could overreact or you

could under-react. But, more than anything trying to understand

the political agenda as it comes to values . . . It is

multidimensional. You have to understand the relationship, the

scenario, the potential, the history, scope and context.

In analyzing Frederick's dialogue, it seems he recognizes that politics influence

the development of organizational values along with the ability of its leaders to

carry those values forward through actions. He appears to be warning other higher

education leaders that context is paramount to achieving realization of personal

and organizational values. In reading Frederick's reference to understanding

relationships within the social context through Blumer's (1969) description of

symbolic interactionism, it appears the political things and others in ones

environment can have significant influence on the actions taken. This assumption

was reinforced by one of the most seasoned campus leaders I interviewed as he

engaged in a lengthy discussion of politics and the benefits recognition of social

and cultural contexts can bring to fulfilling personal and organizational values.

The number one thing is to [remember that] colleges and universities are

all political entities. Become acquainted with the right political elected

officials . . .

Don't do anything that they would interpret to mean and be out of line and

that very well is going to depend upon who you are visiting with. In other

words, some people wouldn't like you to smoke a cigar and have a beer

with them and [with] others that would be the thing . . . so you're going to

have to walk that line.

<center>**Additional Concepts**</center>

As the participants described the role of personal and organizational values, made distinction between the two, and elaborated on times when the two collided they introduced additional concepts that bear introduction as food for thought.

Thinking it Through

Participants took different paths in reconciling the conflicting values they faced during critical incidents. Some indicated they felt triumphant while others were still struggling to cope. Reconciliation between what Twyla felt was important and what her supervisors felt was important was elusive. She stated, "I haven't reconciled it, and I probably never will" as she described the turmoil created on campus when termination decisions were made. Marilyn was able to make a decision that she knew was best for the college by terminating a friend. She continued to grapple with the personal side of colliding values as she said, "It was only three months ago. I'm still not over it."

Actively "thinking it through" was described by many participants as a means to achieve reconciliation. Some leaders indicated this cognitive process took days, perhaps months, to complete, and in the case of Twyla and Marilyn, reconciliation seemed far out of reach. None of the participants indicated that they verbally "talked it through" with colleagues. Perhaps this is an indication that conflict in personal and organizational values is a very personal matter or perhaps it indicated that the isolation inherent in leadership positions does not lend itself to freely sharing these kinds of struggles. One leader stated that he felt unsafe discussing the situation of conflicting values with colleagues and turned to his spouse. Another participant shared that it took her time to

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process and that she would replay the situation in her head "like a hamster on a wheel" until she was able to come to a resolution.

One study participant appears at first glance to be an anomaly. He indicated initially in our conversation that he had not faced conflicts in personal and organizational values (although a segment later in the interview revealed a conflict). He attributed this to being able to "really think it through" along with having a personality that lent itself well to keeping values aligned. This participant also relied on a comprehensive cognitive process to work through issues that it seemed to allowed him to avoid many of the emotional turmoil the other participants experienced in reconciling values.

Mental exhaustion was addressed by several leaders when describing what they go through in reconciling conflicting values. Coming home at the end of an exhausting day only to face sleepless nights seemed to be a common occurrence among the participants. Comments such as, "I didn't sleep during that first 15 months" and "I have had a lot of sleepless nights. Especially about decisions that were made that didn't necessarily affect me but I didn't agree with" indicate that the collision of personal and organizational values is not something easily left at the office.

It's Lonely at the Top

Each participant spoke of the personal toll college leadership can take in response to my question "What do you experience as you try to cope with conflicting values?" Twyla shared, "And, it's a lonely road, but you are the one that the buck stops here and you have to be the one that says 'no'." Another echoed this sentiment by saying,

It's not good if I go out with the VPs or the Physical Ed Director and have

a beer you know every other night or on weekends and all that, because it

can blur the relationship. And, I mean that may be a little hard. I have

told a lot of people over the years, the job is pretty lonely.

Participants experienced loneliness in their leadership journey despite the extensive social commitments in which they engaged. Four of the leaders spoke about the importance of building relationships within the community and becoming involved at the community and state level in order to advance the needs of the institution. Each of the four participants framed building relationships outside of the college as an essential element to leadership success. Yet these numerous outside relationships and extensive community involvement did not compensate for the isolation they associated with the position.

Participants spoke of the importance of a personal support system that can act as an outlet for the frustration that is felt in dealing with conflicting values and to offset the loneliness they described. Two spoke specifically of working through angst over conflicting values with a spouse. Another participant indicated that his spouse was his primary sounding board for dealing with conflicting values. Another said that " . . . if you're not living that life [of a campus leader] you don't understand" indicating that even a supportive spouse was little solace on some days. The point that seemed to be emerging from the discussion was that working through conflicting values is not only influenced by others in the work environment but may also be influenced by the others in the home environment. The social isolation that was alluded to may put extra burden on the family unit to provide an outlet for reconciling conflicting values.

Emotion

      Perhaps the most surprising theme that emerged from conversations with participants was the amount of emotion involved in confronting conflicts between personal and organizational values. A review of resumes before and after the interviews along with analysis of backgrounds given at the beginning of the interview suggests that these are highly motivated, career-driven people. Yet their leadership success was a very personal, emotional endeavor. One participant was reduced to tears as she described the impact conflicting values had on the institution and on her as a person. Another leader shared that she was "still not over it" when she described a critical incident. Owen displayed an unexpected level of emotion when he stated, "It was my darkest hour." From sleepless nights to feelings of hopelessness, emotion was evident in each conversation about conflicts in values. Each leader identified experiences that seemed to indicate fear, anxiety, guilt, or sadness while a few also identified experiences that were framed in terms of happiness, compassion, and hope. Conflicts in values involved personal soul-searching to determine how to negotiate and interact with the things and others in their environment. Often when one ponders the role of a CEO or top administrative official, the personal commitment that is based on a deeply-held set of core values is overlooked. The participants in this study are a reminder that personal values and organizational values often collide and when they do, the process of reconciling is at times an emotional journey.

