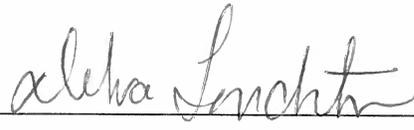


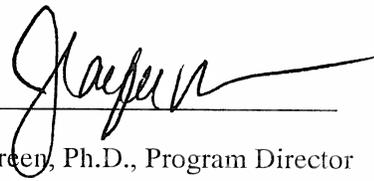


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SOCIALLY PERCEPTIVE ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS:  
A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS IN  
JOHNSON COUNTY, FLORIDA

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By  
CHRISTINA LAPNOW

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A DISSERTATION IN PRACTICE

Submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School of Creighton University in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in  
Interdisciplinary Leadership

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## Abstract

A study of secondary assistant principals in Johnson County, Florida was conducted to assess their needs in the areas of emotional intelligence and determine if professional development was warranted. Over the last 35 years, many psychologists, researchers, and academics have noted the importance of emotional intelligence in organizations, classrooms, and relationships and have encouraged its development. Emotional intelligence may be linked to job satisfaction and may have an impact on school climate. Studies have linked leadership success with higher levels of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence can be split into two areas: the ability to understand and control one's own emotions, and understanding other's emotions and feelings to react appropriately. Emotional intelligence levels are also correlated with the leadership skills necessary for school leadership and with 21st-century school leadership characteristics and standards.

Preliminary data collected at the end of the 2014–2015 school year indicated a need for support for secondary school leaders utilizing the conducted climate surveys. Additional data, collected from the Florida Department of Education, indicated a high teacher attrition rate in the school district. Assistant principals in the district's middle and high schools were invited to participate in the study. Of the 81 potential participants, 20 agreed to take the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal—Me Edition and participate in the background survey. The results indicated 90% of participants could benefit from support, development, or training in emotional intelligence. In this study, 10% of the participants earned a score in the top bracket of emotional intelligence reflecting mastery in emotional intelligence skills. The data did not show a significant relationship in this sample between

need and gender, age, or years of experience. Recommendations were offered with regard to a specific support program that can be implemented to increase domains of emotional intelligence through an administrative training program for those already in assistant principal positions and recommendations for implementation in educational programs for administration.

## Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family. First, to my mom, Patty. You have fostered a love of inquiry, education, and imagination since I was a child. You taught me to appreciate the beauty in our world, the power of education, and the kindness in every person. You are the model of faith, diligence, and compassion.

To my supportive husband, Kyle. You make life an adventure! You have encouraged me, made me laugh, held my hand when things got tough, and have been my best friend. You have the kindest heart and I am lucky to share this life with you.

To my mother in-law, Denise and father in-law, Rich. I would have never started this educational journey without your encouragement and support. Thank you for being my biggest cheerleaders through this process. You are both hardworking, intelligent, and are great role models.

To all of the dedicated, diverse, and talented educators that I have worked with over the years, thank you for inspiring me and so many others.

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To Dr. Kate Winter and Dr. Peggy Hawkins, thank you both for teaching me how to make sense of quantitative data. You both took time to explain complicated equations, revise my quant style, and encourage me along the way. While I certainly may never have the mind for math, I am so incredibly grateful that you do.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### **Background**

The focus of this case study was to examine emotional intelligence levels of assistant principals at secondary schools in a district that will be referred to as Johnson County, Florida for this study. Johnson County is a fictional name given to the participating county so it could be anonymized for this descriptive research study. Information was collected in order to determine whether secondary school assistant principals could benefit from support and development in intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. Data gathered from emotional intelligence appraisals were used to inform recommendations for a training and support program that would help school leaders to improve in the domains of emotional intelligence.

Assistant principals in the Johnson County School District possess a vast array of abilities, specializations, and characteristics. Secondary assistant principals in Johnson County must fulfill many different responsibilities on any given day, such as setting instructional goals, providing safety for students on campus, analyzing data, organizing standardized testing, and providing support for teachers and staff. Successful assistant principals build relationships, cohesion, and a positive climate in order to help both teachers and students to succeed.

The Johnson County Schools have experienced many changes over the last five years. As most in the field of education will admit, change is constant. Yet this particular district has had major changes in recent years: radical changes in funding, new curriculum, a new leadership map, and a new superintendent of schools. The Johnson County Schools, as an organization, fit the theoretical change framework of the teleological theory as

described by Burke (2011), in that the organization is adaptive and purposeful in its process of change. It constantly develops new goals and implements changes in response to its external environment. It establishes new mission statements, visions, plans, and strategies, and this process is ongoing (Burke, 2011). Change is part of the environment and culture in public education, but the keys to implementing change successfully are relationships and communication.

When Johnson County Schools (JCS) hired a new superintendent of schools in 2015, one of this individual's first steps was to set up three guiding principles to establish direction and a shared vision. He expressed these principles in his first letter to stakeholders:

Guiding Principle #1: *Dedication to increased student achievement.* The student achievement goal for this school year is: To increase individual student learning to accelerate achievement outcomes for every school. Our work is focused on nurturing the success of our students. We want our students to achieve, and to achieve to their fullest potential.

Guiding Principle #2: *Commitment to finding solutions to problems.* JCS believes in collaboration. It is our district's goal to communicate in a timely and transparent manner to promote trust, collaboration, and engagement in a dynamic educational system.

Guiding Principle #3: *Mutual respect and positive relationships with all stakeholders.* JCS is committed to building relationships. The genesis of this principle is the Golden Rule: To treat others the way you would like to be treated.

We may not always agree, but as adults we can agree to work together. ( [REDACTED]  
personal communication, August 18, 2015)

The goal of the present research was to further develop professional support in order to nurture student success, to encourage collaboration and commitment so as to promote trust and engagement, and finally to support positive relationships by focusing on assistant principals in secondary schools as positive change agents for success.

### **Statement of the Problem**

School leaders are expected to set direction, build a vision, and inspire change (Zepeda, 2013). Although many different qualities have been identified as contributing to an educational leader's success, some characteristics are consistently cited: vision, decisiveness, skilled communication, empathy, and flexibility (Zepeda, 2013). As society continues to grow and evolve, soft leadership skills are becoming more crucial than ever. Gerzema and D'Antonio (2014), in a survey of 64,000 participants from 13 countries, found that traditionally soft qualities of leadership were strongly desired in leaders. These qualities included such characteristics as connectedness, humility, candor, patience, empathy, trustworthiness, openness, flexibility, vulnerability, and balance. Many of these characteristics overlap the qualities associated with transformational leadership, a concept that has gained popularity in the last two decades. These soft skills also lie at the heart of leadership that promotes high emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence was originally conceptualized by Salovey and Mayer (1990) as the ability to accurately appraise and express emotions, to understand and regulate one's own emotions, and to promote emotional growth. Over the last 35 years, many psychologists, researchers, and academics have noted the importance of emotional

intelligence in organizations, classrooms, and relationships and have encouraged its development. The soft skills involved in managing one's emotions and feelings are important contributors to success. Research has shown that emotional intelligence can be split into two areas: the ability to understand and control one's own emotions, and understand other's emotions and feelings so as to react accordingly (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Leaders who possess these skills are more successful in leadership positions than their counterparts who lack those skills (Bradberry & Greaves, 2003).

With more and more accountability measures present in public education, assistant principals are encouraged to keep growing as leaders and to find tools to manage people in the ever-changing educational environment. School leaders are evaluated on their ability to inspire change, encourage all stakeholders, and motivate others (██████████, 2014). Successful leaders are skilled in the areas of decision making, leadership development, school management, and communication (Florida Department of Education, 2014a).

Since 2008, schools in Johnson County, Florida have suffered budget cuts due to declining funding and reduced tax revenues. These cuts added an increased burden to staff and other leaders, on top of many additional legislative and district-initiated changes that have impacted the schools' climate. In the last five years, the school district lost more than \$80 million in state funding and was forced to enact extensive budget reductions (██████████, 2014). These modifications included the loss of 976 teaching positions and the closing of six schools (██████████, 2013a). In addition, cuts also eliminated 22 assistant principal positions and many instructional programs, and professional development support and opportunities were reduced (██████████, 2013a). School leaders are finding the

educational environment more stressful and concerning than ever. Cowell (2015), related the current educational environment to a “VUCA environment” first described by Hesselbein & Shinseki (2004) that concerned military leaders attempting to lead in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environment. Cowell (2015) stated assistant principals are trying to be instructional leaders during VUCA environments across the country. Teachers in this particular district were vocal at union meetings, teacher advisory meetings, and public input forums at school board meetings with regard to the lack of support that they felt from leaders in the schools.

Changes implemented within the district during the last five years have included newly enforced state standards, reforms in state-mandated standardized testing and assessment platforms, new curricula and district standards, grading policies, evaluations for all employees with associated merit pay incentives, and school grading systems. With so many radical changes to the system in such a short time, the need for effective communication and interpersonal skills among school leaders is great.

According to the Florida Department of Education (2014a), 20% of county school administrators earned a highly effective rating on annual evaluations during the 2013–2014 academic year; the remaining 80% could use growth in one or more areas of evaluation. In addition, the data indicated a 9% attrition rate among teachers in Johnson County, almost double the state average of 5%. Each year, however, funding for school leaders’ professional development is reduced in response to budget cuts (Smith, 2012).

In this dissertation research, assistant principals at the secondary level were studied to discover their strengths and weaknesses in emotional intelligence, which could inform the establishment of professional development to encourage leadership growth and

enhance teacher satisfaction. Additional support in the areas of emotional intelligence may encourage leaders to be more conscious of interpersonal relationships and support teachers and staff in fresh and effective ways.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this case study was to examine emotional intelligence levels in assistant principals in secondary schools in Johnson County in order to assess their need for support and development. An emotional intelligence appraisal was used to gather data and to inform recommendations regarding an emotional intelligence training and support program to improve school leaders' capacity in specific domains of emotional intelligence.

### **Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study was to create a proposed curriculum outline for a professional development program in order to develop emotional intelligence among secondary assistant principals in Johnson County Schools.

### **Significance of the Dissertation in Practice Study**

School administrators need to possess many skills in order to exert successful leadership. The field of public education is rapidly changing, and teachers and staff need more support than ever to navigate these changes. Teacher burnout has been rising since the inception of high-stakes accountability measures and the emphasis on standards-based approaches. Dworkin and Tobe (2014), noting this concern, stated that job stress usually drives burnout, but that supportive administrators and coworkers can reduce this problem. Many additional issues can cause teacher stress and burnout, such as budgetary pressures, high-stakes accountability, and diminishing interpersonal trust. School leaders must be

able to support, encourage, empathize, and build relationships with teachers in order to enhance their capacity and resilience as teachers and thereby support students and schools.

As evidence of the growing pressure on teachers, national teacher attrition rates have risen from 6.4% in 1988 to 9% in 2008, representing a 41% increase over 20 years (Ingersoll, Merrill & Stuckey, 2014). Data from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Educational Statistics (2014) reported even higher attrition, with a national rate of 16% and 20% attrition in low-income areas.

This study adds to the academic research in the field of leadership strengths in education with a focus on the soft skills of transformational leadership and emotional intelligence. Additionally, areas of growth are documented in order to determine where school-based administrators may need additional support so that they can, in turn, better support school staff.

The implementation of the federal No Child Left Behind Act in 2001 brought with it an increased focus on standards-based assessments, standardized testing, and data-driven decision making; consequently, less time and attention have been devoted to the people who fill the hallways and school buildings. The present study was designed to consider whether increased attention to relationships, communication skills, and empathy could help to support school goals and increase assistant principals' success.

### **Methodology Overview**

The purpose of this study was to determine levels of emotional intelligence with secondary assistant principals a large public school district in Florida through a case study applying an emotional intelligence appraisal instrument, created by Bradberry and Greaves (2003) and the TalentSmart organization with which they are associated. During

the 2015–2016 school year, 81 individuals (including the researcher) held assistant principal positions in Johnson County. Individualized invitations were sent to the 81 potential participants in the study. Of these 80, 20 agreed to take part. These 20 participants were diverse in administrative experience (ranging from new to 20 years), age, race, and gender. All worked in the same school district, had earned a degree in educational leadership, and held K-12 Educational Leadership certification in the state of Florida. All 20 participants filled out both the demographic survey and completed the emotional intelligence appraisal.

In the first phase, survey questions addressed the relationship between emotional intelligence levels and communication skills among assistant principals throughout the district. This investigation used the TalentSmart Emotional Intelligence 2.0 Appraisal- Me Edition, which focuses on four areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Scores were based on a normed sample from the general population. The scales were set in 10-point intervals, with 100 being the highest possible score in each domain area. Emotional Intelligence 2.0 is a self-reported questionnaire that estimates an individual's emotional intelligence. According to Bradberry and Greaves (2009), the assessment utilized 28 items to calculate a total score, in addition to producing four scale scores aligned to Goleman's model of emotional intelligence in the four areas mentioned prior. This assessment was also aligned with the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT). More than 500,000 individuals have completed the assessment, and their results have provided a valuable research database on emotional intelligence in business and leadership (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009). The researcher

received written permission from the TalentSmart Company to use their Emotional Intelligence 2.0 Appraisal-Me Edition for this descriptive study.

The data gathered from the present administration of the emotional intelligence appraisal informed the creation of an emotional intelligence professional development program to assist school leaders in areas of emotional intelligence that need improvement within the one district studied.

### **Definition of Relevant Terms**

The following terms are used throughout this dissertation, sometimes in ways that are specific to this study.

**Assistant principal:** Assistant principals support the principal in the overall administration of the school. Each assistant principal position is unique to the school in which the individual works. Duties typically include instructional support, discipline, professional development of staff, safety and security measures, and evaluation of teachers and staff.

**Emotional competence (or competency).** “A learned capability based on emotional intelligence that results in outstanding performance at work” (Goleman, 1998, p. 24).

