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Cynthia Sims-Vanzant

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The University of San Francisco

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND  
LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AMONG HUMAN SERVICE PROGRAM MANAGERS

A Dissertation Presented  
to  
The Faculty of the School of Education  
Organization and Leadership Department

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Education

by  
Cynthia Sims-Vanzant  
San Francisco  
May 2007

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

Cynthia Sims-Vanzant  
Cynthia Sims-Vanzant - Candidate

5-10-07  
Date

Dissertation Committee

Patricia Mitchell  
Patricia Mitchell, Ph.D. - Chairperson

5-10-07  
Date

Betty Taylor  
Betty Taylor, Ph.D.

5-10-07  
Date

Rosita J. Galang  
Rosita Galang, Ph.D.

5-10-07  
Date

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## DEDICATION

To my children, *Arlmon III, Fredric, and Crystal*—my greatest supporters  
Thank you for your kindness, patience, and support during this most challenging process.  
I will forever cherish your commitment to helping me to persevere through the tough  
times and believing in my ability to succeed. Most importantly, I appreciate the love that  
you have demonstrated through your unselfish acts of kindness.

To my late parents, *Fred and Hattie Sims*  
Thank you for instilling the value of education in me at a very early age.  
Your prayers and words of wisdom during your short era in my life  
inspired, motivated, and guided me through both the challenges and the joys of life.  
I will forever love and cherish your memories.

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## CHAPTER I

### RESEARCH PROBLEM

#### *Introduction*

What is the best style of leadership to achieve success in human service organizations, or should the situation determine the leadership style? Most human service organizations fall under the category of non-profit agencies. The organization that is the subject of this research comprises both government-funded and nonprofit programs. However, the organizational structure is designed the same as nonprofit organizations. Therefore, the effects of leadership styles are comparable to the nonprofit rather than the corporate sector. According to Drucker (2001), nonprofit organizations are the newest and fastest growing category of organizations in America; in fact they are America's largest employers. Because of their budget constraints and scarce resources, nonprofit organizations need to implement leadership principles more strategically than profit-based businesses. Leaders of nonprofit organizations must approach their work with the knowledge that their organizations impact the welfare of their clients and that their organizations' success depends on the efficiency of their leadership.

The success of nonprofit organizations is tracked or measured by the achievement of outcomes related to clients. This success typically depends on funding that leads to program development or decline. External factors, such as changes in government funding, tremendously affect their service delivery to clients. Therefore, nonprofit organizations are more dependent upon management to find ways to revitalize their mission (Herman & Heimovics, 1990).

Temkin (1994) contends that nonprofit leaders need to possess skills beyond technical knowledge and expertise; they need to inspire and motivate others. The leaders need to be able to articulate the organization's mission in terms of values and standards. In a study of top executives, Shin and McClomb (1998) found that these organizations have to maintain flexibility to experiment with new concepts and ideas in this rapidly changing society. These organizations must be ready to realign their organizational culture to adapt to the changing needs of society, irrespective of whether they want to do so.

Yukl (1994) suggested that the concept of leadership can be a confusing phenomenon because researchers tend to define the term according to the perspective that appeals to them the most. As opposed to a concrete definition, Yukl described leadership in terms of individual traits, role relationships, position, and the perception of legitimacy of power or influence over others. However, Blanchard (1998) refers to leadership as having two aspects—a visionary role and an implementation role. From a servant-leadership perspective, he conceptualized the visionary (leadership) role as “doing the right thing” and the implementation (management) role as “doing things right” (p. 22). Blanchard further implied that good leadership is visionary; it must start with a good sense of direction. The visionary leader not only articulates the goals of the organization, but also allows subordinates to innovate and to take calculated risks (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). Goleman et al. conclude that the visionary leader inspires subordinates by helping them to understand how aligning their objectives with those of the organization will be in their best interest. Thus, visionary leaders create resonance in an organization, which is necessary to lead organizations to new summits of excellence.

### Statement of the Problem

According to Gustafson and Allen (1994), human service organizations are not currently able to make the best possible use of resources. Minimal effort has been made to improve management practices in the human service system. New policy mandates are consistently imposed that only tangentially relate to program quality, leaving the human service systems to operate without adequate direction (Gustafson & Allen). The Family Service Center is a complex human service agency within the Department of Human Services that faces severe budgetary cutbacks year after year. Its walls encompass an enterprise whose primary mission is to provide financial benefits, social services, employment, and training services to families who are in need due to their social or economic situation. The department integrates human assistance programs to provide a short-term, unified system of services to address the many facets of poverty and dependency (Anonymous, 2004). Consequently, because of the agency's complexity, the diverse population served, and scarcity of public resources, the Family Service Center needs a creative intervention capable of instilling a more ethical and efficient use of limited resources across the agency.

The hierarchical structure of this organization is comparable to that of nonprofit organizations which tends to affect the leadership roles and complicate the process of decision-making. Similar to nonprofit organizations, the Family Service Center is led by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Board of Directors, and clarifying the roles of each poses a challenge. The Board is both the legal and hierarchical superior, yet the CEO is expected to be the one who is more knowledgeable about the organization. Therefore, the Board in its decision-making process normally depends on the CEO for

knowledge and expertise (Drucker, 2001). According to Young, Hollister, Hodgkinson, and Associates (1993), effective nonprofit organizations are governed by the Board of Directors, and information is provided to the Board to assist them in making decisions that are in the best interest of the organization. To further complicate this process of leadership, the Family Service Center employs human service program managers, who supervise first-line supervisors and provide advice, recommendations, and information to the division managers. The division managers and the CEO ultimately make the final decision, subject to approval by the Board of Directors.

The success of human service agencies is tracked or measured by the achievement of outcomes related to clients as opposed to bottom-line profit or loss. Since external factors such as changes in government funding tremendously affect their service delivery to clients, human service organizations are more dependent upon leadership competencies that inspire and motivate their subordinates. Efficient leaders must be able to manage relationships from the perspective that nothing is accomplished alone (Goleman et al., 2002). State and federal legislation dictate the policies and procedures for the provision of benefits and social services, but the leadership competencies, approaches to management, personal core values, and communication styles needed for effective human service management have not been sufficiently researched. The minimal amount of research that has been conducted on human service leadership began during the 1970's when Yale University began the study on the non-profit sector. This study focused on organizations that provided services to people rather than a product; therefore a part of their research focused on leadership practices in human service agencies (Young, et al., 1993).

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify the current leadership competencies of human service program managers, whether their current leadership practices are in agreement with the minimum competency requirements, and whether a relationship exists between their leadership practices and emotional intelligence competencies. Five human service program managers were interviewed independently to identify existing leadership practices, rank the importance of Goleman's emotional intelligence competencies as they relate to their current leadership practices, and determine the relevance of these leadership competencies to the success of their programs. The emotional competence framework for leadership developed by Goleman (1998, 1995) served as the foundational source in formulating the interview questions. Participants were asked to assign existing leadership competencies, when possible, to the minimum performance elements required by the Department of Human Services. Additional items (e.g., demographics, gender, age, and ethnicity) deemed necessary for optimal leadership performance were added to this list of competencies.

This study created a better understanding of the current leadership competencies of human service program managers and how these competencies relate to the minimum qualifications required by the Department of Human Services (see Appendix A), and it identified existing leadership styles and approaches to problem solving so that training programs and seminars could be developed to improve leadership competencies in an effort to improve delivery of services to clients.

## Background and Need for the Study

Human service organizations have fundamental weaknesses in the way they operate. There is no evidence that there has been any concerted effort to improve agency management; most of the changes have been the result of ad hoc initiatives imposed by state and federal laws. Human service program managers are consequently forced to manage without a national consensus on how to staff, organize, and deliver services. New policy mandates that only tangentially relate to program quality constantly plague human service organizations. Until agency management is improved, these problems will continue to exist within human service organizations (Gustafson & Allen, 1994).

The human service agency referenced in this proposal, The Family Service Center, comprises various programs, some of which are federally funded. The remainder are paid by State, County, and individual donations. When the agency was established in 1961, it employed approximately 150 workers. After the agency became an independent agency in 1992, that number expanded to over 2,400 social workers and support staff in the 21st century (Anonymous, 2004). The Family Service Center provides an array of services, such as financial benefits, social services, employment and training to persons who are in need due to their social or economic circumstances. The agency comprises approximately 10 programs ranging from cash aid to community services. This vast growth in the number of workers employed requires a change in the organizational culture to allow a more innovative leadership style to meet the agency's needs.

Human service program managers' leadership strategies have a major impact on the quality of services delivered to families who are in need due to their social or economic circumstances. In a study of human service managers, Yin (2004, p. 606)

posited that all the managers articulated that “child- and family-centric missions fell within the agency’s official mission statement.” Human service agencies require workers to deliver supportive, empowering, and strength-based services to “at-risk” families; what type of leadership is being provided to “burned out” workers? Are the human service managers being empathetic to workers’ needs and validating their feelings and, if so, by what means? Yin summarized his study by stating that human service managers need to employ progressive leadership skills to reduce workers’ stress and create a propitious atmosphere for them.

Historically, most studies focused on the competencies necessary to effectively manage organizations in the corporate sector until the 1970s, when the universities began to discover the nonprofit sector (Young, et al., 1993). Yale University established the first research program on nonprofit organizations in 1977. The nonprofit sector has unique characteristics which cause difficulty when attempting to generalize research results from corporate organizations to nonprofit organizations. This difficulty might be attributed to the nature of the human service organizations servicing people rather than producing goods, whereby the success or failure of an organization can be measured in terms of bottom-line profit or loss. Leaders in nonprofit organizations must be flexible, resourceful, willing to take calculated risks, emotionally attuned, self-aware, and compassionate (Young, et al.).

The growing demand for the services of human service organizations, along with an increasing number of state and federal regulations, makes it crucial to define the characteristics of the managers who will not only meet the minimum basic standards required by the organization but also go beyond those basic standards to assume key

leadership roles and embrace leadership competencies that will foster growth and success within the agency. In a study on leadership, Morden (1997) analyzed several key aspects of leadership competence. Similarly to Gandz (2005), he defined leadership as accomplishing task through people. Morden further contended that there is no one “best” or “right” style of leadership. His perception of effective leadership is “when the requirements of the leader, the task, the group, and the individual (the leadership situation variables) are fitted together appropriately within the prevailing context of the environment” (p. 524). According to Morden, a fundamental role of the leader is to demonstrate the ability to manage the core competencies on which the organization’s success depends. The leader must maintain a knowledge base of the policies and procedures of the organization and ensure that the knowledge base is updated routinely to reflect any changes.

Additionally, the effective leader must be inclined to perform ancillary functions (i.e. serving as a role model or exemplar). Subordinates tend to view the leader’s behavior as an example to emulate or avoid; therefore, it is imperative that leaders recognize what values or attitudes they represent. Morden (1997) describes effective leaders as those who can initiate enthusiasm throughout the organization through their visible involvement in daily events, thereby creating a congruous environment. This study explored the existing leadership competencies of human service program managers and whether these leadership competencies are significant to the performance and success of the agency, workers, and families served.



### Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical framework for this study was found within the theories of emotional intelligence (EQ) and transformational leadership. Salovey and Sluyter (1997) defined emotional intelligence as:

The ability to perceive accurately, appraise and express emotions; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to reflectively regulate emotions in ways that promote emotional and intellectual growth. (p.10)

Traditional concepts of intelligence (IQ) focus on cognitive skills and knowledge.

However, the newly popularized concept of emotional intelligence focuses on knowing one's feelings and using one's feelings to make good decisions in life (O'Neill, 1996).

Emotional intelligence competence has been proclaimed to be the key to success within the various spheres of life, education, work, and relationships (Epstein, 1999). O'Neill further contends that while both types of intelligence are important, IQ contributes about 20% to the factors that determine life successes. About 80% depends upon the skills that make up emotional intelligence—that is, the ability to successfully interact with other people, showing empathy, managing emotions in relationships, and being able to persuade or lead others.

The theory of emotional intelligence is rooted in Howard Gardner's (1993) theory of multiple intelligences. Gardner discovered that there are different intelligences that people use to solve problems and experience life's successes. Gardner asserted that the traditional IQ assessment to predict life successes was narrow and limited. Gardner listed the following seven intelligences that people use to live and work: linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, musical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, spatial intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and intrapersonal intelligence. During the

1990s, Mayer and Salovey (1993, 1995) studied Gardner's multiple intelligence theory, thereby coining the term "emotional intelligence." However, Goleman (1995) synthesized and popularized the theory of emotional intelligence as a way to understand people's methods of interpreting the world around them and achieving life's successes. Goleman sought to guide leaders to a greater understanding of themselves as well as to greater success in their interaction with others.

Understanding the powerful role of emotions in the workplace sets the best leaders apart from the rest—not just in tangibles such as better business results and the retention of talent, but also in the all-important intangibles, such as higher morale, motivation, and commitment. (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 1990, p. 5)

Goleman (1998) developed the following basic emotional and social competencies in his emotional intelligence framework:

**Self-awareness:** Recognizing what one is feeling as it happens; the ability to maintain self-reflectiveness in the midst of tumultuous emotions; being autonomous and sure of their own boundaries (Goleman, 1995); and having a well-grounded sense of self-confidence. Self-awareness is the keystone to emotional intelligence (Goleman). Individuals must be aware of their emotions in order to make decisions and choose directions. Emotional intelligence is the ability to manage not only one's emotions but also those of others (George, 2000).

**Self-regulation:** Handling emotions so that they facilitate rather than interfere with a task; being flexible when change occurs; being responsible for personal performance; maintaining one's integrity and honesty; the ability to delay gratification and suppress impulsivity; and having the capacity to recover from setbacks (Goleman, 1995).

**Empathy:** Sensing what other people are feeling and using that information to facilitate reaching the organization's goals; and cultivating rapport and attunement through a diversity of people (Goleman, 1995).

**Social skills:** Managing emotions in others and accurately reading social situations; inspiring and mentoring people; and the ability to negotiate and resolve conflict (Goleman, 1995).

Downton (1973) coined the term "transformational leadership" in his research on political leaders. However, Burns (1978) distinguished between transactional and

transformational leadership styles. Burns described the transformational leadership process as “leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation” (p. 20). Burns believed that effective leaders appeal to higher ideals and values of their followers resulting in higher levels of performance by the followers. During his extensive study of political and corporate leaders, Burns found the majority of leaders to be transactional whereby there was an exchange of rewards for compliant behavior. Burns further described the leadership process as a process of “evolving interrelationships” in which leaders are continuously evoking responses from followers and modifying their behavior according to the responses of their followers.

Bass (1985) expanded the earlier ideas of Burns’ transformational leadership theory. Unlike Burns, who believed that followers could transform leaders, Bass primarily focused on the leader’s effect on the followers. Bass believed that leaders motivated followers by (a) helping them recognize the importance of outcomes, (b) helping them to transform self-interest into team interest, and (c) appealing to their higher ideals and moral values (Yukl, 1994). Bass further theorized that leaders’ behaviors range on a continuum from transformational to transactional leadership at different times based on different situations.

