

DISSERTATION

INTUITION AND CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS OF
ADMINISTRATORS OF PROPRIETARY SCHOOLS

Submitted by

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the Degree of Philosophy

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, Colorado

Spring 2006

UMI Number: 3226117

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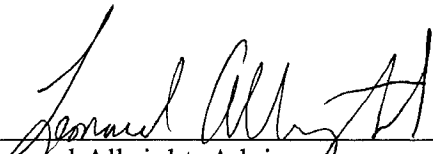
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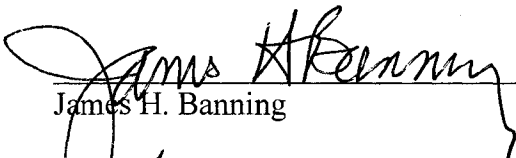
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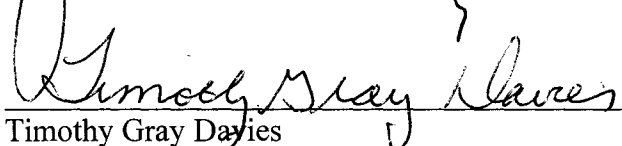
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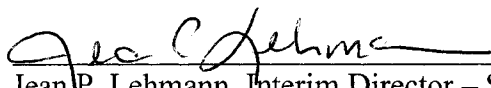
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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION
INTUITION AND CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS OF ADMINISTRATORS OF
PROPRIETARY SCHOOLS

This study focuses on an examination of current views, attitudes and uses of critical thinking and/or intuition in the decision making process by administrators in post secondary proprietary education. Those administrators/educational leaders included the Chief Executive Officer [CEO] at the corporate level and the school president and the academic dean at the local campus level. The study was limited to proprietary schools in the southeastern United States.

The purpose of the study was to gain a better understanding of how decisions were made utilizing critical thinking or intuition or both at the upper managerial level of the proprietary educational setting. Therefore, qualitative inquiry, based on the grounded theory approach, was the research method used. During the interviews, the administrators discussed their decision making process, explored their leadership skills and determined how they used critical thinking or intuition in the day-to-day operation of their school.

Most of the decisions made by school presidents and academic deans were routine in nature, such as book purchases, the various reports requested and budget items. They usually made their decisions based on similar events that had previously occurred from which they were able to intuitively draw from their experience. The CEO's, on the other hand, utilized more of their critical thinking skills as they created and developed various strategies in leading their corporations toward obtaining prescribed goals. Some of those

goals included increased corporate profits and positive returns for shareholders. However, in nearly every case, emotions influenced the decision-making process as well as spirituality and individual managerial style.

A passion among the administrators for their students' success was also revealed. However, most realized their responsibilities were two fold: they had a responsibility to the success of the business and the shareholders and they had a responsibility to the students and their future. Intuition and critical thinking were the decision-making tools that each of the administrators' admitted to using, depending on the situation, to obtain those objectives.

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Acknowledgements

As with any project of this magnitude, there are always the people who were close, supportive, loving and invaluable and to use the cliché, this project probably would not have been successful without them.

Without the encouragement, support and love of my wife LeA this huge step in my life would not have happened. “What did you do today?” was the common question around the Coe Household this past year. The next question, “What are we going to write today” came daily from Madison, with those huge brown puppy dog eyes. She stayed with me constantly throughout the writing process.

I thank Dr. Gene Gloeckner who put our program together for the Atlanta cohort along with the support of Dr. Lucie Phillip. Without their vision this really would not have happened. Dr. Gloeckner went “to bat” for us countless times even though we almost destroyed his house with bottle rockets one afternoon.

I also could not have received more support from Dr. Pamela Harroff, my dean and friend, if I had asked for it. She allowed me to take time off from teaching to travel to Colorado to work close with my committee and allowed me to bounce questions off her about the process.

While in Colorado for a month, I appreciated both the encouragement and support of Drs. Jim Banning and Tim Davies. I enjoyed working with both of you in class and getting to know you better during our on campus meetings. Your advice, encouragement and direction was invaluable. My only regret is that I wish I had gotten to know the fourth member of my committee Dr. Ken Smith better. However, I hope to be working on another project soon where we can work more closely together. It’s a privilege for me to

have each of you on my committee. As I told a panel discussion on the CSU campus, I had the best there is. And, of course, thanks also to each of the other professors who came to Atlanta for the in class portion of the program.

Being alone in Colorado can be a trying experience. I certainly must acknowledge the good friends I met, Ann and “Bongo Bob”; Jessica and Emily; Tim, one of the best musicians I have ever met; and Randi and Shelia --- thanks to all of you for keeping me sane and out of trouble. Thank you Dr. Terry Deniston who stayed close to me throughout my research. Thank you Dr. Jean Lehmann for your support and encouragement. And, Dr. Barb Nelson who helped get my project off the ground.

Being an advisor to me can be a tough job, just ask my wife or my mother or Dr. Len Albright. Without his guidance, encouragement (to keep rollin’), suggestions, questions and answers I would not have this research project, which I am truly proud. I can’t say how much I appreciate his patience and guidance.

Thanks again, from the bottom of my heart, for all that each of you has done for me.

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my father and mother,

Melvin E. Coe, Sr. and Kathryn C. Coe

My wife, LeA.

And

A very close friend Malcolm Gibson

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background/Overview

Educators are aware that some administrators are more effective as leaders than as managers. Some administrators, admittedly, are more effective as managers than leaders. Moreover, there is that rare administrator that carries both traits. Regretfully, some are neither managers nor leaders.

Walters and Marzano (2004) reviewed previously published studies that examined the effect academic leadership had on student achievement. They found a significant relationship between the two. They concluded that as administrative leadership was perceived to improve, benchmarked by positive feedback from students and faculty, so did student achievement. Good educational leadership seemed to make a difference in the quality schools.

Since proprietary schools operate in a for-profit environment, traditional managerial theory should apply. Hargreaves and Fink (2004) described managers in general as “creating only temporary, localized flurries of change that had little lasting or widespread improvement for their organizations in the long run” (p. 7). Andersen (2000) stated, “From time to time we hear that managers lack creativity and innovated [sic] ability to meet the future” (p. 46). Either of those events could be devastating in a

proprietary school where administrators face challenging conditions, struggle for fewer market dollars, better students and more qualified faculty (Sanchez, 1997).

Research Problem

Obviously educational leaders need certain training to be successful in their position even though there has been little to define what that training should be (Walters and Marzano, 2004). Most administrators began their career as students and then most likely became teachers before accepting an administrative role (Kunar, 1997). Kunar's research indicated that some teachers were more likely to use critical thinking in their classrooms than others. Her recommendation for further study asks, "Do students who had teachers who develop and enhance critical thinking skills experience more success in the workplace than those who had teachers who do not develop and enhance critical thinking" (p. 234)?

Many of our educational leaders earned their degrees from colleges offering similar curriculum (Mathern, 1998). Yet, it becomes apparent that they achieved different levels of success in their respective schools. In support of Kunar's discussion, traditional management theory recommends the use of critical thinking in the problem solving process. It is the belief of Spitzer and Evans (1997), that critical-thinking skills are the fundamental ingredients for good management. They found that in only a few companies was top management capable of making solid problem solving decisions.

However, Trailer and Morgan (2004) found managers skipping over "time consuming systematic analysis" (p. 42). Some no longer relied on critical thinking to make decisions; relying instead on their intuition. Besides the time factor, these

researchers cited several reasons including: “an increased need for visionary thinking, inspired leadership and complex imaging” (p. 42).

The research problem of this study, therefore, focuses on an examination of the current views, attitudes and uses of critical thinking and/or intuition along with the involvement of emotions in the decision making process of administrators and educational leaders who are involved in proprietary education. The educational leaders for this research include the Chief Executive Officer [CEO] at the corporate level of management, the school president and the academic dean at the local campus level.

Research Questions

The purpose of the research is to present a grounded theory understanding of the uses of critical thinking and intuition in the decision making process of educational leadership. More specifically, this is an inductive study of educational leaders and how they make decisions and is based upon research guided by three questions:

How are critical thinking skills used by educational leaders?

How are intuition skills used by educational leaders?

How can critical thinking and intuition be “tied” together?

A fourth question emerged during the research involving how emotions play a part in the decision-making process. Discovery was made into when and how intuitive and/or critical thinking skills are used in the administrative decision-making process and how emotions become involved.

Delimitations of the Study

There are many accredited proprietary schools nationwide. However, the scope of this study was focused on those schools, the CEO's, school presidents and academic deans in the southeastern United States. Although it probably would have been a richer study to interview administrators nationwide, geographic restrictions and the scale of the structure of some of the corporations and schools made that unrealistic. Consequently, the research remained focused on participants who were involved with proprietary schools in the southeast.

Limitations of the Study

Two limitations were faced during the research. The first involved the total number of schools involved in the research. There are several hundred proprietary schools nationwide. A precise figure is not available because some schools have gone out business, others have just opened, some are accredited and some are not (Burke, 2004). One hundred sixteen were identified as operating for profit in the southeast.

The second limitation involved the number of administrators, that fit the determined requirements. In addition, the outcome of the initial mailing asking for participation in the study was somewhat disappointing with 16 responses that resulted in actual interviews. A second mailing asking for participation was done resulting in an additional three responses.

Significance of the Study

A study by Burke and Miller (1999) indicated that there were gaps in the research of intuitive decision-making. They wrote that much of the research is conceptual and little quantitative or qualitative research has been done in field settings to support generalizations. Andersen's (2000) study of 200 managers spanning eight companies indicated that only a fourth of them considered themselves intuitive when solving problems and making decisions. About a third of Andersen's sample agreed that intuition in managers was an important asset to their organization. Anderson related intuition to organizational effectiveness, but was unable to empirically support the premise that intuitive managers are more effective than others.

Effective leadership in any business involves critical thinking (Kepner-Tregoe, 2000). Critical thinking is the ability to evaluate complex situations and solve problems and in order to do that, "We must actively evaluate all of the problem's aspects, which we can only accomplish through much practice and a real commitment to carving out time for thinking and planning ahead" (Hader, 2005, pg. 4). Critical thinking is not a common practice in today's management skills (Kepner-Tregoe, 2000).

Significance of Critical Thinking in Management

Channel (2000) reiterated the need for those in business to utilize critical thinking skills and be able to make decisions humanely and intelligently. The definitions of

management and leadership share a common thread in that they both control and/or direct a business or organization (Schermerhorn, 1993). Kepner-Tregoe (2000) identified several areas in which managers seem to be deficient: finding critical issues in complex situations; problem solving; finding the cause for what had gone wrong; making the best choice in the appropriate time frame; and identifying and responding to potential threats and opportunities.

Significance of Intuition in Management

Overell (2001) contends some managers rely on quicker, cheaper and allegedly more effective ways to make a decision. He believes many managers rely less on factual evidence and more on intuition. He contends reacting with a "gut feeling" can often lead to a better solution than merely using the evidence of facts and figures. Although many managers may find basing their decisions on intuition to be too subjective and not sufficiently analytical, it has become an important topic in corporate thinking and in discussions in many university management principles classes.

Hayashi (2001) incorporates aspects of intuition into organizational development, which he says can help avoid the pitfalls of "data paralysis" in corporate life. Intuition, he contends, encourages a culture of innovation and calculated risk-taking, which is also characteristic of entrepreneurship. Intuition presents the possibility of turning ideas into action by speeding up the decision-making process. The further up the "management ladder" people are, the more they rely on their intuition. Hayashi believes that 80% of all managers use intuition to make decisions.

Significance of Critical Thinking and Intuition in Management

Simon (1987) contends that managers should feel confident in approaching their decision making process from the perspective of both systematic and intuitive thinking. Senior managers and administrators deal with problems and opportunities that are made up of multiple and interrelated issues requiring multi-dimensional thinking or the ability to view many problems at once along with their emotional relationship to one another. Therefore, research into the combination of both critical thinking and intuition by management seemed appropriate.

Significance of Emotions in Management

Palombo-Weiss (2000) writes that throughout the history of Western civilization, there has been a conflict between emotion and thought. General wisdom of the ancients included, 'Rule your feelings, lest your feelings rule you.' Research conducted by neurologists shows a strong link between emotion and reason. As humans we are equipped to sense emotions, to have feelings. According to Palombo-Weiss (2000), emotions have an effect on the mind as they occur. Scientists also have discovered that the same areas of the brain that are involved in processing emotion are also involved in processing memory. This research became the foundation for the emergent question.

Summary

Challenges for educational leaders as a whole are mostly in the non-routine matters. Sanchez (1997) researched intuition and decision-making in higher education administration, but left out proprietary schools and limited his research to a single school.

He writes: “Higher education administrators, for the most part, care a great deal about making the right decisions consistently... It appears that intuition is a part of the decision making schemes of many higher education administrators” (p. 48).

In an effort to help educational leaders make more effective decisions, this study will clarify intuition, how it is used, and whether it can be trusted. Furthermore, intuition as a decision making tool will be compared with critical thinking. And, the effect of emotions on both critical thinking and intuition will be explored. However, the concern arises in regards to which management style of problem solving, critical thinking or intuition, is used successfully in specific situations; in other words, which administrator uses which style and under what conditions. My study provides proprietary educational leaders with empirical information on critical thinking, intuition and emotions and how any or all is used as a viable and recognized managerial process applied in decision-making.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This review will essentially follow the listing of the research questions for the study as presented in Chapter 3. Because the study centers on the management of proprietary schools and how those administrators (or educational leaders) use critical thinking and intuition in their decision-making, the review of literature begins with a look at proprietary schools, their history and operation.

A section on critical thinking follows, which is the foundation of the first research question: How are critical thinking skills used by educational leaders? The various definitions of critical thinking are presented, followed by a review of the literature of critical thinking and management.

The literature on intuition and its affect on management is examined, which is the basis of the second research question: How are intuition skills used by educational leaders? Definitions are explored before intuition and management are reviewed. And, finally in this section key works are reviewed on the specifics of the reliability of intuition.

Some administrators believe that critical thinking and intuition can be tied or used together, which is the foundation of the third research question: How can critical thinking and intuition be tied together?

During the interview process a fourth research question emerged from the study concerning emotions: How do emotions affect the decision making process? Therefore, the fourth section of this review of literature centers on emotion and its affect on management. Emotional intelligence is also explored. Anger was an emotion to which most of the administrators related in their decision-making. A discussion of the differences in how anger is handled among men and women and the differences in how anger is handled based on age are included in this section.

There are two intermediate emerging themes: management style and spirituality. These intermediate themes resulted following the interview sessions when different styles of management were discussed. And, with the study being based in the southeastern United States, spirituality played a part in several of the participants' decision-making process. An examination of pertinent literature involving these intermediate themes concludes the chapter.

Proprietary Schools

Introduction

The foundation of the study is built on the management of proprietary schools. This section begins with an overview of proprietary education followed by a review of proprietary education as a business. The terms proprietary and proprietary education are used interchangeably with for-profit and for-profit education.

An Overview of Proprietary Education

The demographics of American higher education have changed since the 1980s and 90s when a student's average age was around 25 years old. They were mostly working adult women who attended school on a part-time basis. Stereotypically, the average college student that should have been attending class full-time, was 18 to 22 years old and most would have lived on campus (Levine, 2001).

Students are now older. They attend school part-time and work full time. Many, especially those with children, are demanding a very different type of relationship with their college. Today's adult student brings more of a consumer attitude to higher education. They prefer relationships like those they have with the person who fixes their car (Levine, 2001). They are specific about what they want from their college: convenience, service, quality and low cost. According to Levine (2001), students want a stripped down version of higher education without the electives and the student activities.

For-profit institutions are mostly career oriented, offer a quality education, cut out some of the traditional frills such as sports, student centers and summer vacations; thus, making them more inviting to the non-traditional student (Sachdev, 2003). On the other hand, as proprietary schools adjust to meet accreditation regulations, many have started to offer more general education courses becoming more like the traditional universities. Their student support services sometimes exceed those of a traditional community college, especially in regards to retention and career placement (Bailey & Badway, 2001). They also seemed to have gained more respect from government agencies and especially from students (Farrell, 2002).

The growth of the for-profit, proprietary institution has "been one of the most watched trends in higher education" (Bailey and Badway, 2001, p. 5). Bailey and Badway's research also indicated that proprietary schools have been a topic of controversy within the traditional higher education realms since for-profit schools are beginning to compete more at the same level. This has increased the anxiety among both private non-profit and public colleges and universities (Bailey and Badway, 2001).

It is estimated that over 2,300 proprietary schools offer degrees and certificates. They are dominated by only a few corporate entities (Roueche, Roueche & Johnson, 2002). The Apollo Group's University of Phoenix has 58 campuses and 102 designated learning centers in 36 U.S. states, Puerto Rico, and Canada with a total student population of around 116,000 students. The University of Phoenix has also set up articulation agreements with at least 150 community colleges (University of Phoenix, 2004). Other national "brands" include DeVry, with 21 campuses enrolling 47,000 students (DeVry, 2004), and ITT with 78 campuses in 28 states (ITT, 2004).

Other private sector and even some traditional universities have been getting involved in the for-profit school market. For example, Kaplan, the testing company, has created an on-line law school. Sylvan has established a university in Europe. Harcourt General, the publisher, has plans for its own university. A company created by Larry Ellison and Michael Milken called Unext is offering an on-line MBA with its instructional units being prepared by Columbia, Stanford, University of Chicago, London School of Economics and Carnegie-Mellon. Caliber Learning Network is offering graduate education in cooperation with Johns-Hopkins, University of Pennsylvania and Teachers College (Levine, 2001).

Strict federal regulations have been imposed on proprietary schools, making them follow rules and regulations more similar to traditional post-secondary institutions and community colleges. One of the key figures federal regulators watch, according to Kim Molee (personal communication, 2004), Director of Placement at Emory University's School of Business, is the number of students obtaining jobs in their field in relation to the number of students graduating from proprietary schools.

Evidence also indicates that proprietary institutions could become a threat to community colleges due to the increasing student demand for specific occupational training (Zeiss, 1998). However, the number of students enrolled in proprietary schools still remains low in absolute terms as compared to the local community college (Bailey & Badway, 2001). While proprietary schools may be a competitor for postsecondary students, community colleges are expected to continue to offer their programs at relatively low prices, which will continue to give them a specific attractiveness toward much of the student population (Baldwin, 1997).

Proprietary schools typically charge about \$12,000 to \$15,000 a year in tuition, as they feed off the demand for the various perceived technology-related jobs. The average return to investors can be as high as 20% (Sachdev, 2003).

Summary

Proprietary education is big business generating billions of dollars for the corporations that own them. Overall, students are taking a consumer-based attitude when deciding on their education specifically looking for a quality education without the frills of a major university. For-profit schools seem to be filling that niche as growth they reach a near 100% growth rate.

Management of these institutions carry a huge responsibility to both students and the investors in the sense they must provide value in the education provided and a profit for the investors.

Critical Thinking Skills Used by Educational Leaders

Introduction

Before we can look at how educators employ critical thinking, we first must examine various definitions that have emerged from researchers and scholars. Proprietary schools are a business. They operate to make a profit. Critical thinking is reviewed under the auspices of business management.

Definitions of Critical Thinking

Definitions of critical thinking have been studied and debated over the years and continue to evolve. In the early 1900s, Dewey (1910), used the scientific method as a basis for his critical thinking studies. He coined the terms reflective thinking and inquiry. In his now classic book, *How We Think*, (1910) he summed up critical thinking as a

process of being reflective while encouraging his students to delay judgment. He persuaded them to maintain a healthy skepticism and open mind. At the time, his definition of critical thinking contained an intellectual and emotional component. For example, his students were expected to first examine the problem, find a solution, discover and report why they were or were not successful [test the hypothesis], and reflect on what they had learned from their successes or failures [feedback]; in essence, the scientific method.

Finding the critical issues in complex situations such as problem solving, finding the cause for what has gone wrong and making the best choice in appropriate time is how Pascarella (1997) defined his critical thinking process. He connected critical thinking skills with re-engineering and the learning organization. Pascarella says re-engineering is a call for discontinuous thinking or an effort to get management to change their decision framework and start over again. The learning organization on the other hand is a theoretical concept where workers continuously learn in their business environment. Knowledge and learning, according to Pascarella, should be a part of an organization's structure in order for it to advance in its strategic or operational direction identified by management.

Another way in which managers in particular learn is based on the circumstances in which an event or problem occurs. Managers take action and adapt their decisions according to the demands of the setting. Brookfield (as cited in Fiume, 2000) points out that effective managers have to become skilled in the art of *reading* the situation that they are attempting to organize or manage. It is Pascarella's belief that critical thinking serves as that mechanism that leads to that effective action. Critical thinking skills are an

important basic tool essential to effective management. Pascarella (1997) says, “Managers with good critical thinking abilities make the appropriate business decisions in solving organizational problems” (p.38).

Critical thinking can be seen as having two components: (a) A set of skills to process and generate information and (b) Beliefs and the habit of using those skills. Either can vary based on the intellectual commitment and the motivation behind it. When grounded in fair-mindedness and intellectual integrity, Paul contends critical thinking becomes a higher intellectual order (Scriven & Paul, 1992).

