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REFLECTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE SPIRITUALITY PLAYS IN

EDUCATIONAL LEADERS' COPING SUCCESSES WITH A FOCUS ON

GENDER DIVERGENCE



A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Education



Duquesne University



in partial fulfillment of the requirements for

the degree of Doctor of Education



By

Bettie J. Bertram



November 2007

# DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY
## SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
## INTERDISCIPLINARY DOCTORAL PROGRAM FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

*Dissertation*

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Doctor of Education (Ed.D.)

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*November 20, 2007*

REFLECTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE SPIRITUALITY PLAYS IN
EDUCATIONAL LEADERS' COPING SUCCESSES WITH A FOCUS ON
GENDER DIVERGENCE

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# ABSTRACT

## REFLECTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE SPIRITUALITY PLAYS IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERS' COPING SUCCESSES WITH A FOCUS ON GENDER DIVERGENCE

By

Bettie J. Bertram

November 2007

Dissertation Supervised by Dr. Gibbs Kanyango

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between spirituality and the ability to cope as an educational leader. The role gender plays was also analyzed to determine if there were any differences in the ability to cope as an educational leader founded on gender. The sample for this study consisted of 65 executive leaders from the public educational sector ranging in age from 32 to 64 years of age. The sample was composed of a mix of women and men, the majority of participants Caucasian. The participants selected were college graduates with at least 12 years of experience in education. Participants were given surveys to complete on work conflict, life satisfaction and spiritual well-being. The three instruments were the Interpersonal Conflict at Work Scale (ICAWS), the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS), and the Spiritual Well Being Scale (SWB). This

study employed quantitative methods to determine how, if at all, spirituality affects the ability to cope with interpersonal conflict at work stressors. First, a correlation analysis was performed to determine if there was a relationship between spirituality, life satisfaction, and work conflict. A simple regression analysis was completed to ascertain predictability. Second, differences due to gender were compared through an independent t-test to ascertain if there were differences between men and women. Results showed that there is no relationship between ICAWS and SWBS. Also, there were no differences in these measures based on gender. However, results showed a significant relationship between the ability to cope with stress and spirituality. The regression analysis supports these findings as well because the results for regression analysis showed that about 30% of the variance in life satisfaction is explained by existentialism.

DEDICATION


My best friend, David Bertram and my children, Chris and Jayne.  David, you are my cause for celebration and my inspiration to enjoy life to exquisite excess.

My parents, Marlene and Bill Vivian. Without your unending support and encouragement, I **never** would have believed. Thank you. You truly are one of my life's most precious blessings.

My Nan. You added to my crazy while keeping my feet firmly on the ground. Forever friends never felt so good.

My Sisters. Unconditional love can stretch the soul farther than I ever imagined.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chapter 1

*Introduction*

There is a strong need for research in the area of spirituality as a means to help prevent or deal with stressors. According to the originating language of educational leadership, the avowal of faith commingles with a personally directed journey in order to find the ability to breathe by drawing out what is found within. "The origin of the word *professional* is *profiteri*, which means an avowal of faith or belief. The root of the word *educate* is *educare*, which means to draw out that which is within. The root of the word to *lead* is *laithjan*, which means to cause to go on one's journey. The word *spiritual* was derived from *spirare*, to breathe" (Houston & Sokolow, 2006, p. xi). Spirituality and introspection are the tools used to discern what is within and how to help it grow. "Spirituality is the force through which all people are connected, it's the connection between us as human beings" (p. xxiv). The benefits to the organization are great when the leader is grounded in spirituality. However, it was not assumed in this study that all leaders have some level of spirituality.

Characterizing spirituality is an attempt to hit a moving target. An empirical review completed by Dent, Higgins, and Wharff (2005) analyzes definitions, distinctions, and embedded assumptions regarding how spirituality affects leadership in the workplace. There is a "lack of clarity of definitions and consensus about boundaries" (p. 626) that prohibits the development of this paradigm. However, they conclude their findings do indicate spirituality is typically coupled with religion and most studies find a direct correlation between spirituality and production in the workplace. This suggests further study of the degree to which spirituality affects coping skills for stressors in a vocation.

Researchers Blackburn, Martin, and Hutchinson (2006) suggested that when training leaders for conflict management skills, gender should be taken into consideration and conflict style strengths utilized in the curriculum. The curriculum affords the direction, creating the path the leaders will choose to take. The goals of the educational organizations need to be centered around true collaboration when leaders seek growth during this journey.

When people where asked at a recent public schools administration retreat to describe an educational leader, some of the responses included: the facilitator, the one

with all of the headaches, or the one smart enough to take

up residence in the ivory tower and delegate (personal

communication, June 18, 2006). Without actually serving in

the role of a leader, it is difficult to understand the

daily challenges of the position. Of many leaders Maxwell

(1998) surveyed, "four out of five of all the leaders that

you ever meet will have emerged as leaders because of the

impact made on them by established leaders who mentored

them. It takes a leader to raise up a leader" (p. 134).

Leaders, both male and female, therefore, have a tendency

to gravitate toward one another for camaraderie or simple

understanding and for learning how to deal with issues,

challenges, and risky decisions.

It is because of this problematic slice of leadership

that much research has been undertaken to better understand

what makes an effective leader and how to hone those

skills. It is necessary for a leader to embrace life's

difficult lessons and maintain an open mind to ask if there

is a lesson to be learned (Houston & Sokolow, 2006). "What

happens in your personal and professional life gives you

the opportunity to grow and to decide how you process those

experiences in a way that actually promotes your growth"

(p. 78).

Educational leaders need additional resources to help them cope with daily pressures. It was for this reason this study was completed. If spirituality does predict ability to cope with stress, the next step for leadership development may be the teaching or understanding of spirituality.

The role of women in the work force has dramatically changed over the last two decades. However, the woman's role as the primary responsible adult in the home and as caregiver remains close to the same as it was years ago (Nelson & Burke, 2000). This additional burden of responsibilities has created an issue when female leaders attempt to keep up with their male counterparts at the workplace. Stress can then start to build when the needs of the female leader are not heard.

Women, specifically, cite the need for additional resources to help combat stress on the job (Edmondson, Lawler, Jobe, Younger, Piferi, & Jones, 2005; Harkness, Long, Bermbach, Patterson, Jordan, & Kahn, 2005; Nelson & Burke, 2000). Do the additional burdens affect a woman's health and the ability to cope on the job? Does gender influence the level of affect or the parameters of help that spirituality provides when dealing with stress?

This study sought to investigate the relationships between spirituality and the ability to cope and even possibly transcend beyond the standard coping mechanisms, specifically as it pertains to differences between men and women in this regard. There are limited studies on gender effects in the area of spirituality. The few studies available have determined that women appear to be more religious in nature than men, as it influences and associates with spirituality, possibly due to "their different socialization, expected roles, life experiences, and coping mechanisms" (Levin, 1994; Peterson, 2005). However, the field of spiritual research doesn't include studies to determine why or how this plays out as a leader.

One primary research question to be answered was whether or not there was a difference in the level of statistical significance between men's ability to cope with stress through spirituality and women's ability to cope with stress through spirituality. The identification of a group (i.e., women), which displays a higher level of a construct necessary to become a more effective leader, is an important finding. This information would also play an important role for overall health when assimilated with the ability to cope with stress.

The importance of studying the relationship and effects of spirituality is being proposed in other fields as well, for example the science of medicine. The science of medicine is addressing spirituality as one of the highest areas of concern within the medical field (Koenig, 2006). Physicians, between 85% and 93%, believe they should have direct knowledge of their patients' religion and spirituality. This information should not be limited to those patients on the critical or dying list. The physicians also agree that this new information is important for routine office calls and hospital visits. "Spiritual factors play a major role at all ages in dealing with life change and helping persons to cope with pain, anxiety and disability of medical illness" with the spiritual needs of people varying by age, race, and ethnicity (Koenig & Cohen, 2006, p. 1157). They also change over the years from experiences unique to each individual. This necessitates the drive for study in the evolving field of spirituality.

Since 1990, leadership researchers have focused on various aspects of spirituality. "Leadership is singled out as the most important influence on the presence of spirit" (Moxley, 2000). Moxley reviews the role other people have on individual spirit. There is a strong need for

organizations to maintain power, from which spirituality is drawn, through the collective. The followers within that collective require interpersonal relationships to acquire that force of power. This particular splinter stresses the value of spirituality as the energy and vitality source to create and perpetuate the power.

Leaders, while creating a practical and productive way to work, function in the primary role of developing spirit at "individual, team and organizational levels" (Cacioppe, 2000, p. 110). Cacioppe's analysis of the spectrum of consciousness describes how the ego is developed and matured. The development of the mental ego state includes the individual "thinking, feeling and judging how others see us" (p. 111) from adolescence through adulthood. This analysis continues with the state of higher awareness defining a condition that precludes the concrete self-talk and, instead, becomes "natural, effortless action" (p. 111). This level is spiritual in nature and can add finesse to the leader's problem solving and decision making skills.

The field is still young enough to have aggressive discussions on the definitions of the basic terminology while the studies continue to evaluate the role spirituality plays. Some foundational questions are still without confirmed answers. Does spirituality affect the

ability to cope with stress? How does spirituality affect leadership? Do women and men experience and understand spirituality in different ways? Does spirituality truly need to be defined through a god or deity? Does structured religion embody the cornerstone of spirituality in the workplace? Is spirituality a cognitive characteristic or innate resource?

Although there are too many questions for any one study, it was this researcher's intent to understand and illuminate any connections which may exist between spirituality and the ability to cope with stress. This additional information may enable leaders to better deal with their responsibilities while gaining greater life satisfaction and longevity in the field.

For the purposes of this study, workplace spirituality was defined as a "framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees' experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides feelings of completeness and joy" (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003, p. 13). Religion was defined as an integrated set of beliefs and activities (Corbett, 1990) related to a specific God or deity. It was not a goal of this research study to define or describe the various

religious benefits of spirituality. Rather, a projected
outcome was the determination of individual benefit derived
from an essential, core spirituality often described
through existentialism with the hope of aiding any
educational leader requiring such support.

Leadership roles have evolved into a complex
phenomenon. Maintaining good leadership skills requires
vigilance and determination. However, even with the most
comprehensive plan in place, our bodies are not designed to
deal with that form of extensive stress for a long period
of time (McKee, Johnston, & Massimilian, 2006). These
authors suggest the way to successful leadership isn't
professional development as much as it is personal
development. They stress the importance of building a solid
equilibrium through the practices of mindfulness, hope, and
compassion in an effort not to use impaired judgment, when
facilitating sensitive issues. Again, the research turns to
holistic views over cookie cutter solutions. Spirituality
comes into play to make this personal development happen.
The balance found through spirituality may help leaders
become better people as well as models for the
organization's staff.

Educational leaders are pushed through high-stakes
accountability to facilitate an ethical and just workplace

while achieving organizational goals and visions. Effective leaders should acknowledge the need to take care of the internal leadership qualities as well as external leadership qualities. Lynham and Chermack (2006) suggest that responsibility is linked to leaders and is closely related to "ethical and moral factors that are often created and agreed upon within the system itself" (p.74). The overarching drive for their study is the absence of leadership theories that explore the essence and struggles of leadership. They explicitly state there is a distinct lack of focus on performance and suggest a means to connect various leadership theories in order to focus the research on leadership as a process. Their theory is that honing the performance focus will link many affective and cognitive variables within the organization directly to the leader. These affective variables include spirituality.

Spirituality becomes the glue that binds when the organization sharply defines the focus. When we agree that leadership is not action in isolation, but the coming together of values and core beliefs, the parameters of study can widen to include variables such as processes and the interplay of directional feedback through the unique synergy of spirituality.

*The Role Spirituality Plays*

Some of the greatest challenges currently being faced in education today include: understanding and following state mandates, adhering to national laws and state regulations, proactively listening and responding to parent groups, evaluating and accounting for standardized student assessments, combating shrinking funds, and refining the ever-changing direction of the most essential curricula to be covered.  When the life and death realities of shootings and bomb threats settle on the shoulders of a leader, even the most balanced may stumble. Even the affective domains of personnel, empowerment, employee satisfaction, relations with a new school board vying for decision-making power, and empirical progress become exacerbated due to higher accountability. How does the educational environment tackle these additional burdens?  How does the field of education continue to maintain great leaders for substantial lengths of time? With so many difficult or impossible tasks to accomplish, education continues to struggle with keeping executive positions filled.  Spirituality may be key in refilling and refueling the needs of leaders.

Traditionally, stressors are defined as life changing events that may be characterized as either positive or negative. More recent definitions have been expanded to

include minor events or daily annoyances (Fabricature, Fenzel, & Handal, 2000). Researchers are finding that the daily hassles actually magnify the effects on distress to a greater degree than negative life events (p. 221). Knowing that educational leaders deal with a high amount of daily hassles leads this researcher to believe that there is a strong need for meaningful and effective support to get through the responsibilities.  This support may be found through the awareness and development of one's spirituality.

Both men and women struggle with establishing balance between work and family with varying factors taking the blame for the difficulties. It has become necessary to tap into any feasible means of strength. Spirituality is now a focus of clarity for leaders wishing to maintain better work habits and personal growth for the good of the organization and the people as a whole. Current research establishes a means and a need to study how spirituality affects one's ability to cope with stressors (Edmondson, Lawler, Jobe, Younger, Piferi, & Jones, 2005; Fabricatore & Handal, 2000; Nelson & Burke, 2000) when leading in an organization.

Knowing that life expectations and requirements for success continue to exponentially escalate, true leaders

choose to actively chase methods to discern and improve effectiveness. Clawson (2006) identifies both external and internal life dreams as being equally necessary for a happy and fulfilled life. Most leaders have a good sense of the external life's dream but neglect the internal. The internal life's dream deals with emotional experiencing. Life goals of emotional experiencing must include living aware of personal/emotional experiences in order to keep stressors of the workplace at bay. Leaders need to embrace a cognitive understanding of the intricate tapestry we weave through every decision and conversation with colleagues.  Spirituality can clarify the meaning of these personal and emotional experiences with others.

*Misunderstandings About Spirituality*

   Stephen Covey (1989) talks at length about the need to preserve and enhance a healthy and balanced life. He specifically touches on spirituality as value clarification and commitment as well as the use of study and meditation as distinct ways to achieve this balanced life. Spirituality is the relationship of leadership to life. Concentration on personal spirituality renews and invigorates the leader to continue to serve. Spiritual fitness is not purely for personal benefit. When someone practices remaining positive, the modeling benefits others

(Mramor, 2005). Every situation allows an opportunity to gain insight and understanding about how spirituality connects to intrinsic strength, which leaders can then share through deliberate intention and incidental relationships.

People may erroneously conclude that religion and spirituality are one and the same. Religion is generally referred to as the parts of the church and tradition routinely followed in a faithful community related to a specific higher being (Benefiel, 2005; Fry, 2003). Spirituality seems to be loosely defined as a line of existentialism that primarily focuses on what is perceived as our meaning and purpose in life without direct correlation to a specific deity (Benefiel, 2005; Dent, Higgins, & Wharff, 2005; Fry, 2003).