**Emotional intelligence.** For the purposes of this study, Bradberry and Greaves’s definition of emotional intelligence was used. It defines emotional intelligence as “your ability to recognize and understand emotions, and your skill at using this awareness to manage yourself and relationships with others.” (2003, p. 12)

**Emotional Intelligence Appraisal—Me Edition.** An emotional intelligence assessment created by Bradberry and Greaves’s organization, TalentSmart (2003), to

determine an individual's level of emotional intelligence. The Me Edition provided scores to both the researcher and the individual taking the evaluation.

**Secondary school:** A school that provides curriculum and instruction to students in grades 6 and above, or after the student finishes primary school and before higher education.

### **Delimitations and Limitations**

Limitations of this study were as follows:

- Responses based on self-report and self-perception could have been affected by the participant's personal biases.
- Assistant principals who perceived that they may score low in areas of emotional intelligence may not have been inclined to participate in the study, whereas others who believed that they have high levels of emotional intelligence may have been more inclined to participate.
- Assistant principals who perceived themselves as having limited leadership skills may have been disinclined to participate.

Delimitations of this study were as follows:

- This study included only assistant principals in one school district.
- This case study focused on only one district during one time period.

### **The Leader's Role and Responsibilities in Relation to the Problem**

Great leaders have a variety of different strengths that contribute to their success. Over time, various notions, ideas, dissertations, and theories have been produced defining leadership and what makes a leader effective. Although many theories exist, we know that one element holds true: great leaders move us (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2013).

Great leadership is rather primal; it works through emotions. Leaders set the mood and tone of their organizations (Goleman et al., 2013). Emotional intelligence and the skills associated with this area are now considered to be the strongest indicator of success in a workplace (Nadler, 2007).

A societal shift has occurred toward an emphasis on transformational leadership rather than the historic managerial type of leader (Burke, 2011). Leadership has more to do with the *person* and his or her style of influence rather than with the *position* of power (Burke, 2011). This style of leadership is charismatic and inspirational. It provides individual consideration for followers, with the leader serving as mentor. It is also characterized by clear expectations, communication, innovation, and compassion (Burke, 2011). Transformational leaders tend to have high levels of emotional intelligence, whereas laissez-faire leadership is associated with low levels of emotional intelligence (Gardner & Stough, 2002). Those leaders who reflect attributes of the laissez-faire style of leadership such as avoiding acceptance of responsibility, failure to follow through, being absent when their presence is required, and resistance to opinion and feedback were also unable to understand the emotions of others or to manage and identify their own emotions (Gardner & Stough, 2002).

Many of these qualities of leadership also overlap with other popular styles of influential leadership discussed including servant leadership. The four principles of Jesuit leadership, as described by Lowney (2003), include self-reflection, adapting to embrace a changing world, engaging others with a loving attitude, and energizing others through heroic ambition. The models of transformational leadership and servant leadership both

heavily emphasize a focus on serving others rather than on oneself (Greenleaf, 1977; Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2011).

Through a heightened awareness of and focus on emotional intelligence and the soft skills associated with it, leaders can become more influential (Goleman, 2006). The purpose of this dissertation was not only to study leaders' inherent strengths but also to discover areas of potential growth, so as to help assistant principals become emotionally stronger and thereby foster growth among schools and teachers. Leaders should model the behaviors that they would like to see in their organization (Gardner & Stough, 2002). Increased modeling of the skills associated with emotional intelligence should ultimately create a more empathetic and communicative work organization.

### **Summary**

The focus of this case study was to examine emotional intelligence levels in assistant principals at secondary schools in Johnson County in order to assess the need for programs to support their development in this regard. Data was gathered from the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal (Bradberry & Greaves, 2003) to inform the second phase of the dissertation in practice, in which a professional development program was outlined to help school leaders improve in domains of emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence is composed of four primary areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management (Goleman, 2006). Today's educational system increasingly demands the soft skills and transformational leadership qualities associated with high emotional intelligence. Thus, the goal of this study was to support school leaders' growth in these areas and to promote a stronger and more collaborative climate. The Johnson County Schools have experienced many changes over

the last decade, and additional support in relationships and personal growth is particularly welcome in this context of change. Nearly one-quarter of the school district's secondary assistant principals participated in this study. These individuals were a diverse group with participants ranging from new assistant principals to those with decades of experience.

The present research should contribute to the growth and development of Johnson County Schools, offering recommendations with regard to professional development for school leaders.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Introduction**

The emotional intelligence movement gained popularity and momentum over the last 35 years in many fields such as psychology, business, leadership, and education. While social and emotional competencies have been studied in various forms since the early years of psychology and sociology, Salovey and Mayer in 1990 were the first to conceptualize the idea and coin the term *emotional intelligence*. Over time, three models of emotional intelligence have emerged, in addition to many surveys and assessments. This literature review first focuses on emotional intelligence in general, then on emotional intelligence in leaders, and finally on the overlap between popular school leadership characteristics and emotional intelligence.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this case study was to examine emotional intelligence levels in assistant principals at secondary schools in Johnson County in order to assess the need for their support and development. The data gathered from the emotional intelligence appraisals informed the second phase of the dissertation in practice, which involved recommendations regarding a professional development program to help school leaders improve their capacities in domains of emotional intelligence.

### **Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study was to create a proposed curriculum outline for a professional development program in order to develop emotional intelligence among secondary assistant principals in Johnson County Schools.

### **The Emotional Intelligence Movement**

The importance of emotional intelligence has been widely noted in recent years, but the concept is not new. Charles Darwin published the first known work related to what we now call emotional and social intelligence in 1872, he discussed the importance of emotional expression for survival and adaptation (Bar-On, 2006). The study of emotional intelligence and related behaviors continued into the 20th century. Edward Thorndike (1920) published works on social intelligence and emotional competence (Bar-On, 2006). Edgar Doll (1935) produced the first instrument designed to measure socially intelligent behavior in young children (Bar-On, 2006). David Wechsler in 1939, likely influenced by Thorndike and Doll, included two subscales that assessed social intelligence in his well-known cognitive intelligence assessment (Bar-On, 2006). Howard Gardner's influential book *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* was at the forefront of the psychology of social characteristics since 1983 (Warner, 2003). In this text, Gardner (1993) discussed seven different intelligence areas in which individuals may have strength: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.

The first appearance of the term *emotional intelligence* may have been in a 1985 Ph.D. dissertation, "A Study of Emotion: Developing Emotional Intelligence," by Wayne Payne (Scuiu, Petcu, & Gherhes, 2010). However, the most important and popular models of emotional intelligence have come from Greenspan, Salovey, and Mayer, Bar-On, and Goleman (Scuiu et al., 2010).

These areas of research have helped form and define human social perspective and strengthened the idea of social intelligence as a portion of general intelligence (Bar-On,

2006). In the 1980s, Bar-On coined the term *emotional quotient* (EQ) to differentiate the measurement of emotional intelligence from cognitive intelligence and IQ (Bar-On, 2006). Bar-On's research reflected the link between emotional intelligence and personal competence, happiness, and success (Greenockle, 2010). Similarly, Salovey and Mayer researched the topic of emotional intelligence during the 1980's. Goleman also began focusing on this topic during the early 1990s as more studies were being conducted and released (Cherniss, 2000).

During the last few decades, three main models of emotional intelligence have become prominent (Gardner & Stough, 2002). These three focused on different areas of emotional intelligence within individuals. The first was Salovey and Mayer's (1990) conceptualization, which primarily considered emotional intelligence as an innate mental ability encompassing basic psychological processes and complex ones that develop with time and experience (Mayer & Salovey, 1993). The second model, developed by Bar-On, was a non-cognitive, personality-based model that examines an individual's ability to cope with environmental pressures and stress (Bar-On, 1997). The third, and arguably the most popular, model, created by Harvard psychologist and researcher Daniel Goleman (1990), focused on emotional intelligence as a learned intelligence or competence applied primarily in the workplace and within organizations.

While definitions and descriptions of emotional or social intelligence have evolved, Bar-On (2006) indicated that several factors have remained consistently present within the definitions:

- (a) the ability to recognize, understand and express emotions and feelings;
- (b) the ability to understand how others feel and relate with them;
- (c) the ability to

manage and control emotions; (d) the ability to manage change, adapt and solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature; and (e) the ability to generate positive affect and be self-motivated. (p. 3)

Emotional intelligence was related to social intelligence and cognitive intelligence (Boyatzis, 2007). Whereas emotional intelligence was defined as the ability to recognize and understand emotional information in oneself, social intelligence was the ability to see it in others, and cognitive intelligence was the ability to use that information in situations to produce effective or superior performance (Boyatzis, 2009). According to Riggio, Riggio, Salinas, and Cole (2003) both social and emotional intelligence were intertwined as overlapping “people skills” that leaders need in order to be successful. Their overlaps included the areas of nonverbal and emotional communication, emotional sensitivity, expressivity, and emotional control (Riggio et al., 2003).

When Salovey and Mayer began using the concept of emotional intelligence in 1990, they viewed it as composed of three mental processes: appraising emotions within oneself and others, using emotions in adaptive ways, and regulating emotions in others (Vitello-Cicciu, 2003). Emotional intelligence, as originally theorized by Salovey and Mayer (1990), “involves the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (p.10). Over the years, Salovey and Mayer have refined their work to encompass the four popular domains on which all emotional intelligence researchers seem to agree (Vitello-Cicciu, 2003).

Salovey and Mayer's conceptualization has become known as the ability model and has stimulated much of the research and study in this area. They tended to view emotional intelligence as intelligence in the traditional sense, for example, as a set of mental abilities (Nowack & Learning, 2008) that were used to process thoughts in everyday life. According to their original definition, emotional intelligence included verbal and nonverbal assessment, the expression of emotion, the regulation of emotion in oneself and others, and the application of emotional content in problem solving (Mayer & Salovey, 1990). Salovey and Mayer conducted many studies on how to assess this intelligence using a Meta-Mood Scale and on how different levels of emotional awareness contributed to individuals' behaviors and reactions. In a 1995 study, they found that individuals who scored higher on the ability to understand and appraise other's emotions, as well as their own, were better equipped to recover more quickly after watching an upsetting and unsettling film on drunk driving than their counterparts who were unable to identify their own feelings.

In the early 1990s Goleman became aware of Salovey and Mayer's work and began his own studies of emotional intelligence (Cherniss, 2000). In 1995, the term gained popularity and acceptance with the release of Goleman's bestselling book *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*. The book focused primarily on the implications of emotional intelligence in the workplace, considering the four general abilities of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management (Goleman, 1995). Since the publication of this book, Goleman continued to write, conduct research, and simplified his definition and its implications for leadership in all types of organizations, including education (Warner, 2009).

Although these researchers have been the most influential in the study of emotional intelligence, other studies in psychology have had significant impact. For example, a 40-year longitudinal study was conducted at the University of California–Berkeley, it involved 80 people who earned scientific Ph.D. degrees in 1950 (Feist & Baron, 1996). These graduates were given IQ tests, personality tests, and various interviews, and they were re-interviewed 40 years later. Estimates of their success were self-reported and analyzed. It was determined that those that scored higher in social and emotional abilities such as emotional balance and interpersonal effectiveness also achieved greater professional success (Feist & Baron, 1996). In fact, these measures were four times more important than IQ in determining professional success (Feist & Baron, 1996).

Another popular study that reflected the importance of emotional and behavioral control and its impact on cognitive ability was the popular and often recreated set of “marshmallow studies” at Stanford University in 1970 (Cherniss, 2000). In this study, children age four to six years old were put into a room alone with a marshmallow and were instructed that if they waited for the researcher to return before touching it, they would receive two marshmallows (Cherniss, 2000). When the same children were studied years later, those who had resisted the temptation to eat the marshmallow scored on average 210 points higher on the SAT, had higher academic competence, and were better equipped to handle frustration and stress in adolescence (Shoda, Mischel, & Peake, 1990). These examples of earlier studies show that skills related to emotional intelligence have long been studied prior to the emotional intelligence movement.

Another study conducted by Seligman showed that learned optimism leads to success in the workplace (Schulman, 1995). Using insurance salespersons as participants, Seligman found that those with optimism in the workplace sold 37 percent more insurance in their first two years than those who were not optimistic (Schulman, 1995). In a supplementary study, 500 college freshmen at the University of Pennsylvania were tested with regard to their sense of optimism. The results showed that optimism was a better predictor of freshman-year success than high-school grades or SAT tests (Schulman, 1995).

### **Emotional Intelligence Defined**

The idea that a high level of emotional intelligence is an important element of leadership in business, organizations, and social constructs has become increasingly popular since the 1990s (Bradberry & Greaves, 2006). Emotional intelligence as a concept has incorporated aspects that have been described more generally for decades in terms of character, personality, competence, and soft skills (Goleman, 1998). Emotional intelligence was initially defined by Salovey and Mayer (1993) as a set of abilities that refer to how effectively an individual deals with his or her emotions and the emotions of others. In 1993, Mayer and Salovey defined emotional intelligence as a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions. This understanding was built in part on Gardner's studies in multiple intelligences and subsequent studies of how we relate to others. Interest in the area gained momentum following the popular books regarding emotional intelligence by Goleman, the first of

which was released in 1995. Goleman presented a model of emotional intelligence clustered in five areas:

- Self-awareness, including such areas as emotional awareness, self-assessments, and self-confidence
- Self-regulation: self-control, adaptability, innovation, and trustworthiness
- Motivation: achievement drive, commitment, optimism
- Empathy: developing and understanding others, political awareness
- Social skills: influence, communication, collaboration, cooperation, and conflict management

Goleman has developed his research in emotional intelligence to include four distinct areas with 21 associated competencies (Goleman, 2006). These four domains included self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, or areas of both personal and social competence. Although individuals may score higher in one area than in another, regulation of one's own emotions and one's reactions to the emotion of others constituted key qualities of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2006).