Bass’ (1985) research resulted in the proposal of four factors, commonly referred to as the “four I’s,” that are characteristic of transformational leadership: (a) idealized influence, (b) inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration. Bass further theorized that transactional leadership is on the other end of the continuum and that leaders possess both transactional and transformational characteristics in varying degrees. In similar research, Sivanathan and Fekken (2002)

conducted a study of residence dons and their supervisors on a university campus to show that there is a relationship between the characteristics of transformational leadership and emotional intelligence. As hypothesized, leaders who reported higher levels of emotional intelligence were perceived by participants as having displayed greater transformational leadership behaviors.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the leadership competencies of program managers in the human services agency?
2. In what ways are the leadership competencies of the program managers in agreement with the minimum performance elements required by the Department of Human Services?
3. In what ways are the program managers' leadership competencies in agreement with the leadership competencies necessary for the success of their programs?
4. In what ways are the program managers' leadership competencies in agreement with Goleman's (1998) emotional intelligence leadership competencies?

### Definition of Terms

The following terms were defined for the purpose of this study:

*Benchmark* refers to a set of practices that serve as baseline competencies for superior performance amongst leaders. McCauley and Lombardo (as cited in Yukl, 1994) conducted a study using a measure called Benchmarks which indicated that leaders with good self-awareness and a desire for improvement had higher advancement within their organizations.

*Core competencies* refer to those skills that serve as the foundation for the success of an organization. Core competencies are represented by the long-term accumulation of learning and experience of the organization and its staff, which include knowledge and expertise, culture and value sets, operational skills, coordination, and understanding the customers and markets they serve.

*Emotional intelligence* is the ability to recognize one's own feelings as well as the feelings of others, the capacity to motivate others, and the ability to manage one's own emotions and relationships (Goleman, 1995). According to Goleman et al. (2002), driving emotions in the right direction is the key element to a leader's success.

*Human Service division managers* are responsible for the administration, planning, and coordination of a human services division composed of several major component programs under the executive direction of the deputy director.

*Human service organizations* are agencies that provide case management and direct services to clients. Human service organizations provide financial benefits, social services, child welfare services, and employment and training services appropriate for individuals who are in need due to their social or economic circumstances.

*Human service program managers* are responsible for planning, coordinating and managing a single human service program section of a division within the area of social services.

*Leadership competencies* are the skill sets employed by leaders to inspire their followers to achieve organizational goals.

*Leadership practices* the skill sets that leaders perform routinely to develop or enhance their leadership competencies.

*Nonprofit organizations* are funded by three major sources: governmental funding, contracts, and grants; sales of goods and services; and donations. Nonprofit organizations are governed by a Board of Supervisors and a CEO.

*Resonance* is the ability of leaders to perceive and influence the flow of emotions between themselves and others they work with. Goleman et al. (2002) describe resonance as the human analog of synchronous vibration that occurs when two people are operating on a parallel emotional “wavelength” and feel “in synch” (i.e., people’s emotional centers are in synch in a positive way).

#### Limitations of the Study

This study has some limitations. The generalizability of this study was limited to one human service organization. The purpose of such a limitation was to enable incorporation of a data-collection design, which will include in-depth interviews and observations of a limited number of participants to obtain a clearer understanding of their experiences and perceptions of leadership in the field of human services. This research focused on the competencies of those fulfilling the roles of human service program managers. Although this study focused on the unique leadership qualities of program managers, the findings can be applicable to other leadership roles within human service organizations.

Another limitation of this study involved the selection of participants. The participants were selected solely from one human service program, thereby yielding a smaller number of available participants. Thus, the sample size was perceived as a limitation. Furthermore, the method of recruiting participants was another limitation of the study. The method of recruiting participants was limited to personal contact by the

division managers. The researcher's information was provided to all potential participants allowing them the option to contact the researcher if they elected to participate. Only female human service program managers responded to the request. The pilot study might also be perceived as a limitation due to the researcher having administered the interview questions to only one participant to determine the appropriateness of the questions. Certain factors might have influenced the retrieval of optimal data from participants such as work schedules, personal life crises or circumstances, or the level of communication between the researcher and the participants. Results might also be skewed by personal perceptions of the interviewer and the participants in regard to leadership assessment. The qualitative researcher must acknowledge personal assumptions and biases (Heppner & Heppner, 2004).

#### Significance of the Study

Due to the increasing challenges faced by human service program managers, this research holds significance for a variety of groups. Those who stand to benefit from the results of this study are (a) the Board of Supervisors, which has the legal responsibility to make decisions in the best interest of the organization; (b) the members of senior management who develop the training curriculum for human service program managers; (c) the human service program managers, whose careers may be served by the development of their profession and a clearer understanding of leadership competencies; and (d) those who study and contribute to the greater body of knowledge surrounding the concept of emotional intelligence and its implications for leadership in human service organizations.

Furthermore, a failure to incorporate emotional intelligence competencies into current management practices may cause leaders' programs to fail. Emotional intelligence fosters a more interactive or participatory style of leadership. In a study of managers in successful corporations, Kanter (1997) found that while the basic accomplishments of an organization may be carried out by using a traditional style of management, a participative-collaborative style of leadership reduces the risk of failure because it encourages teamwork in the completion of a project. Gibson (2003) contends that successful leadership in this 21<sup>st</sup> century requires leaders to abandon old leadership styles and embrace change in order to accommodate the future needs of the organization. Specifically, this study was intended to inspire senior management to make changes in their training programs for human service program managers, thereby developing a benchmark for the industry. These changes consist of (a) developing formal leadership training for human service program managers, (b) encouraging the implementation of emotional intelligence competencies by hiring a trainer, (c) strengthening the professional framework for selecting managers, and (d) developing a more rigorous performance evaluation that will serve as a growth tool for human service program managers.

### Summary

This chapter provided an introduction and statement of the problem. Human service organizations are unique in the sense that many of them are government-funded, yet their leadership style is comparable to non-profit organizations. Leaders in nonprofit organizations must be aware that the welfare of their clients and the success of their organization depend upon the efficiency of their leadership. The problem identified in this study was the need to examine the leadership styles of human service program



managers in relationship to leadership competencies that inspire and motivate their subordinates to facilitate achievement of organizational goals. This chapter further provided the purpose of the study, which was to identify current leadership competencies, whether their current practices are in agreement with the minimum competency requirements, and empirically determine whether a relationship exist between current leadership practices and emotional intelligence competencies. The background and need for the study, theoretical foundation, research questions, and definition of terms were provided in sequential order, along with the limitations and significance of the study. The following four chapters consist of the review of pertinent literature, methodology, and findings, and conclusions with implications of these findings. This study concludes with recommendations as a result of these findings, as well as recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

#### Overview

The review of the literature begins with the evolution of leadership theory (i.e., trait theory, contingency-based theory, charismatic leadership, and transformational leadership). This review of relevant literature further examines leadership from an emotional intelligence perspective within the human service field leading to a comprehensive examination of emotional intelligence leadership theory. The review concludes with an examination of leadership competency studies and the effects on organizational success.

#### *Evolution of Leadership Theory*

##### *Trait Theory*

According to Yukl (1994), the trait approach was one of the earliest approaches to studying leadership. Most often, these studies focused on physical characteristics and aspects of personality and aptitudes measurable by psychological tests. There was an underlying assumption that certain individual attributes would make people more likely to become successful leaders. The presumption was that some people were born with a genetic predisposition to become leaders. Leaders were identified as those who demonstrated personality traits such as self-confidence, emotional maturity, emotional stability, high energy levels, stress tolerance, an even temperament, needs motives, and values. However, some leadership research tends to argue that if these traits are jointly determined by temperament and physiological needs, they are more likely to be influenced by learning (Bouchard, Lykken, McGue, Segal, & Tellegen, 1990).

Among the list of traits that are relevant among successful leaders, Stodgill (1974), identified personality characteristics associated with leadership as self-confidence, sense of personality identification, ability to accept consequences for one's actions, perseverance, and persistence. Leadership research focused on the trait theory continued over the decades. However, Stodgill (1974) posited that while some leadership traits increase the likelihood for effective leadership, there is no guarantee for success. The key element to success in leadership theory is to integrate personal and situational characteristics into the study. The failure of the trait approach to correlate in a consistent manner with leadership effectiveness contributed to growing emphasis on the study of leadership behavior (Chemers, 1995).

#### *Style-based Leadership Theories*

In the 1950s, the focus shifted from an analysis of the internal state of the leader (i.e., characteristics) to identifying the specific, concrete behaviors of the leader (Chemers, 1995). In a study by Lewin and associates, graduate students were trained in three styles of leadership behavior: autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire. The leader in the autocratic position retained tight control of the group, whereas the democratic leader emphasized group participation. The laissez-faire leadership style resulted in minimal participation. The democratic style yielded more positive results on group process than other styles. However, the importance of the results lies in the definition of leadership in terms of behavioral style (Chemers). If studies revealed behavioral determinants of leadership behavior, people could be trained to exhibit that behavior and thus become effective leaders (Robbins & DeCenzo, n.d.). In an attempt to explain leadership in terms of behavior, Robbins and DeCenzo found difficulty in identifying consistent relationships

between leadership behavior and effectiveness without giving consideration to situational factors that influenced success or failure.

### *Contingency-based Leadership Theories*

A major shortcoming in the study of the effectiveness of various leadership theories has been their inability to identify consistent relationship patterns of leadership behavior and positive organizational outcomes (Chemers, 1995). A generalization could not be made as the results varied over different ranges of circumstances. The most pressing deficiency in the leadership research was the failure to account for situational factors that influenced the success or failure of each style (Robbins & DeCenzo, n.d.). As a result of these deficiencies, modern contingency theories were developed to more accurately predict the effects of leadership styles on organizational outcomes.

Fielder (1967) developed the first comprehensive contingency model for leadership which proposed that the leader's basic leadership style is a key factor in group performance. Fielder's approach was centered on an instrument referred to as the "least preferred co-worker (LPC) questionnaire" which purported to measure whether the leader's behavior was task oriented or relationship oriented. After extensive study, Fielder concluded that the most effective leadership style integrated situational parameters into the leadership equation (Chemers, 1995).

Hershey and Blanchard's (1969) model for situational leadership suggested two basic assumptions: there is "no single all-purpose" style of leadership, and supportive and directive behavior are the two independent main components of the leader's behavior. Situational leadership focuses on the follower; the appropriateness of the style of leadership depends on the follower and the task to be performed (Ingens, 1995). Directive

behavior is characterized by the leader giving specific rules and instructions and closely monitoring subordinates to ensure that the job is completed as outlined. Supportive behavior is characterized by the leader communicating, encouraging, and listening to subordinates based on mutual trust and respect between the leader and the follower.

Similar to Fielder's theory, Vroom and Yetton's (1973) Normative Decision Theory categorizes the decision styles of leaders as task motivated or relationship motivated. Task-motivated leaders tend to be more autocratic while relationship-oriented leaders tend to be more participative in their style of leadership. Although the normative model assumes that leaders can adapt their behavior to different situations, several aspects of a leadership situation determine the effectiveness of the process used. These aspects include the amount of relevant information that is held by the leader and subordinate, the acceptance of an autocratic decision by subordinates, and the degree to which the decision problem is structured.

In 1971, House formulated the Path-Goal Theory, which examined the contingencies under which a leader's behavior influences the level of a subordinate's motivation and satisfaction (Evans, 1996). The Path-Goal Theory is a more restricted theory that focuses on leader-structuring behavior, whereby the leader clarifies the path to the goal for the subordinate (Chemers, 1995). Yukl (1994) identified the four types of leadership behavior associated with the Path-Goal Theory as (a) supportive leadership, (b) directive leadership, (c) participative leadership, and (d) achievement. The extent to which a leader can effectively motivate and satisfy subordinates depends on the leader knowing which style of behavior to apply to a given situation and group of followers. House's leadership research continued through his focus on charismatic leadership, in

which subordinates follow a leader based on their perception that the leader possesses certain exceptional qualities (Yukl).

### *Charismatic Leadership*

The study of charisma began with Weber's description of charisma in 1947:

[A] certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of the individual concerned is treated as a leader (as cited in Sankar, 2003, p. 38).

House (1977) proposed a theory to identify how charismatic leaders behave, how they differ from other leaders, and which conditions are optimal for their successful performance. According to House, the charismatic leader has intense and unique effects on subordinates; the charismatic leader creates a high level of trust from the followers of the leader's ideology. The followers willingly obey their leader; they become emotionally involved in the organization's mission, they set high performance goals for themselves, and they believe that they are an integral part of the overall success of the organization. Yukl (1994) posited that (a) charismatic leaders engage in behaviors that indicate their competence to their followers, (b) charismatic leaders articulate the mission of the organization to the group in relevance to the values, ideals, and aspirations of the group, (c) charismatic leaders model ideal behavior for their followers, (d) charismatic leaders set high performance goals while expressing confidence in their followers, and (e) charismatic leaders behave in ways that arouse motivation relevant to the group's mission.

At this point in the review of literature on leadership theory, the basis has been established that certain situations can influence the competencies that a leader brings to a

situation and certain behaviors are most effective when applied differently in different situations. The relationship between the leader and follower can be another factor that affects the performance of the follower and the organization. While charismatic leadership has its identified behaviors, many theorists tend to use it interchangeably with transformational leadership which served as one of the theoretical foundations for this study.

### Historical Background of Emotional Intelligence

Over the past century, various studies have paved the way for the development of theories that broaden our understanding of human intelligence. This understanding evoked the need to develop different assessment measures. Gardner (1993) contended that individuals possess a collection of aptitudes rather than a single problem-solving faculty that can be measured by the use of a pencil and paper testing device. An individual may not be particularly gifted in any single intelligence; but, because of a unique combination of skills, they might be able to perform a certain task uniquely well. There is a continuing debate in the literature regarding various concepts of intelligence, such as emotional intelligence.

The mid-20th century marked the bridging of the gap between intelligence and emotion theory. Whereas emotions and intelligence previously had been considered separate fields, researchers began to examine how emotions interact with thoughts. The epistemology of emotions revealed that emotions emanate from a different system than that of thought; however, the emotional center has immense power to influence the rest of the brain—including its center for thought (Gardner, 1993). Gardner further contends that

there are different intelligences that people use to solve problems and experience life successes.

Gardner (1993) refuted the view that the IQ test was the only measure of intelligence, suggesting that a wide spectrum of intelligences existed that accounted for life successes. Gardner further asserted that the use of the IQ test alone to indicate the condition or level of an individual's intelligence was very narrow and limited. His theory of multiple intelligences generated other studies regarding the relationship between intelligence and emotions. Gardner's list of intelligences includes the following:

**Linguistic intelligence:** involves the mastery of language. Poets and journalists exhibit such special capacities.

**Logical-mathematical intelligence:** involves what is often labeled as "scientific thinking" and the ability to use logic and deductive reasoning to solve problems. Mathematicians and scientists rely upon these skills to relate to the world.

**Spatial intelligence:** involves the ability to maneuver and operate by formation of mental images. Surgeons, navigators, and engineers have highly developed spatial intelligence.