Eat You Alive

      This phrase was used by two participants as they shared experiences of grappling with conflicting values. I was so struck by the consistency in word choice that I pondered

its indigenous meaning further by writing an analytic memo as suggested by Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (1995). I needed to understand what it meant to participants to be "eaten alive." The two participants' use of this phrase appears to tie back to the personal and emotional components in negotiating conflicting values. These individuals appear to take their professional roles very personally. Not so much for the personal gain in careers that can be achieved through professional success, but more for the fulfillment of an altruistic set of personally-held core values. When circumstances threatened the fulfillment of their agendas, individuals begin cognitively processing their social contexts and the things and others within these contexts. Reconciling beliefs with the realities of the social context may not happen easily for some individuals or in some instances. Rather, a lengthy and exhausting process of sorting through the messiness may ensue. The reference to "eat you alive" seemed to be an indication that at some point an individual must come to terms with the messiness and make a decision in order to avoid being eaten alive. That decision may involve a plan of action to align values, come to a level of acceptance with the way things are, or perhaps depart the organization when no chance of reconciliation is perceived. One participant elaborated on the tendency to engage in a never-ending cycle of cognitive processing as he described the struggle to find a suitable solution to conflicting personal and organizational values. He indicated that a body and mind can take only so much of this type of anxiety, and leaders have to "know when to let it go" or it will "eat you alive."

Review of Participant Experiences

Some of the most powerful moments of the conversations occurred when participants spoke of the personal nature of values conflicts. Four of the participants

spoke of the emotions involved as they worked through leadership dilemmas that challenged their values. Three of the leaders spoke specifically about sleepless nights as they wrestled with these kinds of conflicts. One participant spoke of the emotions associated with terminating a long-time friend in order to fulfill job expectations. This participant also addressed how fulfilling organizational values took a toll on her family. Another campus leader shared a story of worrying about his job when he chose to stand up for personal values over institutional values and how the tension led him to seek alternative employment. He spoke of the impact a conflict in values at work had on his family relationships; how he was afraid he might lose his job and what that financial hardship would mean to his family. A third campus leader relayed that she often feels like she is the "bad guy" for denying student, faculty, or staff requests and these tough decisions "make you literally sick at your stomach." For these four participants, body language and tone of voice undergirded the emotion shared through their stories. One participant spoke of facing challenges as a college administrator, but those challenges had never presented a conflict in his personal values. He surmised that his personality and attitude of "have no fear" allowed him to keep personal and organizational values aligned in a way that he did not face the same level of dilemmas described by the other four study participants. However, this participant spoke of feeling "guilt" over his inability to convince the board of his college to take his advice and the long-term negative impact this failure had on the college.

Each campus leader spoke of helping students which tied to the mission statements I examined. Two participants shared times when they felt the mission of helping students was in danger of being compromised. It appeared they felt the leaders

above them had lost sight of this mission. Their stories took two very different paths. One leader stood on the side of the students and ultimately left his position within six months due to the tension that had been created between himself and his supervisor. The second leader made her opinion known about a decision that was not student centered but stayed with the institution as it went through some very difficult times as a result of the decision made by those above her in the organization. It appeared that the ability to reconcile the conflict was a determining factor in whether the participant stayed with the organization or departed. Personal and family considerations were also taken into account in decisions to stay or leave.

Four leaders spoke of supporting their president or supervisor as an important facet of organizational operations. Some found providing this support to be fulfilling and an opportunity for personal and professional growth. Others had experienced instances where supporting a president or other supervisor created a conflict in values and made their leadership role unpleasant, even unbearable. Two of the leaders spoke of the difficulty in maintaining their values and supporting a new president during a difficult transition period. It appeared that the participants were unsure if organizational values would be changing with the arrival of a new leader. These participants indicated that times of organizational change were particularly difficult to maintain one's personal values while synthesizing shifting organizational values. One leader presented an instance where organizational values changed dramatically as an institution transitioned from two-year status to four-year status. He stated, "The values changed almost overnight." He saw this transition period as an opportunity for the institution and embraced the change while maintaining his own set of values. He stated that others at the

institution had a more emotional reaction to the transition as he shared, "There were tough times. The values were changing and they recognized it."

The five participants addressed communication as a key to leadership success. As easy as this concepts appears, the leaders shared stories when communication, or the lack thereof, created significant issues on their campuses. One participant shared a unique perspective on the flow of communication in describing how staff and faculty consistently complained that administration did not communicate expectations or upcoming actions. What she found as she advanced through the organizational ranks was that communication was flowing down from the president's office, but it was getting stalled at the middle management level and was not reaching the lower levels of the hierarchy. In addition, those at the lower levels of the hierarchy were not responsive in requests for input into decision making. Communication was flowing down, but it was not flowing back up leading to a sense of apathy on the part of staff and a sense of frustration on the part of administration.

The importance of relationships was addressed in each conversation. One leader spoke of developing relationships with campus employees that mistrusted administration due to the actions of previous presidents. He stressed that it took time and effort but that campus culture had improved dramatically over the years due to his efforts in building relationships with employees at all levels on campus. Another leader spoke extensively about building relationships with community members and political leaders in order to benefit the organization. He found that it was a very delicate balancing act to know which people were important to build relationships with and which people it was better to limit associations.

All participants spoke of the importance of working as a team. Some participants shared stories when a team in which they were members worked effectively to benefit the organization. They elaborated on what the team was able to accomplish for the college. Others shared experiences where the team was rendered ineffective due to contradicting personalities and agendas. Dysfunctional teams were explained as being due to members placing personal gain above the good of the campus or being at odds with each other due to the leadership influence from the president. Conversations of team also led to discussion of trust. Four of the leaders spoke at length about the importance of trust within the team. Some elaborated on how a lack of trust had a detrimental impact on campus operations

Connecting to Existing Theory

This section discusses participant experiences as they relate to existing theory. This theory was selected a posteriori, or at the end of the study, to bring greater depth of understanding and meaning to the data collected. The emotional aspect of conflicting values emerged as I inductively analyzed participant experiences.