Thinking critically basically should include the following: (a) An ability to raise important questions and explore alternatives, (b) A sense of what is missing or needed to solve a problem, (c) The ability to deal with complexity and to form hypotheses, (c) A sensitivity as to the background of an issue, (d) A knack for separating important information from material that is peripheral or less relevant, (e) A healthy skepticism and a corresponding ability and willingness to test one’s theories and explore one’s feelings, (f) A willingness to challenge and be challenged, and (g) An ear for what others are saying and an ability to step into another person’s shoes. (Winn, 2004)

Business leaders usually agree upon the importance of critical thinking as both an educational and a managerial objective. Theories have been developed, research has been performed and assessment instruments created (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, 1991). Even though the concept of critical thinking has become more common in educational literature than in business managerial literature, early evidence did not embrace it as an essential value in either discipline (Johnson, 1992).

Critical Thinking and Business Management

Critical thinking generally though has not been openly acknowledged in the workplace (Fiume, 2000). However, Fiume's research indicates that critical thinking is embedded within the fabric of work settings. He was referring to various managerial concepts such as strategic planning, basic problem solving, and entrepreneurial risk taking. All are concepts inherent to the workplace drawing directly upon the idea of critical thinking.

Because the demands of the workplace are contextually specific and managers adapt their decision making process to the demands of context, there is a great deal of ambiguity involved. Several of the participants interviewed in Fiume's study mentioned that they were forced to make decisions without having all of the information at hand. Managers then, according to Fiume (2000) must be wary of any claims to total success or predictable certainty. He says, "rather than making decisions based upon total accuracy, managers look to their past experiences to speculate on possible solutions to problems" (p. 25). Managers calculate risks involved in different courses of action and then make their decision knowing that success is uncertain.

Critical thinking has been described as the mental work involved when one, especially a manager, is faced with a complex question. The quality of their solution depends upon many factors including: how much is known about the subject; how easily can relevant information be retrieved; how one conducts inquiry into a particular subject, for example the kinds of questions to be asked and how they are answered; the organization of the inquiry, for example, the goals that were set and how they were monitored and revised; the assumption that knowledge is constructed through human

inquiry and judged according to a criteria of adequacy rather than standards of ultimate truth; and, how much one really cares about the work at hand (Kurfiss, 1988).

Proprietary school administrators then should be able to, based on the various definitions of critical thinking, detect bias, recognize illogical thinking, avoid stereotyping, reach conclusions based on solid evidence and guard against any misinformation (Glen & Smoot, 1994). Their research on educational leadership revealed school administrators should be able to analyze different perspectives and make their judgments based on reasonable evidence and not on bias or their emotions. Emotions will be discussed later in this chapter.

However, every person educated or not should possess some, if not most of the capabilities of critical thinking. Individuals employ them to varying degrees that often depend on the time element and circumstances involved (Winn, 2004). Kuhn's (1991) research in critical thinking revealed that a significant number of students, and adults, still experience difficulties when faced with complex reasoning.

Thinking critically is also being able to appropriately and analytically respond to changes in modern society. (McKendree, Small, & Stenning, 2002). Equally important, critical thinking is viewed as a tool that effects a working and meaningful democracy (Dewey, 1910).

Critical thinking is a conduit to better decision-making. It is a process that involves a cognitive mapping of the problem, followed by assessing resolution requirements, such as additional information needs, to generating ideas that enables resolution of the problem, and finally to organizing validation of the solution (Williams, 2002).

Summary

Many researches agree that reflective thinking and inquiry is a short but reliable definition of critical thinking. It begins with finding the critical issues in complex situations. Additionally, business leaders also agree upon the importance of critical thinking as both an educational and a managerial objective. It is the mental work involved when managers investigate those complex situations. Unfortunately critical thinking has generally not been openly acknowledged in the workplace even though it has become a conduit to better decision-making.

Finding the critical issues in complex situations such as problem solving, finding the cause for what's gone wrong and making the best choice in appropriate time is a more detailed definition of critical thinking. It can be seen as having two components: a set of skills to process and generate information and beliefs and the habit of using those skills; which can vary based on the intellectual commitment and the motivation behind it.

However, business leaders usually agree upon the importance of critical thinking as both an educational and a managerial objective.

Intuition Skills Used by Educational Leaders

Introduction

Another decision-making tool, intuition, offers a reliable alternative to painstaking fact gathering and analysis. With the belief that intuition may be at the center of the decision making process and that analysis is at best a supporting tool for making

intuitive decisions, trust in intuition is understandable. However, if detached from rigorous analysis, intuition becomes an undependable guide (Klein, 2003).

In this section, the literature on intuition in management and business is reviewed. The section opens with several ideas on what intuition is. Literature on intuition and management is reviewed concluding with the reliability of intuition and a brief summary.

Definitions of Intuition

Intuition is integrated unconsciously into one's gathering of knowledge, intelligence, experience and the respect for the unknown. Intuition creates, what Glasser (1995), called a pattern of responsive and productive decision-making that results in a manager taking some kind of action.

However, small business managers, i.e. administrators serving smaller schools [200-300 students] do not have the resources or the staff to appropriately analyze all-important decision situations. However, decision aids are needed that are not demanding in time. Dependable resources are needed that can be worked into intuitive decision-making (Dianich & Gupta, 1983). Schmidt's (1995) research findings showed that by itself, intuition is valuable in problem-solving or in decision-making when situations exist where there is a great deal of change, complexity or uncertainty.

There is growing acceptance of intuition in decision-making even though, like critical thinking, intuition is hard to define and understand since it is used all over the world and defined by various cultures in many ways. The literature on intuition is diverse and extensive.

It pervades philosophical and psychological thought in both western and eastern traditions. It permeates every discipline from science to religion. It has been presented in the guise of everything that is not relegated to the domain of reasons, from gut feeling to divine revelation (Schmidt, 1995, p.73).

Several schools of thought have been established with competing philosophies about the nature and origin of intuition. Agor (1986a) refers to intuition as the highest level of cognition. However, some believe that intuition does not operate independently of analysis, that in fact intuition is a process where the brain simply evokes past memories and experiences.

One of the first formal studies exploring how managers use intuition to make important decisions was conducted by Agor (1986b). His instrument was based on the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Survey*. The research focused on how managers used their intuitive abilities to make major decisions. As a group, he found that many managers readily acknowledged their use of intuitive ability to guide important decisions. The managers believed that intuition in itself is a key management resource that should not be ignored nor abandoned. Many of Agor's top executives stressed that good intuitive decisions are based in part on input from facts and experience gained over the years, combined and integrated with a well-honed sensitivity. His research also revealed that managers with higher levels of intuitive ability are likely to be more effective in such occupations as marketing, human resources, organizational development and sales. Each is an important managerial skill if one is involved in an educational leadership position in proprietary education (Agor, 1986b).

A 1987 op-ed article in the *Wall Street Journal* discussed the relationship of intuitive powers to the performance of top executives (Zehnder, 1987). The article

referred to noted psychologist Carl Jung and his findings that managers who were skilled in the use of intuition had decision-making skills that others lacked. Research showed that the successful manager had superior intuitive powers, which, in conjunction with their other managerial attributes, enabled them to make good decisions on a regular basis.

The next year Agor (1988) said “Organizations often already have the intrapreneurial [sic] talent necessary to dramatically increase productivity, but they either don’t know it or don’t follow practices necessary to nurture it” (p. 68). He went on to discuss the necessary qualities of an intuitive manager which included: seeing new possibilities in the market place that others do not see; supplying new, ingenious solutions to seemingly unsolvable management problems; dealing with and resolving complex issues where data are incomplete or unavailable in a timely manner; motivating colleagues to perform at peak levels. Intuitive executives function best in a management environment where there are rapid change and crises and where limited time is available to make critical decisions (Agor, 1988).

Intuition and management

Intuition can be broken down into three terms. Rational intuition (or logical) is applied to decision-making that is analytic. Non-rational intuition is used for decision-making that is strictly intuitive and judgmental. And, irrational intuition refers to decision-making and behavior that responds to the emotions or that deviates from action chosen rationally (Simon, 1987).

Evidence also has emerged revealing intuitive skills of managers are similar to the same kind of mechanisms as the intuitive skills of chess master's or even physicians. The

experienced manager has in his or her memory, a large amount of knowledge, gained from training and years of experience and have it unconsciously organized in terms of recognizable chunks and associated information (Simon, 1987).

Using the idea of applying large chunks of knowledge, such as used in intuition, in this case data, to a business situation; Bouman (1978) developed an early computer program that was capable of detecting financial problems of a company based on data compared from accounting statements. The program was modeled on protocols used by experienced financial analysts interpreting similar statements. It utilized knowledge that enabled an analyst to spot problems intuitively and fast. When a comparison is made between the responses of the program and the responses of an expert human financial analyst, a close match is usually found based on Bouman's theory. Of course, his application is now archaic.

Bhaskar (1978), a colleague of Bouman, conducted a study involving business school students and experienced executives. Both were asked to analyze a business policy case. The results produced by the students and the businessmen were similar, however; the difference between the two was the time required to identify the key features of the case. The experts did this very rapidly with the predicted appearance of intuition. The novices did it slowly with much consciousness and explicit analysis. Two main conclusions emerged from this research. First, the experts arrived at a problem diagnosis and solved it rapidly and intuitively. However, they were not able to describe how they obtained the result. Second, the experts' ability to solve the problem was because they were able to recognize a retrieval process that most likely employed a large number of chunks or patterns stored in one's long-term memory.

Bhaskar (1978) went on to say that when the problem is significant the recognition process has to be organized in a coherent way and supplied with the reasoning capabilities that allow inferences to be drawn from the information retrieved along with combining those numerous chunks of information.

Reliability of Intuition

Sixty experienced professionals holding upper level managerial positions in major corporations were interviewed for Burke and Miller's (1999) study on intuition. Fifty-six percent of those participating said their intuitive decisions were based on their own experiences. Those experiences included their collection of successes and failures. Forty percent of Burke and Miller's participants said intuition was initially based on their feelings or emotions at the time they were given data in a decision-making scenario.

Other participants in their study characterized intuition as being based on knowledge and skills learned through training. Some participants suggested that intuition involved some element of feelings in order to generate a decision compatible with either their own moral codes or with the companies' cultures. Contrary to critical thinking that must be learned, Burke and Miller's (1999) study acknowledged that many in their sample had developed or acquired their intuitive skills through experience using an "experimental" database that fed that intuition. Others said they developed their intuitive skills just by using them over and over.

Burke and Miller (1999) asked their subjects whether they always, often, sometimes seldom or rarely used intuition in the workplace. Forty-seven percent answered often. Thirty percent said sometimes intuition plays a fairly significant role in

their daily work life especially when they needed to make decisions quickly or unexpectedly. Others responded by saying that they used intuition when faced with uncertainty such as in “one of a kind” situations, for example a first-time restructuring or reorganization and financial issues such as formulating budgets, estimating prices, and selecting investments that would involve intuition directly.

Additional research into intuition found almost 25% of the 200 managers surveyed were primarily intuitive when solving problems and making decisions. Andersen (2000) based his concept of intuition and other decision functions on Jung’s typology. What Andersen called the “creative-innovated” decision making style was found in 23% of the surveyed managers. Andersen concludes that intuition is a dominant decision making function in management and is directly related to organizational effectiveness. He went on to say, very similar to Pascarella’s beliefs discussed earlier, that “The focus on future opportunities and threats as well as actions to preserve flexibility and handle uncertainty appears to be the reason why intuition in managers is effective” (p. 61).

Summary

Intuition offers a reliable alternative to fact gathering and analysis and may just be at the center of the decision making process, according to some researchers. The comparison here to critical thinking is that analysis is at best a supporting tool for making intuitive decisions. One researcher referred to intuition as the highest level of cognition.

Tying Critical Thinking and Intuition Together

Introduction

The review of the literature provides us with research supporting the combination of intuition and critical thinking. In Chapter 4, one of the administrators interviewed admits to using both, but contends his decision-making process starts with intuition and ends with critical thinking.

Combining Critical Thinking with Intuition

It is doubtful that a manager can be found who relies exclusively on intuition or solely on critical thinking techniques. More likely, there will be a continuum of decision-making styles involving a combination of both skills. However, the nature of the problem to be solved will actually determine the mix (Trailer and Morgan, 2004).

Additional research supports combining intuition with intellectual and cognitive skills (Parikh and Neubauer, 1994). For example, intuition might be used to “fill in the blanks” when quantitative data are not available. And, with the explosion of information constantly facing decision makers, intuitive decision-making could become even more pertinent (Keats and DeMarie, 1998).

Intuition is not a mysterious phenomenon. It is an information processing style that should be taken into consideration when making business decisions. Managers using intuition do not process information in a pattern, such as the prescribed way of critical thinking, but quickly grab whatever enters their consciousness in order to create a pool of options. Because intuitive employees set no standards or limits on processing their thoughts in this way, they will eventually come up with an intuitive idea probably not

arrived at by a logical sequence. Intuitive information processing strategies are most often found at the highest levels of an organization and in specific functions like research and development, where coming up with new approaches are both expected and rewarded. When intuition comes into play, there is no right or wrong about whether decisions are made by using a structured, logical or random intuitive strategy – they are just different approaches that lead to different outcomes (Simpson, 2003).

Additional research (Sanchez, 1997) indicates intuitive and non-intuitive decisions made by management including school administrators and other decision makers, seem to be based on personal experiences such as formally acquired knowledge through higher educational institutions, in house management/leadership training programs or seminars, on the job experiences and other types of learning opportunities that are a part of one's professional career in management/administration. Many administrative decisions in higher education are easily made due to the fact that extensive guidance is provided in the form of legislative laws, institutional policies and departmental procedures. Most issues that come up already have well-established protocols making most decision making easy and routine.

Summary

Intuition, researchers say, is not a mysterious phenomenon. It is an information processing style to be taken into consideration when making business decisions. Other research indicated intuitive and non-intuitive decisions made by management including school administrators and other decision makers, are based on personal experiences such as formally acquired knowledge, etc

The Effect of Emotions in The Decision Making Process

Introduction

The question of: 'How do emotions affect the decision making process?' emerged from the study during the interviewing process. Administrators admitted that emotions and mood do play a part in the outcomes of their decisions. Emotional intelligence is also explored.

Anger was an emotion to which most of the administrators related. There is a review of literature on the emotion of anger. Because both male and female administrators were interviewed, it was discovered that there is differences in how anger is handled among men and women. And, there are differences in how anger is handled based on age.

Emotions and the Decision-Making Process

The study of emotions is an already developed area of research. Scholars have been examining for years what shapes one's emotion, who feels what kind of emotions, beliefs about emotions, emotional socialization and so on. The emergent fourth research question of this study asks how emotions effect the decision making process. Collins (1981) suggests that emotion is the key mechanism motivating individuals' actions.

Researchers have studied a number of ways in which emotions influence behavior. Some state that certain types of emotions motivate certain types of behavior and in doing so act as a self-control mechanism. Shott (1979) suggests that emotions such as shame, guilt, embarrassment, pride and vanity motivate self-control. When a person is

ashamed, guilty or embarrassed, they often behave selflessly in order to reduce the shame and restore pride (self esteem). For example, an administrator who is responsible for the school's enrollment goals may feel ashamed or embarrassed among colleagues if their school does not reach a certain goal.

Scheff (1990) makes a similar point when he states that shame produces conformity. Similarly Duncombe and Marsden (1995) have suggested that people do emotion work - that is, self consciously work to control their emotions and shape their behavior. However, Pizarro (2000) argues that there is a philosophical tradition that views emotions as being harmful to the process of decision making, in that they are undependable forces, much like intuition.

Managerial decision-making involves a certain amount of risk taking and the literature on emotion and social cognition has produced strong evidence that emotional states play a major role in how people take risks and evaluate complex information (Kuvaas & Kaufmann, 2004). Key research on emotion and its connection to risk taking has been performed by Isen and her associate (Isen & Patrick, 1983). Their work found that positive moods yield risk-averse behavior and that negative moods produce risk-taking behavior. Isen and Patrick's (1983) mood-maintenance hypothesis, which seems to interpret into basic psychological motivation factors, states that those in a positive mood want to maintain that mood. They do not take big risks because of the possibility of incurring a loss that would interfere with their happiness. Similarly, people who are in a bad mood are more willing to take higher risks in the hope that a good outcome will "repair" the negative affective state. Therefore, the influence of mood on

risk-taking is explained through a desire to maintain a positive emotional state or mitigate a negative affective state.

Forgas (1998) found in his study that subjects who were sad performed better and made more effective use of memory for task information than the control subjects did. The participants who were in happy moods made more errors and recalled less. Forgas (1998) believed that moods may also have relevance for decision making and risk, particularly for the comparative effects on positive vs. negative emotions, even though most of his study was based on social judgments.

Again, people in negative moods may be expected to choose risky options, in order to give themselves a chance of obtaining the positive outcome that might improve their state. If negative emotion acts to increase systematic processing, the risky option may be the more likely. Conversely, positive emotion acts both as a processing and as risk-avertter, consequently resulting in the likely choice of the safe option.

A later study by Schwarz (2001) seemed to agree. He argued that negative emotions threaten the achievement of desired goals and that the situation calls for systematic and attentive processing. He reported positive emotions signal to one that the situation is safe and that current information at hand is sufficient for the current situation. In other words, according to Schwarz (2001) people should look to their emotions as an indicator of whether they know when an outcome in their decision making process is accurate (Schwarz, 2001).

Goleman (1995) suggests that humans have “two minds”: A rational mind and an emotional mind. Various stimuli, such as events that surround us and actions and behaviors of others with whom we interact, are responded to by emotions and feelings.

Within the context of our personality, temperament, moods and emotions rise and fall in short-term cycles. And, together with the cognitive component of our thought processes [the rational mind], they shape the decisions we make and the behaviors we display. They, according to Goleman (1995), can be invaluable guides to our ability to interpret events around us and make good decisions, often in quick response situations.

An emotionally intelligent person is someone who, among other things, has learned to check impulses and at the same time, use the information provided by emotion to craft behaviors and responses in charged situations (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989).

Weisinger (1998) describes emotional intelligence as “the intelligent use of emotions: you intentionally make your emotions work for you by using them to help guide your behavior and thinking in ways that enhances your results” (p. xvi). Goleman (1995) argues that emotional self awareness is a building block of emotional intelligence – in part, an ability to shake off a bad mood or reign in a good one and deal with fresh situations in an emotionally aware manner. Therefore, understanding emotions and learning how to harness them and make them work for us and those around us is a valuable skill (Brown, 2003).

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence has its roots in social intelligence theory and was introduced by Edward Lee Thorndike in 1920 as “the ability to understand and manage men and women . . . to act wisely in human relations” (Thorndike, 1920, p.228). Another researcher refined that to the “ability to get along with others” (Moss and Hunt, 1927, p. 108); while another defined it as :

The ability to get along with people in general; social technique or ease in society; knowledge of social matter; susceptibility to stimuli from other members of a group; as well as insight into the temporal moods or underlying personality traits of strangers (Vernon, 1933, p. 44).

Along the line of the developing emotional intelligence theory, Howard Gardner (1983) proposed multiple intelligences. His theory sought to establish the pervasiveness of intellectual activities in areas where it has been left out. Basically, his multiple intelligences include three broad forms including: Object related, which includes spatial, logical-mathematical and bodily-kinesthetic; Object free, which includes linguistic and music; and Personal Forms, which includes sense of self, sense of others and the culture's presentation and interpretation of selves. He did warn that his multiple intelligence theory did not encompass all areas; for example, the ability to plan a line of action in regards to the actual achievement of action. He also contends that originality, or novelty, metaphorical capacity, common sense, and wisdom require specific combinations of the intelligences.

Gardner's 1983 model was criticized by some researchers who based their arguments on the lack of supportive research and quantitative evidence (Sternberg, 1996). Gardner (1999) refuted these criticisms on the basis that the intelligences arose from the data that were grouped by the various areas of study in which the critics were not experts.

Gardner (1999) later refined his definition of intelligences to be a latent ability to solve problems or create culturally valuable products. He based his revised theory groups based on their disciplinary underpinnings (biological sciences, logical analysis, developmental psychology and traditional psychological research).

He further expanded his seven intelligences to include an eighth which he calls a naturalistic intelligence. He defined it as a capacity to recognize the existence of other neighboring species and to map relations both formally and informally among species (Gardner, 1999).

Sternberg (1996) further developed his theory into what he referred to as successful intelligence that is the means to think well in three different ways (1) analytically – solving problems and judging quality of ideas (2) creatively – formulating good problems and ideas in the first place and (3) practically – using the ideas and their analysis in everyday living.