One prime misunderstanding is that spirituality is a tool with which to gain marketing success or profitability. Lewis (2000) writes about marketing trend predictions by Faith Popcorn. Popcorn's predictions are so accurate that Fortune 500 companies follow her religiously. One of her six latest predictions is called anchoring. Anchoring is the current trend toward spirituality. According to Lewis, Popcorn's predictions set the marketing for companies who wish to stay on the cutting edge. Therefore, spirituality

is now a marketing tool. Even "children's spirituality has become a significant for-profit enterprise in North American consumer culture" (Mercer, 2006, p. 23). The current product market for children's spirituality is a multi-billion dollar endeavor. One of Mercer's critical issues with the commodification process of spirituality for children is the need to make spirituality generic moral lessons in order to appeal to the mass-market public. "The ability of children to find in such spirituality the kinds of complex narrative and symbolic resources they need for dealing with ambiguity and increasing levels of complexity is similarly restricted" (p. 31). She strongly recommends keeping the rich, local forms of spirituality while maintaining cognizance about the marketing promotions of spirituality in its lowest form.

*Historical Perspective*

Spirituality became linked to leadership by the work of Fairholm (1996) who focused on the importance of spirituality in the workplace. He studied how work meets spiritual needs since our place of employment was evolving into our primary community of extended families. We have created livable communities at work rather than at home in our neighborhoods.

As a relatively new field of study, the definition of the word spirituality itself is still debated in the unending search for an agreed upon conceptual definition. The field experts, who spend much time discussing whether or not it is even tied to religion, aggressively debate the terminology surrounding spirituality (Dent, Higgins, & Wharff, 2005). The purpose of their study was to explore and analyze "the essential factors and conditions for promoting a theory of spiritual leadership within the context of the workplace". Eight areas of distinction designated as definition, connected to religion, marked by epiphany, teachable, individual development, measurable, profitable/productive, and nature of the phenomenon were outlined. The researchers found some studies linked religion to spirituality and some did not.

The study also specified the need to be cautious that the definition applied to spirituality did not overlap other concepts, such as altruism or balance. Dent, Higgins, and Wharff caution researchers going into the field of spirituality that the area of interest is an exploratory one and should be broached with some reservation until more specific empirical studies have been completed. They cite Fairholm (1998) and Fry (2003) as the most comprehensive models of spiritual leadership. The researchers suggest

that spiritual leadership may be the "transition from

exploratory to confirmatory work" (p. 647), which includes

integral transformation as the work continues and the

evolution of the constructs of consciousness through the

connections of leadership development to the stages of

moral development.

*Examining the Status of Stress in the Workplace*

With the current health crises revolving around

stress-induced diseases, it is imperative that leaders

learn to cope effectively and efficiently on the job site

with the staff. Leaders not only need to manage stress for

themselves, but to demonstrate to the organization a means

to manage intrinsically as well as interpersonally. When

people lead well, others follow that lead. Leading isn't

necessarily an overt process. Simple ways of communicating

and reacting to everyday occurrences seep through the

fabric of the organization and become the mode of

operation.

Understanding how to precipitate satisfaction is an

essential key to success in the workplace. The role of the

leader is to help establish a healthy work environment. The

leader needs to get personally involved, articulate core

values, honor promises, take responsibility and be able to

stand alone with personal convictions. These descriptors

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paint a picture of a well-rounded, purposeful individual.
With all of these high-cost responsibilities comes great
pressure to perform above the norm. This pressure can
affect the ability to cope when faced with challenges that
surface naturally in the field of education.

*Statement of the Problem*

Work in the field of education, particularly in the
leadership realm, has led to many conversations with
colleagues about the increasing responsibilities and
limited supports for administrators. Interestingly, many of
our leadership resources seem to focus on the affective
needs of balance in life between work and play, as well as
professional ambition with personal growth. Benefiel (2005)
states spiritual development is continually renewing,
supporting the leader attaining spiritual depth for the
benefit of personal and individual transformation rather
than to seek material gains.

The goal of reflective and effective practitioners has
evolved in an effort to find a way to make the leadership
position professionally enriching, while maintaining health
and happiness. Spirituality may play a huge role in
maintaining such health and happiness by addressing the
underlying personal trials and tribulations. Stress does
affect all aspects of an individual's life, regardless of

position. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a

strong need for research in the area of spirituality as a

means to help prevent or deal with already existing

stressors (Calicchia & Graham, 2006; Edmondson, Lawler,

Jobe, Younger, Piferi, & Jones, 2005; Fabricatore & Handal,

2000; Graham, Furr, Flowers, & Burke, 2001).

*Theoretical Framework*

The theoretical framework for this study includes

spirituality on a personal and individual level, leadership

spirituality, spirituality in the workplace, spirituality

as it affects coping ability when faced with stress, and

the means of measuring spirituality as it correlates to the

ability to cope with stressors. Embedded in the study are

the historical perspective, examination of early

interpretations of spirituality, and much theoretical

support. Current practices will be linked with suggested

benefits from a conscious understanding of personal

spirituality.

Fry (2003) analyzes the purpose of spiritual

leadership.  He theorizes that spiritual leadership is "to

create vision and value congruence across the strategic,

empowered team, and individual levels, and ultimately, to

foster higher levels of organizational commitment and

productivity" (p. 693). Spirituality is the base for

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becoming more committed and productive in the organization. Fry's study examines leadership and motivation, a call for workplace spirituality, and the move toward a theory of spiritual leadership.

Spirituality is rooted in leadership theories and theories of motivation, including transformational and transactional leadership. Fry (2003) proposes the idea that "spiritual leadership is necessary for the transformation to and continued success of learning organizations" (p. 717). Fry also suggests that these same learning organizations can be intrinsically motivating for the front line employees through altruistic love, hope/faith, and vision.

The link between a leader's calling and the level of organizational commitment is examined by Markow and Klenke (2005) in order to investigate the relationships between personal meaning and organizational commitment while identifying the sources of personal meaning that predict calling. Results from this study show personal meaning from religion was not a predictor of calling, while personal meaning derived from transcendence, or spirituality, was a predictor. This implies leaders are able to share and promote a sense of personal meaning with followers through the avenue of spirituality. Markow and

Klenke conclude with the suggestion that organizations
recreate vision statements to include the followers' sense
of transcendence, again tapping into workplace
spirituality.

There is confusion in the current leadership model
between "dedication, mission, or vision with spirituality"
(Korac-Kakabadse, Kouzmin, & Kakabadse, 2002). Spirituality
moves beyond these general ideas and becomes the
strengthening girders underlying the theories. This
synthesis reviewed the leadership praxis from the frame of
wider spiritualities.  A composite of philosophical
positions comprising the search for the spiritual was
created.

Taoism is one example. According to the Taoist
concepts, a comprehensive source of natural activity exists
that encapsulates the metaphysical and moral framework of
principles.  The focus of this philosophy is on bottom-up
leadership flow for processes and commitment. Both the
Taoist approach and the spiritual approach to leadership
embody the maintenance of the balance for effectiveness.

Dent, Higgins, and Wharff (2005) note that
spirituality and spiritual leadership may be veracious only
in a select set of circumstances. Their study revealed
"limited scholarship linking religion with leadership" (p.

642). They propose that practices and beliefs should be important inclusions during the study and theory development of spirituality in future research.

Most of the articles reviewed did not see epiphanies as the core flow for the development of spirituality. Instead, they found personal transformation to be the typical end result of spiritually shaping experiences. Houston and Sokolow (2006) helped set the stage for the transformation theory by first addressing formation through the principle of intention. An intention includes "not just what you want to do but the why behind what you want to do" (p. 1). This helps to establish the leader and the framework, which includes the transition through calling, intention, formation, and transcendence, for the creation of reality.

Individual development related to human developmental stages is addressed as being an area in need of more research (Dent, Higgins, and Wharff, 2005). The researchers suggest comparing age groups to ascertain the validity of the spirituality studies being completed. Gender is not discussed or reviewed throughout the study.

One strong point of interest found in this study is the theory that spiritual development can be taught. As is the case with seminary educators, direct instruction can

include "understanding, character, and practical skills that can be employed with sensitivity, given the conditions and contexts within which one works" (Shulman, 2006, p. 30). This Carnegie Foundation study takes the time to generate examples of this type of learning and formation of responsible leaders. This study, through surveying faculty and students from across 18 Jewish and Christian seminaries, found four signature pedagogies: interpretation, formation, contextualization, and performance, to be the base for curricular and formational coherence.

It is suggested that future studies focus on isolating organizations that use spiritual development courses and how those courses affect leadership practices and behaviors. Future implications may include having spiritual development courses/methods embedded within standardized assessments for use when evaluating skill sets.

This study's lens of interest closely resembled the framework established by Fry (2003). Fry defines spiritual leadership as "comprising the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one's self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership" (p. 695). This entails a sense of calling and the ability to

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make a difference that is based on altruistic love, which

produces membership in order to feel understood and

appreciated. However, added to Fry's framework is the force

and power of intention behind actions and motivation

(Houston & Sokolow, 2006). A leader's intentions are

defined by behaviors and words.  Therefore, the leader must

have the intentions strongly defined before they say or do

anything on the continuum to make that goal happen. "The

more consistent you are and the more resolve you show, the

more others can determine the extent to which they identify

with and support your stated intentions" (p.10).

*Purpose of the Study*

    The purpose of this study was to explore the

relationship between spirituality and the ability to cope

as an educational leader. This study also investigated the

role that gender plays, if any, in the relationship between

spirituality and the ability to cope as an educational

leader. The goal of this research was to ascertain if this

additional pathway helps leaders refine or redefine how to

maintain an internal balance in such a strife driven world

of work.

    Wharff (2004) proposes the idea that "empirical

results of the manifestations of leader's spiritual

beliefs, activities, and practices should provide promising

new ways to understand how leaders transcend and progress

through the stages of human development" (p. 648).  If a

leader is able to provide an additional tool for daily

coping, the entire organization benefits from its use. All

members of our global society need to understand internal

values and moral principles. Leaders, especially, are

accountable to not only possess sound practices, but they

need to deeply understand them in order to articulate

exactly what they are modeling, leaving little room for

discrepancy in the interpretation.

*Significance of the Study*

This study strived to institute a better understanding

of the role spirituality plays in guiding educational

leaders when coping with stress. This research project also

sought to describe the interplay of spirituality and life

satisfaction. Upon completion of the survey, information

regarding the benefits of spirituality to help cope with

stress may be used to coach educational leaders to tap into

their existentialism and maintain enhanced life

satisfaction.

Training may be developed to steer educational leaders

when making decisions or creating mission and vision

statements that set the foundation for the organization's

staff empowerment. Educational leaders may be better able

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to analyze and communicate their intrinsic values once they comprehend the function their individual spirituality plays.

As spirituality becomes more of a focus for leaders, research is required to establish answers to important questions. Data on spirituality and leadership exist, but the focus on how spirituality intrinsically affects how a leader makes extrinsic decisions necessitates studies that correlate spirituality with the perception of satisfaction.

*Research Questions*

This study determined how effectively spirituality predicts the ability to deal with stress as a leader and to what degree the predictions vary according to gender. The specific research questions that this study answered were:

(a) Is there a statistically significant correlation between spirituality and the ability to cope with stressors as an educational leader?

(b) Is there a difference in the level of statistical significance between men's ability to cope with stress and spirituality and women's ability to cope with stress and spirituality?

*Research Hypotheses*

Based on the above research questions, the research hypotheses postulated in this study were:

(a)  There is a statistically significant relationship between the ability to cope with stress and spirituality.

(b)  There is a difference in the level of statistical significance between men's ability to cope with stress and spirituality and women's ability to cope with stress and spirituality.

*Operational Definitions*

For the purposes and needs of this study, the following definitions were applied.

*Calling*—the experience of transcendence or how one makes a difference through service to others and, in doing so, derives meaning and purpose in life (Fry, 2003, p. 703).

*Leadership effectiveness*—includes both the leader's effect on followers and achievement of goals (Reave, 2005, p. 657).

*Membership*—establishing a social/organizational culture based on altruistic love whereby leaders and followers have genuine care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others, thereby producing a sense of

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membership and [feeling] understood and appreciated (Fry, 2003, p. 695).

*Religion*—an integrated set of beliefs and activities (Corbett, 1990).

*Spiritual leadership*—comprising the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one's self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership (Fry, 2003, p. 695).

*Stress*—a state of extreme difficulty, pressure, or strain. The amount of perceived stress will be measured through the Interpersonal Conflict at Work Scale and the Satisfaction With Life Scale.

*Transcendence*—the ability to stand above the flow of time and contemplate the reality of which one is part (Meehan 2002, p. 294).

*Transcendental leadership*—the developing of leaders beyond the ego towards a higher influence in order to comprehend an extraordinary, spiritual presence in their lives (Sanders, Hopkins, & Geroy, 2003, p. 23).

*Workplace spirituality*—a "framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees' experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a

way that provides feelings of completeness and joy"
(Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003, p. 13). This description is
general enough, yet detailed enough to serve as a working
definition.

*Summary*

Understanding the power of purpose enables leaders to
tap into inner resources (Burmark & Fournier, 2003). "A
sense of purpose ignites an imperishable flame that only
grows in light and strength.  Significance, meaning,
purpose-these terms refer to a perceptual function of the
human spirit" (p. 88). The human spirit requires a sense of
purpose. It is what drives us to complete our work
ethically, morally, and completely. Understanding the role
spirituality plays in maintaining our health, welfare,
sense of productivity, and value systems cannot be
overrated. The combined issues of women vying for equal
respect and opportunities, stressors increasing across all
venues of life, and the call to be "good" people create
internal strife that only exacerbates the problem rather
than allow solutions to evolve.

Tapping into spiritual leadership may move leaders
from tentative musings to fundamentally vital approaches,
promoting the fine balance between professional growth and
personal satisfaction.

This correlational study used a quantitative model to examine the relationship of spirituality to the ability to cope with stressors, noting any divergence between men and women. The participants used self-administered surveys to note their spirituality, life satisfaction, and interpersonal conflict at work. This study examined the gender differences with spirituality's role when managing job stress.

Chapter 2 outlines the literature review to include stressors, spiritual health, female roles in leadership, balancing responsibilities, transcendental leadership, spiritual leadership, theological research on spiritual leadership, chaos theory, and spiritual cultivation. Chapter 3 will present the methodology, research question, hypothesis, and research design used for this study. Limitations are also noted.

Chapter 2

*Introduction*

The focus on spirituality certainly is not a new one. However, the ties between spirituality, life satisfaction, and conflict at work haven't been solidly defined for educational leaders.  This study evaluated the role spirituality plays when coping with stress as an educational leader. Bodies of literature researched for this topic included gender challenges, stressors, spiritual health, female roles in leadership, balancing responsibilities, theological research on spiritual leadership, transcendental leadership, spiritual leadership, chaos theory, and spiritual cultivation.

Gender challenges for female roles in leadership have important implications for perceived stress and success of educational leaders. Nelson and Burke (2000) point to external variables such as earnings, corporate culture, and prejudice to explain why women face greater challenges when attempting to move up in organizations. They describe how these various inequities lead to greater stress levels for women. Spirituality looks to a way of coping with stress

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more easily controlled by women that will benefit their roles in leadership.

The literature surrounding stressors lends itself as a variable for the questions being studied by this researcher. David, Kerr, and Kurpius (2003) found that "spiritual well-being and female gender were found to be the best predictors of anxiety" (p. 356). They suggest, "that for some people meaning and purpose in life exceed traditional religious beliefs in terms of how these variables relate to anxiety" (p. 357). The study of spirituality and its correlation to coping with stress ties into establishing that meaning and a purpose in life.

As leaders continue to increase duties associated with their roles in the organization, which exacerbates stress levels, they need additional supports to balance these responsibilities. Edmondson, Lawler, Jobe, Younger, Piferi, and Jones (2005) suggest, "spirituality may have a salutary effect on health" (p. 161). They state spirituality predicts health responses to stress. Hence, if leaders are able to tap into their spirituality, providing beneficial health effects, they may be better able to juggle the many obligations now mandatory on the job.

Spiritual health and spiritual leadership attempt to help leaders maintain balance in order to cope with stress.

They tap into the reflective and introspective aspects of a leader. Calicchia and Graham (2006) suggest future research is necessary for specific groups of people to understand the nature of stress "from an idiographic rather than a nomothetic paradigm" (p. 318).

Theological research on spiritual leadership is a necessary component when studying spirituality. Understanding the interplay between secular theories and theology provides the full range of research. Religion and spirituality cross over one another for definitions and applications. However, the distinctions between the two also need to be clarified to understand how they are immeasurably joined together while maintaining two separate ideologies.

"In order to truly understand the notion of leadership, we must focus on the internal development of the leader" (Sanders, Hopkins, & Geroy, 2003, p. 21). Transcendental leadership recognizes the transcendent, which exists above and beyond the material world, in everyday experience. The ability to facilitate a relationship with the transcendent is necessary for this researcher's study to lay the groundwork for using "spirituality to mobilize the individual towards meaningful accomplishment" (p. 21).

A large part of dealing with stress is how to understand the nature of perpetual change and then knowing how to cope with it. Chaos theory helps to narrow individual definitions of meaning and purpose in order to provide tools to control confusion. Chaos theory describes the inevitability of change and the unexpected paths and opportunities that arise from the change. Stress can develop from this change. Tapping into individual spiritual strengths will imbue leaders with the understanding for stressors from interactions at the workplace.

Spiritual cultivation ties it all together by establishing the means to learn how to teach spirituality, thereby reaping the benefits on a deliberate level.

Dent, Higgins, and Wharff (2005) note that spirituality and spiritual leadership may be veracious only in a select set of circumstances. Their study revealed "limited scholarship linking religion with leadership" (p. 642). They propose that practices and beliefs should be important inclusions during the study and theory development of spirituality. All of the above-mentioned literature, in combination with this study, provides additional insight into how executive leaders maintain a balanced health while preserving the preferred higher level of standards for effectiveness and growth.

Living in the world of today is different from any other period throughout history. Job satisfaction can no longer be assumed the norm in organizational leadership. Cohrs, Abele, and Dette (2006) studied situational conditions, personal characteristics, and interactions between variables. They found significance in the perceived job characteristics of autonomy and participatory leadership. They concluded that the specific field of employment also factors into job satisfaction.

The stressors in current society are not harder for educational leaders than leaders in other vocations. However, the recent changes in the legal requirements of public schools established new stakeholders that permeate all walks of life, bringing varied and strong opinions to the table, perhaps without a similar educational background. Johnson, Aiken, and Steggerda (2005) establish that the responsibility of educational leaders to work with such diverse constituents pushes them to "convey a sense of energy and hope-regardless of current problems and challenges-and the expectation that they should create contexts built on principles of ethics, equity, and social justice" (p. 251). This places a great burden on the leader, albeit a necessary one. Their qualitative study, comprised of 6 field-based leaders, attempted to discover

the strategies used by leaders to work through all
expectations of their workplace. Analysis of the interviews
allowed four central themes to emerge: crossing emotional
boundaries, value-driven emotions and leadership tools,
adaptive emotional capacity, and subjectivity and emotional
competence.

The acknowledgment of the differences between men and
women leaders peppers each area of literature.  Male and
female roles are often defined through sex-based
differences, but Wojtalik, Breckenridge, Hancox, and
Sobehart (2007), through a phenomenological study, disagree
and, with the support of the Eccles Theory, indicate that
the female's actual competencies are grossly misrepresented
in their choices due to the gender-biased expectations of
their parents while they were growing up. This qualitative
study included eight participants with four non-leaders and
four leaders. Each participated in a 90-minute semi-
structured interview where they answered questions
specifically relating to gender-role stereotypes,
socializers' beliefs and behaviors, differential aptitudes,
and previous achievement-related experiences. All completed
the Index of Self-Esteem, the short form. The participants
attended focus groups to further illuminate childhood
events and the impact they had on career decisions.

Women make their vocational decisions through the lens of socialized competencies shared with them through their parents' expectations. "Understanding the cognitive processes involved in the re-teaching of revised gender messages seems crucial for designing effective intervention strategies" (p. 61) for gender-role beliefs. Knowing that many of the difficulties women leaders face today originate from their early childhood points to the need for a strong support system.

One variable of this support system needs to include concrete instrumentality that travels between and among life situations, to not only aid in mere survival but also to increase the ability to exquisitely flourish. Atwood (2001) demonstrates that sexual inequality still exists in today's marriages, which reverberates throughout the lives of sons and daughters. "For many women, their confidence in themselves and their capacity to form satisfying intimate relationships has been undermined" (p. 32). According to Atwood, women equate their value as women with open-handed service on behalf of others at the sacrifice of themselves. Hence, there is an immediate need to address not only the misperceptions of women but mental health and life satisfaction as well.

A second component of a strong support system for women must alleviate the difficulties of tapping into the old boys networks, specifically as it pertains to mentoring and professional networking. Searby and Tripses (2006) completed a phenomenological qualitative study to understand how women develop the capacity to move into mentoring relationships.

Whereas most mentoring studies focus on the mentor, this study focused on the protégé's needs of both professional skills and personal qualities from their mentors. These researchers concluded that "aspiring women school leaders need to come to a better understanding of themselves, including recognizing internal conflicts about seeking out mentors, identifying strategies for engaging in mentoring relationships, and finally, persevering in the face of inequitable opportunities" (p. 193). Women need to do a better job of supporting aspiring women leaders.

A study to evaluate the effectiveness of spirituality on personal coping and life satisfaction may help women to undertake the uphill struggle by looking within first.

McKay and Dinkmeyer (2002) support Holmes' theory by expanding on the idea of interpretation of an event or situation influencing the intensity of the stress experienced. They delineate the major stressors in life and

believe that providing encouragement through diverse

practices allows both women and men to control how they

react to each stressor by focusing on what is found within

first. "In most instances, the amount of stress you

experience depends on how you choose to think about and

respond to the situation" (p. 112).

*Gender Challenges*

Knowing that men and women are different isn't quite

enough when researching leadership. It's more than a simple

explanation of the various strengths and socially accepted

norms attributed to each gender. True understanding of how

gender affects leaders includes the need to dig a level

deeper to not only understand what the differences are but

why the differences exist. Spirituality may help leaders

and researchers understand the why when studied in the

context of how spirituality is applied when dealing with

stressful situations.

Many female workers are calling it quits in terms

of the attempt to succeed equally alongside their male

counterparts particularly within the traditional "old boy's

network" type organization (Kephart & Schumacher, 2005).

The researchers explain that feeling more isolated at work,

the so-called "glass ceiling", stereotyping of work roles,

balance issues, the need to assume male methods, and

Table 1

Detailed Occupation Group by Sex:  March 2002
(Numbers in thousands.)

| Detailed occupation group | Total | | Sex | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Male | | Female | |
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| Total | 135,154 | 100.0 | 71,505 | 100.0 | 63,649 | 100.0 |
| Executive | 20,596 | 15.2 | 11,179 | 15.6 | 9,417 | 14.8 |
| Professional | 21,831 | 16.2 | 9,867 | 13.8 | 11,964 | 18.8 |
| Technical | 4,425 | 3.3 | 1,939 | 2.7 | 2,486 | 3.9 |
| Sales | 15,848 | 11.7 | 8,013 | 11.2 | 7,835 | 12.3 |
| Clerical | 18,422 | 13.6 | 3,882 | 5.4 | 14,540 | 22.8 |
| Production | 14,385 | 10.6 | 13,126 | 18.4 | 1,259 | 2.0 |
| Machine operators | 6,493 | 4.8 | 4,165 | 5.8 | 2,327 | 3.7 |
| Transportation | 5,638 | 4.2 | 5,047 | 7.1 | 591 | 0.9 |
| Cleaners | 5,218 | 3.9 | 4,152 | 5.8 | 1,067 | 1.7 |
| Private service | 685 | 0.5 | 33 | 0.0 | 652 | 1.0 |
| Non-private service workers, | 18,543 | 13.7 | 7,715 | 10.8 | 10,829 | 17.0 |
| Farming | 3,070 | 2.3 | 2,388 | 3.3 | 682 | 1.1 |

SOURCE:  U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey,

March 2002, Special Populations Branch, Population

Division.

Internet Release date:  March 24, 2003

Table 2

Earnings of Full-Time, Year-Round Workers 15 Years and Over
by Sex: 2001    (Numbers in thousands.)

| Earnings | Total | | Sex | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Male | | Female | |
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| Total with money earnings 1/ | 100,351 | 100.0 | 58,712 | 100.0 | 41,639 | 100.0 |
| $1-$2,499 or loss | 871 | 0.9 | 501 | 0.9 | 370 | 0.9 |
| $2,500-$4,999 | 372 | 0.4 | 161 | 0.3 | 211 | 0.5 |
| $5,000-$9,999 | 2,265 | 2.3 | 995 | 1.7 | 1,270 | 3.0 |
| $10,000-$14,999 | 6,530 | 6.5 | 2,985 | 5.1 | 3,545 | 8.5 |
| $15,000-$19,999 | 9,396 | 9.4 | 4,242 | 7.2 | 5,154 | 12.4 |
| $20,000-$24,999 | 11,285 | 11.2 | 5,497 | 9.4 | 5,788 | 13.9 |
| $25,000-$34,999 | 20,932 | 20.9 | 11,188 | 19.1 | 9,744 | 23.4 |
| $35,000-$49,999 | 20,885 | 20.8 | 12,567 | 21.4 | 8,318 | 20.0 |
| $50,000-$74,999 | 16,248 | 16.2 | 11,292 | 19.2 | 4,957 | 11.9 |
| $75,000 and over | 11,569 | 11.5 | 9,285 | 15.8 | 2,284 | 5.5 |

1/Total money earnings is the algebraic sum of money wages

or salaries and net income from farm and non-farm self-

employment.  SOURCE:  U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population

Survey, March 2002, Special Populations Branch, Population

Division.  Internet Release date:  March 24, 2003

occupational segregation are some of the barriers to women's advancement.  There is a strong paradigm shift in the direction of women entrepreneurism as the chosen method to crack through the "glass ceiling". "Current research supports the continuation of this shift until these issues can be resolved equitably so that female executives can make a proactive, conscious choice to embrace corporate life or entrepreneurism" (p.13).  Education cannot withstand a mass exodus of women leaders. This issue is a crucial one for leadership in education.

Table 1 is a compilation of information from the 2001 census regarding detailed occupation groups by gender. There is less than a 1% difference between how many men versus women hold executive, administrative, and managerial positions. This information as it stands alone is not alarming. As a matter of fact, it can be very encouraging to women. One distinct limitation to this table is the lack of breakdown for education or related fields. However, when the information from Table 2 is added, the differences for earnings of men and women have a much larger disconnect. Assuming that executive, administrative, and managerial positions demand the higher pay of $50,000.00 and over, women are grossly underrepresented.

A study completed by Schuck and Liddle (2004) illuminated the experiences of women in management. Ninety-three female corporate managers completed 57 items of qualitative data. One interesting point in the research was the women's tendency to downplay the role gender played, instead of acknowledging that this was the current world and change would be slow. The assessment tool rated the women managers' perceptions of interpersonal success, being globally positive, negotiating feminine relational style, subtle barriers, overly hostile climates, and compensation for gender.

Age and income did not correlate significantly with the Quality of Experience (QE) score. Managerial level was significantly related to QE ($F$=3.57, $p$=.03), as was number of employees in the company ($r$=.29, $p$=.04). The researchers concluded that there is a marked gender gap and lack of mentoring or role models.

For women to be successful, they must enter the game on an even playing field. "Accurate assessment is the first step in designing appropriate interventions that may improve the quality of life for women in management (p. 87)."

"For a woman to establish herself at the leadership table, she must negotiate her way through a number of tests

that her male colleagues often bypass (Kolb, Williams, & Frohlinger, 2004, p. 3). A female leader encounters four distinct tests she must pass before she can prove her suitability for leadership.  The tests include the token test, the double-bind test, the fitness test, and the right stuff test.  Through these tests of legitimacy, a woman must learn to be on guard for discrimination. Becoming too comfortable in the current leadership realm or believing the world will naturally move to that order of events only increase the level of potency of biased attitudes.

"As women strengthen their foothold in the executive world, their issues are shifting from gaining access to the boardroom to gaining comfort in the personal life choices associated with a managerial career" (Ruderman & Ohlott, 2002, p. 2). Networking for women is much more than professional contacts. Women use their levels of connection to validate their experiences, create a community, and find a mentor. The authors conclude "although having a life outside work causes many conflicts, it also brings benefits that have an impact at work as well" (p. 223). Understanding that the life outside of work is as important as the experiences in the workplace, we are again reminded that women must strive to find balance.

Zichy (2001) created the Leadership Q Diagnostic Test to help men and women understand and even master self-knowledge, self-management, self-confidence, accomplishment, self-esteem, and leadership. Self-knowledge is the foundation block to develop all others. However, "certain ways of leading do not lend themselves neatly to gender stereotypes" (p. 10). Not all women lead collaboratively, and not all men lead analytically. Leadership needs to be understood from the person's ability rather than the person's gender in order to identify individuality. She strongly suggests that women continue to deal with the peaks and drops in self-esteem as guilt from not being a first class nurturer takes hold. A truly powerful antidote to this guilt would be to understand personal priorities and how to achieve them.

Covey (1989) addresses this very same issue through his spiritual dimension. He defines the spiritual dimension as "your core, your center, (and) your commitment to your value system" (p. 292). When we understand the source that inspires us, we gain the ability to accept and embrace what we know will bring us inner peace. Covey helps to address the underlying factions that make us successful.

Since women deal with different challenges than men, it would behoove the research world to acknowledge the need

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to study supports specific to the difficulty. Spirituality
adds information to the reasons behind the actions. This
may help leaders better understand their own intentions and
will clarify their future direction for greater success.

*Stressors*

Stress affects all people at one time or another.
However, leaders have to be extra vigilant with how they
deal with stressors because an entire organization may be
depending on how the situation is resolved. Leaders feel
this high level of expectation to perform and often are
their own greatest source of pressure to do so
successfully. If spirituality can clarify even the smallest
of strengths used to maintain stressful situations, then it
is worth it to diligently study the link between
spirituality and stress.

In order to establish a relationship between stress,
social support, and spirituality, Calicchia and Graham
(2006) studied 56 graduate students in a counselor
education program of which 90% indicated a belief in God.
Two separate measures were used to generate Pearson
correlations for life stress, spirituality, and social
resources. Close examination of the results showed
religious well-being was not significantly correlated with
any variable outside of physical health.

The *t* scores resulting in >3.98 (p <.01) fell in the areas of physical health, stress related to children, and number of stressful negative life events. The end results of this study do provide support when hypothesizing that "spirituality and social support are effective buffers of stress" (p. 315).

The challenges women executives face are critically different from the obstacles that male executives have to contend with (Nelson & Burke, 2000). Women and men in leadership roles do not necessarily agree on the existence or cause of the disparity between genders at the work place. This disagreement only lends itself to an increase in the stress level for women. The differences in gender extend to include physical and behavioral symptoms of stress as well.

Nelson and Burke (2000) pointed out that the working woman still carries the major burden of responsibilities within the home. Women in "dual career families work an extra month of 24-hour days each year, compared to men" (p. 110). They identified the female perception of three critical factors for successful advancement of women executives: "consistently exceeding performance expectations, developing a style with which male managers are comfortable, and seeking out tough job assignments".

These sources of stress appeared to exacerbate not only the expected roles, but also the actual roles of women executives.

Nelson and Burke (2000) concluded that the top inhibitors for support of women executives were exclusion from informal networks and lack of access to executive-level mentors. Women strongly felt that corporate culture was the strongest barrier to organizational advancement. Stress prevention strategies to enhance women executives' health are important because these leaders maintain the degree of well being of the institution. Spirituality can be one such source of strength when coping with stress on the job.

Over the last decade, research has clearly shown that spirituality has become a point of interest in the field of leadership. In addition, research in both the medical and leadership realms have addressed the need to work through and combat stressors within the workplace. The interest and work of both topics have led to an interest in how spirituality works to moderate the relationship between wellbeing and stressors, as seen by a study completed by Fabricatore, Fenzel, & Handal (2000).

A sample of 120 undergraduates completed four instruments to measure the impact that a "personal,

integrated spirituality has on well-being and its role in moderating the effects of stressors" (p. 221). Two MANOVAs were conducted and found neither "gender ($F_{(2.117)}$=1.72. $p$=.183) nor religious affiliation ($F_{(6.228)}$=1.67, $p$=.131) accounted for a significant portion of the variance" (p. 224).

Definitions of stressors have been expanded to include the daily hassles and obstacles, which can have an even greater effect on distress and symptomatology. It is no longer limited to significant life events. Further, stress can be positive or negative. An example of positive stress (eustress) would be the positive stress of managing successful communication in a marriage. Negative stress (distress) could be the negative stress of managing the time and effort required for successful communication in a marriage.

Caliccia and Graham (2006) studied the interconnections of stress, social support, and spirituality. They reported that stressors produce "life threatening" consequences due to the feeling of inadequacy to meet demands. The study also purported the role of stress buffering variables was an important one in interpreting data. The researchers share the efforts of the current scientific push to assess moderating variables,

including such domains as coping strategies, locus of control, and social position in the community. How specific variables/mechanisms moderate or buffer against the deleterious effects of stress has yet to be explored with great depth in the literature (Caliccia & Graham, 2006).

The results of the study supported their hypothesis of spirituality being an effective buffer for stress, albeit a limited one. The results also suggested a divergence of existential well-being and religious well-being with the only significant correlation found in the existential well-being domain.

Research completed by Graham, Furr, Flowers, and Burke (2001) studied the relations among and differences between religion and spirituality when dealing with stressful situations. A sample of 115 graduate students consisted of 77.4% women and 17.4% men. Five distinct instruments were used to measure spirituality, coping, and comfort. The study discovered that "there was a statistically significant positive relationship between the spirituality and preventive coping ($r$=.29, $p$<.01) and between the spirituality and the combative coping ($r$=.30, $p$<.01" (p. 7).

Their findings suggest spirituality positively correlates with coping with stress. These authors

speculate, "different coping skills may be needed to combat stressful situations than the skills used to prevent stressful situations from developing" (p. 9). Richards and Bergin (1997) support this theory by stating individuals with a positive spiritual identity experience self-worth through greater meaning and purpose in life. In both studies described above, the reiteration is made to concretize the definitions of spirituality and religion.

A leader-member exchange (LMX) study completed by Harris and Kacmar (2006) investigated the significance of leaders giving too much attention to specific individuals, creating higher expectations and obligations outside of the formal job description. Their results provided evidence that individuals with higher-quality LMX relationships suffer more stress than those individuals with moderate-quality LMX relationships. Two organizational samples of 120 and 402 employees participated. A different presentation of the survey was provided to each sample. Confirming the hypothesis, LMX and stress were negatively and significantly related: $r$=-.143, $p$<.05 for sample one and $r$=-.315, $p$<.01 for sample two (Harris and Kacmar, 2006).

The opposite of this finding has been assumed to be the reality. The focus, therefore, has been on the low-

quality LMX individuals, rather than the high-quality LMX relationships. Including all variables relative to this author's research, this study was controlled for tenure, gender, and job satisfaction, which limited the possibility that the results were due to a phenomenon within a specific organization, so the researchers' conclusions allow for replication (p. 79). Stress under these circumstances will adversely affect the health and well being of workers, limiting the production and growth of the institution.

Stress can and does affect all aspects of an organization. The leader must understand and embrace the means to work through stress with the least amount of backlash to the surrounding staff. Spirituality may illuminate one possible avenue for coping with stress that actually promotes personal and professional growth rather than breaking down the hearts and minds of those involved.

*Spiritual Health*

Spiritual health, as a means to recognize the role personal spirituality plays and whether or not it is encouraged to expand, is key to producing and implementing that individual spirituality when dealing with difficult situations. A study on spirituality should fully encompass the individual acknowledgement of spiritual health. It is

analogous to knowing what good nutrition entails in order to make a good salad.

Spirituality can lead to greater health and immunity (Graham, Furr, Flowers, & Burke, 2001). One speculation regarding spirituality when coping with stress are the different skills needed to cope with stressful situations the key or rather than the skills used to prevent stressful situations. Some resources for dealing with stress may be reachable on an ongoing basis but not for crisis or emergency situations.

Covey (1989) depicts spirituality as one of the four dimensions of human nature. He describes spirituality as one of the many terms used to mean perspective or organizational contributions. Covey believes spirituality "draws upon the sources that inspire and uplift" (p. 292) people. The importance of spiritual renewal is stressed as an important step in settling inward conflict, which then promotes public victories, whether through board meetings or reading with the students. Knowing how spirituality affects the daily responsibilities of leaders can only add to future successes because of the ability to understand what generates the internal energy to keep moving forward through means of renewal.

Greenleaf (1977) helped lay the foundation for this idea by analyzing the idea of leading and making a difference from within rather than without. He focused on leaders knowing what needs to be cleaned on the inside in order to keep the outside pristine. "What happens to our values, and therefore to the quality of our civilization in the future, will be shaped by the conceptions of individuals that are born of inspiration" (p. 28). This is key to becoming an effective leader. Why would an organization follow a leader that did not see more clearly than the others? No learning or progress would take place.

Greenleaf emphasized the need to intrinsically understand the needed direction in order to bring followers along the necessary path. This focus on internal health and balance works hand in hand with the premise of relationships between spirituality and physical health due to the impossibility of removing the mental/emotional from the physical/physiological.

Direct correlations are being studied to predict health through spirituality. One such study focuses on spirituality as a predictor of health responses to stress in young adult women (Edmondson, Lawler, Jobe, Younger, Piferi, & Jones, 2005). Fifty-two college participants completed five different measures to ascertain if there was

an association between their spirituality and
cardiovascular response to stressors. Their results
indicate a relationship with spirituality that may actually
prevent illness, even in young adults. Stress did predict
health, with a beta of 0.33. Existential well-being also
predicted health independently of stress, with a beta of
−0.397 ($p$<0.01).

They conclude that spirituality may "have an impact on
both magnitude of stress experienced and the degree of
concomitant physiological reactivity" (p. 162). Perceived
stress and subjective well-being both correlate to
spiritual well-being, although existential variables play a
more prominent role in garnering health benefits through
spirituality.

Understanding spiritual health leads to clarity of
each individual's innate resources, thereby eliminating the
vicissitude of an outside source of aid, not to discount
the cohesive strength behind a synergistic community. It is
pulling oneself up by the bootstraps instead of calling for
assistance from a butler that may not be available.
Spiritual health does support spirituality as the
foundation for the action. Knowing that a fortified
foundation is needed to build upward, the suggested study

of spirituality correlated to dealing with stressors for leaders includes personal spiritual health.

*Female Roles in Leadership*

Of particular interest to this proposed study is how spirituality affects the way women cope with their unique health issues and increasing responsibilities as they take on more traditional "male dominated" leadership roles. Women executives continue to make progress in holding high-ranking positions in both the public and private industries. Unfortunately, they aren't as readily provided the same socially embedded supports such as mentors. Women, therefore, require a concentration of other options to attempt to keep up with their male counterparts.

One purpose of focusing on the differences between male and female leaders is to supplement the research stating that women still must consistently exceed performance expectations, look for the tougher assignments, and maintain a style male managers find comfortable (Nelson & Burke, 2000) in order to achieve success equal to the success of a man with comparable years of experience and training. This added pressure creates a difficult work environment when tallying up the stressors a woman must deal with on a daily basis.

Nelson and Burke (2000) suggest specific stressors that executive women face in a gender related fashion: barriers to achievement, tokenism, overload, downsizing, organizational politics, social-sexual behavior, work-home conflict, and workaholism. These stressors exhibit the need for relief in the minds of leaders facing these challenges.

Spirituality is seen as a key for providing leaders with another means to manage the balance between life and work. Managing stress or anxiety through spirituality obviously is not a new concept. It is however, more important than ever to establish measures for educational leaders to function in our systematically changing world. Spirituality, defined through existentialism or religion, has been found to be of great value in this crisis.

Davis, Kerr, and Kurpius (2003) study the relationship between anxiety and spirituality in at-risk adolescents, with a focus on the role gender plays in the results. Forty-five ethnically diverse students, ranging in age from 14-17, participated by completing four measures for this study. Females were found to have a higher trait anxiety (*M*=46.62) than the males (*M*=39.44, *t*(43)=-2.66, *p*<.01). Also found, the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient between trait anxiety and spiritual well-being was significant, *r*=.58. *p*<.01. The researchers noted the

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past discrepancies in research results defining the direct role of spirituality in leadership and state that the differences may be attributed to the various definitions of religion used as the variable. Their results indicated differences in anxiety scores due to gender over other variables. A possible explanation provided is attributable to the differences in social upbringing dependent upon gender. This study provided yet another direction for researchers to explore the relationship between gender and spirituality.

Barriers have historically existed for females seeking educational administration positions. Miller, Washington, and Fiene (2006) review the models of male dominance, which include the Meritocracy Model, the Discrimination Model and the Women's Place Model, to attempt to explain why women have been denied top positions in the field of education administration, specifically the role of superintendency. "The traditional top-down hierarchy has been replaced by a web-like organization in which females operate from the center" (p. 230).

The Feminist Leadership Model challenges the male-dominated theories of organization structure and function. This particular model of female leadership lends itself well to the current demands of the educational leader. The

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authors point out the need to improve beyond our current best practices through the use of flexibility leadership skills emanating from the center of the web-like organization. The traits outlined by this study enable leaders to meet the newest demands of education that seemingly provide answers through women leadership studies such as these.

An investigation on the role of gender and how it relates to conflict adds to the research base of female roles in leadership. Blackburn, Martin, & Hutchinson (2006) examined the impact of conflict management styles and the effects the different styles had on school culture. Two survey instruments were used with 15 female principals, 15 male principals, and 150 teachers. The findings suggest, "the secondary principal's conflict management style and school culture were related and that gender played a role in how leaders' conflict style was perceived" (p. 247).

It was suggested by the researchers that when training leaders for conflict management skills, gender should be taken into consideration and conflict style strengths utilized in the curriculum. The goals of the educational organizations need to be centered around true collaboration.

Understanding the female role as a leader will help these same leaders find the intrinsic and extrinsic supports they need to succeed. This study of spirituality as it affects the ability to cope with stress addressed the role differences as a suggested divergence. This helped diagram the starting point to direct the researcher to what was needed to reach the target.

*Balancing Responsibilities*

Meeting the demands of the various roles leaders play can be difficult due to the many expectations and perceptions of the parties involved in creating the roles. It can be stated that perception becomes the reality. When this is applied to leaders, the worry shifts to how all of these expectations can be met instead of if these expectations even should be met. The study of spirituality brings the focus of the leader inward to help prioritize what truly needs to be accomplished and which perceptions are not desirable to own.

The incompatibility of many roles can lead to role strain. Role strain, as defined by Alice Home (1997), involves three dimensions: role conflict (simultaneous, incompatible demands), role overload (insufficient time to meet demands), and role contagion (preoccupation with one role while performing another). Home completed a study

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involving 443 women in an attempt to ascertain the relationships between stress, role strain, and perceptions of role demands and support. The results showed that the perceptions of the participants regarding role expectations were much more powerful predictors than the actual role situations.

The study cites the need for support through networking in order to maintain realistic expectations. A stated limitation of this study, however, was the possibility of a lack of specificity for the perception of support measures through the use of the survey instrument. The primary recommendation from this research was for multiple-role women not to wait for additional studies, but instead to start creating strategies now.

Role stress is also being studied through the use of preventive management. Khetarpal & Kochar (2006) found key stressors to be poor peer relations, intrinsic impoverishment, and under participation, as noted using the Occupational Stress Indicator (OSI) inventory by A. K. Srivastava. This study was an attempt to "provide a preventive and positive approach when experiencing stress at work and at home" (p. 2) through the use of social support as a coping technique.

The conclusions drawn included the benefit of social support for overall health. Recommendations were to make use of stress management techniques, coping patterns, optimism, and a positive attitude. This helps to establish the need for further research in coping patterns and how to maintain a positive attitude in the face of present day struggles.

Dolbier, Soderstrom, and Steinhardt (2001) examined the concept of self-leadership. Self-leadership is defined as leading with the innate or core self. They based their research on the internal family systems model, "which combines the existing paradigm of multiplicity of the mind and systems thinking" (p. 469) into an individual model. The individual in this model is seen as a composite of multiple sub-personalities. The researchers summarize that many leaders have faced some form of constraining atmosphere in which they afforded their followers the opportunity to improve themselves through self-leadership if they chose to do so.

These findings verify a positive correlation between self-leadership and coping styles. Optimism was also positively related to self-leadership. Optimism lends itself quite nicely to further research in the field of

leadership effectiveness through spirituality or existentialism.

Finding a balance between professional and personal needs with desires is known to be elusive. Blanchard and Bowles (1998) spend time to describe the Spirit of the Squirrel, which conceptualizes the true meaning of worthwhile work defined by what fulfills the divine plan for the world when contributing to the wellbeing of mankind. It's about finding the balance between what needs to be done professionally and what personal needs are to be met. Spirit of the Squirrel teaches to guide others by values through learning where your organization is going and then getting out in front to lead. Taking a complex world and simplifying it reduces the stressors associated with presenting difficulties. It also guides your understanding of personal priorities, enabling proactive plans to succeed instead of reactionary answers to challenges.

The Hedgehog Concept is a sojourn to basic principles that unify and guide everything (Collins, 2001). A hedgehog can see what is absolutely essential and ignore the rest. A successful leader should be motivated to cultivate the same skill. Often, this sense of what is "essential" will

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concretize the definition of spirituality for individual people.

Dent, Higgins, and Wharff (2005) add to this concept by elaborating on leadership as the manifestation of a leader's spiritual core. Their qualitative narrative analysis distilled eight thematic categories from a total of 25. Open coding was used to establish patterns for the themes. They maintained a random sample size of 12 articles per coder. Cronbach's alpha variance for the 7 areas of concentration ranged from 0.78 to 0.92. Leadership requires acting in a community context over acting as an individual. One goal of spiritual research is to understand how leaders transcend and progress.

Balancing responsibilities is helpful from organizing all the way to prioritizing needs. Spirituality can help the leader to ascertain which of these responsibilities take precedence and which can be delegated or even dismissed. Having this balance then provides a feedback loop to support the growth of individual spirituality in an unending circle.

*Transcendental Leadership*

Transcendental leadership has lent itself strongly to the research of spirituality and effective leaders. It's important for leaders to understand what makes them grow

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and what may stunt true development. A specific focus on spirituality affords these leaders a look at individual ownership of affective domains, which aren't as easily explained.

Sanders, Hopkins, and Geroy (2003) espouse the notion that spirituality is the culmination of an individual's essence, which mobilizes the individual towards transcendental accomplishment. They propose that contributing theories found embedded within transactional leadership and transformational leadership, passed through the guise of consciousness, moral character and faith, will enhance leader effectiveness. The refined definition, as distilled in this study, describes transcendental leadership as the "developing of leaders beyond the ego towards a higher influence in order to comprehend an extraordinary, spiritual presence in their lives" (p. 23).

Levenson, Jennings, Aldwin, and Shiraishi (2005) studied the conceptualization and measurement of self-transcendence. Self-transcendence reflects an increasing spirituality. The sample included 341 participants, with ages ranging between 18 and 73, from across all educational domains of a university. Respondents were highly educated, with 54.9% having a post-graduate degree. The online survey

included information from two instruments and one

dichotomous question.

The research found self-transcendence and alienation

were unrelated to age, gender or educational status. Self-

transcendence was "negatively correlated with neuroticism

($r$=-.28,$p\leq$.001), and was positively correlated with the

other four personality measures of openness to experience,

extraversion, meditation practice, and agreeableness, with

correlations ranging between .16 ($p\leq$.01) and .23 ($p\leq$.001)"

(p. 135). This supports the idea that self-transcendence is

not a reinstatement of personality characteristics but is

an independent construct. "This suggests that one can

undertake activities that facilitate self-transcendence and

positive personality development" (p. 140), which could

lead to improved satisfaction and a decrease in stress

allowing a refinement of leadership skills.

A study both analyzing and using transcendental

phenomenology was conducted by Moerer-Urdahl and Creswell

(2004). The researchers wished to encourage qualitative

researchers to examine this alternative to hermeneutic

phenomenology as a challenge to major traditions in

qualitative research. They analyzed nine former mentors of

young school children. The mentors had received training in

interpersonal and communication skills and were able to participate in a mentoring program for four decades.

The culminating results of this study allow stories to be told from the participants' voices in an "approach consistent with human science research" (p. 23), especially regarding spirituality, which is a strongly subjective topic.

Begley (2004) adds to this research base with his study of valuation processes. "School leadership is a phenomenon involving seven or more arenas of influence…(including) the transcendental" (p. 4). Begley makes the case for understanding valuation processes in order for authentic leadership practices to occur. The most central layer to this theory is the self. The existential or transcendental self is as important as the physical self.

The transcendental self is used as a placeholder to represent the soul or life force of human life until future research is completed.  Spirituality through this study lends itself to future research for divesting the studies of the placeholder and putting in its stead the concrete understanding of what the central core of the leader truly represents.

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*Spiritual Leadership*

Spirituality is at the very center of spiritual leadership. The way a leader puts spirituality into play is what defines that leader as a spiritual one. The study must addressed spiritual leadership research to show an understanding of what makes a leader's actions spiritual. This study does not assume the premise that all leaders have some level of spirituality.

Fry (2003) has laid much of the groundwork for the study of spiritual leadership. His thorough investigation of the accelerating need for spirituality in leadership incorporates "calling and membership as two key follower needs" (p. 693). He defines four distinct arenas that connote the fundamental nature of leaders in the workplace— "the body (physical), mind (logical/rational thought), heart (emotions; feelings), and spirit" (p. 722). This places spirituality in the very center of the altruistic needs required for leadership research to continue its forward progression.

In a later study, Fry, Vitucci, and Cedillo (2005) reiterate Fry's earlier findings. They defined spiritual leadership theory as "developed within an intrinsic motivation model that incorporates vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love, theories of workplace spirituality, and

spiritual survival" (p. 837). Their research culminated in a methodology designed to establish a baseline for interventions and action plans for organizations. The results of their study provide stalwart support for the reliability and authority of spiritual leadership theory measures.

A total of 181 aviation squadron individuals completed the baseline survey. There were 189 respondents in the final demographic group. The surveys were content analyzed to validate the findings. The seven scales "exhibited adequate coefficient alpha reliabilities (p <.001) between .83 and .93" (p. 843). The researchers suggest further study on the role of organizational culture's effect on important personal outcomes.

There has historically been a disconnect between spirituality and leadership effectiveness. Reave (2005) reviewed over 150 studies to determine if such links exist. Her analytical study extracted spiritual teaching elements from leadership research. Her study results demonstrated clear "consistency between the values (in the sense of established ideals) and practices emphasized in many different spiritual teachings, and the values and practices of leaders who are able to motivate followers, inspire trust, and promote positive work relationships" (p. 656).

The key elements of integrity, humility, and honesty are found in both spiritual values and leadership success. One point of interest made in this study was that a leader must be ethical to be spiritual but the reverse is not true. This points to spirituality becoming important for future research in leader effectiveness.

One incentive to continue research in the field of spirituality is the distinct possibility of spiritual development being teachable. Dent, Higgins, and Wharff (2005) studied the essential factors and conditions to promote the theory of spiritual leadership and found "spiritual development in organizations can be enhanced by teaching, broadly defined" (p. 644). Organizations can facilitate trainings or spiritual retreats to help people progress through stages of spiritual development. They continue in their study to include how general human development lends itself to spiritual growth.

Many quantitative studies on the leadership component of spiritual leadership have been conducted but those on the aspect of spirituality have been much fewer. Benefiel (2005) dissects the literature to ascertain this area is an unaddressed challenge for researchers when leading organizational transformation through spiritual leadership. She states spiritual development is continually renewing,

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involving distinct stages that follow the shift of the spiritual core. The "second half of the journey" in Benefiel's research study title specifically refers to the leader attaining spiritual depth for the benefit of personal and individual transformation rather than to seek material gains.

Being a spiritual leader, with the understanding that the leader recognizes his/her spirituality and can articulate it, imparts the advantage of knowing how to advance to a deeper, more personal transformational level, which leads to getting the organization relativized to a higher purpose, acknowledging a greater sense of alignment with the transcendent, and creating new ways to make meaning emerge.

Does an increased personal "calling" or meaning predispose leaders to strong organizational commitment? According to Markow and Klenke (2005), personal meaning "derived from religion was not a significant predictor of calling, while personal meaning derived from self-transcendence was" (p. 15). The participants of this study were enrolled in an undergraduate college leadership class. A snowball sampling technique was used for survey distribution. Three survey instruments were used to create the survey. The regression analysis showed the correlation

between self-transcendent meaning and commitment was significant ($\beta$ =.52, p >.05).

This empirical study posits that meaning is directly related to calling, which mediates commitment to the organization. The greatest influence on sense of calling was commitment to purposes and ideals outside of themselves.

The variable of spirituality provided immeasurable capacity for leaders to help followers understand their role in the workplace because the contribution of their abilities held greater meaning and did not simply fill a void at the worksite. Markow and Klenke suggest spirituality may be the task of purposeful activity connecting through shared efforts of making meaning from what is done and why.

Dantley (2005) separates principled and purposive leadership from essentialist theology. He argues the need for critical spiritual conversation to question immoral practices that marginalize people, attempting to defrock them of simple humanity. Leaders can no longer afford to abandon the "power of inquiry, discovery and chaos" (p. 18) when considering how schools are reconstructed. It becomes necessary to establish being and meaning for all

participants in an educational setting through operating

from an ethic of care.

Spiritual leadership offers insight for studying

spirituality and the effects on stress management. Focusing

on leaders already designated as spiritual enhance the

proposed research study by providing examples of what

spirituality looks like in action and the possible results

of such actions.

*Theological Research on Spiritual Leadership*

Theological research must combine with secular

research to consider the importance of pertinent data from

the practitioner and academic perspectives. The idea of

forgoing religious research and theory in an area such as

spirituality is open neglect of information vital to the

topic. Most leaders in faith environments spend decades

learning about how theology affects people. To not tap into

that expertise would be remiss of a thorough researcher.

"All of life is a faith based initiative" (McAllister-

Wilson, 2002). Churches recognize the world is changing and

the leaders have to change with it. Leaders are required to

motivate the congregation to step out of the easy, flowing

mainstream and try something new. This path of change is

difficult for some. McAllister-Wilson suggests that in

order for our lives to count, we need to be a part of

something bigger than ourselves. He emphasizes "vision and a sense of mission as keys to success" (p. 219) when attempting to achieve a purposeful role.

The vitality of the Christian faith relies upon the sense of understanding and accomplishing the big vision. He also posits leaders understand results as the true measure of success through the means of reverse engineering, asking, "what would success look like to God" (p. 220). When the target established is spirituality, the vision and mission are the means to get there.

"Time may idealize historic figures, but upon closer inspection, failings among even the best leaders point to the need for a higher sense of leadership" (Reliable Leadership: Its Spiritual Source, 2007, p. 2). God is the foundation of reliable leadership. The flawed leaders' strategies arising to national levels promulgate the need to tap into a stronger and more resilient resource for leadership. This is suggested as easily attainable because God is accessible to everyone at any time. Looking to God can free a leader from doubt and inexperience simply by listening to what He has to say. "There's no leadership void when we accept God as our leader" (p. 5).

The issue of leadership appears to be a contentious one in both church and society. Mwaura (2006) states

Christians in Africa typically follow their religious

leaders more tenaciously than their political ones. She

states it should be pastoral "leadership that listens

carefully most of the time, frequently speaking with

encouragement and reinforcing words with believable action"

(p. 187).

Pastoral integrity, Mwaura's strongest conviction, is

defined as "that which holds a pastor up, enables a pastor

to hold out for what he or she believes and gives him or

her comfort to hold on to when things get rough" (p. 187).

More focus is required to create a visionary leadership to

lead Africa from the long-standing traditions no longer

relevant to the African congregations. Relevant theological

education drives the evolution of its own curriculum to

make the necessary changes.

Calvert (2005) defines three vital factors necessary

to become more heterogeneous within the church: language,

liturgy, and leadership.  He focuses on leadership by

detailing the importance of the choice of the leader. That

is the true test of the seriousness of the congregation to

move toward a migrant church with true diversity, both in

race and culture. He also emphasizes the people's need to

help make decisions for their own church in conjunction

with the immigrant leadership. "Now I have seen the rainbow

church" (p. 177) when leaders face the challenges to lead diverse congregations.

Following a leader requires more than knowing the direction and moving forward by adhering to the rules. Sometimes following a true leader requires some faith and trust that the followers will not be led astray. Having someone with new ideas lead down an unknown path can be scary. Alice Camille (2007) writes "fear claims our hearts when we contemplate change, but change is necessary for life and growth" (p. 40). She discusses the parable of Jesus providing fish for two boats of disciples in order to define the action of letting go of the security of what is known even if it isn't the best that can be done. The disciples had to just believe and follow without having a chance to consider whether or not this is what was desired. A parallel argument can be made for secular leaders as well. It isn't easy to acknowledge someone knows more or better.

The follower must trust the leader and knowingly accept the leader's guidance. To do so ensures movement and the elimination of stagnation. "No movement meant no transformation" (p. 40). No transformation, therefore, means no growth. No one in education, especially the leaders, can afford to accept that as truth.

This theological research supports the need for juxtaposition of spirituality and religion when dealing successfully with stress. Throughout the literature, similar needs and suggested directions exist. Leaders are called in both secular and theological venues to step ahead of the pack and gracefully provide a replicable example for the organization. The theological research supports the need for clear direction to enable leaders to better deal with the stressors associated with the 21st century.

*Chaos Theory*

Comprehending chaos theory and the resulting ramifications can be challenging. When spirituality is added, a calm understanding can take place. The existential beliefs and core values spirituality brings to the table may help leaders make sense of the chaos and move smoothly through transitions rather than fighting the changes.

"Chaos or complexity theory provides a means of retrospectively analyzing the processes involved in complex change" (Hannay, Smeltzer, & Ross, 2001). Chaos theory is often depicted as a butterfly, which causes a slight disturbance with its wings that ripple across the atmosphere to create an impact many layers away. Chaos theory allows us to understand, but not control the randomness (p. 272). This description causes panic for a

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leader who wishes to control and plan for the future. With fiscal repercussions due to the high accountability in the educational realm, the need to know where the organization is required to move is detrimental to the success of the leader and the students.

How do I help others find meaning in their lives? What are my values?  Are leaders strengthened by faith in a higher power?  Wheatley (2003) focuses on each of these questions in reference to the role of a leader. She states the need to move the domain of spirituality into leadership to combat the "unavoidable consequences of this time of turbulence" (p. 20). We as a people need to have meaning in our lives and know our purpose in being here. The science of chaos is not compelled to simply "explain chaos, but give us tools for controlling the chaos" (p. 20). Spirituality is just such a tool.

Whether we embark upon the quest for inner peace casually or unconsciously, feeling frustration when we fail at change is not atypical. Wheatley (2003) also connects courage to spiritual leadership, and states, "We do not develop courage from careful analysis or from strategic planning. We have to be engaged at the heart level to be courageous champions" (p. 24). In our need to make sense of the role we play in the big picture, we continually reflect

upon how successfully we achieve our measured benchmarks in the efforts to improve ourselves.

Chaos theory excites those pioneers researching spirituality. Bloch (2005) describes spirituality as the experience of nested inseparability or connectedness. Chaos theory adds that there are no existing living systems without interdependence.  Each system is connected and relies on all other connections to maintain growth and developmental change. Strange attractors are defined as "entity shapes that are neither linear nor contained" (p. 198) to form unique figures or fractals of the universe.

This emergence of a new entity may cause concern when leaders attempt to rationalize why or how things happen. Leaders often discount the odd occurrence because they cannot concretely explain how that occurrence made such an impact outside of simple luck. They keep the strange links between events to themselves. "They believe that others make career decisions based on logical links of past experience and that others expect this logic of them as well, but that is not what most people experience" (p. 198).

When leaders allow themselves the opportunity to emerge in a form quite different from the previous norm, they allow themselves the chance to create a "sense of

satisfaction, flow, and even joy" (p. 200). A personal strange attractor can take many shapes and often presents itself through spirit and consciousness while taking into account the elusive molecules of the essence of each individual.

One bifurcation of Chaos Theory invokes the idea of the archetype, which loosely translates into an inherited memory represented in the mind by a universal symbol, mobilizing "experiences in the world through its instinctual project and that and in so far as these experiences are sufficiently satisfactory, they enable the representation of the archetypal energy which has thus been mobilized" (Martin-Vallas, 2005, p. 287). A simple way to describe this process is to meet a sufficient satisfaction of needs in order to have the experience, which then becomes the representation. A "minute variation in the conditions of the system" can have expansive ripple effects (p. 291).

Martin-Vallas continues to report that human beings cannot be lessened to a "causal and predetermined model" (p. 291). When determining action that takes place to start emergence, spirituality can become the flutter of air from the butterfly's wings to start the chain reaction felt around the world. Spirituality may also add depth to the

archetypes already in the human mind by serving as the strange attractor or the one unpredictable action that sets all motion forward.

Richards (2001) agrees through the chaos theory that human beings are ever changing through the subconscious and conscious taking in of emergent new order. She suggests people live more open, less guarding of self, and more creative lifestyles, seeking new ways to understand life around us to willingly accept the bifurcations life may offer.

Shifting organizational relationship paradigms from Newton to chaos (Tetenbaum, 1998) causes alarm for the educational leader. Tetenbaum notes the six characteristics of the 21$^{st}$ century organization as technology, globalization, competition, change, speed, and complexity and paradox. Chaos theory perpetuates endless feedback loops that establish the patterns of behavior in any given system. The dimensions of a culture of chaos include knowledge and information sharing, innovation and creativity, teamwork and project orientation, diversity, and strong core values (p.27-28). Do these same dimensions follow through with spirituality?

Chaos theory fits with spirituality on the level of knowing chaos exists in today's world as the future for

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change. Do they also coexist as a means of spirituality guiding chaos under the guise of core values? "Values allow for coordination without control and for experimentation and adaptation without lawlessness" (p. 29).

Knowing that chaos theory operates using conflict, necessary for creativity and change, the role of the leader/manager is to weave spirituality, through the core values, into the changes found within the institutions, without allowing the conflict to create anarchy. Are the values known to be the core of the chaos theory the center of spirituality as well? Spirituality, if for no other reason, serves a distinct purpose in the chaos theory by providing individuals with an internal calm to aid in increasing resilience as we, both as leaders and human beings, attempt to maintain deliberate control over our lives and futures.

*Spiritual Cultivation*

Studying spiritual cultivation was quite possibly the most important body of literature for the current study. Spiritual cultivation is the application and teaching of spirituality in the individual and societal realms. Even if the study showed significance between spirituality and a smoother approach when dealing with stress, the information does little if we cannot apply it.

Dent, Higgins, and Wharff (2005) note that spirituality and spiritual leadership may be veracious only in a select set of circumstances. Their study revealed "limited scholarship linking religion with leadership" (p. 642). Most of the articles reviewed by the researchers did not see epiphanies as the core flow for the development of spirituality. Gender is not discussed or reviewed throughout the study. One strong point of interest found in this study is the theory that spiritual development can be taught. It is suggested that future studies focus on isolating organizations that use spiritual development courses and how those courses affect leadership practices and behaviors.

One such group of institutions embodies the ideals and the means to teach not only the main body of text for the profession but also the formation of responsible men and women of integrity "who are trusted to use their knowledge and skills in the responsible service of others" (Shulman, 2006, p. 30.). Seminary educators focus on four main bodies of pedagogy: interpretation, formation, contextualization, and performance. Through these four pedagogies, they teach the common goal of "learning for both deep cognitive understanding and the development of character, identity, and moral sensibilities" (p. 30).

This study uniquely challenged the experienced researchers due to their belief that the nurturing of our spiritual development underscores all other higher forms of learning. It is with this idea in mind that the need for spiritual research is emphasized.

The confusion in the spiritual development debate is covered quite comprehensively by Meehan (2002) in his attempt to distinguish between spiritual development, which denotes an "educational aim relevant for all, concerned with sensitizing students to issues at the heart and root of human existence", versus developing spirituality, which is defined as a "catechetical aim, concerned with nurturing the beliefs, values, behavior and practices of a Christian faith" (p. 304). Meehan (2002) states being religious and being spiritual are not synonymous. He recognizes that one can be spiritual without being religious, with the reverse also being true.

Dent, Higgins, and Wharff (2005) point out that much of an organization's spirituality can be affected through teaching. This would indicate that a proactive plan for training and in-servicing to enhance spirituality and broaden the general understanding of spirituality, as it truly exists is both necessary and meaningful. This study, however, does not address the relative ability or

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practicality of teaching spirituality as a curriculum or
conceptual ideology.

Groen (2001) agrees that spirituality-infused
organizations have people with "a sense of vocation and
passion about their work" (p. 21). Spiritual organizations
establish a workplace culture that encourages creativity
and risk taking while articulating values that are "infused
in its operational and decision making practices" (p.20).
Groen (2001) continues to describe that individual and
group participation is central to a supportive workplace
context. She stresses in her study that spirituality
addresses all dimensions of an organization's connections
with teaching personal leadership.

Resistance to open oration about spirituality may be
ameliorated through a spiritual lifemap. Hodge (2005)
defines spirituality as an "existential relationship with
God that fosters a sense of meaning, purpose, and mission
in life" (p.77). A spiritual lifemap depicts the
delineation of an individual's spiritual passage, which may
concretize a leader's extant strengths. It may also be used
simply to provide insight into a leader's spirituality.

Facilitating spiritual development through informal
learning strategies contributes to the dynamics of adult
learning (English, 2000). The analyzed component of

authentic spiritual development that most interests this author is the care, concern, and outreach to others. Directly related to leadership is the idea that a "fully integrated spiritual person reaches beyond his or her self and acknowledges the interdependence of all of creation, appreciates the uniqueness of others, and ultimately assumes responsibility for caring and being concerned about other humans and the natural order" (p. 30).

English (2000) also suggests the importance reciprocity plays in adult interactions through collaboration or mentoring. She suggests the goal of "achieving self-actualization" is of top concern for fostering "shared commitment for the common good" (p. 36). As leaders, we must, in all good conscience, continue to increase our feedback loop of mutual information sharing with all stakeholders involved in the process.

Advances in the conceptualization of spirituality linked to health are becoming more and more important as research establishes a correlation between spirituality and health. Hill and Pargament (2003) highlight recent studies that functionally connect spirituality with health. They recognize the role that the sacred plays as the "common denominator of religious and spiritual life" (p. 65). The goal of the researchers is to measure how the sacred helps

to chart the pathways that people take. Their results suggest that spiritual difficulties can be linked to both positive and negative health effects.

Interestingly, they also point out the importance of greater sensitivity to cultural characteristics (p. 70), which is often not considered in the research. Although they are their own most frequent citation, Hill and Pargament (2003) establish a very clear picture of the available research and the direction in which it needs to move.

Acknowledging that spirituality "is the force through which all people are connected, the great force that no one can completely understand even though most people recognize it in their lives in some form" (Houston & Sokolow, 2006, p. xxiv) means the world of leaders then needs to establish what needs to be done with the information. Leaders focus on how they connect with others in order to maintain effectiveness and growth in their organizations through studies on stressors, gender challenges, spiritual health, roles in leadership, balancing responsibilities, the use of transcendence, ethical leadership, chaos theory, and spiritual cultivation. Studying how spirituality links this ability to manage stress with overall happiness at work

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during the connections may lead to more efficient and

satisfied leaders and followers.

The ability to teach spirituality in a way that

increases an individual's quality of life is paramount to

current research. Leaders not only need to discern how

spirituality affects daily vocations but are also compelled

to look to the research to share the teachable points when

proactively using the information. What good comes of

knowing the importance of spirituality if the practical

application is not known?

*Summary*

The literature review for this study on spirituality

to understand its role when coping with stress covers many

bodies of research. The purpose of this chapter is to lay

the groundwork for the study. Considerable research exists

for spirituality, stress, and leadership in isolation.

However, the correlation between the three variables is

elusive. This study complements the current research body

on spiritual leadership and stress and provides new insight

into how spirituality can support leaders and others during

times of duress.

Chapter 3 defines the research design, data gathering

and compiling procedures, method of evaluation,

instruments, and participants. Each section is explicitly

described to identify the purpose and rationale of use.

Chapter 3

*Introduction*

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between spirituality and the ability to cope as an educational leader. The role gender plays was also analyzed to determine any differences within that variable. A goal of this study was to determine whether spirituality affects how leaders cope with stress at work and if the results vary by gender. Spirituality provides another avenue for leadership effectiveness. An additional goal of this research was to ascertain if this additional pathway helps leaders refine or redefine how to maintain an internal balance in such a strife driven world of work. Spirituality, rather than religion, will open this up much more as we become more religiously, culturally, and ethnically diverse.

*Sampling Procedure*

This study was conducted in central Pennsylvania covering schools in three counties. Because of the distribution of the target population for this study, the sample was chosen by systematic random sampling from the local intermediate unit administration list. To ensure equal representation of male and female participants in the

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final sample, the target population of school

administrators was stratified according to gender.

Systematic random sampling was then conducted within each

strata by choosing every third name on the list. In the

event that an administrator could not participate, the next

name on the list was used. The process continued until a

minimum of 60-100 participants was selected, with each

gender represented equally. Because of the demographics of

administration in this region, the sample was not

ethnically diverse.  Hence, results are not generalizable

to populations outside of this area.

    The participants were selected through membership in

local intermediate unit consortia in Pennsylvania. The

selected sample received a letter stating the research area

of need and a description of this particular study. The

letter included information about participation being

voluntary. No exclusion criteria were used. Two copies of

the voluntary consent letter included the name and contact

information of the investigator, the purpose of the

research, the duration of the participation required, the

procedures to be followed in completing the survey, and any

risks involved in the study, which are not any greater than

those encountered in everyday life.

*Participants*

Executive leaders in both the public and private educational sector ranging in age from 39 to age 65 participated in the study. The sample was composed of a mix of women and men, the majority of participants were Caucasian. The participants selected were college graduates with at least 12 years of experience in education.

All of the executive leader participants had similar leadership roles with an organizational responsibility for decision-making and subordinates that report directly to them. Specific religious denomination, if any, was unknown.

Any benefits were articulated with a notice that no alternative will be offered to this study or methodology. Confidentiality was explained in full. Participants had the right to withdraw at any time and were under no obligation to finish the study. The letter ended with the request of signatures from the participant and the investigator. One copy was signed and returned and the other copy was retained by the participant.

It is believed this sample provided an accurate representation of the population of educational leaders in central Pennsylvania.

*Research Questions*

This study assessed the impact and implications of how effectively spirituality predicts the ability to deal with stress as a leader and to what degree the prediction results vary according to gender. The specific research questions that this study answered are:

(a)  Is there a statistically significant correlation between spirituality and the ability to cope with stressors as an educational leader?

(b)  Is there a difference between men's ability to cope with stress and spirituality and women's ability to cope with stress and spirituality?

*Hypotheses*

Based on the above research question, the research hypotheses postulated in this study were:

(a)  There is a statistically significant relationship between the ability to cope with stress and spirituality.

(b)  There is a difference between men's ability to cope with stress and spirituality and women's ability to cope with stress and spirituality.

*Measures*

Participants initially filled out a demographics section on the survey protocols. The information requested include gender, age, race/ethnicity, and education. They were presented with three separate surveys to be completed individually. The three instruments were the Interpersonal Conflict at Work Scale, the Satisfaction With Life Scale, and the Spiritual Well Being Scale.

The total investment of time for each participant was less than 20 minutes. Participants were assigned an indiscriminate code number known only to the researcher collecting the data and are maintained in the researcher's home.

*ICAWS.*

The Interpersonal Conflict at Work Scale (ICAWS) was designed to be widely applicable across organizations to assess interpersonal conflicts as well as stress and to be easily administered and scored. The questionnaire contains a Likert-type format of 4 items. Each question asks the respondent to rate the frequency from a 1 (being the least often) to a 5 (signifying the most often). High scores represent difficulties with coworkers.

Spector and Jex (1998), focusing on psychometric properties through a meta-analysis, noted the nominological

validity confirmed expectations from prior stress research.

The ICAWS assesses meaningful constructs (p. 10). The

instrument has high internal consistency reliability and is

reported to average .74 across 13 studies. The ICAWS was

normed with n=3363.

   *SWLS.*

   The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) was designed

to assess global life satisfaction without crossing the

line into related constructs. The questionnaire contains a

Likert-type format of 5 items. Each question asks the

respondent to rate the frequency of the stated occurrence

from a 1 (being the least often) to a 5 (signifying the

most often).  A factor analysis from previous studies

revealed a single factor model. A two-month test-retest for

reliability for the SWLS was 0.82 (Diener et al., 1985) and

internal consistency of 0.87 (Dorahy, Lewis, Schumaker,

Akuamoah-Boateng, Duze, & Sibiya, 1998). The SWLS has high

temporal reliability. Pavot and Diener (1993) note the

discriminant validity of the SWLS that separates this scale

from emotional well-being scales. The items are global,

allowing the respondents to temper their answers through

personal values.  "Participants include criteria from

conscious evaluative judgment when responding to the items

(p. 164)." "The SWLS demonstrates adequate convergence with

related measures, including measures using a different

methodological approach (p. 167)."

*SWBS.*

The Spirituality Well-Being Scale (SWBS) is used to

measure the participants satisfying relationship with God

not based on specific ideological or specific religion. The

SWBS was developed by social psychologists, Dr. Ellison and

Dr. Paloutzian. This twenty-item measure was presented at

the American Psychological Association in 1979 and was

first published in 1982. The SWBS has been completed by

thousands of people in research, education, clinics,

hospitals, and religious settings. The SWBS consists of two

subscales: Existential Well-Being (EWB), which pertains to

a sense of life satisfaction and purpose with no religious

reference, and Religious Well-Being (RWB), which describes

one's sense of well-being in relation to a God Fee and

Ingram (2004).

Each subscale has 10 items that range in responses

from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). Higher

scores will indicate a more extensive spiritual well-being.

Test-retest reliability coefficients were .86 for the EWB

subscale, .93 for the SWB, and .96 for the RWB subscale.

Alpha coefficients of .89 for the SWB, .87 for the RWB, and

.78 for EWB, reflect internal consistency. Positive

correlations with other measures of spirituality, such as the Spirituality Index of Well-Being (r=.62, p<.001) (Daaleman & Frey, 2004), indicate evidence for construct validity.

*Assumptions*

It was assumed that participants honestly and openly completed the surveys. As with many self-reported instruments, the participants might have been unable or unwilling to objectively complete the surveys in a way that defines who they are now rather than who they wish to be. The researcher attempted to balance this possibility through a narrow and unambiguous set of definitions for terminology found within the surveys.

It is also assumed that the participants were able to read and comprehend the questions on the surveys.

*Procedures for Data Collection*

Each participant was given a copy of three surveys: the Interpersonal Conflict at Work Scale, Satisfaction with Life Scale, and the Spirituality Well-being Scale. The instructions were clearly stated in the cover letter with the informed consent. Participants were mailed the individual surveys, with specific directions to be followed, and asked to complete the surveys and return the surveys in the self-addressed, stamped envelopes provided

in the original mailing. A second self-addressed, stamped
envelope was provided to separately mail the consent form
and a request for a copy of the study information, which
would allow total anonymity of the participants upon return
of the survey instruments. All participants were treated as
dictated by APA ethical standards. Before beginning the
study Duquesne University's Institutional Review Board
approved the study.

*Data Collection*

The three survey instruments were mailed to the
participants. A self-addressed stamped envelope was
included to return the surveys. The participants were given
a two-week window in which to complete the surveys. At the
end of the two-week period, a reminder was sent to
encourage a high percent of participation.

*Limitations*

It was assumed that the sample participants would
properly follow the instructions when completing the
surveys. There were, however, some limitations to this
study. Since the leaders were operating within a wide range
of spiritual backgrounds in diverse organizations, there
were various factors that could affect the levels of
spirituality other than those being examined in this study.
A spiritual "snapshot" may not have the depth needed to

properly ascertain true significance of how spirituality

affects a leader's coping abilities. This study used a

relatively small population sample gathered from a limited

regional demographic area.

*Data Analysis*

The researcher scored all surveys by hand. The data

were then analyzed through the use of Statistical Package

for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This researcher analyzed

themes brought about by the composite of information

collected from the participants. The quantitative data was

summarized, with no individual responses demarcated.