Cognitive-Motivational-Relational Theory

Cognitive-Motivational-Relational Theory (CMRT) developed by Richard Lazarus (1991) can be applied in understanding what leaders go through as they define organizational values, the role of values, and make decisions regarding conflicting values. Lazarus built this theory on the premise that individuals assess relationships and evaluate their impact on well-being. The assessment involves emotions that are experienced uniquely by each individual in relation to the environment. Personal goals, beliefs, and social context influence meaning making and understanding in the assessment and coping

processes. Identification of the influence things and others have on decision making aligns with Blumer's (1969) development of symbolic interactionism. Lazarus (1991) postulates that emotions are an undeniable factor in the individual approach to problem solving situations such as conflicts in values.

As the name indicates, there are three components to this theory. The cognitive component suggests that knowledge is used to individually assess the environment and to draw a comparison to beliefs about how things work (or should work). Lazarus (1993) states, "There are many realities rather than a single one . . ." (p. 7) indicating that assessment is individualized based on context. Two coping mechanisms that result from the cognitive process of assessment are problem-focused coping (developing a plan to change the conflict) or emotion-focused coping (employing avoidance, changing appraisal or reassessing meaning). Motivation refers to the active pursuit of goals and gives relevance to the environmental encounters or conflicts one may face. The relational component indicates there is emotional interaction between the person and others or things in their environment that could potentially result in individual harm or benefit. Lazarus (1991) postulates, "A personality, which includes a person's goal hierarchy and beliefs, is forged by living in a particular society and culture, and selectively internalizing its values, meanings, and social rules" (p. 825). Data collected in this study certainly reflected divergent experiences, varying levels of emotions, and unique coping strategies as leaders defined values, described their role in the organization, and dealt with conflicts in personal and organizational values.

Lazarus outlines fourteen different emotions, some positive and some negative, that help the individual cope with stressful situations, aid the meaning making process,

and influence the action taken. Those emotions are anger, anxiety, sadness, guilt, shame, envy, jealousy, disgust, hope, happiness, pride, gratitude, love, and compassion. Below is a synthesis of the data collected when viewing it through a CMRT lens. The findings are grouped by the emotion evoked by the participant with participant assessment of the person-environment relationship, coping mechanisms enacted and the resulting action.

Anxiety. Three participants shared stories of sleepless nights due to the anxiety associated with conflicting personal and organizational values. One participant employed the problem-focused coping strategy as he developed a plan to face the values conflict head on by standing up for his personal values. While he was successful in helping students establish a controversial student organization, the anxiety that continued as a result of a strained relationship with his supervisor led him employ the emotion-coping strategy as he departed the institution. Two leaders also enduring sleepless nights due to anxiety over values conflicts utilized emotion-focused coping strategies. One leader avoided facing the conflict due to an assumed lack of power to evoke change. She outwardly resumed normal activities but never reconciled the conflict internally. She shared her anger (another emotion defined by Lazarus) at the outcome of the conflicting values. The third leader to describe anxiety-induced sleeplessness used the avoidance technique described by Lazarus until he was able to change his assessment and meaning of the situation. He did not change his personal values or his perception of organizational values but was able to avoid confrontation through re-assessing the conflict and coming to terms with the realities of his environment.

Guilt. One campus leader spoke at length about the guilt she felt in terminating a long-time friend at her institution. Saying the experience was "terrible", she displayed

body language and tone of voice that validated this emotion. She employed the emotion-focused coping strategies outlined in CMRT by reassessing her obligation to do what was best for the institution. This reassessment led her to develop a course of action (Lazarus' problem-coping strategy) that ended her conflict in values. This leader also shared the guilt she felt for sacrificing family time in order to embody her personal value of being self-motivated and the organizational value of producing a quality product and being student-centered. In this instance, it appeared that she relied on the emotion-coping strategy as she did not appear to change her course of action in response to the guilt she felt. Another participant continued to grapple with feelings of guilt three years after she faced a conflict in personal and organizational values. She felt she had let others in the organization down as she was unable to develop a problem-coping strategy that would lead to the desired change. The only consolation she offered herself was that "it could have been worse." This statement indicates alignment with the emotion-coping strategy of avoidance since she had not reassessed the meaning of the values conflict nor had she changed her initial appraisal.

Another leader used the term "guilt" when he described feeling like he had "screwed things up" in picking his predecessor. After his retirement, he watched his beloved institution go through several years of presidential change and turmoil. He indicated that his own actions unintentionally created a conflict in established organizational values for those he left behind after retirement. It was too late for him to develop a problem-coping strategy which left him with the continued emotion of guilt.

Disgust. A leader shared a story of when a supervisor expected him to lie to subordinates. Not only did this happen on a regular basis, but the supervisor expected this

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study participant to not reveal where the false information originated. The impact this behavior had on employee morale and organizational culture was "awful." The participant described his tenure with the institution as "the worst four years of my life." Lazarus (1991) defines disgust as "taking in or standing too close to an indigestible object or idea" (p. 826). This certainly fit the participant's description of finding himself in an environmental relationship that caused conflict in his personal value of honesty and the organizational value of loyalty. He expressed disgust at the supervisor's demands and the impact on individuals and organizational culture. He employed avoidance as a coping strategy by letting the supervisor believe he was carrying out his mandates while letting subordinates know where the messages originated. This was his strategy for maintaining his personal value of honesty although he was only able to be honest with subordinates, and not with the supervisor. He argued that while he did not uphold the organizational value of loyalty in his relationship with the supervisor, he was able to uphold the value of loyalty to the subordinates. He employed the avoidance strategy for four years as it appeared he felt powerless to develop a plan of action that would resolve the values conflict without jeopardizing his job.

Hope. Several leaders spoke of facing conflicting values because there was hope for a desired outcome. One leader found himself in the midst of dramatic organizational change as his institution transitioned from a two-year college to a four-year institution. The shift in organizational values was unavoidable and caused considerable discomfort among many employees. This leader chose a problem-coping strategy where he chose to embrace the impending change and align his personal values with the new organizational values. He took this action because he felt hope in the positive outcomes of the

organizational change. He saw an opportunity to offer higher levels of education and service to students that gave him hope that organizational change and shifting values would prove worthwhile.