Sternberg (1996) indicated that successful intelligence is most effective when all three of the above characteristics are in balance. “Successful people don’t just have abilities, they reflect on when and how to use these abilities effectively” (p. 128)

Another noteworthy advocate of multiple intelligence is Perkins (1995) who presented intelligence as learnable and as having three dimensions, neural, experiential and reflective. He defines neural intelligence as the contribution of the efficiency and precision of the neurological system to intelligent behavior; experiential intelligence as the contribution of context-specific knowledge to intelligent behavior; and reflective intelligence as the contribution of strategies for various intellectually challenging tasks, such as attitudes, imagination, and the use of self-monitoring and management to intelligent behavior.

Salovey and Mayer (1990) seem to have been credited with developing the actual EI construct. They based their theory on a subset of social intelligence defined as:

The ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feeling 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).

In addition, their scope of EI includes "...the verbal and nonverbal appraisal and expression of emotion, the regulation of emotion in self and others and the utilization of emotional content in problem solving" (Mayer & Salovey, 1993, pg. 433)

Salovey and Mayer (1990), defined emotional intelligence as the "ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions"(p. 189).

Salovey and Mayer (1990) indicated that "moods, although less intense and generally longer lasting than emotions, should be just as effectively regulated and managed by individuals with emotionally intelligent skills" (p. 196), and therefore, considered their model to apply to moods as well as emotions. Some psychologists however, have argued that emotions differ distinctly from moods.

Salovey and Mayer (1990) conceptualized emotional intelligence as a set of skills contributing to (1) the accurate identification of emotions in one's self and in others, (2) the effective regulation of the same, and (3) the use of feelings to motivate, plan and achieve in one's life.

Mayer and Salovey (1997) later expanded their 1990 definition of emotional intelligence to include use of emotions for thought facilitation, "emotional intelligence 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). They diagrammed these skills into four

branches, with the lower branches representing the more basic psychological processes and the upper branches, the integrative psychological processes.

Goleman (2000) popularized EI in the business realm by describing its importance as a skill necessary for success in business and as a crucial component of effective group performance. In his national bestseller, *Emotional Intelligence. Why it can matter more than IQ* (1995), and in his subsequent book, *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (1998), Daniel Goleman presented his Mixed Model of emotional intelligence. Goleman contends his own model that he adapted from Salovey and Mayer's is most useful for understanding how being able to monitor and regulate one's own feelings and the feelings of other, and to use feelings to guide thought and action matters in work life (1998).

In 1995, Goleman defined emotional intelligence as abilities that include intelligence, zeal, persistence, and the ability to motivate oneself. And, he wrote, "there is an old-fashioned word for the body of skills that emotional intelligence represents, character" (p.28).

Goleman (1995) claims that emotional intelligence will account for success at home, school and in the workplace. He continues by stating that among youth, EI will bring about, "better manners, less aggression, more popularity, improved learning (p. 192). In the workplace, Goleman believes that emotional intelligence will improve teamwork, cooperation and effectiveness (P. 163).

In addition to the controversy over what emotional intelligence exactly is and why it is important particularly in the workplace, it is not surprising that debates continue regarding how to measure and assess it. There are some researchers that are questioning

the value of emotional intelligence in its entirety and are offering counterarguments to its existence (Ciarocchi et al., 2001). Adams (1998) even suggested that perhaps emotional intelligence is a new name for an old concept, namely *wisdom*.

Emotional Intelligence theory suggests that emotionally intelligent individuals who work well with others will be the most valued and sought-after employees because they elevate the group's or organization's collective emotional intelligence (Weisinger, 1998).

The Emotion of Anger

Introduction

Davila (1999) describes anger as: "a strong uncomfortable response to a perceived injustice, a violation of rights, a negation of self, or a compromise of beliefs and values that occur to maintain the status quo" (p. 25). Anger is presented here in the framework that some administrators had made decisions in anger. Several related to anger during the process of solving problems with a colleague or even a student. And, administrators handle anger differently based on their gender and age,

People have fewer coping strategies for dealing with anger than any other emotional state, including fear, anxiety and sadness. Anger incorporates two different concepts: the experience of anger as purely an emotional state and the expression of anger as a behavioral response to that anger (Spielberger et al, 1985). In this section we look at the differences of how men and women handle anger and how age effects emotions.

Female Expression of Anger

Although this issue continues to be debated, there is a wealth of literature suggesting that women experience and express this emotion differently than men (Thomas, 2003).

Women are often perceived to suppress their anger. Lerner (1998) reports that women tend to be inhibited in their expression of anger whereas men tend not to be. Although this view may be relevant to some women, anger can function as an energizing force. For example, women's feelings of anger at not being able to vote led to the women's rights' movement and eventually to significant legal changes.

In their various feelings of anger, Thomas's (2003) research says women usually use cooking metaphors such as 'stewing' or 'simmering' to relate to their unexpressed feelings of anger.

Reasons for anger suppression in women are varied (Averill, 1983). Socialization is a possible explanation for this behavior, according to Sharken (1993) who considers that women are socialized to express their emotions more openly, with the exception of anger, which he suggests is viewed as 'unfeminine' by society.

Thomas (2003) made the connection between a woman's reluctance to express anger and her fear of adversely affecting interpersonal relationships, which could have implications for professional practice. Colleagues and subordinates need to be given the opportunity to express their feelings within a trusting relationship.

Thomas (2003) also refers to anger as a confusing emotion for women because feelings of anger are interwoven with hurt, frustration, sadness, and disillusionment.

Women's anger is frequently expressed as much through tears and emotion as physical aggression (Thomas, 2003).

Male Expression of Anger

While men and woman may differ in their *mode* of expressing anger, this difference is not related to the *degree* of anger expressed (Nunn and Thomas, 1999). The main gender difference is that men cry less than women when angry (Averill, 1983). Men are also considered to be more aggressive than women, but women are equally capable of anger expression (DiGiuseppe et al, 1994). Anger may be displayed when a person feels he or she has lost control of a situation, or feels the behavior of other people does not conform to proper human conduct (DiGiuseppe et al, 1994). And, the situations are made worse when men feel that they are unable to control what is happening and unable to fix what has gone wrong (Nunn and Thomas, 1999).

While some men may manifest their anger by withdrawing from the situation, others may react by physically lashing out at people or by striking something. Men have been socialized to express anger freely (Turkel, 2000) which may explain why such outbursts are quite common. In general, men are perceived as more comfortable with the emotion of anger than women and use the externalization of anger response to express it (Nunn and Thomas, 1999). Even vulnerable emotions such as disappointment, hurt and shame (emotions considered to unmanly to express) may get funneled into anger (Turkel, 2000). However, these responses to emotions, including anger, may vary depending on the culture or social environment in which that individual relates (DiGiuseppe, 1994).

Age Differences in Emotion Control

There has been research suggesting that older adults are more motivated to regulate negative affect emotions and are effective at doing so (Carstensen, 1995). Carstensen pointed to studies conducted by Georgia Tech psychologist Fredda Blanchard-Fields (as cited in Carstensen, 1995). Blanchard-Fields studies examined the outcomes of how older adults regulated or handled their emotions in various situations. She equated effective emotion regulation with positive outcomes, that is, fewer negative emotional experiences or greater positive emotional experiences. Accordingly, older adults reported better regulation and greater control over their emotions, fewer and shorter durations of experiencing negative affects and less anger and less intense aversive reaction in response to interpersonal problem situations.

Part of the more recent Blanchard-Fields (2004) research asked: If older adults emphasize emotion regulation in their everyday functioning, this should be reflected in age related differences in self-regulating strategies. Their findings suggested that when people are coping with stressful situations or solving emotionally charged problems, emotion focused strategies are preferred by older adults more so than by younger adults.

Previous Blanchard-Fields (as cited in Carstensen, 1995) studies focused on everyday problem-solving strategies in emotionally laden interpersonal situations compared to less emotionally charged instrumental contexts. In low emotionally significant problem situations such as consumer-oriented or home management problems Blanchard-Fields (2004) found relatively few age differences in problem-solving strategies. Problem-focused action, where direct action was taken to solve or fix a

problem, was the predominant strategy across age groups from adolescent through older adulthood (Blanchard-Fields, 2004).

However, age differences emerged when problems were more emotionally charged and more interpersonal in nature, such as conflict with friends, family or romantic others (Blanchard-Fields, 2004). In these situations, older adults consistently opted not to deal directly with the issue.

In contrast, adolescents and younger adults tended to approach emotionally significant problems with the idea to control it and fix it. Furthermore, Blanchard-Fields (2004) found that older adults do not unilaterally endorse passive emotion focused strategies, but prefer a combination of problem-focused and passive emotion-focused strategies as compared to young and middle aged adults. In summary, Blanchard-Fields (2004) tells us that, "Older adults draw on a larger repertoire of strategies when solving emotionally salient problems" (p. 261). This is similar to how Goleman (1995) described emotional intelligence and is very reminiscent of intuition.

Intermediate Emerging Theme: Management Style

Mitroff and Linstone (1993) say that if America is to remain competitive in business, changes should be made in the way business executives think, make decisions, and solve problems. They said businesses must put forth a new thinking approach. Logic and rationality, they explained, are useful but limited. They said that varying perspectives, multiple realities, and openness to multiple solutions are the secrets of contemporary problem solving that will lead us to the cutting edge of innovation. And, they argue that if we are to produce products and services that compete in the information

age and the global market place, the foundations of our thinking should be rebuilt and we should learn how to approach decision making in more creative ways.

More specifically, Morgan (2001) implies that the conscious mind is not capable of keeping up with the explosion of information around us and as a defense mechanism we turn instead to the unconscious for suggestions for our future courses of action. He goes on to say that to see this contrast between the conscious mind and the unconscious as an either or choice is to misunderstand the nature of decision-making. His research on intuition revealed that intuition works best when it is the result of carefully sifted knowledge, gleaned over many years of hard work and learning. Morgan's research also showed that the key ingredient, besides deep knowledge, is balanced emotional involvement. Good decision-making only comes when it is based on a solid foundation of hard fact gathering and a balanced emotional assessment of all the options.

The beliefs of Robbins and DeCenzo (1994) are that managers should have a capacity to break out of unproductive decision making processes and question the relevance of operating norms enabling them to generate new and more productive paradigms for decision making. They classify workplace decisions as programmed: well structured, familiar, routine, easily defined problems and nonprogrammed: new problems, where information is ill structured, information is ambiguous or incomplete.

Schermerhorn (1993) found linkages between management levels and brain skill preferences and abilities. For example, part of his field research demonstrated that top management positions were characterized by frequent nonprogrammed decisions while lower level management positions generally entailed mostly programmed decision-making. Research (Agor, 1986b) in related fields has also indicated that "left brain"

dominant managers are more comfortable and skilled at programmed decision making situations while "right brain" dominant managers prefer the unprogrammed decision making organizational environments. Analysis of Agor's survey also showed significance in that top managers tend to be more "right brain" dominant than lower level managers. But, he went on to say this brain skill is a key resource for reaching higher levels of management. He also contends that brain skill dominance differs by sex and by occupational specialty. In addition, Agor's research indicated that managers vary considerably by brain skills with respect to their ability to deal with certainty, periodic uncertainty, and risk in decision- making. "Left brain" dominant managers tend to prefer highly structured, predictable, and routine situations and tend to recruit other managers with similar preferences. This in turn, Agor contends, often leads to the creation of a "groupthink" atmosphere and a lack of entrepreneurship or inclination to be innovative from within an organization. In contrast, "right brain" dominant managers tend to prefer crisis decision- making settings and considerable uncertainty,

Leadership skills and critical decision making abilities distinguish successful business leaders (Helliwell, 2000). Intelligence and emotions play an important part in the make-up of business leaders. What is unique, Helliwell writes, is the rapidly changing business environment that is driven by the speed at which information and business decisions happen in global markets. The decision to capitalize on an opportunity today may not be the right decision tomorrow. The ability to recognize that and make the right decision "now" is vital in staying ahead of the competition.

Over 50% of business decisions fail one way or another and yet 91% of business people are as confident as ever in their ability to make decisions (Marcum & Smith,

2002). Decision confidence is up, according to research by Marcum and Smith (2002).

But they contend that decision success is down, which presents a serious gap. They go on to say that companies don't fail, people do.

What people do is not the equivalent or the essence of what makes them successful or productive. Real output is driven by the activities people engage in. Activity originates with a decision. What people decide to do fast or not right or not, is based on the results of their thinking. The fundamental nature of work today is thinking. Thinking is the nucleus of business that drives what gets created and launched. If we want to change our results we must first change our thinking not just efficiency of the doing (p. 12).

Intermediate Emerging Theme: Spirituality

Miller (2002) stated, "Because of the increasing focus on the importance of spirituality in the workplace, traditional assumptions about the barriers between work and faith must be reconsidered" (p. 148)

Matthew Fox (1994) wrote, "We must make way for the heart...without that heart-food, we will surely die of starvation of the spirit, and all the promotions and fat paychecks in the work will not assuage the feeling that we are dying in the soul" (p. 26.).

Leigh (1997) described the emergence of spirituality in the workplace as an acknowledgement that "people come to work with more than their bodies and minds; they bring individual talents and unique spirits" (p. 26).

The emergence of spirituality in organizations has been attributed to the need for personal fulfillment on the job (Laabs, 1995). Changes in leadership theory have also contributed to the emergence of spirituality in organizations, as the workforce is experiencing a growing need to reconcile personal values with organizational values (Mirvis, 1997). These values include wisdom, understanding, temperance, and prudence,

which are also found in early Christian scripture. They contain a moral quality that is seen as the essential standard for goodness (Kennedy, 2001).

The early part of the 20th century saw significant study in the area of values. Carl Jung (1933) provided a psychological theory, which was based on his understanding of the unconscious to include all potential that resides within the individual. Later, Kohlberg (1981) built on the work of Jung and suggested, “the most fundamental values of a society are the values of justice and truth” (p. 295).

Current paradigms of management and leadership theory have centered on the idea of leading by serving (Spears & Lawrence, 2002). Many of these theories are based on the recognition that the individual’s perceptions and feelings influence their productivity. Sergiovanni (1992) stated, “The leadership that counts, in the end, is the kind that touches people differently. It taps their emotions, appeals to their values, and responds to their connections with other people” (p. 126).

Systems theory has also provided a change, allowing leadership to look at all aspects of leading and managing, including the human element, rather than focusing on a single characteristic (Checkland, 1999). Senge (1990) included the human elements of shared vision, and team learning in his theory and offered the idea that “personal mastery becomes the spiritual foundation of a learning organization, a foundation on which worker commitment and enthusiasm is built” (p. 7). These paradigm changes have allowed leaders to nurture and develop human values within the organization.

Chapter Summary

The demographics of American higher education have changed with students now being somewhat older, part-time workers and attending school only part-time. These students are also bringing more of a consumer attitude to higher education – wanting more than an education; wanting their money's worth. Research indicates they want a stripped down version of higher education. They no longer want the electives. They want to develop skills that can be taken to the job market; which most likely is why there has been an over 200% growth rate in for-profit colleges. And, with current federal regulations, proprietary schools have become more like traditional post-secondary institutions and community colleges.

In managing proprietary schools we looked at two management styles in the literature review: critical thinking and intuition. Critical thinking has been defined as finding the critical issues in complex situations and simple problem solving. A more business type definition has critical thinking pundits finding the cause for what's gone wrong, making the best choice in an appropriate time frame while identifying and responding to potential threats and opportunities.

Studies have shown that critical thinking skills are an important tool essential to effective management. That has prompted business leaders to usually agree upon the importance of critical thinking as both an educational and a managerial objective. However, becoming an effective manager has some difficult obstacles to overcome. Additional research revealed that a significant number of students, and adults, experience difficulties when faced with complex reasoning. That is where intuition can come in to play.

A small business executive must use decision aids that are not demanding in time but are dependable resources that can be worked into their decision making style. One researcher referred to intuition as the highest level of cognition and found that many managers readily acknowledged their use of intuitive ability to guide them in important decisions. Contrary to critical thinking that must be learned, another study acknowledged that many in their sample had developed or acquired intuitive skills through experience using an “experimental” database that fed their intuition. When it comes to managerial decision making, leadership skills and critical decision making abilities are what distinguish successful business leaders. And, many businesses are making a special effort to replace their managers with leaders.

Research shows that emotion is a key mechanism that motivates individuals’ actions. Additional research shows that people do emotion work - that is, they self-consciously work to control their emotions and shape their behavior. In recent years, the topic of Emotional Intelligence has emerged. One best selling author suggests that humans have “two minds”: A rational mind and an emotional mind. In essence emotional intelligence is: The ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feeling when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth.

The emotion of anger can be significant in the decision making process, too. Anger incorporates two different concepts: the experience of anger as purely an emotional state and the expression of anger as a behavioral response to that anger. And the expression of anger differs among men and women.

Women are often perceived to suppress their anger. It seems research has proved anger to be a confusing emotion for women because their feelings of anger are interwoven with hurt, frustration, sadness, and disillusionment.

While men and woman may differ in their mode of expressing anger, the differences are not related to the degree of anger expressed. According to research, in general, men are perceived as more comfortable with the emotion of anger than women and use the externalization of anger response to express it.

On a similar topic, one researcher found that when people are coping with stressful situations or solving emotionally charged problems, emotion focused strategies are preferred by older adults more so than by younger adults.

If America is to remain competitive in business, changes should be made in the way business executives think, make decisions, and solve problems. Businesses must put forth a new thinking approach.

The emergence of spirituality in organizations is now being recognized as a need for personal fulfillment on the job. Changes in leadership theory have also contributed to the emergence of spirituality in organizations, as the workforce is experiencing a growing need to reconcile personal values with organizational values. These values include wisdom, understanding, temperance, and prudence.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Given the apparent void in literature, a need existed to provide an understanding of how educational leadership in the for-profit market utilizes those skills in their management decision-making process. The purpose of this research was to explore when and how those administrators use critical-thinking and intuitive decision-making skills and if both are at times used together.

Initially I went into this study to fully understand how critical thinking was used in the administrator's decision-making process. I previously studied various theories of critical thinking with Dr. Richard Paul and Dr. Linda Elder at Sonoma State University, California. As noted in Chapter 2, they teach the critical thinking process to educators. Part of my instructional responsibilities at DeVry University in Atlanta includes teaching critical thinking along with management principles.

Research Design and Rationale

In this study, I used qualitative inquiry to research the decision-making processes of those upper level managers. Qualitative inquiry contributes to a deeper understanding of how decisions are made in upper level proprietary school management. Grounded theory tradition is also suited for this kind of research in which there is little or no existing theory (Merriam, 1998).

Grounded theory evolved out of research by sociologists Glasser and Strauss (1967) who outlined an inductive method of qualitative research. Their method allows theory to be generated directly from the data. That is, theory is grounded in empirical research, rather than abstractly produced.

Grounded theory is a methodology. In other words, it is a way of thinking about and conceptualizing data. It assumes that one's communications and actions express meaning on which theory can be based. Grounded theory analysis is inductive, in that the resulting theory continually emerges from data through structured analysis (Glasser & Strauss, 1967).

Strauss later working with Corbin (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) distinguished grounded theory from other approaches to qualitative analysis by putting theory as a final output of research. In essence, the aim of grounded theory is theoretical development with its focus on analytic induction, which helps to understand our world more clearly, rather than as an absolute truth.

Since the appeal of grounded theory analysis is the structured and detailed procedures for the generation of theory from data, grounded theory then starts with a clear, but broad research question. In this study there are three that cover the general areas researched:

How are critical thinking skills used by educational leaders?

How are intuition skills used by educational leaders?

Are critical thinking and intuition "tied" together?

Patton (2003) described three types of qualitative data: interviews, observations and documents. Goetz and LeCompte (1984) argue that interviews are "less abstract than

many instruments used in other research designs" (p.221). Therefore, this research is interview based. Hence, I conducted and analyzed data from a set of semi-structured interviews of a diverse sample of upper level proprietary school administrators along with observations of their schools, staff behavior and office environments. That fieldwork was instrumental in understanding and writing the descriptions about the participants found early in Chapter 4.

The interviews and discussions were digitally recorded, transcribed, coded, interpreted and constantly compared among one another, resulting in a comprehensive study of the research questions. I was the primary researcher, the human instrument and primary data collector for this research.

Participants and Site

Educational leaders of proprietary schools, in particular the corporate CEO's, school and/or campus presidents and academic deans were my participants. They were selected from the 2004 Higher Education Directory (Burke, 2004), a directory of colleges nationwide. Because I am based in the Atlanta metro area, logistically, I limited the study to schools in the Southeastern United States.

Ninety-one schools were selected and essential information, such as address, phone number, and website address was entered into a database. Each school selected had an Internal Revenue Service classification of "proprietary" and had been accredited by a major regional accrediting agency. Each degree granting school was at the post-secondary education level offering at least an associate's degree. Additionally, 167 administrators were identified with the various schools and added, along with their

appropriate information such as position, administrative assistant, phone and email address.

The initial mailing requesting an interview consisted of 141 letters approved by the Institutional Review Board of Colorado State University (Appendix A) to administrators describing my research, encouraging them to participate and a reminder that their responses would be held in complete confidentiality. They were asked to return a postage paid post card (Appendix B) signifying their willingness to participate. The post card had blanks to fill in enabling the participant to request a time to contact them in order to set the interview appointment. Each of the post cards that were returned (responses) resulted in an interview.

