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AN ANALYSIS OF EMPATHY AS LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES AND ACTION IN
EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHER LEADERS

By

Jill K. Bruckner

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major: Educational Administration

Under the Supervision of Dr. C. Elliott Ostler

Omaha, Nebraska

May 2017

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ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS OF EMPATHY AS LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES AND ACTION IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHER LEADERS

Jill K. Bruckner, Ed.D.

University of Nebraska, 2017

Advisor: Dr. C. Elliott Ostler

The study of empathy, as both a concept and a construct, spans disciplines and decades. As such, its relevance to relationships, empirical definition, significance to leadership, motivational factors, and position in emotional intelligence comprise a wide range of perceptions, applications, and examination across fields ranging from psychology to biology to education. This purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between educational leaders' self-perception of empathy and to explore how attitudes relate to leadership attributes and action. Results were designed to inform practice, expand understanding, and to compensate for a gap in research regarding measured relationships between empathy and leadership. In general, the group ($n = 105$) showed high agreement in the domain of cognitive empathy (92.38%), while hierarchical, geometric analyses revealed alignment between cognitive empathy and the study's five leadership attributes. Further, high mean, per-item scores on the 16 leadership measures – the lowest of which was 4.02 ($SD = .80$) – suggest the sample group shared solid agreement regarding leadership traits.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have accomplished nothing in my life alone; and, the gift of opportunity that defines this dissertation – and the whole of my doctoral work – is no exception.

We all have to help each other, and I have had the help of many, not the least of whom was Dr. Kay Keiser, who offered me a graduate assistant position in the University of Nebraska – Omaha’s Department of Educational Leadership in the final year of my doctoral program. What a gift this was, to be embedded daily with such considerate, humble, learned, and giving scholars committed to growing leaders of all backgrounds and capabilities. To each of you, Dr. Dick Christie, Dr. Janice Garnett, Dr. Elliott Ostler, Dr. Tami Williams, Dr. Kathy Ryan, Dr. Kay Keiser, Dr. Neal Grandgenett, and Mrs. Barb Mraz, I offer a deep bow of gratitude – and a lifetime of tireless thanks – for all that you do and all that you are. Your influence is evergreen and I am better for knowing each of you.

An additional nod of appreciation goes to my supervisory chair, Dr. Elliott Ostler, whose patience when I shifted dissertation topics was unwavering, and whose guidance and wisdom were equal parts instrumental and essential in completing this project.

Outside of the Department of Educational Leadership, I had the inexhaustible support of my family while I juggled work days and homework. To my heroes Bob and Marilyn Bruckner, whom I also have the privilege of calling my parents, this dissertation is as much yours as it is mine. For the many, many times you asked, “How can we help?” and stepped in to void the vacuum of time by dropping off, picking up, and hosting kids so I could write or study, thank you.

To my children – those grown and one still at home, Nick, Anna, Madeline, and

Lydia, you inspire me daily and make life a golden surprise. That you tolerated and supported me through a doctoral degree often gave me pause; and, I know now your encouragement was a sign of empathy and maturity, while your magnanimous spirit was ever-inspirational. Thank you for being the best kids, to each other and to me.

To my brothers and sisters-in-law, Tim and Jaeme, Mike and Amanda, and their families; my grandson Jack and daughter-in-law, Melanie; to my dear friends, mentors, and colleagues (Melanie & Fred, Teri & Bob, Colleen, Kathy, Amy, Erin, Eden, Jennifer, Pat, Marilou, Lisa, Sue, Sonya) who encouraged me, uplifted me, and equipped me to embrace this adventure, thank you, thank you, thank you.

Finally, to my new husband Jay, who married me in the last semester of this journey, thank you for stepping into this adventure, for holding my hand, and offering the bright promise of great things ahead. Every day is a good day.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Empathy, an elemental component of leadership (and part of an ongoing academic discussion regarding understanding emotion, nurturing effective relationships, demonstrating responsibility, and collaborating to achieve positive outcomes) is more than a manifestation of agreed-upon attributes (Batson, 2009; Decety, 2011; Einolf, 2008).

For the school administrator, teacher leader or education expert, empathy has become a talked-about trait, progressing from something “interesting” to something essential (Undung & de Guzman, 2009).

As such, this research offers two variables for examination and comparison: an analysis of empathy and an investigation of leadership attributes and action.

The Story of Empathy

In the weeks before transitioning doctoral research into rhetoric, I wrote – I penned every page I could that had little to do with dissertation, and more to do with distance. I wrote journal and magazine articles, a newsletter, poetry, and children’s stories. Most were published, and each was an exercise in seemingly practical procrastination – a flurry of frantic activity in an effort to run a race of avoidance.

If you’ve ever had a daunting deadline, perhaps you can empathize with my plight. Maybe that’s why, in framing the research that became this study, I also wrote *The Man Who Stitched the Sky* – to illustrate empathy, and to create a climate for conversation around a topic – empathy and leadership – that is equal parts endless and temporal.

One strategy for growing empathetic thought among disparate entities is the use

of literature as a positioning piece for understanding (Cress & Holm, 1998; Djikic, Oatley, & Moldoveanu, 2013; Hammond & Kim, 2014; Morrison, 2014), and this approach lends itself handily to introducing this research. Consider *The Man Who Stitched the Sky*:

The Man Who Stitched the Sky

Once upon a time, at the edge of the earth, in a hut made of tumbleweed and dust, lived a man named Daley.

Daley wore boots made of mica and a lopsided hat shaped like a piece of pie from a mythical meal attended by kangaroo mice and four large iguanas.

For an age and an eon, Daley lived alone, there, at earth's edge, where the chasm of darkness yawned moments before embracing the horizon each night.

From the instant the seasons surfaced, Daley kept his sharpened needle (the one with an eye the size of a coffee cup) in his tumbleweed hut. Every evening, as the sun dipped low, he stitched the night sky to the earth, just as he had always done.

Daley loved his work. He loved the feeling of dusk in his weathered hands, and celebrated the quiet of night, knowing the importance of each straight stitch as he sutured earth and sky.

One day, as is expected from those who tread in mica footwear, Daley discovered he'd been given a daughter. She was lovely, much smaller than his needle and answered to Melody, both in song and in name. Daley adored her.

When Melody was old enough to wear obsidian shoes swirled with stars, she asked Daley to leave a small slant of sun every evening when he stitched - a

sliver of light just for her, so she could dance in a spotlight to the music that played in her mind.

Daley knew the earth needed to rest, but a sliver of sun, was that so much to ask? And, so, Daley stitched all but a single stitch – and the sun sluiced slimly as Melody swirled in the otherwise dark.

Melody loved the light; and, each night she asked for more. More sun, fewer stitches. Daley obliged, feeling the happiness of his daughter in his heart.

The earth, however, was less accommodating, it strained nightly against the horizontal seam, threatening to unravel the thread of darkness, obliterating evening and washing the vista with iridescent brilliance.

Daley worried this could not continue; but, night after night, Daley stitched, leaving just a glimmer of gold for Melody.

Even so, the music was fading from Daley's daughter; and, one night, as dusk breathed through dust, Melody abandoned the tumbleweed hut, pulled by the light of one small stitch loose in the sky. Melody left to find her music.

Daley was heartbroken. Still he stitched, always leaving a sole thread undone, hoping Melody would one day map her heart home through the splinter of sky to the twilight of the tumbleweed.

Many years passed. Daley grew weary in his age and aloneness; and his hope for Melody's return faded like owl feathers and baked sand.

One night, his weathered hands barely lifting his now-heavy needle, he resolved to stitch the single straggling strand of sunlight to the surface. There was no need to leave Melody a guiding light home. She was not coming.

Sundown came as usual, that night, and Daley began to sew. His seam was as solid as always, but his hands shook, and the needle fell, leaving not one, but two-thousand-and-one stitches undone.

Watching his work unravel like tree bark and memories, Daley dropped to the dust, his needle at his side. It was then that he saw her. Melody. His heart crescendoed. His eyes closed. Melody took his hand, and lifted the needle.

And, you, if you live in a place and time where night comes daily, then you know what Melody did next...and every night after, at the edge of the earth in the dance of dusk (Bruckner, 2017).

Like Daley in *The Man Who Stitched the Sky*, educational leaders are often called upon to make decisions that serve the individual; but with a nod to the many. Sometimes, there is conflict in compromise, just as there was in the story – conflict between the needs of the earth and the perceived joy of the daughter, Melody.

Not unlike Daley, who felt the “happiness of his daughter in his heart,” maybe you’ve had moments emotions have impacted your decisions. Psychologist Daniel Goleman (1995, 2004), suggests the most effective leaders are those with a high degree of emotional intelligence, among them the trait of empathy. Empathy, Goleman (2000, 2001, 2004, 2013) says, allows individuals to consider and understand another’s situation, as well as the emotions attached to it. As a leader – a man who stitches the sky and guarantees dusk – Daley may have been trying to do just this.

Empathy, however, isn’t just about internalizing another’s feelings. Empathy is ubiquitous enough to be difficult to define (Batson, 2009; Elliott, Bohart, Watson, & Greenberg, 2011; Olderbak, Sassenrath, Keller, & Wilhelm, 2014) yet impactful enough

to be broadly acknowledged as worthwhile.

In *These Things Called Empathy: Eight Related but Distinct Phenomena* (2009), C. Daniel Batson notes “Students of empathy can seem a cantankerous lot. Although they typically agree that empathy is important, they often disagree about why it is important, about what effects it has, about where it comes from, and even about what it is” (p. 3). This means defining “empathy” is not without difficulty – and is often characterized by a lack of agreement in the field (Batson, 2009; Elliott et al., 2011; Reniers, Corcoran, Drake, Shryane, & Völlm, 2011).

Even so, in *The Man Who Stitched the Sky*, perhaps you felt empathy for the characters in the arc of the daughter departing, then returning and assuming the father’s role. The question remains, however, why did Melody return, and why did she take up the needle? What motivated her behavior, and her father’s before her?

Empathy Threaded Through Leadership

One overarching analysis of *The Man Who Stitched the Sky* might be that Daley sewed a dutiful thread of leadership superseding his desire to pursue his daughter. Perhaps it was empathy that allowed Daley to let Melody go, and empathy that drove him to leave a slim slant of light to illuminate her return. “Empathy is a construct that is fundamental to leadership” (Sadri, Weber, & Gentry, 2011, p. 818). This research explores empathy and action – concepts that may have helped Daley weigh duty versus instinct – concepts that, as this research unfolds, might also be elemental to educational leaders.

Research Question

This research provides perspective and relational data on empathy and leadership.

As such, no hypotheses are made surrounding the outcome of the primary research question, which is: What is the relationship between self-reported empathy and leadership attributes and action among educational leaders enrolled in the University of Nebraska-Omaha's Educational Leadership program?

Definition of Terms

Words such as “empathy” and “leadership” carry broad meaning in a host of scenarios across many cultures (and are each widely studied by researchers and psychologists). Both words will be defined here, in the context of the present research. Additional definitions will be provided for subsets of empathy relevant to this work, as well as for the types of educational leaders commonly grouped under the umbrella of organizational leadership.

Empathy

For purposes of this study, **empathy** is defined as the capacity to sense others' feelings coupled with “the ability to understand another's perspective” (Goleman, 2000, 2013). This definition is further clarified by the definition of “empathy” as established by research that led to the development of the Basic Empathy Scale (BES) (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006). The BES is the original instrument from which the Basic Empathy Scale in Adults (BES-A) was derived (Carré, Stefaniak, D'Ambrosio, Bensalah, & Besche-Richard, 2013) – and on which this research relies – where the BES is :

based specifically on the definition of empathy put forth by Cohen and Strayer (1996) “as the understanding and sharing in another's emotional state or context” (p. 523). This orientation was adopted because it allowed for a focus on both

affect congruence (affective empathy) and the understanding of another's emotions (cognitive empathy) (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006, p. 592-593).

A wider examination of the foundational definition of empathy – a definition that borrows from psychology, contemporary wisdom, science, and education – will be explored in Chapter 2.

Three Empathic Categories: Cognitive Empathy, Emotional Contagion, and Emotional Disconnection

This research examines self-reported empathy on a three-factor scale, and aligns the definitions of cognitive empathy, emotional contagion, and emotional disconnection with the 2013 Basic Empathy Scale in Adults (BES-A) (Carré et al., 2013), the same scale adapted for this study.

Cognitive empathy, in this research, is the aptitude to recognize and understand others' experiences (Carré et al., 2013; Eres, Decety, Louis, & Molenberghs, 2015), while **emotional contagion** is defined as the “tendency to ‘catch’ (experience / express) another person's emotions” (Hatfield, Rapson, & Le, 2009, p. 153).

Emotional disconnection, on the other hand, works to prevent “empathic overarousal” (Lam, Kolomitro, & Alamparambil, 2011, p. 43) by protecting the self from anguish, suffering, or profound distress (Carré et al., 2013).

Leadership

While leadership practices and characteristics will be examined in this study's literature review as foundational to appreciating the ramifications of this research, “**leadership**” is: 1.) clarified as two primary concepts; and 2.) framed by the instrument adapted for this study.

Two Concepts: Leadership as Individuals and Leadership as Practice

One aspect of this research, the first concept, concentrates on individuals, the educational “leadership” of an organization; the second aspect of this research analyzes leadership attributes and actions – the *practice* of leadership – by considering potential relationships between educational leaders and their behavior as heads of departments, schools, service agencies, and districts, rounding out this study’s second main definition of leadership.

Finally, **educational leaders** (individuals engaged in leadership) are defined here as grades Pre-K-16 (primary, secondary, post-secondary, and graduate) teacher leaders, department chairs, school and institution deans, principals and vice-principals, as well as disciplinarians, building administrators, certified state and district staff, and college faculty. Current educators engaged in coursework to achieve certification in either leadership or administration are also included in this definition.

Leadership as Defined by the Instrument: The Integrated Leadership Measure

In addition to exploring self-reported empathy, this study examines leadership roles, here called “attributes,” framed by the instrument modified for this research, the Integrated Leadership Measure (Fernandez, Cho & Perry, 2010), which noted:

From the leadership and public administration literatures, we develop the concept of integrated leadership, which incorporates five leadership roles essential for the success of leaders in the public sector: **task-oriented leadership; relations-oriented leadership; change-oriented leadership; diversity-oriented leadership; and integrity-oriented leadership**. The selection of the first three leadership roles is influenced by the Ohio State University and University of

Michigan leadership studies, Yukl, Gordon, and Taber's (2002) integrated framework, and by the work of Ekvall and Arvonen (1991) and Lindell and Rosenqvist (1992a,b), who expanded upon the Ohio State leadership studies by identifying a third category of effective leadership behavior—development- or change-oriented behavior. The other two roles are derived from contemporary public management research that attests to their importance as theoretical constructs and as patterns of behavior associated with effective leadership. (Fernandez et al., 2010, p. 310-311).

Framework

This research is girded by multiple influences that impact self-perception, self-awareness, leadership, empathic response, decision-making, and action. Of these, two primary components emerge as frameworks: One is The Potter Box, a construct; while the other is an educational leadership practice, Ketelle and Mesa's 2006 *Empathetic Understanding and School Leadership Preparation*. This practice examines leadership as “quadrants of concern.”

Framework Component 1: The Potter Box, A Construct

Jay Black and Chris Roberts (2011), authors of *Doing Ethics in Media: Theories and Practical Applications*, describe The Potter Box as “a series of logical steps that conscientious people can use as they work through an ethical quandary” (p. 53). A system of ethical reasoning favored by professional communicators, The Potter Box is appropriate here because the reasoning process allows the user to arrive at conclusions unique to self and situation, particularly if the situation involves a moral dilemma or crisis.

Originally developed by Harvard Divinity School theologian and professor emeritus Ralph B. Potter, The Potter Box has undergone decades of application and refinement to arrive at its current iteration: a procedure designed to consider facts, values, principles, and loyalties when making a decision (Potter, 1965, 1972, 1999).

According to Nick Backus and Claire Ferraris, authors of *Theory Meets Practice: Using The Potter Box to Teach Business Communication Ethics* (2004), “The Potter Box provides a method of making ethical decisions, regardless of context” (p. 225), and is (typically) visually represented as four dimensions around which practitioners proceed in a circular motion.

To use The Potter Box, decision-makers begin by defining the facts / situation with objectivity, followed by identifying the differing values at work in the situation. After facts and values are considered, practitioners move to defining values as potential categorical imperatives (such as Aristotle’s Golden Mean, or Mill’s Principle of Utility – among others), and conclude with examination of loyalties and evaluation of whom / what the decision will affect (Backus & Ferraris, 2004; Guth & Marsh, 2016).

Figure 1 visually depicts the Potter Box’s facts, values, principles, and loyalties, each of which Potter suggests are crucial to moral-analysis decisions. Media scholars such as Patterson & Wilkins (2008) and Christians, Fackler, Richardson, Kreshel, and Woods (2015) contributed to the evolution of The Potter Box by popularizing depiction of the dimensions as quarters or quadrants (Figure 2).

Within each quadrant, Potter Box proponents may shift perspective by considering consequences and individuals. For example, in the “loyalties” category, educators might weigh commitment to students with obligations to the school.