Pride. The term "pride" was used by one leader who described the role personal and organizational values had on his campus. He felt that the lack of pride among employees when he arrived on campus was creating an undesirable campus culture. He spoke of instilling pride from the ground up, literally, as building and grounds renovations led employees to feel pride in their workplace which led to increased institutional pride. Another leader spoke of feeling proud of the accomplishments his leadership team had seen during his tenure as president.

Compassion. Several leaders spoke of having compassion for students by having a strong desire to help them improve their lives through education. Compassion for students was expressed as "student-centered" or "students first" in mission statements and in interviews. Compassion was also discussed in conversations relating to employees as one participant spoke of realizing the impact terminating employees had on family finances. Another leader made a similar reference by saying "You are dealing with people's careers. Their lives."

Happiness. Lazarus (1991) defines this emotion as " making acceptable progress toward achieving a goal" (p. 826). All but one participant spoke of making progress toward goals. One leader apparently experienced happiness as he saw the culture on his campus begin to change in a positive manner. Another spoke of happiness in witnessing the success of a comprehensive scholarship program for students. A third leader spoke of happiness in terms of seeing her campus make significant strides toward goals after

several years of leadership turmoil. Finally, one participant spoke of being happy about growth of the college's development foundation and the college's relationship with the community.

Summary

The role that personal and organizational values plays in leader decision making and their efforts to negotiate conflicts between these values has been understudied. Conversations with college administrators provide readers a glimpse into the realities faced by leaders from colleges of different sizes and geographical locations. From struggling to maintain values to the emotional drain this creates, the participants involved in this study enriched leadership literature by sharing personal and organizational trials and triumphs. The leaders provided a view from the driver's seat as they took readers through their leadership journey in relation to values. This chapter was designed to present data related to the research questions in a manner that provides current and future leaders with an in-depth look at real-life situations of negotiating values while introducing an existing theory that helps readers understand participant experiences. Chapter Six will delve into discussion of the findings shared in Chapter Five making connections to existing literature as well as implications for further research.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to explore college leaders' experiences of negotiating conflicts between their personal values and those of the institution. The goal of this chapter is to deconstruct the findings introduced in Chapter Five and to discuss implications for theory, research and practice. Further, findings are connected to existing literature and theory in an attempt to illuminate similarities and differences in what theorists and other researchers have found and what evolved from this study.

Bloomberg & Volpe (2008) remind qualitative researchers to be open to the experiences of others and to appreciate diversity in those experiences. They suggest, "We must listen before we can understand" (p. 127). Some conversations surrounding the values cards included conflicts between personal and organizational values. Some conversations provided support for the role values play in leadership decision making while others helped define participant distinction between personal and organizational values. All three levels of conversations provided information pertinent to answering the research questions. As with many qualitative studies, unexpected topics were introduced by participants as they elaborated on their lived experiences. These emergent concepts are presented near the end of the chapter to provide the reader additional insight into the

unexpected topics introduced by the participants. A final summary of the findings along with implications for research, theory, and practice concludes the chapter.

Discussion of Findings

Each of the five participants enumerated personal and organizational values during our interview. Each leader spoke of at least some, if not all, of the personal and organizational values listed on their index cards. Conversations regarding personal values brought about emotional responses in the participants. They spoke of these values as being steadfast: an important element of who they are as people, not just leaders. Their personal values seemed to be ingrained into their being. One participant spoke of these values being instilled during his childhood from his parents and as providing a foundation for him as an individual through his adult years. Phrases such as "that's just who I am", "your word should stand for something," and "I'm going to stand on this side [of personal values], because it works for me" were indicators of the significance of deeply held personal values in the participants' lives as members of society. When speaking of organizational values, there was less emotion displayed than during the conversations regarding personal values yet a sense of commitment to organizational values was evident in the stories they shared. It appeared that the participants were committed to upholding organizational values as a necessary component to professional success, but personal values were something they regarded as central to their core regardless of the organization in which they worked. In fact, some of the participants shared leadership experiences from multiple institutions, and it appeared that, for most participants, their personal values remained relatively unchanged as they transitioned from role to role.

Organizational culture is described in the literature as influencing organizational values (Bellon, 2006; Buchko, 2007; Bellon, 2006; and Szabo, et al, 2001). While participants touched on this concept to some degree, they spent more time looking at values from the opposite perspective by elaborating on the role of organizational values in shaping campus culture. Organizational values are not always static. Some participants shared stories where organizational values "shifted" as the institution responded to organizational change or leader change or attempted to affect cultural change. Symbolic interactionism would predict that as the things and others in a particular environment change, organizational values will change as well and have an impact on campus culture. This idea was reflected in several leaders' conversations regarding shifting values. There are times when this shift and change is deliberate and desirable and times when it is unintended and detrimental to the organization. Colleges, like many other types of organizations, often undergo leadership changes. A change in leadership often creates a sense of uncertainty among faculty and staff as they struggle to anticipate inevitable organizational changes and different performance expectations. One leader shared an experience of organizational change where the college transitioned from a two-year college to a four-year college. This structural change proved unsettling to employees as they grappled with a new mission and new organizational challenges. Whether leader change or organizational structure change, resistance appears to stem from feeling threatened about "the way we do what we do." Participants spoke of organizational values playing a vital role in overcoming resistance to change or restoring campus culture that had become undesirable and possibly destructive. While organizational values were

illuminated as critical to organizational success, personal values appear to play an even larger role.

All participants are organizational leaders who spoke of the importance of modeling personal values and the impact that has on campus culture. Studies by Hood (2003), Buell (2008), Grojean, Resick, Dickson & Smith, (2004) and Fernandez & Hogan (2002) confirm what the interviewees shared: followers are influenced by the observable values of their leaders. Two participants spoke of stepping in to lead institutions that had endured years of leadership change and turmoil. The campus culture had become infected with mistrust and apathy. Organizational values had become meaningless due to constant transition from president to president. These two participants spoke of relying on the strength of their personal values to build trust between administration and the campus community. Modeling personal values such as honesty, commitment, and loyalty helped these leaders established a sense of trust among the skeptics on campus and helped to rebuild a positive campus culture. It appears that these participants found that organizational values play a role in institutional success, but the personal values of leaders must be desirable, identifiable, and observable in order for followers to feel safe and develop their own commitment to organizational values.