Because some of the CEO's and presidents were identified as having several positions with their individual schools, there is a discrepancy among the number of administrators in the database and those who received a mailing. For example, some CEO's of their organization held the position of president of their school, while also serving as the academic dean. In classifying them for this research, the higher rank prevailed.

The Directory of Higher Education also listed three separate categories of CEO's. For the purpose of this research, they were combined into one category. The CEO's, of course, were at the corporate level. The president was at the campus level, as was the academic dean.

The overall initial response rate from female administrators was low in proportion to the females in the database. Therefore, a second mailing was made two months after the first with an attempt to recruit more female administrators. The second mailing of 41

letters consisted of a concentration of female administrators from the original database. Larger school CEO's were also targeted in the second mailing. Each had received the earlier first mailer request. This new mailing also reflected that it was a second request for participation. The overall response to the second mailing was also low in female administrative numbers. However, three additional interviews, including one female were conducted and are also part of the study.

It was the intent to interview each of the administrators in person. However, phone interviews were conducted when person-to-person contact was not feasible. There were nine in-person interviews; ten interviews were conducted over the telephone. Participant consent forms (Appendix C) approved by the Institutional Review Board of Colorado State University were properly completed and submitted for each discussion and interview and remain on file.

All of the interviews but one were digitally recorded and transcribed onto computer. The interview not recorded was the result of software failure. Notes were taken, however, during the course of that conversation. The initial interviews lasted between 40 minutes to an hour. The actual interviews, whether conducted in person or by telephone varied within that 40 – 60 minute time from. More time, however, was taken during the in-person interviews to include campus tours, introductions and usually lunch.

A hand written note of thanks on a personal note card was sent to each of those participating within a day after the interview.

Data Collection

The data were gathered through face-to-face and telephone interviews and digitally recorded with the permission of those interviewed. A standard computer backup “wav” file was made of the audio at the same time. The DSS recording and the backup are on a CD-ROM and remain on file. The digital interview was then transcribed verbatim as an MS/Word document file before being transferred to the Rich Text Format required by the NVivo software package. Each file was given a corresponding letter designation [see Chapter 4] in which the interviews and the transcripts were identified throughout the research again assuring participants’ confidentiality. These also are stored on the CD-ROM with hard copies being destroyed.

During the person-to-person interviews, field notes were made concerning the overall environment of the visited school. Field notes were also made during the phone interviews, reflecting voice inflection and over all mood and sincerity of the interviewee. Creswell (1998) reminds us that a researcher typically conducts enough interviews “to saturate the categories” (p. 56). Saturation was accomplished when the later interviews became very similar in content to first sets conducted and no new nodes (categories) were added to the coding structure.

Data Analysis

Wolcott (1994) writes analysis is the process used to identify the various features and relationships of a study. He goes on to suggest that analysis should be conducted conservatively, carefully, and systematically reminding us that it is not necessary to know everything to understand something.

The NVivo software package was used which became an important tool in locating commonly used participant's words, phrases or ideas that emerged and were developed back into themes and sub-themes. Wolcott (1994) also reminds us that computers are good allies since they do not make interpretations.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) proposed a constant comparative method of generating and analyzing data. The process began with an open, overall, review of the transcript: open coding. Emerging concepts and major categories (nodes) were created and organized. A category is considered to stand by itself as a conceptual element of the theory (Dey, 1999). The interviews were not completed when coding and analysis began.

As each transcript was loaded into NVivo, data was either assigned to a pre-existing code or a new one was created as a taxonomy structure of codes developed. Again, using the constant comparative method, patterns, such as administrators referring to 'some of their decisions being the same thing over and over again,' for example, along with other statements of what the administrators were saying and how those statements related to their experiences or past problems or situations were developed: axial coding.

Continuing to use the constant comparative method, data were moved into larger categories (tree nodes) making sure everything was grounded within the data: selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Based on the grounded theory approach, an inductive analysis process was adopted allowing "categories to emerge from the data through an interactive process of analysis and tentative category assignment" (Nunan, 1999, p.56). My process is illustrated below in Figure 1.

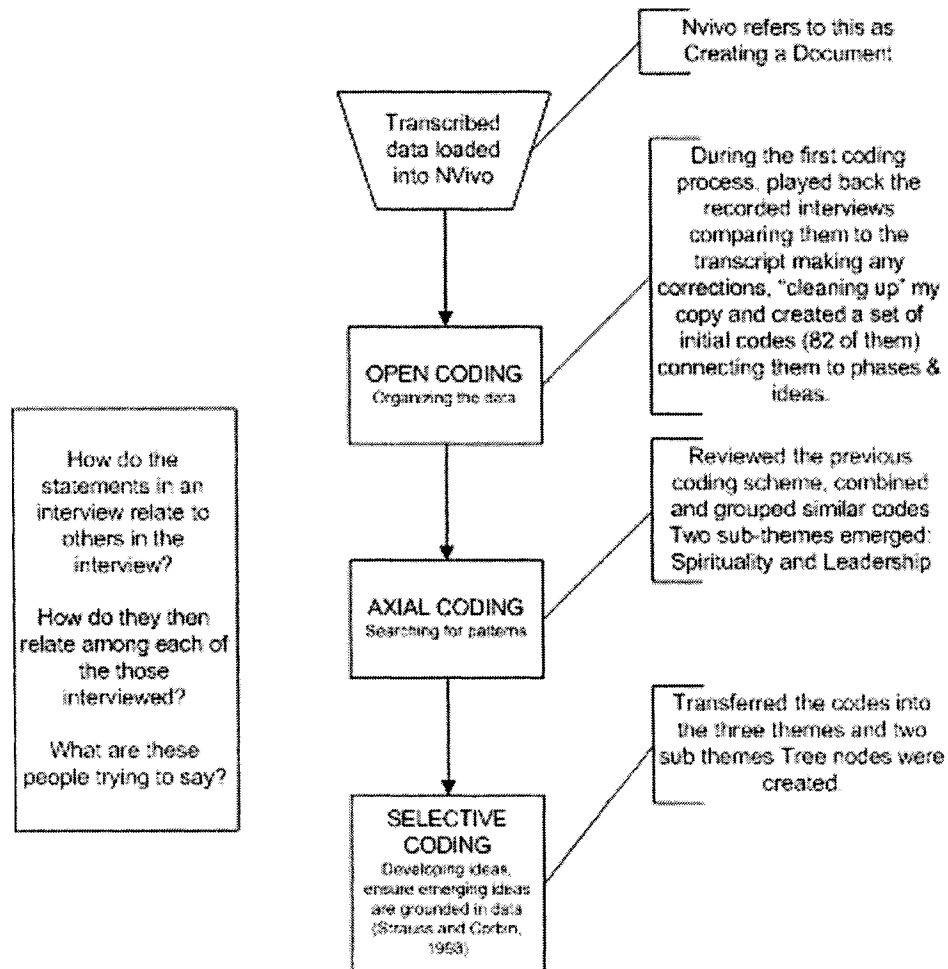


Figure 1. Illustration of the coding method used in the study.

According to Trochim (2002), the use of concept mapping, also known as mind mapping [referred to in NVivo as modeling], encouraged me to stay on task by visually showing my research ideas and their relationships. Each of the nodes was developed, categorized and placed on mind maps. Assembling the data in a concept-mapping environment aided me in identifying a central phenomenon. A "story line" emerged and was developed integrating the categories created earlier in the coding process.

Establishing Trustworthiness

Qualitative researchers use the term "a trustworthy study" instead of referring to reliability and validity (Pitney, 2004). In quantitative research, internal validity has traditionally been defined as being whether an instrument measures what the researcher had intended it to measure. In a qualitative study, the researcher conducting the interviews and observations becomes the human instrument and is more aware of the context, i.e.: people, place and environment in which data are collected. Qualitative researchers use the term credibility instead of internal validity. Credibility is related to whether the research findings capture what is really occurring in the context and whether the researcher learned what was intended (Pitney, 2004).

Pitney (2004) and Creswell (1998) recommend several strategies to establish credibility including triangulation and member checks. The more common triangulation strategy would not work in this study because the results of the instrument are my interviews with the administrators. Other qualitative researchers have used member checks to verify the dependability of their study. I did the same. Member checks allowed

those interviewed to further clarify my descriptions and interpretations of the information they provided. It involved my study's participants a second time. They received a near completed draft copy of my work. I followed up either through a phone conversation or with another mailing. Each of those interviewed did request a copy of my final findings. Creswell (1998) assures us that member checks can be a reasonably used strategy to establish dependability.

Qualitative researchers also use the term transferability instead of the quantitative term external validity. Transferability is related to whether or not the findings are germane to similar studies. In order to deal with transferability I provided, in Chapter 4 in-depth and descriptive information about my participants so that they, as CEO's, campus presidents or academic deans can determine whether the results speak to their individual situation or experience.

From a traditional quantitative perspective, reliability relates to whether the findings of a study can be reproduced. As a qualitative researcher, I was interested in the meaning the educational leaders gave to their experiences. I am also aware, as should be the reader of my study, that because human behavior rarely, if ever, remains the same in nature, the concept of reliability becomes somewhat of a challenge. Qualitative researchers, according to Pitney (2004), use the term dependability. Dependability is not based on whether another researcher can reproduce my findings but rather whether the findings are reasonably based on the data collected.

Summary

A qualitative method of study for my research was chosen because of the nature of the research questions and having little or no previous research available in this area. The purpose of my research is to present a grounded theory understanding of the uses of critical thinking, intuition and emotions in the decision-making process of educational leadership. More specifically, this inductive study of southeastern educational leaders and how they make decisions was based upon research guided initially by three questions: How are critical thinking skills used by educational leaders? How are intuition skills used by educational leaders? A fourth question emerged during the study: How do one's emotions at the time a decision is being made affect that decision?

Discovery is expected into when and how intuitive and/or critical thinking skills are used in their decision making process. My intended audience is those studying critical thinking and intuitive managerial styles and students involved in educational leadership.

The overall structure of the study utilized the interviewing process. Through those interviews, discussions and analysis, five open ended interview questions were investigated, interpreted and compared resulting in a complete study of research questions, data findings, and discussions.

The data were gathered through face-to-face and telephone interviews and digitally recorded. Throughout the interviews, field notes were made concerning the overall environment of the visited school and the administrator. Each transcript created from the interviews was coded using the recommended Open Coding Method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Utilizing open coding as the first step, initial categories of information

about critical thinking, intuition and emotions were formed by segmenting the information collected. In the second step, a procedure of putting data back together in new ways following the open coding process was utilized in order to make connections between categories. Assembling the data aided by a concept-mapping environment also helped in identifying a central phenomenon.

CHAPTER 4 – RESULTS OF THE INTERVIEWS

Introduction

This chapter looks at the results of the interviews of the participants of the research and how they helped to resolve the research questions discussed earlier. The 19 participants of the study are introduced first. I have given as much background information as possible without violating their shield of confidentiality.

In the next section, statements gathered from the participants are related to the first research question: How are critical thinking skills used by educational leaders? The key theme that developed during the interviews centered on how the administrators utilized the various sources of their facts in order to base an adequate decision. The fact gathering process is broken down into assumptions, facts from experience, facts from knowledge and the reliability of those facts.

The third section focuses on the second research question: How are intuition skills used by educational leaders? The theme of the section centers on the agreement that intuition could be learned and honed. Three sub-themes concerning intuition are discussed: intuition being based on life experiences, intuition is basically the same thing over and over and the reliability of intuition.

The next question of focus is: How can critical thinking and intuition be “tied” together? The two themes that emerged concern how intuition leads to critical thinking and that the decision-making process starts with intuition.

A fourth question also emerged during the research process: How do one’s emotions at the time a decision is being made affect that decision? Making the right decision surfaced as the main theme of this section. Anger, fear, egos and culture all play a part in the emotional process of decision-making and are discussed.

Two Intermediate Emerging Themes, management style and spirituality, reflect a characteristic that became specific to this study. Spirituality was considered because it was mentioned by several of the administrators and the setting of the research includes for-profit institutions located in the “Bible Belt” region of the Southeastern United States. Two elements come into focus under the discussion of spirituality; decisions based on the ‘right thing to do’ and how one’s faith is important to the decision making process.

In regards to management style, administrators in a for-profit educational institution tend to make decisions differently. Their decisions involve different criteria than a traditional business. The focus of that sub-theme is on those differences and how some administrators rank students above the institution. The breakdown of these questions and sub-themes are illustrated in Table 1 on the next page.

Table 1. Research Questions and Related Themes

Research Questions and Intermediate Emergent Themes

Themes and Related Sub Themes

Research Question 1
How are critical thinking skills used by educational leaders?

THEME 1: Dependence on facts to make decision

- SUB THEME: Thinking based on assumptions
- SUB THEME: Facts from knowledge
- SUB THEME: Facts from experience
- SUB THEME: Reliability of facts

Research Question 2
How are intuition skills used by educational leaders?

THEME 2: Intuition is honed and learned.

- SUB THEME: Based on life experiences
- SUB THEME: Same stuff over and over
- SUB THEME: Reliability of intuition

Research Question 3
How can critical thinking and intuition be “tied” together?

THEME 3: Reliance on data and previous knowledge

- SUB THEME: Intuition leads to critical thinking
- SUB THEME: It starts with intuition
- THEME 4: Making the right decision

Emergent Question 4:
How do one’s emotions at the time a decision is being made affect that decision?

- SUB THEME: Anger and fear
- SUB THEME: Ego plays a part
- SUB THEME: Culturally based
- Management Style
- Spirituality

Intermediate Emergent Themes

Introduction of Participants in the Study

CEO-F

CEO-F is the co-owner of his school. There is one other partner who is the director of admissions. His former occupation was with the Salvation Army where he served as an officer. His school competes in the same market with several other small (200-300 students) proprietary schools and a major state university. CEO-F's school offers a two-year associate degree and is located in a medium size city. The school is housed on one of the main thoroughfares on the outskirts of the city limits. The store front facilities are in what could have been a dry goods store at one time. The school has been updated with state of the art equipment, clean comfortable classrooms and lecture labs where students may plug in their laptops to a network and watch overhead projected computer lectures. There are twelve full time faculty on staff. Adjunct faculty are hired as needed. The library is small but seemingly adequate. There was space available for students to study and ample parking in the rear and one side of the building.

Roughly 50% of the 160 students attending his school are male. Two thirds of the student body are Caucasian. Hispanic and African American make up the remaining third. An associate's degree is the highest offered in data processing and medical records

School Director-V

His title was that of school director, placing him directly under the CEO who is also the majority stockholder of the corporation. The school competes with nearly two-dozen other small predominantly Hispanic schools in the market. The school serves over 700 Spanish-speaking students in areas of medical technology, emergency medical

technician, physician assistants and surgical technologists. There is not an academic dean position at the school. It is interesting to note that among his 26 full time faculty, 22 of them received their medical training [M.D.] in Havana.

Overall, the school is a modern state of the art facility that appears to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning. The offices, classrooms, library, and laboratories occupy a single building on a 6-acre campus. The classrooms were well lighted, ventilated, and contained the latest teaching aids including audiovisual equipment, ultrasound medical equipment, x-ray medical equipment, a mock laboratory operating room, and other equipment and supplies that allow the students to obtain hands-on experience. In addition, the Pharmacy Technician Program had a fully equipped pharmacy laboratory. The library appeared adequate for the facility and is open to not only students and faculty but also citizens in this community.

School President-B

School President-B is responsible for one of 21 schools in the southeast that make up this chain of technical schools. His school, established in 1966, has over 3,000 students attending who are mostly either military personnel or ship builders. The two-year school focuses on science, specifically chemistry and physics and technology, specifically computer programming. School President-B came from another proprietary organization where he was an academic dean. There are over 50 full time instructors at the school and an equal number of adjunct instructors.

School President-T

The main campus of this twelve-school chain is located in a large southeastern city and is headed up by School President-T. The school serves over a 1,000 full-time students who study in the allied health fields. Ninety-three percent of his students are female. The minority enrollment in the school is also significant, with 73% being African-American.

Academic Dean-S

Academic Dean-S, a former psychologist, was probably the most interesting of the interviews. I had given those to be interviewed the option of having a set of guideline questions before the interview. He declined and responded to the interview questions insightfully and spontaneously sometimes questioning the question, but then answering *his* own question.

The request for the interview was originally to the school president. She also received another request in the second mailing. The president asked Academic Dean-S, who had only been on the job a short time, to consent to the interview.

The school's main campus is located in a mid-size city. There are two stand-alone buildings that are connected by breezeways on a pristine grassed lot. Faculty offices, the library and general education classrooms are housed in one building. The business courses and allied health courses are taught in the other. Academic Dean-S's office was located on the first floor as one enters the library building and is glass enclosed except for the back wall to his desk. The office was clean and uncluttered. I felt, though, as if I was

in a 'fish bowl'. However, we were uninterrupted and distractions were minimal during our interview.

The school offers a four-year Bachelor's degree to nearly 300 students on this campus. The majority of the students (71%) are African-American. However, the Academic Dean-S noted that only 38% of these students attend full-time; the rest are part-time. Women represent 80% of the student body.

School Presidents – R and L

School President-R is responsible for a campus branch of this national chain of schools. There are 27 altogether. School President-L oversees a larger branch in a major city. During the phone interviews, both avoided questions concerning faculty make up and over all organizational structure. Because this was a characteristic of both, I assumed it to be a part of their corporate culture and did not pursue the issue. Both however seemed sincerely happy to help me with my research and provided in depth answers to my questions. School President-R also brought in on his own, a discussion on spirituality in his decision making process.

Both campuses offer four-year degree programs in allied health, computer training, art and business. Eight hundred students attend School President-R's smaller campus; over a thousand attend School President-L's larger campus.

School President-P

Of all of the interviews conducted, this one was the most difficult. School President-P had postponed it several times because of illness. She still had a bad case of

laryngitis but did not want to put off the interview again. I tried to keep it as short as possible, but it turned out to have been the longest interview of the group, going nearly an hour. She is near retirement and was able to relate her experiences to the subject matter.

President-P oversees two schools; the main campus is in a small mid-state city, the other is in a much larger market. Both schools serve around 300 students who study in the allied health technology field, earning two-year associate degrees.

Academic Dean-A

Academic Dean-A formerly worked in public education in this major city where his campus is located. He was sincerely happy to take part in my study however; he was very disgruntled with his position. He opened up more at the end of the interview and out of respect, I turned the recorder off, allowing him an opportunity to vent his feelings. There reportedly was quite a bit of friction between he and his campus president. I believe his answers to the interview questions were open and frank. The school serves nearly 700 students and competes with seven other two-year proprietary schools in this major market.

CEO-D

Of all of the interviews conducted and the people I met during the course of this study, this is the position that I would enjoy having. When that was facetiously discussed following the interview, CEO-D let me know the job was not available. During the tour of the building, I felt like I was in Disneyland with all of the state of the art equipment, student work on display and full classrooms. CEO-D was proud of her facility as she

stopped several times to pick up trash in the hallway and complained of a plant that needed watering. This school does not have a presidential position and the CEO answers directly to the board of directors. The school's academic dean, answers directly to the CEO.

The school occupies a five story building on the outskirts of this major market city. CEO-D occupies a spacious office on the second floor. It was private with a small side window viewing the lobby. There was a window running the length of the outside of her office [really running the length of the building] in which her view is of one of the city's major expressways and downtown. She occupies one of a suite of four offices. There is a single receptionist who handles traffic. Our meeting was in the suite's conference room, which, with the exception of a coffee maker and microwave, was pretty barren as compared to her office and the reception lobby, which was decorated by student art and various awards.

There are at least a half dozen proprietary schools specializing in the same concentrations as this school in the market. CEO-D also reminded me there are several major public universities in the market that offer similar majors. She was very quick to point out that allied health, a popular subject taught in proprietary schools, is not part of this school's curriculum. The school concentrates on the creative arts such as interior design, animation, painting, drawing and the culinary arts.

School President P-2

School President-P2 is a veteran educator from this medium size city school system. He has previously held professorships at two major universities. The meeting was

held in the President's conference room, which was well decorated and could possibly have been used by the Board of Directors. The conference room was next to President-P2's office, which was also stylishly furnished. Awards, certifications and trophies were prominently displayed.

During the conversation with School President P-2, an emergent opportunity was presented. He introduced me to various members of his academic team who were also available for interviews. Those interviews resulted in a separate appointment with corporate CEO-H of the colleges; there are three of them. Arrangements were then made to interview the other school presidents and academic deans of CEO-H's organization. They too were conducted in the president's conference room. Their introductions follow.

CEO-H

CEO-H had just taken over his top position a few months before the interview. He had previously been in an executive position with the school for 12 years. He is a member of the Board of Directors overseeing the various schools held by the corporation. The corporation holds three schools in this medium size market with schools of varying disciplines in three other cities within the state. There are five other proprietary schools and a major university in this market.