Figure 1: The Potter Box, Representation A

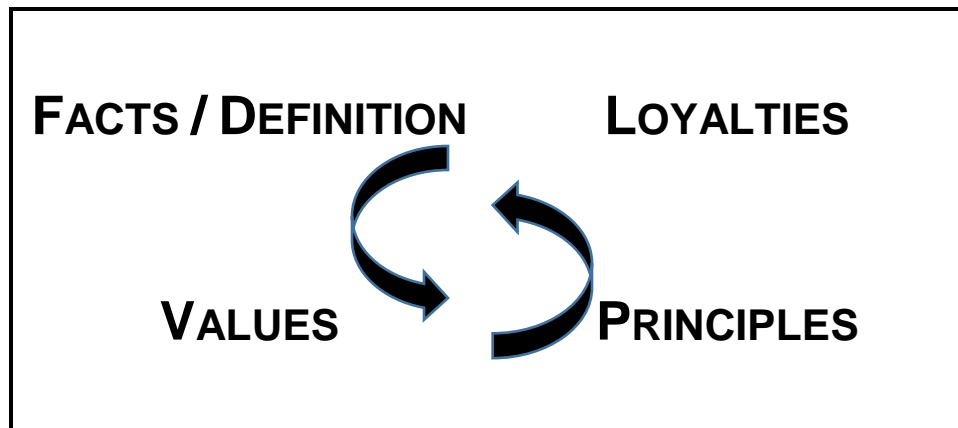


Figure 1. The Potter Box, Representation A. This figure illustrates an adaptation of the Potter Box system of ethical decision-making, developed by Harvard Divinity School's Ralph B. Potter (1965, 1972), where practitioners move fluidly between four dimensions to reach a conclusion or solve a dilemma.

Figure 2: The Potter Box, Representation B

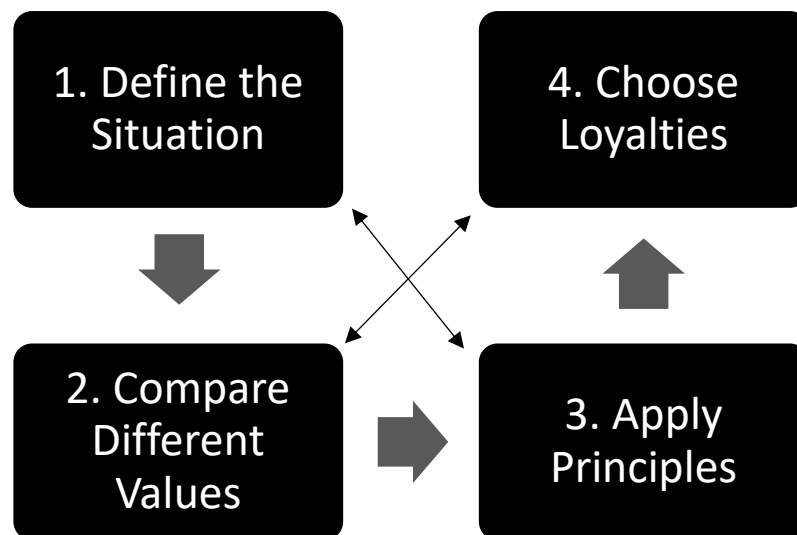


Figure 2. The Potter Box, Representation B. This figure offers an alternative depiction (from that shown in Figure 1), yet similar application, of The Potter Box, a system of

ethical / moral reasoning founded by Harvard Divinity School professor Ralph B. Potter (1965, 1972). Black and Roberts (2011), from which this adaptation is derived, suggest fluidity between the system's four quadrants be depicted with arrows, noting moral reasoning can occur sequentially, but can also include re-visitation to quadrants until a conclusion is reached.

Values-based management that considers loyalties, principles, situations, and others is not unique to The Potter Box. For example, leadership strategist Peter Drucker points out "People are as much individuals as you are. They pervasively insist on behaving like human beings. This means they too have their strengths; they too have their ways of getting things done; they too have their values. To be effective, therefore, you have to know the strengths, the performance modes, and the values of your coworkers" (Drucker, 2006, p. 14).

Framework Component 2: Ketelle & Mesa's Empathetic Understanding and School Leadership Program

Professors Diane Ketelle and Pete Mesa (2006) moved theory into practice by creating a two-part, inquiry-based conceptual framework. Over two years of leading, guiding, and teaching collegiate-level educational administration students, the pair noted an emergent, continuous trait in successful leaders: empathy. Using their own experiences, coupled with a desire to enhance the reflective process of leading with empathy, they developed a conceptual framework designed to help students make decisions by considering organizational needs overlaid with reflective questions - Ketelle and Mesa's *Leadership Quadrants of Concern* (Figure 3) and *Time / Context / Point-of-View Overlay* (Figure 4) illustrate situations and scenarios requiring measured responses.

This approach, which visualizes areas of leadership concern as leadership quadrants, ensures “that perspectives, opinions, and beliefs of a wide constituency will be considered” (Ketelle & Mesa, 2006, p. 148).

Figure 3: Ketelle & Mesa’s Leadership Quadrants of Concern

Socio-Political Parent, teacher, business, government agency involvement Involve, consult with political community Union negotiations Contract management Community service Partnerships Involving collaborating with school community stakeholders Public relations Anything done to win support and collaboration of the school community stakeholders	Programmatic Instruction Curriculum Professional Development Subject area programs (reading, writing, math) Student academic assessment Teacher Evaluation Anything to do with teaching and learning Curriculum and instructional development, quality control, planning
School Climate/Culture Student welfare programs Student discipline Values, norms, considerations by which students, teachers, administrators, parents, live in the school community Environmental aesthetics Co-curricular activities Student – teacher relations Student affiliation with school Teacher morale	Organizational Management Allocating resources Planning, organizing, initiating actions needed for the school to progress toward its goal Delegating, assigning, distributing work Scheduling, coordinating activities and tasks Monitoring, evaluating quality of performance of school personnel

Figure 3. Ketelle & Mesa’s Leadership Quadrants of Concern. Ketelle, & Mesa (2006).

Empathetic understanding and school leadership preparation. *Leadership Review*, 6(4), p. 148.

Ketelle and Mesa suggest positive empathy is elemental to school leaders’ success; and, the pair advocate perspective-taking to grow empathetic skills and enhance practice. This, they say, combined with teaching leadership strategy, can be used to increase leaders’ self-awareness and help them meet the demands of their role.

Figure 4: Ketelle & Mesa's Time / Context / Point of View Overlay

<p>Socio-Political</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past: What is the socio-political history of change in this context? • Present: What is the current political climate relative to change? • Future: How to win political support for the change? What is the vision of the change? 2. Context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What/who are the contending groups who might use change to gain political power? Where do political forces stand in relation to core issues related to change? 3. Point of View <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Leader: Are there any political problems with the change related to my job status, pressure from boss/board? Is this change merely a vehicle to advance me professionally or is it advantageous for students? • Implementers: Does the change trigger union issues? Teacher loss of autonomy, academic freedom? 	<p>Programmatic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past: What is the history of change with a similar design? What is the track record of success? • Present: How are things going with program implementation, teacher support, and relational climate? • Future: What are the prospects for program winning support—what changes are needed to gain from it? 2. Context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the school's ability to implement programmatic change. 3. Point of View <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Leader: Do I believe the program's theory? Do I agree with it philosophically? • Implementers: What if they have strong doubts about it and resist implementation? If I resolve my doubts, how can they be persuaded to implement the change? • Objective or authoritative: What kind of support can be found for the innovation in the professional literature? Where has the innovation been implemented?
<p>Culture/climate</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past - What is the history of the school's climate? What has affected the school's climate? • Present - Assess the school's culture and its openness to change. • Future - Assess trends that may impact school's culture/climate. 	<p>Organizational Management</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past - What is the history of organizational management problems? What is the history of program implementation? • Present - Are there currently any organizational management problems that will impact
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the school's receptivity to change. 3. Point of View <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Leader – What is the school's climate like? How receptive is the school to change? • Implementers – How do they view the school's climate? How ready do they think the school is to change? • Recipients of change – Assess parent and student attitudes toward change. • Objective or authoritative – What does the literature say about the openness of a school to change? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> implementation? • Future - Are there any future issues that may impact implementation? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess management issues unique to your school context. 3. Point of View <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Leader – Prepare information on change and distribute. Lead discussions on change. • The Implementers – What is the average amount of time they will have to invest? • Recipients of change – Make sure they are consulted. What is the impact on families?

Figure 4. Ketelle & Mesa's Time / Context / Point of View Overlay. Ketelle, & Mesa (2006). Empathetic understanding and school leadership preparation. Leadership Review, 6(4), p. 149-150.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between educational leaders' self-perception of empathy and to explore how attitudes relate to leadership attributes and action.

In a review of nearly 600 articles across the disciplines of neuroscience, psychology, education, emotional intelligence, leadership, and business management, no instrument measuring both empathy (attitudes) and leadership roles (attributes and action) appears to exist. Therefore, a dearth of literature on the subject seems to suggest a gap in the research.

This research has the potential to provide insight, and raise new questions, regarding the analysis of empathy and action in educational leaders.

Assumptions of the Study

Several important assumptions are made in this research, primary of which is a presumption of honesty in the respondents – an assumption that supersedes the potential for self-report bias, where survey participants attempt to cast their responses in a more “favorable” light, the practice of which might threaten the validity of the research (Donaldson & Grant-Vallone, 2002).

Instead, this research assumes study participants – partially motivated by their own desire to contribute to a body of knowledge that serves their field – authentically self-scored their feedback, an assumption further bolstered by the survey's assurance of anonymity.

This research also supposes participants understood the over-arching concepts (in this case, leadership attitudes, empathy, and workplace actions) addressed on the data-

collection instrument – a conjecture that is vital to evaluating the aggregate responses of the group; as is the assumption the survey instrument was conveniently delivered in an environment that accommodated appropriate reflection without fear of reprisal or hope for tangible reward.

Delimitations of the Study

This study is delimited to Educational Leadership students (master's, doctoral, or unclassified) enrolled in coursework during the 2016-2017 academic year at the University of Nebraska – Omaha. Further delineation of the study group includes voluntary respondents to the March 2017 LAAM.

Significance of the Study

Caring leaders matter; and, a focus on empathy and leaders necessitates ongoing exploration, consideration, and study.

This research is academically relevant given the paucity of analyses in actualizing educational leaders' empathic behaviors, as well as understanding the impact of empathy (as both a trait and an action) on educational leadership.

A host of research (Butler & Chinowsky, 2006; Clarke, 2010; Desteno, 2016) suggests self-reflective, emotionally intelligent leaders are often skilled at elevating employees, increasing motivation, and building team: all attributes that might grow from a potential relationship between empathy and positive action.

The significance of this study lies in the possible relationship between empathetic educational leaders and their attributes / actions, and in the ability of these findings to impact practice – especially regarding educational leadership preparation and established leaders' performance-based results.

Contribution to Practice

This research contributes to practice by exposing new outcomes, and aligning with existing enquiry, regarding specific leadership attitudes and activities relative to domains of empathy.

First, this endeavor supports Undung & de Guzman's (2009) research regarding "strengthening the need to develop academic leaders' awareness of their subordinates' needs, problems and concerns, thus bringing them together in achieving the institutional vision, mission, goals, and objectives" (p. 20) by potentially providing insight into educational leaders' mindsets – revealing practices that might increase satisfaction and efficiency.

Second, this research expands the body of knowledge regarding leading with understanding in a diverse, dynamic, and changing environment.

Finally, examining the relationship between empathic understanding, and behavior exposes strategies that might successfully be adopted in educational environments outside of the initial study group.

Organization of Study

This research focuses on the educational leader (including teacher leaders and school, district, or state administrators), and the relationship between empathy and leadership action. A review of literature focusing on these topics appears in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 outlines the study's research methods, including an overview of both participants and the research instrument. Data on response rate and analyses of the relationship between empathy domains and leadership categories are discussed in Chapter

4, while Chapter 5 addresses the implications of the research through a discussion and conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

While there are many components of educational leadership, this research focuses on leadership and empathy – specifically, empathy defined as emotional contagion, emotional disconnection, and cognitive empathy (Carré et al., 2013). As for those who lead with empathy, some suggest empathetic managers experience greater success, resolve conflicts more quickly, and facilitate more enduring business relationships (Frei, 1985; Goleman, 2013).

Origins of Empathy

Research suggests the development of empathy has both innate / neurological components, as well as adaptive tendencies based on situations and circumstances (Decety, 2015; Eslinger, 1998; Ginot, 2009). Others widen this definition to include helping behaviors motivated by perspective and concern (Batson, Eklund, Chermok, Hoyt, & Ortiz, 2007).

Although definitions of empathy (gleaned from multiple disciplines) abound, researchers appear to echo a familiar maxim regarding the meaning of empathy: Given the many contexts and frameworks for empathetic responses, a universal definition is not completely plausible (Engelen & Röttger-Rössler, 2012); however, some agreed-upon traits of empathetic individuals can be identified.

For example, Ketelle and Mesa's *Empathetic Understanding and School Leadership Preparation* (2006) broadly identifies empathy as “referring to the ability to accurately assess another person’s point of view” (p. 145). Empathy also includes an aptitude for understanding and responding to others’ emotions (Agosta, 2014; Kunyk &

Olson, 2001).

In a review of studies regarding empathy training Lam et al. (2011), suggest “empathic ability is an asset professionally for individuals, such as teachers, physicians, and social workers” and define empathy as “an individual’s capacity to understand the behavior of others, to experience their feelings, and to express that understanding to them” (p. 162).

Goleman and Boyatzis (2008) point out “certain things leaders do – specifically, exhibit empathy and become attuned to others’ moods – literally affect both their own brain chemistry and that of their followers” (p. 2), suggesting elements of empathy borrow from biology.

Jackson, Rainville, & Decety (2006) concur, noting neural activity of those observing pain in others mirrors brain activity of those actually “processing” pain, an observation that supports the ability to empathize might be innate. Additional research suggests empathic concern can be elicited and measured by evaluating behavioral and neural responses to humans perceiving medical pain in others (Lamm, Batson, & Decety, 2007).

Decety (2011) further suggests empathetic concern can inspire altruistic helping behaviors, noting infants as young as 12 months will comfort others in duress, while Vaish, & Warneken (2012) point out 12-14-month-old babies “show egocentric empathic distress, in which they respond to another’s distress as if they themselves were in distress, because they still lack a clear differentiation between self and other” (p. 132), clarifying the phenomena of one crying infant begetting another crying baby (a spontaneous response Vaish & Warneken say can occur as early as days after birth).

Warneken & Tomasello (2006) also note altruistic helping behaviors – motivated by empathic responses extraneous of evolutionary reactions, such as animals aiding each other in kin groups – occur at very early ages in human infants. To better understand this inclination, the pair tested babies aged 18-months in situations where an adult might need help with, as an example, reaching something that appeared out-of-reach, or accessing an object that appeared hindered by another object.

In six of 10 trials, 24 infants tested by Warneken & Tomasello helped the adult with such tasks as opening a cabinet when the adult experimenter appeared to have too many items in his hands to perform the task on his own. The babies also handed the adult specific articles when he appeared unable to reach the objects. The researchers concluded, “even very young children have a natural tendency to help other persons solve their problems, even when the other is a stranger and they receive no benefit at all,” (Warneken & Tomasello, 2006, p. 1302).

In a 2003 *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* article, Laurie Carr, Marco Iacoboni, Marie-Charlotte Dubeau, John C. Mazziotta, and Gian Luigi Lenzi summarized the origins of empathy, along with its neural characteristics like this:

Empathy plays a fundamental social role, allowing the sharing of experiences, needs, and goals across individuals. Its functional aspects and corresponding neural mechanisms, however, are poorly understood. When Theodore Lipps (Gallese, 2001) introduced the concept of empathy (*Einfühlung*), he theorized the critical role of *inner imitation* of the actions of others in generating empathy. In keeping with this concept, empathic individuals exhibit

nonconscious mimicry of the postures, mannerisms, and facial expressions of others (the *chameleon effect*) to a greater extent than nonempathic individuals (Chartrand & Bargh, 1999). Thus, empathy may occur via a mechanism of action representation that modulates and shapes emotional contents (p. 5497).

Empathy and the Brain

A paucity of definitive knowledge in neural interpretations of empathy, as Carr (2003) and her colleagues point out, is not the only issue underpinning the ambiguity of understanding empathy. Geoff Goodman (1991), in his comparative article examining definitions of empathy popularized by Heinz Kohut (1959) and Carl Rogers (1975), notes clinical understanding of empathy by psychotherapists Kohut and Rogers has evolved, and includes understanding others' situations, but not to the extent it compromises therapist / client intervention to relieve pain and promote healing.

Discussing empathy in a clinical setting, such as therapist / client, is not unusual, and Decety (2011) reminds scholars the bulk of research exploring empathy and empathic response has been in social and developmental psychology – fields that also lend themselves well to examining the neuroscience of empathy.

Popularly recognized as having both cognitive and affective (emotional) characteristics (Belacchi & Farina, 2012; Engelen & Röttger-Rössler, 2012), empathy is also umbrellaed by concepts that include emotional / self-awareness (Neumann et al., 2009; Goleman, 2013) and observable prosocial behaviors (Decety, 2011); and, while these concepts are present in other mammals – such as in animals caring for their young, or in the motivation of a dolphin to save someone from drowning, for example (Decety, 2011) – humans exhibit complex social / emotional behaviors that set them apart from

other animals.

With the discovery of mirror neurons in primates (Rizzolatti & Fabbri-Destro, 2010) in the early 1990s, the neurological explanation for empathy widened. Here's why: Researchers Di Pellegrino, Fadiga, Fogassi, Gallese, & Rizzolatti, (1992) noted similar neurons in a chimpanzee's ventral premotor cortex activated when grasping an object, as when observing an object being grasped. This led to "an enormous literature" (Rizzolatti, & Fabbri-Destro, 2010, p. 224) on sensorimotor (mirror) neurons – neurons Decety (2011) also says appear to activate in neuroimaging research regarding emotions and empathetic response. In other words, mirror neurons are stimulated when humans observe an emotional experience in much the same way as when they personally engage in an emotional situation.

Goleman and Boyatzis (2008) suggest mirror neurons aid in both individual and group understanding by facilitating emotional reproduction – creating avenues for shared experiences and resonant perceptions – responses that may occur unconsciously.

Emotional Disconnection

The ability to understand, yet distance oneself from another's heartache or discomfort seems counterintuitive when discussing empathy. However, elements of this research rely on feedback regarding emotional disconnection.

This distancing aspect of empathy was addressed in the development of the Basic Empathy Scale in Adults (BES-A) (Carré et al., 2013), where researchers adapted the Jolliffe and Farrington (2006), adolescent-centered Basic Empathy Scale to include emotional-disconnection, a "regulatory factor that involves self-protection against distress" in their analyses (Carré et al., 2013, p. 681). The BES-A was modified to fit this

research.

In adjusting the BES-A, the instrument's three domains of empathy were retained. Emotional disconnection is but one of these domains. Rounding out the triad are emotional contagion and cognitive empathy.

Emotional Contagion and Cognitive Empathy

This research examines relationships between attitudes and action, with “attitudes” measured as three empathic states: cognitive empathy, emotional contagion, and emotional disconnection.

Citing (among other evidence) studies of college roommates assuming each other's depressive states over time (where one roommate is not depressed and the other is “mildly” so), James Fowler and Nicholas Christakis (2008) suggest emotion can be contagious. The pair studied the spread of happiness as “likes” on social media – and further examined research participants' responses to online likes for alterations in their own levels of happiness. The researchers, who suggest “people's happiness depends on the happiness of others with whom they are connected” (p. 1), also acknowledge emotion can “spread over short periods from person to person” (p.1) in an act of emotional contagion.

Others, such as Yale University's Sigal G. Barsade, concur, noting the “transfer of ideas is qualitatively different than the transfer of feelings” (2002, p. 645). Barsade developed a method for testing group emotional contagion, by measuring participants' moods and concluding alterations in reported states-of-being demonstrate group contagion is real and people are “walking mood inductors,” p. 667.

If group contagion is possible, then cognitive empathy is equally relevant – and, a

discussion of the same is not complete without an overview of Emotional Intelligence (EI), the concepts of which have been pioneered, championed, studied, and amended by a host of researchers (Beldoch, 1973; Gardner, 1983; Goleman, 1995; Mayer & Cobb, 2000; Salovey & Mayer, 1990) who suggest measuring intelligence via IQ alone does not accurately assess an individual's abilities, including the ability to lead.

Instead, Daniel Goleman and colleagues Richard Boyatzio and Annie McKee in *The New Leaders – Transforming the Art of Leadership into the Science of Results* (2002) suggest four quadrants to Emotional Intelligence: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, with empathy as an elemental construct of self-awareness.

Further, Goleman & Boyatzis (2008) suggest socially intelligent leaders aspiring to greater empathy ask, “Do you understand what motivates other people, even those from different backgrounds” (p. 5)? Gauging motivation, coupled with an awareness of understanding others' emotions, helps clarify cognitive empathy, defined earlier in this study as the aptitude to recognize and understand others' experiences (Carré et al., 2013; Eres et al., 2015).

Empathy and the Educational Leader

“Our job is to develop leaders as we develop as leaders ourselves,” says Michael Fullan (Zegarac, 2012, p. 14). Patricia Phelps in *Helping Teachers Become Leaders* (2008), echoes Fullan's remarks by emphasizing seasoned educators – as well as building administrators – can help aspiring teacher leaders understand their role as influencers of school climate by “fostering a climate of inquiry” (p. 121) and championing an environment that encourages collective ideation – strategies that might be difficult to

accomplish without a degree of empathy.

In fact, caring leaders – including those who consciously mentor and advise new talent – are often the same leaders who manage for sustainability, not only of the organization (school building or district), but also for a community-centered school culture and student success (Coffey & Horner, 2012; Rhodes, Stevens, & Hemmings, 2011).

The act of caring, however, in the truly empathetic teacher leader, is most effective when authentically evolved from an emotion, to a perspective-taking practice – a behavior further fortified by intentional, positive relationships with colleagues and students, and bolstered by effective communication that suggests understanding (Beaty-O’Ferrall, Green, & Hanna 2010). Further, leadership preparation that includes empathetic training can highlight the value of empathic responding and can increase perceptual understanding of others among leaders (Ketelle & Mesa, 2006).

Alan Mortiboys, author of *Teaching with Emotional Intelligence: A step-by-step guide for higher and further education professionals* (2012), is a University of Central England educator and consultant. He explains he begins professional learning lectures by asking attendees to envision an educational experience from their childhood – an experience about which they had strong feelings. He then invites participants to summarize the feeling in a single descriptive word. Examples might include “angry” or “excited.” His contention: Learning does not happen in the absence of emotion, and classroom experiences are reflexive, with teachers and learners together creating a classroom environment.

Like Mortiboys, Julian Kitchen, a Brock University professor and longtime

teacher-educator, says he leads with empathy and encourages relational educational experiences. His interactions with preservice teachers, about which he writes in *Conveying Respect and Empathy: Becoming a Relational Teacher Educator* (2005), suggest practices such as reflection, mirroring understanding, and emphatic listening contribute to a more authentic, reflexive experience for the soon-to-be-classroom teacher.

From his observations, experience, and research, Kitchen has formulated characteristics of what he calls “relational teacher education” (2005, p.196), leadership skills equally applicable to the new – or established – educational leader. These include:

1. Understanding one’s own personal practical knowledge
2. Improving one’s practice in teacher education
3. Understanding the landscape of teacher education
4. Respecting and empathizing with preservice teachers
5. Conveying respect and empathy
6. Helping preservice teachers face problems
7. Receptivity to growing in relationship (Kitchen, 2005, p. 196)

While Kitchen’s characteristics of relational teacher education are devised with the preservice teacher in mind, there is a universality to his observations that supports a message of empathetic leadership.

Ketelle and Mesa (2006) further recognize the value of empathy in educational leadership, pointing out attributes such as self-awareness and “empathic insight” are characteristic of effective leaders, but posit little research has been accomplished to analyze leadership action. As a result, the pair suggests a framework for empathy training of school leaders, and note “empathy is a precondition of any leadership style”

(p. 145).

As a potential leadership precondition, empathy can be taught (Ioannidou & Konstantikaki, 2008) through strategies such as effective listening, perspective-taking, and cultivating authentic relationships – some of the same strategies transformational leadership theorists say can be learned and, consequently, can elevate team members and create continuity within empowered organizations (Miller, 2007, 2009).

“Transformational leadership comprises idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration” (Barling, Slater, & Kelloway, 2000, p. 157). As such, transformational leadership, the tenants of which were popularized by James MacGregor Burns (2003) and Bass and Avolio (1994) has gained significance among educational leaders as a reflective leadership style high in emotional intelligence and capable of contributing to job satisfaction, sustained professional-development motivation, and leader-follower trust (Eliophotou-Menon & Ioannou, 2016).

In a review of literature, Eliophotou-Menon and Ioannou (2016) found a significant link between teacher job satisfaction and transformational leadership, citing such examples as common-vision growth and leader support as elemental to the satisfaction / leadership association.

Ross and Gray’s 2016 research, a Canadian quantitative study Eliophotou-Menon and Ioannou examined involving 3074 educators, “showed that for each increase of a standard deviation in transformational leadership, there was an increase in the commitment of teachers to the school targets and generally to their school” (Eliophotou-Menon & Ioannou, 2016, p. 17).

An additional aspect in cultivating commitment is educational leaders’ ability to

foster trust. Louis & Wahlstrom (2011) point out in *Principals as Cultural Leaders* trust is elemental to school culture, enhancing teachers' desire to participate in professional communities and encouraging engaging instruction. Caldwell et al. (2012) argue trust can be taken to an even more intricate, ingrained level by transitioning leadership practice into transformative experiences through a combination of leadership traits, including those foundational to transformational leadership, to create leadership that is ethically motivated and value-centered.

Examining school leadership through the transformative lens, as well as through the traits of empathy and emotional intelligence, which sustain the transformational leader (Barling et al., 2000), helps position the current research in the context of contemporary school leadership trends.

CHAPTER THREE

Method

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between educational leaders' self-perception of empathy and explore how attitudes relate to leadership attributes and action.

Research Instrumentation

This research evaluates empathy and behavior among educational leaders using a two-part instrument constructed from the Carré et al., 2013 Basic Empathy Scale in Adults (BES-A) (Appendix A). The BES-A is a 20-point Likert instrument designed to measure emotional contagion, cognitive empathy, and emotional disconnection and is a derivative of the 2006 Jolliffe & Farrington Basic Empathy Scale (BES).

Working in conjunction with the BES-A, is a re-tooled version of Fernandez et al. (2010) Integrated Leadership Measure (Appendix B). The Fernandez et al. tool measures leadership dispositions as roles that are "task-oriented," "relations-oriented," "change-oriented," "diversity-oriented," and "integrity-oriented" (Fernandez et al., 2010, pp. 311-312). The survey instrument designed for the present research does the same.

By combining, amending, and aligning the BES-A and the Integrated Leadership Measure, the full research instrument, here called the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure (LAAM) (Appendix C), surveys multiple self-reported perceptions and behaviors to expose potential relationships between educational leaders' empathic attitudes and their leadership attributes / actions.

There are, however, some important differences between the Integrated Leadership Measure, the BES-A and the LAAM.

For example, the Integrated Leadership Measure, was originally designed to explore the “relationship between integrated leadership and federal program performance” (p. 308). In other words, both managers and employees reported leadership attitudes on the same scale; and, the language on the Integrated Leadership Measure reflects this.

The LAAM, on the other hand, has been adapted to collect responses not from leaders and their subordinates, but from leaders alone. This adaptation has left the “role” categories of the original survey intact (for data disaggregation and analyses later), but has shifted some statements on the survey to be self-reflective, rather than other-centered.

Additionally, the LAAM is used to gather data regarding educational leaders’ attitudes and actions; however, the Integrated Leadership Measure was used to “test the hypothesis that integrated leadership has a positive effect on organizational performance in the public sector” (Fernandez et al., 2010, p. 312).

Regarding the BES-A, differences exist here, as well, largely with the participating population, a voluntary sample consisting of students, employees, and retired individuals, among others, and recruited by the French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies for a correlational study – using factor analysis – that appeared to show empathy was “process dependent” and aimed to “validate an adult version of the BES, and to identify the model of empathy that is best able to explain the factor structure of the BES” (Carré et al., 2013, p. 679, 685).

This opens a discussion of the methods of both the BES-A and the Integrated Leadership Measure – and how these approaches differ from the LAAM, summarized here as Instruments A and B.

Instrument A: The Basic Empathy Scale in Adults

“Recent studies of empathy have led to it being defined as underpinned by three components, namely, emotional contagion, emotional disconnection, and cognitive empathy,” (Carré et al., 2013, p. 679).

The BES-A is a three-factor model designed to assess empathy (Carré et al., 2013), and the LAAM, while not a replication of the 2013 BES-A, employs 19 of the 20 BES-A queries with these amendments:

1. Language was generalized and Americanized throughout the LAAM to fit the target audience of educator-leaders. Changes to language included 1.) replacing the word “friend” (used 11 times in the BES-A) with the words “others” and “other people” and 2.) exchanging the phrase “work out” (used twice in the BES-A) for the more common American word “recognize.”
2. BES-A item No. 4, “I get frightened when I watch characters in a good scary movie” (Carré et al., 2013, p. 690) was removed from the LAAM. This query closely mirrored BES-A item No. 11, “I often become sad when watching sad things on TV or in films” (Carré et al., 2013, p. 690) and was considered extraneous to the current research.

The 20 query statements on the BES-A are separated into post-survey “classifications” (Carré et al., 2013, p. 682). This practice was adopted on the LAAM, as well. However, in the present research, the term “empathic domains” is used when referring to the three BES-A classifications of cognitive empathy, emotional contagion, and emotional disconnection.

Query coding within empathic domains on the LAAM differs from query

numbering on the BES-A, although all LAAM empathy items are categorized within their original BES-A classifications (Carré et al., 2013, p. 682).

The LAAM empathic domains and query numbers are:

Cognitive Empathy Items: 3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 19

Emotional Contagion Items: 2, 4, 10, 14, 16

Emotional Disconnection Items: 1, 6, 7, 12, 17, 18

Instrument B: The Integrated Leadership Measure

The Integrated Leadership Measure “study sought to synthesize leadership and public administration research to develop and measure the concept of integrated leadership in the public sector” (Fernandez et al., 2010, p. 319).

The present study uses the Integrated Leadership Measure to assess self-perception of leadership attributes in an integrated environment by asking study participants to review the survey’s 16 items through the lens of “how you approach work situations.” Changes were made to the wording of some of the statements to contextualize the instrument for the current research – research that targeted educators, rather than public sector employees, for which the Integrated Leadership Measure was originally designed. These adaptations included:

- replacing the word “managers” with the word “I” on items 1, 3, and 4;
- adding “(for example, school, ESU, district) to others” following the word “organization” on item 1;
- replacing the phrase “supervisors / team leaders” with the word “I” on items 5, 7, and 9;

- amending item 12 to read, “My colleagues are committed to a faculty/staff representative of all segments of society;”
- amending item 13 to read, “I work well with faculty of different backgrounds;”
- amending item 14 to read, “I maintain high standards of honesty and integrity;”
- amending item 15 to read, “Prohibited personnel practices (for example, illegally discriminating for or against any employee/applicant) are not tolerated.”

Fernandez et al. (2010) suggest leadership effectiveness may be impacted by integrated leadership success, or, the organization’s ability to function across multiple (sometimes hierarchical) levels of management, leadership, departments, and personnel working collaboratively. Fernandez and his colleagues (2010) identified five “leadership roles:” task-oriented, relations-oriented, change-oriented, diversity-oriented, and integrity-oriented, and defined the roles in this way:

Task-oriented leadership involves the kinds of leadership behavior that express a concern for accomplishing the goals of the group that are aimed at defining and organizing the group’s activities.

Relations-oriented leadership involves behavior that reflects concern for the welfare of subordinates and a desire to foster good interpersonal relations among organizational members.

Change-oriented leadership represents leadership behavior that can increase performance by making organizations more adaptive and responsive to the external environment...and, [these] leaders may be more effective at identifying the most promising strategic initiatives for their organizations.

Diversity-oriented leadership [means] workforces and constituencies are likely

to reap dividends in terms of ideas generated, quality of the assessment of options and decision acceptance.

Integrity-oriented leadership is the final leadership role. Research on organizational justice provides theoretical support for the positive effect of integrity on performance. (Fernandez et al., 2010, p. 311-312).

Given the absence of synthesis on leadership theory, leadership traits, effectiveness of leaders' activities and perceptions of what makes a leader (Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Rosete, & Ciarrochi, 2005; Fernandez et al., 2010), the Integrated Leadership Measure, as an assessment of leadership action and roles, is an appropriate instrument for the current research; and, the five roles defined in the Integrated Leadership Measure align with the LAAM as follows, replacing the word "role" with the word "attribute:"

Task-oriented Leadership Role Items: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Relations-oriented Leadership Role Items: 6, 7, 8, 9

Change-oriented Leadership Role Items: 10, 11

Diversity-oriented Leadership Role Items: 12, 13

Integrity-oriented Leadership Role Items: 14, 15, 16 (Fernandez et al., 2010, p. 320)

Data Collection

The Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure (LAAM) is a cross-sectional survey comprised of two five-point Likert-scale instruments, one measuring empathic attitude by domain and the other measuring leadership behavior by attribute (Appendix C). As a cross-sectional survey, the LAAM "collects data at one point in time...and has

the advantage of measuring current attitudes and practices” (Creswell, 2015, p. 380).

The LAAM was direct-emailed as a web-based questionnaire. Participants were given prior notice of the survey via “Blackboard,” an online campus communication system, and the survey was subsequently emailed to each respondent’s personal email account.

To potentially increase response rate, a three-part survey-administration strategy was employed (Creswell, 2015). This included an email of the LAAM from the Educational Leadership department chair (Appendix D), followed by two subsequent email messages (Appendix E) sent to non-responders. The survey was left open online for seven days, and response rate was tracked using online software. Participation in the investigation was not an obligation and no incentives for completing the survey were given.

Participants

The survey sample was delimited to 258 students selected by invitation; and, therefore, was “not based on random sampling, so drawing inferences to a general population is difficult” (Creswell, p. 387). Qualification for invitation to the survey was enrollment in the University of Nebraska – Omaha’s Educational Leadership program.

Of the 258 students offered the survey, 105 responded, 42 of which were master’s candidates and 63 of which were doctoral candidates.

Additionally, study participants are enrolled in coursework aligned with National Board Policy for Educational Administration Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (2015). Standards 1-3 govern such issues as “core values” (p. 9) “ethics / moral direction” (p. 10) and “equity and cultural responsiveness,” (p. 11), all of which could be

interpreted as empathetic traits, and could potentially motivate survey participants to respond to survey questions in ways those in other fields might not.

Although individuals in alternative leadership roles (such as medicine, politics, small-business ownership, manufacturing, or software engineering, among others) might respond differently than educational leaders to the LAAM – or to a similar instrument – it is important to remember this research is the study of educational leaders’ attitudes and actions.

Therefore, this research relies on feedback from students comprised of current University of Nebraska – Omaha Educational Leadership program participants – and may not be representative of educational leaders in general.

Further, some may suggest the participating study group – which represents a “helping profession” - might skew higher on the empathy-measurement tool than those in fields where research appears to indicate lower levels of empathy. For example, effective social workers may exhibit empathetic behaviors in their work (Gerdes & Segal, 2011), whereas research indicates business students exhibit lower levels of empathy (Brown, Sautter, Littvay, Sautter, & Bearnese, 2010) than their contemporaries in other fields.

While elevated empathy scale scores may be a potential outcome with the study group, a separate audience of participants in an unrelated field is not provided for contrast in this study – making the assertion of “higher” empathy immeasurable in this research.

Respondent Bias

There is a potential for response bias among participants in this research, because not all individuals offered the survey returned the instrument; and, some respondents replied sooner than others. Self-reported data, on which this study relies, may also have

some limitations, as Pronin, Gilovich, & Ross (2004) point out self-perception may not always reflect reality.

Gender, sometimes flagged as a potential study bias, was – by design – not recorded in the present research. Previous research on empathy and teacher-efficacy noted no correlation between empathy, emotional self-efficacy, teaching self-efficacy, and gender (Goroshit & Hen, 2014). Further, the research instrument for the current study retained the gender-neutral characteristics of its first-generation iterations – the same two studies from which Carré et al. (2013) and Fernandez et al. (2010) designed their research: The Basic Empathy Scale (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006) and the U.S. Office of Personnel Management’s 2006 Federal Human Capital Survey.

Survey Design

This was a two-part survey. Sections 1 and 2 of the survey consisted of Instruments A and B, the BES-A and Integrated Leadership Measure, respectively. Each instrument was arranged with queries / statements on a five-point Likert-scale (“strongly disagree,” “disagree,” “neither agree nor disagree,” “agree,” “strongly agree”).

Section 1 of the survey focused on the respondent’s approach to work situations, and section two focused on the respondent’s view of self. Open-ended, textual responses were allowed in both sections.

Demographic data on the survey was limited to current position, years of service in education and program of study (master’s or doctoral) in which the student was enrolled.

Analysis

This research addresses the question, “What is the relationship between self-

reported empathy and leadership actions and attributes among educational leaders enrolled in the University of Nebraska-Omaha's Educational Leadership program?"

To better examine this issue, the following sub-questions were addressed:

Sub-question 1: What were educational leadership candidates' perceptions on the LAAM by factor?

The three domains of empathy (emotional contagion, emotional disconnection, and cognitive empathy) on Instrument B will be analyzed, as will the five leadership roles on Instrument A (task-oriented, relations-oriented, change-oriented, diversity-oriented, and integrity-oriented) using descriptive statistics.

Sub-question 2: What are the relationships between the three domains of empathy and the five leadership attributes?

Relationships between the attributes and the domains will be explored using scatter plots, geometric analyses, and hierarchal cluster analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between educational leaders' self-perception of empathy and explore how attitudes relate to leadership attributes and action.

Overview

As an exploratory analysis of educators' perceptions of both leadership and empathic attitudes, this research used a two-part, five-point, Likert-scale survey (Instruments A and B), administered via email to 258 educational leadership master's and doctoral students, of which 105 responded.

Instrument A measured "how you approach work situations" (defined for this research as "leadership attributes") while Instrument B analyzed "how you view yourself" (here, categorized as "domains of empathy"). Participation in the research was voluntary, and both instruments A & B were offered in a single survey, the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure (LAAM).

In addition to the LAAM's Instruments A and B, the survey offered an opportunity for respondents to provide textual feedback. Consequently, 60 unique responses to, "Share an experience that supports one of the statements above," (which followed both Instrument A and Instrument B) were recorded corresponding to leadership attributes and actions. Fifty-eight additional written responses were captured illustrating empathetic behavior, experiences, and attitudes. The impact of raw, write-in responses, although not coded and analyzed by theme in this research, are in discussed in Chapter 5.

Participants

This study focused on 105 educational leadership students at the University of Nebraska – Omaha. Forty-percent of the students ($n = 42$) were master's students, and 60% ($n = 63$) were doctoral students (Tables 1A and 1B).

Table 1A

Descriptive Statistics for "Program of Study in Which You Are Enrolled"

Master's or Doctoral Program of Study ($N = 105$)					
Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance
Program of Study in Which You Are Enrolled	1	2	1.6	0.49	0.24

Note. 1 = Master's; 2 = Doctoral

Table 1 B

Distribution of Responses for "Program of Study in Which You Are Enrolled"

Master's or Doctoral Program of Study ($N = 105$)		
Item	%	n
Item 1. Master's	40.00%	42
Item 2. Doctoral	60.00%	63
N	100%	105

All participants were educators representing a wide range of years in the field (Table 2), with 58.10% of respondents ($n = 61$) reporting between 11 and 20 years in education. Less than 4% ($n = 4$) of participants had been in education more than 25 years; and nine participants (8.57%) reported between 0 and 5 years of experience, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Distribution of Responses for "Years in Education"

Range of Participants' Years in Education from 0 to 25+ ($N = 105$)		
No. of Years in Education	%	n
Item 1. 0-5	8.57%	9
Item 2. 6-10	13.33%	14
Item 3. 11-15	38.10%	40
Item 4. 16-20	20.00%	21
Item 5. 21-25	16.19%	17
Item 6. 25+	3.81%	4
Item 7. I am not an educator.	0.00%	0
N	100%	105

Respondent reporting for “current position” (Table 3A) also ranged, with 34 participants (32.38%) indicating they were “K-12 classroom educators” (the largest group of responders), followed by building administrators ($n = 20$) who comprised 19.05% of the total. Also shown on Table 3A, “Educational or state agency” and “full-time students” were the least represented of the group, with three respondents in each category and 2.86% each of the total. Sixteen individuals characterized their professional position as “other,” and raw, textual responses for the same are shared in Table 3B.

Table 3A

Distribution of Responses for "Current Position"

Current Professional Position (<i>N</i> = 105)		
Position	%	<i>n</i>
Item 1. Full-time Student	2.86%	3
Item 2. K-12 Classroom Educator	32.38%	34
Item 3. Teacher Leader / Coach	13.33%	14
Item 4. Building Administrator	19.05%	20
Item 5. School District Administrator	4.76%	5
Item 6. Educational or State Agency	2.86%	3
Item 7. Higher Ed	9.52%	10
Item 8. Other	15.24%	16
<i>N</i>	100%	105

Table 3B

Total "Current Position" Textual Responses for 16 Participants Who Selected "Other"

Current Professional Position Raw Text Responses to "Other"	
(n = 16)	
<hr/>	
Item: If "Other" was selected above, please describe.	
1.	Instructional Facilitator
2.	Outside Education
3.	School Counseling Director
4.	CADRE Associate
5.	Substitute Teacher
6.	K-12 School Librarian
7.	K-12 School Librarian
8.	PreK-5 Teacher Librarian
9.	Speech-Language Pathologist in Early Childhood
10.	Technology Director
11.	School Counselor
12.	School Psychologist
13.	Department Head in Special Education
14.	Curriculum Coordinator
15.	School Psychologist and District Administrator
16.	Instructional Facilitator/ Academic Data Rep.

Research Sub-question 1: What were educational leadership candidates' perceptions on the LAAM by factor?

This exploratory research gathered data on three domains of empathy (cognitive empathy, emotional contagion, and emotional disconnection) and five work attributes / actions (change-oriented, diversity-oriented, integrity-oriented, relations-oriented and task-oriented). While no hypotheses were made regarding outcomes, evidence was presented that suggests empathy is elemental to leadership (Sadri et al., 2011), and successful leaders exhibit the trait of empathy (Frei, 1985; Goleman, 2013; Ketelle & Mesa, 2006; Undung & de Guzman, 2009).

Results for Sub-question 1, “What were educational candidates’ perceptions on the LAAM by factor?” are presented in Tables 4-21, and are discussed here, by domains of empathy and leadership attributes / action.

Scoring for Instruments A and B is evaluated throughout, and is summarized in Appendix F.

The Domains of Empathy

This study considers three domains of empathy addressed by 19, five-point, Likert-scale items, with a low score of 1 and a high score of 5. The range of respondent choices included: “Strongly Disagree (1),” “Disagree (2),” “Neither Agree nor Disagree (3),” “Agree (4),” and “Strongly Agree (5).” The 19 items were divided as:

Cognitive Empathy Items: 3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 19

Emotional Contagion Items: 2, 4, 10, 14, 16

Emotional Disconnection Items: 1, 6, 7, 12, 17, 18

Tables 4-10 refer to the LAAM’s three domains of empathy, and Tables 11-21 show results for the study’s five leadership attributes.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics / Raw Scores by Item for “How You View Yourself”

As the descriptive statistics in Table 4 demonstrate, the item with the highest mean (for the 105 respondents), and a lower standard deviation was Item 3, “I can understand other’s happiness when they do well at something” ($M = 4.53$, $SD = .66$), indicating a high level of agreement among participants.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for "How You View Yourself"

Empathy Items (N = 105)			
Item	N	M	SD
Item 1. Others' emotions don't affect me much.	105	2.63	0.88
Item 2. After being with someone who is sad about something, I usually feel sad.	105	2.91	0.93
Item 3. I can understand others' happiness when they do well at something.	105	4.53	0.66
Item 4. I get caught up in other people's feelings easily.	105	2.62	0.86
Item 5. I find it hard to know when my friends are frightened.	105	1.93	0.81
Item 6. I don't become sad when I see other people crying.	105	2.59	0.87
Item 7. Other people's feelings don't bother me at all.	105	2.01	0.68
Item 8. When someone is feeling "down" I can usually understand how that individual feels.	105	4.05	0.65
Item 9. I can usually recognize when others are scared.	105	4.13	0.55
Item 10. I often become sad when watching sad things on TV or in films.	105	3.46	0.99
Item 11. I can often understand how people are feeling even before they tell me.	105	4	0.63
Item 12. Seeing a person who has been angered has no effect on my feelings.	105	2.32	0.76
Item 13. I can usually recognize when people are cheerful.	105	4.33	0.55
Item 14. I tend to feel scared if I am with others who are afraid.	105	2.51	0.87
Item 15 I can usually realize quickly when someone is angry.	105	4.29	0.61
Item 16. I often get swept up in others' feelings.	105	2.45	0.82

Table 4 (Continued)

Descriptive Statistics for "How You View Yourself"

Empathy Items (<i>N</i> = 105)			
Item	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Item 17. Others' unhappiness doesn't make me feel anything.	105	2.21	0.69
Item 18. I am not usually aware of others' feelings.	105	1.84	0.77
Item 19. I have trouble figuring out when other people are happy.	105	1.73	0.68

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Item 13, "I can usually recognize when people are cheerful" ($M = 4.33$, $SD = .55$), also showed general agreement, and shared the lowest standard deviation of the group with Item 9, "I can usually recognize when others are scared" ($M = 4.13$, $SD = .55$). Each of these items (3, 13, and 9) corresponds to the domain of Cognitive Empathy (Tables 5 & 6) and are contrasted by two items with the lowest mean responses, also displayed in Table 4. These are Items 5 and 19, "I find it hard to know when my friends are frightened" ($M = 1.93$, $SD = .81$) and "I have trouble figuring out when other people are happy," ($M = 1.73$, $SD = .68$) respectively. These items garnered the strongest level of disagreement among study participants.

Before transitioning to a discussion of cognitive empathy results, it is appropriate to mention here, raw scores on Items 5 and 19 were later reversed for consistency.

Therefore, a strong level of disagreement equates to a high level of cognitive empathy (Table 4) for statements 5 and 19.

Tables 5 and 6: Cognitive Empathy

Raw scores for cognitive empathy are presented on Table 5, and reversed, total scores for cognitive empathy are presented on Table 6. Table 5 shows the eight items related to cognitive empathy for the 105 participants. Altogether, the eight items comprise 840 responses, and include:

Item 3. I can understand others' happiness when they do well at something.

Item 5. I find it hard to know when my friends are frightened.

Item 8. When someone is feeling "down," I can usually understand how that individual feels.

Item 9. I can usually recognize when others are scared.

Item 11. I can often understand how people are feeling even before they tell me.

Item 13. I can usually recognize when people are cheerful.

Item 15. I can usually realize quickly when someone is angry.

Item 19. I have trouble figuring out when other people are happy.

Of the three domains of empathy, only cognitive empathy includes reverse-scored items (Items 5 and 19, Table 5); and, as shown on Table 5, 82% ($n = 87$) of respondents disagreed (combined "strongly disagree" and "disagree") with Item 5, indicating a strong level of cognitive empathy, while 95.24% ($n = 100$) of the study group also disagreed/strongly disagreed with Item 19, again suggesting a high level of agreement.

Table 5

Raw Distribution, Mean and Percentage Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Eight Positively and Negatively Keyed Items Corresponding to the Domain "Cognitive Empathy"

Cognitive Empathy (N = 105)												
Item No.	Item	SD		D		NA/D		A		SA		n
		SD	F	D	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	
3	I can understand others' happiness when they do well at something.	0.95%	1	0.95%	1	0.95%	1	38.10%	40	59.05%	62	105
5 ^a	I find it hard to know when my friends are frightened.	29.52%	31	53.33%	56	12.38%	13	3.81%	4	0.95%	1	105
8	When someone is feeling "down," I can usually understand how that individual feels.	0.95%	1	1.90%	2	7.62%	8	70.48%	74	19.05%	20	105
9	I can usually recognize when others are scared.	0.00%	0	1.90%	2	3.81%	4	73.33%	77	20.95%	22	105
11	I can often understand how people are feeling even before they tell me.	0.00%	0	2.86%	3	11.43%	12	68.57%	72	17.14%	18	105
13	I can usually recognize when people are cheerful.	0.00%	0	0.95%	1	0.95%	1	61.90%	65	36.19%	38	105

Table 5 (Continued)

Raw Distribution, Mean and Percentage Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Eight Positively and Negatively Keyed Items Corresponding to the Domain "Cognitive Empathy"

		Cognitive Empathy (N = 105)										
Item No.	Item	SD		D		NA/D		A		SA		n
		SD	F	D	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	
15	I can usually realize quickly when someone is angry.	0.95%	1	0.00%	0	2.86%	3	61.90%	65	34.29%	36	105
19 ^b	I have trouble figuring out when other people are happy.	35.24%	37	60.00%	63	1.90%	2	1.90%	2	0.95%	1	105
MEAN		8.45%		15.24%		5.24%		47.50%		23.57%		100.00%
n			71		128		44		399		198	840

SD % = Strongly Disagree Percent; SD F = Strongly Disagree Frequency; D % = Disagree Percent; D F = Disagree Frequency; NA/D % = Neither Agree nor Disagree Percent; NA/D F = Neither Agree nor Disagree Frequency; A % = Agree Percent; A F = Agree Frequency; SA % = Strongly Agree Percent; SA F = Strongly Agree Frequency

^aNote. Item 5 is negatively keyed, with a high level of agreement indicating a low level of cognitive empathy. Disagreeing with, "I find it hard to know when my friends are frightened," is not dissimilar from agreeing with "I know when my friends are frightened." For consistency, Item 5 was reverse-scored and totals were transposed in Table 6.

^bNote. Item 19 is negatively keyed, with a high level of agreement indicating a low level of cognitive empathy. Disagreeing with, "I have trouble figuring out when other people are happy," is not dissimilar from agreeing with "I understand when other people are happy. For consistency, Item 5 was reverse-scored, and totals were transposed in Table 6.

When total scores for all eight cognitive empathy items were adjusted for reversed scoring, as seen in Table 6, the overall level of agreement for the group was 92.38%, the highest of any empathic domain.

Table 6

Combined Score for Frequency, Mean and Percentage Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Items Corresponding to the Domain "Cognitive Empathy" After Reversing Items 5 and 19

Cognitive Empathy (<i>N</i> = 105)											
	SD %	SD F	D %	D F	NA/D %	NA/D F	A %	A F	SA %	SA F	<i>n</i>
MEAN	0.59%		1.78%		5.24%		60.95%		31.43%		100.00%
<i>n</i>		5		15		44		512		264	840

SD % = Strongly Disagree Percent; SD F = Strongly Disagree Frequency; D % = Disagree Frequency; D F = Disagree Frequency; NA/D % = Neither Agree nor Disagree Percent; NA/D F = Neither Agree nor Disagree Frequency; A % = Agree Percent; A F = Agree Frequency; SA % = Strongly Agree Frequency; SA F = Strongly Agree Frequency

Tables 7 and 8: Emotional Contagion

Like the domain of cognitive empathy, the domain of emotional contagion included responses from 105 participants. However, this domain was comprised of five items, for a total of 525 responses. Table 7 shows percentage responses per item for emotional contagion, and table 8 shows the distribution of responses.

Regarding response analysis in this domain, the greater the level of agreement with each item, the more emotionally contagious the respondent (or group of respondents), the higher the level of disagreement with an item, the lower the level of emotional contagion.

Items for Tables 7 and 8 include:

Item 2. After being with someone who is sad about something, I usually feel sad.

Item 4. I get caught up in other people's feelings easily.

Item 10. I often become sad when watching sad things on TV or in films.

Item 14. I tend to feel scared if I am with others who are afraid.

Item 16. I often get swept up in others' feelings.

Nearly a third of the group (32.38%, $n = 30$), fell in the “neither-agree-nor-disagree” category (Tables 7 and 8), while 24.19% ($n = 127$) of responses were classified as agree / strongly agree. The largest number of responses overall (Table 8) was seen in the combined total for disagreement (combined SD and D) across all five items ($n = 228$, Table 8), or 43.3% (Table 7).

Item 10 (“I often become sad when watching sad things on TV or in films”) showed the highest frequency of combined agreement (60 responses, Table 8). Conversely, Item 16 (“I often get swept up in others’ feelings”) exhibited the greatest number of disagree / strongly disagree responses: 64, as shown on Table 8.

Table 7

Mean and Percentage Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Five Items Corresponding to the Domain "Emotional Contagion"

Emotional Contagion (N = 105)						
Item	SD	D	NA/D	A	SA	n
Item 2. After being with someone who is sad about something, I usually feel sad.	5.71%	27.62%	39.05%	24.76%	2.86%	105
Item 4. I get caught up in other people's feelings easily.	5.71%	42.86%	38.10%	10.48%	2.86%	105
Item 10. I often become sad when watching sad things on TV or in films.	1.90%	19.05%	21.90%	45.71%	11.43%	105
Item 14. I tend to feel scared if I am with others who are afraid.	9.52%	43.81%	34.29%	10.48%	1.90%	105
Item 16. I often get swept up in others' feelings.	6.67%	54.29%	28.57%	8.57%	1.90%	105
n						525
MEAN	5.90%	37.53%	32.38%	20.00%	4.19%	100.00%

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Table 8

Distribution of Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Five Items Corresponding to the Domain "Emotional Contagion"

Emotional Contagion (N = 105)						
Item	SD	D	NA/D	A	SA	n
Item 2. After being with someone who is sad about something, I usually feel sad.	6	29	41	26	3	105
Item 4. I get caught up in other people's feelings easily.	6	45	40	11	3	105
Item 10. I often become sad when watching sad things on TV or in films.	2	20	23	48	12	105
Item 14. I tend to feel scared if I am with others who are afraid.	10	46	36	11	2	105
Item 16. I often get swept up in others' feelings.	7	57	30	9	2	105
n	31	197	170	105	22	525

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Tables 9 and 10: Emotional Disconnection

Tables 9 and 10 represent percentage responses (Table 9), and distribution (Table 10), for the domain of emotional disconnection. Six items comprise this domain:

Item 1. Others' emotions don't affect me much.

Item 6. I don't become sad when I see other people crying.

Item 7. Other people's feelings don't bother me at all.

Item 12. Seeing a person who has been angered has no effect on my feelings.

Item 17. Others' unhappiness doesn't make me feel anything.

Item 18. I am not usually aware of others' feelings.

These six items represent 630 responses from the study group's 105 participants, each of whom completed the full LAAM and answered on the Likert scale, an identical practice for all research analyzed by domain for this study.

For the domain of emotional disconnection, “strongly disagree / disagree” responses signify a greater level of emotional connectedness, and responses aligning with “strongly agree / agree,” indicate higher emotional disconnection (and lower connectedness).

More than 70% (Table 9) ($n = 444$, Table 10) of combined responses from the six items in the domain were classified as “strongly disagree / disagree,” with the highest frequency of disagreement ($n = 97$, combined SD and D) on an individual item occurring on Item 18, “I am not usually aware of others' feelings” (Table 10).

Contrasting the relatively high number of total “strongly disagree / disagree” responses, were the 52 responses, as shown on Table 10, that contributed to the combined total of all six items for “agree / strongly agree.” Here, 8.25% of participants reflected the

group's overall percentage of responses for a high level of emotional disconnection.

Approximately one-fifth of the 630 overall responses (21.27%, $n = 134$), showed participants “neither agreed nor disagreed;” and, of this total the *single* item with the greatest number of neither-agree-nor-disagree responses ($n = 38$), was also the item with the lowest level of disagreement at 53 responses and 50.48%. This result was for Item 6, “I don’t become sad when I see other people crying.” Despite the lowest level of disagreement for an item in this domain, only 14 participants, as shown on Table 10 (13.34%, Table 9) agreed / strongly agreed with this statement.

Table 9

Mean and Percentage Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Six Items Corresponding to the Domain "Emotional Disconnection"

Emotional Disconnection (N = 105)						
Item	SD	D	NA/D	A	SA	n
Item 1. Others' emotions don't affect me much.	3.81%	50.48%	26.67%	17.14%	1.90%	105
Item 6. I don't become sad when I see other people crying.	6.67%	43.81%	36.19%	10.48%	2.86%	105
Item 7. Other people's feelings don't bother me at all.	19.05%	63.81%	15.24%	0.95%	0.95%	105
Item 12. Seeing a person who has been angered has no effect on my feelings.	8.57%	58.10%	27.62%	3.81%	1.90%	105
Item 17. Others' unhappiness doesn't make me feel anything.	8.57%	67.62%	19.05%	3.81%	0.95%	105
Item 18. I am not usually aware of others' feelings.	30.48%	61.90%	2.86%	2.86%	1.90%	105
n						630
MEAN	12.86%	57.62%	21.27%	6.51%	1.74%	100.00%

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Table 10

Distribution of Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Six Items Corresponding to the Domain "Emotional Disconnection"

Emotional Disconnection (N = 105)						
Item	SD	D	NA/D	A	SA	n
Item 1. Others' emotions don't affect me much.	4	53	28	18	2	105
Item 6. I don't become sad when I see other people crying.	7	46	38	11	3	105
Item 7. Other people's feelings don't bother me at all.	20	67	16	1	1	105
Item 12. Seeing a person who has been angered has no effect on my feelings.	9	61	29	4	2	105
Item 17. Others' unhappiness doesn't make me feel anything.	9	71	20	4	1	105
Item 18. I am not usually aware of others' feelings.	32	65	3	3	2	105
n	81	363	134	41	11	630

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

The Leadership Attributes

Data sets 11-21 show raw responses for “How You Approach Work Situations” (Instrument A) and include: Table 11 – which shares descriptive statistics for the 16 statements to which the 105 study participants responded – and Tables 12-21, which show distribution and mean percentage results by leadership attribute.

A five-point, Likert-scale, with a low score of 1 and a high score of 5, was used to gather data. Likert-scale responses included: “Strongly Disagree (1),” “Disagree (2),” “Neither Agree nor Disagree (3),” “Agree (4),” and “Strongly Agree (5).” For analysis, each of the leadership attributes was disaggregated as:

Task-oriented Leadership Attribute Items: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Relations-oriented Leadership Attribute Items: 6, 7, 8, 9

Change-oriented Leadership Attribute Items: 10, 11

Diversity-oriented Leadership Attribute Items: 12, 13

Integrity-oriented Leadership Attribute Items: 14, 15, 16

Before examining results for each attribute, a note about overall scores is appropriate. Overall scores were high, and no single leadership attribute dipped below 87% agreement.

In the combined categories of “agree / strongly agree,” for example, the attribute of diversity-oriented leadership was 87.62% (Table 14), followed (in ascending order) by change-oriented leadership (89.05%, Table 12), and relations-oriented leadership (89.29%, Table 18). The two highest mean percentages of total agreement appeared in task-oriented and integrity-oriented leadership, 89.52% (Table 20) and 93.38% (Table 16), respectively.

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics / Raw Scores by Item for “How You Approach Work Situations”

Descriptive Statistics were captured for the full empathy scale; and, this strategy was replicated for “How You Approach Work Situations,” the data for which are displayed on Table 11. Unlike the descriptive statistics shown on Table 4 (Instrument B, “How You View Yourself), however – where the per-item mean ranged from a low of 1.73 to a high of 4.83 – the lowest mean on Table 11 was 4.02 ($SD = .80$), and the highest mean was 4.83 ($SD = .38$), indicating an elevated level of overall agreement for “How You Approach Work Situations” across the study group and the instrument. As an example, a the highest-mean score of 4.83 ($SD = .38$), was noted for Item 14, “I maintain high standards of honesty and integrity,” followed by “Prohibited personnel practices (for example, illegally discriminating for or against any employee/applicant) are not tolerated,” ($M = 4.74$, $SD = .63$). Two additional high-mean items, “I know how my work relates to our faculty’s goals and priorities,” ($SD = .49$) and “I work well with faculty of different backgrounds,” ($SD = .53$) had similar means ($M = 4.68$, $M = 4.67$, respectively) but lower standard deviations than the item with the second-highest mean of 4.74.

The lowest mean (4.02) was recorded for Item 12, “My colleagues are committed to a faculty/staff representative of all segments of society.” This item exhibited the third-highest standard deviation of the group ($SD = .80$); however, preceded by Items 16 ($M = 4.21$, $SD = .93$) and 7 ($M = 4.06$, $SD = .85$), “I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule, or regulation without fear of reprisal,” and “I provide colleagues with opportunities to demonstrate their leadership skills,” respectively.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics - Population (N), Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (StD) - for "How You Approach Work Situations"

Work Situation Responses (N = 105)			
Item	N	M	StD
Item 1. I communicate the goals and priorities of our organization (for example, school, ESU, district) to others.	105	4.34	0.67
Item 2. I know how my work relates to our faculty's goals and priorities.	105	4.68	0.49
Item 3. I promote communication among different departments (for example, about projects, goals, and needed resources).	105	4.34	0.67
Item 4. I review and evaluate the organization's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives.	105	4.14	0.8
Item 5. I provide colleagues with constructive suggestions to improve their performance.	105	4.08	0.79
Item 6. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my work.	105	4.4	0.76
Item 7. I provide colleagues with opportunities to demonstrate their leadership skills.	105	4.06	0.85
Item 8. I have a feeling of personal empowerment with respect to teaching and learning.	105	4.52	0.73
Item 9. I support professional development.	105	4.7	0.57
Item 10. I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.	105	4.52	0.79
Item 11. I reward creativity and innovation.	105	4.37	0.68
Item 12. My colleagues are committed to a faculty/staff representative of all segments of society.	105	4.02	0.8

Table 11 (Continued)

Descriptive Statistics - Population (N), Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (StD) - for "How You Approach Work Situations"

Work Situation Responses (N = 105)			
Item	N	M	StD
Item 13. I work well with faculty of different backgrounds.	105	4.67	0.53
Item 14. I maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.	105	4.83	0.38
Item 15. Prohibited personnel practices (for example, illegally discriminating for or against any employee/applicant) are not tolerated.	105	4.74	0.63
Item 16. I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule or regulation without fear of reprisal.	105	4.21	0.93

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Tables 12 and 13: Change-Oriented Leadership

As shown on Tables 12 and 13, change-oriented leadership included two items, Item 10, "I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things," and Item 11, "I reward creativity and innovation." The two items represented 210 responses from 105 participants, with total disagreement (combined SD and D) only marginally represented by 3 individuals (Table 13) and 1.43% (Table 12) of the responses. The greatest number of responses ($n = 121$, Table 13) fell in the "strongly-agree" category, representing 57.62% of total responses. Nearly 10% of respondents ($n = 20$) chose "neither agree / nor disagree," and overall agreement with Items 10 and 11 (combined agree / strongly agree) was 87.62% (Table 12) or 184 of 210 responses (Table 13).

Table 12

Mean and Percentage Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Two Items Corresponding to the Attribute "Change-Oriented Leadership"

Change-Oriented Leadership (N = 105)						
Item	SD	D	NA/D	A	SA	n
Item 10. I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing	0.95%	1.90%	7.62%	22.86%	66.67%	105
Item 11. I reward creativity and innovation.	0.00%	0.00%	11.43%	40.00%	48.57%	105
n						210
MEAN	0.48%	0.95%	9.53%	31.43%	57.62%	100.00%

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Table 13

Distribution of Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Two Items Corresponding to the Attribute "Change-Oriented Leadership"

Change-Oriented Leadership (N = 105)						
Item	SD	D	NA/D	A	SA	n
Item 10. I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.	1	2	8	24	70	105
Item 11. I reward creativity and innovation.	0	0	12	42	51	105
n	1	2	20	66	121	210

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Tables 14 and 15: Diversity-Oriented Leadership

Like change-oriented leadership, diversity-oriented leadership (Tables 14 and 15) was characterized by two survey items (210 responses, Table 15) and 105 participants. The items, "My colleagues are committed to a faculty/staff representative of all segments of society" (Item 12), and "I work well with faculty of different backgrounds" (Item 13), received fewer marks in the "strongly-agree" category ($n = 103$, Table 15), when compared with change-oriented leadership, however. While overall agreement was high (87.62%, combined A and SA, Table 14), diversity-oriented leadership showed the

lowest percentage of agreement for all five leadership attributes. In this category, 10% of respondents chose “neither agree / nor disagree ($n = 21$, Table 15) and five respondents “disagreed” with Item 12, “My colleagues are committed to a faculty/staff representative of all segments of society” (Table 15). No disagreement was evidenced for Item 13, “I work well with faculty of different backgrounds.”

Table 14

Mean and Percentage Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Two Items Corresponding to the Attribute "Diversity-Oriented Leadership"

Diversity-Oriented Leadership ($N = 105$)						
Item	SD	D	NA/D	A	SA	n
Item 12. My colleagues are committed to a faculty/staff representative of all segments of society.	0.00%	4.76%	17.14%	49.52%	28.57%	105
Item 13. I work well with faculty of different backgrounds.	0.00%	0.00%	2.86%	27.62%	69.52%	105
n						210
MEAN	0.00%	2.38%	10.00%	38.57%	49.05%	100.00%

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Table 15

Distribution of Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Two Items Corresponding to the Attribute "Diversity-Oriented Leadership"

Diversity-Oriented Leadership (N = 105)						
Item	SD	D	NA/D	A	SA	n
Item 12. My colleagues are committed to a faculty/staff representative of all segments of society.	0	5	18	52	30	105
Item 13. I work well with faculty of different backgrounds.	0	0	3	29	73	105
n	0	5	21	81	103	210

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Tables 16 and 17: Integrity-Oriented Leadership

At 93.38% overall agreement (combined A and SA, Table 16), “integrity” was the survey’s highest-scored leadership attribute. Three items, 105 respondents, and 315 total responses (Tables 16 and 17) contributed to this measurement. Items included: Item 14, “I maintain high standards of honesty and integrity;” Item 15, “Prohibited personnel practices (for example, illegally discriminating for or against any employee / applicant) are not tolerated;” and, Item 16, “I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule or regulation without fear of reprisal.”

Nine respondents (Table 17) represented 2.85% of overall disagreement (Table 16) in the integrity category, while 4.76% of responses (Table 16) landed on the Likert’s midpoint, “neither agree / nor disagree.”

One-hundred-percent agreement ($n = 105$) was achieved for Item 14, “I maintain high standards of honesty and integrity,” the only item on Instrument B (the leadership-attribute survey) to achieve this level of consensus. Conversely, the item with the highest level of disagreement, “I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule or regulation without fear of reprisal,” reflected 7 participants in the “disagree / strongly disagree” categories (Table 17), or 6.66% (combined SD and D, Table 16).

Table 16

Mean and Percentage Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Three Items Corresponding to the Attribute "Integrity-Oriented Leadership"

Integrity-Oriented Leadership (<i>N</i> = 105)						
Item	SD	D	NA/D	A	SA	<i>n</i>
Item 14. I maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	17.14%	82.86%	105
Item 15. Prohibited personnel practices (for example, illegally discriminating for or against any employee/applicant) are not tolerated.	0.95%	0.95%	1.90%	15.24%	80.95%	105
Item 16. I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule or regulation without fear of reprisal.	0.95%	5.71%	12.38%	33.33%	47.62%	105
<i>n</i>						315
MEAN	0.63%	2.22%	4.76%	21.90%	70.48%	99.99%

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Table 17

Distribution of Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Four Items Corresponding to the Attribute "Integrity-Oriented Leadership"

Integrity-Oriented Leadership (N = 105)						
Item	SD	D	NA/D	A	SA	n
Item 14. I maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.	0	0	0	18	87	105
Item 15. Prohibited personnel practices (for example, illegally discriminating for or against any employee/applicant) are not tolerated.	1	1	2	16	85	105
Item 16. I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule or regulation without fear of reprisal.	1	6	13	35	50	105
n	2	7	15	69	222	315

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Tables 18 and 19: Relations-Oriented Leadership

Four items, 105 respondents and 420 responses rounded-out the relations-oriented leadership measure, as shown on Tables 18 and 19. Of this total, 89.29% of responses ($n = 375$, Table 19) appeared in the agree / strongly agree category. Relations-oriented leadership included:

Item 6. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my work.

Item 7. I provide colleagues with opportunities to demonstrate their leadership skills

Item 8. I have a feeling of personal empowerment with respect to teaching and learning.

Item 9. I support professional development.

Few overall responses were negative in this category. For example, total attribute-disagreement was 3.1% (Table 18, combined SD and D, $n = 13$); while 7.62% of overall responses (Table 18) fell at the scale's mid-range ($n = 32$, Table 19).

One item, "I support professional development," had no disagreement, as shown in both percentages (Table 18) and total counts (Table 19). On the other hand, the single item with the highest level of disagreement, at 5.71% (Table 18), was, "I provide colleagues with opportunities to demonstrate their leadership skills." Here, 6 participants (Table 19) disagreed with this statement.

Table 18

Mean and Percentage Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Four Items Corresponding to the Attribute "Relations-Oriented Leadership"

Relations-Oriented Leadership (N = 105)						
Item	SD	D	NA/D	A	SA	n
Item 6. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my work.	0.00%	3.81%	5.71%	37.14%	53.33%	105
Item 7. I provide colleagues with opportunities to demonstrate their leadership skills.	0.00%	5.71%	16.19%	44.76%	33.33%	105
Item 8. I have a feeling of personal empowerment with respect to teaching and learning.	0.95%	1.90%	2.86%	32.38%	61.90%	105
Item 9. I support professional development.	0.00%	0.00%	5.71%	18.10%	76.19%	105
n						420
MEAN	0.24%	2.86%	7.62%	33.10%	56.19%	99.99%

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Table 19

Distribution of Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Four Items Corresponding to the Attribute "Relations-Oriented Leadership"

Relations-Oriented Leadership (N = 105)						
Item	SD	D	NA/D	A	SA	n
Item 6. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my work.	0	4	6	39	56	105
Item 7. I provide colleagues with opportunities to demonstrate their leadership skills.	0	6	17	47	35	105
Item 8. I have a feeling of personal empowerment with respect to teaching and learning.	1	2	3	34	65	105
Item 9. I support professional development.	0	0	6	19	80	105
n	1	12	32	139	236	420

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Tables 20 and 21: Task-Oriented Leadership

Task-oriented leadership contained five items, the most of any leadership attribute in the study. These are:

Item 1. I communicate the goals and priorities of our organization (for example, school, ESU, district) to others.

Item 2. I know how my work relates to our faculty's goals and priorities.

Item 3. I promote communication among different departments (for example, about projects, goals, and needed resources).

Item 4. I review and evaluate the organization's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives.

Item 5. I provide colleagues with constructive suggestions to improve their performance.