Individual names and school districts did not appear on any

survey. The data was stored in a locked filing cabinet in

the home office of the researcher. The surveys will be

stored for five years and then destroyed by the researcher

and one witness.

Correlations were generated to determine if those

leaders with a higher sense of spirituality describe a

significantly amplified life satisfaction and happiness.

The Pearson correlation measures the degree and direction

of the linear relationships between two variables

(Gravetter & Wallnau, 2004). A simple regression analysis

was also completed to determine any predictability between

the variables. The interrelations of the variables of

spirituality, life satisfaction, and interpersonal conflict at work were examined to determine significant negative or positive correlations. Religious well-being and existential well-being scales were bifurcated for analysis.

To compare differences based on gender, an independent t-test was performed. A t-test determined if the means of two corresponding population distributions (males and females) differ significantly from one another (George & Mallery, 2005).

Chapter 4

*Introduction*

Chapter 1 supplied an overview of the necessity of the research that took into account the problem and research questions. This overview described the researcher's intent to discover new insight into the connection between spiritual leadership and stress and recognize how spirituality can support leaders and others during times of duress.

The body of literature in Chapter 2 proposed the existence of the need for further study to unite spirituality and life satisfaction in a relationship that stresses the urgency of one helping to define the other. Strong indicators were also present to specify why adding the component of gender was significant to the study. Chapter 3 presented the methodology and research design used in the study including sampling procedures.

This chapter presents of the statistical analysis to answer the research questions posed in this study. The results are presented according to the research questions.

*Analysis of Data*

Pearson correlations were obtained to determine the relationship between spirituality, life satisfaction, and

happiness. The Pearson correlation measures the degree and direction of the linear relationships between two variables (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2004). Simple regression analysis was also performed to determine any predictability between the variables. Religious well-being and existential well-being scales were bifurcated for analysis.

The composite survey was distributed to executive educational leaders in the south central region of Pennsylvania. Each composite survey was reviewed by hand and the data entered into SPSS statistical software for analysis. Sixty participants returned surveys, which accounts for 63.7% of the total number of surveys sent.

The primary objective for this quantitative research study was directed by the following research questions:

(a) Is there a statistically significant correlation between spirituality and the ability to cope with stressors as an educational leader?

(b) Is there a difference in the level of statistical significance between men's ability to cope with stress and spirituality and women's ability to cope with stress and spirituality?

The following hypotheses structured the study:

(a) There is a statistically significant relationship

between the ability to cope with stress and

spirituality.

(c) There is a difference in the level of statistical

significance between men's ability to cope with

stress and spirituality and women's ability to

cope with stress and spirituality.

*Results for Research Question A*

The initial set of analyses examined the relationship

between life satisfaction and the existential component of

spirituality.  The Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS) is

composed of two distinct subscales.

The Existential Well-Being (EWB) subscale included the

even numbered items on the 20-item scale. The questions did

not refer to any specific religious contexts, instead,

dealing with life issues, such as life satisfaction and

direction.

The Religious Well-Being (RWB) subscale questions

encompassed the odd numbered items and contain the word

"God". Approximately one-half of the items are worded in

the negative to help control for bias in the responses. The

responses were summed for each subscale and then the total

SWBS was summed for analysis.

Direction was not firmly known. Therefore, the test of significance was two-tailed. The Pearson correlation analysis (Table 3) showed significant correlation (r=.555, p<.001) between the EWB and the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS), which indicates a strong relationship between the two variables.

This means participants with an increase in their existential well-being had increased life-satisfaction. However, this does not indicate that one variable causes the other. It can be argued that the direction of causality could be likely but it does remain open to interpretation because this was not a controlled experiment.

Table 3

*Pearson Correlation EWB and SWLS*

|  |  | SWLS | EWS |
|---|---|---|---|
| SWLS | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .555** |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) |  | .000 |
|  | N | 65 | 65 |
| EWB | Pearson Correlation | .555** | 1 |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |  |
|  | N | 65 | 65 |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

The correlation (Table 4) between EWB and SWLS also was

significant (r=.524, p<.001). The significance was two-

tailed.


Table 4

*Correlation between EWB and SWLS*

| Spearman's Rho | | SWLS | EWS |
|---|---|---|---|
| SWLS | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .524** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 65 | 65 |
| EWB | Correlation Coefficient | .524** | 1.000 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 65 | 65 |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.


Knowing that the EWS was one subscale of the total

spirituality scale, another set of analyses was completed

for the RWS. The Pearson correlation examining the

association between SWLS and RWB (Table 5) did not show

significance at r=.116.

Correlations were also obtained for the Interpersonal

Conflict at Work Scale (ICWS) with both the EWB and SWB.

The Pearson correlation was not significant between ICWS

and EWB (r=-.140, p<.05) and between ICWS and RWB (r=.087,

p<.05).

Table 5

*Correlation between RWB and SWLS*

|  |  | SWLS | RWB |
|---|---|---|---|
| SWLS | Correlation Coefficient | 1 | .116 |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) |  | .356 |
|  | N | 65 | 65 |
| RWB | Correlation Coefficient | .116 | 1 |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) | .356 |  |
|  | N | 65 | 65 |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 6

*Correlation between SWLS and RWB*

| Spearman's Rho |  | SWLS | RWB |
|---|---|---|---|
| SWLS | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .255* |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) |  | .040 |
|  | N | 65 | 65 |
| RWB | Correlation Coefficient | .255* | 1.000 |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) | .040 |  |
|  | N | 65 | 65 |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

*Regression Analysis*

In an attempt to predict life satisfaction from the spirituality score, simple regression analysis (Table 7) was performed for SWLS and EWB. Regression helps define the

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one-to-one relationship between each spirituality value and its corresponding life-satisfaction value.

The dependent (criterion) variable was life-satisfaction. The independent (predictor) variable was existentialism. The results were significant (R=.555, p<.05) which measures the strength of the relationship. The $R^2$ was .30, which means that about 30% of the variance in life satisfaction was explained by existentialism.

When given the information about existentialism, we then have clues about the characteristics of life-satisfaction. This indicates that spirituality explains 30.8% of the life-satisfaction in the participants.

Table 7

*Regression Analysis for EWB and SWLS*

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .555(a) | .308 | .297 | .76574 |

Predictors: (Constant), EWB

The relationship between existentialism and life satisfaction was displayed visually using a scatterplot. The scatterplot is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

*Scatterplot Regression EWB and SWLS*
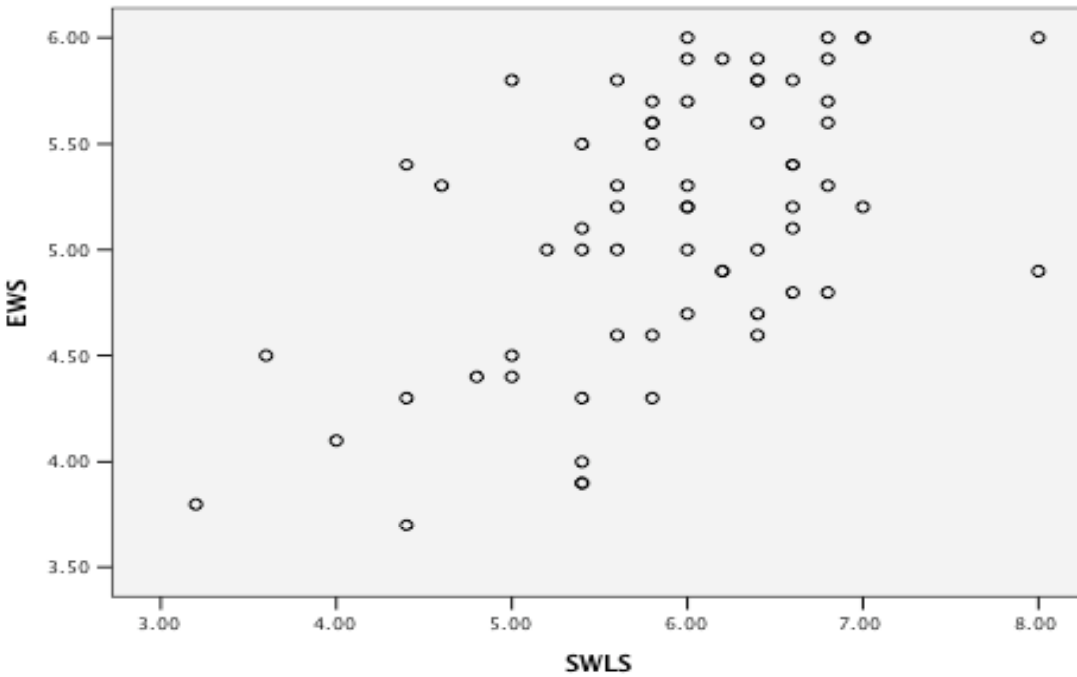


*Results for Research Question B*

To compare differences due to gender, an independent *t* test was performed. A *t* test determines if the means of two corresponding population distributions differ significantly from one another (George & Mallery, 2005). The results in Table 8 showed no significant differences between genders on each of the measures.

Table 8

*T Test for Gender Comparison*

| | Sex | N | Mean | T | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ICAWS | male | 36 | 1.4 | .35 | .50 | .08 |
| | female | 29 | 1.4 | | .47 | .09 |
| EWB | male | 36 | 5.3 | 1.9 | .63 | .11 |
| | female | 29 | 5.0 | | .60 | .11 |
| RWB | male | 36 | 4.8 | -.14 | 1.2 | .19 |
| | female | 29 | 4.8 | | .93 | .17 |
| SWB | male | 36 | 5.0 | .75 | .75 | .12 |
| | female | 29 | 4.9 | | .64 | .12 |
| SWLS | male | 36 | 6.0 | .67 | .76 | .13 |
| | female | 29 | 5.8 | | 1.1 | .20 |

*Summary*

Data were analyzed using correlation analysis, regression analysis, and an independent *t* test. The data analyses were conducted for 65 executive educational leaders in south central Pennsylvania.

Results showed that there is no relationship between ICAWS and SWBS.  Also, there were no differences in these measures based on gender. However, results showed a significant relationship between the ability to cope with stress and spirituality. The regression analysis supports

these findings as well because the results for regression analysis showed that about 30% of the variance in life satisfaction is explained by existentialism.

Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the findings, practical implications, and recommendations to current educational leaders and for future study.

Chapter 5

*Introduction*

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between spirituality and the ability to cope as an educational leader. The role gender plays was also analyzed to determine any differences within that variable. An additional goal of this research was to ascertain if this additional pathway helps leaders refine or redefine how to maintain an internal balance in such a strife driven world of work. Spirituality, rather than specific religions related to a god, opens this opportunity more as we become more religiously, culturally, and ethnically diverse.

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the degree of the relationship between spirituality and the ability to cope with stress as measured through conflict at work and life satisfaction. Three types of statistical analysis were conducted: Pearson correlations, simple regressions, and independent $t$ tests.

This final chapter creates the solid foundation by summarizing the findings of this study and linking them to previously reviewed literature, the methodological approach of this study, and other factors that played a role in the results of this study.

This chapter also brings closure to the data

collection and findings of the study by interpreting the results, identifying educational benefits for the organization, benefits to the individual leader, and making recommendations for future studies in the areas of spirituality, gender, and coping.

There are copious spirituality studies.  However, studies that combine spirituality with stress as accrued by conflict at work and a lack of life satisfaction are scarce. New research studies would benefit educational organizations by examining influential factors regarding coping and satisfaction.

*Conclusions*

In this study, the small sample size could have attributed to the non-significant findings from the gender analysis using a *t* test. The study also took place in a relatively small region in south central Pennsylvania.  All participants were white. These non-significant findings could suggest one of a few possibilities; the hypothesis stating that there is a difference between men's ability to cope with stress and spirituality and women's ability to cope with stress and spirituality was wrong and there is no significance to the relationship; or the sample sizes, when split between gender, were too small.

Despite the findings that there was no statistical significance for gender status in this study, the continued research to identify other influential factors is important, as evidenced in the earlier literature review.

There were some limitations to this study. Since the leaders were operating within a wide range of spiritual backgrounds in diverse organizations, there were various factors that could affect the levels of spirituality other than those being examined in this study.

One participant actually wrote on the survey that he was an atheist and therefore, some of the questions did not apply. A spiritual "snapshot" may not have the depth needed to properly ascertain true significance of how spirituality affects a leader's coping abilities. This study used a relatively small population sample gathered from a limited regional demographic area.

*Recommendations*

This particular study on spirituality leads to many important questions to consider. When focusing on spirituality, is it necessary for the leader to be conscious of his or her individual spirituality? If the spirituality exists in a leader, yet hasn't been given space or time to grow, is the spirituality any less significant in the life of the leader or do leaders follow

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the spirituality innately as they make decisions or create

a life path for themselves? "Spirituality is the unseen

force that is both part of humankind and at the same time

greater than humankind.  It's the force through which all

people are connected, the great force that no one can

completely understand even though most people recognize it

in their lives in some form (Houston & Sokolow, 2006, p.

xxiv)."

Another very evocative point is whether or not

spirituality can be taught and learned. Is it possible to

teach spirituality from a basic level of information or can

we only enhance or bring to consciousness the spirituality

we already possess? We are drawn back to the question of

whether it is possible to live the art without fully

understanding the science. However, in order for growth and

progress to occur, a clear picture of the starting point is

needed to graph the direction and effort required to

understand what is necessary to accomplish the goal.

Might a leader's spirituality be the strange attractor

that attracts and creates beauty from chaos? "It is chaos'

great destructive energy that dissolves the past and gives

us the gift of a new future.  It releases us from the

imprisoning patterns of the past by offering us its wild

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ride into newness.  Only chaos creates the abyss in which we can recreate ourselves" (Wheatley, 2006, p. 119).

Chaos wasn't specifically parceled out as a variable in the study.  However, the far-reaching ramifications of chaos are worth further investigation. The study of chaos theory as it relates to leaders will provide understanding about not only the specific functions of chaos but the real need for universal change in organizations and natural systems.  Although the SWB had specific questions about existentialism, the connection wasn't clean enough to ascertain if chaos theory plays a significant part in the study results. The existentialism questions converged to establish the perceived meaning and purpose of the lives of each leader through spirituality. Examples of such questions are "I don't know who I am, where I come from, or where I am going" and "I feel that life is a positive experience".

Spiritual strengths empower the leader by promoting understanding of the processes of relationships between and during seemingly chaotic changes in life. Chaos then defines these relationship interactions and connects the essential elements necessary to learn from and about each change or reciprocal action. It becomes the responsibility of the leader to understand, without fear or reservation,

the relationships of the changes that occurred in order to allow the organization and natural system to evolve. Understanding the relationships of the outwardly chaotic action is much more important than understanding the results of such actions.

Palmer (2007) defines the new professional as "a person who is not only competent in his or her discipline but has the skill and the will to deal with the institutional pathologies that threaten the profession's highest standards" (p. 3). Leaders need to call upon their inner light, which creates more humane leaders who acknowledge and are accountable for their own shadows or failings. New professionals are "moral agents with the power to challenge and change the institution" (p. 3).

The ability to deliberately measure the effects of chaos as captured through the strange attractor is not found within the survey instruments used in this study. Fry (2003) and Wheatley (2006) suggest the presence of an underlying energy that leaders attract and share through words and actions. The overt thoughts and behaviors of leaders may be measured but there is no instrument currently designed to measure the capacity of a leader when understanding and accessing energy as a strange attractor. It seems necessary, therefore, to create such an instrument

to measure not only the energy but also the outcomes or patterns of the energy's movements and direction.