Academic Dean-H2

Academic Dean-H2 had been an instructor at School President-P2's college before being promoted to academic dean in a recently re-organizational plan. The school

is divided into four divisions. Academic Dean-H2 oversees the four divisional deans, 25-
fulltime faculty and 50 or so regularly scheduled adjuncts.

School President-O

School President-O is a veteran restaurateur from Europe, probably in his early
50's. He studied culinary arts before being recruited to this organization where he
oversees an academic dean, 14 faculty members and additional adjuncts. He also operates
the on-campus food facilities through his culinary school. A full-service up scale
restaurant is also owned by the culinary school and is operated under School President-O.

Academic Dean-R2

Academic Dean-R2 was the youngest interviewed. He is in his early to late 30's
and is the academic dean of the third school, the school of information technology, of this
market chain,

Academic Dean-S2

Academic Dean-S2 began working as an adjunct professor before taking over as
Academic Dean for the Art School, which concentrates on studies in Fashion Design and
Graphic Arts.

Table 2. Listing of additional information concerning the interviews

NVIVO Code	Position	Gender	Date Interviewed	Previous Position	School's Curriculum
F	President	(male)	3/9/2005	Salvation Army	2-yr Technology & Medical
S	Academic Dean	(male)	2/10/2005	Psychologist	2-yr Business
R	President	(male)	3/8/2005	Educator (public)	Business
P*	President	(female)	3/4/2005	Educator (public)	Allied Health
D	CEO	(female)	2/22/2005	Corporate Training	Art & Culinary
H	CEO	(male)	3/4/2005	Investor	Business & Culinary
B	President	(male)	3/4/2005	Educator (public)	Business
V	School Director	(male)	3/3/2005	Physician	Medical Technology
M	Academic Dean	(male)	2/24/2005	Businessman (foreign)	Business
T*	President	(male)	2/26/2005	Education (proprietary)	2-yr Allied Health
P2	President	(male)	2/8/2005	Education	Business & Art Design
H2	Academic Dean	(male)	2/9/2005	Education	Business & Art Design
O	President	(male)	2/8/2005	Restaurant Owner	Culinary Arts
F2	Academic Dean	(male)	2/8/2005	Education	Culinary Arts
R2	Academic Dean	(male)	2/8/2005	Unknown	Technology
S2	Academic Dean	(female)	2/8/2005	Private Practice	Business
C	Retired CEO	(male)	6/17/2005	Education	Business
L	President	(female)	6/14/2005	Unknown	Business
A	Academic Dean	(male)	5/4/2005	Education	Art & Culinary

Research Question 1

How are critical thinking skills used by educational leaders?

Introduction

In the discussion of this question with the participants, a major theme based on the dependence on facts to make decisions and four sub-themes emerged. The first sub-theme involves how thinking is based on assumptions. An attempt is also made in this sub-theme to have the participants define critical thinking. Obtaining facts from knowledge is the second sub-theme. This is followed by the third, obtaining facts from experience. There may be a fine line here concerning facts from knowledge and facts from experience. We must make the distinction that critical thinking, in its simplest form, involves interpreting and analyzing facts. Whereas, when we later look at intuition, we will discover that intuition, in its simplest form is the recall of how similar situations were handled as compared to the one at hand. Finally, we look at how the participants perceive the reliability of those facts.

Theme 1: Dependence on facts to make decisions

Critical thinking, as the term is generally used, roughly means reasonable and reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do. Having the facts in hand is paramount to good critical thinking skills (Ennis, 2001; Paul, 1993).

When faced with any kind of problem or situation, before he makes a decision, School President-R says that he determines all of the possible facts and looks in every direction before he decides anything. He uses his critical thinking skills daily and is

concerned with the effect his decision is going to have on both students and his institution. He tries to step back and look at the bigger picture of the decision. “Not just today,” he says, “but what effect it will have on the future as far as setting a precedent and the effect it’s going to have down the road.” (School President-R)

Defining Critical Thinking

Several of the administrators had different thoughts on the meaning of critical thinking. The same first question was asked in each of the interviews: How do you define critical thinking?

According CEO-D, “...trying to take into account all of the variables - to me it’s very much a ‘but if’ kind of situation at the end of the process.” She assumes that critical thinking involves assessing the problem, determining the issue, and determining what the question is first. She goes through a process of identifying or assessing what the different elements of the decision or the problem or issue are before going through her logical ‘what if’/‘but if’ kinds of scenarios in terms of thinking and making a decision. (CEO-D)

School President-F saw critical thinking as a way to analyze a problem and the thought process used to work through it. He believes part of the critical thinking process is used to look at the future asking the questions: where you are going, where do you need to be and how are you going to get there. However, he also sees critical thinking as a thought process to come up with solutions. (School President-F)

Another administrator, Academic Dean-M had difficulty in separating critical thinking and the reasoning process. He realizes and understands that problem solving is his main responsibility at his school. He tends to think of critical thinking more as

analysis and probably a precursor to problem solving. He believes that if you have something to solve you probably should be thinking more critically before you apply a solution. He applies critical thinking because he has a problem to solve. However, he believes it is more thinking on the analytical side of things. (Academic Dean-M)

School Director-V focuses on the moment at hand saying that, "Critical thinking is the ability of an individual to adapt or make decisions based on circumstances that are in front of them at that time." He also uses critical thinking skills daily. "Basically," he says, "you develop critical thinking through experiencing multiple scenarios about life. It is a life experience situation." He believes one may encounter similar scenarios. Even though they are not the same, he believes there are always similarities, which causes critical thinking and creativity to come into play. He went on to say that just because a scenario may be similar there would always be different aspects within it.

(School Director-V)

Sub-Theme: Thinking based on assumptions

Academic Dean-S believes all thinking is based on assumptions. He was quick to add that assumptions are not facts. He defined an assumption as something taken for granted or presupposed. He compared it to something that was previously learned and not questioned - a part of our system of beliefs. Inferences can be based on those assumptions in order to make sense of where we are, what we are about, and what is happening.

"We cannot act without assumptions and inferences," he said, "we all make assumptions. Everybody assumes an awful lot. And, we make these assumptions based on our experience." Critical thinking, he said, tries to make the assumption that one is

operating on explicit information before testing its validity. Academic Dean-S was also concerned with the first step of testing the validity of a question, which he contends is assessing or determining the issue or what the question really is. (Academic Dean-S)

Academic Dean-R2 questioned the over-all decision-making process wanting assurances that the assumption he was working on was the correct problem and the data being gathered were adequate for the situation. In solving problems, he specifically wants to know what caused the decision to have to be made to begin with and does the decision he is making meet the need that caused him to be there? (Academic Dean-R2)

Alternatively, as School Director-V put it, you have to determine the assumptions as to how you are going to solve the problem. In the medical field, decisions sometimes have to be made immediately. School Director-V said, "You basically have to make the right decision at the right time based on the circumstances that are happening very, very fast intervals. He gave an example:

Where you have written situations you look at the picture and you know have to make a quick decision - if you are going to take this route or that route, based on the information that is being provided. (School Director-V)

Sub-Theme: Facts from knowledge

Critical thinking comes into play early for School President-B. Knowing what questions to ask is at the top of his list for problem solving, which he believes, is the key to problem solving. The proprietary school environment is unique. He accepts the responsibility as the top administrator to find out as much as he can about what is really going on with the issue. He is a hands-on administrator and makes an effort to talk to all of the individuals involved if at all possible instead of having filtered information coming

to him. He tries to get as many facts as he can and then tries to determine the right thing to do in that particular case. Keeping your objectivity was another issue discussed by School President-B. He tells his managers that a good practice is the Sergeant Friday technique from the old *Dragnet* TV show, just the facts. “Don’t divulge your feelings,” he said, “and don’t do anything except collect the facts. Collect the information.” (School President-B)

School President-R says a lot of his information comes from both knowledge and experience but he falls short of calling it intuition. Additional information he requires is obtained from other people both on and off campus along with historical data. (School President-R)

CEO-D brings in other people adding to her knowledge base depending on what the circumstances are admitting that there are risks involved depending upon the level of the issue and the potential, which is all part of the analysis. Her key question is: What is the potential downside liability?

She calls on other people especially when there is typically a tough decision to be made relative to the direction of the school. CEO-D admitted that she likes to have a major part of her decision based on her own thinking, but she admitted to using other resources a lot. Sometimes that input is testing where her thinking is and where that fits with those from whom she is asking input.

It was important to her that when decisions impact a lot of people, that they too are involved in her decision-making process. During the interview she also made it known that she is one of those that does not do everything herself. She qualified her statement by adding that there is not enough time to make everything a consensus. The

CEO says, “We’re certainly not a democracy at some of the higher levels. But, I feel like I need to have the benefit of a lot of people’s input, insights and have tested out the possible what ifs.” She says only one person can be responsible for the ultimate decision, “My decision making... ultimately its my decision. But, lots of input.” (CEO-D)

School President-F also utilizes the knowledge of others to obtain facts for his decisions. In the interview, he said he especially liked participating management. It is important to him to see how different people view the situation at hand asking the questions: Do they view it as a concern or opportunity? How is it related to you? What are the effects?

He depends on staff input because of the size of the school. It is small serving only a few hundred students. He continued saying that since the school is intimate he knows the tendencies of those who are involved in his decision making process. He believes he knows in which direction they are going to lean and why. He always extracts the information that he needs from them before questioning them as to why. He contends that through their experience base and working with them on a continuous basis, he is usually able to determine whether they have a personal bias or actually a valid concern. He occasionally has to remind his staff that they may not like the decision personally and that personal biases do get in the way. “So, on some occasions a personal bias can interfere. It does interfere with the way we go about making decisions. So we have to check on one another,” he said. Statements similar to that from other administrators is how the fourth research question emerged in the research on the topic of emotions along with the sub-theme concerning decisions being made in anger. (School President-F)

Academic Dean-M also adds to his own knowledge base before seeking others. He said he begins the analysis approach before getting additional input. He added that he does not want to influence others and usually does not. He contends that he does not tell someone what he thinks before he asks: "What do you think?" However, he says he has many times looked at someone else's perspective and adjusted their conclusions to coincide with his own, because he knows another look gives him more information.

(Academic Dean-M)

School President-R only on occasion gathers facts from his team. Many times, he makes a decision without any input from anybody. He ultimately just makes a decision and moves forward. Generally, though, if it is something he is not completely comfortable with or does not know enough about, he will get input. "But, once I get the input then I make the decision to move forward don't ever look back on it," he said.

He said he usually has an idea of which way he is going. However, he admits that his staff can certainly be successful in steering him in a different direction when asked.

(School President-R)

Some administrators, such as School President-T, depend only on their upper level managers. Specifically, he depends a lot on his boss, the CEO of the university, even though the campuses under the corporate umbrella are joined but autonomous. He said, "I think my boss has lately, tried on some occasions, to wean me from asking her advice. And I take that to heart."

He admits that there are some decisions that he has to make on his own and feels comfortable making them. He says they are just 'OK' decisions. He also admits that they

are not always popular and that he too does not believe in democratic management.

(School President-T)

Medical Technology School Director-V also asks for guidance and information from his CEO, who is the majority stockholder of the corporation and at times, asks for guidance from the department heads involved in the situation. He asks them for their opinion based on facts they already have. In solving the problem, he makes a hybrid [his term] taking his own thoughts, and then adding those of his CEO and department heads in order to resolve the issue at hand. He emphasized that facts and knowledge are very important in making decisions in the medical field. He gave an example of diagnosing a patient; decisions are based on everything that surrounds the situation. (School Director-V)

CEO-H takes as much time as possible to gather his facts. He will try to delay a decision until the next day so that he has a chance to think on it and maybe get additional input. He uses facts to offset his emotions in the process. He says, “If I can delay it, it will give me time to do some research and find out more stuff. Get more facts to base a decision on. I’d do that. If I can’t, then I’ll just do the best I can.” (CEO-H)

Sub-Theme: Facts from experience

“If you’ve got the facts supporting you, you know stuff you’ve picked up from experience, you tend to work at it and the facts support it. I think it makes it a much easier decision,” according to Academic Dean-F2. His colleague, Academic Dean-H2 also believes in a lot of data collection. He wants to know what and how people are feeling and how they are performing. The two deans agreed that their facts need to be

measurable. Therefore, they look at different ways of collecting data so that they are not just making a decision intuitively or basing them on intangibles. (Academic Dean-H2 & Academic Dean-F2)

The fact gathering process can be a challenge. School President-O says, “It becomes much more difficult to make a good decision when you have radically different perspectives and people involved. But, I think that’s just a part of the data gathering.”

School President-B contrasted critical thinking with intuition during the interview and discovered that he has to be able to put things together to where at least he has enough of a picture to really decide what is going on. He wants to make sure his decision is really the right thing to do and specifically looks at things he has done in the past. However, he was adamant in saying that he does not believe that is intuition. (School President-B)

If the facts are there, School President-F does not want to re-invent the wheel. He likes to brainstorm with his team and practices participating management. He wants to see how different people view the situation and depends on their experience to provide the information needed. He wants to know if his team views it as a concern or opportunity and asks the questions, How is it related to them? What are the effects of it if they do or if they don’t? He likes to gather background information as much as possible and studies his competition asking additional questions such as: Who’s doing it, who’s not? Most of the information he uses comes from experience or past history. He reminded me that especially when one is in charge of a smaller school time and management dollars have to be multi-faceted. (School President-F)

School Director-V depends on facts based on his experience and avoids any emotional involvement. He says, “I analyze the facts and basically that’s why emotions have gone away. ‘Cause I have a saying that if my heart ever rights a paycheck, then I’m in the wrong field.”

Academic Dean-M warns that data based on either experience or knowledge can be over analyzed. He was an engineer before changing careers. He gave an example as to how over-analyzing a situation can lead to trouble:

When you add two numbers, multiply two numbers and so on. Where each number is a certain level of accuracy. And then after you get the result you are trying to extrapolate something more accurate than you know the source information. That’s what you can do over analyze. You are actually pulling things that don’t exist or you can’t validate it. (Academic Dean-M)

CEO-H admits that some people are able to generalize better in some circumstances having a lot of experiences that may be a little different than the current situation. Even though slightly different he trusts that their solution would work. “I think that happens for us in our routine decisions,” said CEO-H.

Sub- Theme: Reliability of data

Even though School President-B depends on his staff to gather the knowledge and information he needs for a decision, he also realizes that often the staff will not have all of the data needed and may not have the full picture. He has confidence in his team knowing that they will have enough information to at least realize there is a problem or see that there is an issue that needs to be investigated. Their job is to tell him the truth and give him the best quality information that they have, even if it is wrong. If they sincerely

believe in it, School President-B wants to hear it. However, once the decision is made he takes full responsibility. He added, "... If the problem is in their area, they should have already been on top of it." (School President-B)

Decisions made on data furnished are sometimes made on levels further up the chain of command than the academic dean position and can sometimes be difficult to carry out, according to Academic Dean-M. Sometimes the result from higher management is not what was expected. Academic Dean-M said he is allowed to dissent, "But, they will say, yes we hear you, but go ahead with what we decided." During the interview he sincerely believed his upper management 'hears' what is going on at the local level and he trusts that they are listening. However, it gets to the point where he sometimes does not trust them anymore. (Academic Dean-M)

A similar question was discussed with School Director-V. The interview question was: In spite of the data, the reliability of the data provided for a particular decision, what happens if the decision handed down to you by your CEO is totally wrong? The director said he tells his CEO that he does not agree with the decision. The response then from the CEO, according to School Director-V was, "This is how I want it."

CEO-D has been confronted by her subordinates and questioned about decisions made that were based on apparently unreliable data that had been presented. However, in running her school, she follows one simple rule which is first and foremost to make sure students are well served and second that academic objectives that have been established are met. She admits part of her responsibility as the chief executive officer is to be the buffer and get decisions translated to those concerned in such a way that they will be successful. (CEO-D)

Even though administrators rely on data from either previous experience or knowledge obtained through the decision making process, mistakes can be made. School President-B says some of his mistakes have been costly. He admitted to making other decisions that had cost him growth opportunities and missed partnerships. “A lot of different things,” he said, “but it never cost me any sleep.” (School President-B)

School Director-V at one time was given unreliable data. He admitted his analysis of the data was incomplete and poor. It resulted in what he called a ‘train wreck.’”

School President-R had a different outlook offering advice that if you are not making a mistake, you are not doing anything. He contends we learn from our mistakes and reiterates that he learns from each of his mistakes. He used the analogy of Edison inventing the light bulb and reminded me that Edison failed a whole lot more times than he succeeded.

If he does not see something working the way he thought it would work or not being as successful as he hoped it would be, he believes there is an opportunity to learn from it. (School Director-R)

Summary

Critical thinking as defined by other researchers (Chapter 2) is reasonable and reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do. However, the administrators had different thoughts on the meaning of critical thinking: (1.) Critical thinking is assessing, (2) Critical thinking is determining the issue, what first is the question, (3) Critical thinking is a way to analyze a problem and the thought process to

go through it, and (4) Critical thinking is the ability of an individual to adapt or make decisions based on circumstances that are in front of them at that time

Assumptions play an important part in the decision making process even to the extent that one administrator believed that all thinking is based on assumptions. However, what came out during the interviews was that assumptions are not facts and having the facts is significant.

Separating critical thinking and the reasoning process was determined to be a challenge and most administrators admitted they used critical thinking approaches on most major problems, calling in assistance from others to obtain additional facts to interpret as well as their own. Most facts used in the critical thinking process come from either their own knowledge and experience or that of others. Mistakes can be made in the decision making process, Even though administrators rely on what they believe is reliable data from either previous experience or knowledge. Some mistakes could be costly.

Research Question 2

How are intuition skills used by educational leaders?

Introduction

In the discussion of the second research question with the participants, a major theme indicating that intuition can be learned and honed emerged from the interviews. In addition, three sub themes surfaced: intuition being based on life experiences, the repetition of intuition as some administrators see ‘the same stuff over and over,’ and the

reliability of intuition. The administrators also discussed their various definitions of intuition.

Theme 2: Intuition can be learned and honed

“Intuition? That is something that is honed and learned,” said School President-C. He went on to say, “Generally intuition is my first reaction. And then from that I will draw a hypothesis.” (School President-C)

School President-R says, “We look at a lot of empirical data but, ultimately it’s going to come down to my intuition, from my gut.”

Defining Intuition

During the interview process, I asked what the administrators believed intuition meant to them. They replied with several different concepts. Words I had expected them to use: instinct, perception, insight, hunch or inkling were not mentioned. School President-R says, “To a certain extent, intuition - it is life experience; part of it is your gut.”

School President-B defined intuition simply as flying by the seat of your pants when you do not know what else to do. He quickly added that he does not do that very often. An even simpler definition came from CEO-D who called it a ‘no brainer.’ She became a little more personal in describing her definition of intuition saying she based her intuition on emotions. She said she believes emotion has some role or at least some aspect of emotion is involved with intuition. “Certainly when you’ve been doing what I’ve been doing for as long as I’ve been doing it there is a gut level that is based on a fair

amount of experience,” she said. However, she is sensitive because she is a woman in higher education, in management and in business. (CEO-D)

Sub-Theme: Intuition is based on life experiences

CEO-D believes her intuitive skills were acquired over time and have become an important part of her decision-making process. She says her intuition has developed into part people skills and part experience. She believes that if one puts those things together, intuition is produced. However, she does not believe many of us are born with any good intuition. She says she acquires it through the things experienced and things learned. She also thinks that there is a time element involved. (CEO-D)

CEO-C adds that he is at a point in his career [retired] where he hardly sees anything new anymore. “I don’t see many things new,” he said, “I might see a little variation on something.” (CEO-C)

School President-F believes intuition comes directly from life experiences and is predicated on experience. In his intuitive process, he searches his memory for something similar to recall from the past or an exact matching event that has stayed with him that matches the situation being faced. Sometimes he can feel his intuition coming on. He acknowledges to have gathered over the years so much information in his database that he is not quite able to pin point where it all comes from but he says he knows he has seen it before. (School President-F)

Academic Dean-M believes experience plays an important part in the intuitive decision making process and relates it to his growing up in the Caribbean.

My mother will tell you that my spirit doesn't take to a particular part of a person. And, really where does that come from? I really think it has to do with experience and you see certain traits and you identify certain traits --- and so on. So, intuition is largely a learned although its probably unintended probably done as sub behind type experience. (Academic Dean-M)

Just as he discussed recognizing patterns and categorizing information in critical thinking, Academic Dean-S applied similar logic to intuition. He believes intuition, as in critical thinking, is recognition of patterns and usually occurs after years of experience coming from some field or line of work or activity. He contends it take several years of experience before one can begin to recognize those patterns. However, being able to recognize them allows him to move more quickly, assuming again one has recognized that the patterns are valid and that as one generalizes from one situation to another the generalizations are also valid. However, Academic Dean-S was quick to point out that overall he did not trust his gut feeling.

If by gut feeling you mean recognition of a pattern well then, ok. If you mean some emotional attraction that may be based on a conscious or unconscious recognition of patterns then ok. But if you simply mean an ungrounded attraction then I distrust gut feeling. (Academic Dean-S)

Sub-Theme: Same stuff over and over

As intuition appears to be based on years of experience, some administrators said they were beginning to see repeated instances of various situations occur over and over. CEO-H has made decisions on similar problems. The example he used was budget decisions for his three schools. However, he says he is still challenged by the situation year after year.

Since there is a host of decisions that have been seen before, School President-T finds most of his decisions come relatively easy saying he does not think a lot about them. He said, “Ok. Not a lot of thought is put into some of our decisions.”

School President-F, who also says he is ready to retire, still stays busy keeping his school headed in the right direction.

I'll be honest with you. Sometimes I get to the point where I don't want any damn more concerns. [laughter] You just get tired of handling some the same concerns over and over and over. And, it could be a different face, a different day --- it's the same thing. Sometimes I don't want to deal with it. (School President-F)

In order to deal with his apparent frustration, he grants what he calls a temporary stay of execution; he ignores it. He encourages people to take the opportunity to solve it themselves. If it is a real problem, he knows it will come back to his desk. (School President-F)

Sub-Theme: Reliability of intuition

Academic Dean-M relies on his intuition when it is obvious and he can see the solution with his own eyes. He admits that at times his first impression is not the best and realizes that he can make the wrong decision. He recognizes that he has those limitations. (Academic Dean-M)

School President-R said he completely trusts his intuition and depends on it.

Others generally used their intuition, as mentioned earlier, when there is little leeway to interpretation [defining] the problem. Intuition is used regularly in their day-to-day decision making such as completing routine reports and scheduling, etc.

Summary

Intuition is generally well accepted by each of the participants except one who still must have the facts. Intuition is usually the first reaction to a problem by most administrators. In addition, most agreed that intuition takes time to learn and the skills are acquired over time and are an important part of the decision-making process; part of it is life experience and part of it is your gut.

However, generally speaking there seemed to be more doubt in the reliability of intuition in regards to critical thinking discussed earlier because of the dependence on facts.

Research Question 3:

How can critical thinking and intuition be tied together?

Introduction

Having the data to rely on and/or having previous knowledge of similar situations were apparent keys in the decision making process for the administrators interviewed, which resulted in the third theme of the study. Having reliable data relates to critical thinking while having previous knowledge or experience relates to intuition that ties the two together. This section also focuses on two sub-themes, which seemed to have brought the research around almost full circle as the participants discussed the possibility of intuition leading to critical thinking and the contention that everything starts with intuition.

Theme 3: Reliance on data and previous knowledge

When the facts are all there or there is possibly a belief that they are not correct, School President-F's intuition becomes involved. If there is strictly a dependence on the facts whether or not to approach the situation through critical thinking or let intuition take its course, depends on the circumstances. When a student is concerned, for example, he said he usually sides with the student. He also would side with one of his employees in a similar situation. (School President-F)

School Director-V uses both critical thinking and intuition in his day-to-day decision-making. He says being creative influences a lot of his decisions especially when you have various avenues available to you.

How would I say it to you --- if I could say it in Spanish it would be easier. There are certain scenarios where you become creative in bringing out an outcome and preventing a crisis from developing. (School Director-V)

Sub-Theme: Intuition leads to critical thinking.

Even though he admitted to using both, School President-F believes critical thinking is more significant than intuition. He says that in the final analysis critical thinking is probably more important only because it forces one into a process.

"Nevertheless, if we are all honest," he went on to say, "intuition probably leads to the critical thinking." (School President-F)

Academic Dean-S confessed that intuition is used along with critical thinking in most all decisions. "I'd be hard pressed to think of when it doesn't kick in," he said, "I am intuitive possibly to a fault, depending though on people who are masters of detail." He tries to think about the assumptions that he is operating on in order to test their validity.

He did admit that maybe some of his colleagues might have a concern over how he solves problems. “But, I think it would be better to ask those who work with me --- those questions. I’m sure some of them will say no he’s spasmodic,” he said.

(Academic Dean-S)

The follow up question was: Then critical thinking kicks in on decisions that you need information for? His reply, “Not necessarily. If someone tells me what to do, the board wants this --- that decision is already made. There’s no need for critical thinking.

(Academic Dean-S)

School Director-V made the comparison between what society allows and what is done in real life, which he labeled internal intuition. He explains that it is something innate within you that you have never been trained to address because European society does not let you. European society is not programmed to look at intuition as part of decision-making. He says it would be an instinct that is already innate within you.

(School Director-V)

Sub Theme: It starts with intuition

Retired School President-C says he would start with intuition and then use critical thinking to either prove or disprove. Critical thinking, he believes, is more scientific and probably more provable. Intuition is where he starts believing that we all probably have to start there.

Academic Dean-S discussed his reliance on current data at hand and having previous knowledge of a similar circumstance. He contends that he is usually prepared to handle a crisis, which he too says begins with his intuition. He tries to think in advance

about what to do if faced with certain events even to the point of pre-planning his options. The secret he says is that he is confident that he can call on other people who are committed to his same goals. He gave the example of having to let an instructor go in the middle of a semester and quickly covered his options.

He also referred back to a previous career position where he had been prepared for most situations. Time is a factor, too.

Its hard for me to think of an emergency I had to deal with in this position that I didn't have some time, if only for a short time, to look at my contingencies, to call on people who are dedicated to their job and are loyal to this university and are willing to help out. (Academic Dean-S)

Summary

Several administrators reported they use both critical thinking and intuition in their day-to-day work, tying both together. Some believe critical thinking is more important than intuition. Another believes intuition probably leads to the critical thinking. Several start with intuition then use critical thinking to either prove or disprove their decision.

Emerging Research Question 4:

How do one's emotions at the time a decision is being made affect that decision?

Introduction

This section focuses on making the right decision and how emotions become involved in that part of the process. Emotions were a topic discussed during the interviews; later resulting in a question that emerged during the process. There is an examination of key literature on emotions and emotional intelligence in relationship to

management and leadership. There is also a review of some of the key research on the differences in how anger is handled among men and women. Based on the interviews, we will also discuss how administrators manage their anger and fear, how ego comes into the decision-making process and how one's culture can affect decisions.

Theme 4: Making the right decision

School President-B says emotions come into play as he attempts to make the right decision. He also believes they can be a disadvantage in dealing with problems impacting and involving others. Objectivity plays an important role in his decision-making process, too. He points out to his colleagues that sometimes when get emotionally involved they loose their objectivity. He warns that they have to try and keep their emotions under control.” (School President-B)

Academic Dean-S had some thoughts on recent brain studies and how they relate to emotions, thought and the decision making process. Studies of the brain show that when the cognitive areas are excited, so are the emotional areas. However, the reverse is not true. Even people who are extremely logical are so because of some underlying decision to involve emotions making them more logical in their approach to the question. (Academic Dean-S)

“Obviously everybody is human,” according to School President-F, “and, emotions will play a part.” When he feels his emotions affecting the situation, he seeks more input from others in order to justify that he has made the right decision. Usually no emotions are involved in his decisions. He goes back to the intuition that he knows has

worked. Where his emotions really do kick in is during his 'drive of let's get it going' which he says is a motivator for others to do what ever is necessary. (School President-F)

Sometimes though, according to Academic Dean-R2 the results of whether or not the right decision was made are not that instantaneous. Sometimes he knows right away and sometimes he has to wait until much later to have the results that demonstrate the decision was right. When everything is over he feels good about what he has done and believes he has done a good job.

Sub-Theme: Anger and fear

Several of the administrators admitted to making decisions in anger or out of fear. Analyzing his own anger, Academic Dean-S believes anger usually is based on fear of some sort. If one thinks they are going to be harmed in some way, then one fears that harm. Academic Dean-S is not sure there is much difference between what he called anxiety and fear. But, he says there is always some fear or anxiety that sparks an aggression against the 'perceived external source of that anxiety.' He cited an example, "You say to me you're a son of a bitch. I would say, a normal response would be, I feel some anxiety or I might use the term fear." (Academic Dean-S)

"Have you ever made a decision in anger?" was one of the questions asked of the participants. Their answers varied and were very candid. CEO-D said, "Unfortunately, I have. I don't think I've made one recently. But, yes unfortunately I've made decisions in anger."

My follow up question was, "Was it a good decision, did you regret it? Would you like to have it over again?"

Her reply, "I'm trying to think of one specific. Probably in the things that come to mind, I would probably think it was only an adequate decision. I don't think it was a good decision."

School President-F was sure he had made a decision in anger. However, he was not able to remember an example. He said in his job he did not make snap decisions while angry. He did cite one exception, "Well, the only one I would do that for would be my daughter." His daughter works as his administrative assistant.

When angry, School President-F said that he usually would just go and close his office door and then later try to talk with everybody possible and try removing himself from the situation. When asked about emotions in decision-making he did admit they are usually involved. He immediately said it could have been a personal reason. He cited an example involving a student:

The one I'm thinking about is we suspended this student and she came back and still couldn't do it and she wants to come back again. And, she referred to me as something less than an administrator. So, I'm sure I was kind of mad deep down. But, I also researched myself to make sure did I have a valid reason. I'm happy I can sleep at night. (School President-F)

From Jamaica, Academic Dean-M is aware of anger in decision-making. He said, "I've not really made a decision in anger. I think would be able to control that."

"I've regretted it later, said School President-R. "And, I've reversed myself when I did something in anger. I calmed down cooler heads prevailed. I've backed off from whatever I had said."

Academic Dean-S also admitted to making a decision in anger. However, he contends that he revisits it later and tries not to publicize decisions made in anger. He

knows he has said things when he was angry. Generally, he mistrusts anger. (Academic Dean-S)

Sub-Theme: Ego plays a part.

School President-B knows when he has reached the right outcome of a situation and he says that he feels good about what he has done. “As a matter of fact,” he said, “that’s one of the things I really enjoy in talking with these folks, is the good feeling you get when you’re able to work out a reasonable compromise.”

He immediately reminded me that he did not say a win-lose situation but repeated ‘a reasonable compromise’. You probably did the right thing, according to School President-B if you feel good about the outcome. He admits that sometimes the ‘good feeling’ does not linger long. There have been outcomes he has faced where he felt great at that time, but the next day there is a lot of remorse. In that case, he says, “You know, you probably didn’t make a good decision. But, if you look back on it and time and time again you feel good about it, then you probably know you made the right decision.”

(School President-B)

“Sure ego plays a part in the decision-making process,” according to School President-F. He told me during the interview that he was the most difficult person he ever had to work with and immediately compared it to emotions saying that he tries to play them down. He bases most of his lone decisions on the fact that he has more experience than anybody in his school. He often times makes a decision because he knows it is right based on his intuition.

He gave the example of a staff meeting where someone wanted to implement, what he termed, an absurd policy. He knew from experience if implemented it would cut revenue. He was very adamant about not accepting the proposal and remembered that there was not any discussion. He asked me, "Was that ego? Probably was. But, I knew I was right because I have already crossed that bridge too many times. And I can't have somebody coming in with a lot less experience and not really understanding the full gamut of it because they're only getting the small picture of the whole."

Ego plays a part in the decision making process and hopefully one is able to control it, was the advice given by School President-F. He also tries to sway others to be more scientific. "But sometimes you just gotta do what you gotta do," he said. (School President-F)

Making decisions that are rewarding also play into CEO-D's ego. She contends the whole process is energizing. She would not be doing what she is doing, responsible for solving problems and making decisions, if it was not rewarding. She thinks it would be horrible if administrators did not like having to make decisions and then realized you had to make multiple decisions as part of your job.

Sub-Theme: Emotions can be culturally based

Academic Dean-M was born and raised in Jamaica. School Director-V was born and raised in Spain. They both interestingly noted that they believed their foreign culture has played an important part in how emotions are involved in their decision-making process.

Academic Dean-M said he rarely if ever gets angry on the job. He said he only got angry with his children. He believes he has control over his emotions, especially anger.

In growing up one tends to be (pause) but, I've seen other people who weren't Jamaicans be able to - they don't show things outwardly. I don't think they make some of the best decisions in anger. On the other hand, I've seen people who do it; anger. (Academic Dean-M)

School Director-V credits being control of his anger with his upbringing and expression of emotions. He says his secret is his European education. He said, "We observe, we stay quiet and respond only when something needs to be responded to, based on the facts that get to you."

During the interview, he said he had no emotions on the job, "At all, nothing. They tell me I'm very dry. That's what my employees tell me. That I'm emotionless, dry." (School President-V)

Summary

Emotions can be a disadvantage in dealing with issues, especially when you let people know how you think and feel during the decision-making process as those emotions are continually changing. On the other side of the coin, everybody is human and emotions play a part in the decision making process. Emotions can put an administrator at a disadvantage; especially anger. Anger is a response to fear of some sort. One administrator openly admitted to not trusting his anger.

From Jamaica, one dean was particularly aware of anger in decision-making even though he says he has not really made a decision in anger. He credits his Caribbean

upbringing with that. Another administrator admitted to making a decision in anger and admits to reversing himself the times when he had. Ego also plays a part in making the right decision according to some of the administrators especially when they made decisions that were rewarding.

Intermediate Emerging Themes

Introduction

There were two additional themes of note that emerged during the interviews: Management Style and Spirituality. Both themes support the emotional aspect of this research; though only somewhat related, there was an importance felt.

Not every participant spoke to one or the other themes. I felt that the statements they made were significant and could not have been placed in other sections. The administrators' *Management Style* is how they handle their students' concerns. Student concerns make up the bulk of challenges faced daily by CEO's, school presidents and their academic deans.

The first part of this section recognizes differences in the decision-making process in a proprietary school setting. Proprietary schools are career oriented and a well-rounded education for a student is usually not high on their priority list of expectations. The mission of most proprietary schools is to get their students jobs upon graduation, which is a major concern of the accrediting agencies. We look at how many administrators, then, place student concerns over that of the institution.

During classroom sessions of my doctoral program, a colleague's research centered on the spirituality of college leadership; his topic lingered on my mind during

my research. I spent time with a few of the participants discussing their spirituality and faith. The theme was not discussed with all of the participants. It came up when participants mentioned the involvement of their faith and how it affected their day-to-day decision-making. This brief section focuses on how decisions are based on the right thing to do and how important faith is to the decision making process.

Emergent Intermediate Theme: Management Style

Sub-Theme: For profit decision-making is different

During this later part of the interview, CEO-D became very terse in answering the questions. She said, “I am aware that for-profit making decision making is different. There is no decision making except at the highest level.”

CEO-D says there is a misconception over the statement that proprietary schools are out only to make a profit. She assured me it was different at her school. Most of her major decisions concern the student, which she says is first and foremost. She reminded me that her role as CEO of an institution of higher learning is to insure *her* students have a quality learning and educational experience. In regards to decisions, according to CEO-D, “The people ones are the tough ones. And, they’re the ones that have the greatest impact. At least that’s what we’re all about.”

CEO-D is also concerned over how her decisions affect people rather than how they impact stockholders earnings, which she says, is the stark difference between a proprietary school and a traditional business. She repeated several times that the impact or consideration of her decisions play an important role in her decision making, especially if it has anything to do with people. She reminded me that in education,

everything done is about people. She said, “Yes, I’m concerned about my P&L and I have a margin goal but, that’s all through people.” (CEO-D)

School President-B says he is in charge and will win all the time. However, he tries to break things down to a human level where they can be effectively communicated. He contends that the major problem with some of his younger colleagues is that they allegedly get into a ‘win-lose’ type mode and they think everything is a contest. Compromise is occasionally the only acceptable alternative one might have.

Another concern he expressed involved some administrators just sticking to the policy manual. He says, “Policy is often just a way for a person to avoid making a real decision. Or hiding behind a corporate veil. Or, not really dealing with the person, just dealing with an issue. You know, you’ve got to take the whole thing in context.” (School President-B)

The impact of a decision was important to CEO-H who considers the dysfunctional consequences of the decision. A manager should take into account not only the decision itself but what the consequences are of the decision. He believes that will often determine how that decision is made.

Emotions continued to get involved with School President-P2’s decision making. In proprietary, especially in a small school, there is a different involvement between the student and teacher and sometimes the decision-making becomes personal.

The decision’s tougher for me, I don’t want to use the word hurt, but if somebody else is going to be disappointed you know, a student or a teacher, you’re not going to be able to use anymore - you know, to me that’s even more tough - their reaction to the fact as to how it’s going to affect *their* lives. Those are the ones that are tough. (School President-P2)

School President-T had similar thoughts when he said, “Its tough to have to make a decision that’s gong to affect somebody’s life.”

School President-L also shared similar feelings saying that proprietary education has been her roots for 30 years. She too tries to reach out to people who would benefit most admitting that she probably leans more toward giving students more opportunity, without sacrificing the integrity of the school. (School President-L)

School President-O compared traditional business to a for-profit educational setting. He says:

They’re paying for a product, but because of the unique features of education, if they don’t accept the responsibility of getting their education, doing the work toward their education, then the only way to preserve the value of the education itself, is by giving them the grade they would not be as happy with. (School President-O)

He continued by saying it is critical for students to be partly responsible for their educational process and that they should be made to feel that they are a part of the school.

Sub-Theme: Students over institution

Academic Dean-F2 realizes his decision-making is student based. Using an old cliché, he says, “You take care of your students and they will take care of you.” His decision-making is all about taking care of the students. He used the example of eliminating a program of study. He says programs are taken out of the degree concentration when they not good for the student to enroll in them. He does this to protect them from finding out later when they graduate they are not going to have the opportunity for a job in that field. (Academic Dean-F2)

School President-R weighs all of the alternatives when it comes to the impact his decisions have on students. However, he admits he is biased in favor of the student. He tries to put the student's interest first if at all possible and tries to do whatever can be done with the idea that students are the first priority. It does not always work out that way because sometimes there can be overriding issues from the accreditation standpoint.

Emergent Intermediate Theme: Spirituality

Sub-Theme: Decision based on the right thing to do

One of the first ingredients in making a decision, according to School President-B is to get as many facts as possible and then try to determine what the right thing to do is in that particular case. His determination of an outcome is not what the policy is or what the rules say but, again he stressed what is the right thing to do in this particular situation.

You can call it ethics if you want. You can call it customer service. You can call it whatever, but I think that it's important to really establish what you believe the right thing to do would be. The right thing. The Bible. The 'Golden Rule.' You can't always do the right thing. But, you certainly want to do the right thing as much as you possibly can or get as close to it as you possibly can. And it gives you a reference point to work with. If you don't, I think you may be heading in the wrong direction. (School President-B)

Sub-Theme: Faith important to decision making

The question discussed with School President-F was if faith really played a part in his decision making process. His response:

I would like to say 100%, but probably not quite. Though to be frank with you, of course, we're in [City where school is located] you know about [City]. My

background is the Salvation Army. I had a lot of success with that. (School President-F)

School President-R used a Bible verse to back up his comment saying, "...slow to anger, quick to listen and slow to speak' and I try to do that."

CEO-H simply says, "I think it plays a significant role in my decision making."

School President-P adds that:

I am an example of what I do. And you know you are going to judge Christianity solely based on what they observe me do. And, I think I have an absolute duty to try as hard as possible to espouse Christian action in everything I do. And, certainly I don't succeed in it, anywhere near where I'd like to. But, I certainly try. (School President-P)

Chapter Summary

This chapter looked at the results of the interviews of the participants of the research in light of resolving the three research questions discussed earlier. During the course of the interviews, a fourth research question emerged.

Statements were gathered that related to the first research question: How are critical thinking skills used by educational leaders? The theme developed that administrators required facts in order to make an adequate decision. That fact gathering process is broken down into assumptions, obtaining facts from experience and knowledge and the reliability of those facts.

Thinking is based on assumptions, but assumptions are not facts. An assumption is something we take for granted or presuppose. Assumptions are things we previously have learned and do not question that have become a part of our system of beliefs.

One technique to problem solving is knowing the questions to ask, realizing that the proprietary school environment is unique. Most of the administrators admitted to accepting the responsibility of finding out as much as you can about what was really going on with the issue.

The administrators also depend on their staff to gather the knowledge and information needed for a decision. Several realize that often the staff will not have all of the information needed and may not have the full picture. However, the confidence in the team is knowing that they will have enough to realize there is a problem or an issue that needs to be investigated.

The next section focused on the second research question: How are intuition skills used by educational leaders? Most of the participants agreed that intuition could be learned and honed which became the theme of the section. Three sub-themes concerning intuition were discussed: intuition being based on life experiences, intuition is basically the same thing over and over, and the reliability of intuition.

It was agreed on by several of the administrators that intuition is something that is honed and learned. It was also the first reaction of some before they draw a hypothesis. Others said they look at empirical data but, ultimately their decision will come down to intuition, from the gut.

Several believe intuitive skills are acquired over time and become an important part of their decision-making process. Others say intuition develops as part people skills

and part experience and if one puts those things together, real intuition is produced. As intuition appears to be based on years of experience, some administrators are beginning to see repeated instances of their intuitive process meaning that decisions are being made on the same or very similar topics. Some of the administrators said, in spite of that, they are still being challenged by the continuation of the same thing. The majority of those interviewed seem to trust their intuition. One blatantly said he did not trust his intuition.