Over the last twenty years, psychologists Mayer, Salovey, and Curuso (2004) steered much of the research on emotional intelligence and the capacity to increase understanding to enhance thinking and behavior. They defined emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive and interpret emotion, to understand and label emotions, and to reflectively regulate emotions in oneself and others.

Emotional intelligence was considered as the possible new x-factor that may impact our understanding of social influence and leadership. Emotional intelligence was

considered to be a precursor of transformational leadership (Brown & Moshavi, 2005) and was related to an individual's ability to engage in effective leadership behaviors by being aware of the emotional state of others and reacting accordingly. Those with a higher level of emotional intelligence felt more secure in their ability to control and influence events, they were reported to stimulate and motivate followers to do the same (Brown & Moshavi, 2005). Brown and Moshavi (2005) further pointed out the correlation and relationship between behaviors of transformational leadership and emotional intelligence, such as individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation.

### **Emotional Intelligence Competencies**

As shown by Goleman (2006), emotional intelligence overlapped many of the characteristics necessary for successful leadership. Some of the determining factors of a leader with high self-awareness, the first of the four domains of emotional intelligence, included emotional self-awareness (for example, recognizing gut feelings or emotional triggers), accurate self-assessment, and self-confidence. Boyatzis (1982) demonstrated that this domain was the hallmark of superior performance in many companies and organizations.

Second, self-management included the areas of emotional self-control, transparency, adaptability, achievement, initiative, and optimism. Competencies in this area included poise in stressful situations and dealing with hostility while maintaining restraint and composure (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001). This was noted as a valuable skill for all educational personnel (Ciarrochi & Mayer, 2007). Those who could manage their own and others' emotions (such as teachers or students' emotions) while teaching and leading could create a more open and effective learning environment with few

distractions. Those who controlled their emotional reactions and effectively influenced how others felt better dealt with difficult conversations with stakeholders. (Ciarrochi & Mayer, 2007).

Third, social awareness included compassion, organizational awareness, and service (recognizing others' needs). An empathetic leader could read emotional currents, pick up on nonverbal cues, and could understand others' feelings and concerns. According to Cherniss and Goleman (2001), this sensitivity is critical for superior job performance because it enabled one to focus on dealing with others effectively.

Finally, relationship management included inspirational leadership, influence, developing others, being a change catalyst, conflict management, building bonds, and teamwork and collaboration. This set of competencies included the essential social skills that excellent leaders depend on (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001). It also encompassed the components of critical communication skills that was noted that leaders must possess in order to deal with difficult issues, such as to listen well, welcome information sharing, and foster open communication among all stakeholders (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001). Individuals and leaders with skill in this area could articulate and arouse enthusiasm, integrate emotional realities into perception, and instill a plan of action by leading by example.

Cherniss and Goleman (2001) stated that emotions are contagious, particularly when exhibited by those at the top. When successful leaders displayed a high level of positive energy, that feeling spread throughout the organization. The leader set the emotional tone, and the more positive the leader's style is, the more positively those in the group felt (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001).

### **Emotional Intelligence in Leaders**

As the role of leadership has changed from a controlling top-down, autocratic style to a more collaborating and cooperating style with a premium on relationships, emotional competence was noted as being crucial to success (Greenockle, 2010). According to Fullan (2002), relationships were the common single factor for educational change. If relationships improved, schools improved and thus emotional intelligence is essential in times of change or difficult stretches in education (Fullan, 2002). Emotional competence is particularly central to leadership because the essence of leadership involves getting others to do their jobs more efficiently (Goleman, 1998). A leader's emotional intelligence accounted up to 70% of workers' perceptions of climate and fostered a culture of loyalty, trust, and motivation (Goleman, 2002). Emotionally competent leaders were thought to promote strong interpersonal relationships within the organization through enthusiasm, trust, and decision making (George, 2000). George (2000) also suggested that emotionally intelligent leaders were happier and more committed to their organizations. According to Nadler (2002), emotional intelligence in leaders was a key ingredient for success, as it impacted cognitive functionalities such as adaptability, resilience, and optimism. Leaders with emotional intelligence were skilled in the areas of social flexibility and adaptability (Scuiu, Petcu, & Gherhes, 2010).

Over the last few decades, success stories of leaders with high emotional intelligence were becoming more popular in the business world. The U.S. Air Force found that its most successful recruiters scored significantly higher in emotional intelligence competencies such as empathy, happiness, assertiveness, and emotional self-awareness (Cherniss, 1999). Recruiters scoring higher in emotional intelligence were three times

more successful than others (Cherniss, 1999). Similarly, Boyatzis (as cited in Cherniss, 1999), focused on a multinational consulting firm. Partners who scored above the median on nine or more of the 20 competencies studied delivered \$1.2 million more profit from their accounts than did other partners who did not score as high (Cherniss, 1999).

A connection between emotional intelligence and success in leadership was also reflected in research conducted by Spencer, McClelland, and Kenler (as cited in Cherniss, 1999) with 300 executives from 15 corporate businesses. The results showed that high scores on the emotional intelligence assessment were also reflected in the leadership areas of influence, team leadership, organizational awareness, achievement drive, and self-confidence.

Emotionally intelligent leaders built relationships due to understanding their own emotional makeup, as well as by being sensitive and inspiring to others (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). These leaders focused on developing relationships and on working to develop the full range of emotional intelligence domains (Goleman et al., 2002). According to Fullan (2002), the single factor common to all successful change during complex times is that relationships improved. Thus, leaders must be high in emotional intelligence to build relationships with diverse people and groups in challenging times (Fullan, 2002).

Leaders with high emotional intelligence in organizations were more productive and had a positive impact on employee commitment and retention (Nadler, 2011). The power of emotionally intelligent leaders was in their ability to provoke passion and enthusiasm, inspire, and keep others committed and motivated (Goleman et al., 2002).

### **Development of Emotional Intelligence**

Most studies have indicated that some levels of emotional intelligence are innate, but they are not genetically fixed. Weaknesses in one area may be mitigated as an individual matures and has more diverse experiences that lead to deeper understanding (Goleman, 1998).

Goleman (1998) found the following:

Studies that have tracked people's level of emotional intelligence through the years show that people get better and better in these capabilities as they grow more adept at handling their own emotions and impulses, at motivating themselves, and at honing their empathy and social adroitness (p. 7).

According to Boyatzis (2007), decades of research in the fields of cognitive behavior therapy and self-help training programs proved that behavior can be changed over time with modification and education. The honeymoon effect of such training programs dropped off after the initial and immediate improvement, but published studies show roughly a 10% increase in emotional intelligence competencies following a 3- to 18-month training program (Boyatzis, 2007).

Many successful emotional intelligence programs focus on strengthening individual domains by a number of strategies (Vitello-Cicciu, 2003). Some examples were keeping an emotional journal, meditation, positive visualization, appreciative inquiry, and practicing empathetic listening (Vitello-Cicciu, 2003). With focused training on emotional awareness, leaders built confidence and trust, learned how to display empathy and emotional awareness, and demonstrated skill in addressing issues and solving problems (Moore, 2009).

### **Emotional Intelligence and Transformational Leadership**

The characteristics of leaders with emotional intelligence also overlapped those associated with transformational leadership (Gardner & Stough, 2002). Both constructs stressed the ability to monitor and manage emotions in others and one's own emotions. Gardner and Stough (2002) asserted that the skill of managing emotions is often connected with the idealized characteristic of charisma, which was a hallmark of transformational leadership styles. According to Greenockle (2010), 21st-century leaders were expected to foster lifelong learners through professional development, develop and celebrate individual capabilities and competence, and create an environment that encouraged the autonomy of individuals within the workplace. Transformational leaders established trust by building their followers' confidence and motivated them to improve performance through emotional support (Lopez-Zafra, Garcia-Retamero, & Martos, 2012). Transformational leaders also used nonverbal emotional cues that make them more charismatic and effective leaders (Wierter, 1997). Barling, Slater, and Kelloway (2000) found that emotional intelligence and transformational leadership were associated in the three areas of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration.

### **Misconceptions Regarding Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional intelligence is not necessarily "being nice." Rather, at times it involved challenging or confronting others in uncomfortable and tough conversations (Goleman, 1998). Emotional intelligence was not defined as behaving overtly emotional or complimentary. It did entail managing feelings and emotions in order to make sure that they are expressed appropriately and efficiently (Goleman, 1998). A common

misconception concerning emotional intelligence and leadership was that a leader must always be nice when, in fact, too much niceness could indicate low confidence and assertiveness, thus displaying a lack of emotional intelligence (Simmons, 2001). An emotionally intelligent leader understood which battles to choose, was assertive when necessary, and could display courage and confidence in tough situations (Simmons, 2001). Additionally, emotionally intelligent leaders were in touch with both positive and negative emotions and could perceive, manage, and understand them (Salovey & Grewal, 2005). Leaders with high emotional competence could harness negative emotions to achieve intended goals (Salovey & Grewal, 2005).

Gray (2010) identified three main misconceptions of emotional intelligence in leadership. The first misconception, as noted above, was that leaders were always pleasant; often a leader would have to be confrontational while maintaining a heightened sensitivity to the needs of others and delivered difficult information in a manner that would have the best impact. Second, emotional intelligence was not a carefree expression of one's feelings. Rather, it entailed managing feelings and expressing them in an appropriate manner. Finally, emotional intelligence did not develop during childhood as cognitive intelligence is thought to; it was not genetically based, and it developed and is refined through repeated use (Gray, 2010).

Each leader may have strengths and weaknesses in emotional intelligence in different domains. According to Goleman (1998), some individuals were highly empathic but lacked the ability to handle stress, whereas others were in touch with their moods yet socially unaware.

### **School Leadership Skills**

Individuals have possessed many leadership skills in order to move schools into a 21<sup>st</sup>- century focus. These leaders were required to transform schools into cultures with autonomy and forward thinking, a focus on professional development, they embraced change, and created successful, highly performing learning environments for both students and teachers (Moore, 2009). According to Zepada (2012), successful school leaders have demonstrated flexibility, made positive decisions, recognized differences in staff and students, individualized instruction and communication, facilitated and built consensus, guided rather than mandated, and cultivated support, among other skills. According to Leithwood, Seashore-Lewis, Anderson, and Walhstrom (2004), school leadership was second only to classroom instruction among the most important school-related factors for improving student learning and enabling a school's success. According to Moore (2009), "There is enough research to suggest that leaders high in emotional intelligence may be more skillful in influencing, inspiring, intellectually stimulating, and growing their staff" (p. 21).

Emotional and social intelligence skills are reflected in a number of key outcomes defined as success measures by education experts and contained in measurement scales of district and state evaluations. Although school leadership can be defined in a number of different ways, many educational organizations in Florida apply the principles set out by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) and the Florida Principal Leadership Standards. Among the various standards used across the country, Northouse (2004) and Nohavandi (2003) recognized some common elements of effective leadership. These elements included interactions with the group, the exercise of influence, and the

attainment of a common goal. Emotional intelligence in leaders may be the difference between high-performing and low-performing schools, as those leaders were thought to be more skilled in leading change and cultivating commitment (Beavers, 2005; Buntrock, 2008; Fullan, 2001; Moss, 2008; Patti, 2007 as cited by Moore, 2009).

School leaders have been evaluated by many measures and standards, both formally and informally (Marzano, Frontier, & Livingston, 2011). Since 2009 and the Race to the Top initiative's investment of \$4.35 billion in education reform, many changes were made to both teacher and school leader evaluation systems (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Race to the Top required states to link student achievement data to teachers and principals for evaluation purposes. Around this time, interim final requirements were issued for the School Improvement Grants program, authorized under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2014). School districts were required to include new teacher and principal evaluation systems as part of the reform. Thus, many relatively subjective standards of evaluation have been replaced by more data-driven ways of analyzing a leader's effectiveness.

A framework created by McRel (2003) was widely accepted as identifying 21 leadership responsibilities that impact student achievement and also had a positive effect on staff and students (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). School leaders who demonstrated significantly above-average improvement on the 21 leadership responsibilities achieved significant upswings of up to 10% in student achievement (Waters et al., 2003). Based on these comprehensive analyses of research on school leadership and student achievement, Waters et al. (2003) developed a framework for

principal leadership called the “21 Things for the 21st-century Administrator.” They are defined as:

- Affirmation: celebrated accomplishments and acknowledged setbacks in the school
- Change agent: wanted to challenge the status quo and keep growing
- Contingent rewards: rewarded and recognized individual accomplishments
- Communication: had clear communication lines with all stakeholders
- Culture: fostered a sense of community and shared beliefs
- Discipline: defended teachers and others from issues that would detract from the intended focus
- Flexibility: adapted according to situations, comfortable with change
- Focus: set clear goals
- Ideals/beliefs: shared strong ideals and beliefs
- Input: involved stakeholders in decision-making processes
- Intellectual stimulation
- Involvement in curriculum, instruction, and assessment (directly and indirectly)
- Knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Motoring/evaluating: analyzed the effectiveness of policies and practices and impact on student learning
- Optimizer: inspired and lead with new innovations
- Order: set standards and policies and procedures
- Outreach: involved stakeholders
- Relationships: cultivated relationships with stakeholders
- Resources: provided teachers with materials and professional development

- Situational awareness: aware of school and surroundings
- Visibility: has high-quality contact with all stakeholders (pp. 42-44)

Many schools have drawn from this research in preparing their own evaluation systems for school-based leaders. However, even though many of the 21 responsibilities can be also tied to emotional intelligence, very few schools look at emotional intelligence as a precursor for success in the schools (Waters et al., 2003).