Only one leader stated he had not faced a conflict between personal and organizational values. This leader appeared to have a very strong sense of self and relayed that his personality was such that he wouldn't have considered difficult situations to be conflicts between personal values and organizational values. Rather he suggested that he found engagement in these types of challenges to be exciting and an opportunity to test his fortitude and creative thinking. He stated more than once that he "really

thought it through" before taking action. Yet this participant shared that he felt "guilty" for not picking a predecessor to successfully lead the college forward. Even though his failure to achieve approval of a desired replacement to continue to fulfill organizational values left him appearing somewhat haunted several years after retirement, he did not present the same level of emotion when reflecting on his experiences that other interviewees displayed. When he spoke of the guilt that he felt, it was a reflective moment with a sense of sadness and a shrug of his shoulders. Perhaps this can be attributed to his personality or personal values that are so deeply held and steadfast that he truly never found himself in danger of compromising them. Perhaps it can be attributed to the fact that he was a retiree, and emotion wanes and difficult times are less raw after leaders leave the ranks. It could be that the passage of time casts a rosier glow on leadership experiences.

The remaining four participants each described situations where they felt conflict between personal and organizational values. One participant endured four years of being torn between his personal value of honesty and loyalty and to what he described as organizational value of loyalty. He shared that this period was one of the worst times of his life as he was constantly pulled in opposing directions. He stated that as a young leader, he did what he had to do in order to keep his job. Another participant faced similar conflicts with personal and organizational values. When push came to shove, he stood by his personal values with the realization that it could cost him his job and eventually led him to depart the institution. One participant described a conflict with personal and organizational values that took some time for her to work through. She was able to reconcile the conflict by realizing that she was not upholding her personal value

of honesty. Even when she came to the realization that the conflict in personal and organizational values was self-imposed, alignment of the two came at a hefty emotional price as she terminated a long-time friend and coworker. The fourth participant to speak of conflict between personal and organizational values took a stand for her personal values at her institution but was ultimately forced to accept the decision of others. She spoke with great emotion about the situation causing her to continue to feel as if she failed herself and her organization. She admitted that the ongoing inner conflict she had felt for three years had not been reconciled and probably never would be.

The emotion that these leaders revealed during discussions of conflicting values was surprising. This is not an element of leadership that has been well-documented in the literature. Prilleltensky (2000) addresses personal wellness, collective wellness, and relationship wellness in his study but does not delve into the emotions that surface when conflicting values threaten one of the areas of wellness. Symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969) suggests that individual behavior can be ascribed to "status, position, cultural prescriptions, norms, values, sanctions, role demands, and social system requirements" (p. 7). It seems logical within a symbolic interactionism framework to consider the emotions involved when leaders face conflicting values given the impact the things and others in an environment have on an individual and the decision-making process. It seems the very personal nature of core values invites conflict as what is important to one individual is less important to another or to an organization. Conflict often incites emotion, and this emotion was evident in all five participants as they recounted experiences with conflicting values.

As briefly discussed in Chapter Five, Cognitive Motivational Relational Theory (Lazarus, 1993) provides a lens through which we can consider the understudied emotional aspect of leadership and ties nicely to the constructionist epistemology used to frame this study. Using this tool to view participant stories and my own leadership experiences allows the reader to reflect on the emotional side of leadership. The theory may be one that can be further applied to assist in exploring and understanding emotional data. The implications of this possibility are further discussed in a later implications section of this chapter.

These leaders endured struggles and enjoyed triumphs as they engaged in the coping process as described by Lazarus (1993). The individual, in fact personal, nature of coping resulted in different paths for different individuals with different outcomes and levels of satisfaction with those outcomes. Whether the participants viewed themselves as successful or unsuccessful in coping with conflicting values, they all appeared to have maintained their personal values to the best of their abilities while building on the lessons learned as they maneuvered their way through the organizational structure. Each participant shared some form of the old adage, "To thine own self be true" in sharing their stories with two offering the caveat that being true to yourself is easier said than done when other decision makers in an organization have more power. This appears to be the reality of leadership that goes unaddressed in the literature. Being a leader is more complex than making good decisions or modeling desired behaviors. The participants in this study illuminate the reality I have experienced as well: leadership is a series of successes and failures. There are emotions involved throughout the decision-making continuum. There are times leaders can hold steadfast to their personal values while

fulfilling organizational values. There are times when personal values are overshadowed by the need to appease others. The extent to which individuals will bend on personal values appears to be directly related to their emotional investment in the situation presenting the conflict. When the stakes are perceived to be high, the emotions tend to be high as well.

There is an abundance of definitions of values (Graber & Kilpatrick, 2008; Haydon, 2007; Brandes & Stuber, 2004; and Buchko, 2007). As this study illustrates, defining values is individualized based on meaning made internally with some values being more intensely guarded than others. Each participant had a unique set of personal and organizational values with some commonalities and some differences in their index cards. The leaders spoke of the distinction between personal and organizational values in terms of what was important to them as members of society and what was important for professional success. There were times the two overlapped; other times they collided. After analyzing the data, it appeared that personal values were presented as foundational and developed very early in life with little alteration as the individuals grew personally and professionally. Organizational values were depicted as shifting as institutions grew or underwent leadership changes. The emotion that was displayed in conversations surrounding personal values was unmatched in conversations regarding organizational values. It appears that experiences of conflicting values that force participants to choose between upholding a deeply held personal value and an organizational value are very, in a word, personal. Such conflicts create situations that unpleasant, unsettling, and in some cases life-altering. Shifting organizational values may create unrest on campus, but do not appear to evoke the same emotional intensity for campus leaders that challenges to

personal values evoke. It seems personal values are deeply-rooted and closely guarded in values conflicts. There appears to be a lifetime investment in upholding what we consider to be central to our core. Challenges to this investment are not taken lightly. Because of the intensity of the meaning assigned to personal values, they are less likely to shift or change over time. Organizational values have a tendency to undergo at least minor, and sometimes major, changes as leaders come and go and the institution adjusts to organizational change. These changes do not represent a threat to an individual's core values and therefore evoke less emotional intensity.