How can critical thinking and intuition be “tied” together? was the next question of focus. It seems they can. As an administrator depends on facts presented, the final outcome of the decision is also based on previous experience. The two sub-themes focused on the fact that intuition leads to critical thinking and that the decision-making process starts with intuition.

Critical thinking is perceived by those interviewed to be more important than intuition even though intuition appears to be used more often than critical thinking. One reason stated was that critical thinking forces a process. “But,” one administrator says, “if we are all honest, intuition probably leads to the critical thinking.”

A fourth research question emerged during the study: How do one’s emotions at the time a decision is being made affect that decision? This main theme concerned making the right decision. It was also recognized that anger, fear, egos and culture all play a part in the emotional process of decision-making.

Most agreed that emotions come into play and affect decision-making, which can put them at a disadvantage in dealing with problems impacting and involving others. We were warned that one can give away a strategic situation that is not ready to be revealed if

emotions get out of hand. Objectivity also plays an important role in the decision-making process. Everybody is human and emotions play a part.

Making decisions are rewarding and play into one's ego, according to a CEO. She also found making decisions were energizing and went on to say if ego did not play a part in decision-making, you would never be considered right by more than 50%.

Two of those interviewed were from outside the United States. One was from Jamaica and the other from Spain. Both believe that their cultural upbringing had a lot to do with how they make decisions and how emotions affect their process.

Two intermediate emerging themes appear at the end of the chapter. They focus on management style and spirituality. Administrators in a for-profit educational institution seem to make decisions differently, involving different criteria, than a traditional business. The focus in that sub-theme is on those differences and how students usually rank above the institution. Two elements come into focus under the discussion of spirituality: Decisions based on the right thing to do and how faith is important to the decision making process.

The question asked to several administrators was if their faith really played a part in their decision making process. One said 100%. During the interview another used a Bible verse to back up his comment saying, "...slow to anger, quick to listen and slow to speak' and he says he tries to do that. Another summed up by saying that spirituality plays a significant role in his decision-making. He reminded me that he is an example of what he does and his students and faculty will judge Christianity solely based on what they observe him doing. He says he has an absolute duty to try as hard as possible to

espouse Christian action in everything he does. He was quick to admit that he does not succeed in it anywhere near where he would like to.

CHAPTER 5 - DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to further understand the decision-making process of upper-level proprietary school administrators. More specifically, the research centered on how those administrators utilized critical thinking skills and their intuition as they made decisions affecting their school. This study answered three research questions: 1.) How are critical thinking skills used by educational leaders? 2.) How are intuition skills used by educational leaders? 3.) How can critical thinking and intuition be tied together?

Decisions made by the participants of the study were often based on their critical thinking skills or intuition. In either case, the research exposed the fact that the emotional state of the decision maker played an important role in the final outcome of the decision. A fourth research question then emerged: how do one's emotions at the time a decision is being made affect that decision?

The study was based in the southeastern United States, which is frequently referred to as "The Bible Belt." Several of the administrators discussed the role of spirituality and how it affected their decision-making and leadership.

Discussion of the Findings

How Critical Thinking Skills Are Used by Educational Leaders

The quality of the solution to a problem or situation facing administrators or any manager depends upon many factors. According to this study, some of those factors were:

- How much is known about the subject
- Who or what will be affected by the decision
- How easily relevant information can be retrieved
- How the inquiry is conducted into a particular subject
- How are the questions asked and answered
- How the inquiry is organized
- How the goals were set, monitored and revised

Finding the critical issues in complex situations and problem solving is how Pascarella (1997) defined the critical thinking process. For example, finding the cause for what has gone wrong and making the best choice in an appropriate amount of time. When the administrators who were interviewed faced significant problems, they utilized their critical thinking skills. Most of those significant problems either involved personnel or money. Critical thinking was not used in routine day-to-day problem solving.

The administrators based their ability to solve problems on assumptions, in essence the knowledge they already had along with knowledge gained from the experience of other people.

It is important to note here the differences the participants of this study made between critical thinking and intuition. Critical thinking involves gathering facts that

were not readily available. Intuition involves utilizing facts that have already been obtained. When other people are involved in the decision-making process a question of the reliability of the facts emerge. Each of these will be explored in the following section.

Thinking Based on Assumptions

During the research, the word assumption was defined, as taking something for granted or working with something that is pre-supposed. Something previously learned and not questioned could also be an assumption. Assumptions are a part of our system of beliefs, as mentioned by several of the study participants. Inferences or deductions are also based on assumptions, according to the participants, in order to make sense of where we are, what we are about, and what is happening.

Fiume's (2000) research indicated critical thinking is embedded within what he called the fabric of work settings. There is a great deal of uncertainty involved in the decision-making process when critical thinking is involved. That is because the demands of the workplace are contextually specific and managers adapt their decision making process to the demands of context. Managers, according to Fiume and this research concurs, calculate the risks involved in their different courses of action and then make a decision knowing that its success is uncertain. Critical thinking, therefore, is a way to analyze a problem and the thought process that is used to work through it. Part of the critical thinking process is used to look at the future; asking the questions: where are you going, where do you need to be and how are you going to get there? This is the opposite of intuition in which one can with some degree of accuracy base success on previous successful events.

The concern one participant in the research (Academic Dean-S) had in his process of decision-making was assessment or determination of the issue -- what the question really was. Kurfiss (1988) reminds us that knowledge is constructed through human inquiry and judged according to a criterion of adequacy. Moreover, Academic Dean-R2 wanted to be assured that his assumptions were targeted on the correct problem and the data he was gathering were adequate for the situation. Moreover, as School Director-V put it, you have to determine the assumptions involved as you go about solving the problem.

Facts from Knowledge

When faced with any kind of problem or situation, before a decision is made there is an attempt to determine all of the possible facts. The administrators said they look in every direction before deciding on anything. Nevertheless, there appeared to be an order of concern. The CEO's and presidents were concerned with the effect decisions were going to have on the institution and students, in that order. Academic Deans were concerned over how the decision would affect students and personnel. Each, though, tries to step back and look at the big picture of the decision and the effect it will have on the future as far as setting a precedent. All were concerned over the effect it would have down the road.

Educational leaders, being in business themselves, must be able to detect bias, recognize illogical thinking, avoid stereotyping and reach conclusions based on solid evidence (Glen & Smoot, 1994). A formula, for lack of a better word, seemed to develop as to how to use critical thinking. Thinking critically in this study included:

- An ability to raise important questions and explore alternatives,
- Develop a sense of what information is missing or needed to solve a problem
- Be sensitive to the background of an issue
- Have a knack for separating the important information from material that is peripheral or less relevant,
- Have a willingness to challenge and be challenged,
- Listen to what others are saying
- Be able to empathize with significant others.??

Facts from Experience

The CEO's were more likely to develop a "pipeline of information" as they called on other people within their organization to discuss their ideas when there was a tough decision at hand. Those people included the local campus president and at times the academic dean. Again, decisions made by academic deans usually consisted of the involvement of either students or personnel. Facts gathered by academic deans usually came from those directly involved.

Each administrator in this study wanted to have the majority part of the decision being a result of their *own* thinking. However, each administrator did admit to using resources quite often even though having knowledge of the key pieces of the problem's solution usually came before asking for input. In addition, they wanted to make sure it was known that they did not do everything themselves.

For example, School President-F said he liked to brainstorm with his team and practices participating management. He depends on his teams experience to provide the information needed. He reminded me that especially when one is in charge of a smaller school time and management dollars have to be multi-faceted.

Several administrators said that even though outside input is sought, there is not enough time to make everything a consensus. The administrators as a whole seemed to not operate their school as a democracy. However, the research revealed that in the majority of the schools administrators do not do everything.

Critical thinking is a conduit to better decision-making. It is a process that involves assessing the resolution requirements, such as the specific information that is needed to generate ideas that enable the resolution of the problem (Williams, 2002). An

underlying factor seemed to be the question of how the administrators responded to change within their organization. This is supported by McKendree, Small and Stenning (2002) who wrote that thinking critically is also being able to appropriately and analytically respond to changes in modern society.

Reliability of the Facts

Even though the school administrators depend on staff and others to gather knowledge and information needed for a decision, they also realize that sometimes the staff will not have all of the data needed. We are reminded of Harrison's (2003) statement that when dealing in intangibles, few decisions are based purely on fact. In large service based companies for example, leaders have to work hard to find the facts. When most decisions are made down the managerial line, Harrison says a filtering process keeps the general operational detail from the leaders.

In other words everyone may not have the full picture. Most of the administrators did, however, have confidence in their team. They were confident in knowing that the staff would have enough information to at least realize there is a problem or see that there is an issue that needs to be investigated. Their job is to tell the administrator the truth and give them the best quality information that they have, even if it is wrong. School President-B was more precise when he said if his staff sincerely believes in it, he wants to hear it. However, once the decision is made he took full responsibility.

Some administrators were confronted by their subordinates and questioned about decisions made that might have been based on unreliable data. Academic deans seem to

follow one simple rule: make sure students are well served and that academic objectives are met.

Even though administrators rely on data from either previous experience obtained or knowledge obtained through the decision making process, mistakes can be made. Mistakes were described as being costly, a train wreck, missed growth opportunities and missed partnerships.

Advice was offered that if you are not making a mistake, you are not doing anything. We learn from our mistakes. There is always an opportunity to learn.

How Intuition Skills Are Used

“To a certain extent, intuition - it is life experience; part of it is your gut,” according to School President-R. Intuition is flying by the seat of your pants when you do not know what else to do, which came from School President-B. According to Glasser (1995), intuition, in any case, is integrated unconsciously into one’s gathering of knowledge, intelligence, experience and their respect for the unknown. That was interpreted as the knowledge, the intelligence and the experience being already present and not having to be gathered again. Even so, the research indicated intuition is something that can be learned and continually developed. CEO-D specifically said she does not believe many of us are born with any good intuition. It is acquired through things experienced and things learned. There is a time element involved.

CEO-D also believed that her intuitive skills were acquired over time and were an important part of her decision-making process. Her intuitive skills are divided into two

categories, which are part people skills and part experience. When they are put together, true intuition is produced.

Intuition is Based on Life Experiences

Schmidt's (1995) research shows that by itself, intuition is valuable in problem solving or decision-making when situations exist where there is a great deal of change, complexity or uncertainty. Another theorist (Sanchez, 1997) says intuition is simply derived from memory. School President-R says, "We look at a lot of empirical data but, ultimately it's going to come down to my intuition, from my gut." Most of the administrators believed intuition existed in one form or another and that intuition is a powerful and beneficial tool.

The research revealed intuitive skills were acquired by the administrators over time and became an important part of their decision-making process. One CEO said her intuition has developed into part people skills and part experience. Another CEO spoke out saying she did not believe many of us were born with intuition. It is acquired through life experiences and things we have learned.

School President-F also believes intuition comes directly from life experiences. In fact, he says all intuition is predicated on experience. As situations arise, he tries to remember something exact or similar that has happened in the past to which he can relate. He acknowledges to having over the years gathered so much information in his mental database that he is not able to remember precisely where the information came from but, he says he always knows he has seen it. I would not have defined it as a mental database but rather information that I had learned over the years.

Same stuff over and over

This research showed that intuition is based on years of experience. Many of the administrators interviewed said they were beginning to see repeated instances of situations occur over and over. CEO-H has made decisions on similar repeated problems. The example he used was budget decisions for his three schools. However, he says he is still challenged by the situation year after year.

Since there is a host of decisions that have been seen before, School President-T found most of his decisions came to him relatively easy. He said, "Ok. Not a lot of thought is put into some of our decisions."

Reliability of Intuition

As in many other decision-making processes, the reliability of intuition became a question. This study indicated that most of those in proprietary education management rely on intuition when the answer is obvious and they already can see a solution. Many of the administrators admitted that at times their first impression was not the best. At that point, they realized they then could make a wrong decision. Many recognized those limitations.

One school president admitted to trusting his intuition and depending on it. Others generally used their intuition, as mentioned earlier, when there is little leeway to interpretation [defining] the problem. Intuition is used regularly in day-to-day decision making such as completing routine reports and scheduling, etc. This is supported by additional research. Zehnder (1987) for example indicated that many successful managers

had superior intuitive powers, which enabled them to make good decisions on a regular basis. Recall Sanchez's (1997) research that showed challenges faced by administrators were in the non-routine matters. In which case, intuitive thinking seems to be used much more than critical thinking. Most issues that come up already have well-established protocols making most decision making easy and routine.

On the other hand, Academic Dean-S pointed out that overall he did not trust his intuitive feeling, "If by gut feeling you mean recognition of a pattern well then, ok. If you mean some emotional attraction that may be based on a conscious or unconscious recognition of patterns then ok. But if you simply mean an ungrounded attraction then I distrust gut feeling."

The Relationship Between Critical Thinking and Intuition

Research by Parikh and Neubauer (1994) supported combining intuition with intellectual and cognitive skills [critical thinking]. For example, this study pointed to the fact that intuition is used at times "fill in the blanks" when were not available. As CEO-H goes through the critical thinking process, some data [intuitive thought] became useful. That data enabled him to build a successful solution to the challenge at hand. Even though he admitted to using both, School President-F believed critical thinking was more significant than intuition. He says that in the final analysis critical thinking is probably more important only because it forces one into a process. Intuition probably leads to the critical thinking.

Academic Dean-S confessed that intuition is used along with critical thinking in most all of his decisions. "I'd be hard pressed to think of when it doesn't kick in," he

said, “I am intuitive possibly to a fault, depending though on people who are masters of detail.”

Trailer and Morgan (2004) do not think that a manager can be found who relies exclusively on intuition or solely on critical thinking techniques. More likely, there will be a continuum of decision-making styles involving a combination of both skills. It was, however, the consensus of the participants that the nature of the problem to be solved actually determines the mix.

Intuition leads to critical thinking.

This research also indicated critical thinking is deemed more important to the participants than intuition. That is also supported by a statement by one school president who said, “In the final analysis critical thinking is probably more important only because it forces you into a process. But, if we are all honest, intuition probably leads to the critical thinking.”

It Starts With Intuition

School President-C says he starts with intuition and then moves on to use critical thinking to either prove or disprove his initial decision. Critical thinking is more scientific and probably more proof. “Intuition is where I start. I think we all probably have to start there,” he said.

Because intuitive managers apparently set no standards or limits on processing their thoughts, they will eventually come up with an intuitive idea probably not arrived at by a logical sequence. Intuitive decision-making is most often found at the higher levels

of an organization where coming up with new approaches are both expected and rewarded (Simpson, 2003). That conflicts with this research where the higher level administrators, the CEO's, seemed to depend on the critical thinking process even though they considered themselves intuitive managers. When intuition comes into play, there is no right or wrong about whether decisions are made using a structured, logical or random intuitive strategy – they are just different approaches that could lead to different outcomes.

The Role of Emotion in Decision-Making

Researchers have studied a number of ways in which emotions influence behavior. Some stated that certain types of emotions motivate certain types of behavior. Overall, managerial decision-making involves a certain amount of risk taking and the literature on emotion and social cognition produced evidence that emotional states play a major role in how people take risks and evaluate complex information (Kuvaas & Kaufmann, 2004).

Several of the school presidents in particular said their emotions came into play and do affect decision-making. However, there is also belief emotions can be a disadvantage in dealing with problems impacting and involving others. Objectivity can be lost when emotions become involved.

Research (Isen & Patrick, 1983) on emotion and its connection to risk found positive moods yield risk-averse behavior and that negative moods produce risk-taking behavior. Isen and Patrick's (1983) mood-maintenance hypothesis, which seems to interpret back into basic organizational behavior motivation factors, states that those in a

positive mood want to maintain that mood and they do not take big risks because of the possibility of incurring a loss that would interfere with their happiness. Similarly, people who are in a bad mood are more willing to take higher risks in the hope that a good outcome will “repair” the negative affective state.

“Obviously everybody is human,” according to School President-F, “and, emotions will play a part. When I feel emotions are coming into the situation, I seek more input from others.”

“On the positive side, it’s going back to the intuition that you know its [sic] worked and that you have that emotion and drive of let’s get it going,” said School President-F. He continued, “Well, that’s going to kick in and that’s going to be a motivator for others to do what ever is necessary.”

Again, people in negative moods may be expected to choose risky options, in order to give themselves a chance of obtaining the positive outcome that might improve their state. If negative emotion acts to increase systematic processing, the risky option may be the more likely. Conversely, positive emotion acts both as a processing and as risk-avertter, consequently resulting in the likely choice of the safe option.

Anger and Fear

Davila (1999) describes anger as: “a strong uncomfortable response to a perceived injustice, a violation of rights, a negation of self, or a compromise of beliefs and values that occur to maintain the status quo” (p. 25). Analyzing his own anger, Academic

Dean-S believes anger usually is based on fear of some sort. If one thinks one is going to be harmed in some way, one fears that harm. Academic Dean-S is not sure there

is that much difference between what is called anxiety and what is called fear. But, he says there is always some fear or anxiety that sparks an aggression against the perceived external source of that anxiety

“Have you ever made a decision in anger?” was one of the questions always asked of the participants. Their answers varied and were very candid. CEO-D said, “Unfortunately, I have. I don’t think I’ve made one recently. But, yes unfortunately I’ve made decisions in anger.”

My follow up question was, “Was it a good decision, did you regret it? Would you like to have it over again?”

Her reply, “I’m trying to think of one specific. Probably in the things that come to mind, I would probably think it was only an adequate decision. I don’t think it was a good decision.”

People have fewer coping strategies for dealing with anger than any other emotional state, including fear, anxiety and sadness. Anger incorporates two different concepts: the experience of anger as purely an emotional state and the expression of anger as a behavioral response to that anger (Spielberger et al, 1985).

Academic Dean-S also admitted to making a decision in anger. But he contends that he revisits it later and tries not to publicize decisions made in anger. He knows he has said things when he was angry. But, generally, he mistrusts anger.

Ego plays a part in decision-making

School President-B knows when he has reached the right outcome of a situation and he says that he feels good about what he has done. “As a matter of fact,” he said,

“that’s one of the things I really enjoy in talking with these folks, is the good feeling you get when you’re able to work out a reasonable compromise.”

“Sure ego plays a part in the decision-making process,” according to School President-F. He told me during the interview that he was the most difficult person he ever had to work with and immediately compared it to emotions saying that he tries to play them down. He bases most of his lone decisions on the fact that he has more experience than anybody in his school. He often times makes a decision because he knows it is right based on his intuition.

Making decisions that are rewarding also play into CEO-D’s ego. She contends the whole process is energizing. She would not be doing what she is doing, responsible for solving problems and making decisions, if it was not rewarding. She thinks it would be horrible if administrators did not like having to make decisions and then realized you had to make multiple decisions as part of your job.

Intermediate Emerging Themes

Just as emotions were able to affect the decision-making process, two other topics of significance were discussed by several of the administrators: management style and spirituality. Management style was a concern because of subtle differences in managing a for profit institution and managing a public institution. Another concern in management style was how students were respected and treated by administrators within the organization.

The idea of spiritual belief surfaced in the research. One administrator stated a divine guidance had a part in his decision-making process. Others stressed that they

attempted to follow the golden rule in treating others as they wanted to be treated themselves. Most of them were just concerned with doing the right thing.

Management Styles

Part of the discussion centered on how some school directors get in a 'win-lose' type mode and think everything is a contest. This research revealed that compromise could be an acceptable alternative. It was brought out in the study that some administrators go only by their policy manual. And that policy is often a way for a person to avoid making a real decision or hiding behind a corporate veil or not dealing with the person just dealing with the issue.

The overall impact of a decision was important to CEO-H. He said, "You have to consider the dysfunctional consequences of your decision. You have to take into account not only the decision itself but what are the consequences of the decision. Because that will often determine how you will make that decision."

This supports the beliefs of Robbins and DeCenzo (1995) who wrote that managers should have a capacity to break out of unproductive decision making processes and question the relevance of operating norms enabling them to generate new and more productive paradigms for decision making.

Both leadership skills and critical decision making abilities distinguish successful business leaders (Helliwell, 2000). Intelligence and emotions play an important part in the make-up of business leaders. What is unique, Helliwell writes, is the rapidly changing business environment that is driven by the speed at which information and business decisions happen in global markets. The decision to capitalize on an opportunity today

may not be the right decision tomorrow. The ability to recognize that and make the right decision “now” is vital in staying ahead of the competition.

Spirituality

Miller (2002) stated, “Because of the increasing focus on the importance of spirituality in the workplace, traditional assumptions about the barriers between work and faith must be reconsidered” (p. 148)

School President-P says he is an example of what he does and that is how people will judge him and Christianity. Judgment is based solely on what people observe him doing. He says in his day-to-day work he has an absolute duty to try as hard as possible to espouse the Christian faith in everything he does. He admits he does not always succeed in it, anywhere near where he would like, but he certainly tries.