One-hundred-five respondents contributed to the results, which yielded 525 responses. Of this total, 89.52% ($n = 470$, Table 21) reflected agreement. Negative responses, as shown in Tables 20 and 21 - when comparing overall totals and percentages for all five items – were minimal, with 2.47% ($n = 13$) of the sample choosing “strongly disagree / disagree.” Forty-two responses (Table 21) comprised an 8% (Table 20) response rate to “neither agree / nor disagree,” for all five task-oriented leadership items.

The greatest number of per-item responses in a single category on the five-point Likert-level-of-agreement scale was achieved by Item 2, “I know how my work relates to our faculty's goals and priorities,” with 104 study participants agreeing, as shown on Table 21.

Table 20

Mean and Percentage Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Five Items Corresponding to the Attribute "Task-Oriented Leadership"

Task-Oriented Leadership (N = 105)						
Item	SD	D	NA/D	A	SA	n
Item 1. I communicate the goals and priorities of our organization (for example, school, ESU, district) to others.	0.00%	1.90%	5.71%	48.57%	43.81%	105
Item 2. I know how my work relates to our faculty's goals and priorities.	0.00%	0.00%	0.95%	30.48%	68.57%	105
Item 3. I promote communication among different departments (for example, about projects, goals and needed resources).	0.00%	0.95%	8.57%	45.71%	44.76%	105
Item 4. I review and evaluate the organization's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives.	0.00%	3.81%	14.29%	45.71%	36.19%	105
Item 5. I provide colleagues with constructive suggestions to improve their performance.	0.00%	5.71%	10.48%	54.29%	29.52%	105
n						525
MEAN	0.00%	2.47%	8.00%	44.95%	44.57%	100.00%

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Table 21

Distribution of Responses for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure's Five Items Corresponding to the Attribute "Task-Oriented Leadership"

Task-Oriented Leadership (N = 105)						
Item	SD	D	NA/D	A	SA	n
Item 1. I communicate the goals and priorities of our organization (for example, school, ESU, district) to others.	0	2	6	51	46	105
Item 2. I know how my work relates to our faculty's goals and priorities.	0	0	1	32	72	105
Item 3. I promote communication among different departments (for example, about projects, goals and needed resources).	0	1	9	48	47	105
Item 4. I review and evaluate the organization's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives.	0	4	15	48	38	105
Item 5. I provide colleagues with constructive suggestions to improve their performance.	0	6	11	57	31	105
n	0	13	42	236	234	525

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Research Sub-question 2: What are the relationships between the three domains of empathy and the five leadership attributes?

Instrument A, “How You Approach Work Situations,” and Instrument B, “How You View Yourself,” are disparate tools administered in a single survey, the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure. While seemingly unlike, the instruments measure attitudes, attributes, and behaviors of leaders - qualities which may be relatable. This research uses geometric analyses to explain the relationships between the study’s three domains of empathy and five leadership attributes.

Tables 22-28: Cumulative Means and Representative Figure

Overview

Tables 22-28, along with Figures 5-11, examine relationships between empathic domains and leadership attributes. The empathic domains are: cognitive empathy, emotional contagion, and emotional disconnection; while, the leadership attributes include: change-oriented leadership, diversity-oriented leadership, integrity-oriented leadership, relations-oriented leadership, and task-oriented leadership.

Tables and figures for comparative relationships are presented together, and each group compares mean percentages on a low-to-high Likert scale as follows: SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5).

Tables 22-26 compare the domains of empathy with each leadership attribute, as do Figures 5-9. For example, Table 22 shows “cumulative mean responses by empathic domain and change-oriented leadership.” This means the table compares four sets of cumulative mean percentages on the five-point Likert scale. Empathic-domain

comparisons are repeated for each of the five leadership attributes on subsequent tables.

Each table has a companion figure. In the example of Table 22, the figure is a scatter plot (Figure 5), and is a graphic representation of the data on the table. For this research, scatter plots are used to examine potential relationships between empathic domains and leadership attributes.

Tables 27 and 28 follow a table-plus-scatter-plot strategy, as well; however, data for these tables are separated by domain and attribute, with Table 27 (and Figure 10) corresponding to empathic domains, and Table 28 (with companion Figure 11) illustrating leadership attributes.

Finally, Figure 12 is a hierarchal analysis (dendrogram) that summarizes data for Tables 22-28 and Figures 5-11.

Discussion

When each of the five leadership trends are separately plotted relative to empathic domains (Tables 22-26, Figures 5-9), and are then evaluated in aggregate (Table 28, Figure 11) some trends emerge. Similarly, relationships are noted in the aggregated empathic domains scatterplot shown on Figure 10.

First, cognitive empathy and each of the five leadership attributes (change-oriented, diversity-oriented, integrity-oriented, relations-oriented, and task-oriented), share the upper-right quadrant of each graph (Figures 5-9), indicating a high-level of agreement, and a consistent relationship between, the sample-group's leadership attributes and cognitive empathy.

Second, while cognitive empathy carries an over-arching theme of alignment with leadership traits throughout the data, "integrity" emerges as a high-level, stand-alone trait

(Table 28, Figure 11) among the leadership attributes themselves, echoing consistency with raw-data that revealed the LAAM's only perfect, per-item score: Instrument A, Item 14, "I maintain high standards of honesty and integrity," coded to integrity-oriented leadership (Tables 16 and 17).

Although integrity trends independently high, the remaining four leadership attributes, when graphed, separate into two groups, as shown on Table 28, Figure 11:

1. change-oriented and relations-oriented
2. diversity-oriented and task-oriented

The relationship between each of the groups (Figure 11) consolidates as the graph trends downward.

Third, Table 27 and Figure 10 share empathic domain data. Here, the relationship between emotional disconnection and emotional contagion appears on the low end of the scale, and the two traits trend together, albeit descending in mean responses, to the scale's high end.

Table 22

Cumulative Mean Responses by Empathic Domain and Change-Oriented Leadership for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure

Domains of Empathy & Change-Oriented Leadership (Participants, $N = 105$; Empathy Responses, $n = 1995$; Change Responses, $n = 210$)					
	Mean				
	SD 1	D 2	NA/D 3	A 4	SA 5
Cognitive Empathy	0.59%	1.78%	5.24%	60.95%	31.43%
Emotional Contagion	5.90%	37.53%	32.38%	20.00%	4.19%
Emotional Disconnection	12.86%	57.62%	21.27%	6.51%	1.74%
Change-Oriented Leadership	0.48%	0.95%	9.53%	31.43%	57.62%

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

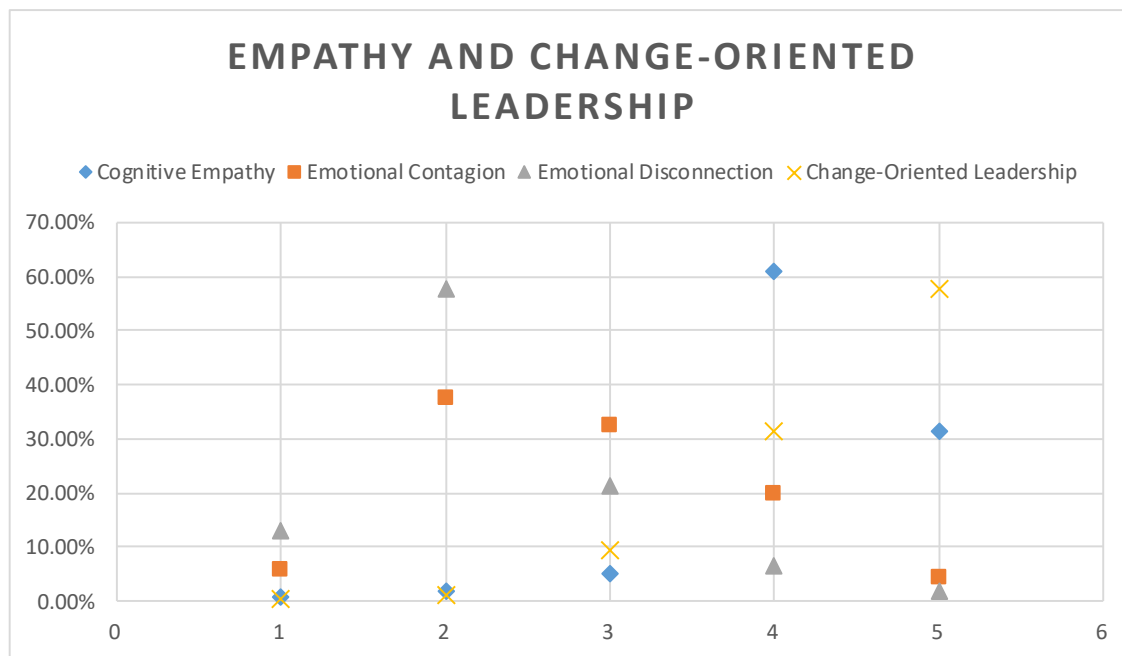


Figure 5. Empathy & Change-Oriented Leadership. This figure illustrates Table 22, comparing the mean values of the domains of empathy (cognitive empathy, emotional contagion, emotional disconnection) with the means for the attribute of change-oriented leadership.

Table 23

Cumulative Mean Responses by Empathic Domain and Diversity-Oriented Leadership for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure

	Domains of Empathy & Diversity-Oriented Leadership (Participants, $N = 105$; Empathy Responses, $n = 1995$; Diversity Responses, $n = 210$)				
	Mean				
	SD 1	D 2	NA/D 3	A 4	SA 5
Cognitive Empathy	0.59%	1.78%	5.24%	60.95%	31.43%
Emotional Contagion	5.90%	37.53%	32.38%	20.00%	4.19%
Emotional Disconnection	12.86%	57.62%	21.27%	6.51%	1.74%
Diversity-Oriented Leadership	0.00%	2.38%	10.00%	38.57%	49.05%

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

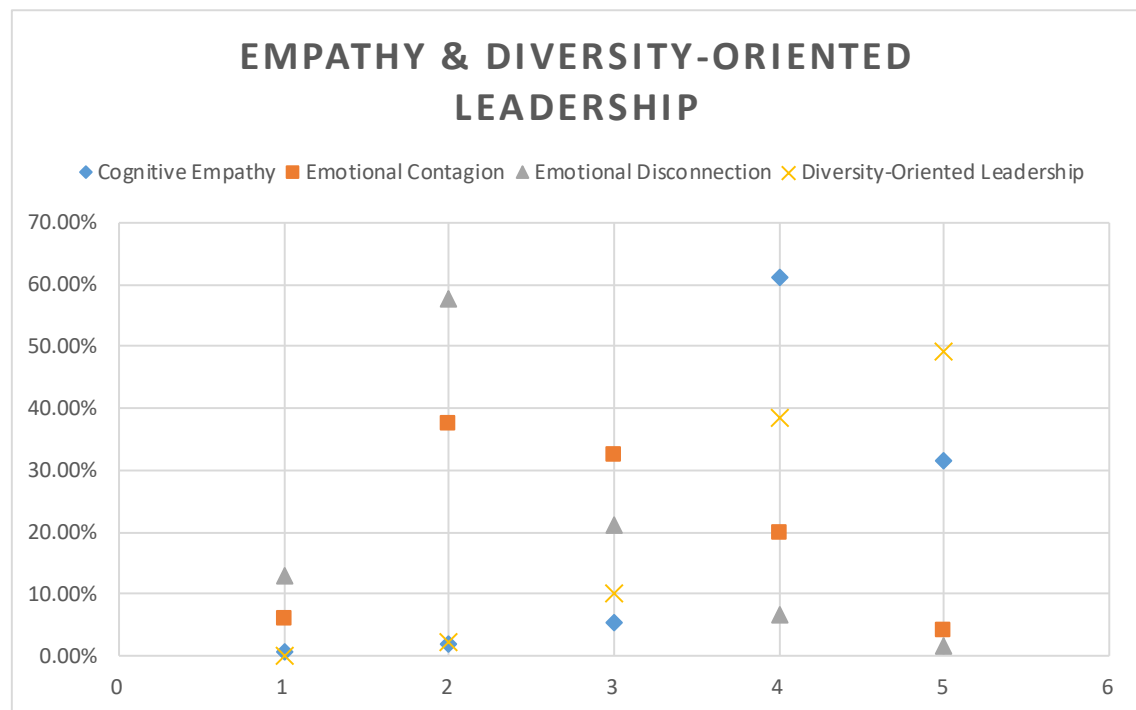


Figure 6. Empathy & Diversity-Oriented Leadership. This figure illustrates Table 23, comparing the mean values of the domains of empathy (cognitive empathy, emotional contagion, emotional disconnection) with the means for the attribute of diversity-oriented leadership.

Table 24

Cumulative Mean Responses by Empathic Domain and Integrity-Oriented Leadership for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure

Domains of Empathy & Integrity-Oriented Leadership (Participants, $N = 105$; Empathy Responses, $n = 1995$; Integrity Responses, $n = 315$)					
	Mean				
	SD 1	D 2	NA/D 3	A 4	SA 5
	1	2	3	4	5
Cognitive Empathy	0.59%	1.78%	5.24%	60.95%	31.43%
Emotional Contagion	5.90%	37.53%	32.38%	20.00%	4.19%
Emotional Disconnection	12.86%	57.62%	21.27%	6.51%	1.74%
Integrity-Oriented Leadership	0.63%	2.22%	4.76%	21.90%	70.48%

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

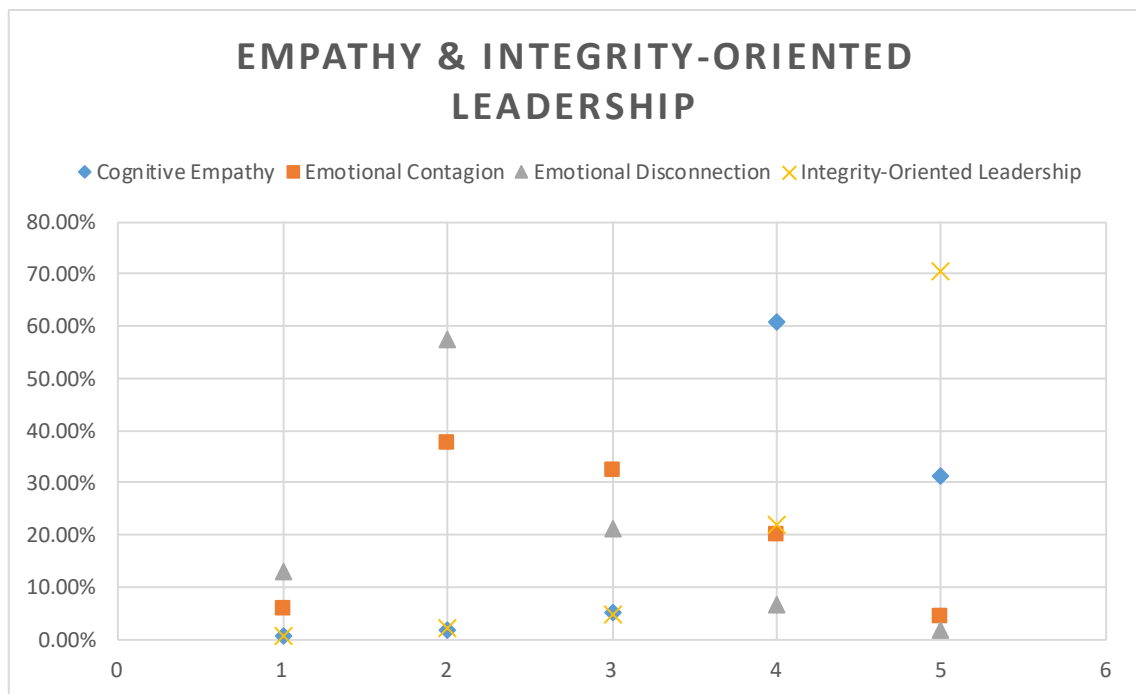


Figure 7. Empathy & Integrity-Oriented Leadership. This figure illustrates Table 24, comparing the mean values of the domains of empathy (cognitive empathy, emotional contagion, emotional disconnection) with the means for the attribute of integrity-oriented leadership.

Table 25

Cumulative Mean Responses by Empathic Domain and Relations-Oriented Leadership for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure

Domains of Empathy & Relations-Oriented Leadership (Participants, $N = 105$; Empathy Responses, $n = 1995$; Relations Responses, $n = 420$)					
	Mean				
	SD 1	D 2	NA/D 3	A 4	SA 5
Cognitive Empathy	0.59%	1.78%	5.24%	60.95%	31.43%
Emotional Contagion	5.90%	37.53%	32.38%	20.00%	4.19%
Emotional Disconnection	12.86%	57.62%	21.27%	6.51%	1.74%
Relations-Oriented Leadership	0.24%	2.86%	7.62%	33.10%	56.19%

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

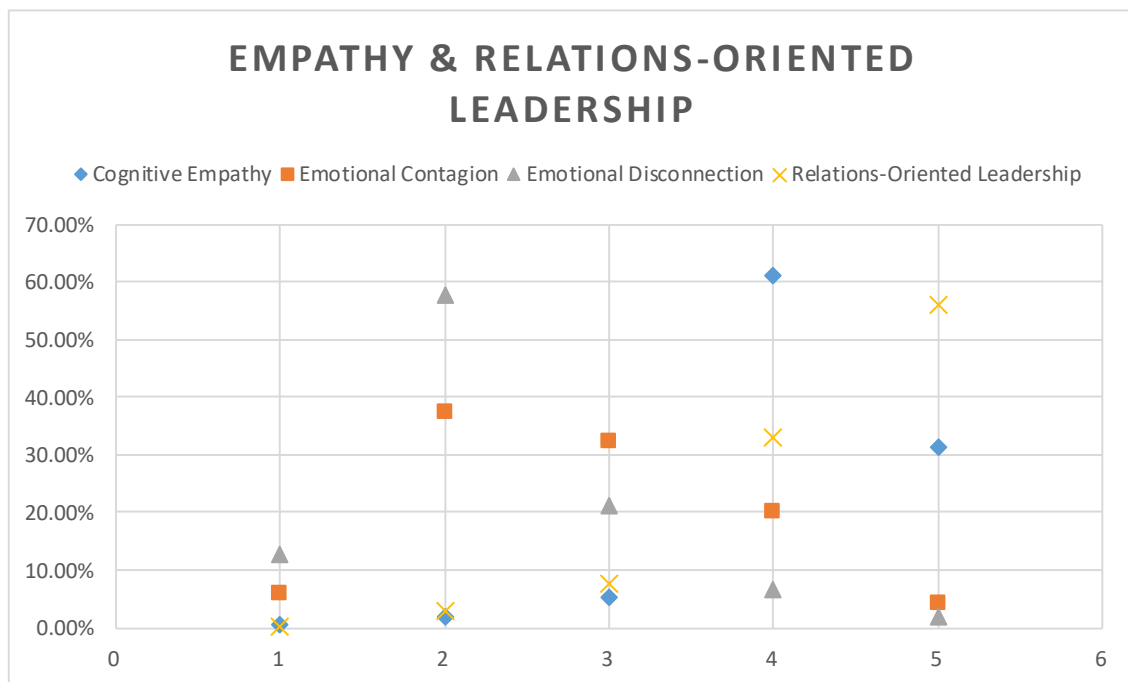


Figure 8. Empathy & Relations-Oriented Leadership. This figure illustrates Table 25, comparing the mean values of the domains of empathy (cognitive empathy, emotional contagion, emotional disconnection) with the means for the attribute of relations-oriented leadership.