Limitations

Qualitative studies, such as this, explore participant experiences as they occurred in a particular environment at a specific moment (Patton, 2002). While intensive collection and analysis of data related to a limited number of participants allows for a depth of understanding not afforded by other methodologies, the unique experiences of the individuals may not always be replicated by readers. The insights offered by these participants are meant to expand the knowledge of future leaders and are not prescriptive in nature.

Discussing conflicts in personal and organizational values may create uncomfortable situations with leaders as sharing stories involving their current work environment could be detrimental to careers. Having a common background with the participants helped in securing interviews; however, it is possible they felt reluctant to share stories that would identify them in my study. While I have taken great care to conceal identities, it is reasonable to think participants in a study such as this would hesitate to reveal conflicts in their current work environment.

Finally, all participants in this study were leaders at colleges. While this population provided engaging and insightful stories of conflicts in values, leaders from other types of organizations may provide unique stories with differing degrees of emotion.

<center>**Implications for Theory, Research and Practice**</center>

Theory

There are numerous leadership theories that provide future leaders with a foundation for assuming their professional roles. What appears to be lacking from theories and current literature are studies that help leaders deal with conflicts in values. As the participants in this study indicated, conflicts in personal and organizational values are a common occurrence. Participant responses in this study indicate that experiences of conflicting values create breakpoint moments when decisions must be made that have a lasting impact on the individual and her/his career. Development of a leadership theory that promotes understanding of conflicting values will help future leaders prepare for the journey ahead while aiding current leaders as they face those breakpoint moments. Many leaders may not expect to encounter the emotional side of leadership the participants in this study revealed. The data in this study suggest additional theory related to the emotional aspect of being a leader and decision maker will provide a foundation from which to develop critical leadership skills. Cognitive Motivational Relational Theory was a useful tool in this study for understanding the emotional aspect of negotiating conflicts in personal and organizational values. This aspect of leadership appears to be often overlooked in the literature yet, as the participants in this study indicated, is very significant in decision making and the coping process. Further exploration of CMRT and

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its application to leadership and specifically to negotiating values conflicts will make a rich contribution to the resources available to current and future leaders from various types of organizations.

Research

The study of leadership is a complex matter as is demonstrated by the volumes of leadership texts and studies available to readers. This study presented a new dimension to leadership literature by exploring how leaders negotiate conflicts in personal and organizational values. The unexpected discovery of the emotional side of leadership makes a rich contribution to existing literature. Future leaders may gain insight into what challenges and opportunities may lie ahead while current leaders may learn how emotions impact decision making on conflicting values and other dilemmas.

Practice

This study was developed to aid future and current leaders in dealing with their own experiences with conflicting values by hearing stories from seasoned leaders. Although the specificity of a qualitative study makes it impractical to assume individual experiences can be generalized to all readers, there are lessons to be learned from the stories of conflicts between personal and organizational values. Practical application of ideas gleaned from the experiences of others is, in some ways, more useful than leadership theories when it comes to dealing with real-life leadership issues. Perhaps one of the most important "take-aways" from this study is understanding that emotions play a role in negotiating conflicts in values and the way in which we cope with the conflict. Another point to consider is that leadership training should include conversations regarding some of the issues raised by the participants: isolation, silences created by

feeling one cannot share conflicts and concerns with others on the campus, and the toll

that the tremendous responsibility takes on the individual and her or his family.

Future Research

Additional studies applying Cognitive Motivational Relational Theory to the

experiences of leaders will yield rich data for leaders from various types of organizations

to utilize in honing their leadership and decision-making skills. Although the participants

in this study were purposefully selected to represent diversity in gender, location and size

of institution, and years of experience additional studies with retired campus leaders may

be useful. Additional data collected on retirees may provide confirmation or contradiction

to the supposition in this study that perhaps once a leader leaves the leadership role for

good the emotional aspect of values conflicts fades. Studying leaders with varying ethnic

and cultural backgrounds may provide fresh insight into the role of values and ways in

which conflicts in values are negotiated. Finally, gender issues were not addressed in the

current study's research questions and surfaced only briefly in one conversation.

Exploring experiences of negotiating conflicting values from a gender perspective may

provide guidance to leaders and future leaders facing gender-related issues in their

decision-making roles.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of college leaders as

they negotiate conflicts between personal and organizational values. Chapter One

introduced the study and presented the statement of problem, purpose of the study, and

research questions. The epistemological stance and conceptual framework providing the

foundation for the study were briefly discussed in this chapter as well.

Chapter Two provided a thorough investigation of current literature related to values-based leadership. Discussions included defining values, describing values-based leadership, exploring impact of personal values on the organization, the influence of the organization on personal values, and conflicts between the two. Stories of leadership successes and failures related to values provided readers an opportunity to identify with the lived experiences of other leaders.

Chapter Three included a detailed description of the qualitative methodology utilized in the study design, data collection and analysis. Blumer's (1969) symbolic interactionism was introduced as an approach to understanding how participants interact with the things and others in their environments and how this interaction is related to values. The open coding process used to analyzed data was described in order for readers to get a sense of the data immersion that occurred during the collection and analysis phases. The use of analytic memos (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (1995) was discussed as a means for developing deeper understanding of participant experiences. Finally, trustworthiness of data was established as suggested by Lincoln & Guba (1985) through a trustworthiness table that depicts the confirmability, transferability, and credibility of data.

The experiences, backgrounds and personalities of the five participants required a chapter devoted to acquainting readers with the leaders before delving into study findings. Creating a Narrative Portrait as the fourth chapter provided readers an opportunity to get to know the leaders in a way that may have been lost if combined with data collection and analysis activities. Utilizing this chapter allows the participants to be depicted as real people with relatable experiences and draws the reader into their lives

before their stories are deconstructed and analyzed. Researcher reflexivity as described

by Patton (2002) concluded this chapter to provide the reader a framework of the

influence researcher experiences may have on data collection and analysis.