**Musical intelligence:** involves the appreciation for music, as well as the ability to perform and create music. Composers such as Mozart and Bernstein personified such skills.

**Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence:** involves having bodily control or using one's body to fashion products or solve problems. Basketball and baseball players are represented in this component.

**Interpersonal intelligence:** involves the ability to understand other's needs, emotions, motivations, and how to relate to them. Teachers, clinicians, and religious leaders have high degrees of interpersonal intelligence.

**Intrapersonal intelligence:** involves the ability to understand oneself. Individuals with high levels of intrapersonal intelligence are able to identify their emotions and use them to guide their behavior.

In the early 1900's Thorndike (1920) split intelligence into three broad classes.

The first class involved analytic, verbal, or both intelligences; the second class involved mechanical, performance, visual-spatial, synthetic, or a combination of these



intelligences; and the third class involved social, practical or both intelligences. Social intelligence was the least studied of all three classes. According to Mayer and Geher (1996), the concept of social intelligence was subdivided into emotional and motivational intelligences. In the 1990s, Salovey and Mayer (1990) refined the theory and coined the term “emotional intelligence.” Goleman (1998) defines emotional intelligence as the ability to control one’s impulses and accurately interpret the emotions of others. He views emotional intelligence as the center of aptitudes necessary for individuals to utilize in solving problems and experiencing life’s successes.

#### *Goleman’s Leadership Competency Framework*

Goleman (1998) proposed that emotional intelligence is comprised of two major components: personal competence and social competence. Personal competence refers to how leaders manage themselves, whereas social competence refers to how they maintain relationships. Goleman simplified these competencies into five domains: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Underlying these five domains are the following 25 competencies: emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment, self-confidence, self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability, innovation, achievement drives, commitment, initiative, optimism, understanding others, developing others, service orientation, leveraging diversity, political awareness, influence, communication, conflict management, leadership, change catalyst, building bonds, collaboration and cooperation, and team capabilities.

Individuals under the domain of self-awareness are realistic and honest about their strengths and limitations. They have a deeper understanding of their emotions and the effects of their emotions. Individuals with strong self-awareness display a self-

deprecating sense of humor. Self-aware leaders understand their values and goals (Goleman, 1998).

Goleman (1998) asserts that the second domain of self-regulation is important for two reasons. The first is that “people who are in control of their feelings and impulses are able to create an environment of trust and fairness” (p. 96). Secondly, it is important for competitive reasons. People who are in control of their emotions adapt to organizational change more readily.

According to Goleman (1998), virtually all effective leaders rate high in the third domain of motivation. Motivated leaders demonstrate a passion for their work, seek out creative challenges, and take pride in the quality of their work. They are never satisfied with the status quo and are always eager to explore new approaches to their work. Simply stated, highly motivated leaders forever raise the “performance bar” and they never settle for objectives that seem too easy to fulfill.

Goleman (1998) refers to the next two domains, empathy and social skills, as the heart of emotional competence. These two domains involve a leader’s ability to maintain relationships with others. The empathetic leader is able to recognize the feelings of others and use that information, along with other factors, in the process of making intelligent decisions. Goleman (1998) further asserts that empathy is a vital leadership quality in today’s organizations for three reasons: the increasing use of teams, globalization, and the need to retain talented staff. Collectively, these competencies result in the ability to skillfully manage the emotions of others. They provide the tools for effective leadership (e.g., influence, development of others, catalyst for change, conflict management, and inspirational leadership). Specifically, Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2002) posit that

relationship management refers to leaders who assume that nothing important is ever achieved alone.

### *Recent Leadership Competency Studies*

Leadership competencies gained momentum during the early 1990's; partly as a result of the rapid changes that organizations faced. The perception of a static set of rules or responsibilities succumbed to the idea that leadership should adopt a more useful approach that allowed flexibility to adapt to meet the changing needs of the organization (Garmer & Johnson, 2006). Today's business market requires leaders to produce results, not excuses. Gibson (2003) describes this challenge as living in an age of "deliver-or-depart leadership" (p.30). Due to the complexity and chaos of today's market, the old rules and assumptions of leadership no longer apply. Leadership is now challenged to embark upon a new learning curve and embrace a "radically different set of competencies" (Gibson, p. 31).

As a result of conducting 14 formal studies and thousands of interviews with leaders of organizations, Kotter(1999) became convinced that most leaders lack the necessary leadership competency skills to make their organization successful. Most of them are doing what they believe is right, yet their leadership skills are inadequate. Oftentimes, failure of an organization is blamed on internal and external factors that affect performance. Kotter agrees that many elements affect an organization to some magnitude, but he firmly asserts that the quality of leadership has the most powerful influence. Leadership establishes the vision for an organization, but the leader has to strategize to achieve that vision. According to Armstrong (1990), one of the core strategies for effective leadership is for leaders to inspire and encourage their followers to

willingly participate in the achievement of the vision organizational goals. Thereby, the success of any organization lies within the competence of the leader (Kotter).

Gandz (2005) contended that the key to successful leadership is attaining results for the followers. He suggests that, to be effective, the leader employs the following competencies:

1. Ability to understand and interpret the environment: leaders have to broaden their vision to view into the future. The leader must be able to think both short term and long term, as well as concentrate on organizational change.
2. Ability to develop winning strategies: leaders must develop a strategic plan to attain the desired results. This plan must provide details of the steps necessary to achieve the goals as well as who is responsible for each step.
3. Ability to execute the strategies: leaders must be able to align their followers with the overall mission, vision, and objectives so that everyone is committed to achieving the intended goal.
4. Ability to evaluate the results and make strategic adjustments: leaders must be able to monitor the success or failure of the plan and be prepared to make adjustments or changes to meet the organizational goals.
5. Ability to build organizational capabilities: leaders must also be able to invest time, effort, and money in building the organization's management and leadership talents. Effective leaders invest in developing their core competencies while producing winning results for their organization.

Barner's (2000) study on leadership competencies revealed that a leader must have a clear understanding of the challenges, as well as the needs of his organization. As a result of his study, five steps to leadership competence emerged. The initial step in articulating a business strategy is to assess the short- and long-term goals of the organization. An analysis should be conducted focusing on (a) anticipated challenges for the next year, (b) necessary leadership competencies to address these challenges, and (c) how significant competency gaps would affect overall organizational performance. Such a strategy allows an organization to design a competency model identifying

leadership competencies necessary to successfully execute a strategy, as well as identify any competency gaps that might hinder their plan.

Secondly, Barner (2000) contended that leaders should be requested to formulate a list of any challenges they anticipate during the upcoming year (i.e. changes in leadership, new systems, or expansion into new markets). Developing such a list helps to “provide a clear context for understanding the difficulties in work functions that leaders will face when trying to achieve new goals” (p. 50). The third step is to specify any assumptions that were identified in the business analysis. Highlighting these assumptions allows leaders to realistically assess the timeframes for implementing these events, as well as helping them to develop an awareness of how uncertainties can impact goal attainment. After identifying the assumptions, step four suggests that the leader assess the objectives and challenges for the upcoming year to determine what would be the best style of leadership to achieve the identified objectives of the organization. Step five concludes Barner’s plan with challenging the organization to designate a troubleshooter who can provide an impartial critique of the analysis as well as alternatives to their implications. The overall concept of these five steps is to develop a systematic plan for organizations to assess whether they have the leadership style necessary to attain the goals of the organization. Yet, Barner strongly attests that while these technical leadership competencies are crucial, the leader must also possess basic leadership competencies such as effective interpersonal communication skills, adaptability, and good decision-making.

In another study on leadership competency, Scholtes (1999) developed a new set of competencies based on his experience with organizations. Scholtes supports the

change in leadership from “management by objectives” to a more inclusive style. His new leadership competencies were based on the work of Deming, whereby leaders need to understand the value of thinking in systems terms, of understanding variability and human behavior, and of providing clear directions in attaining the organization’s goals.

As a result of this study, Scholtes (1999) developed the following six basic competencies:

1. The ability to think and lead in terms of systems: The axiom of a system is purpose, thus the purpose of an organization needs to be made clear to the followers. A organizational system is composed of many parts that are vital to the overall well-functioning of the organization.
2. The ability to understand variability: Carefully interpreted data is required to understand variation. Otherwise, the leader tends to apply an overly simplistic solution to a complex problem, resulting in failure. Leaders must understand variation and learn how to effectively manage through it.
3. The ability to understand, develop, and improve the learning process: Evaluation must be a continuous process; therefore leaders must be committed to a lifelong undertaking of learning. Learning must be concurrent with meeting the needs of the organization.
4. The ability to understand human behavior: Scholtes implies that not understanding human behavior is one of the greatest shortcomings of managers, yet it is paramount to the success of an organization. A good leader exemplifies altruism and promotes the concepts of motivation, mutual trust, and respect.
5. The ability to understand interactions and interdependencies: Understanding the interactions and interdependencies among the variables (i.e. the system, learning, and human behavior) is necessary to understand and manage the complexity of change.
6. Ability to provide vision and focus of the organization: The leader is responsible for continually reminding the people of the organization’s purpose and priorities to attain the organization’s goals.

Garman, Butler, and Brinkmeyer (2006) engaged in a study whereby they developed a competency model for the Healthcare Leadership Alliance (HLA).

Leadership was the final competency in this model. The HLA identified 14 domains

associated with this competency, however three were deemed as most crucial to effective leadership. First, the organization must have a compelling vision; one that is so profound that the employees can remember it when difficult circumstances arise. The establishment of a vision not only involves formulating a picture, but also ensuring that the vision has been properly disseminated through systematic communication with the employees. According to Garman et al., the leader should be certain that everyone is aware of the vision. Secondly, the leader should effectively communicate the goals of the organization to the employees. When the goals are effectively articulated to the employees, it tends to enhance the employees' understanding of the common purpose. The third area of importance to effective leadership relates to the leader's role in developing an organizational culture that embraces mutual trust, individual motivation, teamwork, and diversity. Garman et al. asserts that the pathway to leading an organization to success involves "shifting perspectives toward creating a climate that is broadly conducive to performance" (p. 361).

In a research study with Australian and Canadian human service managers, Rosslyn and Harvey (1996) affirmed their perspectives of leadership excellence. A total of 51 human service managers were interviewed over a 6 month period. Their organizations ranged from child welfare to health service agencies. Congruent to other studies mentioned in this literature review, their vision of excellence encompassed articulating a clear purpose, direction, mission, or vision and achieving goals as vital to an "excellent" organization. To attain success, every organization must work toward this goal. The organization's purpose should reflect prioritizing activities and channeling

resources as an effective means of filtering out unsuitable conditions. The “excellent” organization evaluates its performance and honestly provides the results to its clients.

Another characteristic of an “excellent” organization is its commitment to staff. The most common ranked was providing a positive organizational climate to staff; fundamentally, providing a safe environment where people can feel trusted, valued, and respected. Employees should be allowed the freedom and encouragement to take calculated risks. The “excellent” organization places an emphasis on meeting the needs of its staff, thereby creating a reciprocal atmosphere.

Boutros and Joseph (2007) studied leadership competency in health care organizations. They proffered building, maintaining, and recovering trust as a core leadership competency in the health care industry. When faced with crises, leaders oftentimes have to make critical decisions under high-pressure conditions with limited information. It is paramount for leaders to have built a reciprocal atmosphere of trust. Consequently, a leader’s inability to build, maintain, and recover trust is often found to be the cause of most failed personal and business relationships. Trust is emotional and is a product of choice. Boutros and Joseph describe trust as “reinforced by shared experiences over time, kept promises and understanding of the motives underlying sacrifices” (p.38).

According to Boutros and Joseph (2007), there are three major elements incorporated in building trust. Trust must be “built on a strong foundation, deliberately planned, and structurally reinforced” (p. 39). Trust is won incrementally and is primarily based on the leader’s ability to fulfill promises that are beneficial to the team as opposed to personal gain. Communication is a key factor in building, maintaining or recovering



trust. Once trust has been built, a system must be developed to maintain trust. Boutros and Joseph listed 12 behaviors that foster a trusting relationship, which include: the ability to share personal information, admitting weaknesses and mistakes, acting fairly and consistently, offering and accepting apologies, and fulfilling commitments. If trust has eroded in an organization, Boutros and Joseph posit that it can be recovered by offering sincere apologies, accepting the offended person's influence, and fulfilling the promise.

Further, Boutros and Joseph (2007) analyzed how trust is reflected in the organizational structure. The hierarchical organization tends not to value trust as a leadership competency; the decision-making process is reserved for the top executives. Conversely, a flat structured organization reflects a trusting culture. It tends to decentralize the approach to management and encourages employees to become involved in the decisions. A flat structured organization values teamwork and empowers employees to make decisions, thereby enabling them to adjust to organizational change more easily.

In a study that focused on leader and employee relations, Joseph (2003) conducted research on 295 managers to test whether the leadership styles of a manager are a function of the emotional competencies of that individual. A total of nine emotional competencies (stress response, emotional literacy, ability to express emotions, dealing with the emotions of others, resilience, interpersonal connections, compassion, ability to trust others, and happiness) were compared to nine different leadership styles. The leadership process is composed of three key elements, which were the focal points during this study: the interaction among the leader, the follower, and the leadership situation.

Joseph analyzed the leadership styles and emotional competencies of the 295 managers to conclude the following:

1. Leadership style and stress: Empowering leaders, strategic leaders, and visionary leaders are the least stressed, while principle-centered leaders and transactional leaders appeared to be the most stressful types.
2. Emotional literacy: Servant leaders, visionary leaders, and charismatic leaders ranked the highest in regard to recognizing and respecting the emotions of others, while strategic leaders ranked the lowest.
3. Ability to express emotions: Visionary leaders and entrepreneurial leaders ranked highest in expressing their emotions, while transformational and strategic leaders ranked the lowest.
4. Ability to deal with other people's emotions: Visionary leaders and entrepreneurial leaders rated highly in their ability to recognize and respond appropriately to other's feelings, while strategic leaders and transactional leaders rated very poorly in this competency area.
5. Resilience: Visionary leaders are highly capable of bouncing back when faced with failure, whereas strategic leaders and transactional leaders have great difficulty in this area.
6. Interpersonal connections: Entrepreneurial leaders and visionary leaders are the best at establishing connections, while transformational leaders and strategic leaders are not very strong in this competency area.
7. Compassion: Empowering leaders, servant leaders, and visionary leaders scored high in this competency area, while strategic leaders and entrepreneurial leaders scored low.
8. Trust radius: Empowering leaders, visionary leaders, and servant leaders rated high in their ability to trust others, while transformational leaders rated poorly in this competency area.
9. Happiness and quality of life: Visionary leaders and servant leaders expressed more satisfaction with life and work, whereas transformational leaders were the least satisfied.

While there was no indication of which style of leadership is most effective in an organizational setting, according to the empirical data associating leadership styles and emotional competencies, the characteristics of a particular leadership style are

predictable. The results of this study supported the hypothesis that the leadership style of a manager is a function of the emotional competencies of that person (Joseph, 2003).