The school district studied in this dissertation had an evaluation system based on the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) and the Florida Principal Leadership Standards. The evaluation was concentrated on four domain areas: student achievement, instructional leadership, organizational leadership, and professional and ethical behavior. These were further organized into ten areas of focus as per the Johnson County System for Empowering Leaders (2014):

- Proficiency Area 1 - Student Learning Results: Effective school leaders achieve results relative to the school's student learning goals and direct energy, influence, and resources toward data analysis for instructional improvement and the development and implementation of quality standards-based curricula.
- Proficiency Area 2 - Student Learning as a Priority: Effective school leaders demonstrate that student learning is their top priority through effective leadership actions that build and support a learning organization focused on student success.
- Proficiency Area 3 - Instructional Plan Implementation: Effective school leaders work collaboratively to develop and implement an instructional framework that aligns curriculum with state standards, effective instructional practices, student learning needs, and assessments.

- Proficiency Area 4 - Faculty Development: Effective school leaders recruit, retain, and develop an effective and diverse faculty and staff; focus on evidence, research, and classroom realities faced by teachers; link professional practice with student achievement to demonstrate cause-and-effect relationships; facilitate effective professional development; monitor implementation of critical initiatives; and secure and provide timely feedback to teachers so that this feedback can be used to improve teacher professional practice.
- Proficiency Area 5 - Learning Environment: Effective school leaders structure and monitor a school learning environment that improves learning for all of Florida's diverse student population.
- Proficiency Area 6 – Decision Making: Effective school leaders employ and monitor a decision-making process that is based on vision, mission, and improvement priorities using facts and data; manage the decision-making process, but not all decisions, using the process to empower others and distribute leadership when appropriate; establish personal deadlines for themselves and the entire organization; and use a transparent process for making decisions and articulating who makes which decisions.
- Proficiency Area 7 - Leadership Development: Effective school leaders actively cultivate, support, and develop other leaders within the organization, modeling trust, competence, and integrity in ways that positively impact and inspire growth in other potential leaders.
- Proficiency Area 8 - School Management: Effective school leaders manage the organization, operations, and facilities in ways that maximize the use of resources

to promote a safe, efficient, legal, and effective learning environment; effectively manage and delegate tasks and consistently demonstrate fiscal efficiency; and understand the benefits of going deeper with fewer initiatives as opposed to superficial coverage of everything.

- Proficiency Area 9 - Communication: Effective school leaders use appropriate oral, written, and electronic communication and collaboration skills to accomplish school and system goals by practicing two-way communication, seeking to listen to and learn from others, building processes of regular communication with staff and the community, keeping all stakeholders engaged in the work of the school, recognizing individuals for good work, and maintaining high visibility at school and in the community.
- Proficiency Area 10 - Professional and Ethical Behaviors: Effective school leaders demonstrate personal and professional behaviors consistent with quality practices in education and as a community leader by staying informed on current research in education and demonstrating their understanding of the research, engage in professional development opportunities that improve personal professional practice and align with the needs of the school system, and generate a professional development focus in their school that is clearly linked to systemwide strategic objectives.

Although evaluation models vary widely, many of the same characteristics of quality leaders are highlighted throughout the literature. Since the introduction of President Obama's Race to the Top initiative in 2009, evaluation models have continued to grow and change. Florida was one of the first states to submit a Race to the Top

application to receive funds tied to the \$4.35 billion competitive grant program (Boser, 2012). Each county in Florida had to submit to the Florida Department of Education their individual plans on how they would update their own evaluation procedures for teachers and administrators alike. Race to the Top aimed to kick-start key education reform by adopting more rigorous standards, recruiting and evaluating highly effective teachers and principals, and turning around low-performing schools success (Boser, 2012). Evaluations were tied to rigorous and research-based evaluation systems such as Robert Marzano's or Charlotte Danielson's. Evaluation systems have continued to morph since the 2009 RTTT movement.

### **Teacher Burnout, Turnover, and Job Satisfaction**

Leaders with high emotional intelligence had higher levels of enthusiasm and optimism (Goleman, 2011). "Optimistic, enthusiastic leaders more easily retain their people, compared with those bosses who tend towards negative moods" (Goleman, 2011, p. 75). The National Education Association (NEA, 2013) reported that teacher turnover ranged from 17% to 20% nationally, and that, according to estimates by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, one-third of all new teachers leave the profession after three years of experience and nearly half leave within five years. The commission indicated that teachers cite discipline problems and lack of administrative support as two of the main reasons for their departure. More than half of the teachers who resigned their positions said that they left due to low job satisfaction (Ingersoll, 2002). The most recent annual MetLife Survey of the American Teacher indicated a 23% drop in teacher satisfaction since 2008, when 62% of 1,000 teachers surveyed said that they were very satisfied with teaching as a career (Markow, Macia, & Lee, 2013). This report found

that 39% of teachers were very satisfied with teaching, the lowest level in 25 years of survey administration (Markow et al., 2013) .

Work environment factors associated with lower turnover rates included positive school climate and adequate support systems, particularly principal support (Billingsly, 2003). Conversely, problematic school factors such as a poor work climate and lack of administrative support were associated with the lowest levels of job satisfaction and teacher commitment (Billingsly, 2003).

As evidence of the growing pressure on teachers, national teacher attrition rates have risen from 6.4% in 1988 to 9% in 2008, representing a 41% increase over 20 years (Ingersoll, Merrill & Stuckey, 2014). Data from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Educational Statistics (2014) reported even higher attrition, with a national rate of 16% and 20% attrition in low-income areas.

Not only were teachers leaving the profession at an alarming rate, but absenteeism and low job satisfaction were also reported much higher than in other professions. According to Miller (2008), 5% to 6% of school teachers on any given average day in the United States were absent, a rate three times higher than that among all other managerial and professional employees (Miller, 2008).

### **Summary**

Many established theorists have agreed that the skills constituting emotional intelligence can be clustered into four distinct domains, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, which fall under the headings of personal competence and social competence (Goleman, 2006). Many studies also reflected the connection between emotional intelligence and success in leadership or

management (Goleman, 2011). Many models of school leadership are present, but the most popular and widely used factors are recognized in McRel's (2003) framework, which identified 21 leadership responsibilities that can impact student achievement and positively impact staff and students (Waters et al., 2003). These 21 areas also overlap the areas of emotional intelligence that have been defined by researchers. Researchers agree that although some of these skills are innate, most can be developed and encouraged through training programs (Goleman, 2006). With additional support from school-based administrators, attrition and absentee rates could potentially be lowered, as leaders with high levels of emotional intelligence and empathy have been shown to be able to retain employees, increase job satisfaction, and decrease turnover (Goleman, 2011).

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

**Introduction**

The purpose of this case study was to examine emotional intelligence levels in assistant principals in secondary schools in Johnson County in order to assess the need for support and development. The data for this dissertation were collected by various means, utilizing a case study structure to inform the evidence-based solution of creating a professional development program for the district's secondary assistant principals. The most significant data were obtained through self-reported emotional intelligence appraisals. In addition, participants completed a demographic survey. Additional data to inform this study were collected from the school district, national statistics, and county climate surveys from the 2014–2015 school year, and from various meetings of the school board and of teacher and district advisory committees.

Emotional intelligence was considered an indicator of success in school leadership (Goleman, 2006). There were four distinct domains of emotional intelligence; even if an individual is strong in one area, there may be need for development in another (Goleman, 2006). The most successful leaders were strong in all four domains of emotional intelligence (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009).

Based on the results of climate surveys, past annual evaluations of the assistant principals, and the vocal frustrations expressed by teachers at teacher advisory meetings and school board meetings in the 2014–2015 school year, it was hypothesized that growth in emotional intelligence may be beneficial to many assistant principals in the school district.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this case study was to examine emotional intelligence levels among assistant principals at secondary schools in Johnson County in order to determine the need for supporting their development. Data were gathered from the emotional intelligence appraisal to inform recommendations regarding an emotional intelligence training and support program to improve school leaders' capacity in specific domains of emotional intelligence. The aim of this study was to create a proposed curriculum outline for a professional development program in order to develop emotional intelligence among secondary assistant principals in Johnson County Schools.

### **Setting**

The population of the study was geographically restricted to the Johnson County School District. According to information provided by the Johnson County Schools (2015), the district employed 7,340 individuals in instructional, support, and administrative positions and enrolled nearly 62,000 K-12 students during the 2014–2015 school year. Over 16% of the population in Johnson County is at or below the federal poverty line, and has an overall rate of 43% free or reduced-price meals in schools with some schools as high as 100% of free and reduced (Florida Department of Education, 2015). Johnson County's half-million residents hold a variety of occupations, including tourism, farming, light industry, education, and government.

### **Baseline Assessment Information**

During the 2014–2015 school year, data were collected through various methods. In Florida, many public datasets are available through the Florida Department of Education's office of accountability and reporting. One such report is the annual

evaluation data, the most current being two years prior. The most recent data showed that 80% of administrators in Johnson County did not score in the highest category, indicating that growth could occur for many assistant principals across the district.

Another report suggested the need for improvement and indicated an 8.7% attrition rate of teachers leaving the profession in Johnson County; this figure was much higher than the state average of 5%. In addition, the most recently published data (from the 2012–2013 school year) on the retention of first-year instructional staff showed a state average of 85% retention, whereas Johnson County Schools retained only 75% of their first-year teachers (Florida Department of Education, 2014).

Data were also gathered through the 2014–2015 School Advisory Council climate surveys that are administered at high schools throughout the county. The survey results were provided by the district on request. Disaggregated data aligned with the topic of emotional intelligence, including assessments of administrator collaboration, communication to stakeholders, engagement, and accountability within each individual school. The data reflected a wide range of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with school leadership. A question asking teachers and staff to rate how well school leaders effectively engage stakeholders in the school's purpose and direction elicited some of the lowest ratings, with a county average of 3.6 on a 5-point scale. Staff members also gave school leaders an average rating of 3.6 in the area of accountability.

### **Rationale for the Methodology**

Research collected through the literature review and baseline data from the Florida Department of Education and climate surveys were used to verify the need for growth in emotional intelligence. Concentration was then focused on assistant principals in the

secondary level to eliminate additional variables. While these employees vary with regard to experience, gender, and race, the administrators all hold important qualities in common: they have all completed similar training programs, have earned at least a master's degree in Educational Leadership and a K-12 Florida Leadership License, and work within Johnson County.

Demographic questions obtained the following information from the sample:

- Age
- Gender
- Race
- Years of experience as an assistant principal
- Years in education
- Year when the individual began working in education
- Annual evaluation rating
- Degree earned
- Secondary level of current position: either high school or middle school

In addition to providing demographic data, participants completed the Bradberry and Greaves (2015) Emotional Intelligence Appraisal—Me Edition. Directions and an individually generated code were sent to all participants, who completed the instrument online in October 2015. This assessment and the demographic data were analyzed to determine any patterns or relationships.

### **Study Participants**

The prospective participants of this study were 81 assistant principals in secondary schools across Johnson County. A current roster of assistant principals was obtained from

the Johnson County School District in August 2015. These leaders shared many similar job responsibilities within their individual secondary schools, including evaluating and giving feedback to their teachers, analyzing data, providing support and professional development for staff, creating school improvement plans based on data, and contributing to their school's climate. Many of these individuals will likely go on to become principals in the district.

Upon approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and approval from the Office of Accountability of Johnson County, the 81 assistant principals were invited to participate in this study by formal letter in September 2015. Within two weeks of the invitation, 20 of the 81 potential participants responded positively.

Permission was also requested and granted by the school district. A formal request, including extensive detail on the proposed research and methodology, was approved by the Director of Accountability and Evaluation on June 22, 2015.

### **Instrumentation**

Using the SurveyMonkey.com website, a 10-question demographic survey was used to gather the previously listed information from the participants. The survey was multiple choice and was password protected to secure anonymity by participants.

The Bradberry and Greaves (2015) Emotional Intelligence Appraisal—Me Edition was used to assess participants in the areas of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Scores were based on a normed sample from the general population as provided by the TalentSmart Emotional Intelligence Appraisal. The scores were set at 10-point intervals, with 100 being the highest possible score in each domain area. The assessment used 28 items to calculate a total score in addition to the four

scale scores. The four components originally defined by Goleman and the subsequent number of assessment questions were defined by Bradberry and Greaves as follows:

1. Self-awareness (6 items): competencies include emotional self-awareness, accurate self-assessment, and self-confidence
  - Reading one's own emotions and recognizing their impact: using "gut sense" to guide decisions
  - Knowing one's strengths and limits
  - A sound sense of one's self-worth and capabilities
2. Self-management (9 items): competencies include emotional self-control, transparency, adaptability, achievement, initiative, and optimism
  - Keeping disruptive emotions and impulses under control
  - Displaying honesty and integrity; trustworthiness
  - Flexibility in adapting to changing situations or overcoming obstacles
  - The drive to improve performance to meet inner standards of excellence
  - Readiness to act and seize opportunities
  - Seeing the upside in events
3. Social awareness (5 items): competencies include empathy, organizational awareness, and service
  - Sensing others' emotions, understanding their perspective, and taking active interest in their concerns
  - Reading the currents, decision networks, and politics at the organizational level
  - Recognizing and meeting follower, client, or customer needs

4. Relationship management (8 items): competencies include inspirational leadership, influence, developing others, being a change catalyst, conflict management, building bonds, and teamwork/collaboration
  - Guiding and motivating with a compelling vision
  - Using a range of tactics for persuasion
  - Bolstering others' abilities through feedback and guidance
  - Initiating, managing, and leading in a new direction
  - Resolving disagreements
  - Cultivating and maintaining a web of relationships
  - Cooperation and team building

Bradberry and Greaves's assessment aligned with other popular emotional intelligence assessments including the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) and Bar-On's Emotional Quotient Inventory. More than 500,000 individuals have taken this particular assessment, creating a considerable database on emotional intelligence in business and leadership (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009). As noted, 100 is the highest possible score in each domain, and total scores are computed by averaging scores in the four domains. The scores are categorized as follows:

- 59 and below – significantly below average
- 60-69 – below average
- 70-79 – average
- 80-89 - above average
- 90-100 – significantly above average

The Emotional Intelligence Appraisal—Me Edition was a short, yet detailed Likert-style survey that could be completed in as little as 10 to 15 minutes.