The fifth chapter organizes the study findings in a way that readers can synthesize

and absorb participant experiences—those that were common among participants and

those that were unique. The results of the card sorting activities and researcher coding

activities is depicted through tables and rich narrative that illuminates lived experiences

through a symbolic interactionism lens. Analytical themes (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw,

1995) were explored to better connect participant experiences to existing literature and

theory. From this analysis, the unexpected theme of emotion emerged that provided a

new framework for considering leaders' conflicts in values.

Finally, Chapter Six discusses the findings: what meaning was made by the

researcher and how that meaning connects to literature and theory. The research

questions were re-introduced in order to discuss how the findings contributed to

answering the research questions. Limitations of the study were presented in order to

identify areas that would benefit from additional research. Implications for theory,

research and practice provide a justification for the outcomes of the study as they

contribute to these three areas.

Final Conclusion

This study was developed from my own experiences and questions as a college

campus leader. The ways in which leaders negotiate conflicts in personal and

organizational values is not well-documented in the literature. Certainly the emotional

aspect of conflicting values that surfaced during this study has not been the focus of very

many studies. The qualitative methodology utilized provided an opportunity for me, and the readers, to hear first-hand from seasoned leaders on ways in which they negotiate conflicts in personal values and organizational values. The experiences the study participants shared were best represented through a framework, such as symbolic interactionism, that allowed readers to come to know the leaders; how they dealt with the things and others in their environment; to identify with some of the conflicts; and to understand the emotion involved when values collide.

As stated earlier, leadership is a series of successes and failures. Some leaders, such as study participant Larry, seem to experience more successes and fewer failures. Others, such as participant Twyla, experience tests to their values from which they never fully recover. There is no leadership text or course that can prepare a campus leader for every conflict in values they will face. Perhaps study participant Frederick was most successful in facing conflicting values when he supported the gay/lesbian/bisexual group against the wishes of his superior. Even though he eventually left his job due to the tension created between the two, he was able to do so on his own terms with his personal values intact. Or perhaps Owen can be considered successful in avoiding being eaten alive as he delicately balanced the ongoing conflict in personal and organizational values by secretly defying his supervisor's unsavory mandates in order to keep his job until he could find other employment. There appears to be no right or wrong answers to negotiating conflicting values and avoiding being "eaten alive." The path to avoid this undesirable fate is as unique as the leader traveling that path.

Leadership theory provides a solid foundation for honing leadership skills. However, being drawn into the lived experiences of leaders, such as the participants in

this study, provides a perspective on the real-life challenges and triumphs of leadership. It is my hope that current and future leaders will find this study enriches their understanding of the role of values in decision making and how to negotiate conflicts in values as they take their own leadership journey.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Saldana's Coding Chart
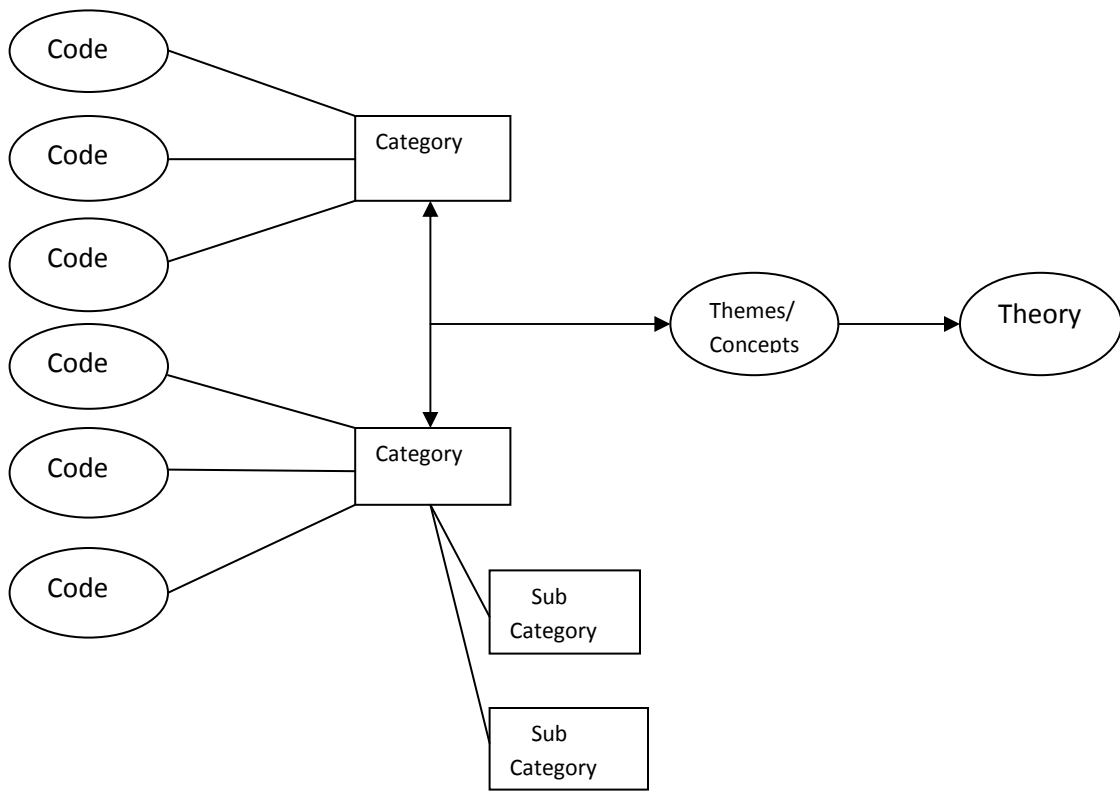
Appendix B

IRB Approval

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Thursday, November 08, 2012

IRB Application No   ED12176

Proposal Title: Values-based Leadership: College Leaders' Perspectives on Maintaining
                           Values in Decision Making

Reviewed and   Exempt
Processed as:

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved   Protocol Expires: 11/7/2013

Principal
Investigator(s):

Ramona K. Buckner   Kerri Shutz Kearney
2912 White Oak   315 Willard
Poteau, OK 74953   Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the
rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that
the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45
CFR 46.