Kupers and Weibler (2006) investigated the significance of emotions in transformational leadership. Today, organizations are faced with ubiquitous and continuous changes. These dynamic changes exert pressure on the relationship between leaders and followers. Emotions are highly relevant in this context as they can either energize or obstruct the change process in organizations. In the past, emotions were viewed as something to be “left at the door” or minimized. George (2000) concluded that emotions play a vital role in leadership, as well as in the change process (as cited in Kupers and Weibler). Therefore, leadership research and practice need to reconsider the role of emotions in the context of organizational transformation. In this study, Kupers and Weibler revealed emotional competencies of transformational leadership as operationalized through the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and emotional intelligence competencies as they relate to specific dimensions of transformational leadership. There was a very limited spectrum of emotions revealed in the questions of the MLQ, which led the researchers to believe that the emotional dimensions that were identified in the questions of the MLQ were partly by chance. Goleman’s extended framework of emotional competencies was used to enrich the discussion on how emotional intelligence competencies could be connected to the four components of transformational leadership.

Visionary leadership is a touchstone theme within transformational leadership. Whether creating and realizing or sharing an enthusiastic vision, emotions are triggered, which contributes to an emotionally grounded sense of direction. Influencing or

persuading others to share the vision of an organization necessitates an emotionally competent leader. “Visionary, transformational leaders are able to articulate and arouse enthusiasm for a shared vision, to guide the performance of others while holding them accountable” (Kupers & Weibler, 2004, p. 371). It is essential for the transformational leader to engage in a healthy dialogue and seek mutual understanding. To accomplish this, transformational leaders must be attuned to others’ emotional states as well as their own so that they can control the impulse to respond in ways that might negatively affect the emotional climate. They encourage followers to express their emotions in an open and honest manner without fear of reprisal. In handling conflict, they must manage situations with diplomacy and tact, encouraging win-win situations so that symbiotic relationships can be attained.

Effective transformational leaders foster collaboration and teamwork whereby they promote a friendly, cooperative climate and create group synergy to pursue the collective goals of the organization. Kupers and Weibler (2004) suggested that the most effective leaders are those who integrate diverse components related to emotional competencies, switching to the most appropriate for a particular situation. While the study outlined how the four main components of transformational leadership are linked to some emotional competencies, the researchers are aware that there was no “full-range theory” developed as a result of this study.

Change is inevitable in the business sector and people are constantly adjusting or being forced to adjust to change. The results of a survey conducted by Ferres and Connell (2004) supported the hypothesis that employees would report less cynicism towards organizational change if managed by emotionally intelligent leaders. It is vital

for leaders to have sufficient interpersonal abilities to deal with cynicism and help make the change process more manageable for their employees. Change cynicism oftentimes results from a lack of faith in the leaders and failed previous change efforts. However, if employees deem their leader as effective and perceive that they have been involved in the decision-making process, they are less cynical about organizational change. Emotional competencies are considered soft skills that are crucial to leadership effectiveness in situations of organizational change.

For the purpose of this study, Ferres and Connell (2004) assessed this relationship in terms of two grouped aspects of emotional intelligence: (1) emotional perception and understanding and (2) emotional utilization and management. In matrix format, they subdivided the competencies and traits of the emotionally intelligent leader and how they relate to change management. The empathetic leader has “the ability to understand employees’ mental models and existing frameworks” (p. 64). Leaders who are capable of acknowledging their own emotions and empathizing with others are more likely to be able to successfully spearhead major organizational changes. The emotionally intelligent leader also sets challenging goals and takes calculated risks during the change process. Leaders who are able to influence the emotions of their followers may be able to reduce cynicism in reference to organizational change.

The aim of this research study was to partly contribute to the existing management literature by exploring the extent to which leader emotional intelligence competencies affect levels of change cynicism in a large public sector organization. It was hypothesized that high levels of leader emotional intelligence predicted lower change cynicism amongst the survey group. This was consistent with the assumption that

emotionally intelligent leaders can understand and influence employees' mental models and negative attitudes.

The roles of organizational members have changed as a result of a metamorphosis of business organizations from the traditional hierarchical structure to a flatter, more flexible structure with interactive and interdependent processes (Prati, Douglas, Ferris, Ammeter, and Buckley, 2003). Prati et.al. conducted a study on emotional intelligence, leadership, team process, and outcomes to develop a conceptual model integrating how they influence each other. Today's organizations are seeking leaders who can facilitate, coordinate, and orchestrate the work behavior of others. According to Prati, et.al., recent evidence tends to suggest that "social effectiveness skills" are crucial to leadership effectiveness. Furthermore, they asserted that "emotional intelligence has emerged as one of the most notable social effectiveness constructs, and ...argue that it is the foundational element of leadership effectiveness" (p. 22).

Effective work teams have been described as innovative, cohesive, communicative, and supportive of the collective goal. The literature on emotional intelligence describes these attributes as being reflected in the emotionally intelligent leader. The emotionally intelligent leader empathizes with others, communicates effectively, and encourages cohesive and supportive relationships. As well, emotionally intelligent leaders create a supportive work environment. Leaders are change catalysts for teams; they motivate and inspire teams to implement the articulated vision. George (2000) listed four aspects of emotional intelligence that are critical to leaders in the development of effective teams (as cited in Prati, et.al., 2003). The first was the ability to accurately appraise one's own emotions and the emotional state of others. This aspect is

crucial to establishing and maintaining supportive relationships. The second aspect is the ability to predict emotional reactions in various situations. The third aspect is the use of emotions by the leader to influence the behavior and cognition of others. George identified the final aspect as the management of emotions which brings the other three aspects together to create an effective team.

As a result of this study, Prati, et.al. (2003) proposed that emotional intelligence is critical to the effectiveness of team interaction and performance. The team leader serves as the motivator and facilitator for cohesion and support among team members. The emotionally intelligent leader provides a transformational influence whereby positive emotions may become contagious. Through empathy, team members tend to emulate the leader's emotions or develop similar emotions. The emotionally intelligent leader has the ability to empower team members and create an atmosphere to improve oneself and the team processes for the collective benefit.

Dulewicz and Higgs (2003) reviewed the findings from a major study of United Kingdom (UK) boards and re-analyzed the data on tasks and competencies related to emotional intelligence competencies. Their study supported the contention of Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2002) that emotional intelligence becomes more important as one advances in an organization (as cited in Dulewicz & Higgs). As many other researchers in this literature review assert, emotional intelligence is a critical factor in leadership effectiveness in 21<sup>st</sup> century organizations. The researchers identified four main challenges with which organizations are faced:

1. Attracting and retaining highly talented individuals
2. Balancing the “hard” and “soft” aspects of the organization

3. Succeeding in implementing change
4. Addressing the needs and interests of all stakeholders and managing the resulting paradoxes.

Managing these challenges requires a new leadership paradigm and emotional intelligence has been identified as the basis for the new paradigm. Of the 38 competencies investigated, the following nine were directly identified or linked as closely related to the seven elements of emotional intelligence: integrity, influence and persuasiveness, achievement motivation, resilience, decisiveness and intuitiveness, determination, sensitivity, energy, and listening. With the exception of energy, all of the competencies aligned with the seven elements of emotional intelligence and were rated as relevant to the majority of the directors involved in the study.

This study provided evidence that emotional intelligence is valuable for managers in organizations. It is highly relevant in the assessing, selecting, and developing process for leaders. Also, this study argued that emotional intelligence characteristics are among some of the required attributes for effective leadership and change management.

### Summary

The literature review for this study acknowledged the evolution of leadership theory to current leadership theories that have been deemed as more inclusive to meet the demands of organizational change in the 21st century. The related literature included topics of the evolution of leadership theory, historical background of emotional intelligence theory, Goleman's leadership competency framework, and recent leadership competency studies. What can be concluded from this review of the literature is that successful leadership can not be accomplished alone; it requires a systemic or inclusive



approach. Furthermore, the review tends to support the theory that successful leaders must motivate and inspire their followers to align with the overall mission and goals of the organization. While technical leadership skills are crucial, effective leaders must also possess the basic leadership skills such as good interpersonal skills, adaptability, and good-decision making. Recent leadership competency studies reveal more evidence of the role emotions play in effective leadership and managing organizational change.

Despite some obvious deficiencies in the general competency requirements for human service program managers, the concept of emotional intelligence competencies presents vast new opportunities for improvement in leadership efficiency. The principles of emotional intelligence provide an appealing and logical set of established leadership constructs to expect from human service program managers. Particularly, Goleman's (1998) competency framework allows for possible integration and expansion of such competencies into the existing general competence requirements as established by the Department of Human Services (2001). Because the field of human services is characterized by uncertainty, unpredictability, multitasking, and flexibility, there is a critical need for a uniquely effective style of leadership. Integration of Goleman's (1998) competency framework and current general competency requirements can greatly influence the manner in which leaders are developed, recruited, and retained in human service organizations. This study's value is the examination and analysis of leadership from the perspective of leadership competencies – the similarities between the leadership styles employed by the participants and the resulting attainment of the organization's goals.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Restatement of the Purpose

The purpose of this study was to identify the current leadership competencies of human service program managers, whether their current leadership practices are in agreement with the minimum competency requirements, and whether a relationship exists between their leadership practices and emotional intelligence competencies. Five human service program managers were interviewed in depth to identify their current leadership practices, rank the importance of Goleman's emotional intelligence competencies as they relate to their current leadership practices, and determine the effects of these leadership competencies on the success of their program.

The emotional competence framework for leadership developed by Goleman (1998, 1995) served as the foundational sources in formulating the interview questions. Participants were asked to assign existing leadership competencies, when possible, to the minimum performance elements required by the Department of Human Services. Additional items (i.e., demographics, gender, age, and ethnicity) deemed necessary for optimal leadership performance were added to this list of competencies.

This study was intended to help create a better understanding of the current leadership competencies of human service program managers and how these competencies relate to the minimum qualifications required by the Department of Human Services (see Appendix A), and to identify existing leadership styles and approaches to problem solving so that training programs and seminars can be developed to improve leadership competencies in an effort to improve delivery of services to clients.

## Research Design

Data for this qualitative, descriptive study was collected primarily through interviews by the researcher with five human service program managers, guided by a predetermined list of open-ended questions. Categorized as qualitative in nature, the research questions were reframed or refined as the researcher learned more about the participant and the contextual conditions of the phenomenon that was being studied. According to Creswell (2003), this method of data collection is “emergent rather than tightly prefigured” (p. 181). The qualitative method allows the researcher observe the participant or place in their natural setting, whereby the researcher can become more involved in the actual experiences of the participants. Creswell further proposed that the data collected is fundamentally interpretive; the researcher “filters the data through a personal lens that is situated in a specific sociopolitical and historical moment” (p. 182). The lack of research in this area suggested that a qualitative approach to this study was most appropriate (Emerson & Harvey, 1996).

This unique design allowed for an in-depth analysis of how human service program managers viewed their leadership practices in relation to emotional intelligence competencies. Competencies critical to the assessment of human service program managers were gleaned through this process. The researcher also collected data through the completion of a demographic questionnaire and observation of the participants’ behavior, actions, comments, and workplace environment.

This qualitative study was aimed at empowering the participating human service program managers, as well as program directors, to examine and determine critical competencies for leadership roles, using the competency framework outlined by Goleman

and colleagues (Goleman, 1995, 1998; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002) and their theory of emotionally intelligent leadership as a guide. This study attempted to facilitate a clearer participant understanding of how such influences affect their mentoring and supporting of their employees.

### *Pilot Study*

A pilot study was conducted by interviewing a human service division manager prior to performing the primary study to ensure the appropriateness of the protocol and process. The interview was audio taped and transcribed. The participant was requested to review the transcribed interview for accuracy. Based on feedback from the participant, appropriate revisions were made to the interview protocol. The pilot study presented an opportunity for the researcher to become familiar with the interview process, which served to streamline the subsequent interview process.

### *Population Sample*

The population sample for this study consisted of five human program managers in one human service agency located in a city in the western region of the United States. Represented in this sample were individuals who held a bachelor's degree in various fields ranging from social sciences to administration. They have also met the minimum competency requirements of the Department of Human Services (2001). Diversity factors within the potential sample were their duration of experience as human service program managers, their leadership training, the number of employees they supervised, and their gender and race.

Sample size in qualitative research, specifically participatory research, is not intended to be representative of the larger population (Truesdale, 2004). Only 6

responded to the request to participate. Therefore, the researcher decided to limit the study to 6 human service program managers to conduct a more in-depth study of the participants. One of the program managers later reversed her decision to participate, reducing the number of participants to 5. This type of sampling provided the opportunity to gather a more complex, interactive, and encompassing narrative, thereby adding breadth and depth to the study.

#### Selection Process

Upon approval by the University of San Francisco Institutional Review Board (IRB), ten human service program managers were contacted by the researcher via e-mail requesting their participation in this study as suggested by their division manager. Contact was successful with six of the managers. Subsequent to the e-mail, telephone contact was made with each of the managers to obtain verbal consent to participate.

#### Instrumentation

The leadership competencies of 5 human service program managers were assessed using Goleman's leadership competency framework. The framework is composed of 5 dimensions of emotional intelligence and 25 emotional competencies. Participants were asked to evaluate their current leadership practices in relation to the minimum requirements as established by the Department of Human Services. To allow for consistency in future replication of this study, a detailed interview protocol was implemented (see Appendix B). The interview protocol was composed of open-ended questions divided into six different topic areas. The primary purpose of the protocol was to outline a sequence. The protocol was not read verbatim, but was used as a guide for conversation to promote a more natural discussion. The questionnaire requesting

demographic data (see Appendix C), including prior leadership experience, length of time in current position, and ethnicity and sex of each respondent, was briefly discussed and collected at the onset of the interview.

#### Human Subjects Approval

An application outlining the methodology was submitted to the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) at the University of San Francisco. Upon review, the IRBPHS provided approval to conduct this study (see Appendix D). Subjects were advised that their participation in this study may mean the loss of confidentiality; however the researcher would use pseudonyms in any reports or publications resulting from this study. All data collected (i.e. audiotapes and transcriptions) was coded and filed in a locked file belonging to the researcher to minimize the risk of loss of confidentiality. The audio tapes of interviews will be destroyed within 1 year of the interview date.

#### Transcript for Obtaining Verbal Consent

A transcript for obtaining verbal consent was used as a guide when conducting telephone conversations with potential participants. The transcript provided a narrative of the background, need, and purpose of the study (see Appendix E). It also provided a description of the study and scope of participant involvement. Because the intent of the telephone conversation was to encourage open dialogue between the researcher and participant, the transcript was modified as deemed appropriate by the researcher to increase the comfort level of the participants.

### Informed Consent Form

The Informed Consent Form was a modified version of the application submitted to the University of San Francisco IRB for the protection of human subjects (see Appendix F). All information required by the IRB was presented to potential participants in this research study; only specific details related to the researcher and the research study were added.