According to TalentSmart (2015), the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal—Me Edition was developed according to the strictest research standards in both design and validation. It was highly reliable, with the four skills yielding coefficient alphas ranging from 0.79 to 0.92 and Cronbach's alpha measured at 0.85 to 0.91 (TalentSmart, 2015). The company found that this brief format was preferred to longer instrument versions in studies, as it remained valid without fatiguing participants with repetitive and unnecessary questions. The average time for administration of the test was roughly 10 minutes (TalentSmart, 2015).

The survey was provided via an online secure platform on which each participant was provided with login information and a unique individualized code. Results were provided to both the participant and the researcher. The price to use the instrument was \$39.95 per online test, although the researcher received a 50% discount on the instrument to use it for graduate-level research.

### **Procedures**

Upon approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Creighton University and permission from Johnson County Schools Office of Accountability and Evaluation, each assistant principal in Johnson County was invited by letter to participate in the research study. Interested assistant principals then expressed their willingness to participate by email, upon receipt of which the researcher provided details on how to access both the demographic survey as well as the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal. Upon completion of the appraisal, the results were made available to each individual participant

and to the researcher. Results were encoded and locked in my personal computer so as to ensure confidentiality for participants. The encoded results were entered into a spreadsheet for analysis to determine relationships and patterns within the datasets.

Information gathered from the background survey and information from the emotional intelligence appraisal were combined on a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for analysis. The overall score, the four domains, and the demographic information were entered. Then, the mean, range, standard deviation, variance, and population standard deviation of the data were calculated. These results were studied to see where the lowest subcategories were reported and where the highest averages were. The data were then studied to determine if there were relationships between demographic information and levels of emotional intelligence in the areas of gender, experience, race, and age. The data were then organized into scatterplots to present relationships or lack thereof. While this is a quantitative tool, it was used as a descriptive measure for this study.

### **Ethical Concerns**

One ethical concern of this particular study was that the researcher was an employee within the Johnson County School District during the study. In such a situation, the researcher must be cognizant of subjectivity and bias regarding emotional intelligence and the role it can play, as well as potential bias and preconceived notions regarding participants' attributes and attitudes (Roberts, 2010). Objectivity is essential to reliability of data analysis, thus the researcher had to take steps to ensure that personal opinions did not enter the study. Participants were encouraged to submit their information anonymously into the assessment system. Even if subjects did use their names on the initial appraisal, the information was entered into the data spreadsheet by a generic

number. Due to the nature of the self-assessment, the researcher had no input into how individuals scored themselves on the appraisal nor had an impact of how the scores were reached by TalentSmart. Anonymity and confidentiality were also important ethical concerns in this study, as assistant principals are often put in a public light. Thus, factors such as school placement and names were removed from the spreadsheets. All information and assessments were locked on the researcher's personal computer.

Limitations of this study were as follows:

- Depending on the assistant principal's job focus, some individuals will have more job related interpersonal and intrapersonal experiences to analyze for the appraisal.
- Self-reported and self-perception responses are affected by the participant's individual biases
- Assistant principals who perceive that they may score low in areas of emotional intelligence may not be inclined to participate in the study, whereas others who perceive themselves as having high levels of emotional intelligence may be more inclined to participate.
- Assistant principals who perceive themselves as having limited leadership skills may be disinclined to participate.

Delimitations of this study were as follows:

- This study included only assistant principals in one school district
- The case study focused on only one district during a short period of time.

### **Summary**

This chapter has presented the methodology for this study of the emotional intelligence levels of secondary assistant principals in Johnson County. The purpose of this study was to explore self-perceptions of emotional intelligence skills of secondary school leaders so as to determine areas of needed growth and inform development of professional development opportunities in the domains of communication, interpersonal skills, and intrapersonal skills. The ultimate goal of this research was to create a curriculum for professional development for leaders in the district. The researcher invited all 81 assistant principals in the school district, and 20 of them (or nearly 25%) agreed to participate.

## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND THE EVIDENCE-BASED SOLUTION

**Introduction**

This study was designed to examine the emotional intelligence levels of assistant principals at secondary schools in Johnson County, Florida to determine needs for support and professional development. Preliminary data obtained through Johnson County climate surveys, teacher attrition rates, a study of the Florida leadership standards and 21st-century leadership skills, and an analysis of annual evaluation data from prior years indicated that such support could be beneficial in Johnson County. The emotional intelligence assessments were intended to identify needs in communication and in interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. The chapter is organized in two sections; it first reports the findings and then provides the problem-based solution.

Through this dissertation in practice, the researcher studied assistant principals at the secondary level in order to discover strengths and weaknesses in emotional intelligence in order to inform and develop professional development to encourage leadership growth to support teacher satisfaction

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this case study was to examine emotional intelligence levels in assistant principals in secondary schools in Johnson County in order to determine if there was a need for support and development. The researcher analyzed the data gathered from the emotional intelligence appraisal to inform the second phase of the dissertation in practice. Further steps were to make recommendations regarding an emotional intelligence professional development program that will be created for school leaders to increase areas or domains of emotional intelligence

### **Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study was to create a proposed curriculum outline for a professional development program in order to develop emotional intelligence among secondary assistant principals in Johnson County Schools.

### **Review of Study Design**

The research utilized both demographic data as well as an examination of emotional intelligence subset levels to determine trends in the data sets. Data collection started after approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Creighton University and permission from Johnson County Schools' Office of Accountability and Evaluation. An updated roster of 2015-2016 secondary schools' assistant principals within Johnson County was requested by the researcher in August. Formal letters were then sent to the school addresses of all potential participants. Out of the 81 potential candidates, 20 individuals responded by email and agreed to participate in both the demographic survey as well as the emotional intelligence assessment, as reflected by a 25% return rate. Instructions were then communicated to the individuals to access the password protected emotional intelligence tests and the demographic surveys. All 20 participants did complete both steps of the information gathering surveys. Useable data were collected from all 20 participants.

SurveyMonkey.com was used to create a 10-question demographic survey to gather additional information from the participants. Data was collected in the following areas: age, gender, years of experience as an assistant principal, years total in public education, the year the individual started teaching, degree earned, his or her current secondary level, race, and the previous year's annual evaluation rating.

The emotional intelligence levels were gathered utilizing Bradberry and Greaves’ Intelligence Me-edition assessment (2015). Individuals were assessed in the areas of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management and given a score out of 100. Scores were based on a normed sample from the general population as set from the TalentSmart Emotional Intelligence Appraisal. Demographic data on the participants, obtained through the 10-question online demographic survey, are contained in Figure 1.

Demographic	Variable	Number	Percent
Gender	Male	11	55%
	Female	9	45%
Age	30-35	1	5%
	36-40	5	25%
	41-45	5	25%
	46-50	3	15%
	51-55	3	15%
	56-60	3	15%
Years of experience as an assistant principal	1 to 5	8	40%
	6 to 10	6	30%
	11 to 15	5	25%
	16 to 20	1	5%
Degree earned	M.Ed.	14	70%
	Ed.S.	4	20%
	Ed.D.	2	10%
2014-2015 Evaluation rating	Unsatisfactory	1	5%
	Effective	14	70%
	Highly effective	5	25%

Figure 1: *Demographic data of participants*

Of the 20 participants, 11 (55%) were men and 9 (45%) were women. In addition to the information presented in the table some additional demographic information was collected. Participants reported (75%) as Caucasian and 5 (25%) as African American. The participants spent an average of 19 years working in public education, with a range of 10 to 35 years of experience. This information was reported in addition to their years serving as an assistant principal.

### **Results of the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal**

The Emotional Intelligence Appraisal – Me Edition created by Bradberry and Greaves under the company TalentSmart was utilized by the researcher to collect the data. The survey is a 28-question Likert-style survey that asked participants to respond to the four components of Goleman's Emotional Intelligence theory. The 28 questions were distributed in the following way: six questions on self-awareness, nine on self-management, five in the area of social awareness, and eight items in the area of relationship management. According to TalentSmart (2015), the test was very reliable and was held to the strictest research standards in both design and validation; with the reliabilities for the four skills yielding coefficient alphas ranging from 0.79 to 0.92 with the Cronbach's alpha measured at 0.85 to 0.91 (TalentSmart, 2015). The normative sample size was over half a million participants and provided the researcher administering the test with an overall score and individual scores in each one of the domain areas. The survey was provided in an online secure platform in which only the participant was provided the login and unique individualized code. Emotional intelligence scores of the 20 participants are provided in Table 1.

Table 1

*Participants' Emotional Intelligence Scores*

Participant	Total EI score	Self-awareness	Self-management	Social Awareness	Relationship management
AP #1	93	98	93	95	85
AP #2	75	82	71	70	75
AP #3	77	72	81	83	81
AP #4	73	69	79	70	73
AP #5	86	82	79	90	91
AP #6	75	72	79	74	75
AP #7	66	69	63	64	67
AP #8	91	82	91	95	95
AP #9	77	72	85	77	75
AP #10	77	78	81	74	75
AP #11	79	78	73	87	79
AP #12	80	82	89	80	69
AP #13	81	82	81	77	85
AP #14	86	88	87	83	85
AP #15	80	82	77	80	79
AP #16	74	85	71	61	79
AP #17	77	78	69	80	79
AP #18	77	75	75	77	81
AP #19	83	88	93	74	77
AP #20	94	94	83	80	77

As indicated in Table 2 below, the participating assistant principals had a mean score of 79.55 for total emotional intelligence score, with a range of 66 to 93, a standard deviation of 6.33 and a median of 78. In the subcategory of self-awareness, the mean was 80.4 with a range of 69 to 98, a standard deviation of 7.82, and a median of 82. In the subcategory of self-management, participants had a mean of 80 with a range of 63 to 93, a

standard deviation of 8.22, and a median of 79.5. The lowest mean in this dataset was in the category of social awareness, with an average score of 78.55, a range of 61 to 95, a standard deviation of 8.96, and a median of 78. Finally, the relationship management subscale had a mean of 79.1 with a range of 67 to 95, a standard deviation of 6.75, and a median of 79.

Table 2

*Means and Standard Deviations on the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal*

Emotional Intelligence Subscales	Range Minimum	Range Maximum	Mean	SD
Self-Awareness	69	98	80.40	7.82
Self-Management	63	93	80.00	8.22
Social Awareness	61	95	78.55	8.96
Relationship Management	67	95	79.10	6.76
Total Emotional Intelligence	66	93	79.55	6.33

Trends in the data were examined to determine if any correlational relationships existed with the demographic data utilizing a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient in IBM’s SPSS software. A Pearson product-moment correlation utilizes the bivariate correlation to determine if two variables are linearly related to each other represented the p-value to determine if the data were significant. If the significance was detected then the Pearson “r” was analyzed to determine the strength of the relationship. Mathematically the “r” reflects the degree to which two variables are related. The output is a number that ranges from -1 to 1, where -1 is a perfect negative correlation, 0 is no correlation, and 1 is a perfect positive correlation. Correlation is an effect size, Evans (1996) suggested descriptive language was used to describe the strength of the value of “r” as indicated:

- .00-.19 “very weak”
- .20-.39 “weak”
- .40-.59 “moderate”
- .60-.79 “strong”
- .80-1.0 “very strong”

The first correlation examined was the relationship between years of experience as an assistant principal and total emotional intelligence score. The results are reflected in Table 3 and Figure 1. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between years as an assistant principal and the individual’s total score on the emotional intelligence appraisal. The findings were not significant as reflected by the output,  $r(18) = .20, p = .41$ . A scatterplot summarizes the results Figure 2.

Table 3

*Relationship Correlation Between Years of Experience as an Assistant Principal and Emotional Intelligence Appraisal Scores*

		Total EI	Years as AP
Total EI	Pearson Correlation	1	.196
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.408
	N	20	20
Years as AP	Pearson Correlation	.196	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.408	
	N	20	20

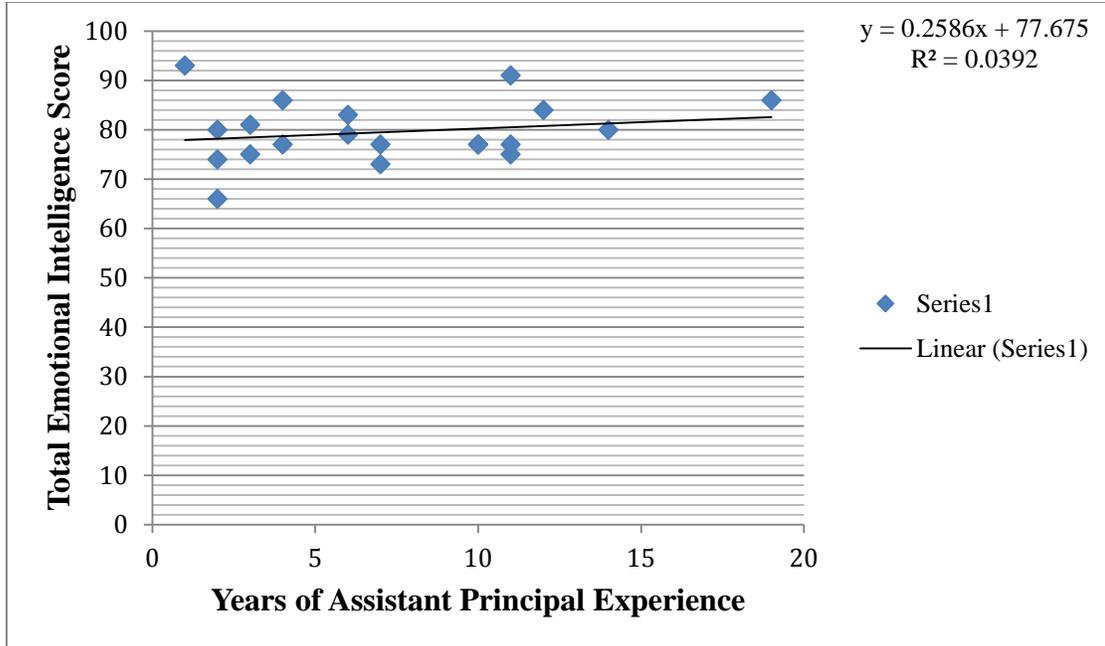


Figure 2. Scatterplot of relationship between years of experience as an assistant principal and emotional intelligence appraisal scores.