☒ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval
  stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol
   must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval. Protocol modifications requiring
   approval may include changes to the title, PI, advisor, funding status or sponsor, subject population
   composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and
   consent/assent process or forms.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar
   year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are
   unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the
authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the
IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 219 Cordell North
(phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Shelia M. Kennison

Shelia Kennison, Chair

SAMPLE EMAIL SOLICITATION FOR PARTICIPANTS:

Dear (Participant),

My name is Ramona Buckner and I am a doctoral student at Oklahoma State University. I am studying values-based leadership and am interested in hearing how college leaders manage conflicts between personal and organizational values in decision-making situations.

I am interviewing college presidents and vice presidents for my dissertation and am hoping you would be willing and able to spend approximately two hours with me in your campus office some time during Fall 2012 or Spring 2013 exploring your experiences with managing conflicting values in your role as a college leader. These interviews will be taped recorded so I may fully capture your experiences as I write my dissertation. Please be assured that every precaution will be taken to protect confidentiality and participant identities.

I understand you may not feel comfortable discussing this topic or have the time to devote to an interview. However, if you do feel inclined to participate in my dissertation project, I would be very appreciative. The information that may be gained through interviews with campus leaders, such as yourself, will be invaluable to leaders and future leaders from a variety of organizations.

Whatever your decision may be, I appreciate your consideration and wish you the very best in the academic year. You may respond to my request by emailing me at rcbuckner@aol.com

Sincerely,

Ramona K. Buckner

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: Values-based leadership: College leaders' perspectives on maintaining values in decision making

Investigators: Ramona K. Buckner
Current Student: Ed. D., Educational Leadership, Oklahoma State University
M.S., Higher Education, Northeastern State University
B.S., Business Education, Oklahoma State University

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to conduct research that explores college leaders' experiences managing conflicts between their personal values and those of the organization and its stakeholders. College leaders face unique challenges in their leadership roles yet their experiences can be utilized by leaders from all types of organizations to enhance decision-making abilities. The purpose of this study is not to judge whether decisions are right or wrong according to a prescribe set of ethics, rather the purpose is to gain insight into how leaders negotiate their core personal values with those values of the institution in the process of making decisions. Information regarding the process of making decisions will be sought.

Procedures: You are being asked to participate in one, two-hour interview involving a discussion of negotiating core personal and organizational values in decision making activities. You will be asked to complete a brief hands-on exercise that gives them an opportunity to express and describe your core personal values and your description of relevant organizational values. Interview sessions will be audio taped and a copy of the transcript will be emailed to you so you may verify that I have captured your words correctly. At the end of the research project, all audio tapes will be destroyed along with any identifiers to the recordings.

Risks of Participation: There are no known risks associated with this project which are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

Benefits: Conversations with higher education leaders regarding maintaining personal values in decision making or managing conflicting values will provide valuable insight for current leaders and future leaders from all types of organizations. The practical guidance that will be gleaned from seasoned leaders will enhance the literature and theory that practitioners rely upon in their decision making processes.

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Confidentiality:	Pseudonyms will be used in place of your real name and that of your institution in order to protect identities. All references to participants and colleges will be stated in vague terms that will not reveal identities to readers. A master list of pseudonyms will be kept in a password protected file in my home computer to which only I have access. I will transcribe the interview tape recordings, store them in a personal safe deposit box at my bank, and destroy them upon successful defense of the dissertation. The sole purpose of maintaining this list is to allow for needed follow-up questions/clarification. The list containing your name and that of your college will be destroyed after successful defense of the dissertation. Due to the measures outlined above, no foreseeable risks to confidentiality are present in this research project.

Compensation:	You will receive no compensation for participating in this research study.

Contacts:	Questions regarding this research project may be directed to:

Ramona K. Buckner   or   Dr. Kerri Kearney
918-260-5736   Oklahoma State University
rcbuckner@aol.com   315 Willard Hall
                                              Stillwater, OK 74078
                                              405-514-2043
                                              kerri.kearney@okstate.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact Dr. Shelia Kennison, IRB Chair, 219 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu.

Participant Rights:	As a participant in this research, you are entitled to know the nature of the study. You are free to decline to participate, and you are free to stop the interview or withdraw from the study at any time. No penalty exists for withdrawing your participation. Feel free to ask any questions at any time about the nature of the research activity and the methods the researcher is using. Your suggestions and concerns are important. Please feel free to contact the persons listed above with any questions that you may have today or following the research session.

Signatures: I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy of this form has been given to me.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   Date

I certify that I have personally explained this document before requesting that the participant sign it.

_____   _____

Signature of Researcher   Date

Appendix C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

After explaining the Informed Consent Form and answering participant questions, I will ask the following interview questions allowing the participants to explore areas not covered by the questions below.

1. Tell me about your leadership background.

2. Describe a situation when you felt torn between your personal core values and a decision you made or were expected to make?

   a. How did your personal values differ from those of the organization?

   b. How would you describe the emotions involved?

3. What do you consider when dealing with tense situations?

4. How do you define your limits when making organizational decisions that are in conflict with your personal core values?

5. What are some of the lessons you have learned from your leadership experiences that have stayed with you through the years?

VITA

Ramona K. Buckner

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: VALUES-BASED LEADERSHIP: COLLEGE LEADERS' PERSPECTIVES ON MAINTAINING VALUES IN DECISION MAKING

Major Field: Higher Education Leadership

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education in Higher Education Leadership at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in July, 2013.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in College Teaching at Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, OK/USA in 2002.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Business Education at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK/USA in 1985.

Experience: <u>Vice President for Business Operations/Chief Financial Officer</u>, Carl Albert State College, Poteau, OK. January 2008-present. <u>Upward Bound Project Coordinator</u>, Carl Albert State College, Poteau, OK. September 2007-January 2008. <u>Professional Development Coordinator</u>, Eastern Oklahoma State College, Wilburton, OK. October 2006-September 2007. <u>Scholarship Coordinator</u>, University of Arkansas—Fort Smith, Fort Smith, AR. January 2005 to July 2005. <u>Accountant/Office Manager</u>, Clunn, Tygart & Co. CPAs, Inc., Broken Arrow, OK. January 1999 to December 2004, August 2005 to October 2006. <u>Academic Coordinator</u>, Branell Institute, Nashville, TN. June 1993-March 1994.

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