### Demographic Questionnaire

The Demographic Questionnaire (see Appendix C) included nine areas of interest, including prior leadership roles, intention to become leaders, and number of staff reporting directly to them. The initial intention was to mail the questionnaires to the participants as a time saving device, however feedback received during telephone conversations revealed that it would be more productive to complete them at the beginning of the interview process. The purpose of the questionnaire was satisfied effectively by collecting brief responses prior to the interview. Brief responses to specific areas of interest were discussed before addressing the research questions by the researcher and the interviewee.

### Researcher's Profile

The researcher was an essential instrument in the collection of data for this study. As the designer of the research study, the interviewer, and recorder of data, the researcher analyzed the data from a holistic perspective. In qualitative research, the researcher must acknowledge how his or her personal biases, values, and interest emerge and shape the study (Creswell, 2003).

The researcher was born and raised in a small southern town, Pelican, Louisiana, where she was resided for 23 years. During that time, she obtained a bachelor's degree in psychology from Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Shortly after obtaining her bachelor's degree, she married and moved to Mansfield, Louisiana, and resided there for the next 15 years. During that period of time, the researcher owned and managed a dry-cleaning business for approximately 5 years. While continuing to manage the business part-time, she became employed as a social service director for a Head Start program for the next 6 years. Upon resigning from that position, the researcher became a full-time mother until the family relocated to the Sacramento area. This move facilitated a return to the field of social services and employment in the group home systems. In 1992, she enrolled in the social work program at California State University-Sacramento and completed her master's degree in social work in 1995 while continuing to work in group homes. After completion of her degree, the researcher was employed by the Department of Health and Human Services in Sacramento County where she remains currently employed. After 6 years of field social work, the researcher was promoted to a supervisory position, during which time her interest in doctoral course work at the University of San Francisco emerged. Subsequent experiences and observations of the current leadership practices led to the topic area for this research study.

#### Data Collection

The qualitative research method allows researchers to engage in an interactive process, subject to influence by personal traits or experiences, as a method of data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). This method employs an approach that utilizes different methods that add depth and breadth to investigations. According to Heppner



and Heppner (2004), the qualitative researcher is interested in capturing the individual's perception through multiple strategies. The initial stage of the interview was dedicated to rapport building between the researcher and the participant, as well as creating a conducive atmosphere to encourage the sharing of personal perspectives.

The University of San Francisco IRB for the Protection of Human Subjects granted permission to the researcher to perform interviews for this research with a population of five human service program managers located in a northern California county of the United States (see Appendix D). Following this approval, all of the potential participants were contacted via e-mail. Initially, 6 of the 10 human service program managers contacted responded in agreement to participate. A Participant Briefing on the Study was e-mailed and reviewed by the participants detailing the study (see Appendix G). Over the course of a 2 week period, all of the potential participants were contacted via telephone requesting a verbal consent to participate. The researcher spoke directly to five of the managers; the sixth revoked participation in the study. A verbal transcript describing the study was read to each potential participant and all candidates appeared interested and willing to participate. One-on-one interviews were arranged during these initial telephone conversations and scheduled approximately 2 weeks later. Reminder telephone calls were made to those who agreed to participate 1 week prior to the scheduled interview date.

A pilot study was conducted before the initial interview. Participant feedback and the findings were integrated into the design of the interview protocol. All five interviews were conducted within a 2 week period. All interview environments were conducive to confidential conversation and conveniently located in a quiet area. Each interview lasted

45-60 minutes and was tape-recorded with prior permission from each research participant.

Data collection included the implementation of the Interview Protocol. Initially, the protocol was read verbatim, however it was later used solely as a guide. At the beginning of the interview, each participant was provided with two copies of the Informed Consent Form (see Appendix F). They were requested to sign both copies, maintaining one for their records and returning one to the researcher. Once completed, the participants were provided with copies of the Minimum Competency Requirement for Program Managers (see Appendix A) and the Goleman (1998) Emotionally Intelligent Leadership Competencies (see Appendix H). Participants were encouraged to ask questions, make comments or engage in discussion to ensure that they understood the documents and instruments they would review while addressing the research questions. The Demographic Questionnaire was then administered (see Appendix C) in hard-copy form for completion. The Interview Pertaining to the Research Questions (see Appendix B) followed in the interview process. Several demographic questions were asked first.

Three important aspects emerged during the course of the interview. Participants were first asked to identify their current leadership competencies and then they were asked to prioritize Goleman's (1998) Emotional Intelligence Competencies. After this topic was discussed, the participants were shown the minimum competency requirements for human service program managers and asked whether any of Goleman's emotional intelligence competencies were related to their current minimum competency requirements. This task was to help inspire the participants' thoughts about how the competencies are associated and how one can be used to help develop the other.

Questions and comments were encouraged throughout the process. Participants were asked to express what changes they would recommend in the current minimum requirements for human service program managers to reach optimal performance in their respective organizations. Back-up copies were made of all tape-recorded data and then coded before they were sent to transcription. Original tapes were labeled by participants' names and filed at home in a locked safe with only the researcher having access to the information. When the coded tapes were returned to the researcher, they were placed in the safe along with the original tapes.

### Data Analysis

Data was drawn from the departmental websites to learn more about the contextual environment in which the participants work as leaders. Participation in this research was voluntary, therefore the data was primarily used as a preparation for the interviews. Demographic information (e.g., education, age, experience, number of workers supervised) was analyzed as a vital part of the data (see Appendix C). The researcher's presentation and presence in this interview process provided a beginning to the analysis and helped to deepen the researcher's understanding throughout the process.

The interview questions guided the dialogue:

#### Demographic Information

1. What type of formal leadership training have you added to your background?
2. What other influences facilitated your development of leadership skills?

#### Research Question 1

What are the leadership competencies of program managers in the human services agency?

What are some of your current leadership competencies as a human service program manager?

How would you rank them from most to least important?

#### Research Question 2

In what ways are the leadership competencies of the program managers in agreement with the minimum performance elements required by the Department of Human Services?

1. What current leadership competencies are represented in the minimum qualification requirements?
2. What benefits do you perceive by integrating additional competency items into the existing minimum requirements?
3. What adverse affects do you perceive by integrating additional competency items into the existing minimum requirements?

#### Research Question 3

In what ways are the program managers' leadership competencies in agreement with the leadership competencies necessary for the success of their programs?

1. What leadership competencies have contributed to the success of your program?
2. Which leadership competencies have least contributed to the success of your program?
3. What additional leadership competencies might improve the success of your program?

#### Research Question 4

In what ways are the program managers' leadership competencies in agreement with Goleman's (1998) emotional intelligence leadership competencies?

1. How would you rank Goleman's leadership competencies as they pertain to human service organizations?

2. What value do you place on that ranking?
3. In what ways are current leadership competencies in agreement with Goleman's leadership competencies?
4. In what ways could the size or setting of a human service organization affect your ranking of leadership competencies?

#### Updating the Department of Health and Human Services Minimum Requirements

1. Which leadership competencies do you feel should be added to the minimum competency requirements to most accurately assess minimum leadership performance?
2. What leadership competencies do you feel should be added to the minimum competency requirements to most accurately assess competence above minimum level?
3. What other deficiencies still exist in the process of assessing leadership potential in human service program managers?

#### Closing Thoughts

1. What pros and cons do you see in establishing a leadership model for human service program managers?
2. Why do you believe research in the human service leadership has been previously lacking?

The interview questionnaire was confidential and was not submitted to the participants prior to the interview. A copy of the interview questionnaire may be found in Appendix B.

The data from this study was analyzed based on recurring themes as revealed during field notes, field observations, and data collection. Units of information, quotes, and phrases containing similar information was categorized and coded in separate themes. These themes were analyzed in relationship to the minimum competency requirements for human service program managers and to Goleman's emotional intelligence competencies. Interview questions were reviewed by peers and the researcher's advisor.

Interviews were transcribed verbatim in chronological order within 3 weeks of the last interview. Heppner and Heppner (2004) contend that "interviews should be transcribed verbatim with only identifying information omitted" (p. 166). The researcher repetitively engaged in a process of reading and reflection to gain an accurate understanding of the data. The transcripts were reviewed for accuracy. Corrections only were made to the text during the initial review. During the subsequent review of the transcripts, units of information, such as phrases, words, and quotes were coded by highlighter for reference, with notes made in the margin next to each category. The research questions served as a checklist to verify inclusion of the desired content. Additional themes emerged throughout the participants' interviews, thus requiring more reviews of the tapes to further analyze and document the patterns to synthesize the findings.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

#### *Overview*

This chapter presents the findings from this study involving a detailed analysis of data gathered revealing the development of leadership skills and their relationship to emotional intelligence competencies. This study was supported by the guidelines of Goleman (1995, 1998) to explain the findings and answers to the four research questions. The aim of this study was to examine (a) current leadership competencies, (b) whether a relationship existed between the competencies of human service program managers and the minimum performance elements required by the Department of Human Services, (c) what leadership competencies human service program managers felt contributed to the success of their program, and (d) whether a relationship existed between current leadership practices and Goleman's emotional intelligence competencies. As introduced earlier, this study was guided by the following four research questions:

1. What are the leadership competencies of program managers in the human services agency?
2. In what ways are the leadership competencies of the program managers in agreement with the minimum performance elements required by the Department of Human Services?
3. In what ways are the program managers' leadership competencies in agreement with the leadership competencies necessary for the success of their programs?
4. In what ways are the program managers' leadership competencies in agreement with Goleman's (1998) emotional intelligence leadership competencies?

Answers to these research questions were found within the transcribed interviews of the five participants. Themes were derived from concepts identified by participants' quotes and other identifiers. The major thematic categories were leadership defined, leadership values, empathy, organizational awareness, developing others, conflict management, communication, teamwork and collaboration, self-confidence, interagency collaboration, service orientation, adaptability, and integration of the emotional intelligence model (Goleman, 1995, 1998),

### Participants' Profiles

Confidentiality was discussed with the 5 final study participants. While they were not concerned with the possibility of their identity being revealed, pseudonyms replaced their names. Table 1 provides a demographic breakdown of the personal information gathered during the actual interviews.

Table 1

#### Demographics of Research Participants

Demographic Category	Participants
Gender	
Female	5
Male	0
College Major	
Business	1
Organizational Communications	1
Humanities	1
English/Journalism	1
Prior Formal Leadership Roles	
Human Service Supervisor	5
Human Service Program Specialist	1
Program Director	1
Restaurant Manager	1



### *Monica*

Monica, 40 years of age, was the youngest participant and had the least experience of the 5 human service program managers interviewed for this study. Her experience in this position had been only 3 months. However, Monica had served as a director in another human service agency for 8 years. At the time of the study, Monica was responsible for providing direct supervision to 6 human service supervisors; 3 of whom were females and 3 were males. Two men and one woman were of diverse ethnic descent. Monica was responsible for indirectly supervising 70 professional support staff.

Monica clearly articulated that her intention was to become a leader. Her parents were business owners and served as role models. She appeared to provide open and honest answers to the queries. Due to renovations in her office, the interview was conducted in a nearby private conference room in the facility where she worked. Monica was dressed in business attire and presented very professionally.

### *Gina*

Gina, 52 years of age, was the second participant interviewed. She had 5 years of experience as a human service program manager and 8 years prior leadership experience. Gina expressed that she had always desired to become a leader. In fact, Gina personally invested in taking leadership courses at the local universities to enhance her leadership skills. At the time of this study, Gina managed a staff of 15, 13 women and 2 men. Nine women and one man were of diverse ethnic descent. In addition, Gina managed 15 professional support staff. Gina's interview was conducted in her office. Gina appeared relaxed and provided honest and open answers to the questions. Gina was dressed in business attire and appeared to be comfortable in the setting.

*Deidre*

At 55 years of age, Deidre was the oldest of the participants and had the most experience as a human service program manager. Deidre had a total of 5 years as a program manager and 2 years prior experience in a leadership position. At the time of the interview, Deidre supervised 4 staff members, all of whom were females.

Deidre's goal was to become a leader. In pursuit of this goal, she completed leadership training through the local university and her department. The interview was conducted in the office where she is employed. The setting was very comfortable, and Deidre appeared relaxed when answering the questions. Deidre was dressed professionally and presented as very interested in the topic. The interview consumed approximately 50 minutes.

*Geri*

Geri, 47 years of age, was the fourth participant interviewed. Her experience as a human service program manager spanned approximately 5 years, and she had been a supervisor in the same agency for 12 years. In her current role, Geri managed 15 supervisors, 8 female and 7 male. Three of the women and three of the men were of a diverse ethnic descent. Additionally, Geri indirectly supervised approximately 60 support staff.

Geri is a professional acquaintance of the researcher and was very helpful in providing information regarding the culture of the agency. It was clear that Geri intended to become a leader. She had completed leadership courses at the local junior colleges and universities. The interview was conducted in her office. Geri was professionally dressed and appeared very relaxed and comfortable.

### *Lisa*

The final participant, Lisa, was 47 years of age and had served as a human service program manager for 3 years. Lisa was a supervisor for 9 years prior to her promotion to a human service program manager. Lisa has a military background, and she served as a platoon squadron leader for 6 years. She made it very clear that she had always wanted to become a leader. Her primary responsibility was supervising training staff. She performed management responsibilities for 23 supervisors, 16 of whom were women and 7 were men. Ten of the women and four of the men were of ethnic descent. Furthermore, Lisa supervised 12 professional support staff.

Lisa appeared very focused and interested in the topic, providing open and honest answers to the queries. The interview occurred in her office. Lisa was professionally dressed and appeared relaxed during the course of the interview.

### Findings

#### *Research Question 1*

What are the leadership competencies of program managers in the human services agency?

In answering this question, the participants focused on defining leadership and discussing their own characteristics and behaviors as leaders. They also explored relative values that influenced the development of their leadership perceptions and expectations within human service program leadership. A consensus was gained that leadership is inspiring and guiding individuals through a team effort; it cannot be attained alone.

Table 2 summarizes the shared themes expressed by the research participants.

Table 2

Common Themes Expressed by the Participants

Categories	Definitions
Collaborative Leadership	Sharing the decision-making process with their employees
Communication	The ability to share information, listen, and provide constructive feedback
Empathy	Understanding others and being attuned to their emotional cues
Self-confidence	The ability to make decisions
Conflict Management	The ability to negotiate and resolve disagreements
Interagency Collaboration	Effective communication with other agencies towards shared goals
Organizational Awareness	Awareness of the funding sources, policies, and regulations governing the organization
Developing Others	Helping others to achieve their personal growth and development
Adaptability	Flexibility in adapting to change
Trustworthiness	Maintaining standards of integrity and honesty

*Collaborative Leadership*

All of the participants agreed upon the value of teamwork and collaboration, which is one of the leadership competencies referenced in Goleman's (1995) relationship management domain, as the key to building a community of shared values. This was also listed as one of the general competency requirements for human service program

managers by the Department of Human Services (2001). One of the participants, Lisa, commented on the importance of all personnel in the agency operating cohesively to ensure effective and efficient operation of the organization. She stated, “I try to make everybody feel as though they are invaluable to the team. I value their input. You can’t do this in a vacuum; you just can’t make decisions in a vacuum in this type of work. Lisa further commented that she is the leader, and she is responsible for everything that occurs in her bureau; therefore, leaders must gain a common consensus about key organizational goals. Monica described her understanding of the concept of collaborative leadership as, “You do it together and you lead from where you stand. Especially in public service, you do not lead alone. You lead by how you represent yourself in a group, implementing the vision, and the effectiveness of that vision.”