“So, what we try to do is really get as many facts as you can and then try to determine what is the right thing to do is in that particular case,” says School President-B, “So, I think that’s one of the first ingredients.” He went on to recommend not depending on policy or what the rules say but ask ‘What is the right thing to do in this particular situation’. He said people can call it ethics or customer service but it is important to establish what you believe the right thing to do would be. The right thing. The Bible. The ‘Golden Rule.’

This study showed administrators did not always do the right thing. But, they certainly wanted to as much as possible or get as close to it as they possibly could. Doing the right thing gave them a reference point from which to work.

School President-F said he would like to believe that 100% of his decisions were faith based. Before becoming involved in proprietary education, he was a successful officer in the Salvation Army.

The emergence of spirituality in organizations has been attributed to the need for personal fulfillment on the job (Laabs, 1995). Changes in leadership theory have also contributed to the emergence of spirituality in organizations, as the workforce is experiencing a growing need to reconcile personal values with organizational values (Mirvis, 1997). These values include wisdom, understanding, temperance, and prudence,

Emotional intelligence [EI] also came into play here. Goleman (1995) redefined EI as abilities that include intelligence, zeal, persistence, and the ability to motivate oneself. And, he wrote, “there is an old-fashioned word for the body of skills that emotional intelligence represents, character” (p.28). Adams (1998) suggested that perhaps emotional intelligence is a new name for an old concept, namely wisdom.

Implications of the Study for Proprietary School Leaders

The implications of this study are three fold. First, it gives managers additional credence in the use of intuition. Second, it encourages additional use of critical thinking. Third it allows us to recognize how important emotions are in the decision making process.

Sanchez (1997) looked at how administrators used intuition at a single school. His research showed that only one set of administrators used intuition. However, this research showed that other administrators in a wider region also counted on their intuition. These administrators, holding various managerial titles, lead and manage successful schools.

Their intuition is based on the experience they have gained over many years in their position. Several times, they recalled that they had previously faced the same situation and drew on the same experiences in order to make the correct decision. Intuition that is used regularly and is based on experience is a reliable decision-making tool. Intuition should not be a hidden. However, some justification as to the arrival of a solution could be required.

Some of the study's participants said that when they were faced with a particularly important decision an intuitive thought came first. This was often reported as the starting point for the critical thinking process.

A major study conducted by Kepner Tregoe (1990) indicated critical thinking was rarely used in the workplace which might be misleading. The participants in this research admitted to using critical thinking when a particularly tough question arose or when they did not have precedent on which to rely. However, recall most of their problems or situations are routine. There is also some confusion as to what critical thinking really is. As discussed in Chapter 2 we found multiple definitions. This study agrees with the premise that critical thinking is similar to the scientific method. However, one must be able to distinguish among information that is useful, reliable and truthful to the situation or event at hand.

Emotions and one's emotional state at the time the decision is being made, according to this research, play a very important role in the outcome of the decision. Most of the administrators interviewed admitted to being angry sometimes when they made a decision. Most of them also regretted the decision that was made. They seemed to want to have been able to change their minds. There seems to be an unwritten rule that

tells educational administrators that once a decision is made it cannot be changed. The implication here is that administrators should be aware of their emotional state of mind when a decision is to be made. Several administrators that were interviewed in this study said that they would take extra time in deciding an issue.

Conceptual Framework

I was excited over how the conceptual framework of this study developed. It is illustrated on page 130. Because of my previous studies in the field, the element of critical thinking became the first research question: *How are critical thinking skills used by educational leaders?* During early discussions with administrators, before the actual interviews were conducted, intuition emerged as another key element decision-making process and was added as the second research question: *How are intuition skills used by educational leaders?*

Research during the review of literature suggested that some managers may employ both critical thinking and intuition in their management style and decision making process which resulted in the third research question: *How can critical thinking and intuition be tied together?*

However, the emotional state of the decision maker at the time a question or event is being settled was reflected on by the study's participants and became another significant element that emerged in the study. In other words, whether a decision was made using the tool of intuition or critical thinking the process still must pass through an emotional state. Emotions and how they affected the decision-making process came about

during the first several interviews thus becoming an emerging fourth question: *How do one's emotions at the time a decision is being made affect that decision?*

More specifically, anger as an emotion and how decisions are made when that emotion was present, surfaced. The decision-making process continued to come together as it gets funneled once more through and becomes affected by either the administrator's management style and/or spirituality.

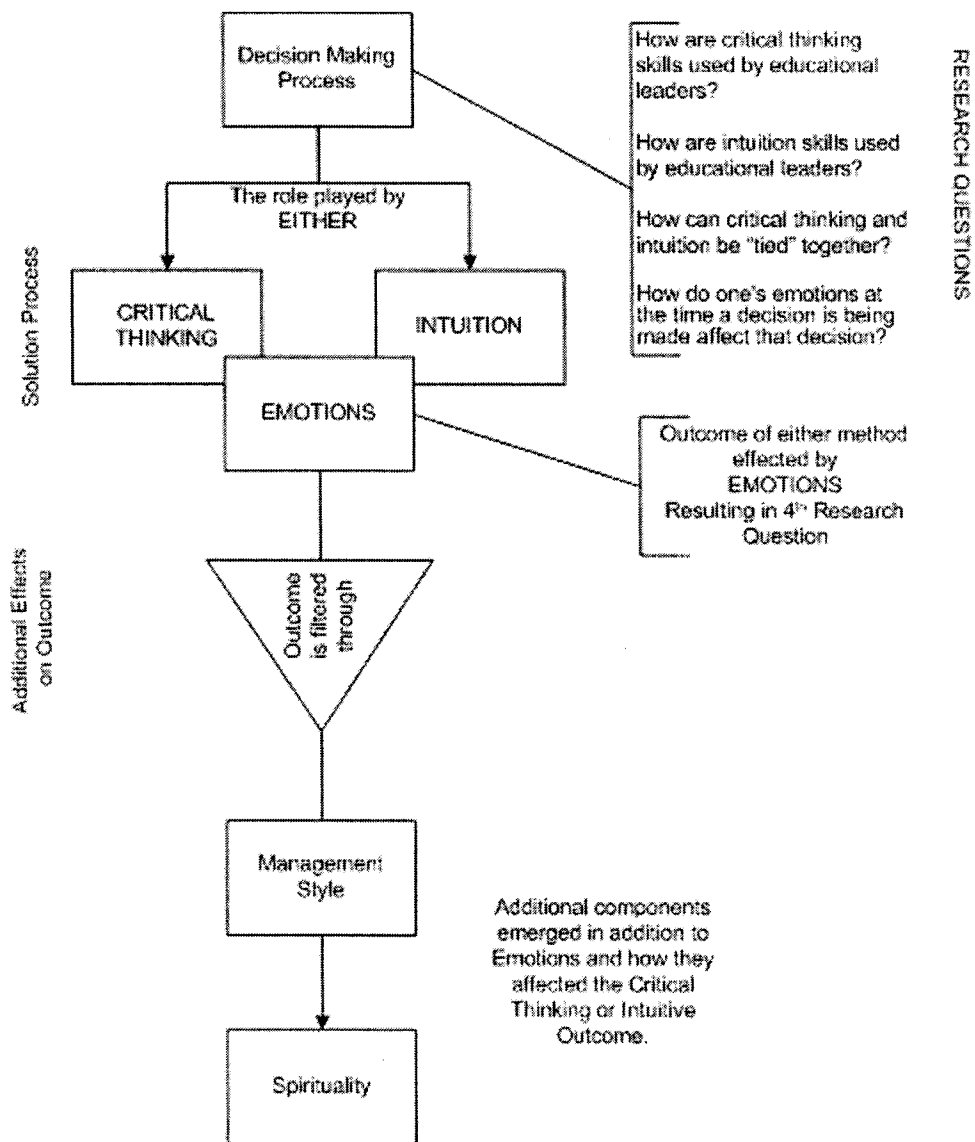


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of Study.

Recommendations for Further Research

Additional studies in the field of intuition and how the process begins and works is recommended. For example, the analogy used by many of the participants in this research compared the use of intuition to looking through a set of index cards that were expected to match information related to the current situation at hand. How is that first “index card” written, how is it determined to be important and what is the thought process involved are questions that deserve further study.

The Foundation of Critical Thinking in California continues to teach educators how to teach critical thinking to students and how to use critical thinking in the classroom. The foundation’s work has resulted in many schools requiring courses in critical or strategic thinking. As discussed earlier, administrators begin their journey to management as students. Continued research in and presentations of the critical thinking methods is recommended.

There are many journal articles and books published on the topic of emotions and how they relate to managerial decision-making. The Blanchard-Fields team at Georgia Tech in Atlanta continues to conduct significant studies in the field of emotions and their effects on decision-making. This concern over additional research was primarily prompted by School Director-V’s statement when he said he is completely emotionless on the job in comparison to CEO-D who admits to being excited when faced with a major decision or problem.

Being based in the deep south, the so called “Bible Belt” of the nation, additional studies are recommended into how spirituality plays a part in the decision making process in general and, if spirituality also emerges among leaders in other regions of the nation.

Conclusion/Summary

What did I learn from this study? During the interview process, I observed most of the proprietary school CEO’s, school presidents and academic deans were energetic, self directed, knowledge seeking, and wanted to make a difference in their institution and in their students’ lives. They wanted to see immediate results even though they realized that usually does not happen. They welcomed competition in their markets, and were confident in their ability to transport their skills between the educational and business sectors. However, what was not mentioned or discussed was any part that faculty played in their overall decision-making process. I would have liked to have heard some mention from at least the academic deans toward that topic. The administrators were justly concerned over the well being of students and the school’s “bottom line” profit but at no time did one say they depended on their faculty for input it was all staff. However, recall Walters and Marzano’s (2004) research [pg. 1] where overall faculty feedback was utilized as a benchmark of determining quality administrative leadership.

I learned that it was the responsibility of the corporate CEO in partnership with the individual school president of their local campus to provide the vision and empower management to create a challenging and progressive learning culture. I particularly appreciated the quote from CEO-H who said, “A leader's own strength in critical thinking and decision making is the central platform on which we have influence over other

managers and students in the school.” In other words, analyze the question, gather the facts, search for alternatives, test the alternatives, make a decision and get feedback on the outcome while making sure the information obtained is truthful and useable.

Administrators must also recognize that critical thinking, by its very nature, requires a systematic monitoring of thought. Our thinking, in order to be critical, cannot be accepted as it is handed to us but must again be analyzed and assessed for its clarity, accuracy, relevance, depth, breadth, and logicalness.

Critical thinking, by its very nature requires reasoning to occur within one’s point of view and consideration of one’s frame of reference. Moreover, if need be, it should be looked at from another’s point of view and their frame of reference. The reasoning process must begin with some goal or objective in mind. Critical thinking has an informational base where all data, when used in reasoning, must be interpreted. That interpretation involves concepts, those concepts entail assumptions, and those basic inferences in thought have implications.

As one utilizes critical thinking concepts, whether those concepts originated with Ennis, Paul or Elder, we are at least empowered to question:

- Ends and objectives
- The status and wording of questions
- The source of information and fact
- The method and quality of information collected
- The mode of judgment and reasoning that is to be used
- The concepts that make that reasoning possible
- The assumptions that underlie the concepts in use

- The implications that follow from their use, and
- The point of view or frame of reference within which reasoning takes place.

Questioning that focuses on fundamentals of thought and reasoning are basic to critical thinking.

Micromanagement at one time was an apparent successful managerial philosophy (Drucker, 1974). Therefore, I feel it is safe to say that yesterday's school president had that luxury of micromanaging, being able to reserve the right to make all the strategic calls and decisions themselves. When that practice was in vogue thirty years ago, their executive teams gave an obligatory 'yes' to everything that was asked of them. Now, with the increasing speed and complexity of decision making within the multi campus organization, neither the CEO nor most likely the campus president has as much time or special knowledge to be able to analyze all issues and respond effectively within the brief window of opportunity. Those administrators now must spend their time making sure that their people are making the right decisions.

During the interview with one of the CEO's, we discussed the idea of how upper management tries to think ahead in order to anticipate threats and opportunities. I had mentioned that academic deans sometimes believe upper management only reacts and never thinks things through when a crisis arises – a knee jerk reaction instead of preparation. The CEO disagreed by saying, "We tend to get over our heads with trying to predict the future, but history has shown the futility of that. What I try to do at <CORPORATE NAME> is get prepared for various scenarios. I use a process of critical thinking."

The goal of critical thinking is to arrive at a truthful judgment. On the other hand, problem solving is a process, which is made up of many decision points where judgments are made. Consider again the question asked by Academic Dean-S, "Of what truth or worth is it?" The ability to reach a sound judgment is fundamental to a manager's success and the achievement of optimal problem-solving outcomes is arguably the central function of management. The administrators agreed that in order for that process to be effective critical thinking strategies and skills must have previously been learned. This only comes from experience.

Intuitive judgment seemed to have been preferred by the administrators whenever possible since again a speedy outcome can be reached using simple strategies previously used. Those standards seem to work most of the time. However, internal influences such as emotions also impacted on decisions that are arrived at intuitively such as fear, environment and stress. When I reviewed the interview transcripts, I found the older and more experienced administrators seem to have a deeper intuitive knowledge. As their intuition continued to grow, they became more trusting of their experiences. The younger administrators seem to have more going on, but have less experience from which to draw. This provides evidence to the argument that experience is a factor in intuition.

The question then arises: What about the quality of the decision? CEO-H, School President-P and School President-B were perceived as the senior members of those interviewed. When asked about a time factor, all three agreed that when problems or situations were considered without precedent, in other words, when critical thinking skills were utilized, the results of the solution were not immediately be determined. Determining the results was on going based on the magnitude of the event. Moreover, as the project or situation developed the original solution could change somewhat. In the short term, when intuition was predominantly used in the decision making process, the results were usually instantaneous without a significant long term, year or more, effect.

Managerial decision-making is far from a cold analytic process. Instead, our emotions and feelings play a crucial role by helping filter various possibilities quickly, even though our conscious mind might not be aware of the screening. Our intuitive feelings guide our decision making to the point at which our conscious mind is able to make good choices. So, just as an abundance of emotion – anger for example - can lead to faulty decisions, so can its scarcity. Balanced emotions are crucial to decision making.

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Appendix A

Front of Return Post.

<p>[Name of Administrator] [Name of School] [Address of Administrator] [City/State – Zip Code]</p> <p>Mel Coe 3002 Marlin Drive Atlanta, GA 30341</p>

Reverse of Return Post Card.

<p>[Name of Administrator] [Name of School] [Address of Administrator] [City/State – Zip Code]</p> <p>I will participate in your study.</p> <p>The best time to call for an appointment is: _____</p> <p>The best time to set up an appointment is: _____</p>

Appendix B

Dear [name of administrator],

As an administrator and educational leader, you are asked to make difficult and complex decisions on behalf of [*name of institution*]. I am working on my doctoral dissertation through Colorado State University at Ft. Collins, CO studying various management styles used by administrators of proprietary schools here in Atlanta. I also work at DeVry University in Atlanta primarily as an instructor but, I also have had experience in administration as a curriculum director and department chair.

In my study of management, I am specifically interested in the use of critical thinking and intuition in problem solving and would appreciate your help in the completion of my research project. My study has been approved by my dissertation committee and Colorado State's IRB (human subjects approval). Of course, our discussions will remain confidential. However, as my research is completed I will provide you with a copy of my studies and if you wish, return and discuss the findings with you. At no time will you be mentioned individually nor will your institution be revealed.

In the next week or so, I will contact [*name of assistant*] to set up a personal interview with you at [*name of institution*]. If you have any questions, you may contact me directly at 770.314.7243 or email: mel_coe.jr@earthlink.net or my dissertation advisor, Dr. Len Albright at Colorado State University, 970.491.1172, email: lenalb@cahs.colostate.edu.

Appendix C



Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Colorado State University

TITLE OF STUDY: Intuition and Critical Thinking Skills of Administrators of Proprietary Schools

**PRINCIPAL
INVESTIGATOR:**

Leonard Albright, PhD
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**CO-PRINCIPAL
INVESTIGATOR:**

Melvin (Mel) Coe, Jr., MBA
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Alpharetta, GA 30004
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mcoe@faculty.atl.devry.edu

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?

We are asking you to participate in the study because the research is centered on proprietary school presidents and their academic deans in the Atlanta, Macon and Birmingham markets, you were selected based on information obtained from the 2003 edition of *The Directory of Higher Learning*.

Page 1 of 4 Participant's initials _____ Date _____

WHO IS DOING THE STUDY?

Mel Coe is the co-principal investigator who will be conducting the in-person interview. Leonard Albright is Mr. Coe's academic advisor.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

Mel Coe is a doctoral student at Colorado State University and your participation is paramount to the completion of his dissertation. The research centers on managerial styles involving intuition and critical thinking.

WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

The interview, with your permission, will take place either in your office, via telephone or at another convenient location. The interview is expected to last about an hour.

WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO?

Very simply, you will be asked questions about your management style concerning critical thinking and intuition. You may ask for a copy of the interview question guide (a list of questions to be asked) in advance. You will also be encouraged to discuss your responses.

ARE THERE REASONS WHY I SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

None at all. However, you do have a choice whether or not to participate and help a PhD student. Even though additional school presidents and academic deans will be contacted in your market, most likely some being your direct competition, your name and school will be held in confidence.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?

There are no known risks involved in participating in the study. However, it is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures, but the researcher(s) have taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential, but unknown, risks.

WILL I BENEFIT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

There are no tangible or monetary benefits in participating in the study. However, the completed study will be shared with you. You would also benefit from the fact that you assisted a PhD student in completing the studies for his dissertation.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Even if you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Page 2 of 4 Participant's initials _____ Date _____

WHAT WILL IT COST ME TO PARTICIPATE?

The only true cost is at least an hour of your time.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT I GIVE?

We will keep private all research records that identify you, to the extent allowed by law.

Your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When we write about the study to share it with other researchers, we will write about the combined information we have gathered. You will not be identified in any of these written materials. We may publish the results of this study; however, we will keep your name and any other identifying information private.

We will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you gave us information, or what that information is. For example, your name will be kept separate from your research records and these two things will be stored in different places under lock and key (the co-principal investigator's safe deposit box).

CAN MY TAKING PART IN THE STUDY END EARLY?

Yes. And, the interview could also be interrupted and then resumed based on your schedule.

WILL I RECEIVE ANY COMPENSATION FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

There is no monetary or tangible compensation involved in this study. You may, however, benefit from the fact that you assisted a PhD student in completing the studies for his dissertation.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM INJURED BECAUSE OF THE RESEARCH?

The Colorado Governmental Immunity Act determines and may limit Colorado State University's legal responsibility if an injury happens because of this study. Claims against the University must be filed within 180 days of the injury.

Page 3 of 4 Participant's initials _____ Date _____

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind. Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact the principal investigator and/or the co-principal investigator.

Dr. Leonard Albright
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If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact Celia Walker, Director of Regulatory Compliance, at 970-491-1553. We will give you a copy of this consent form to take with you.

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?

Your signature acknowledges that you have read the information stated and willingly sign this consent form. Your signature also acknowledges that you have received, on the date signed, a copy of this document containing 4 pages.

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study

Date

Printed name of person agreeing to take part in the study

Name of person providing information to participant

Date

Signature of Research Staff

Page 4 of 4 Participant's initials _____ Date _____

Appendix D

Interview Question Guide

Background Questions:

Academic Level: PhD MBA Undergraduate

Administrative Level: President Academic Dean

Sex: Female Male

Approximated age: _____ (observation only)

Experience in the position: _____ Years

Previous position: _____

Preliminary Questions:

- What kind of feelings do you get when you “know” that a particular decision is “right”?
- How does time put pressure on being right?
- Are there any cues that you rely on such as excitement, warmth, peaceful/calm, high energy, that sudden flash of insight, high-fives, etc. What are yours?
- Does anger, stress or ego play any part in your decision making process? What about lack of self-confidence?
- Do you feel anxious or excited when an unexpected crisis comes up?
- Why do you think you feel that way?

The Decision Making Process:

- When working on a project, had you rather be left alone to decide how to solve it? Or, would you rather have very clear instruction on how to go about solving it? Why?
- Some business executives could be classified as creative or careful. How do you classify yourself?
- Do you have another description of yourself?
- What is it? Explain.
- Which do you prefer being creative or being careful? Why?
- When faced with an unexpected crisis, do you feel, anxious or excited about it?
- Why do you think you feel that way?
- What happens when the variables in problems are less scientifically predictable such as when the facts are limited or there is little previous precedent?

Questions in the Field of Critical Thinking

- How would you define critical thinking?
- When do you use critical thinking to guide you in important decisions? What are the circumstances surrounding your use of critical thinking?
- How do you use critical thinking when there is a high degree of certainty in the outcome of a problem?
- Would intuition work better?

Questions in the Field of Intuition

- How do you define intuition?
- Do you believe you use intuition frequently to guide your most important decisions?
- Do you base your decisions solely on intuition?
- What are the circumstances surrounding your use of intuition?
- Would critical thinking work better?