The second relationship examined was between age and total emotional intelligence scores. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between age and the individual’s total score on the emotional intelligence appraisal. The relationship between the variables were not significant as reflected by output  $r(18)=.07$ ,  $p = .77$ . A scatterplot summarizes the results in Figure 3.

Table 4

*Relationship Correlation between Age and Total Emotional Intelligence Appraisal Scores*

		Total EI	Age
Total	Pearson Correlation	1	.070
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.770
	N	20	20
Age	Pearson Correlation	.070	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.770	
	N	20	20

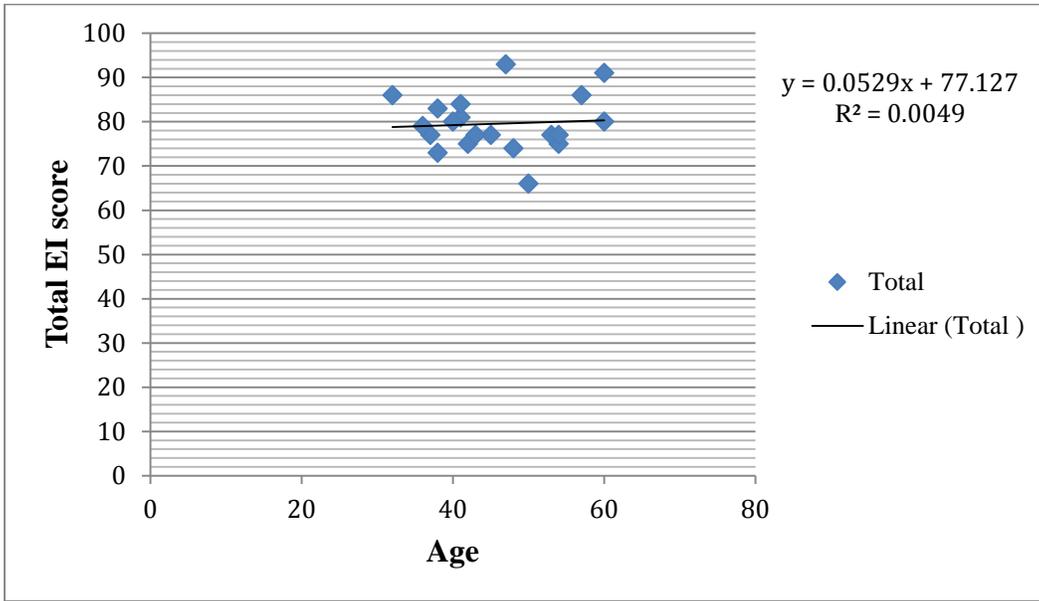


Figure 3. Scatterplot of relationship between emotional intelligence score and age.

The relationship between the assistant principals’ annual evaluation score on the Johnson System for Empowering Leaders (JSEL) and their total emotional intelligence score was also studied. Leaders who scored lower (either “effective” or “needs improvement”) on annual evaluation data than those rated as “highly effective” gave

themselves, on average, higher scores on the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal, as reflected in Table 5. Each JSEL evaluation score was coded into SPSS as a nominal number to run the bivariate tests. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between the annual evaluation ratings and the individual's total score on the emotional intelligence appraisal. There was a weak correlation between the two variables,  $r(18) = -.46, p = .39$ . This is reflected in Table 6.

Table 5

*Total Emotional Intelligence (EI) Averages and VSEL Ratings*

Total EI score	2015 JSEL rating	SPSS coding
74	effective	2
75	effective	2
77	effective	2
79	effective	2
80	effective	2
83	effective	2
84	effective	2
86	effective	2
91	effective	2
93	effective	2
<b>81</b>	<b>average</b>	
66	highly effective	3
73	highly effective	3
75	highly effective	3
80	highly effective	3
81	highly effective	3
<b>75</b>	<b>average</b>	
<b>86</b>	needs improvement	1

Table 6

*Relationship Correlation between JSEL Rating and Total Emotional Intelligence Appraisal Scores*

		Total	VSEL rating
Total EI	Pearson Correlation	1	-.464*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.039
	N	20	20
JSEL rating	Pearson Correlation	-.464	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.039*	
	N	20	20

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Scores on the individual subcategories of the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal are shown in Table 7 highlighting the subcategory where individuals scored the lowest. Seven of the 20 participants had a lower score in self-management than in the other three categories. The overall average in social awareness was the lowest at 78.6, slightly below the average score of 79.1 in relationship management. The other two averages were at or slightly above 80.

Table 7

*Participants' Lowest Subcategory Scores*

Participants	Self-Awareness	Self-Management	Social Awareness	Relationship Management
AP #1	98	93	95	<b>85</b>
AP #2	82	71	<b>70</b>	75
AP #3	<b>72</b>	81	83	81
AP #4	<b>69</b>	79	70	73
AP #5	82	<b>79</b>	90	91
AP #6	<b>72</b>	79	74	75
AP #7	69	<b>63</b>	64	67
AP #8	<b>82</b>	91	95	95
AP #9	<b>72</b>	85	77	75
AP #10	78	81	<b>74</b>	75
AP #11	78	<b>73</b>	87	79
AP #12	82	89	80	<b>69</b>
AP #13	82	<b>81</b>	77	85
AP #14	88	87	<b>83</b>	85
AP #15	82	<b>77</b>	80	79
AP #16	85	71	<b>61</b>	79
AP #17	88	93	<b>74</b>	77
AP #18	94	83	80	<b>77</b>
AP #19	78	<b>69</b>	80	79
AP #20	75	<b>75</b>	77	81
Averages	80.4	80.0	78.6	79.1
Total lowest	5	7	5	3

The next relationship examined was the association of gender and emotional intelligence scores. The women participants on average scored higher than the men with an average of 81, compared to the men’s average of 78.36 on the total emotional intelligence assessments. Women outscored men in three of the four subscales; men had a higher average in self-awareness (81.27) than women (79.33). The full data set is reflected in table 8. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the

relationship between the gender of the participants and total emotional intelligence scores.

As indicated in Table 9, the findings were not significant as reflected by the output,  $r(18)$

= .21,  $p = 0.37$ .

Table 8

*Emotional Intelligence Appraisal Scores by Gender*

Participant	Total	Self-Awareness	Self-Management	Social Awareness	Relationship Management	Gender
AP #1	66	69	63	64	67	female
AP #7	73	69	79	70	73	female
AP #4	77	72	81	83	81	female
AP #3	77	72	85	77	75	female
AP #9	80	82	89	80	69	female
AP #12	86	82	79	90	91	female
AP #5	86	88	87	83	85	female
AP #14	91	82	91	95	95	female
AP #8	93	98	93	95	85	female
<b>Averages</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>80</b>	
AP #16	74	85	71	61	79	male
AP #2	75	82	71	70	75	male
AP #6	75	72	79	74	75	male
AP #10	77	78	81	74	75	male
AP #17	77	78	69	80	79	male
AP #18	77	75	75	77	81	male
AP #11	79	78	73	87	79	male
AP #15	80	82	77	80	79	male
AP #13	81	82	81	77	85	male
AP #19	83	88	93	74	77	male
AP #20	84	94	83	80	77	male
<b>Averages</b>	<b>78.4</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>78</b>	

Table 9

*Relationship Correlation between Gender and Total Emotional Intelligence Appraisal Scores*

		Total	Gender
Total EI	Pearson Correlation	1	.213
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.368
	N	20	20
Gender	Pearson Correlation	.213	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.368	
	N	20	20

**Analysis and Synthesis of Findings**

The aim of this study was to create a professional development program in order to develop emotional intelligence awareness among secondary assistant principals in Johnson County. In order to develop the professional development opportunity for the district, the researcher had to first determine if there was a need and where was the need. Overall results suggest a need for support and development in the area of emotional intelligence. Only 2 of the 20 participants achieved an overall strong rating of 90 or higher denoting mastery; the other 90% had areas needing improvement. The need for growth was found in all four subcategories or domains. There was no significant data to suggest that there is a relationship between the variables and total emotional intelligence. The only data that provided a weak correlation was between JSEL annual evaluation scores and emotional intelligence levels, suggesting that staff at all experience levels could use support and training.

Although the average scores were slightly higher in the areas of self-awareness and self-management than in relationship management and social awareness, there was not a large enough discrepancy to justify focusing on one area over the other. The data indicated that growth is needed in all areas. Based on the variety of subscale results, a suitable training program will need to be differentiated based on the participants' individual needs.

While there were some domain areas of strength related to gender, again the differences were not a wide enough gap to be significant in planning a training curriculum. According to Goleman (1998), men generally score higher in areas of intrapersonal skills while women usually score higher in interpersonal or social skills. This trend was somewhat reflected in the data (see Table 8), as men scored higher only on the subscale of self-awareness, but not to a sufficient degree to justify gender-based variation in training. Rather, the training program should be targeted at individual needs, not at all men or women as a group.

### **Summary**

This study examined assistant principals' emotional intelligence levels in connection with background and demographic information as self-reported by participants in order to identify the need for emotional intelligence training in areas of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills as well as any trends in the data. The results reported in this chapter demonstrate that 90% of participants could benefit from a professional development program in this regard. Demographic and background information did not indicate any strong trends that would influence specific areas of focus in the training curriculum. Rather, an emotional intelligence training program should be individualized

for the needs of each participant. Such an approach would be more effective than a one-size-fits-all training program.

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Introduction**

Improving emotional and social intelligence within secondary assistant principals in Johnson County begins with improved professional development. Strides forward could be made with the implementation of an organized development and training plan. As illustrated in Chapter 2, emotional intelligence and the skills related to this concept are paramount for the success of leaders and can be strengthened with support and training (Goleman, 1998). The Johnson County Schools have had to contend with many threats in the last few years, such as budget cuts, a high teacher attrition rate, a hostile school climate, and a decrease in funding for training and support programs. Nevertheless, a training program in emotional intelligence could foster a more empathetic, open, and communicative work environment for all persons. The real solution is to continue growing and developing as school leaders to inspire change. However, taking time to learn such behaviors and skills would be advantageous not only in day-to-day interactions but also for the school climate as a whole.

This study indicated such a need for self-reflection and improvement within secondary levels in the areas of interpersonal and intrapersonal communication and skills. Johnson County's experience is reflective of that in many other institutions and school districts. The focus of this study on emotional intelligence in educational leaders is to add to the growing body of research on emotional and social intelligence in public education and on how to develop training programs that can best address the need within large public education institutions. The recommendations within this chapter are concentrated on the Johnson County Schools, but they could be readily applied to other institutions as

well. Recommendations focus primarily on creating a multi-tiered emotional intelligence training program that will be delivered through a year-long, individualized, and multilayered approach to emotional intelligence learning and development.

### **Summary of the Study**

This study was developed to examine the emotional intelligence levels of assistant principals in the secondary schools of Johnson County, Florida and identify needs for support and development. The data gathered were used to inform plans for a suitable training program, if needed. Further recommendations for an emotional intelligence training and support program are organized so as to assist school leaders in improving their capacity in the various domains of emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence can be beneficial to contemporary leaders in all institutions (Bradberry & Greaves, 2003, Cherniss, 2003; Goleman, 1998). Whereas emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize and understand emotional information in oneself, social intelligence is the ability to see it in others, and cognitive intelligence is the ability to use that information in situations to produce effective or superior performance (Boyatzis, 2009). According to Riggio, Riggio, Salinas, and Cole (2003), both social and emotional intelligences are intertwined as part of the “people skills” that leaders need in order to be successful, and their qualities overlap. Emotional intelligence may be an effective key in impacting school climate, influencing positive behavior, increasing employee satisfaction, and enhancing a systems-based thinking environment for growth and change (Goleman & Senge, 2014). Emotional intelligence is considered to be an indicator of success for school leaders (Goleman, 2006). There are four distinct domains of emotional intelligence, an individual could be strong in one area, but may need

development in another area (Goleman, 2006). The most successful leaders are strong in all four domains of emotional intelligence (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009).

The methodology involved the collection of data utilizing a case-study structure to inform the evidence-based solution of creating a training program for Johnson County secondary schools' assistant principals. Data were obtained by means of a self-reported emotional intelligence appraisal created by Bradberry and Greaves (2003) and a 10-question demographic survey. Additional data to inform this research was collected from the school district, national statistics, and county climate surveys from the 2014–2015 school year.

The data reflected a need for emotional intelligence support and training among 18 of the 20 participants (90%). The need for growth was found in all four subcategories or domains. Demographic data were analyzed in correlation to the total emotional intelligence appraisals. When analyzed, the only statistically significant data was a weak correlation between JSEL evaluation ratings and emotional intelligence levels, suggesting that staff at all assistant principals could use support and training.

The average scores were slightly higher in the areas of self-awareness and self-management than in relationship management and social awareness. The scores were not that drastic that it would warrant focusing on one area (intrapersonal or interpersonal) over the other. The data indicated that growth is needed in all areas. Based on the range of subscale results, an appropriate training program will need to be differentiated based on the participants' individual needs.

While there were some domain areas of strength related to gender, the differences were not a wide enough gap to be significant in planning a training curriculum. Rather, the

training program should be targeted at individual needs, not at all men or women as groups.

Background and demographic information showed no correlations that would affect specific areas of focus for a training curriculum. As reported in Chapter 4, a training program should be individualized to address the needs of each participant rather than undifferentiated and uniform. My recommendation is to create a multi-tiered emotional intelligence professional development program for assistant principals that will be delivered through a year-long, individualized approach, utilizing multiple delivery strategies and platforms to support efficient learning and development.