It may be possible to create such an instrument through questions that probe the leader's introspection and understandings of spiritual factors that consistently and pervasively connect all people. An example question may address the proactive behaviors explored for spiritual growth on an individual and personal level. Leaders must first be aware of the need before they can allow the growth.

Women, through internal strength and wisdom promulgated by focused relations between and among one another, may serve as a strange attractor when creating the defining pattern of beauty. Blackburn, Martin, & Hutchinson (2006) examined the impact of conflict management styles and suggest a stronger focus on gender to better understand and apply the strengths found in female principals. Nelson and Burke (2000) show how women consistently impart epic efforts in order to achieve success equal to the success of a man with comparable years of experience out of sheer necessity. It may be the introspection and deliberate intention of women that afford the draw of energy required to be a strange attractor.

Is it possible that women, simply by their need to assimilate disparate roles in life, are more willing to open themselves, through conscious thought and behavior, to grow and analyze the chaos that establishes the pattern for a strange attractor? Houston and Sokolow (2006) believe that "a thought creates a force of energy that immediately goes beyond your head and out into the world at large. The moment you create thought, you create potential action. When you create a thought, that thought immediately leaves your being and goes out into the universe, where it has the potential to start manifesting itself in activities and result" (p.4). Because of the many challenges women face in the leadership realm, they have the need to possess an internal strength that enables them to face the fear of change/chaos and proactively accept this change while also establishing how to share this newfound energy with those around them. This researcher believes women share their energy both deliberately, through predetermination, and without conscious effort at the natural level of chaos capacity empowerment. "There is swirling energy in our words and in the very vision of our actions" (Sobehart, in press). Vygotsky (1986) supports the connection of deliberate language to human consciousness by describing

the interplay of thoughts and words as they reflect

reality.

The results of this study showed women do believe that

one's life should have meaning and they expressed the need

for purpose and making a true difference. It seems logical

that women would seek the means to make this happen. The

lack of women mentors and organizational networking does

not negate the personal networking and support systems

established between women when developing meaning and

purpose. The culture, core values, and ethical systems of

organizations established by women leaders should be

analyzed to determine the level of spirituality combined

with the energy of chaos theory to ascertain any present

significance. This issue requires further investigation

through additional studies.

With these theories in mind, it is plausible that

there would be a significant difference in leaders who

understand chaos capacity empowerment and leaders who are

chaos capacity impoverished. Chaos capacity impoverished

means the leader is unable or unwilling to recognize the

connections of energy made through relationships among

individuals and organizations. It is suggested by this

study that further research on how chaos theory applies to

women, especially leaders, through the ability to

understand and embrace chaos is necessary.

It will be a great challenge to tease out the effects

of chaos on spiritual and leadership capacities in women.

The results, however, may be paramount when helping women

understand that stress is not something tangible or without

relief. Stress is instead something that women impose upon

themselves through societal and personal perceptions of

expectations and roles. Chaos theory and spirituality woven

through leadership may allow women the opportunity to seize

change as a vital opportunity presented for personal growth

rather than random challenges they cannot overcome.

For a flower to grow, it must change. For a child to

grow, he/she must change. Chaos magnifies the changes of

the flower and child to show the invisible and indelible

connections between the two. These hidden associations

propel all factions together into a synergistic community.

We as a people need to have meaning in our lives and know

our purpose in being here. The science of chaos is not

compelled to simply "explain chaos, but give us tools for

controlling the chaos" (Wheatley, 2006, p. 20).  The

results of this study do show a lack of life satisfaction

when spirituality is absent. Therefore, conscious

spirituality can combine with capacity to create a strong

antidote to the fear organisms face with perceived chaos under the guise of change.

Self-knowledge is paramount when considering how spirituality is applied during stressful times. Self-knowledge helps underline and cognize personal priorities, and promotes understanding between eustress and distress on body and mind.

The survey questions on conflict at work also find direction in chaos theory. Daily hassles through direct contact with others at work play a more important role in life stressors than major life actions possibly due to the continuation of multiple micro-connections at the quantum level versus the rare occasion of grand scale events.

It is this chaos capacity empowerment that allows leaders to embrace spiritual health, cognizance, and capacity. Leaders need to form campaigns to prevent stress through chaos theory versus coping with stress after the fact.

Does the pull of commitment to purpose and ideals outside of us that relate meaning to calling supercede the dynamics of the feedback and interpersonal influence of others over the leader? "Participation in a wisdom journey requires you to believe that the powers of the universe are not only on our side but also within you. You must feel

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deeply that passion is your genuine life force and ecstasy is your inheritance. You deserve all that you will allow yourself to feel" (James, 1997, p. 28). The original premise of the wisdom journey was foreshadowed by Hildegard of Bingen, who is renowned to be the first feminist (Sobehart, in press).

Sobehart posits on the journey of wisdom through the thoughts and writings of Hildegard by focusing on the time Hildegard spent in an anchorage as a spiritual teacher. Hildegard wrote about feminism and the transcendent spirit. "While we assume she was referring to the green things of the earth, her works imply that we might also use other people, including men, to flourish. She combined both theological and feminist conceptions to bring an understanding of gender and women's ways of knowing to a level far beyond typical discourse" (in press).

An increase in gender research studies could determine how educational leaders might create a better working environment for all members of the organization. It may also provide the tools necessary for longevity in the field of educational administration by helping to level the playing field for women executive leaders.

*Summary*

In contemplating stress interventions for the place of work, the findings of this study strongly support the need to change how leaders view what supports are available and how to use them. "One obstacle to responsiveness is the lack of empirically based guidelines identifying which situations increase risk of stress and role strain and which supports reduce vulnerability" (Home, 1997).

Learning more about coping with stress through a deeper capacity for chaos theory will provide leaders with a pattern to ascertain which perceptions of stress and change are desirable to own (Wheatley, 2006). Leaders with chaos capacity impoverishment will require explicit education to advance empowering progress. The initial step is a survey tool that specifically measures the leaders' capacity for chaos and change. This will enable leaders to establish filters for consciousness and personal precedence. It is important to understand if spirituality serves as a strange attractor or supplies a means to study archetype. Archetype, as an inherited memory, represents a universal symbol in the mind that may aid in the study of spirituality by focusing on what is already instinctually known but not yet consciously developed.

Flurie (2006) focused on the inspirational stage of leadership, which is located between the transformational

and transcendental stages of leadership.  He states "the
stimulus or inspiration that leads the individual to look
beyond transformative leadership behavior and beliefs to
application of the higher spirituality or faith based
leadership behavior of the transcendental leader" (p. 99)
is the inspirational stage, which defines interpersonal
connectedness through service orientation, moral
recognition, legacy development, strong self-efficacy, and
contributor control. Inspirational leaders view themselves
as coaches, elevating the individuals in the organization
in order to meet the "altruistic needs of one's soul and
spirit" (p. 100).

Possible questions for future research are:

1. Can an instrument be created to accurately
reflect the chaos capacity of a woman when
functioning at the fundamental energy level of
chaos theory?

2. Does inspirational leadership correlate to the
study of spirituality when analyzing women as
a strange attractor?

3. Does the pull of commitment to purpose and
ideals outside of us that relate meaning to
calling supercede the dynamics of the feedback
and interpersonal influence of others over the

leader?

4.      Can chaos capacity empowerment be taught using
        conscious spirituality to create a strong
        antidote to the fear organisms face with
        perceived chaos under the guise of change?

5.      Do the culture, core values, and ethical
        systems of organizations established by women
        leaders significantly differ from male led
        organizations?

The study clearly showed a strong relation between
life-satisfaction and existentialism.  The results also
showed a similar strength between life-satisfaction and
religion.  The stronger the spirituality of the
participant, the stronger the level of life-satisfaction
within that same participant. There was a direct
correlation that encourages researchers to further review
how leaders practice their spirituality during the workday.
There is a possibility that bringing spirituality to the
forefront of consciousness will increase a leaders ability
to refine and even redefine his or her own level of
knowledge and understanding of how to best use what is
known.

There was no significance, however, when comparing
gender. It cannot be scientifically concluded that men and

women have similar strengths, skills, or awareness when

attempting to understand their own spirituality, accessing

that personal spirituality, or accept the challenge to

individually grow in spirituality. This study was but one

small slice of information regarding how men and women

compare when dealing with stress.  Too many variables

played into the analysis to be certain any one result is

exclusive of all other variables. Earlier research studies

on spiritual interventions, such as Harris et al (1999)

state that spirituality interventions play a role in

dealing with health care concerns when part of a therapy

regimen for ailments such as stress, which supports the

need for more research in this area.

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**Appendix A**

**Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS)**

**Appendix A**

**Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS)**

**(Material under Copyright)**

**Appendix B**

**Interpersonal Conflict at Work Scale (ICAWS)**

## Appendix B

### Interpersonal Conflict at Work Scale (ICAWS)

1 = Less than once per month or never
2 = Once or twice per month
3 = Once or twice per week
4 = Once or twice per day
5 = Several times per day

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. How often do you get into arguments with others at work? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. How often do other people yell at you at work? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. How often are people rude to you at work? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. How often do other people do nasty things to you at work? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**Appendix C**

**Satisfaction With Life Survey (SWLS)**

**Appendix C**

**Satisfaction With Life Survey (SWLS)**

**Survey Form**

Using the 1 – 7 scale below indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item.

· 7 – Strongly agree
· 6 – Agree
· 5 – Slightly agree
· 4 – Neither agree nor disagree
· 3 – Slightly disagree
· 2 – Disagree
· 1 – Strongly disagree

\_\_\_\_ In most ways my life is close to my ideal.

\_\_\_\_ The conditions of my life are excellent.

\_\_\_\_ I am satisfied with my life.

\_\_\_\_ So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

\_\_\_\_ If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

**Scoring tool:**

```
35 – 31 Extremely satisfied
26 – 30 Satisfied
21 – 25 Slightly satisfied
20      Neutral
15 – 19 Slightly dissatisfied
10 – 14 Dissatisfied
 5 –  9  Extremely dissatisfied
```

**Appendix D**

**Letter of Consent Cover Letter**

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY
INFORMED CONSENT: PARTICIPANTS 18 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER
COVER LETTER

Dear Participant:


I am a student at Duquesne University working on a Doctoral Education Leadership Degree. I am conducting a research study entitled "*Reflective analysis of the role spirituality plays in educational leaders' coping successes with a focus on gender divergence".* The purpose of the research study is to examine whether there are differences in the way leaders cope with stress when varying levels of spirituality are present. I also wish to analyze any significant differences that may occur between genders.

Your participation will involve 10-15 minutes of your time to complete a composite survey. There are some demographic items to complete at the top of the survey. Directions are given for each section.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate and you may withdraw from the study at any time. You may do so without penalty or loss of benefit to yourself. The results of the research study may be published but your name will not be used and your results will be maintained in confidence.

In this research, there are no foreseeable risks to you. Although there may be no direct benefit to you, it has the capability to introduce you to overall self-awareness of your personal levels of spirituality and ability to cope with stress in the workplace.

Two self-addressed stamped envelopes have been included. Please send one signed copy of the consent letter in one envelope. You may keep the other signed copy of the consent letter. Please use the second envelope to return the anonymous survey.  If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact me at 717-624-7938 or 717-968-4526, or (email address) bettie_bertram@uasd.k12.pa.us

Sincerely,



Bettie Bertram

**Appendix E**

**Letter of Consent**

# DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

**CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY**

| | |
|---|---|
| **TITLE:** | Reflective Analysis of the Role Spirituality Plays in Educational Leaders' Coping Successes With A Focus on Gender Divergence |
| **INVESTIGATOR:** | Bettie Bertram<br>161 North Main St.<br>Biglerville, PA 17307<br>717-677-7191 work<br>717-624-7938 home<br>bettie_bertram@uasd.k12.pa.us |
| **ADVISOR: (if applicable:)** | Dr. Jim Henderson<br>School of Education<br>412-396-4880 |
| **SOURCE OF SUPPORT:** | This study is being performed as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership at Duquesne University. |
| **PURPOSE:** | You are being asked to voluntarily participate in a research project that seeks to investigate the relationship between spirituality and the ability to cope with stress as perceived through life satisfaction. Participants are asked to complete a composite of three surveys, which will require no longer than a total of 10-15 minutes, and return the surveys to the researcher. |
| | These are the only requests that will be made of you. |

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**RISKS AND BENEFITS:** There are no risks greater than those encountered in everyday life. This study will provide a better understanding of the role spirituality plays in guiding educational leaders when coping with stress. This information may be used to coach educational leaders to tap into their existentialism and maintain enhanced life satisfaction. The focus on how spirituality intrinsically affects the way a leader makes extrinsic decisions necessitates studies that correlate spirituality with the perception of satisfaction.

**COMPENSATION:** There will be no compensation. However, participation in the project will require no monetary cost to you. Self-addressed, stamped envelopes are provided for return of your consent letter and survey response to the investigator. Contact information is provided for any questions you may have.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Your name will never appear on any survey or research instruments. No identity will be made in the data analysis. All written materials and consent forms will be stored in a locked file in the researcher's home. Your response(s) will only appear in statistical data summaries. All materials will be destroyed five years after the completion of the research.

**RIGHT TO WITHDRAW:** You are under no obligation to participate in this study. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate at any time.

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**SUMMARY OF RESULTS:** A summary of the results of this research will be supplied to you, at no cost, upon request.

**VOLUNTARY CONSENT:** I have read the above statements and understand what is being requested of me. I also understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time, for any reason. On these terms, I certify that I am willing to participate in this research project.

I understand that should I have any further questions about my participation in this study, I may call Bettie Bertram, Principal Investigator at 717-624-7938, Dr. Jim Henderson, Advisor at 412-396-4880, and Dr. Paul Richer, Chair of the Duquesne University Institutional Review Board at 412-396-6326.

_____ I wish to receive a summary of the results of this research.

_____

_____

Participant's Signature                                        Date

_____

_____

Researcher's Signature                                        Date

**Appendix F**

**Survey Composite Form**

**Survey Composite Form**

**SPSS Data Collection Demographics**

1. **Male** \_\_\_\_\_     **Female** \_\_\_\_\_          2. **Age:**  \_\_\_\_\_  years

3. **Professional experience in education:**  \_\_\_\_\_  years

4. **Race:**  \_\_\_\_\_  Caucasian
           \_\_\_\_\_  Black or African American
           \_\_\_\_\_  American Indian and Native American
           \_\_\_\_\_  Asian
           \_\_\_\_\_  Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
           \_\_\_\_\_  Hispanic or Latino

**Section One-Please circle the appropriate number.**

1 = Less than once per month or never
2 = Once or twice per month
3 = Once or twice per week
4 = Once or twice per day
5 = Several times per day

1. How often do you get into arguments      1    2    3    4    5
   with others at work?

2. How often do other people yell at you     1    2    3    4    5
   at work?

3. How often are people rude to you at       1    2    3    4    5
   work?

4. How often do other people do nasty        1    2    3    4    5
   things to you at work?

**Section Two–Using the 1 – 7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item.**

        7 – Strongly agree
        6 – Agree
        5 – Slightly agree
        4 – Neither agree nor disagree
        3 – Slightly disagree
        2 – Disagree
        1 – Strongly disagree

_____  In most ways my life is close to my ideal.

_____  The conditions of my life are excellent.

_____  I am satisfied with my life.

_____  So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

_____  If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

**Section Three**