Monica strongly believes that you must lead by example and communication is crucial to the collaborative leadership process. Gina commented that she exercises collaborative leadership skills. She stated that “she sets the projects up and allows her workers to help put the pieces together.” Gina further believes that if workers make mistakes, a good leader does not focus on the negative; he or she identifies the problem and redirects the worker to the initial goal of the organization. Both Deidre and Geri briefly commented on the importance of collaboration by stating that they accomplish this task through clearly articulating their organization’s mission and vision, thereby gaining compliance to work toward the goals of the group.

### *Leadership Characteristics*

Each of the five participants described leadership in human services as a shared responsibility. They report directly to their division managers, and they also have

supervisory staff who report directly to them. Monica described a good leader as one whom possesses “humane ability”; the ability to understand others and allow them to fail without criticism. She believes that individuals learn through their mistakes. All five of the participants concurred that communication is the key to success in any organization which is a component of social skills. Goleman (1995, p. 27) defines communication as “listening openly and sending convincing messages.”

### *Communication*

Communication emerged as a critical competency. According to Monica, communication skills are critical to leadership competency. This competency can manifest in several different forms. Geri describes her perception of communication as,

I think of communication as pivotal because otherwise people can leave with a distorted view or not have a good perception of what you are trying to relay. They may leave without an understanding of the intended message. I encourage staff to talk to each other.....instead of leaving with negative thoughts or believing something that was totally irrelevant. Staff needs to keep an open dialogue.

Deidre described communication as one of her strongest leadership skills. Team leadership can only be achieved through the “effective exchange of information with employees.” Lisa described her method of communication as “putting it in writing.” She first articulates her expectations to her employees, but follows up with written documentation in effort to reduce any misunderstanding or misperceptions.

Gina expressed that she attempts to keep an open line of communication with not only her supervisors, but all staff working in her division. Gina portrayed herself as having an “open-door policy” whereby all of her staff can walk in and discuss anything with her. She attempts to provide a comfortable setting in which to share their ideas and develop a level of trust with her. Due to the sometimes overwhelming nature of job

requirements, Gina has to be empathetic towards her employees.

### *Empathy*

The theme of empathy was either referred to directly or indirectly by all of the participants. Empathy is the first of two competencies within Goleman's (1995) social competence domain. All of the participants agreed that empathy is essential in working in a human service organization. Empathy, or sensitivity to the needs of others, is a crucial competency when providing services to a diverse population who is in need based on their economic or social conditions. Geri described empathy as,

I think empathy is being able to see yourself in a situation like some of the clients we deal with are faced with and not thinking you are much better than them. I think it is being able to identify with that individual who is downtrodden and going through different stages of life. Being able to deal on their level because it is the bare necessities that people need first before they can think of other things. This applies to my employees as well as the clients we serve.

While Monica described other competencies that need to be developed prior to empathy, she referred to the success of an organization being directly affected by the leader's "ability to be aware of others' feelings and concerns because you have to understand their feelings and concerns before you can motivate them to accomplish the mission." Gina stated,

I am very involved in my bureau because I feel the necessity to be concerned about the feelings of my clerical staff or case workers when they are being bombarded with people at the reception windows who are not very kind and engaging. I was a case worker not too long ago, so I empathize with the stress they are under.

Deidre describes empathy as an overall important competency that is displayed throughout the bureau. Deidre responded to empathy by saying,

In this world or organization, empathy is crucial. We have lots of workers as well as clients who are struggling with a lot of issues. We may not have walked in their shoes, but we need to be able to understand what their issues are. That is

one thing I am proud of our whole department for; we are filled with a bunch of people who are trying to do the right thing for their clients, and it is important that I [the leader] demonstrate that to people that I supervise.

Leaders must be able to understand the issues that their workers are struggling with in order to effectively lead and inspire them to “catch the vision” of the organization.” While Lisa agreed with the other study participants that being aware of others’ feelings is critical to effective leadership in the organization, she believes that there are situations that demand a clear message. That is, the mission of the department has to be accomplished.

Lisa further alluded to her value of empathy when she articulated that she had recently been appointed as the program manager of the training bureau. She was aware that a particular organizational culture had been created, however there were a number of needed changes to be implemented. Yet, she wanted to respect the feelings of her staff and not make those changes too quickly in an effort to first gain the trust of her staff. Lisa believed that she will eventually accomplish this task if she continues to empathize and communicate effectively with them.

### *Self-confidence*

Goleman (1995, p. 26) defined self-confidence as “a strong sense of one’s self worth and capabilities.” There was a lack of consensus among the participants with regard to self-confidence. Gina felt that her self-confidence as a leader derived from the leadership that she experienced while working in the human service field, as well as having been employed as a cook in a restaurant. According to Gina, both professional and personal experiences helped to shape her leadership perspective. Gina described all of her prior leaders as having displayed great management / leadership skills. She further



described her “boss” in the restaurant as “more like military.” As a result, Gina developed strong leadership skills.

Monica’s familial values were most influential in developing her leadership skills. Her parents owned and operated a tax business for over thirty years, as well as served as leaders and representatives for the non-English speaking Hispanic population when they needed assistance in transacting business. Monica feels assured that she is an effective and efficient leader in her organization. On the other hand, Lisa, Geri, and Deidre have had great leadership mentors throughout their careers, yet they believe that the organization should develop more clearly defined guidelines and expectations of human service program managers.

### *Research Question 2*

What ways are the leadership competencies of the program managers in agreement with the minimum performance elements required by the Department of Human Services?

In exploring this question, program managers compared their current leadership competencies to the General Competencies for Human Service Program Managers (Department of Health Services, 2001). While answering this question, the participants focused on the importance of leadership competencies. They also spoke very candidly about the need to integrate other leadership competencies into the department’s minimum competency requirements for human service program managers.

While all of the study participants felt that the current standards tend to only assess minimal performance; there was some disagreement as to whether organizations should revise their program requirements to recruit managers who have optimal leadership skills. Geri commented that such a revision could limit creativity or the ability

to “think outside the box”, which is a valuable quality that should be embraced. Lisa deemed that the hiring process should be revised in reference to the testing and interviewing process. Furthermore, she articulated that the experience requirements should be more heavily weighted in the overall application process. Lisa believed that the current process could possibly eliminate potentially “good leaders.”

### *Management or Leadership*

All five of the participants recognized the importance of leadership or management competencies. They expressed the difference between leadership and management, yet there was a consensus that due to the nature of their organization providing services that are regulated by federal, state, and local policies, a good leader has to determine when it is appropriate to manage or to lead. They all concurred that their preference is to lead their subordinates as opposed to control and direct them.

Monica stated,

Having been in this position for only a few months, I have actually received feedback that one of my greatest strengths is my ability to plan, to bring people together, and to focus on where we are going as an organization. I tend to lead people as opposed to directing and controlling staff.

Gina commented on the importance of analytical and planning skills in the leadership role. She stated, “It’s necessary for the job, so we throw people in, and they either acquire those skills somewhere along the line or they never get them and struggle through the job.” According to Gina, human service program managers spend a large percentage of their time analyzing and planning for the department, and a deficiency in those skills could potentially place the department at risk. In reference to her leadership skills, Gina responded, “Leadership, inspiring, and guiding individuals; I have proven to myself and colleagues that I am good at that.”

In viewing the competency requirements as determined by the Department of Health Services (2001), Deidre immediately referred to the phrase “directing and controlling large staff”. She responded by stating, “I guess it’s linguistics, [but] controlling is kind of a scary word to me. I prefer to think of myself as developing employees in terms of catching the vision and working collectively towards that vision.” Geri asserted that her major was business management. Therefore, she is highly skilled in the principles of management; however, she prefers to lead her employees as opposed to managing them. Geri described herself as very organized and efficient in prioritizing, planning, and coordinating the activities of her organization. Lisa concurred with the other study participants in reference to management skills versus leadership skills. Lisa expressed that she is highly capable of organizing and strategizing ways to get the tasks of her organization accomplished through her employees, but she would not refer to her technique as controlling staff.

### *Conflict Management*

The competency of conflict management falls within Goleman’s (1995) domain of social competence/relationship management. The term conflict management implies the ability to negotiate and resolve disagreement. All of the study participants agreed that this is a critical competence in the field of human services. Their program staff constantly deals with clients who are displeased or aggravated due to the economic circumstances, thus quick to engage in a conflictual dialogue. Therefore, human service program managers not only have to implement conflict management skills on an employee level, but also on a clientele level. Monica stated that her bureau is large and widespread, which causes her to deal with conflict management daily on some level.

Gina describes herself as having developed sufficient conflict management skills working with a large staff. Deidre declared, “I find it interesting that I marked that as an important one although conflict management is something that I am working on. I’m not that good at it yet.” In a similar response, Geri spoke of conflict management as her least desirable task even though it occurs on a daily basis. Lisa described her approach to conflict management with personnel as attempting to resolve conflict at the lowest level. Lisa stated, “I am a firm believer in talking about things. I bring them into a room and allow them to talk over their differences.”

### *Interagency Collaboration*

All five of the study participants referred to interagency collaboration as a crucial leadership competency necessary for the success of their organization. Collaboration and cooperation is referenced as the seventh competency under the domain of social skills within Goleman’s (1995) Emotional Competence Framework. This competency is key to providing holistic services to economically challenged families. Due to budget constraints and lack of grant funding, oftentimes the organization has to rely upon other nonprofit agencies to provide additional services to their clientele. Monica candidly stated, “we do not have all the money and can not pay for everything. If we can get other nonprofits to work with us, we can provide more services to our families who are in need.” Gina confirmed that she believes in “nurturing healthy relationships” and she possesses the “art of persuasion.” Furthermore, she asserted, “I can reflect on some of the projects and things that I was able to persuade other departments and staff that I needed their assistance. It’s all in how you communicate with them to get the resources you need.”

Deidre perceives interagency collaboration as vital to the overall functioning of the agency. Her bureau frequently interfaces with other agencies in the planning and coordination of services to impoverished families. Geri works with a program that provides medical services to the medically indigent. She has to collaborate, plan, and coordinate services with other agencies, community partners, and the public. Lisa's current position as the human service program manager in Training and Staff Development does not require interagency collaboration. However, previous assignments within her organization required her to interact with the public and other community based service providers.

#### *Organizational Awareness*

All five of the study participants identified the need for a leader to employ organizational awareness in the field of human services. There was a consensus that this competency is vital to the overall operation of a human service organization. Most importantly, maintaining an awareness of the funding sources determines the availability of services which is necessary for long range planning. Secondly, it is critical to understand the policies, regulations, and federal and state legislation that govern the agency. The human service program manager is responsible for the effective delivery of service to clientele and the implementation of the policies and regulations governing the delivery of these services.

Monica related organizational awareness to "looking into the future of the organization." She believed that you have to "think outside of the box because you must remain aware of what's going on around you and how it affects your organization." The Family Service Center (FSC) depends upon other resource agencies to provide services to

their clientele. The FSC's service delivery may easily be affected if funding or legislation undermines the propensity for those resource agencies to continue to provide services to their clients. Deidre clearly proclaimed, "I think [that] one of the things a leader needs to do is always be focused on the big picture. I guess we sometimes get so focused on the crisis that we forget about long range planning". Geri commented that she has to constantly read and refresh her memory as legislation changes. She recounted several legislative changes in the past that affected the direction of the organization and how her awareness of pending legislation allowed her to prepare staff for organizational change. Both Gina and Lisa expressed that this competency relates to effective service delivery to clients. Lisa referenced welfare reform as a major change that fell within the competency of organizational awareness or "being prepared for future changes."

### *Research Question 3*

In what ways are the program managers' leadership competencies in agreement with the leadership competencies necessary for the success of their programs?

A consensus was derived among the study participants that some of the leadership competencies described in the general competency requirements for human service program managers are crucial to the success of an organization. Nevertheless, they spoke of additional competencies that need to be added to achieve optimal performance. Monica asserted that leadership competencies should be used as a guide; however there is no guarantee that a leader who possesses these competencies will be a successful manager. The competencies that they focused on were leadership skills, organizational awareness, conflict management, communication, and interagency collaboration. A sixth skill, automated information processing and database knowledge, was listed; but none of

the study participants viewed this as a pivotal skill or competency because it is specific to each program.

Monica described the competencies that she believed made her organization most successful as “my ability to bring people together, create a shared vision, help my workers get from point A to point B, evaluate it and celebrate the successes.” Gina attributes her organization’s success to her creative and innovative abilities, her strong analytical skills, her ability to empathize with her workers, and her collaborative skills. In response to this query Deidre asserted that in addition to her basic leadership competencies (i.e. empathy, communication, and motivation),

One of the things that I have been personally working on is the concept of developing other people, allowing experimentation and failure. I do not label it as failure, but a way to learn. I try to help other people identify what is their joy at work and find a way to get that for them. I think just allowing ourselves to find what makes them happy and try to get those things for them develops better workers.

Lisa asserted that articulating clear expectations, communication through written memos, and working as a team have proven successful for her organization. Geri attributed her organization’s success to communication and organizational awareness. A lack of communication in Geri’s program may result in major hindrances in clientele receiving crucial healthcare.

#### *Research Question 4*

In what ways are the program managers’ leadership competencies in agreement with Goleman’s (1998) emotional intelligence leadership competencies?

In answering this question, the study participants focused on discussing their own practices and behaviors as leaders and how they relate to emotional intelligence competencies. As a catalyst and guide for discussion, the participants were asked to rank

Golemans' (1995) leadership framework competencies and which were most applicable to each line item. The study participants articulated that it was very difficult to rank the domains because they felt they were equally important. Four of the five study participants surmised that the size of the organization would not affect their rankings. On the other hand, Lisa felt that that depending on the nature of the organization, the size would definitely affect her rankings and ability to implement some of the emotional intelligence competencies.

All of the study participants were in agreement of the benefits of implementing the leadership competencies presented in Goleman's (1995) framework. This does not mean that deficiencies were nonexistent nor that they would not recommend changes in some areas. The isolation of these leadership competencies from those listed in the minimum competency requirements for human service program managers simply provided the opportunity for participating human service program managers to objectively determine the need for each competency. Thus, allowed for further inspection of needed improvements in the overall concept of human service leadership competency.

#### *Developing Others*

Both Gina and Deidre referenced developing others as "encouraging the heart." Developing others is a competency represented within Goleman's (1995) empathy domain as an awareness of other's development needs and strengthening their abilities. Gina utilizes yearly evaluations to assess her workers' areas of strengths and weaknesses. She commented, "You have to determine what skills they need and how you will make sure that they get those skills." This relates to enrolling them in appropriate trainings and



monitoring their performance to ensure that a transfer of learning occurs. Lisa believed that the implementation of “one-on-one” training for her subordinates, as well as accessing professional training programs, proves most successful in her program. Geri expressed that this competency is directly affected by the leader’s knowledge and ability to perform such tasks. First, the leader must be capable of demonstrating knowledge of the program and secondly, the leader must develop a level of comfort in training staff. Geri values “on-the-job” or “hands on” training as opposed to a classroom setting for her workers. Monica and Lisa agreed that developing others is an invaluable competency within the field of human services. However, organizational barriers, such as individual caseloads or staff coverage, oftentimes prevent workers’ attendance in trainings.

#### *Adaptability*

This competency falls under the domain of self-regulation within Goleman’s (1995) Emotional Competence Framework. Just as the term implies, adaptability is defined as flexibility in accommodating change. All five study participants agreed that this is a necessary competency for human service program managers. Human service organizations are constantly faced with change. Geri commented, “I am used to change. I engage my staff in a discussion about pending changes and request feedback on how to effectively accomplish the task. I am interested in their suggestions.” Monica declared, “We are constantly faced with change. Passion and tenacity are key elements in helping to persevere through the changes.”

Deidre referenced one of her most challenging transitions during her tenure with the organization was the installation and implementation of a new computer system, Cal-Win. She affirmed, “That was a rough transition for managers and staff. I watched

leaders in our department killing themselves to help their staff help [provide services] to their clients.” Gina expressed her belief that adaptability is a necessary competency for a leader by saying, “The leader must be able to effectively adapt before he or she can help their staff adapt.” Deidre and Lisa both referred to their organization as “one of constant change.” They indicated that there are numerous internal and external factors that dictate the direction of their organization. Both agreed that they embrace change and felt that they effectively work with their staff during transitions.

### *Trustworthiness*

Goleman (1995, p. 27) described this competency as “maintaining standards of honesty and integrity”. All five study participants described this competency as vital in the human service field. Monica and Geri commented that the cultivation of trust is the single, most important competency any leader can possess. Geri stated, “A good leader must engender trust by following through with what he promises. If I tell my staff that I am going to do something, I follow through with it.” Monica commented, “I try to be honest and open with my staff. Sometimes, they do not like the message, but they know that I tell them the truth and then deal with their concerns.” Deidre explained, “Trust must be earned by providing consistent information. If your workers lose trust, you lose your capacity to lead. Who wants to follow someone who cannot be trusted?”

Gina responded to this competency by saying,

I hope I don't have that problem. Not only does my immediate staff feel free to come to me, but I have workers who come to talk to me who feel that they cannot talk to their supervisors. I am in constant contact with my supervisors. They feel fine walking in my door to talk about whatever is going on in the bureau. I think people see that they can rely on me and trust me.

Lisa made similar references to the value of trust by stating, “Effective leadership has to do with trust; whether or not you say what you mean and mean what you say.” She referred to her prior supervisors as mentors who demonstrated great leadership skills, one of which was trust.

### Summary of the Findings

The data revealed answers to the four research questions posed in this study. The unique leadership values of the human service program managers who participated in this study are perceived to be influenced and defined by the cultural values within the field of human services, within their individual programs, and within their personal and professional backgrounds. These human service program managers did not place equal values on the leadership domains, yet a consensus was found in the relative values of the specific competencies. These competencies included communication, empathy, self-confidence, building bonds, developing others, adaptability, and team collaboration.

The human service program managers who participated in this study were in agreement on specific existing leadership competencies including collaborative leadership, communication, empathy, conflict management, organizational awareness, and self-confidence. It was notable that the program managers appeared to focus on minimum performance elements required by the Department of Human Services (2001) in their responses to current leadership competencies. Nevertheless, it was evident that Goleman’s (1995) emotional intelligence competencies was a guiding influence for all five of the participants’ responses to leadership competencies necessary for the success of their program. Most of the responses were filtered through Goleman’s (1995) empathy and social skills domains.

The human service program managers who participated in this study were in agreement that additional competency items (i.e., emotional intelligence competencies) need to be added to the general competency requirements to more adequately meet the growing demands of the profession. Nonetheless, there were variations in the specific additional emotional intelligence competencies that were deemed appropriate. One of the participants expressed a concern that if the competency requirements became too specific, potentially “good leaders” may not be considered for the position. Yet, she agreed that the minimum requirements need to be revised to recruit program managers with optimal leadership skills, as well as provide clarity to the role of the human service program managers.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION, SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to identify the current leadership competencies of human service programs, whether their current leadership practices were in agreement with the minimum competency requirements, and whether a relationship existed between their leadership practices and emotional intelligence competencies. An expected finding was that distinct factors, coupled with various levels of experience and training, can influence the perception of leadership roles within the field of human services. This research probed for consistency and common themes within the interviews conducted with five human service program managers. The literature review provided a historical background on the evolution of leadership theories. It further discussed recent leadership studies which recognized that the most effective leaders possessed more than basic technical skills, they also employed “soft skills” necessary to motivate their employees toward innovation within the field of human services.

Distinct practices and skills have led to the effective delivery of services to their clientele. More importantly, the literature recognized a lack of research in the area of leadership in the field of human services. The results of this study revealed the need for such research, along with the development of formalized training programs, as pivotal to the future of human service leadership competency. The addition of these constructs to the existing program would provide more definitive guidelines for those serving in leadership roles in human service organizations. Even though deficiencies were

disclosed, the participants in the study attributed their leadership success to familial values, experience, mentorships, and their educational background.

Further, the literature revealed a set of competencies that have been mandated by the Department of Human Services (2001) for all human service program managers. The findings of this research implied that, while the basic competencies are valuable to meeting the minimum competency level, they lack particular elements of leadership-excellence benchmarking. It was also found that the concept of emotional intelligence held answers towards clarifying existing and missing leadership competencies. Overall, the results of this study support the literature focused on the role of emotional intelligence as a critical element in leadership effectiveness. As they relate to each of the research questions, the findings were drawn from the data collected from the study as assessed by the researcher.

Research Question 1 asked, “What are the leadership competencies of program managers in the human services agency? It was determined that personal backgrounds influenced the development of their leadership competencies and values within human service program leadership, yet a consensus was gained on effective leadership being accomplished through team efforts. Their values were directly related to self-expectations and expectations held of others. It was also found that professional experience was instrumental in the development of their leadership competencies. The organizational culture, as well as the size of various departments, could affect their ability to employ those competencies termed as “soft skills” (i.e., those centered in human emotion).

The study participants all indicated that collaborative or team leadership is the preferred leadership style in human services. Human service organizations are complex and require cooperation and support between both internal and external partners. Due to budget constraints, the agency depends upon partnerships to provide services to a vast percentage of their clientele. The findings suggested that there are common characteristics necessary to achieve effective team collaboration, which were communication, empathy, and self-confidence. Communication was deemed the key element in the collaborative leadership process (i.e., articulating the vision, motivating staff, and providing constructive feedback). Consensus was further gained on the importance of empathy in human service agencies. Leaders have to be able to manage their own emotions prior to attempting to manage the emotions of others. While there was a lack of consensus that they possessed self-confidence, the theme emerged as a crucial competency for effective leaders. Those who experienced lower self-confidence felt this competency could be improved if the organization developed more clearly defined guidelines and expectations of human service program managers.

Research Question 2 asked, “In what way are the leadership competencies of program managers in agreement with the minimum performance elements required by the Department of Health and Human Services? While there was a general consensus that basic management skills (analyzing, planning, coordinating, and controlling) may be necessary competencies as referred to in the minimum performance elements at times, all of the study participants concurred that their preference is to lead their employees as opposed to managing them. Yet, due to requirements imposed upon the organization by the federal, state, and local governments, a deficiency in those skills could potentially

place the department at risk or jeopardize funding sources. The participants of this study specifically suggested the integration of more detailed additional competencies into the Department of Health and Human Services (2001) minimum competency requirements for human service program managers.

In relation to these requirements, four current leadership competencies (leadership, conflict management, interagency collaboration, and organizational awareness) were identified as having been in agreement with the minimum competency requirements. Associated with leadership were the minimum requirements to plan, coordinate, and manage a human service agency in the areas of social services, financial assistance or community services and apply the basic principles of managing and directing a large staff. Conflict management was associated with the minimum requirements of effectively diffusing and resolving difficult problems not only in reference to employees, but also to clients, community partners, and concerned citizens. Interagency collaboration was associated with effective communication with community partners to provide point responses or services to families in crisis. Organizational awareness was associated with maintaining current knowledge of funding sources, as well as changes in policies, and state and federal regulations that govern the agency. The presence of a leadership competency within the existing minimum requirements does not completely justify its true value within the profession. Future research utilizing a more diverse population is necessary to determine if particular leadership competencies should be explicitly added to the existing minimum competency requirements for human service program managers.



Research Question 3 asked, “In what ways are the program managers’ leadership competencies in agreement with the leadership competencies necessary for the success of their programs? While many of the skills required by the Department of Health and Human Services (2001) are critical to the general operation of the organization, there are a number of additional skills that are necessary. Some of these skills may be implied in the general competency requirements; however, a consensus was articulated that they should be explicitly stated. The competencies that were identified as having attributed to the success of their organization were leadership skills, organizational awareness, conflict management, communication, and interagency collaboration. The need for a more defined set of competency requirements was evident within the population involved in this study.

One participant broadly referred to her leadership skills (creativity, innovation, collaboration, and empathy) as critical to the success of her program, while another participant described her greatest successes were directly a result of her communication skills, empathy, and motivation. Communication and organizational awareness were the most recurring themes in this area based on the belief of the participants that due to the nature of the human service profession, these are the two key elements to successful delivery of services to clientele. Communication was related to interagency collaboration in regards to maintaining a cooperative relationship with community service providers. This determination is reflective of the results from the analysis of data collected from this specific sample population.

Research Question 4 asked, “In what ways are the program managers’ leadership competencies in agreement with Goleman’s (1998) emotional intelligence leadership

competencies?” A total of 9 emotional intelligence leadership competencies (Goleman, 1995) were explicitly identified throughout this study. They were collaboration or teamwork, communication, empathy, self-confidence, conflict management, organizational awareness, developing others, adaptability, and trustworthiness. Due to the ambiguous position on the hierarchical structure, human service program managers require strong leadership characteristics. This study is intended to help define their roles as well as support recruitment and retention. All leaders throughout the human service profession will reap the benefits of this study. Supplementary to the emotional intelligence competencies identified earlier in this study (teamwork, communication, empathy, conflict management, organizational awareness, and self-confidence), developing others was deemed as a critical leadership competency to successful organizational performance. Effective leaders must conduct timely evaluations to determine the developmental needs of staff (i.e., strengths and weaknesses) and create training programs to address those needs.

The field of human services is profession of constant change, thus requiring program managers to serve as change catalysts. Human service organizations are affected by various external and internal factors that result in organizational change. The leader has to first adapt and embrace the changes before being able to help staff adapt to the changes. All of the study participants unanimously agreed that trustworthiness is pivotal in effective leadership. Boutros and Joseph (2007) posited building, maintaining, and recovering trust as a core leadership competency in a study on healthcare industries.

All leaders must recognize their leadership abilities which may fluctuate based upon the specific task at hand or the organizational culture. Until the roles and

responsibilities of human service program managers are more clearly defined, and emotions are considered along with IQs, no reconciliation of the two will be possible because both are contingent upon each other. While the findings of this study recognize the similarities in the expectations of the 5 study participants, their variance in opinions substantiate the need for flexibility in implementing and amending the current minimum competency requirements as a comprehensive framework for human service leadership practice.

### Implications of the Study

The results of this study contributed to the limited existing research regarding the field of human services. The inquiry into human service leadership gleaned new information in several different areas. The findings further indicated the influence and importance of emotions in human service leadership. To the knowledge of this researcher, there were no studies that specifically focus on emotional intelligence in regards to the study of human service leadership. Even more rare is the existence of formalized training programs that address leadership in human services with an emphasis on emotional intelligence competencies. Considering caring as a core value in the profession of social services, there is great merit in understanding the role of emotions in leadership positions.

Human service leaders have the direct responsibility of monitoring and evaluating supervisor's performance, as well as modeling exemplary leadership. Thus, they should be aware of the implications and applications of emotional leadership. This research has added to the existing knowledge base in that area. Finally, the findings of this study can be transformed into a viable leadership competency framework which might be used to

enhance greater efficiency in regards to recruitment, hiring, retention, and evaluation of potential human service leaders. Furthermore, the framework resulting from this study could be used to evaluate performance of existing human service leaders, as well as assess the training needs to enhance their personal growth and development.

The findings of this study may be of interest to a variety of individuals in leadership positions within the human service field, as well as the governing board (i.e., Board of Supervisors). The results of this research clearly indicated that human service leaders embraced a different perception of leadership roles than leaders within the corporate sector. However, the participants indicated that many of their leadership competencies were derived from the corporate sector or private industry. All leaders in the human service field, whether government-funded or non-profit, are likely to benefit from the results of this study. Human services is a field that takes pride in the effective delivery of services to families, thus the data presented can help to provide a deeper understanding of the leadership priorities of human service program managers. As suggested by two of the research participants, more clearly defined expectations would allow for enhanced performance.

Through this research, leaders at higher levels of the organization will gain an appreciation for the responsibilities of program managers and might incorporate them in their professional standards and practices. Human service division managers, deputy directors, and directors can benefit from this study. As this study noticeably emphasized, many of the critical aspects of effective leadership relate broadly to emotional intelligence competencies. More importantly, some of these aspects become more significant as one progresses up the leadership hierarchy.

As referenced by the study participants, human service program managers are beginning to recognize their roles in the effective operation of their programs. The findings of this study will hopefully provide a better understanding of the need to extend their leadership skills beyond the minimum requirements to achieve optimal leadership performance to meet the changing needs and demands of their organizations in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. Such skill sets are crucial to the development of work teams whose personal goals are in alignment with the goals of the organization.

### Recommendations

#### *Professional Practice*

It is the belief of both the researcher and the participants of this study that all leaders in the human service profession could benefit from the development of a better understanding of the principles of effective leadership. For human service organizations to continue to function effectively throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century in ways that are advantageous to the clientele they serve, efficient leadership must become a common practice from the “top down”. Recognizing and defining the competencies that lead to effective leadership is critical to the improvement of service delivery to the clientele. The following recommendations are offered as practical application for this research:

1. Revision of the minimum requirements to develop a model that integrates emotional intelligence competencies is recommended; allow the collective information from this study to serve as a guideline for recruiting and hiring new leaders and support the appraisal process for current human service program managers’ performance.
2. Development of nontraditional training programs to address deficiencies that are revealed in performance evaluations, as well as to enhance the professional

development of all leaders with a focus on emotional intelligence competencies. First, an awakening and acceptance of the emotional intelligence concept must be created within the organization. To effectively implement this concept, Lynn (2002) suggested that organizations must employ a long term coach or trainer and commit to training efforts ranging from six months to one year periods.

3. Creation of a mentorship program for new leaders to help them develop a better understanding of their roles as human service program managers. Mentorships should include leaders at various levels in the organization in an effort to support the professional growth and development of new leaders.

#### *Future Research*

The following recommendations are presented in regards to future research:

1. Continued empirical research in the area of human service leadership (i.e., with a focus on emotional intelligence competencies), employing the use of combined methods of qualitative and quantitative research and triangulation, identifying leadership competencies and the perceptions of the followers.

2. Research in the area of the impact of organizational culture on the development of emotional leadership to help determine the way in which emotional intelligence is translated into leadership behavior in various human service settings.

3. Use of this research as a model to study the effects of emotional leadership competencies on reducing cynicism towards organizational change. Leaders who are emotionally attuned are more likely to influence their employees' emotions regarding change by proposing alternative views of the change process. Emotionally intelligent

leaders tend to be more perceptive of employees' concerns and developmental needs, thereby making the change less ominous. (Ferres & Connell, 2004).

### *Concluding Thoughts*

The researcher's personal experiences within human service organizations facilitated this qualitative study on emotional leadership. Having been exposed to a hierarchical style of leadership, this experience has been both enlightening and rewarding. In seeking more knowledge of transformational and emotional leadership practices, the participants' perceptions in this study provided me with valuable knowledge as to how both leadership practices may be incorporated into a hierarchical structured organization. This knowledge provided me with a greater understanding of the importance of human service program managers' mission to employ these concepts in an effort to achieve organizational success. This research process has served as a personal awakening of the importance of incorporating both transformational and emotional intelligence into the human service leadership perspective. More importantly, the findings of this study added to the field of human service leadership studies by providing supporting data on the importance of developing emotionally intelligent leaders.

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## APPENDIXES

## APPENDIX A

## General Competencies for Human Services Program Managers

General Competency	Minimum Program Requirements	
Management Skills	Plans, coordinates, and manages a human service agency in the areas of social services, financial assistance or community services; analyze complex regulatory and administrative problems; budget and grant development and administration	Applies the principles of management (i.e. planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling large staff) evaluate alternatives and adopt effective courses of action.
Federal, state and local legislation knowledge	Reviews, analyzes and interprets federal, state, and local legislation to recommend policies and procedures for interpretation	Confers with program managers, supervisors, and other administrative staff regarding legislation and regulations, service delivery and implementation strategies
Conflict resolution and negotiation skills	Diffuse complaints and resolve difficult problems as reported by employees, clients, community partners, and concerned citizens	Effectively resolve complaints reported by employees, clients, or community partners utilizing interviews and information gathering process
Interpersonal and communication skills	Interpersonal communication skills that result in effective working relationships	Effectively exchanging information with employees, management, and community partners; being a team player.
Interagency collaboration	Confers with representatives of governmental agencies, private organizations, and community groups regarding human service policies, procedures and cases of joint concern	Effectively communicate with community partners to provide joint responses/services to families in crisis.
Automated information processing systems and databases knowledge	Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, and other written documentation	Develop charts and graphs for presentations; submit monthly statistical reports; and other documentation required by senior management

APPENDIX B  
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL PERTAINING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTION

## APPENDIX B

### Interview Protocol Pertaining to Research Questions

#### Demographic Information

1. What type of formal leadership training have you added to your background?
2. What other influences facilitated your development of leadership skills?

#### Determining current leadership competencies

1. What are some of your current leadership competencies as a human service program manager?  
How would you rank them from most to least important?

#### Relationship between the current leadership competencies and the minimal qualifications required by the Department of Health and Human Service

1. Which of your current leadership competencies are represented in the minimum qualification requirements?
2. What benefits do you perceive by integrating additional competency items into the existing minimum requirements?
3. What adverse affects do you perceive by integrating additional competency items into the existing minimum requirements?

#### Leadership competencies necessary for program success

1. What leadership competencies have contributed to the success of your program?
2. Which leadership competencies have least contributed to the success of your program?
3. What additional leadership competencies might improve the success of your program?

#### Relationship between current leadership competencies and Goleman's leadership competencies

1. How would you rank Goleman's leadership competencies as they pertain to human service organizations?
2. What value do you place on that ranking?
3. In what ways are current leadership competencies in agreement with Goleman's leadership competencies?
4. In what ways could the size or setting of a human service organization affect your ranking of leadership competencies?

#### Updating the Department of Health and Human Services Minimum Requirements

1. Which leadership competencies do you feel should be added to the minimum competency requirements to most accurately assess minimum leadership performance?

2. What leadership competencies do you feel should be added to the minimum competency requirements to most accurately assess competence above minimum level?
3. What other deficiencies still exist in the process of assessing leadership potential in human service program managers?

### Closing Thoughts

What pros and cons do you see in establishing a leadership model for human service program managers?

Why do you believe research in the human service leadership has been previously lacking?



APPENDIX C  
DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

## APPENDIX C

## Demographic Questionnaire

1. Your age: \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Undergraduate major: \_\_\_\_\_
  3. Graduate school: \_\_\_\_\_
  4. Other graduate school(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Major(s): \_\_\_\_\_
5. Formal leadership positions you have held prior to your current role as a human service program manager:
 

Position title: _____	# of years _____
Position title: _____	# of years _____
Position title: _____	# of years _____
Position title: _____	# of years _____
  6. Number of years as a program manager: \_\_\_\_\_
  7. Was it your intention to become a leader?      Yes      No
  8. Number of supervisors reporting to you:
 

Ethnic-minority men:	_____
Caucasian men:	_____
Total number of men:	_____
Ethnic-minority women:	_____
Caucasian women:	_____
Total number of women:	_____
  9. Number of professional staff reporting to you:
 

Ethnic-minority men:	_____
Caucasian men:	_____
Total number of men:	_____
Ethnic-minority women:	_____
Caucasian women:	_____
Total number of women:	_____

APPENDIX D  
HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL

## APPENDIX D

July 28, 2006

Dear Ms. Vanzant:

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) at the University of San Francisco (USF) has reviewed your request for human subjects approval regarding your study. Your application has been approved by the committee (IRBPHS #06-061).

Please note the following:

1. Approval expires twelve (12) months from the date noted above. At that time, if you are still collecting data from human subjects, you must file a renewal application.
2. Any modifications to the research protocol or changes in instrumentation (including wording of items) must be communicated to the IRBPHS. Re-submission of an application may be required at that time.

Any adverse reactions or complications on the part of participants must be reported (in writing) to the IRBPHS within ten (10) working days.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRBPHS at (415) 422-6091.

On behalf of the IRBPHS committee, I wish you much success in your research.

Sincerely,

Terence Patterson, EdD, ABPP  
Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

IRBPHS University of San Francisco  
Counseling Psychology Department  
Education Building - 017  
2130 Fulton Street  
San Francisco, CA 94117-1080  
(415) 422-6091 (Message)  
(415) 422-5528 (Fax)  
[irbphs@usfca.edu](mailto:irbphs@usfca.edu)

APPENDIX E  
TRANSCRIPT FOR OBTAINING VERBAL CONSENT

## APPENDIX E

## Transcript for Obtaining Verbal Consent

- Hello, my name is Cynthia Vanzant. I will be conducting a research study analyzing the phenomenon of human service leadership as it relates to emotional intelligence competencies. It will be a qualitative study seeking to determine the critical competencies for leadership roles within the field of human services. The study will also serve as partial fulfillment of the requirements for my doctorate degree in education at the University of San Francisco School of Education, Department of Organization and Leadership.
- You are being asked to participate in this research study because you are a program manager in a human service setting. If you agree to participate, your involvement will entail an interview encompassing issues related to your own professional growth leading to your current leadership role and particular style of leadership. The in-depth interview questions will be aimed at gaining accurate insight in this regard and should not last any more than 1 hour.
- Although unlikely, if any of the questions make you feel uncomfortable, you are free to decline to answer any of them or to discontinue participation at any time. Although pseudonyms will be used in any published material pertaining to this study, participation in research can pose a minimal risk in confidentiality. All possible effort will be made to maintain study records in as confidential manner as possible. All research information will be coded and kept in locked files at all times with only study personnel having access to these files. Any results specific to your input will not be shared with personnel from your company.
- While there will be no direct benefit to you from participating in this study, this research is expected to provide a clearer understanding of the effects of leadership in human service organizations.
- There will be no cost to you as a result of participation in this study, nor will you be compensated for your participation.
- If you have any questions concerning this research, you may contact me at (916) 873-2597 or the IRBPHS at the University of San Francisco, which as my may know, is the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects concerned with protecting volunteers in research projects. You may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 or e-mailing [IRBPHS@uscfa.edu](mailto:IRBPHS@uscfa.edu) or by writing to the IRBPHS, Department of Psychology, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA. 94117-1080.
- Would you be willing to participate?

APPENDIX F  
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

## APPENDIX F

## Informed Consent Form

## UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

## CONSENT TO SERVE AS A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

## Purpose and Background

Cynthia Vanzant, a graduate student enrolled in the School of Education at the University of San Francisco will be conducting a research study on the phenomenon of human service program manager leadership. The purpose of this study is to explore the existing leadership competencies of human service program managers and whether a relationship exists between current leadership practice and emotional intelligence competencies. This study will further examine whether their leadership competencies are significant to the performance and success of the organization, workers and families served.

I am being asked to participate because I am a leader within a human service organizational setting.

If I agree to participate in this study,

1. I will complete a short demographic questionnaire providing basic information about myself including age, gender, race, religion, and job history.
2. I will participate in an interview with the researcher, during which I will be asked about my leadership history and asked to compare, contrast, and prioritize leadership competencies that I feel are necessary for organizational success.

I will participate in the interview at my office.

## Risks and /or Potential Discomforts

It is possible that some of the questions may cause some degree of discomfort; however, I am free to decline to answer any questions or discontinue my participation at any time.

Participation in research can mean a loss of confidentiality, however, I understand that all records related to this study are kept as confidential as possible. No individual identities will be used in any reports or publications resulting from this research. Study information will be coded and maintained in locked files at all times with only study personnel having access to the files.



Because the time required for my participation may be up to 1.5 hours, I may become bored. I will be allowed to take breaks to minimize any discomfort.

#### Benefits

There will be no direct benefit to me from participating in this study. The expected overall benefit of this research will be a clearer understanding of the effects of human service program manager leadership.

#### Costs/Financial Considerations

No financial costs to me are expected to result from my participation in this study.

#### Payment/Reimbursements

I will not be financially or otherwise compensated for my participation in this study. However, if I incur unexpected costs related to my participation, I will be reimbursed.

#### Questions

- I have spoken to Cynthia Vanzant about this study and have had my questions answered. If I have further questions about the study, my primary contact is Ms. Vanzant at (916) 873-2597 or, secondarily, the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects which is concerned with protection of volunteers participating in research projects. I may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 or e-mailing [IRBPHS@uscfa.edu](mailto:IRBPHS@uscfa.edu) or by writing to the IRBPHS, Department of Psychology, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA. 94117-1080.

#### Consent

I have been given a copy of the Research Bill of Rights and a copy of this consent form for my personal records.

**PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH IS VOLUNTARY.** I am free to decline to answer specific queries posed to me or to withdraw my participation at any time. My decision as to whether or not to participate in this study will have no influence on my present or future status with my employer. My signature below indicates that I agree to participate in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant (Please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

APPENDIX G  
PARTICIPANT BRIEFING ON THE STUDY

## APPENDIX G

### Participant Briefing on the Study

Human service program managers' leadership strategies have a major impact on the quality of services delivered to families who are in need of services due to their economic circumstances. Providing services to needy families can be a monumental task, and the agency is constantly dealing with ever-increasing caseloads. In a study of human service managers, Yin (2004, p. 606) posited that all the managers articulated that "child- and family-centric missions fell within the agency's official mission statement." Human service agencies are requesting workers to deliver supportive, empowering, and strength-based services to "at-risk" families. What type of leadership is being provided to "burned out" workers? Are the human service managers being empathetic to workers' needs and validating their feelings and, if so, by what means? Yin summarized his study by stating that human service managers need to employ progressive leadership skills to reduce workers' stress and create a propitious work atmosphere. Thus, managers are needed who will not only meet the minimum basic standards required by the organization but also go beyond those basic standards to assume key leadership roles and embrace leadership competencies that will foster growth and success within the agency. The purpose of this interview is to explore the existing leadership competencies of human service program managers, whether a relationship exists between current leadership competencies and emotional intelligence competencies, and whether these leadership competencies are significant to the performance and success of the agency, workers, and families served.

The Daniel Goleman theory of leadership is highly relevant to this topic area. His framework for emotionally intelligent leadership competency was based upon his research and findings in various business settings and is strikingly transferable to the human service profession. In summary, Goleman argued that leaders are most successful when they create resonance (the ability of leaders to perceive and influence the flow of emotions between themselves and others they work with). Underlying this proposition is his theory of performance within which the links between the fundamental domains and their underlying competencies emerge.

The findings of this research might have a variety of applications depending on the organization implementing them. Specifically, the information will be of interest to those who recruit and develop training curriculums for human service program managers since no single framework of this kind exists with a focus on human service program managers.

If you are interested in participating in this study, you may contact Cynthia Vanzant at 874-3350 (office); 420-1154 (work cell) or 873-2597 (personal cell).

APPENDIX H  
GOLEMAN'S EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE COMPETENCIES

## APPENDIX H

## Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Competencies Framework

***Personal Competence****These competencies determine how we manage ourselves***Self-Awareness**

Knowing one's emotions and their emotions affect others

- Emotional awareness: recognizing one's emotions
- Accurate self-assessment: being aware of one's strengths and weaknesses
- Self-confidence: decisiveness

**Self-Regulation**

Managing one's internal state and impulses

- Self-control: ability to keep disruptive emotions and impulses in check
- Trustworthiness: develop and maintain standards of honesty and integrity
- Conscientiousness: ownership of responsibility for personal performance
- Adaptability: flexibility in how they view and handle change
- Innovation: Willingness to entertain novel ideas, generate new ideas, and consider new perspectives.

**Motivation**

Emotional tendencies that facilitate goal attainment

- Achievement drive: setting a standard of excellence; taking calculated risks
- Commitment: aligning personal goals with the goals of the organization
- Initiative: performance above the required standards
- Optimism: persistence to attain goals regardless of obstacles

***Social Competence****These competencies determine how we manage relationships***Empathy**

Awareness of other's feelings and concerns

- Understanding others: attentive to others' emotional cues, active listening
- Developing others: sensing other's developmental needs and helping them to achieve personal growth and development
- Service orientation: recognizing and meeting customer's needs
- Leveraging diversity: respecting vies from varied backgrounds
- Political awareness: developing an awareness of the group's emotional

currents and power relationships

*Social Competence (cont'd)*

**Social Skills**

The ability to induce desirable responses in others

- Influence: developing the art of persuasion
- Communication: open listening and sending accurate messages
- Conflict management: negotiating and resolving conflict
- Leadership: inspiring and guiding individuals; leading by example
- Change catalyst: initiating change
- Building bonds: nurturing healthy relationships; developing relationships
- Collaboration and cooperation: working towards shared goals
- Team capabilities: creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals

*Adapted from Goleman, D. (1998 p. 31). Working with emotional intelligence. New York: Bantam Books.*