Emotionally intelligent and socially perceptive leaders are key to school improvement. Those who are rated highly in the areas of emotional intelligence do report higher in job performance (Bradberry & Greaves (2009), Goleman (1998) Joseph, Jin, Newman, & O'Boyle, 2015). There are many emotional intelligence skills that overlap with important leadership constructs such as emotional stability, conscientiousness, self-efficacy, and positive transformational leadership behavior (Joseph et al., 2015). With attention and focus at the training and development level of school leaders, one can better equip schools for success by training individuals to become better in emotional intelligence and thus better at their jobs. School leaders with higher levels of emotional intelligence are skilled in decision making, creating change, flexibility, decision making skills, empathy, stress tolerance, and accountability (Bradberry & Greaves, 2003). If this study is a reflective sample of many secondary high schools in the country, we have room for improvement. Creating programs for support for current instructional leaders, as well as support for future instructional leaders is a valuable investment for our schools.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this case study was to examine emotional intelligence levels in assistant principals in secondary schools in Johnson County in order to assess their need for support and development. Data gathered from the emotional intelligence appraisal was used to inform recommendations regarding an emotional intelligence training and support program to improve school leaders' capacity in specific domains of emotional intelligence.

### **Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study was to create a leadership training curriculum in order to develop emotional intelligence among secondary assistant principals in Johnson County Schools.

### **Implementation of Solution Processes and Considerations**

A program outline and curriculum using the relevant literature, the data from this study and additional studies, and the additional datasets mentioned previously is being developed. Recommendations for implementation include:

- Increased attention and focus in educational leadership preparation programs. This could easily be incorporated as many programs have communication courses that would lend themselves well to how to build relationships and communicate more effectively using interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. The JCS data reflected that all areas could use development, thus a program should focus on the individual's strengths and areas of focus. All four domains should be examined.
- Increased focus and concentration in teacher education programs at the undergraduate levels. While assistant principals serve as school-based leaders,

teachers are leaders within their own classrooms. Attention to this area early in a professional career, will add a base for growth and development over a profession.

If reflection took place early in a career, it could serve as a foundation for growth.

- Educational leadership evaluations that are reported to the state should have social and emotional intelligence as a concentration as reflected in communication skills. Currently, the state of Florida focuses on communication as one of ten leadership standards. These standards also align with a The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC). According to the Florida Department of Education (2015) the leadership rule 6A-5.080 that describes the area of communication states:

Communication. Effective school leaders practice two-way communications and use appropriate oral, written, and electronic communication and collaboration skills to accomplish school and system goals by building and maintaining relationships with students, faculty, parents, and community (Florida Principal Leadership Standards, Standard 9)

If a component on an annual evaluation, then interpersonal and/or intrapersonal communication could be focused on in evaluations. It could serve as an individual's professional development plan and could be evaluated by principals and superintendents. The data from JCS reflected that social competencies of social awareness and relationship management were less than the personal competencies of self-awareness and self-management. While both are vital to communication, that standard specifically points out the importance of "two-way

communication.” If JCS is a reflection of other districts in the state, this is an area that needs to be addressed through formal focus by the evaluator and reflection of the assistant principals

- An emotional intelligence assessment could be given prior to receiving an assistant principal position in school. This could serve as a starting point to determine areas of growth and development. The assessment would not keep someone out of a position, but to serve as a diagnostic assessment. These scores could be analyzed by individuals to find areas of growth. These diagnostic scores could then serve as formative assessments as the individual grows in the profession. Not only could the individual use the scores as reflection, but the supervising principal could use these scores to determine areas of growth and development, but they could also be utilized to mentor and coach the individual in the areas. The state of Florida requires newly hired assistant principals to keep a portfolio with artifacts such as the Florida Educational Leadership Exam (FELE), certifications, and letters of recommendation. An emotional intelligence exam could easily be incorporated into a portfolio as a starting point for an Individualized Professional Development Plan to develop domains over a set amount of time. As mentioned previously, there was a weak correlation between annual evaluation scores and emotional intelligence totals, if it was a concentration early on in a career, it could serve as a foundation to build on through a career.

### **Implementation of Professional Development Program within Johnson County**

A presentation will be made to school district stakeholders to encourage initiation of this program during the 2016–2017 school year. Implementation of an emotional and

social intelligence curriculum could be integrated into a 10-module training program if this proposal is accepted by the district curriculum office. Caffarella and Daffron (2013) identified the need to build a solid base of support as an essential step in planning a successful program or training. Support for implementation would have to be garnered from additional stakeholders to encourage mindset shift and deployment of necessary resources. As mentioned previously, adult programming and learning must be well considered and planned prior to implementation. Caffarella and Daffron (2013) cited five primary purposes of adult education: continuous growth and development of individuals, assisting individuals in responding to practical problems, preparing people for current and future opportunities, adapting to change, and fostering change for the common good. A program in emotional and social skills could potentially impact all five areas if planned appropriately.

### **Proposed Solution for Johnson County**

Data including the TalentSmart Emotional Intelligence Appraisal—Me Edition, district climate surveys, teacher attrition rates, and annual evaluation data all indicate a need for support in intrapersonal (self) and interpersonal (social) skills related to emotional intelligence. Capacities in all four subcategories could benefit from overall improvement and development in the district.

The intent of a professional development program focused on emotional intelligence would be to equip Johnson County assistant principals to provide more meaningful interactions and leadership with teachers and staff in the school district. As mentioned in Chapter 1, this school district has experienced many hardships in recent years, including funding cuts that have reduced training opportunities for school leaders.

A focused training curriculum on emotional intelligence could encourage both new and veteran leaders to improve their skills in the areas of communication, empathy, and meeting the needs of the stakeholders within their community.

### **Proposed Solution for Current School Leaders**

While suggestions for Johnson County are based on preparing assistant principals that are already in a leadership position, emotional intelligence can be easily incorporated into educational leadership preparation programs for individuals that are considering moving into an administrative position in the future. According to Quin, Deris, Biscchoff & Johnson (2015), research in the last 10 years suggests that many educational leadership preparation programs are failing to prepare individuals for that role citing research studies that suggest that programs does not have the unity, purpose, and vision to prepare leaders to increase achievement. According to their study, in order to have a successful program that prepares leaders a program must have the following focus on creating transformational leaders: inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, encouraging the heart, and modeling the way (Quin et al., 2015). Transformational leaders are described as exhibiting inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, and individual consideration. (Quin et al., 2015).

With a focus on developing interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, Davis & Darling- Hammond (2012), found that emotional intelligence was key to a successful leadership program, claiming effective leaders have the ability to:

- 1) Influence teacher feelings of efficacy, motivation, and satisfaction, 2) establish the organizational and cultural conditions that foster a positive environment for

teaching and learning, 3) promote professional collaboration, 4) promote and support the instructional abilities and professional development of teachers, 5) focus resources and organizational systems toward the development, support, and assessment of teaching and learning, and 6) enlist the involvement and support of parents and community stakeholders. (p.43).

Design in leadership programs is key to ensure emphasis on these skills prior to assuming a position of leadership within a school. Self-reflection early on the career path of an assistant principal will ensure a stronger skillset as principal in the areas of emotional intelligence and social competence.

### **Developing the Four Domains of Emotional Intelligence in Assistant Principals**

The four domains of emotional intelligence can be increased through time, experience, and specific development and awareness (Goleman 2006). As described in Chapter 2, strength in the four domains of emotional intelligence can be developed through awareness programs and coaching that focuses on each individual area.

Intrapersonal and interpersonal skills have been the focus of many development programs and self-help books over the decades, such as Daniel Carnegie's popular book in 1936, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. With increased attention and focus, an individual can grow the four domains through reflection, education, and commitment (Goleman, 2006).

The first domain of emotional intelligence, self-awareness, can be built over time with increased focus on this particular area. Some methods for assistant principals to grow this area are to ask specific questions to elicit self-discovery. Some of these questions for reflection may include:

- What triggers you at school? What people or situations annoy or frustrate you?
- What do you do when you get frustrated at school? Describe your habits and reactions.
- What are some situations at school that bring out your best, highlight your talents, and let you shine?
- What do you do to mentally prepare yourself prior to dealing with a difficult situation or difficult individual?

Bradberry and Greaves (2009) suggest the following activities to address the domain of self-awareness:

- Keep a journal about emotions and reactions
- List values and priorities
- Create a list the things that push your buttons and be mindful of them during the day
- Seek feedback from others
- Get to know yourself under stress
- Observe the effect emotions have on others

The second domain of emotional intelligence, self-management, can also be developed through time and attention. Self-management is using the awareness of emotions to regulate actions and reactions to others. For school assistant principals, some of the questions that may add to further understanding and exploration may include:

- Have you ever lost your temper with another administrator or teacher? How did you react?
- What do you do when you are really stressed at school?

- Describe some situations that you contemplate how you are going to say something before saying it? What must you take into consideration?

Upon reflecting on these probing questions concerning self-management, one may also increase this domain by focused attention on language both verbal and nonverbal and training on how to use communication as a tool in the schools. Stress management is a key component to this area, there are many tools and techniques that can be shared to those that would like to increase this domain. Bradberry and Greaves (2009) also suggest breathing correctly and self-talk, in addition to visualization techniques to foster the growth of self-management. Techniques and focus on persistence, emotion regulation, and growth-mindset are also key areas that could be developed in this domain.

The domain of social awareness can be developed through coaching and self-reflection. Social awareness includes communication skills and emotional awareness of others to respond in an appropriate manner. When working with assistant principals, some of the reflection questions in this domain include:

- Do you feel like you are good at determining when a teacher is struggling? How do you know? What do you do?
- In education, change is constant and can cause stress in others; how do you handle a situation or news that you know is going to cause your staff or team stress?
- How do you communicate with your principal? What works well with your relationship? What can you improve?
- Some people are very difficult to work with, what have you done to build relationships with these difficult people?

Reflection and attention to the areas of social awareness can be something that is modeled and practiced with others. Professional development in this area may include hypothetical situations in which individuals can practice body language, empathy, and interpersonal communication skills. Bradberry and Greaves (2009) suggest the following activities to increase social awareness:

- Practice greeting others by name
- Be aware of body language – your own and others
- Practice carefully listening
- Watch body language of others and listen intently at meetings rather than take notes
- Be aware of the mood in a room and adjust accordingly

The final domain of emotional intelligence is the area of relationship management. When looking to increase this domain through training, attention needs to be focused on attention to building and maintaining positive working relationships and creating and strengthening trust. Some reflective questions in this domain may include:

- Have you ever experienced a time when an individual questioned your ability to do your job? Explain.
- Describe how you get results from your teachers and staff.
- What are the best parts of your job?
- Do you love your job? Why or why not?

After self-reflection in this domain additional steps may be taken at training opportunities such as practice, case studies, and conversations on this topic. Relationship

management may also be focused utilizing the following techniques according to Bradberry and Greaves (2006):

- Be curious and open to new things
- Enhance communication style
- Take feedback well
- Have tough conversations and make feedback direct and constructive
- Show when you care
- Acknowledge feelings of others

Emotional intelligence skills can be taught through professional development opportunities for individuals. Education, self-reflection, and purposeful practice are key to increasing any domain of emotional intelligence. Professional development programs can be organized to fit the needs of different participants. Careful consideration is key to developing this plan and creating commitment from participants.

### **Support for the Solution from Data Collected**

The purpose of the emotional intelligence appraisal for this study was twofold: to determine the need for a training program, and to examine participants' demographic and background variables to identify any trends or relationships that could better inform the training program if one was needed. The data suggested that a training program could be beneficial to this school district. The analysis of correlational data determined there were no significant areas of need dependent on any demographic variables. Participants' scores varied according to individual factors rather than gender, experience, age, race, or even annual evaluation data.

### **Existing Support Structure and Resources**

During the 2015–2016 school year, additional training and support activities for assistant principals, including a new monthly “AP Institute,” have been instituted by district personnel. While this program is still in its infancy, it is a good first step in providing support for school leaders. It could also provide a suitable context for incorporating an emotional intelligence training curriculum for Johnson County Schools’ assistant principals. This group meets 10 times during the school year. This would be a great place to implement a 10-module course that could meet during the AP Institute’s afternoon breakout sessions. When the present research project was first developed, there was nothing in place for leadership development within the school district. Now, with a monthly professional development system in place, integration of an emotional intelligence curriculum could be a natural fit for leadership support and growth.

### **Potential Barriers and Obstacles to the Proposed Solution**

Adult learners require a style of education different from what many traditional educational systems have in place. In adult education, the term *andragogy* is used to represent the need to bring in an individual’s experiences, make connections, and demonstrate relevance of what is taught (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013). In order to be successful, the presenter or program planner must take these elements into consideration. When he or she does so and successfully takes individuals’ strengths and weakness into account when developing the curriculum, this care for the individual or *cura personalis* creates a more meaningful and impactful training for the participants. Adults are not always compliant, and they learn and are motivated in very different ways, so special considerations are needed depending on the audience.

Additionally, the idea of “soft skills” is not always appreciated or valued in our extremely data-driven world. Individuals must recognize a need for improvement in the area of emotional intelligence, as part of a broader culture of continuous improvement. Without this recognition, many individuals see emotional intelligence as simply the equivalent of being a warm and nice individual rather than someone who possesses the skills described in Chapter 2. Education and information on the topic would be needed to garner interest and commitment to improvement in this area.

### **Change Theory**

Educational change is part of the culture of the Johnson County Schools. Change is constant, initiatives are evolving, and transformation is encouraged. As society changes, its changes are mirrored in our schools. Often, in public education, most individuals have very little to do with changes, since most of the decisions are made at a much higher level. But even if individuals cannot exert much influence within the extensive organizational hierarchy, they can control their own emotional intelligence and their day-to-day interactions with staff and teachers. These small changes model positive behavior and could have an overall arching impact on school success and culture.