Table 26

Cumulative Mean Responses by Empathic Domain and Task-Oriented Leadership for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure

Domains of Empathy & Task-Oriented Leadership (Participants, $N = 105$; Empathy Responses, $n = 1995$; Task Responses, $n = 525$)					
	Mean				
	SD 1	D 2	NA/D 3	A 4	SA 5
Cognitive Empathy	0.59%	1.78%	5.24%	60.95%	31.43%
Emotional Contagion	5.90%	37.53%	32.38%	20.00%	4.19%
Emotional Disconnection	12.86%	57.62%	21.27%	6.51%	1.74%
Task-Oriented Leadership	0.00%	2.47%	8.00%	44.95%	44.57%

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

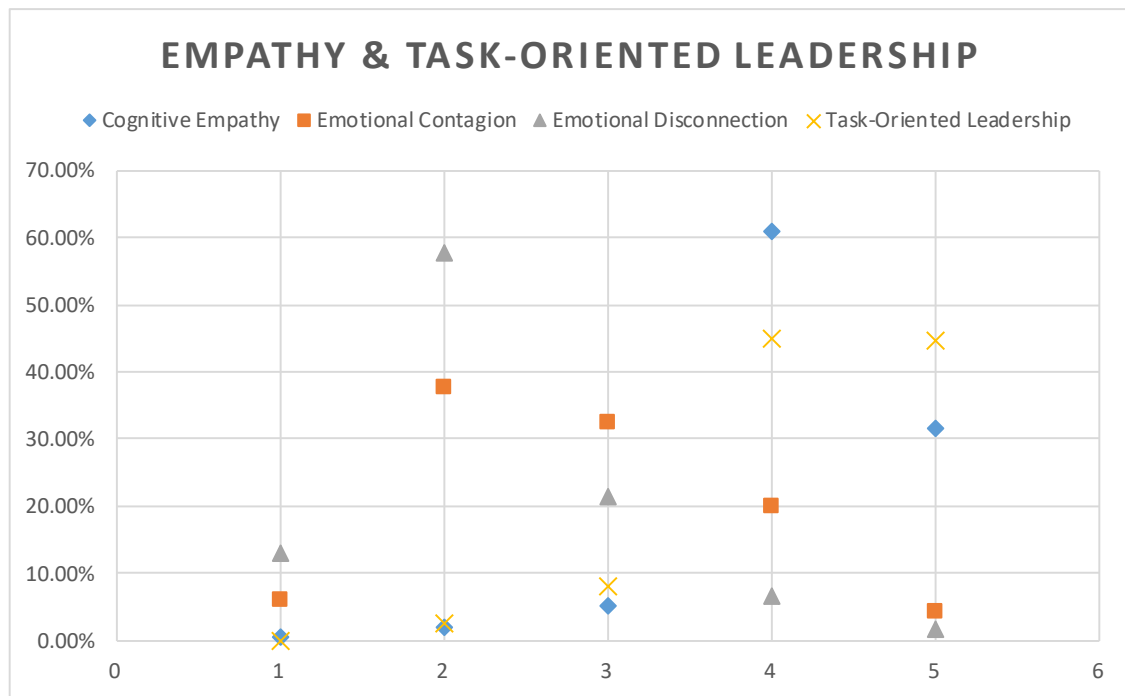


Figure 9. Empathy & Task-Oriented Leadership. This figure illustrates Table 26, comparing the mean values of the domains of empathy (cognitive empathy, emotional contagion, emotional disconnection) with the means for the attribute of task-oriented leadership.

Table 27

Cumulative Mean Responses by Empathic Domain for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure

Empathic Domains					
(Participants, $N = 105$; Total Empathic Domain Responses, $n = 1995$)					
	Mean				
	SD 1	D 2	NA/D 3	A 4	SA 5
Cognitive Empathy	0.59%	1.78%	5.24%	60.95%	31.43%
Emotional Contagion	5.90%	37.53%	32.38%	20.00%	4.19%
Emotional Disconnection	12.86%	57.62%	21.27%	6.51%	1.74%

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

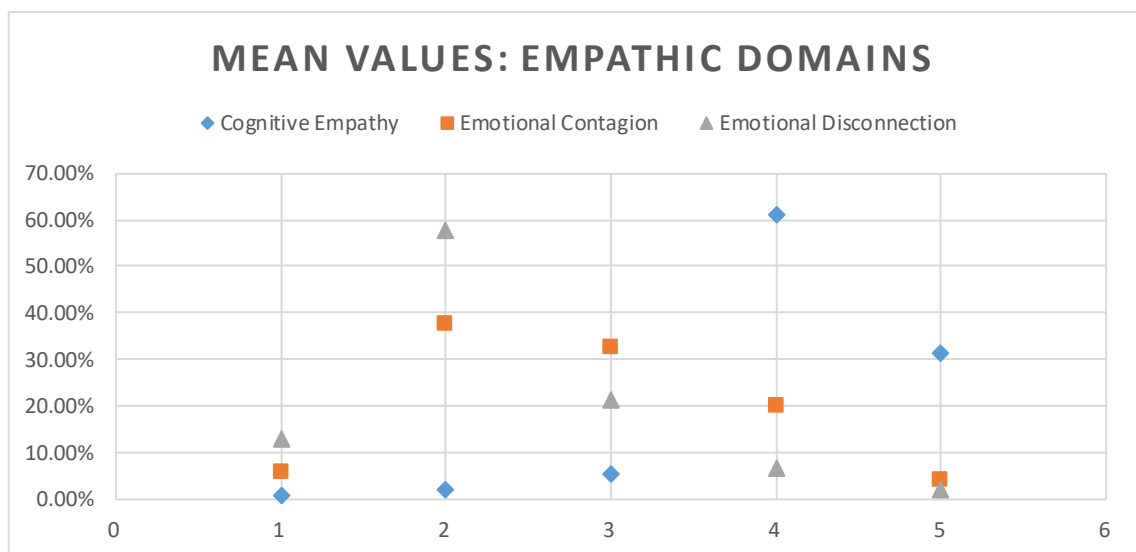


Figure 10. Mean Values: Empathic Domains. This figure illustrates Table 27, comparing the mean empathic domain values for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure.

Table 28

Cumulative Mean Responses by Leadership Attribute for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure

	Leadership Attributes				
	(Participants, $N = 105$: Total Leadership Responses, $n = 1680$)				
	Mean				
	SD 1	D 2	NA/D 3	A 4	SA 5
Task-Oriented Leadership	0.00%	2.47%	8.00%	44.95%	44.57%
Relations-Oriented Leadership	0.24%	2.86%	7.62%	33.10%	56.19%
Change-Oriented Leadership	0.48%	0.95%	9.53%	31.43%	57.62%
Diversity-Oriented Leadership	0.00%	2.38%	10.00%	38.57%	49.05%
Integrity-Oriented Leadership	0.63%	2.22%	4.76%	21.90%	70.48%

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2); NA/D = Neither Agree nor Disagree (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

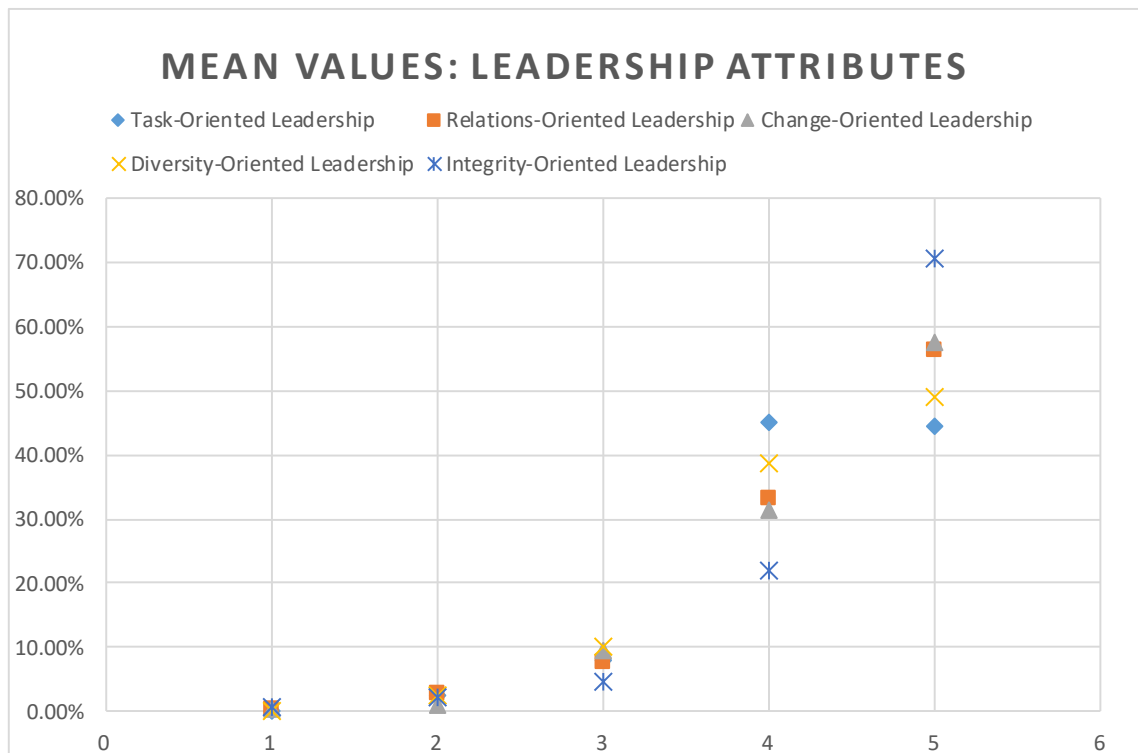


Figure 11. Mean Values: Leadership Attributes. This figure illustrates Table 28, comparing the mean leadership values for the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure.

Figure 12: Hierarchical Analysis of Empathic Domains and Leadership Trends

A hierarchical analysis, Figure 12, provides a geometric representation of the data in Tables 22-28 and in Figures 5-11. The three empathic domains, and five leadership attributes, have been separated and mapped, then regrouped to represent the status and relationship of emergent trends.

As with scatter-plot analyses (Tables 22-28), Figure 12 shows the relationship between change-oriented and relations-oriented leadership, as well as the association of diversity and task-oriented attributes. These two relationships present higher on the geometric analysis, just as they represent greater shared mean responses on Tables 22-28.

Threaded through the empathic domains and leadership attributes is the characteristic of cognitive empathy, which impacts not only emotional contagion and emotional disconnection, but also the five leadership traits.

Comparison of the scatter plots also helped clarify trends that emerged first, and these are depicted on the hierarchical analysis, as well. For example, relations and change-oriented leadership traits precede task-oriented and diversity traits in mean-percentage consensus and top-end Likert-scale agreement. Figure 12 reflects this trend, as it also reflects the emergence of emotional contagion / emotional disconnection's lower-priority relationship.

Figure 12

Hierarchical Analysis of Empathic Domains and Leadership Attributes

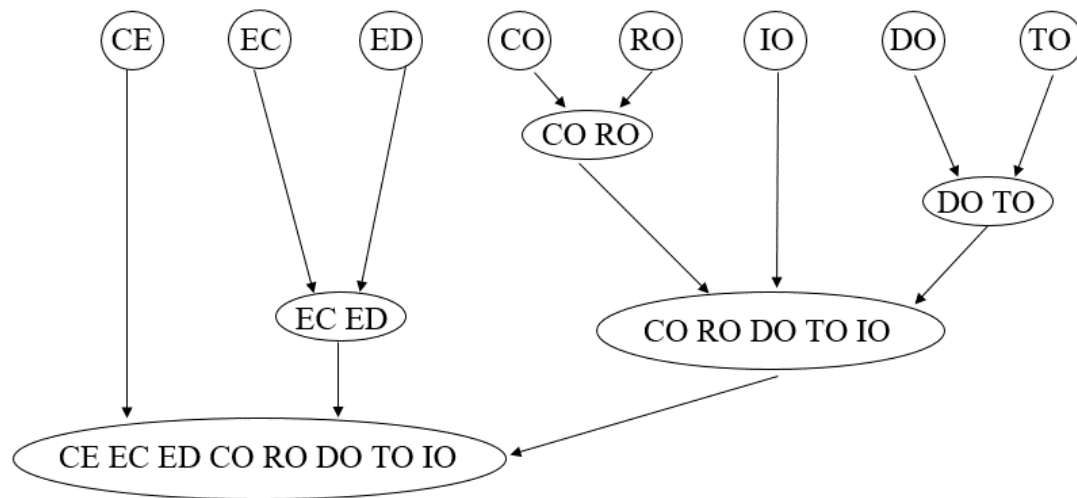


Figure 12. Hierarchical Analysis of Empathic Domains and Leadership Attributes. This figure shows the relationship between the three domains of empathy (cognitive empathy, emotional contagion, emotional disconnection) and the five leadership attributes (change-oriented, diversity-oriented, integrity-oriented, relations-oriented, task-oriented).

Note. CE = Cognitive Empathy; EC = Emotional Contagion; ED = Emotional Disconnection; CO = Change-Oriented; DO = Diversity-Oriented; TO = Task-Oriented, IO = Integrity-Oriented

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions and Discussion

This research investigated empathy in the context of leadership, and considered empathic study through the lens of neuroscientists, leaders, psychologists, and educators. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to examine the relationship between educational leaders' self-perception of empathy and to explore how attitudes relate to leadership attributes and action.

Often separated into cognitive and affective (emotional) constructs (Belacchi & Farina, 2012; Engelen & Röttger-Rössler, 2012; Reniers et al., 2011), "empathy has been inconsistently defined and inadequately measured" (Reniers et al., 2011, p. 84).

Despite disagreement in the field regarding a precise definition of empathy (Batson, 2009; Elliott, Bohart, Watson, & Greenberg, 2011; Olderbak et al., 2014), research from neuroscientists such as Jean Decety (Decety, 2011, 2015; Decety & Ickes, 2011), suggest examining empathy through three domains (cognitive, emotional contagion, emotional disconnection), rather than reflecting on the emotion's cognitive and affective traits alone (Decety & Michalska 2010), provides a more accurate portrayal of empathy's impact on behavior.

It was through this lens empathetic leadership was measured for this research, incorporating an adaptation of Arnaud Carré and colleagues' Basic Empathy Scale in Adults (Carré et al., 2013), with a modified version of Fernandez and colleagues' 2010 Integrated Leadership Measure.

Conclusions

An exploratory study, this research used descriptive statistics, and geometric, hierarchical analyses, to investigate perceptions and relationships of empathy and leadership within a group of master's and doctoral educational leadership students, most of whom were working educators; and, many of whom held administrative positions.

Research Sub-question 1 was intentionally general, calling for an overview of survey respondents' perceptions on the Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure. This included perceptions of both empathy and leadership - without hypotheses regarding potential results. Raw data from Sub-question 1 was foundational to addressing Sub-question 2, which explored relationships between the domains of empathy and leadership attributes.

Perceptions of Empathy

In general, the group scored high on cognitive empathy (92.38% agreement) and appeared to stay emotionally connected, while remaining somewhat less emotionally contagious. Mean scores in emotional disconnection, where disagreement correlated to greater emotional connectedness, reflected more than 70% disagreement. As for emotional contagion, 32.30% of responses were neutral, while 43.3% of respondents disagreed. Here, greater agreement signified greater contagion.

Although higher levels of empathy are thought to inform leadership's understanding of colleagues' needs (Chalmers Mill, 2010), no judgement was attached to the sample group's scores in emotional disconnection or emotional contagion.

For instance, educational leaders may experience situations where emotional contagion might increase collegiality and activate a sense of team – such as celebrating

an improvement in district-wide student achievement – or might be detrimental, such as leadership inaction in response to growing negative emotion around a marginalized student group needing intervention.

It is the same with emotional disconnection, which can serve as a positive attribute in times of crisis, prompting educators to make rational decisions quickly, or can lead to detached leadership and fragmented staff in environments where leadership seems to hold no one in high regard.

Supporting Comments About Empathy from Respondents

Write-in responses from the group appeared to reflect an understanding of empathy that was consistent with domain scores. For example, one respondent explained, “I have always felt very intuitive to those around me. I build relationships with staff that enable me to know quickly when something is 'not right.' I am empathetic to their feelings and feel bad for everyone's situations. However, it does not impact me in the way I help them move forward. Their goals are what drive me.”

Similarly, another said, “Being empathetic is important to me. I believe you have to constantly remind yourself to walk in another's shoes and consider their perspective prior to making decisions and leading.”

Goleman (2013) notes, cognitive empathy is essential to leaders’ successfully communicating their intentions, as well as facilitating their ability to reflect on feelings without exactly experiencing another’s emotion.

Consistent with Goleman’s outlook, the group appeared to understand empathy, in the absence of suffering impediment from the potential implications of negative emotional contagion. Said one respondent, “It is usually easy to tell how a student or

colleague is feeling, as being around them and talking to them every day, you kind of get used to their personalities, and you can tell when something is amiss or not quite right. I try not to get too caught up in negative or angry emotions, and if I do notice something is wrong, I empathize the best I can and offer whatever services I can to them. But as far as getting sad when someone around me is sad, that typically does not happen with me."

Mean scores further illustrating a general understanding of cognitive empathy appeared to echo remarks from the group. As an example, the survey item with the highest mean score, "I can understand other's happiness when they do well at something" ($M = 4.53$, $SD = .66$), may suggest the sample could appreciate others' positive emotions.

Such assurance was mirrored in respondents' written remarks, including "I am confident in my abilities to detect the feelings and emotions of others," and "In general, I don't have trouble reading other's emotions."

Perceptions of Leadership Attributes

Widespread agreement across the 16 items measuring leadership attributes offered no mean Likert-scale scores below 4.02 ($SD = .80$), suggesting the survey group was positively aligned. While all leadership responses trended high, a single attribute, integrity, outpaced all measured leadership traits (change-oriented, diversity-oriented, integrity-oriented, relations-oriented, and task oriented) for agreement among respondents: 93.38%.

High marks for the study group in both cognitive empathy and integrity seem to support Holt and Marques' (2012) research findings, ultimately suggesting a relationship between empathy and ethics – two attributes Holt and Marques assert inspire positive leadership and promote healthy work environments.

Further, the sample group's pervasive, positive response to all leadership attributes offers foundational data for examining relationships between leadership and empathy exposed by this study; and, comments from the research group appeared to also reveal relevant, authentic examples of successful workplace experiences and strategies.

Undung and de Guzman's (2014) research into Filipino school administrators' attitudes about forgiveness among errant faculty members – under the auspice that making mistakes is part of the human condition – revealed similar attitudes about empathy and leadership as the current research, where empathy and compassion appear to temper negative emotions and encouragement fosters humane responses to complex challenges.

Supporting Comments About Leadership from Respondents

High levels of agreement with leadership attributes yielded participant responses illustrating collaboration, innovation, collegiality, and success. One respondent, for example, wrote:

I feel that my administrators and colleagues are consistently encouraging myself and others to find new and better ways to accomplish our goals. This includes strategies in the classroom, ways to document data, and ways to incorporate technology into our lessons. During our last professional development day, we collaborated as a 5th grade team to find ways to incorporate more technology into our whole group reading and writing time. Our Literacy Coach and Principal were very supportive and encouraged us to try something new to engage students.

Others chose to highlight leadership and ethics – concepts consistent with Karin Lasthuizen's 2008 thesis work, which showed the important influence of ethical

leadership on integrity. While Lasthuizen admits integrity is a complex dimension, most participating in the current research (where integrity exceeded 93% agreement) seemed convicted regarding the topic. Said one respondent, “I demonstrate my commitment to ethical practice, professional dedication, and the education of youth and adults each time I work as a member of a team of like-minded people who are doing the same. I exhibit the qualities of an educational leader every day and take my role in my work and the field very seriously. Leadership isn't a once-in-a-while thing; it is every day.”

Additional themes included appreciation for an encouraging work environment (“I am always encouraged to go above and beyond in a creative and constructive manner;”) and striving to be a motivating leader (“Leadership is developing others and fostering an environment where they can excel to do what they do best. I consistently try to put those whom I supervise in positions to grow, lead, and shine”).

Considering positive cognitive empathy responses, as well as high scores in the five leadership attributes measured for this study, raises both hypotheses and questions prior to addressing potential relationships attributed to this study.

Discussion of the Raw Data

There are some important ramifications of this study that are confined by specific limitations. First, the study group was comprised of individuals who, simply by responding to a survey regarding empathy and leadership, may be characteristically more empathetic than those who declined response. As a result, scores on both the leadership and empathy scales may be elevated, calling for additional research to test reactions from a diversity of samples and a host of circumstances and backgrounds.

Second, raw data that expose trends heretofore unstudied offer opportunities to

replicate research situations, and document behaviors and relationships, that might inform practice. For example, among educational leaders with high levels of empathy, it may be beneficial to identify strategies those leaders suggest contribute to greater success, as well as create higher levels of satisfaction, and offer increased employee empowerment.

Third, considering the raw data from this research in the context of relationships is elemental to discovering how empathic behavior aligns with leadership performance, a discussion of which follows.

Relationships Between Leadership and Empathy

This research used hierarchical, geometric analyses to evaluate potential relationships between empathy and leadership, and introduced data suggesting cognitive empathy umbrellaed not only the traits of emotional contagion and emotional disconnection, but also aligned with the five measured leadership traits, positing successful, sustainable leadership may not be plausible in the absence of empathy. Although this study was considered exploratory, and appears to be one of few such studies measuring both leadership and empathy on two scales administered as a single survey, its value is in growing the body of research that might increase understanding of these important constructs.

One of the concepts that framed this research, Kettle & Mesa's Leadership Quadrants of Concern (2006), evolved from Mills College educational leadership professors who theorized their administrative students might benefit from greater levels of empathetic consideration – a supposition that positions “empathic understanding [as] foundational to leadership” (p.144).

The current research provides support for this theory, but also suggests

educational leadership students involved in the present study may already operate from a high-empathy, high-expectation-of-leadership paradigm – something that, in itself, might also be the subject of continued research. On the other hand, this discovery provides support for the leadership instruction students involved in the study are receiving in their current educational program.

Moreover, the research's attribute-based revelations – where diversity and task-oriented attributes aligned, as did change-oriented and relations traits – also offer opportunities for deeper research regarding possibilities for targeted professional development that might capitalize on these traits and lead to greater understanding of their relationship, each to the other.

To further expand understanding, the importance of empathy in educational leaders' decision-making process might also be both considered, effectively returning to the facts, values, principles and loyalties of The Potter Box, the ethical-decision-making construct that worked in synergy with Kettelle & Mesa's 2006 Leadership Quadrants of Concern in framing this research. Empathetic leaders, for instance, might approach situations involving change and relations, differently than their more pragmatic counterparts.

The Thread of Empathy

This research opened with the short story, *The Man Who Stitched the Sky*, an account of a father who balanced obligation with empathetic understanding in order to serve the greater good – a balance not unlike that practiced by effective (and reflective) educational leaders aspiring to create environments that nurture relationships and elevate others.

Goleman (2000) calls such leaders “affiliative,” and, while the present research may have opened the door for more research, it also appears to support those who lead with empathy might also lead with success.

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Appendix A
Basic Empathy Scale in Adults
BES – A

Definition of Emotional Contagion

- 2. After being with a friend who is sad about something, I usually feel sad.
- 5. I get caught up in other people's feelings easily.
- 11. I often become sad when watching sad things on TV or in films.
- 15. I tend to feel scared when I am with friends who are afraid.
- 17. I often get swept up in my friends' feelings.

Definition of Cognitive Empathy

- 3. I can understand my friend's happiness when she/he does well at something.
- 6. I find it hard to know when my friends are frightened.
- 9. When someone is feeling 'down' I can usually understand how they feel.
- 10. I can usually work out when my friends are scared.
- 12. I can often understand how people are feeling even before they tell me.
- 14. I can usually work out when people are cheerful.
- 16. I can usually realize quickly when a friend is angry.
- 20. I have trouble figuring out when my friends are happy.

Definition of Emotional Disconnection

- 1. My friends' emotions don't affect me much.
- 7. I don't become sad when I see other people crying.
- 8. Other people's feeling don't bother me at all.
- 13. Seeing a person who has been angered has no effect on my feelings.
- 18. My friend's unhappiness doesn't make me feel anything.
- 19. I am not usually aware of my friends' feelings.

Carré, A., Stefaniak, N., D'Ambrosio, F., Bensalah, L., & Besche-Richard, C. (2013). Basic Empathy Scale in Adults [Database record]. Retrieved from PsycTESTS. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/t29511-000>

Appendix B

Integrated Leadership Measure

Task-oriented leadership role

- I1. Managers communicate the goals and priorities of the organization.
- I2. I know how my work relates to the agency's goals and priorities.
- I3. Managers promote communication among different work units (for example, about projects, goals, and needed resources).
- I4. Managers review and evaluate the organization's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives.
- I5. Supervisors/team leaders provide employees with constructive suggestions to improve their job performance.

Relations-oriented leadership role

- I6. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my organization.
- I7. Supervisors/team leaders in my work unit provide employees with the opportunities to demonstrate their leadership skills.
- I8. Employees have a feeling of personal empowerment with respect to work processes.
- I9. Supervisors/team leaders in my work unit support employee development.

Change-oriented leadership role

- I10. I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.
- I11. Creativity and innovation are rewarded.

Diversity-oriented leadership role

- I12. Supervisors/team leaders in my work unit are committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society.
- I13. Managers/supervisors/team leaders work well with employees of different backgrounds.

Integrity-oriented leadership role

- I14. My organization's leaders maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.
- I15. Prohibited Personnel Practices (for example, illegally discriminating for or against any employee/applicant, obstructing a person's right to compete for employment, knowingly violating veterans' preference requirements) are not tolerated.
- I16. I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule or regulation without fear of reprisal.

Response Categories: All survey items have responses ranging either from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree or 1 = Very Dissatisfied to 5 = Very Satisfied

Source: 2006 Federal Human Capital Survey, U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

Fernandez, S., Cho, Y. J., & Perry, J. L. (2010). Integrated Leadership Measure [Database record]. Retrieved from PsycTESTS. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/t11599-000>

Appendix C

Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure

University of Nebraska - Omaha
Department of Educational Leadership
Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure

Date: 2017

IRB #: 088-17-EX

Purpose: This brief (five-to-seven-minute) survey is designed to help us understand your perceptions and actions as an educational leader. Your responses will be masked and given an ID number, which will be used to compare data during your enrollment in the Educational Leadership program at the University of Nebraska - Omaha. This will allow us to evaluate how our program impacts students.

Private and Voluntary Participation: All data collected in this survey will be kept in the strictest confidence. No individual names will be reported in any report and only group information will be described. Individuals have the full right to participate or not participate in the survey as desired.

Survey Coordinated by: This survey is being coordinated by the University of Nebraska at Omaha Department of Educational Leadership. For information related to this survey, please contact:

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Tell Us About Yourself

Program of Study in Which You Are Enrolled

Master's

Doctoral

Years in Education

Current Position**

If "Other" was selected above, please describe.

** "Current Position" means, "The position with which you most often identify when responding to questions about work and self."

About The Survey

The statements below reflect educational work experiences, practices and objectives. Section 1 reflects perceptions regarding professional experiences. Section 2 reflects perceptions about yourself.

Rank your level of agreement with each statement in both sections.

Note: Educational leaders serve in many different capacities and locations. For this research, the universal word "organization" is used to represent classrooms, schools, educational service units, and district offices in Section 1.

As you respond, please use "organization" to mean the location/role in which you personally most often serve. For example, an elementary school principal's "organization" is the school.

These statements relate to how you approach work situations.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I communicate the goals and priorities of our organization (for example, school, ESU, district) to others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know how my work relates to our faculty's goals and priorities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I promote communication among different departments (for example, about projects, goals and needed resources).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I review and evaluate the organization's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I provide colleagues with constructive suggestions to improve their performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I provide colleagues with opportunities to demonstrate their leadership skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a feeling of personal empowerment with respect to teaching and learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I support professional development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.

☐☐☐☐☐

I reward creativity and innovation.

☐☐☐☐☐

My colleagues are committed to a faculty/staff representative of all segments of society.

☐☐☐☐☐

I work well with faculty of different backgrounds.

☐☐☐☐☐

I maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.

☐☐☐☐☐

Prohibited personnel practices (for example, illegally discriminating for or against any employee/applicant) are not tolerated.

☐☐☐☐☐

I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule or regulation without fear of reprisal.

☐☐☐☐☐

Share an example of an experience that supports one of the statements above.

These statements relate to how you view yourself.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Others' emotions don't affect me much.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
After being with someone who is sad about something, I usually feel sad.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can understand others' happiness when they do well at something.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get caught up in other people's feelings easily.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find it hard to know when my friends are frightened.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I don't become sad when I see other people crying.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other people's feelings don't bother me at all.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When someone is feeling "down" I can usually understand how that individual feels.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can usually recognize when others are scared.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I often become sad when watching sad things on TV or in films.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I can often understand how people are feeling even before they tell me.

☐☐☐☐☐

Seeing a person who has been angered has no effect on my feelings.

☐☐☐☐☐

I can usually recognize when people are cheerful.

☐☐☐☐☐

I tend to feel scared if I am with others who are afraid.

☐☐☐☐☐

I can usually realize quickly when someone is angry.

☐☐☐☐☐

I often get swept up in others' feelings.

☐☐☐☐☐

Others' unhappiness doesn't make me feel anything.

☐☐☐☐☐

I am not usually aware of others' feelings.

☐☐☐☐☐

I have trouble figuring out when other people are happy.

☐☐☐☐☐

Share an example of an experience that supports one of the statements above.

Appendix D

Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure Email Greeting from Educational Leadership Department Chair

IRB # 088-17-EX

Dear Educational Leadership Candidate,

The Department of Educational Leadership collects input from students during and after their work at UNO in order to better understand your needs and track trends in our programs. We also use information you provide us to share and publish research on the field of preparing educational leaders.

We would be pleased if you would complete a survey of your leadership perceptions this week.

The survey on empathy and leadership traits will only be studied as a group—no one will identify you with your answers. More information is at the beginning of the survey.

If you have questions, please call or email me. Thank you for your help in this important research.

Follow this link to the Survey:

[\\${l://SurveyLink?d=Take the survey}](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

[\\${l://SurveyURL}](#)

Kay A. Keiser, Ed.D.
Chair, Educational Leadership
kkeiser@unomaha.edu
402-554-3443

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[Click here to unsubscribe](#)

Appendix E

Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measure Follow-up Email Greeting from Educational Leadership Department Chair

IRB # 088-17-EX

Feedback Reminder - Survey Closing Tomorrow:

The Department of Educational Leadership values your insight. Please review my email of March 1 (below), where you are invited to provide feedback on empathy and leadership traits. We very much appreciate your time and consideration in completing this seven-minute research instrument. Please note: The survey link will close tomorrow, Wednesday, March 8, 2017 at 11:59 p.m.

Dear Educational Leadership Candidate,

The Department of Educational Leadership collects input from students during and after their work at UNO in order to better understand your needs and track trends in our programs. We also use information you provide us to share and publish research on the field of preparing educational leaders.

We would be pleased if you would complete a survey of your leadership perceptions this week.

The survey on empathy and leadership traits will only be studied as a group—no one will identify you with your answers. More information is at the beginning of the survey.

If you have questions, please call or email me. Thank you for your help in this important research.

Follow this link to the Survey:

[Take the survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

https://unomaha.az1.qualtrics.com/SE?Q_DL=3qKmQIZnjFUT0vr_6fJeK5AFn8ftp3v_MLRP_0qv2oc0blQ9zbeZ&Q_CHL=email

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Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[Click here to unsubscribe](#)

Appendix F

Scoring the LAAM

Explanation

The Leadership Actions and Attitudes Measurement (LAAM) consists of two, five-point Likert-scale instruments:

1. Instrument A, “How You Approach Work Situations” and
2. Instrument B, “How You View Yourself”

Opportunities for respondents to free-write are available on the instrument, as well.

Scoring

Instrument A: “How you Approach Work Situations”

- Five-point, Likert-scale: low score of 1, high score of 5
- Likert-scale responses: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither Agree nor Disagree (3), Agree (4), and Strongly Agree (5).
- Leadership attributes are disaggregated as:
 - Task-oriented Leadership Attribute Items: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 - Relations-oriented Leadership Attribute Items: 6, 7, 8, 9
 - Change-oriented Leadership Attribute Items: 10, 11
 - Diversity-oriented Leadership Attribute Items: 12, 13
 - Integrity-oriented Leadership Attribute Items: 14, 15, 16

Instrument B: “How you View Yourself”

- Five-point, Likert-scale: Low score of 1, high score of 5

- Likert-scale responses: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither Agree nor Disagree (3), Agree (4), and Strongly Agree (5)
- The LAAM empathic domains and query numbers are:

- Cognitive Empathy Items: 3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 19

Items 5 and 19 are REVERSE SCORED. Therefore, a strong level of disagreement equates to a high level of cognitive empathy for statements 5 and 19 only. Averages and total scores for group cognitive empathy can be accurately calculated AFTER reversing items 5 and 19.

*For the domain "Cognitive Empathy," **high scores** (including those following reversal) indicate a **high level** of cognitive empathy.*

- Emotional Contagion Items: 2, 4, 10, 14, 16

*The **greater the level of agreement** with each item, the **more emotionally contagious** the respondent (or group of respondents)*

*The **higher the level of disagreement** with an item, the **lower the level of emotional contagion***

No judgement is attached to either a high or low score.

- Emotional Disconnection Items: 1, 6, 7, 12, 17, 18

*The **greater the level of disagreement**, the **greater the level of emotional connectedness***

*The **greater the level of agreement** the **higher the level of emotional disconnection** (and lower connectedness)*

No judgement is attached to either a high or low score.