Lewin’s theory, as described by Burke (2011), states that the behavior of all individuals must be unfrozen, changed, and then refrozen with the new, desired behavioral practices in place. Such change would have to be implemented over a year-long time period in order to be successful. Self-monitoring, reflection, and coaching would also be imperative to the refreezing of the behavior of the assistant principals in this district.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Key Players in Implementation**

For effective implementation to occur, district leaders would be key players. Without support from the school district's professional development office, the superintendent, and area superintendents, this program will not happen. Thus, careful detail and consideration must go into sharing the importance of this district plan for assistant principals.

Next to the district leaders, support must also come from the principals as school leaders. If the secondary school principals do not see emotional intelligence as an important characteristic for their administrative teams to develop, support for this program will be short-lived.

Since this proposed program focuses on assistant principals, they are the most central keys to program success. These individuals must be open, reflective, and ready to implement change into their lives. Growth in this field takes time and effort. Without dedication and self-reflection, change will not happen.

### **Suggestions for Implementation**

The researcher's role in implementing this program is multidimensional. First, the proposal for the program must be accepted by district stakeholders. This step will include creating a written proposal incorporating data collected for this dissertation and making connections to literature and research so as to highlight the benefits of support in developing emotional intelligence. Highlights of this proposal will include championing the growing body of literature indicating that great leaders are skilled in emotional intelligence. These leaders know how to regulate and to manage their own emotions, as well as how to manage relationships. Most researchers agree that emotional intelligence

skills can be increased through training and awareness (Goleman, 2006). Although this intelligence is shaped in childhood, emotional intelligence can be strengthened through professional growth and development later in life (Goleman, 2006). All leaders have room for growth and improvement; a training program would give these leaders a chance to focus on a new area of development.

The curriculum, if approved, will be multi-tiered and will include 10 face-to-face small group trainings, a self-assessment, a book study, an online Moodle communication system, and a final reassessment at the end of the year-long program. Curriculum will be designed utilizing research by Goleman, Bradberry and Greaves, and Boyatzis. It will be developed specifically for the Johnson County School District and for the Johnson County Assistant Principals Institute.

### **Evaluation and Timeline for Implementation**

The support program for secondary assistant principals within Johnson County will be proposed to district stakeholders in spring 2016. If approved, the program and curriculum will be finalized in summer 2016 for implementation in the Assistant Principal Institute for the 2016–2017 school year.

Evaluation and feedback are essential to the success of a new program. Programs must be evaluated to determine if the program's goals and participants' expectations were met and to what degree the program was overall successful. Evaluation can provide both quantitative and qualitative data that will make the program stronger and more meaningful for participants. Evaluation can be considered in terms of diagnostic, formative, and summative aspects. Diagnostic evaluation can serve as a predetermining factor, showing what the participants already know and what they would like to know. During this stage, a

preliminary emotional intelligence appraisal can be conducted for new participants and an individualized review can be offered to those who participated in this research sample. Additional formative assessments will need to be administered throughout the course of the program to ensure implementation and needs assessment. This step can be accomplished in a number of ways, such as being aware of the audience, encouraging dialogue and deep questioning, and watching body language. Checks for understanding, additional written pieces, and reflections will be collected as well. A summative assessment will occur at the end of the training via a survey and a repeat administration of the emotional intelligence appraisal.

Data will be collected in a number of ways to monitor if this professional development program is being successful as it moves forward. Data can be utilized collecting many of the documents that were utilized as baseline data to determine there could be growth in the area of emotional intelligence for this research study as discussed in Chapter 3. These documents include the county's climate surveys, teacher attrition rates, and assistant principal's annual evaluation data. The preliminary data from climate surveys indicated that the data reflected a wide range of dissatisfaction with school leadership. For example, a question asking teachers and staff to rate how well school leaders effectively engage stakeholders in the school's purpose and direction elicited some of the lowest ratings, with a county average of 3.6 on a 5-point scale. Staff members also gave school leaders an average rating of 3.6 in the area of accountability. During the 2014–2015 school year, the annual evaluation data showed that 80% of administrators in Johnson County did not score in the highest category which is ranked as “Highly Effective”. Baseline data was also garnered from reported attrition rates. Johnson Country

reported an 8.7% attrition rate of teachers leaving the profession; this percentage was much higher than the state average of 5%. In addition, the most recently published data (from the 2012–2013 school year) on the retention of first-year instructional staff showed a state average of 85% retention, whereas Johnson County Schools retained only 75% of their first-year teachers (Florida Department of Education, 2014). While many factors can have an impact on these data sets, if a support program was successful, percentages in these three areas should improve. Teacher job satisfaction would be reflected in the climate survey data and attrition rates and there should be growth in the percentage of assistant principals scoring highly effective on annual evaluations.

Evaluation feedback and data will be used to determine if outcomes were met during the first year of implementation. If successful, the program could be expanded to include assistant principals at the primary level, district personnel, and perhaps teachers and other staff in instructional positions.

### **Critical Pieces Needed for Implementation and Assessment**

Commitment from educational leaders throughout Johnson County is key to the success of this program. Commitment and dedication will be required not only from the participants of the program, but also from district and school-based leaders. As for tangible resources to ensure success, some monetary resources would assist implementation of the program by covering the cost of books and emotional intelligence appraisals.

Intangible resources will also be needed, among which the most precious one in the field of public education is time. If the Assistant Principal Institute continues during the 2016–2017 school year, this time will already have been set aside and afternoon

breakout sessions will be in place. If not, it will be more difficult to encourage school leaders to remove assistant principals from their own schools for training. Another format such as online or teleconference instruction would have to be considered. The format that may be most conducive to the material is small-group learning. The 81 secondary assistant principals are currently divided equally into two groups within the Assistant Principal Institute, who attend on A and B days; thus, the highest number of participants possible in the afternoon sessions would be around 40. This size is large enough to offer many different perspectives and opinions, along with smaller and diverse breakout groups for deeper discussion. If possible, the best format would be to create two separate sessions of 20 individuals to bring the number to a more manageable size, creating a smaller presenter-to-participant ratio and a more individualized learning experience.

Funds for professional development have been limited in recent years due to budget concerns. If funds are possible, allocations could be spent on Bradberry and Greaves (2003) *Emotional Intelligence Appraisal*, as well as *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* as a book study encouraging and fostering growth.

Marketing of this program could occur in several ways, including email, word of mouth, and encouragement by the area superintendents and district superintendent.

### **Summary of the Study**

The purpose of this case study was to examine emotional intelligence levels in assistant principals in secondary schools in Johnson County in order to assess their need for support and development. The researcher gathered data from the emotional intelligence appraisal to inform recommendations regarding an emotional intelligence training and

support program to improve school leaders' capacity in specific domains of emotional intelligence.

It was determined that there is a need for emotional intelligence support in all four domains among assistant principals at the secondary level in the Johnson County Schools.

Johnson County's assistant principals are diverse, talented, and motivated individuals who care about the success of their educational environment. They are educational leaders with a vast array of abilities, specializations, and characteristics; many of them have decades of experience. Secondary assistant principals in Johnson County are required to fulfill many different responsibilities on any given day, such as setting instructional goals, providing safety for students on campus, analyzing data, organizing standardized testing, and providing support for teachers and staff. With additional tools and encouragement in communication and social skills, Johnson County's assistant principals can continue developing 21st-Century leadership skills. Successful assistant principals build relationships, cohesion, and a positive climate in order to help teachers and students to succeed.

The data have demonstrated the need for support and encouragement in development of emotional intelligence among assistant principals, as well as interest in the topic as reflected by the number of administrators who voluntarily agreed to participate. Public education is constantly changing, rapidly growing, and evolving, and we are only as strong as our own self-reflection and evolution as leaders, educators, and as a school district.

### **Implications for Action and Recommendations for Further Research**

This study has illustrated the importance of emotional intelligence support for assistant principals in the secondary schools of Johnson County, but further actions could take place to promote the growing body of literature supporting emotional intelligence and education. Recommendations for further research include a study of elementary assistant principals in Johnson County to gauge emotional intelligence levels and compare the results to those at the secondary level. A study examining the school grade and assessment data under “Florida’s Annual Yearly Progress Report” and their correlation with school leaders’ emotional intelligence could further the establishment of a connection or lack thereof between leaders’ emotional intelligence levels and student success. This study could also be replicated on a larger scale, looking at additional school districts in the state of Florida and all over the country. Are certain school districts and states stronger in these areas? Does that feature have an impact on student achievement and teacher satisfaction? Further research is needed in this important area of public education and leadership.

### Summary

This study was developed to examine emotional intelligence levels of assistant principals in the secondary schools in Johnson County to determine if the data would reflect a need for support and development. The data gathered from the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal- Me Edition, reflected there was a need reflected in the overall scores of 18 out of the 20 participants. The researcher analyzed the data gathered from the emotional intelligence appraisal to inform the second phase of the dissertation in practice in which a training program will be created and implemented (if approved by district personnel) in the 2016-2017 school year.

The growing body of research and literature indicates that emotional intelligence can be beneficial to leaders in all institutions and the subsequent emotional intelligence skills are important to 21<sup>st</sup>-century leaders (Goleman, 1998; Bradberry & Greaves, 2003, Cherniss, 2003). While emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize and understand emotional information in oneself, social intelligence is the ability to see it others and cognitive intelligence is the ability to use that information and situations that produces effective or superior performance (Boyatis, 2009). Emotional intelligence may be an effective key in impacting school climate, influencing positive behavior, increasing employee satisfaction, and increasing a systems-thinking environment for growth and change (Goleman & Senge, 2014).

The researcher's methodology for this study involved utilizing a case study structure in one school district to inform the evidence based solution for Johnson county secondary schools' assistant principals. Evidence for support was reported through a self-report emotional intelligence appraisal created by Bradberry and Greaves (2003). In

addition to the appraisal, participants offered background and demographic information through a ten question survey. Additional data to inform this research piece was collected from the school district, national statistics, and county climate surveys from the 2014-2015 school year.

The data reflected there is a need for emotional intelligence support and training for the majority of the participants in this study, as reflected in 90 percent of participants. When examining background and demographic information in correlation with the emotional intelligence levels, there were very few trends to report or to influence specific areas of focus for a training curriculum, thus the training program proposed will be individualized to best fit the needs of all participants. If training is successful, growth of the program may include other school and district leaders and classroom educators in Johnson County.

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**Appendix A: Initial Invitation to Participate in Study**

September 24, 2015

Dear Mr./Ms. (surname inserted),

I would like to invite you to participate in a doctoral research study I am conducting through Creighton University to fulfill my degree in Educational Leadership. I will soon begin conducting research on secondary assistant principals and emotional intelligence levels. I am requesting that you consider being a part of my study by completing a short 5-to 10-minute Emotional Intelligence Appraisal created by Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves.

I assure you that names, identifiable characteristics, or schools will not be disclosed within my dissertation. The scores and any information will be kept coded and confidential.

If you do participate in the study, you will receive your individual scores on your Emotional Intelligence assessment; these tests may provide insight into your own leadership and communication style. It will provide you with an opportunity to identify your individual strengths as a leader and provide insight on how to build on them.

Thank you for your time and consideration. This research study has been approved by IRBs at both Creighton University and ██████ County Schools. I look forward to hearing from you. If you are willing to participate, please email me at [@creighton.edu](mailto:@creighton.edu) at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Christina Lapnow

**Appendix B: Follow-up Email with Directions for Participants**

Dear [participant],

Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in my doctoral study. I know how busy this time of year is, and I appreciate you taking the time to participate.

If you could first fill out the background information

here: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/xxxxxx](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/xxxxxx)

Next, the emotional intelligence appraisal can be accessed here:

[www.talentsmart.com/me/welcome](http://www.talentsmart.com/me/welcome)

Your unique password is: xxxxxxxxxxx

The assessment is not long and should only take 5 minutes to complete. On the first page, you will be asked to enter a name and email. Please feel free to enter my information if you would rather not put in your own. I have your information coded by a unique password. You will then be asked to fill in demographic and background information. Please note that these questions are used for the larger body of research conducted by the emotional intelligence company and their researchers and will not be used or accessed by me nor will it be used in my own research. Feel free to choose not to respond to these questions. On the next page, you will be directed to a Likert-scale survey in the domains of emotional intelligence. After you answer, you will be shown your strengths in the areas of emotional intelligence.

Please attempt to be as self-reflective as possible when filling out the survey. It really is a great way to learn more about your own personal leadership and communication style.

Thank you, again.

My kindest regards,

Christina Lapnow

**Appendix C:**

**Sample Questions from the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal—Me Edition**

(Sample copyrighted by TalentSmart, Inc.)

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Almost Always	Always
Hear what the other person is “really” saying						
Consider many options before making a decision						
Recognize the impact your behavior has on others						

**Appendix D: Emotional Intelligence Appraisal—Me Edition Permission**

## PERMISSION TO USE AN EXISTING TALENTSMART SURVEY

Date: 09/22/2015

Christina Lapnow, Doctoral Student

Creighton University, Nebraska

Thank you for your request for permission to use Emotional Intelligence Appraisal—Me Edition survey in your research study. We are willing to allow you to use the instrument, online, as indicated in our conversation with a 50% reduction in normal charge with the following understanding:

- You will use these assessments only for your research study and will not sell or use them with any compensated management/curriculum development activities.
- You will purchase one assessment per survey participant. The assessment, scoring, and report will not be reproduced in any way, as in agreement with intellectual property laws.
- You will send your completed research study and one copy of reports, articles, and the like that make use of these assessment data promptly to our attention, once complete.
- You will include no more than three sample items in the written copy.

If these are acceptable terms and conditions, please indicate so by signing one copy of this letter and returning it to us.

Best wishes with your study.

Sincerely,

Director of Programs & Assessments, TalentSmart

\*\*\*@talentsmart.com

I understand these conditions and agree to abide by these terms and conditions.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

Expected date of completion: