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Women, Emotional Labor, and Higher Education Administration: A Qualitative Interview Study

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WOMEN, EMOTIONAL LABOR, AND HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION: A QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW STUDY

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Almi Rodriguez

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To: Dean Michael R. Heithaus
College of Arts, Sciences and Education

This dissertation, written by Almi Rodriguez, and entitled Women, Emotional Labor, and Higher Education Administration: A Qualitative Interview Study, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this dissertation and recommend that it be approved.

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Date of Defense: June 13, 2019

The dissertation of Almi Rodriguez is approved.

Dean Michael R. Heithaus
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Andrés G. Gil
Vice President for Research and Economic Development
And Dean of the University Graduate School

Florida International University, 2019

DEDICATION

I want to begin by first dedicating this work to my life partner and husband, Danny. You have been a motivating force in my life since we first met. I love and admire you deeply. Without your unrelenting support throughout this process, none of this would have been possible. Thank you for loving me the way you do, and for always encouraging me to grow personally and professionally.

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And when the time comes, what would you like to be remembered for?
Someone who used whatever talent she had to do her work to the very best of her ability.

-Notorious R.B.G.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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by

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Florida International University, 2019

Miami, Florida

Professor Benjamin Baez, Major Professor

Emotional labor is not a gender-specific experience. Hochschild (1983) estimated that roughly one-third of American workers encounter substantial emotional labor demands as a result of their occupation. However, my study examined women's experiences with emotional labor in higher education because women face different expectations of emotional management (Wharton & Erickson, 1993; Hochschild, 1983). Emotions are situated within larger, gendered, and sexualized hierarchies that are reinforced through normalizing discourses and social arrangements that dictate what is normal (Illouz, 2007). Furthermore, power relations shape emotions through sometimes unseen, yet repetitious disciplinary techniques (i.e., emotional norms) that make up the patriarchy; particularly in organizational structures, which are not gender neutral (Acker, 1990). Thus, norms, such as emotions, that shape and encode our society deserve our attention, research, and criticality.

The present study provides a platform to recognize and acknowledge the ways in which participants experience and understand emotional labor within the workplace of higher education administration. Two semi-structured, in-depth interviews were

conducted with 12 women higher education administrators about their experiences and understandings of emotional labor. Interview transcripts were analyzed to identify salient and emergent themes.

The results of the present study show that participant's experiences and understandings of emotional labor are contextualized within their work environment and culture, which emphasizes power and privilege through degrees, ranks, and hierarchies. Hierarchies are made explicit in highly politicized places where emotional labor is necessary to appear as rational. Further, participants conceptualized emotional labor as part of their performance of professionalism and leadership, which points to the commodification of emotions and behaviors as part of employment. Finally, through the embodiment of the organization, findings demonstrate the gendered nature of the participant's work environment by acknowledging the way their institution privileges behavior rooted in masculine concepts such as emotion-less rationality. Implications include the acknowledgment of traditionally invisible work and the highlighting of gender relations within this work environment.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As a female employee and scholar negotiating the hyper-masculinized corporate university, there are certain things required of me -- particularly, the idea that I will be friendly, cordial, and handle even the biggest bureaucratic issues with a smile. Bureaucracy is rampant in higher education, and we are often required to suppress feelings to maintain civil engagement as we face what Woodward (2008) describes as bureaucratic rage. Despite the bureaucracy and the rage it produces, the expectation is that employees will conduct themselves in a particular way–a way that serves institutional interests at the expense of employees. Specifically, I am referring to emotional labor. Emotional labor manifests itself in many ways, though we can define this term as the managing of emotions at work and as part of one's job performance (Hochschild, 1983). For the present study, the workplace is institutions of higher education, and the population I am referencing is women administrators.

Higher education is a space where objective and rational thinking is privileged over emotions, yet emotional labor is increasingly important in the corporate university. Emotional labor, for the current study, is defined as "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display" specifically, as part of employment (Hochschild, 1983, p.7). Hochschild (1983) originally discussed emotional labor in the context of worker and customer relations. The present study, though, examines emotional labor in a broader context than one limited to customer relations. Pugliesi (1999) explains, "Emotional labor is often narrowly defined in terms of interactions with customers and workers' efforts to manage their own emotions. Such narrow

conceptualizations belie the multidimensionality of emotional labor as revealed in empirical studies" (p. 129). As such, I examined emotional labor outside of customer relations to provide a deeper understanding of emotional labor in higher education administration.

Emotional labor is not a gender-specific experience. Hochschild (1983) estimated that roughly one-third of American workers encounter substantial emotional labor demands as a result of their occupation. However, the present study examines women's experiences in higher education because women face different expectations of emotional management (Wharton & Erickson, 1993; Hochschild, 1983). Emotions are uniquely situated within gendered and sexualized hierarchies in organizations through moral and social arrangements that dictate what is normal. Williams (2016) explains that "the drive to conform to our surroundings to whatever we know as 'normal' is a powerful force – convention in many ways is more powerful than reason, and customs in some instances are more powerful than law" (p. 6). Thus norms, such as emotions, that shape and encode our society deserve our attention, research, and criticality.

My study was undertaken to contribute to the growing literature on emotional labor by expanding the theoretical concept of emotional labor into higher education administration. The work empirically examines how women administrators understand and experience emotional labor within their work environment of higher education to provide recognition and acknowledgment of the ways in which participants experience and understand this traditionally *invisible* labor. Finally, through this study, I hope to discuss and analyze how gender relations manifest within the work environment of higher education.

Statement of the Problem

Power relations shape emotions through sometimes unseen, yet repetitious disciplinary techniques (i.e., emotional norms) that make up the patriarchy, particularly in organizational structures, which are not gender neutral (Acker, 1990, p. 139). By examining emotions critically in the higher education workplace, we can understand the implications of emotions as they relate to an institution which values *perceived* rationality over emotionality. I use the word perceived purposefully, as emotions "are an integral and inseparable part of everyday organizational life" (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995, p. 98). Therefore, we can argue that emotions often guide what we may perceive as a strictly rational decision. Beatty (2000) demonstrates the link between emotional control, rationality, and organizational life:

> Emotions are political. The hierarchical relationship between reason and emotion has particular implications for life in organizations—for leaders and for followers—in that it is often played out as one of mutual exclusion. Power positions in the hierarchy are ritually reasserted through strict emotional control and suppression—the maintenance of an exclusively and dominatingly rational appearance. The notion that, optimally, saner heads prevail and that sane is synonymous with unemotional is reenacted continually. However, this may be the antithesis of the way people are really feeling. Thus, the display of rational "sanity" that is held to be synonymous with control, may actually belie emotional insanities, or indicate incongruities that can function as valuable indicators of the need for change in an organization (p. 334).

This quote is significant, as Beatty (2000) maintains that reason is not free from emotions. Notably, Beatty states that the mind continually moves between thinking and feeling; therefore, the exclusion of emotions among traditional educational administration literature is "limiting and distorts our theoretical understanding of human experience" (p.

334). Emotions can no longer be seen as subordinate or insignificant if we want to fully explore the ways in which administrators *are* and the ways in which they *can be* (p. 334).

To further the argument of the importance of examining emotions within organizations, Vigoda-Gadot, E., and Meisler, G. (2010) explain that

> Current writings place a great deal of value on the wisdom of the mind as representative of rational thinking and systematic order. . .It is the mind that seems to be the ultimate ruler. . .almost no attention is devoted to the role of the heart. It is the heart that goes beyond rationality, representing the feelings and emotions that play an essential part in administrative reality (p. 81).

Therefore, since feelings and emotions play an essential part in administrative reality, examining how they present themselves through emotional labor can help us understand some of the underlying social constructs that guide behaviors in higher education.

The University in Ruins as an Emotional Endeavor

Readings (1996) describes the modern university as an institution whose social role is up for grabs. The university is changing in a way we cannot ignore, as it is no longer a producer, protector, and inculcator of the idea of national culture; it is in "ruins." The aspect of these ruins that I wish to explore is the idea of excellence and the universities' relentless chase towards it. The chase has led us to the corporate university "whose functions (products?) is the granting of degrees with a cultural cachet, but whose overall nature is corporate rather than cultural" (Readings, 1996, p. 11). Corporate logic encourages students to see themselves as customers and faculty and administrators to assume a corporate identity. The corporate culture that feeds the corporate identity is short-sighted and rarely analyzes its effect on society. Giroux (2002) explains that "it is clear that advocates of neoliberalism, in their drive to create wealth for a limited few,

have no incentives for taking care of basic social needs" (p. 440). Giroux (2002) is referencing the welfare state and state-protected safety nets. However, I argue this extends to the most basic human interactions, including emotions.

As the corporate culture continues to infiltrate the university, faculty and administrators must justify themselves in terms of performance and return on capital (Readings, 1996). The corporate culture calls "for people to either surrender or narrow their capacities for engaged politics in exchange for market-based values, relationships, and identities" (Giroux, 2002, p. 426). To do so, as I will discuss, employees must normalize their feelings and engage in emotional labor. Giroux (2002) asserts that "market forces have radically altered the language we use in both representing and evaluating human behavior and action" (p. 426). The point I am trying to make is that the corporate universities' logic not only impacts the educational community at large but administrators as well. Specifically, the universities logic impacts employees emotions, as the corporate logic values rationality over emotionality. Therefore, employees must manage emotions in a way that serves institutional interests at the expense of employees. As Constanti and Gibbs (2004) found when studying emotional labor in higher education that "the implication is not necessarily of equality or mutual benefit, but of satisfaction for the customer and profit for the management" (p. 248). Therefore, studying emotional labor in higher education administration is important as it allows us to understand how employees understand and experience this phenomenon.

Within the university setting, an informal economy exists (Bousquet, 2008). As Bousquet declares: "advanced economies require the emergence of informality within themselves" (p. 66) Bousquet is careful when examining the informal labor economy of

the university as he does not want to make analogies between university workers and migrant workers or compare financial relations between universities and sweatshops. Rather, Bousquet is "pointing primarily to the actual legal and social confusion regarding the workplace status of the most visible and even traditional members of the academic workforce" (p. 67). Here, Bousquet is referencing those within the professoriate. Despite the palpable contention between the professoriate and administration in his book, I would extend Bousquet's argument about the informal economy of the university into administrative matters. Therefore, I would like to highlight the presence of emotional labor as part of the informal labor economy in higher education administration. The informal labor sector is not easy to define but is essential to acknowledge as part of the current study because it provides a place for us to situate emotional labor within the massive machinery that is higher education.

Emotions are situated within larger gendered and sexualized hierarchies, which are reinforced through normalizing discourses. Foucault (1966) explains that "within a given culture, there occur the normalization of the broad biological functions, the rules that render possible or obligatory all the forms of exchange, production, and consumption" (p. 377). Therefore, what is normal is rewarded and what is seen as pathological based on the prescribed rules of society, or an institution, is punished. In general, when an institution produces a hierarchical norm, a delinquent is formed. Illouz (2007) best explains the arrangements in which emotions are situated in this excerpt from her book, which I feel deserves to be quoted at length:

> Emotions have another cardinal importance for sociology: much of social arrangements are also emotional arrangements. It is trivial to say that the most fundamental division and distinction organizing more societies

> around the world – that between men and women – is based on (and reproduces itself through) emotional cultures. To be a man of character requires one to display courage, cool-headed rationality, and disciplined aggressiveness. Femininity on the other hand demands kindness, compassion and cheerfulness. The social hierarchy produced by gender divisions contains implicit emotional divisions, without which men and women would not reproduce their roles and identities. And these divisions in turn produce emotional hierarchies, whereby cool-headed rationality is usually deemed more reliable, objective, and professional than, say, compassion. For example, the ideal of objectivity which dominates our conception of the news or of (blind) justice, presupposes each male practice and model of emotional self-control. Emotions are thus organized hierarchically and this type of emotional hierarchy in turn implicitly organizes moral and social arrangements (p. 2).

Illouz (2007) is pointing out that emotions are not just psychological concepts, but they are also essential parts of cultural and social relationships. Therefore, emotions are key to understanding social relationships within the corporate university.

Women must navigate the social and hegemonic relationships in the corporate university differently than men. As a result, women are differently situated in hierarchies, depending on the social norms of their organization. Through these hierarchies, emotional labor becomes necessary to give the appearance of rational decision-making. Therefore, the increasingly corporate and bureaucratic nature of the university is an appropriate venue to study emotional labor, as neoliberal ideology further solidifies the expectation that has employees assume a subjectivity amenable to the corporate culture that ignores basic social needs, such as emotion. Emotional labor is necessary for the corporate university but is often ignored and seen as commonsensical. It is often expected, though not explicitly compensated or evaluated.

Theoretical Concept

The major theoretical concept that undergirds my study is emotional labor. Emotional labor has varied in definitions across the literature. Some researchers have conceptualized emotional labor as the display of appropriate emotion (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993); others have focused on what is performed during job-related interactions (Kruml and Geddes, 1990); and others have defined it as the regulation of feelings to meet organizational roles (Grandey, 2000). As I will explore, researchers vary on their definitions, yet they all stem from Arlie Hochschild's (1983) original work, which is why I have chosen to use Hochschild's definition to frame my understanding of emotional labor. Emotional labor, for this study, is defined as "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display;" specifically, as part of employment (Hochschild, 1983, p.7). Furthermore, researchers have built upon Hochschild's (1983) original conceptualizations of the dimensions of emotional labor. Hochschild (1983) originally discussed surface and deep acting, but scholars have since further defined the dimensionality of emotional labor. Researchers have employed both qualitative and quantitative measures in their quests to understand emotional labor. I will further explore these theoretical concepts and strategies in the next chapter.

Before beginning to review the literature on emotional labor, I will briefly address how emotional labor might be understood in relation to traditional conceptualizations of labor. To do so, I will use labor as understood by Karl Marx (1867). Marx explains that labor exists in all societies and further explains that the "capacity for labour is to be understood [as] the aggregate of those mental and physical capabilities existing in a human being, which he exercises whenever he produces a use value of any description"

(Marx, 1867, p. 116). As Callahan and McCollum (2002) explain that the use of the term "emotional labor…is appropriate only when emotion work is exchanged for something such as a wage or some other type of valued compensation" (p. 221). That is, to use the term emotional *labor* there must be exchange-value. As such, not all emotions are considered labor, only those exchanged for value. Hochschild (1983) further demonstrates: "I use the term emotional labor to mean the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labor is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value" (p. 7). Callahan and McCollum (2002) and Hochschild (1983) maintain that emotional labor has exchange-value and is therefore considered labor as understood by Marx (1867).

The need to justify emotional labor through economic understandings of labor is indicative of the ways in which the neoliberal academy values the management of human emotion as work. Nevertheless, for the purpose of my study, emotional labor can be understood in the traditional sense of labor as described by Marx but is also conceptualized by a participant in my study as in childbirth. Therefore, the "labor" in emotional labor can be understood in in both economic and non-economic terms.

Statement of Purpose

My study aims to contribute to the literature on emotional labor by extending what is known into higher education administration as experienced by women. Further, as I will describe in more detail in the literature review, emotional labor is a complex and intricate human experience which can also be situational and individual. Nevertheless, studying emotional labor is necessary as "such insights could be used to help leaders consider the sort of emotional labor that is expected of members within the organization

they lead" (Gonzales and Rincones, 2013, p. 14). Therefore, I conducted this qualitative interview study to provide rich descriptions of emotional labor and the various ways in which it operates and manifests within the participant's work environment.

The purpose of my study is to understand how women experience and understand emotional labor within their work environments. I chose to study women at Florida International University (FIU) because of my close ties to the institution as well as a personal connection and interest in this particular population. As Van Manen (2016) describes, there is a benefit to "understanding it 'from the inside'" (p. 8). Additionally, studying lived experiences, such as emotional labor, allows us to gain "a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences" (Van Manen, 2016, p. 8). Therefore, to study how women in higher education administration experience and understand emotional labor in their work environments, I utilized a human research design that employed qualitative interviews. I interviewed twelve women administrators using semi-structured interviews as informed by Seidman (2013). Utilizing the theoretical framework of emotional labor as defined by Hochschild (1983), interview transcripts were coded and analyzed by me for salient themes and phrases. Once the final themes were identified, I was able to organize my findings to answer the research question in my study.

Research Question

The purpose of the qualitative interview study is to examine emotional labor as perceived by women in higher education administration through various social relations in one organization's context. The following singular research question is answered by

this study: How do women in higher education administration understand and experience emotional labor in their work environments?

Statement of Significance

For my study, I built upon Hochshild's (1983) original concept. As such, customer relations were not the focus of my study. Rather, I explored the emotional labor necessary to dwell within an institution whose traditional values have been replaced by corporate bureaucracy. Studying the role of emotional labor within higher education administration can allow for a meaningful understanding of the whole human experience within a space that traditionally ignores such experiences. The silence around emotional labor is telling in that it reveals assumptions around emotions and higher education administration. That is, emotions are often taken for granted and may be seen as "common sense" in hegemonic relationships. Therefore, my study is significant as it provides a platform to recognize and acknowledge the ways in which participants experience and understand emotional labor within the workplace of higher education administration.

By making explicit, particularly, how women understand and experience emotional labor in their work environment, I hope to provide an avenue to discuss and analyze the often-ignored emotional nature of higher education and the gender structures governing it. These discussions and analysis should also serve as a platform for highlighting how gender relations manifest within the work environment of higher education. Utilizing my study as a catalyst, I hope to open the doors for conversations and increase social consciousness on the impact and role of emotional labor in the field of higher education administration.

Assumptions and Delimitations

As with any research study, there are certain assumptions and delimitations that I attended to as I attempted to address the problems presented in this dissertation. To begin, I assumed the honesty of my participants as they described to me the ways in which they understand and experience emotional labor. I did not assume that my participants knew the definition of emotional labor, but I did assume that they would have an understanding of the concept once we spoke, and I guided our conversation through the theoretical lens provided by Hochschild (1983). Therefore, I remained aware of the definition of emotional labor as provided by Hochschild (1983) as I spoke with participants to make sure we were always talking about the same concept.

Regarding delimitations, the population presented in this study is limited. I interviewed twelve as part of this interview study, and this study is not meant to be representative of any population. Further, this study only focused on women's experiences with emotional labor because women are often faced with different expectations of emotional management (Wharton & Erickson, 1993; Hochschild, 1983). However, men may have provided different perspectives on emotional labor had they been interviewed. These assumptions and limitations are necessary to highlight as they can impact what I can infer from this study.

Summary of Chapter

In Chapter 1, I discussed the power relations present within organizational structures. These power relations shape how employees perceive the impact of emotions on decision making. That is, even though emotions can be seen as undesirable, they are often an integral part of organizational life and administrative reality. I then discussed

higher education as an increasingly corporate space that privileges objective and rational thinking over emotions. The description of higher education as an increasingly corporate entity is important as it highlights how corporate logic encourages employees to assume a corporate identity that often ignores basic human interactions such as emotion. Emotions, as I argued, are situated within hierarchies that dictate what is seen as "normal." To continue, I discussed the theoretical concept that guided this study, emotional labor. I then defined emotional labor in both economic and non-economic terms.

To provide context on how I framed this work, I presented this study's single research question, which is centered around the understanding and experience of emotional labor by women in higher education administration. I gave the purpose statement which summarized how I addressed the problem. Following this, I described this study's significance and explain the implications of this study. Implications include the acknowledgment of traditionally "invisible" work, providing an avenue via this study for discussions and analysis of emotional labor, and highlighting gender relations within this work environment. Chapter 2 reviews literature pertaining to emotional labor, emotions, professionalism, and leadership as it relates to emotions.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The literature review should serve to situate my study within the extant body of literature. I organize the literature review into four distinct parts. To begin, I review various literature on emotional labor, which includes definitions, dimensions, and studies on emotional labor. The section "On Emotions," examines the literature relating to emotions and includes the sociology of emotions, dramaturgical theories, hedonic principles, emotional contagion, and mimicry. Next, I review literature that provides insight into the role emotions play in professionalism and leadership. Finally, I end this chapter with a review of literature on women in higher education administration, providing a general overview of how women are discussed in relation to higher education administration historically and currently, and I also highlight the gendered nature of organizations.

Emotional Labor Overview

> *Emotional labor…is the work, for which you're paid, which centrally involves trying to feel the right feeling for the job. . .Some jobs require a lot of it, some a little of it. . .The point is that while you may also be doing physical labor and mental labor, you are crucially being hired and monitored for your capacity to manage and produce a feeling*
>
> -Arlie Hochschild, 2018 (in Beck, 2018)

The phrase "emotional labor" was first introduced by sociologist Arlie Hochschild in 1983 in her book *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. In her book, Hochschild discusses the relational, rather than task-based, aspects of work. Hochschild (1983) paints a vivid picture of emotional labor by utilizing the traditionally highly feminized occupation of flight attendants. An advertisement jingle says: "our

smiles are not just painted on" (p. 19), indicating that there is a deeper extension of the professional smile that extends into the flight attendant's actual feelings. Hochschild (1983) defines emotional labor as one that

> Requires one to introduce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind – in this case, the sense of being cared for in a convivial and safe space. This kind of labor calls for a coordination of mind and feeling, and it sometimes draws on a source of self that we honor as deep and integral to our individuality (p. 20).

Essentially, Hochschild (1983) maintains that emotional labor requires us to act in a way that is different from what one actually feels.

Gender enters Hochschild's (1983) argument when she explains how gender shapes social interactions. She describes that women have less access to money, power, authority, and status in society and are in a "subordinate social stratum" (p. 45). The "subordinate social stratum," Hochschild suggests, has four consequences. First, women turn feelings into resources and offer it to men in return for material resources they lack. Second, men and women "specialize" in emotional labor differently; therefore, socially assigned tasks of aggression go to men, and "being nice" is assigned to women. Third, the subordination of women in general leaves the individual woman with a weaker "status shield." Therefore, women often face the displaced feelings of others, and men are often called to handle the aggression towards them. Finally, gendered differences create the potential for commercial exploitation of emotions.

Overall, women and men experience emotion work differently. Hochschild (1983) claims that women do more emotional work than men, and "since the well-managed feeling has an outside resemblance to spontaneous feeling, it is possible to confuse the

condition of being more 'easily affected by emotion' with the action of willfully managing emotion when the occasion calls for it" (p. 46). Though a problematic and potentially dated argument, Hochschild (1983) further remarks that women manage feelings more than men because (in general) they depend on men for money, and one way to repay their debt is to do more emotional work. Through being "nice," women demonstrate deference. While almost everyone demonstrates deference, Hochschild (1983) maintains that women are expected to do more than men.

The literature supports linking the hierarchies of gender and race when examining emotion work (Mirchandani, 2003; Evans & Moore, 2015). Mirchandani noted that racialized dimensions of emotion work are excluded in much of the literature. As she explains, the debates on emotion work have normalized whiteness with the reliance on racially homogenous samples in empirical studies and with the assumption that workers are white. Evans and Moore found that people of color experience unequal distribution of emotional labor as they negotiate everyday racial micro-aggressions and dominant ideologies that deny the importance of race and racism. Acker (1999) further supports this by explaining that "a woman who is Black (White), Spanish (English) speaking and a doctor (waitress), does not experience herself in disjointed segments of gender, race, ethnicity, and class; rather, all these elements are produced and reproduced within the same every day experiencing of her life" (p. 51). Therefore, I account for race and ethnicity in emotional labor when mentioned by participants.

Defining Emotional Labor

Researchers have varied in their conceptual definition of emotional labor. Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) define emotional labor as "the displaying of the

appropriate emotion (i.e., conforming with a display rule)" (p. 90). Rather than focusing on the experience of emotion, they focus on behavior. Ashforth and Humphrey justify their definition by explaining that (a) the behavior that is displayed is what is observed and directly affects service recipients, and (b) some may display emotions without having to "manage" feelings. Morris and Feldman (1996) define emotional labor as "the effort, planning, and control needed to express organizationally desired emotion during interpersonal interaction" (p. 987). Kruml and Geddes (2000) define emotional labor as "what employees perform when they are required to feel, or at least project the appearance of, certain emotions as they engage in job-relevant interactions" (p. 9). Grandey (2000) defines emotional labor as "the process of regulating both feelings and expressions for the organizational goals" (p.97). These iterations of Hochschild's original term demonstrate that varying researchers conceptualize emotional labor differently. Emotional labor, for my study, is defined as "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display" specifically as part of employment (Hochschild, 1983, p.7). I chose this definition as researchers' subsequent definitions have all stemmed from Hochschild's. Since I am not looking to re-define the term, Hochschild's definition of emotional labor is appropriate, as it was the first and original definition.

The term emotional labor has made several appearances in the media. Most recently, Gemma Hartley wrote a Harper's Bazaar article about emotional labor titled, "Women Aren't Nags – We're Just Fed Up" (Hartley, 2017). Hartley's article received a great deal of media attention, so she wrote a book titled *Fed Up: Emotional Labor, Women, and the Way Forward* (Hartley, 2018). In these publications, Hartley (2017,

2018) discussed emotional labor in relation to housework, domestic management, and mental burden. To clarify her original definition, Hochschild interviewed with Julie Beck (2018), a reporter from The Atlantic. Hartley's interview is significant because of its recent timing, and it provides a unique opportunity for clarification of the definition of emotional labor directly from Hochschild. Hochschild in Beck's interview spoke about the misconception of the term and restated her definition of emotional labor:

> Emotional labor, as I introduced the term in *The Managed Heart*, is the work, for which you're paid, which centrally involves trying to feel the right feeling for the job. This involves evoking and suppressing feelings. Some jobs require a lot of it, some a little of it. From the flight attendant whose job it is to be nicer than natural to the bill collector whose job it is to be, if necessary, harsher than natural, there are a variety of jobs that call for this. Teachers, nursing-home attendants, and child-care workers are examples. The point is that while you may also be doing physical labor and mental labor, you are crucially being hired and monitored for your capacity to manage and produce a feeling (Hochschild in Beck, 2018).

The recent clarification from Hochschild (in Beck, 2018) is significant, and we should pay close attention to its implications. As part of the interview, Beck (2018) asked Hochschild a compelling question which fits into various narratives provided by participants in my study. Below is an excerpt from the interview:

> *Beck*: I'm going to dig into this one just slightly more. This is something that people talk about a lot. There's a sort of internalized expectation for women in the workplace that they not be too assertive, not too threatening to men, or just play nicely with others. Is that internalized expectation, and the forming of yourself to fit that expectation, emotional labor?
>
> *Hochschild*: I love attention to this, but we need to be precise about it. If in the course of asserting yourself you find that you are having to brace yourself against imagined criticisms, or people are looking disapproving and you realize your job may be in jeopardy, all of that bracing and anticipation and experience of anxiety I would count as yes, emotional labor. But it's not welded into the task itself (Hochschild in Beck, 2018).

Hartley's interview provides us insight into Hochschild's conceptualizations of emotional labor more than 30 years after her initial landmark publication. In the interview, Hochschild (in Beck, 2018) provides clarification on her definition of emotional labor to include the anxiety-inducing internalized expectations women experience.

Dimensions of Emotional Labor

Dimensions are important to understand when creating a study to examine emotional labor. Dimensions add depth and complexity to our understanding of emotional labor. That is, emotional labor is not just a generalized phenomenon, which is either present or not. Instead, it can be present or not in different ways, and frequencies. Researchers agree, when studying emotional labor, that it is essential to encompass multiple dimensions (Pugliesi, 1999; Morris & Feldman, 1996, 1997; Hochschild, 1983).

According to the literature, emotional labor is a multi-dimensional construct, which means it manifests in different ways and can be measured along these varying dimensions. Hochschild (1983) originally described emotional labor along the dimensions of surface acting and deep acting. Surface acting includes hiding or faking felt emotions, and deep acting involves trying to experience the desired emotion. Since her original work, others have argued that emotional labor is more than just surface and deep acting. For example, Morris and Feldman (1996) identify four dimensions of emotional labor: "(a) Frequency of appropriate displays, (b) attentiveness to required display rules, (c) variety of emotions required to be displayed, and (d) emotional dissonance generated as a result of having to express organizationally desired emotions not genuinely felt" (p. 987). Other dimensions of emotions include the intensity of emotions, duration of interaction (Morris and Feldman, 1997), and emotive effort and

emotive dissonance (Kruml and Geddes, 2000). Pugliesi's (1999) study focused on emotion management as a consequence of emotional labor. Pugliesi (1999) measured emotion management along two dimensions, specifically self-focused and other-focused emotion management. What is interesting to note about Pugliesi's study is that not only does emotional labor have dimensions, but the consequences, or ripple effects, of emotional labor also have dimensions, which indicates that emotional labor is an extremely complex and intricate phenomenon. Therefore, my study empirically examines and analyzes how women administrators understand and experience emotional labor within their work environment of higher education to provide rich descriptions of emotional labor and the various ways in which it operates and manifests within this work environment. I will discuss the descriptions that elucidate emotional labor as experienced and understood by the participants of this study in Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7.

Emotional Labor Studies

Higher education scholarship often attends to values, ethics, and lived experiences in the workforce. However, the literature on emotions in higher education as it relates to the working lives of university employees is limited (Woods, 2010). As Woods (2010) explains, in "approaches to researching the working lives of university employees, the emotional dimension of working life is almost invariably *implied*, rather than being the main focus" (p. 172). Additionally, support staff, or administration, are rarely researched (Woods, 2010). The words "staff" and "academics" are often conflated and used synonymously, almost as if no other category of employees exists within the university setting. My study aims to study staff and administrators separate from academics. As Woods (2010) points out,

> In conferring status and resources, income and life chances, workplaces can be very significant emotional arenas. And because those in regular employment typically spend so much of their time doing work and at work, the workplace potentially represents a significant source of pain, pleasure, frustration and fulfillment. Yet emotion at work is a relatively new field of study and is one that suffers from difficulties in reconciling different bodies of knowledge and research tradition (p. 172).

My qualitative interview study of higher education administrators in their workplace studies the emotional aspect of labor through Hochschild's (1983) concept of emotional labor.

Following her call for emotion research in the workplace of higher education, Woods (2012) employed Q methodology to do just that. The Q methodology investigates participant perspectives by having them rank and sort relevant items according to a set of criteria. For example, the researcher gives participants statements and asks participants to rank the statements in order of how much they agree or disagree with them. By asking participants to rank, rather than rate, Q methodology requires participants to engage with items on a granular, non-superficial scale, since they must place items in relation to each other (Woods, 2012). In her study, Woods (2012) invited 100 university administrators to participate in the study, and she acquired 27 sorts. In Wood's study, Q methodology was successful in yielding data about the emotional tone of working lives. The author found that there is no recipe or template for an ideal work environment. Rather, Woods explains that there is a need to understand and harness the various commitments of employees in higher education workplaces, as human responses to similar circumstances can vary.

Gonzales and Rincones (2013) build upon the effort of Woods (2010, 2012) by focusing on positional leaders. Gonzales and Rincones (2013) offer insight into emotional labor with their study by exploring emotional labor in higher education administration.

The authors claim that research on emotional labor in universities is almost entirely absent in the literature (Gonzales and Rincones, 2013). Gonzales and Rincones (2013) examine one department chair at a doctoral granting university using participatory action research (PAR) and photo methods to highlight the importance of emotions in a field where rationality is privileged over emotionality. Gonzales and Rincones's research project included a single participant and co-researcher. Some consider this to be a limitation; however, given the research question and topic, I see this as a strength that expands educational methodology. The methodology employed in Gonzales and Ricones's research study helped to explore the multidimensionality of emotional labor via an in-depth study of one administrator. Gonzales and Rincones's (2013) study has served as a catalyst for my study. The authors state that "we hope that others move forward with such innovative methods, particularly in the higher education and education-related fields, where methods and approaches remain lodged in traditional, post-positivist conceptions of knowledge" (p. 14). The author's findings suggest incorporating emotional labor into higher education leadership coursework. Furthermore, their findings provide insight into the emotional toll leaders endure.

Gonzales and Rincones (2013) were able to explore the multidimensionality of emotional labor. Similarly, yet markedly different, Kruml and Geddes (2000) conducted an empirical study to identify dimensions of emotional labor. Their research identified the dimensions of emotive effort and emotive dissonance. Kruml and Geddes's study was the first to identify emotive effort as a dimension of emotional labor. Kruml and Geddes (2000) worked to develop a valid and reliable scale for emotional labor research. The authors claim that an empirical expansion of Hochschild's (1983) original work through

quantitative data would strengthen support of Hochschild's work. Kruml and Geddes's study offers a means to measure emotional labor through exploratory questionnaires. The authors utilized Hochschild's (1983) work and semi-structured interviews to generate a survey containing 63 items. The researchers distributed 539 surveys to service workers, and 358 were returned. The authors made several significant findings, including consequences of emotional labor (such as burnout), the effects of emotional contagion, the effects of age on the display of appropriate emotions, and the influence of being authentic on workplace dissonance. Kruml and Geddes (2000) suggest the expansion of the emotional labor realm to workers who deal with mostly internal customers, such as managers. My study answers this call by exploring emotional labor outside of customer relations. However, Kruml and Geddes's (2000) study utilized quantitative methods, which are not appropriate for my study, as research on lived experiences is best suited to qualitative methods (van Manen, 2016, p. 17).

Kruml and Geddes's (2000) study identified the specific dimensions and consequences of emotional labor. Pugliesi (1999), though, conducted a study via surveys to measure the consequences of emotional labor on workers. Pugliesi collected data derived from a survey sent to all employees of a mid-sized public university in the United States. Pugliesi's study mainly focuses on the detrimental effects of emotional labor. The author found that emotional labor has uniformly negative effects on workers, specifically in the areas of increased job stress perception, decreased satisfaction, and increased distress. Conversely, in her chapter, "Can Emotional Labor be Fun?" Hochschild (2013) argues that one can enjoy emotional labor. Hochschild (2013) indicates that employees can even take pride in their emotional work. Pugliesi (1999) argues conversely that all

instances of emotional labor are negative. Pugliesi (1999) conducted her study solely through surveys, which may have skewed the results to produce only negative aspects of emotional labor. The questions asked were about psychological distress, and some appear to be potentially leading. For example, questions included: "my position involves too much work to do everything well," and "I have to be nice to people no matter how they treat me" (p. 153). Therefore, the methodology employed in Pugliesi's study is limited and could have benefited from a qualitative component.

Tying in the concepts of identification and measurement, Morris and Feldman (1997) conducted a landmark study on emotional labor that identified a three-component conceptualization of the phenomenon. The three components include frequency of emotional labor, duration of emotional labor, and the experience of emotional dissonance from having to express emotions that one may not actually feel. Furthermore, the authors identified organizational, and job characteristics that predict emotional labor, and they explored the implications of emotional labor on employee wellbeing. The study by Morris and Feldman (1997) is often cited, alongside Hochschild's (1983) in emotional labor studies, because they have both provided significant contributions to the growing literature on emotional labor.

Before their 1997 study, Morris and Feldman (1996) wrote about the dimensions, antecedents, and consequences of emotional labor. Building upon their previous work, their 1997 study was conducted via a questionnaire with 562 respondents from debt collection agencies, members of a military recruiting battalion, and members of a state nursing association. Through their questionnaire, they measured emotional labor, antecedents of emotional labor, and consequences of emotional labor. Antecedents of

emotional labor include organizational characteristics, job characteristics, individual differences, and dimensions of emotional labor. The authors found that organizations should have flexibility in allowing employees to display emotions, and organizations should hire people whose expressive style matches the display norms of the organization. A methodology limitation includes the sole utilization of a questionnaire assessment to measure emotional experiences. The authors recognize that the study could have benefited from additional data collection sources. Morris and Feldman suggest expanding emotional labor studies to a wide variety of occupations.

The literature reviewed on emotional labor demonstrates that the conceptualizations, definitions, and understandings of emotional labor can vary. Moreover, dimensionality is often discussed as an essential concept to studying emotional labor. Researchers have utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods to measure and understand emotional labor. My study employs an interview method, as it will provide for an understanding of emotional labor from a qualitative perspective. Woods (2010, 2012) and Gonzales and Rincones (2013) advocate for exploring higher education as a workplace using innovative methodology. Specifically, Woods (2010) cites the "untapped potential of emotion research" (p. 171). Gonzales and Rincones (2013) call explicitly for the use of innovative methods in higher education. Overall, the literature supports further exploration of emotional labor in higher education.

On Emotions

> *A key component of work performed by many workers has been the presentation of emotions that are specified and desired by their organizations.*
>
> – Morris and Feldman, 1996, p. 987

To understand emotional labor, we should have a basic understanding of emotions. The current section provides a context for what emotions are, as well as some of the sociology behind emotions that can help us understand why participants engage in emotional labor. That is, to understand how women who are higher education administrators understand and experience emotional labor, we should try and explore what emotions *are*. Describing what emotions *are* is complex. However, theorists agree that emotions include experiential feeling, some physiological change, and include behavioral aspects (Mann, 1999, p. 353). Goleman (1996) explained:

> I take *emotion* to refer to a feeling and its distinctive thoughts, psychological and biological states, and the range of propensities to act. There are hundreds of emotions, along with their blends, variations, mutations, and nuances. Indeed, there are many more subtleties of emotion than we have words for (p. 550).

Goleman (1996) explains that researchers still contest primary emotions or if there are any primary emotions at all. Theorists suggest basic families of emotion, though they do not all agree on them.

Theorists would probably agree, nevertheless, that emotional "packages" include various components. These components include "conscious awareness; facial, vocal, and postural expression; neurophysiological and autonomic nervous system (ANS) activity; and instrumental behaviors" (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1993, p. 96). Goleman (1999) argued that the main families of emotions include anger, sadness, fear, enjoyment,

love, surprise, disgust, and shame. Here, Goleman (1999) presents a more detailed look at emotions:

> *Anger*: fury, outrage, resentment, wrath, exasperation, indignation, vexation, acrimony, animosity, extreme, pathological hatred and violence
> *Sadness*: grief, sorrow, cheerlessness, gloom, melancholy, self-pity, loneliness, dejection, despair, and, when pathological, severe depression
> *Fear*: anxiety, apprehension, nervousness, concern, consternation, misgiving, wariness, qualm, edginess, dread, fright, terror; as a psychopathology, phobia and panic
> *Enjoyment*: happiness, joy, relief, contentment, bliss, delight, amusement, pride, sensual pleasure, thrill, rapture, gratification, satisfaction, euphoria, whimsy, ecstasy, and at the far edge, mania
> *Love*: acceptance, friendliness, trust, kindness, affinity, devotion, adoration, infatuation, agape
> *Surprise*: shock, astonishment, amazement, wonder
> *Disgust*: contempt, disdain, scorn, abhorrence, aversion, distaste, revulsion
> *Shame*: guilt, embarrassment, chagrin, remorse, humiliation, regret, mortification, and contrition (p. 551).

The above list is not all-encompassing of human emotions. Nevertheless, understanding different emotions is vital for my study, as participants often experienced a range of emotions that could not always be easily classified or managed. Emotional labor is the managing of emotions in the workplace, and with such varied human emotions capturing the essence of emotionality can be complicated.

The sociology of emotions emerged during the last decades of the twentieth century, and the social construction of emotions is generally accepted among sociologists who study emotions (Turner & Stets, 2006, p. 25). As Kemper (1990) clearly stated, "emotions are socially constructed" (p. 16). Kemper maintains that emotions are not biologically-guided natural phenomena. Rather, he explains, emotions "are amenable to social direction, enhancement, and suppression" (p. 16). Kemper also indicates that the social construction of emotions is accomplished through norms which inform individuals

on how to act and which emotions to express in situations (p. 16). Kemper further explained that the social constructivist position on emotions put forward the idea that emotions can be managed which means that when a deviant emotion is expressed or experienced, individuals who are aware of the social norms can modify their emotional experience to fit the norm (p. 16). Therefore, emotions are not just shaped by culture, but they are also shaped by the social contexts in which we express them. We can connect the social construction of emotions to emotional labor by acknowledging that the social construction of norms guides the performance of emotional labor.

Turner and Stets (2006) discussed dramaturgical theories that explain how individuals present and engage with actions guided by cultural scripts (p. 26). The authors demonstrate that cultural scripts are informed by ideologies, norms and rules, logics, vocabularies, and stocks of knowledge that dictate which feelings should be expressed and experienced (p. 26). Individuals, or actors, must then present themselves in strategic ways, only demonstrating emotions dictated by emotional rules and ideologies. Dramaturgical theories further explain that individuals must manage any incongruities between what they actually feel and what is appropriate to display. As Turner and Stets explain:

> The emotion culture constrains the actions of individuals on a stage in front of audiences, and yet individuals do have some degree of flexibility to engage in strategic actions. In fact, they often use emotionally laden expressive behavior in efforts to manipulate audiences about their sincerity and concern, to extract valued resources in games of microeconomics, or to gain power over others in games of micropolitics. Yet, these same actors are often caught in a conflict between feeling ideologies and rules on the one side and their actual feelings on the other. As a result, they must engage in emotion-work strategies to reduce the degree of discrepancy between feelings and feeling rules (p. 27).

Turner and Stets maintain that dramaturgical theories highlight the importance of defining which appropriate emotions should be experienced and demonstrated in situations. These broad generalizations can serve as a framework for understanding how and why individuals modify their emotions when operating in spaces with emotional norms, such as a workplace.

Demonstrating emotions in the workplace can be beneficial. Planalp (1999) recognizes that "emotion is what gives communication life. A conversation between emotionally involved partners is bright and lively, but a meeting without feeling is deadly dull" (p. 10). Further, Planalp maintains that in many cultures, there is tension between spontaneous and controlled communication that is guided by display rules of appropriate and inappropriate emotional expression (p. 17). Therefore, emotional labor, or emotion regulation and appropriate emotional displays are not unique to one group of people or any specific organization. Further, Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) found a causal link between emotional displays and organizational outcomes (p. 34). Researchers found that the ability to display appropriate emotions in organizational life is important for building relationships, work achievement, and job enrichment (Staw, Sutton, Pelled, 1994, p. 51). For example, some participants of my study choose to engage in emotional labor because they are following appropriate emotional displays in hopes of favorable outcomes, something which I will explain in greater detail in Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7.

Staw, Sutton, and Pelled (1994) sought to study empirically the broad consequences and outcomes of attitudes in the workplace. The authors proposed that "employees who feel and display positive emotion on the job will experience positive outcomes in their work roles" (Staw, Sutton & Pelled, 1994, p. 51). Through multiple

methods, including face-to-face interviews and field observations, the authors yielded results that supported their hypotheses. Staw, Sutton, and Pelled (1994) demonstrated that employees who had positive emotions while working had more favorable supervisor evaluations, higher pay, and greater social support from their supervisors and coworkers (p. 63). The authors proposed going beyond traditional measures of job satisfaction to predict individual outcomes and suggested expanding research on the consequences of emotions within the workplace (p. 64). Employees do engage in emotional labor because they understand that demonstrating positivity can lead to increased pay, support, and favorable evaluations.

Engaging in emotional labor can be conceptualized as more than just managing emotions, and to expand on this idea, I present a basic hedonic principle that explains that people are motivated to pursue pleasure and avoid pain (Higgins, 1998). The hedonic principle can help us to understand the motivation behind the need, or perceived need, to engage in emotional labor. Higgins (1998) asserts that the hedonic principle is a central principle across all research, from the biological to the social. The author describes ways in which this hedonic principle operates and explains that we regulate pain and pleasure based on motivation. These motivations can have a major impact on people's feelings, thoughts, and actions (Higgins, 1998, p. 2). Higgins (1998) further argues that hedonic principles operate with a *promotion* focus or *prevention* focus. A *promotion* focus is concerned with advancement, growth, and accomplishment, whereas a *prevention* focus focuses on following rules and guidelines. The motivation focus can help us understand why individuals engage in emotional labor during interactions. Participants of my study described engaging in emotional labor for various reasons, which can stem from either a

promotion or *prevention* focus. The conceptualization of emotional labor as hedonic- and motivation-focused can help us understand the underlying motivations behind performing emotional labor within higher education administration. Specifically, we can analyze participant motivations empirically to discover how women in higher education administration understand and experience emotional labor.

When discussing emotions and emotional labor, the concept of emotional contagion can help us understand how collective emotions can occur via emotional contagion. Emotional contagion is defined as "the tendency to automatically mimic and synchronize expressions, vocalizations, postures, and movements with those of another person's and consequently, to converge emotionally" (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1992, pp. 153-154). According to Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson, there has been attention paid to the role collective emotion makes on organizational processes as well on everyday social interactions. Since the 1700s, researchers have collected evidence to show that people tend to imitate the emotional expressions of others. Infants mimic emotional facial expressions almost immediately after birth and continue to do so throughout their lives. Further, social psychophysiologists have found that mimicking the facial expressions of others can be almost instantaneous. Evidence suggests that such facial and emotional mimicry is likely unconscious as a result of the speed in which people mimic (p. 97).

Emotional contagion and mimicry can be tied into conceptualizations of emotional labor by demonstrating that engaging in emotional labor may be linked to a biological and evolutionary tendency to do so. Specifically, we may be intrinsically wired

to manage our emotions to match those of the people around us. As Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson (1993) describe:

> Awareness of the existence of emotional contagion may prove useful in understanding and perhaps advancing various areas of interpersonal communication. . .Such understanding may help increase understanding of group behaviors that have shaped history, whether they be Adolf Hitler fanning hatred to his listeners, Martin Luther King spreading a message of love. . .they may even tell something about the awesome contemporary power of celebrityhood and of the mass media as these agencies of large-scale emotional and cognitive contagion to expand their capacities to define reality for billions of people (p. 99).

I conducted my study on a much smaller scale than Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson, but the concept of emotional contagion remains relevant to a micro-scale of a particular environment.

The literature reviewed in this section should provide context as to what emotions are, the social construction of emotions, the sociology of emotions, and dramaturgical theories around emotions, motivation, and emotional contagion. These concepts should serve to support claims, theories, and analysis made in Chapter 5. These concepts are important expand into higher education administration as little has been studied about the intersection of these topics and emotional labor.

Professionalism, Leadership, and Emotions

> *Emotions are an integral and inseparable part of everyday organizational life.*
>
> -Ashforth and Humphrey, 1995, p. 1

> *Day to day, real emotions, the cooked and the raw, continued to be characterized as unwelcome guests and unfortunate intruders at an otherwise rational organizational party.*
>
> -Beatty, 2000, p. 350

For the purpose of my study and literature review, I do not review professionalism and leadership independently. Rather, I reviewed literature that provides insight into the role that emotions and emotional labor play into professionalism and leadership. Given that themes of emotional labor as professionalism and leadership emerged from my data analysis, it is important to provide context to these findings. Therefore, for my study, we can understand *professionalism,* or *being professional,* as how individuals see themselves through other people's eyes (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 152). Professionalism is usually discussed in relation to one's status, standing, regard, or levels of professional reward (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 152). *Leadership,* or *being a leader,* can be understood as being in a position to lead, or in a position to have others follow. Leadership can be understood and conceptualized in many ways, as some understand leading as working with at least one other person, whereas some see it as leading an entire organization. The literature on the professional, professionalism, leadership, leadership qualities is extremely vast, and within this literature, there are often contested conceptualizations of each term. For my study, though, these contested conceptualizations are not relevant, as understanding of professionalism and leadership are based on individuals' lived experiences and perspectives.

At first glance, emotions appear to be the antithesis of organizations: emotions are generally spontaneous, whereas organizations are planned and require order (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000, p. 184). However, Ashforth and Tomiuk maintain that "organizations are often regarded as arenas for an epic struggle between emotionality and rationality" (p. 184). Therefore, even though organizations require planning and order, emotion and emotion management remain at the heart of organizational culture. Specifically, as my study will demonstrate, emotions remain at the core of higher education, professionalism, and leadership. Studying the role of emotional labor within conceptualizations of leadership and professionalism can help us expose the foundational underpinnings of these concepts within higher education administration.

In general school culture, the ideal "professional" is mainly rational with emotions carefully controlled. (Beatty, 2000, p. 334). However, the emotions associated with leadership are nearly unmentioned in the literature (p. 332). Beatty recognizes the need to present the voices of leaders themselves as part of the knowledge base for the emotions of leadership (p. 332). Beatty emphasizes that "the emotional experience of educational leaders is rich in potential to assist us in deepening our understanding of leadership" (p. 333). I would extend this argument to state that examining the emotional experiences of leaders can also help us deepen our understanding of emotional labor and the role it plays in higher education administration. Beatty further maintains that "our understanding of the role of the emotions may be fundamental to a fuller appreciation of the intra- and intersubjective realities of life in schools, in general, and of educational leadership in particular" (p. 331). Therefore, studying the role of emotional labor within higher education administration can help us connect the role of emotions to leadership

and professionalism, traits that are often seen as *required* to work within higher education.

To study general communication rules that govern and influence emotion management, Kramer and Hess (2002) conducted a survey and examined appropriate and inappropriate displays of positive and negative emotions. The study demonstrated that maintaining "professionalism" is at the heart of emotion management. Furthermore, understandings of professionalism are often learned through observation and lived experiences. Kramer and Hess explain that "through a gradual learning process, employees construct an understanding of what professionalism means in their occupations" (p. 75). Generally, participants in Kramer and Hess's study described professionalism as maintaining a neutral or pleasant stance in all circumstances. The authors also note that "masking negative emotions appears to be part of the general rules of civility that are learned as part of the socialization process into occupations" (p. 76). Kramer and Hess's study provided a broader understanding of the roles of emotion in organizational communication.

Leaders are often seen as effective because of their mental abilities and their ability to perform complex tasks. However, there is an increasing body of literature that suggests that perceptions of leadership are also affected by the leader's emotional abilities (Kellett, Humphrey, & Sleeth, 2002, p. 523). Kellett, Humphrey, and Sleeth (2002, 2006) indicated that the ability of employees to display empathy, to identify others' emotions, and to express their own emotion is related to leader emergence. The authors' results suggest that empathy is important for building bonds, providing support for self-worth, effective communication, problem-solving, decision making, and

performance (Kellett, Humphrey, & Sleeth, 2006, p.157). To add further complexity to Kellett, Humphrey, and Sleeth's findings, the authors explain that it is not enough for leaders to display emotions. Leaders must also be able to display empathy through understanding others' feelings and providing considerations of their emotions. As they state, "It is likely that leader empathy helps to explain a follower's sense of emotional support that in turn sparks creativity and performance in educational institutions and other organizations" (Kellett, Humphrey, & Sleeth, 2006, p.158). Therefore, we can conclude that leaders who understand the benefits of demonstrating emotional empathy choose to do so via the performance of emotional labor specifically as it relates to the support and motivation of subordinates or colleagues.

Emotional labor is crucial to leadership success (Burch, Humphrey, & Batchelor, 2013, p. 119). Burch, Humphrey, and Batchelor (2013) remark that "leaders use emotional labor tactics to help their employees feel the right moods for the situation; thus the effectiveness of leaders' emotional labor often depends on how well they have influenced the moods and morale of their followers" (p. 120). Essentially, the authors maintain that to be a good leader, one must also be good at the performance of emotional labor. As part of their discussion, Burch, Humphrey, and Batchelor explained that none of the interviewees who were part of their study had heard of emotional labor; yet, every participant provided real-life examples of times in which he or she performed emotional labor. A recognition of emotional labor as part of any leadership style is significant, as it can help leaders develop techniques to use emotional labor effectively (p. 124). As the authors found, leaders who effectively use emotional labor can improve employee commitment and satisfaction (p. 124). Further, the authors explain that the role of the

leader is changing as employees increasingly expect leaders who are empathic and engage in authentic relationships (p. 124). These findings provide an opportunity for readers to understand the importance of emotional labor as part of being a leader in higher education.

Many academics agree that organizations are inherently political. The political nature of organizations requires employees to have a level of political skill as part of their professional and leadership repertoire. There is literature on the politics of organizations and the need for political skill in leaders. Political skill is characterized as "a comprehensive pattern of social competencies, with cognitive, affective, and behavioral manifestations, that have both direct effects on outcomes and moderating effect on predictor outcome relationships" (Ferris et al., 2007, p. 291). Political skill, as with emotional labor, is necessary to be successful with organizations. Furthermore, emotional labor can overlap with political skill, as employing the performance of emotional labor entails political skill. Ferris et al. (2007) explain that "it is assumed that although performance, effectiveness, and career success are determined in part by intelligence and hard work, other factors such as social astuteness, positioning, and savvy also play important roles" (p. 291). Political skill incorporates some of the key tenets of emotional labor but goes beyond emotion and includes incorporating other kinds of knowledge (p. 294).

Treadway et al. (2005) found that those opting to employ political skill at work expended a higher degree of emotional labor. The authors explained that "political behavior, as a form of social influence, has the potential to generate emotional labor in employees" (p. 240). By integrating the concept of organizational politics and emotional

labor, we can develop a broader understanding of the impacts of politics on behavior. My study will add to what we know about political skill because it directly ties political skill to emotional labor in exposing the political and emotional nature of higher education administration.

Women in Higher Education Administration

The final section of my literature review highlights ways in which women in higher education administration are discussed. The literature on this population is extremely limited, as most studies focus on faculty. Nevertheless, it is important to review what is available to situate my work within this body of literature. The current section of my literature review should not serve to place women in a deficit model. Rather, it is meant to highlight the ways in which the gendered nature of organizations affects women in myriad ways. Further, this section is intended to support the notion that gender *still* plays a role in our social interactions.

Women are underrepresented in leadership roles in higher education systems (Eliadis, 2018; August, L., & Waltman, J, 2004). The underrepresentation of women can be attributed to various factors; nevertheless, analyzing women's positionality in higher education administration and leadership is much more than just looking at the *number* of women leaders. As Seliger and Shames (2009) assert, "the presence — or absence — of female academic leaders can have far-reaching influences not only on the institutions themselves, but beyond that, on the scope of research and knowledge that affects us all" (p. 16). Seliger and Shames discuss the impact women have in top-level leadership positions and explain that women add to both the gender balance in the workforce and serve as role models to younger women. In this quote, they explain their stance in depth:

> Women in senior faculty positions and top-level leadership positions in academia provide male students, faculty and staff an important opportunity to work with talented women—an experience that will prove increasingly valuable as the overall gender balance in the workforce changes. In addition, these women serve as powerful role models and mentors to younger women starting out on the path to leadership themselves. Thus, these leaders can serve to bring out the best in women of not only this generation but several generations to come (p. 16).

Seliger and Shames argue that women in top-level leadership positions add value to the workforce in various ways. Despite this, Seliger and Shames maintain that women lag behind men in status, salary, and leadership positions within academia.

In 1986, Sandler and Hall explored what they called the "chilly professional climate" experienced by women as administrators (p. 3). In their report, Sandler and Hall cite several behaviors experienced by women working as administrators in higher education. These include:

> The higher the rank, the fewer the women (p 4). Asking women to take care of minor social needs, such as expecting women, but not men, to write invitations or provide refreshments for department meetings or parties (p. 3). In discussion groups, people are more likely to respond more extensively to men's comments than to women's (p. 5). Expecting women to behave in typically "feminine" ways, such as being more nurturing and "motherly" to both students and colleagues, which subjects women to the classic double bind situation (p. 7). Women's abilities are more likely to be questioned, subject to greater scrutiny and/or ignored than those of men (p. 9). Women are more likely to be judged by their attractiveness; men are more likely to be judged by their achievements. Sometimes the only praise a woman may ever receive from her colleagues will be comments about her appearance (p. 11).

Sandler and Hall call these behaviors "micro-inequalities." Micro-inequalities are the collective ways in which individuals are singled out, overlooked, ignored, or discounted based on sex, race, or age. It is through micro-inequalities that people

are not treated as individuals; instead, they are treated on the basis of stereotypes or preconceived notions about the group of which they identify. Even though Sandler and Hall's report would appear to be outdated given its age, my dissertation explores whether micro-inequalities are still prevalent in higher education administration, as micro-inequalities appear throughout participant narratives.

As part of their previously cited report, Sandler and Hall (1983) made another compelling statement. Here, they explain how even the most well-meaning individuals may:

> Inadvertently treat women in ways that convey a powerful subtle or not so subtle message to women and to men that somehow women are not as serious professionally, or as capable as their male peers, nor are they expected to be forceful leaders (p. 4).

Sandler and Hall's narrative continues to be relevant in relation to my study as the gendered nature of higher education requires women to modify their behaviors through emotional labor to fit the social norms of their organization.

The entire report provided by Sandler and Hall (1983) is fascinating, as it gives a snapshot of the administrative culture of the 1980s. I hope my study does the same in providing a snapshot of administrative culture in 2018. In this quote, Sandler and Hall explain the expectations of feminine style:

> Women may be downgraded if they do not dress in a feminine style. They often report questions from colleagues and students such as "Why don't you wear a skirt?" along with queries about their sexual orientation. However, should they dress in too feminine a manner, they may be seen as lacking professional demeanor (p. 11)

Again, even though this report is relatively dated at 30 years old, these expectations seem to still hold in higher education, as my study will show.

To continue examining women's experience in higher education, I highlight how Glazer (1991) tied feminism to professionalism. She explains that from a feminist perspective, autonomy and hierarchy are incompatible. Autonomy and hierarchy are both equated with specialized expertise:

> Liberal feminism argues equal treatment of men and women will lead to great autonomy and status within the professions, whereas radical feminism perceived the sexual division of labor as hierarchical and universal in our society. The issues are becoming more ambiguous as the professions rely more directly on large bureaucratic organizations for their existence. In education, the incompatibility of professionalism and organizational structure has been a key factor in perpetuating women's systematic discrimination at all levels (p. 338).

Viewing professionalism through a feminist lens allows us to frame our thinking to theorize how institutions privilege behaviors rooted in masculine concepts of status.

Tomas et al. (2010) examined women in academic administration and found that women think about exercising power differently from the traditional idea of "power over others." Rather, women think about exercising power as "power for" and "power with." As Tomas et al. explain women think this way "possibly because this way of understanding it is more in agreement with the role of facilitator and caregiver that has been socially accepted for women" (p. 497). The authors suggest that this characteristically female way of leading may be taught and put into practice regardless of the leader's gender. Finally, Tomas et al.'s study demonstrates that women face various barriers within university

administration, which includes a change-resistant organizational culture that promotes an environment dominated by male cultures.

Discrimination and power relations still exist in higher education specifically as they relate to women's experiences (Morley, 2016). Additionally, "women continue to be minority in positions of power" (Tomas et al., 2010, p. 496). Morley examines the subtle and complex ways women face discrimination in higher education and found that "gendered power relations symbolically and materially construct and regulate women's everyday experiences of higher education" (p. 550). Furthermore, Morley notes that women experience discriminatory practices, gendered processes, and exclusions within higher education. Morley also found that gendered differences are reinforced in various environments via everyday social practices. The reinforcement of gendered differences is relevant, as my study seeks to uncover how gender relations continue to play a role in the daily lives of women administrators. As such, my study will add to what is known about women in higher education administration. The literature reviewed on women in higher education administration should serve to highlight the importance of emotional labor in gender relations as they relate to the working lives of women in higher education administration.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I presented theoretical contexts for my study and I provided an overview of emotional labor since the work of Hochschild (1983). I reviewed the various ways in which other researchers have defined emotional labor. These various definitions and conceptualizations should serve to support the idea that emotional labor is a complex and intricate experience that deserves further and deeper exploration. Most recently,

Hochschild (in Beck, 2018) provided an interview in which she reiterated the way she defines emotional labor. Through this interview, Hochschild extended the definition of emotional labor to the anxiety-inducing internalized expectations women experience.

I reviewed the dimensionality of emotional labor as presented in the literature. Dimensionality of emotional labor is important to understand, as it shows that emotional labor is not just a generalized experience that is either present or not. Rather, it can be present in varying frequencies, intensities, and so forth. Then, I reviewed varying emotional labor studies. Woods (2010, 2012) called for emotion research in the workplace of higher education, and my study is a response to her call. Gonzales and Rincones's (2013) study on emotional labor served as an impetus for my research, as they called for research in the higher education field "where methods and approaches remain lodged in traditional, post-positivist conceptions of knowledge" (p. 14). I then reviewed additional literature on emotional labor, particularly studies on dimensions, antecedents, and consequences of emotional labor.

The next section of the literature review, "On Emotions," reviews concepts such as dramaturgical theories and hedonic principles that provide a deeper understanding of the motivations behind the performance of emotional labor. The literature on the intersection of emotional labor and professionalism and leadership helps support the notion that emotional labor is necessary to work within organizations who value such characteristics. Finally, the literature presented about women in higher education administration serves to support the importance of examining and analyzing gender relations within this work environment. The theoretical concepts and the literature

reviewed are important, as they highlight the importance of emotional labor and provide insight into the ways researchers conceptualize emotional labor.

The literature reviewed should contextualize my research within the existing body of literature. My research seeks to add to the research on emotional labor through an interview study that examined how women in higher education administration understand and experience emotional labor in their work environments. Therefore, given the concepts and literature reviewed, my study seeks to answers the following research question: How do women in higher education administration understand and experience emotional labor in their work environments? The next chapter will provide the methodology employed to answer this research question.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The qualitative interview study consisted of two interviews guided by the model of in-depth, phenomenological interviewing presented by Seidman (2013). Though not a phenomenological study, a two-interview series was appropriate for the present study as it explored participants' experiences as they were contextualized in their lives. My study adds to the literature on emotional labor as it embodies the development of an understanding of how women higher education administrators understand and experience emotional labor within the context of their work environments. To understand how women administrators understand and experience emotional labor within the context of their work environments, the following research question guided my study: How do women in higher education administration, understand and experience emotional labor in their work environments?

Research Design

To study how women in higher education administration experience and understand emotional labor in their work environments, I utilized a human research design that employed qualitative interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews (Seidman, 2013) guided by pre-determined questions as well as follow-up questions for clarification and elaboration. The use of an interview methodology was appropriate for the research project and question, as it focused on the lived experience emotional labor and collected data from persons who had experienced emotional labor (Creswell & Poth, 2018). My study adds to the current research on emotional labor because it extends what is known about experiences and

understandings of emotional labor in the context of higher education administration at one institution.

The writings of Max van Manen (2016) guide my understanding of lived experiences. As van Manen (2016) explains, "lived experience…has a temporal structure: it can never be grasped in its immediate manifestation but only reflectively as part of the present" (p. 36). What van Manen (2016) is explaining is that we reconstruct lived experiences once we distance ourselves from the experience. As such, my study aims to understand women's lives in higher education administration through the interpretive examination of lived experiences, which have "quality that we can recognize in retrospect" (van Manen, 2016, p. 36). Through reflection and retrospection, my study allows its participants to understand emotional labor through shared meaning making and knowledge creation.

A qualitative interview study is appropriate for my research question as it explores how women understand and experience emotional labor in their workspace of higher education administration. To facilitate the reconstructing of experiences, participants participated in in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews help comprehend participants' lived experiences with emotional labor and how they understand and experience the phenomenon (Seidman, 2013).

My study aimed to understand emotional labor outside of the context of customer (or student) relations. My study explored the dimensions of interactive service work, which is defined as "a range of interpersonal tasks that are distinguished from general human interactional dynamics by the context of paid employment" (Pugliesi, 1999. p. 126). Furthermore, Pugliesi (1999) notes that "emotional labor is now always restricted to

interactions that occur in the course of the provision of a service or other primary tasks of work. Rather, emotion is inherent in all social relations in organizational contexts" (p. 129). Therefore, participants reflected mainly on lived experiences outside of customer relations; these experiences included interactions with co-workers, subordinates, supervisors, and other stakeholders. These interactions often took place in meetings, phone conversations, hallway conversations, and included interactions outside of the formal location of the employee's workplace.

Role of the Researcher and Subjectivity

Higher education is my workspace and my place of learning. I have been involved in higher education, and Florida International University (FIU) specifically, since 2005 when I started college as an undergraduate student. Since then, I have spent countless hours on campus, working and studying, and have built a keen interest in understanding higher education. I decided to study higher education because of my close personal ties to the institution and because my doctoral degree focuses on higher education.

I selected study participants at FIU because I have been an administrator at this university for over eight years. Given my long-time working at the university, I have built professional relationships that made the recruiting of participants possible. Through the relationships I built, I was able to recruit a group of participants that trusted me, even if just peripherally. Higher education is a relatively small field, which means that often, your character precedes you. As a long-time administrator at my university, I believe I have built a reputation as an honest, hard-worker. Therefore, I believe that the recruited participants were more likely to share stories openly with me that they may not have shared otherwise.

Finally, I would like to state my subjectivity and impetus for my study. Just before I finished my coursework in my doctoral program, I faced an extremely tumultuous time in my professional life. The details of the experience are not as important as the impact these events had on me as a scholar and practitioner. After many interactions with superiors, colleagues, and even family and friends as part of this process, I became keenly interested in the concept of emotional labor and the role it plays in the lives of higher education professionals. Specifically, the role it plays in the professional lives of women, as I identify as a cis gendered woman working within higher education. The idea that I spent a considerable amount of time hiding and concealing my emotions (through emotional labor) fascinated me in ways other topics I had come across in my scholarly research never had. To provide an understanding of my experience, I would read articles on emotional labor and feel physical effects in myself; I could feel my blood pressure rising; I could feel anxiety creeping in; but I also felt a deep sense of excitement that I could now put a name to feelings I had been experiencing for months.

It is important to note that I found myself extremely invested in my study, both in temporality (this process took a lot of time), but also emotionally. I connected with my participants on an exceptionally deep level when they shared their stories with me. During interviews, I spent a great deal of time sympathizing and commiserating in my head while trying to maintain the integrity of the research process. I had to remain relatively silent during the interviews, sticking only to questions relating to my study, but I would often nod, make empathetic gestures, and mouth “mmhmm” in solidarity with my fellow colleagues. By providing my subjectivity statement, I want it to be known that

my voice may be found within the analyses provided in my study. Through member checking, I attempt to avoid having my voice overtake that of my participants.

Setting

The research site for my study is a large, urban, Research I university, Florida International University. Florida International University is located in Miami, Florida, and is the city's first and only public research university. Florida International University offers bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees. FIU's 2018-2019 Fall student headcount is 58,063 (opir.fiu.edu). Florida International University is among the top 10 largest universities in the nation and has graduated more than 200,000 alumni (https://www.fiu.edu/about/index.html). Florida International University employs approximately 5,582 full-time employees, of which 931 are classified as Office and Administrative Support (opir.fiu.edu).

Florida International University has two campuses and various centers across the city and globe. Florida International University is composed of 11 schools and colleges and more than 40 centers and institutes. I recruited participants from both campuses (Modesto A. Maidique Campus and Biscayne Bay Campus) and various colleges to try and represent the diverse constituencies of the university. Participant campuses and departments are not identified to maintain confidentiality and prevent the unintentional identification of participants.

Participant Selection

Creswell and Poth (2018) explain, "It is essential that all participants have experience in the phenomenon being studied" (p. 157). Emotional labor is a phenomenon that is not specific to any one person, job, or job responsibility. Rather, it is a generalized

phenomenon experienced by everyone. Therefore, in choosing participants for my study, all participants had experience with the phenomenon of emotional labor. My study focused specifically on women, as they are uniquely situated within the academic institutionally-produced hierarchies of emotion. The participants had job responsibilities outside of student interaction, as my research project aims to study emotional labor not directly related to customer (or student) relations. However, participants also had job responsibilities that included student interaction. While the participants of my study ultimately supported university functions that impact students, their administrative responsibilities were their main job specification.

I selected participants utilizing purposeful, disconfirming, and snowball sampling (Crewswell & Poth, 2018). The term "sampling" is often seen as problematic in qualitative research because the term "sampling" often indicates a representative sample of the population that is studied (Maxwell, 2013). Therefore, I use the term "sampling" for my study, but the sample presented in my study is not meant to be representative of the population.

Purposeful sampling is the most indicative of the sampling conducted for my study because participants were "selected deliberately to provide information that is particularly relevant to questions and goals, and that can't be gotten as well from other choices" (Maxwell, 2013, p. 97). To begin purposeful sampling, I selected five participants from my contacts, then utilized snowball sampling which "identifies cases of interest from people who know people who know what cases are information-rich" (Crewswell & Poth, 2018, p. 158). To increase the credibility of my study, I utilized

disconfirming sampling to find negative cases to seek exceptions and look for variations of experiences with emotional labor (Crewswell & Poth, 2018).

Participants were initially identified by on job title, as well as on the relationship with me. Given the sensitive nature of the topic of emotional labor, the ability to recruit participants who would be willing to share their experiences openly and candidly was considered. From the initial five participants identified, I utilized snowball sampling to recruit other participants who knew the women in my initial sample. I also used snowball sampling through classmates who provided me with lists of participants they felt would be able to provide me with data regarding emotional labor in higher education administration. Once I identified the specific participants I wanted to invite to participate in my study, I emailed them independely, two to three at a time, to gauge interest. In total, I invited 18 participants; of the 18, six declined or did not answer, and 12 agreed to participate in my study. As Maxwell (2013) discusses, snowball type of sampling helps identify individuals "with whom you can establish the most productive relationships, ones that will best enable you to answer your research question" (p. 99). Thus, utilizing sampling, as mentioned above, I was able to recruit a group of 12 participants who trusted me and were willing to share their stories openly.

Data Collection

I interviewed 12 women about their experiences with emotional labor as part of their employment. I collected my data during the Fall 2018 semester between the dates of October 2 and December 10. Seidman (2013) suggests a three-interview series for in-depth, phenomenological interviewing. The traditional series is as follows: interview one: focused life history, interview two: the details of experience, and interview three:

reflection on meaning. My study consisted of two interviews guided by the model presented by Seidman (2013). The intensity of the job responsibilities of my participants made it so they not accommodate three interviews. Thus, I shortened the interview series to two interviews. By shortening the interview series to two, I was able to recruit administrators who were able to meet twice. As part of Seidman's (2013) protocol, I condensed interview one and two into a single interview.

Though my study did not strictly follow Seidman's (2013) traditional three-interview structure, the modified model is acceptable (Seidman, 2013). As Seidman (2013) explains, there is room to explore alternatives "as long as a structure is maintained that allows participants to reconstruct and reflect up their experience within the context of their lives, alternations to the three-interview structure and the duration and spacing of interviews can certainly be explored" (p. 25). The second semi-structured interview at the end of this process, though, followed Seidman's (2013) guidance for interview three where participants reflected on meaning. As Seidman (2013) indicates, "making sense or making meaning requires participants look at how the factors in their lives interacted to bring them to their present situation" (p. 22). Therefore, the second interview allowed participants to make and reflect on meaning.

Regarding data saturation, I followed the advice of Seidman (2013) who advises that when you are not learning anything decidedly new, and the process of interviewing becomes laborious rather than pleasurable, it is time to say "enough." Consequently, Bailey and Kelly engaged in only one interview. Bailey and Kelly were the last two participants I interviewed, and at the time I conducted their interviews, I felt I had reached a point where my study could be sufficiently detailed with the data I had

collected (Crewswell & Poth, 2018). Even though I only conducted one interview with Bailey and Kelly, I believe I these single interviews added to my existing data by elaborating on the complexity of emotional labor.

To begin my study, I arranged an initial 60-minute meeting with each participant. The first hour generally included a brief introduction, reviewing the IRB informed consent, and addressing any questions or concerns before I turned on the recorder. Therefore, interviews were not a full 60 minutes; interviews ranged from approximately 33 minutes to 56 minutes. As part of the first interview, I offered participants the opportunity to choose a pseudonym of their choosing; if they did not select a name, I chose it for them.

The initial interview was an opportunity to build upon any rapport I already had with participants and was also an opportunity to build rapport with participants I had not previously met. To begin, I introduced the research project and provided a space for participants to ask any questions. Then, with consent, the recorder was turned on, and the interview commenced. The first interview was semi-structured (see Appendix A for interview protocol) and included a focused life history and details of experience (Seidman, 2013). I asked the participants to tell me as much about themselves and their professional life for approximately the first half of our interview. The second half consisted of the participants' present lived experience with emotional labor. Following Seidman's (2013) guidance, I did not ask for opinions. Rather, I asked participants "the details of their experience, upon which their opinions may be built" (Seidman, 2013, p. 21). The second half of the interview attempted to reconstruct the many details of participants' experiences with emotional labor.

As part of the interview process, I was careful not to define emotional labor for participants. Rather, I spent a great deal of time guiding our conversations following the definition provided by Hochschild (1983). Specifically, the interviews were guided by the understanding that emotional labor is the work, for which you are compensated, that involves managing your feelings and often the feelings of others for the purpose of doing your job. Therefore, I began by asking my participants, "what does emotional labor mean to you?" While many had an idea of the term, some did not. It is important to acknowledge that there is an emotional labor expert at the institution where I conducted my study. As a result, many of the participants had listened to the expert's presentation on emotional labor, and they had a general understanding of the term. However, for those that did not know what emotional labor was, I followed up with the question "can you give me some examples of times you have experienced emotional challenges in your workplace?" Once I presented the question, participants provided me with a challenging scenario in the workplace and naturally explained how they managed their emotions or the emotions of others as part of the challenging scenario. The discussed method led to a conversation about emotional labor as guided by the participant's own understandings. Following the discussion on a challenging work scenario, I asked follow-up questions specifically relating to their stories and lived experiences with emotional labor grounded in Hochschild's (1983) definition. Through the discussed method, I was able to discuss how participants personally experience emotional labor within the context of their work environments without clouding their pre-defined connotations of the term and phenomena.

The second interview of my study focused on reflection on meaning. Seidman (2013) explains that for this interview:

> Making sense of making meaning requires that the participants look at how the factors in their lives interacted to bring them to their present situation. It also requires that they look at their present experience in detail within the context in which it occurs (p. 22).

The second interviews followed up on the foundation established by first interview. Therefore, questions during the interview were in the context of the first interview and varied with the exceptions of some pre-determined questions (see Appendix B).

With the participants' consent, I recorded each interview via two audio recording devices. For my main device, I used a Tascam Linear PCM recorder; I used my iPhone as a back-up recorder. Following the interviews, the audio recordings were transcribed utilizing a transcription service, *Temi*. The service *Temi* is an advanced speech recognition software that provided the initial transcription of all transcripts. Using a speech-to-text algorithm, *Temi* provides a text file of an uploaded audio file. I reviewed, organized, and checked for errors in all transcripts. Once I reviewed and checked the transcripts for accuracy, I sent the transcripts back to the participants for member checking and participant feedback (Crewswell & Poth, 2018).

Following each interview, I created analytic memos to provide a "reflection on…how the process of inquiry is taking shape" (Saldaña, 2010, p. 32). These analytic memos were created following interviews to document the essence of conversations, focus on emerging concepts, and make links and connections among patterns. These analytic memos provided the basis for coding as they allowed me to reflect consistently

on emergent themes and patterns as I contemplated about "how the puzzle pieces fit together" (Saldaña, 2010, p. 36).

Anonymity and Confidentiality

To protect anonymity, I withheld participant positions within the university and created a short profile for each participant. As part of each profile, I assigned each participant a level of administration of either "mid-level" or "high-level." "Mid-Level" administrators include the title of "Assistant Director," "Associate Director," and "Director," and "high-level" administrators include "Executive Director," "Assistant Dean," "Associate Dean," "Assistant Vice President" and "Associate Vice President," "Associate Provost," and "Vice Provost." I create these categories to avoid inadvertently identifying participants. Additionally, to maintain anonymity, actual job titles may differ from the examples presented. Nevertheless, these titles should provide the reader with a conceptualization of each participant's position within the university's administrative hierarchy. Further, I offer an approximation of the time each participant had worked within higher education. These numbers are provided within +/- five years of the actual time each participant told me they had been working in higher education. As previously mentioned, I gave participants the option to pick a pseudonym. If participants did not choose a pseudonym, I chose one for them.

As part of my study, I did not promised complete confidentiality because I use direct quotes from the interviews as part of my findings. However, quotes may be modified to ensure anonymity. Any modifications to participant quotes have been marked with brackets and italicized font [*example*]. Further modifications to transcripts were made to increase legibility which included the removal of any "ums," "likes," or word

repetitions. To ensure that narratives were not lost or misconstrued, I provided participants with a copy of my modifications before publication.

Data Coding and Analysis

Using transcripts of interviews, I began the process of data analysis and coding. Following the suggestion of Rowley (2012), I utilized *n Vivo* to facilitate the initial coding of my interview transcripts. The software allows researchers to "annotate the text, code the text, search for keywords, and organize the text" (Rowley, 2012, p. 268). I began my *n Vivo* coding with "initial coding" (Saldaña, 2010). Through initial coding, I reviewed the interview transcripts, dissected the data into distinct parts, and compared the data for similarities and differences (Saldaña, 2010). The goal of initial coding was to reflect on the contents of the data as "initial coding is not necessarily a specific formulaic method," it is an "open-ended approach to coding the data with some recommended general guidelines" (Saldaña, 2010, p. 81). Once I completed initial coding, I engaged in second cycle coding. Second cycle coding consists of developing "a sense of categorical, thematic, conceptual, or theoretical organization from your array of first cycle codes" (Saldaña, 2010, p. 149).

I associate Saldaña's (2010) coding methods to Spencer and Ritchie's (2002) phase known as familiarization. The familiarization stage includes listening to interview recordings, reading transcripts, and studying analytic memos. I coded all transcripts once I had completed my data collection. I should note that writing analytic memos helped me identified initial themes, ideas, and key concepts during data collection. However, it was during the initial coding and familiarization stage that I was able to identify overarching themes and phrases clearly, and review the data holistically as opposed to one interview

or interaction at a time. Then, second cycle coding allowed me to refine, reorganize, and reconfigure my initial codes into a smaller and more select list of themes (Saldaña, 2010).

I began initial coding and familiarization by organizing phrases into various emergent themes and codes, or "nodes," as they are referred to in *n Vivo*. That is, I coded inductively and let the themes emerge. However, I did start with two initial codes of "Understandings of Emotional Labor" and "Experiences of Emotional Labor" to find specific mentions of understandings and experiences of emotional labor. When coding for understandings, I utilized Hochschild's (1983) definition of emotional labor as a framework and looked for instances where participants described how they *define* or understand, emotional labor even if they may not have used the term in their descriptions. When coding for experiences, I once again used Hochschild's definition as a framework and coded participant narratives that denoted the *performance* of emotional labor. These two initial codes were the foundation for my coding technique.

From these initial codes of experience and understanding, I simultaneously coded into various other emergent sub-themes which included identity, leadership, professionalism, gender, coping and support, career growth, work environment and culture, burnout, relationships, power, humanity, empathy, students, genuineness, and non-verbal communication. Of these themes, the codes that stood out as most prevalent were work environment and culture, gender, leadership, and professionalism. It was at this point that I completed my initial coding and moved into second cycle coding to focus on the most prevalent themes.

My second cycle coding consisted of honing the prevalent themes of participant's work environment and culture, gender, leadership, and professionalism. I went through

the prevalent codes and distilled them into cohesive themes that would best answer the research question presented in my study. Originally, professionalism and leadership were coded separately. Upon further analysis, I discovered that the two themes intersected in many ways and were best presented together. During second cycle coding, I moved my work out of *n Vivo* and organized quotes in Microsoft Excel, which allowed me the flexibility to move quotes around in a way that made it easy to weave participant narratives together to provide cohesive findings.

Saldaña (2010) explains that "second cycle methods are a bit more challenging because they require such analytic skills as classifying, prioritizing, integrating, synthesizing, abstracting, conceptualizing, and theory building" (p. 45). Engaging in second cycle coding provided me the opportunity to systemize the immense amount of data that was generated from interviews. Specifically, I developed "a sense of categorical, thematic, conceptual, and theoretical organization" (Saldaña, 2002, p. 149) from my first cycle codes. As part of the findings of my study, I offer short profiles of each participant to provide the reader with a familiarity of each person. In the profiles, I highlight each participant's understanding of emotional labor. I created these profiles as part of my second cycle methods because I believe providing rich descriptions of each participant adds to the depth of my study.

Data Integrity

Researchers contest the concept of validity in qualitative studies. Maxwell (2013) suggests dedicating a section of any proposal specifically to validity. However, for my qualitative study, I choose to conceptualize validity as trustworthiness. Two potential threats to the trustworthiness of my study are researcher bias and reactivity. As

mentioned at the start of my study, it is important that I understand my positionality and subjectivity in relation to my study. Therefore, I attempt to be clear about how my values and expectations may influence the conclusion of my study (Maxwell, 2013).

To address my researcher bias, I make my assumptions and intellectual and emotional investments clear, as my awareness will allow me to understand where I am situated in my research before, during, and after the research experience (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Therefore, I included a subjectivity statement in my study as Creswell and Poth (2018) recommend "critical subjectivity…and heightened self-awareness in the research process" (p. 268). I want it known that I am aware of my position as a woman administrator and scholar within the university I am studying. Through my study, I interviewed and studied women to understand the phenomenon of emotional labor, not as a spectator or snoop, but as a scholar-practitioner dwelling within the institution of higher education. As van Manen (2016) explains, "subjectivity means that we are strong in our orientation to the object of study in a unique and personal way- while avoiding the danger of becoming arbitrary, self-indulgent, or of getting captivated and carried away by our unreflected preconceptions" (p. 20). Thus, my subjectivity statement serves as insight as to my impetus for my research, while also providing insight to my understanding of my positioning. By providing the statement, I am demonstrating respect and openness to readers, as my study is of personal importance to me.

Reactivity, or my influence on the setting or individual, may be a threat to my study, as I was a fellow employee of my participants because we shared an employer. To try and control for reactivity, I remained mindful of the threat, and I acknowledged, understood, and aimed to use my influence productively (Maxwell, 2013). Maxwell

(2013) tells us that "what is important is to understand *how* you are influencing what the informant says, and how this affects the validity of the inferences you can draw from the interview" (p. 125). Therefore, I was clear throughout my research process on the potential influences of my bias and reactivity on my study.

Respondent validation, or member checking, is suggested by Maxwell (2013) as a strategy to increase credibility and rule out threats to data integrity. I utilized member checking three times throughout the research process to avoid misconstruing or incorrectly analyzing participant narratives. To describe my process, I sent back all initial transcripts to participants for a chance to make changes or clarify any statements made during our interview. As part of the first contact, only one of the participants provided me with feedback on her transcript. The feedback provided was only clarification of statements she had made and did not include any backtracking or changing of statements. Furthermore, once all data were synthesized and analyzed, participants were provided with my analysis of their experiences and understandings of emotional labor. Member checking provided me the opportunity to ensure I was not misinterpreting the perspectives of my participants.

As part of member checking, participants were also asked to review their composites and approve that I had created a persona who had been properly de-identified. The deidentification step was particularly important to me because, as previously mentioned, my participants are colleagues at my institution, and I promised anonymity in exchange for honest and open dialogue. Their trust in me helped us to create a safe space where they were open to sharing extremely personal and vulnerable stories. As such,

protecting my participants' anonymity while still respecting their stories was a top priority.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 3 is an overview of the method of inquiry utilized in my study. To begin, I provided a detailed explanation of my human research design, which employed qualitative interviews. The interviews were semi-structured as guided by Seidman (2013). Then, I elaborated on my understandings of lived experiences, which are guided by van Manen (2016). As was explained, in-depth interviews were utilized to facilitate the reconstruction of lived experiences. My study examined emotional labor outside of the context of customer (or student) relations, so participants were asked to reconstruct lived experiences outside of customer (or student) relations.

Chapter 3 continues with a discussion about my role as the researcher and my subjectivity. My subjectivity serves to inform the reader on my impetus for completing my study while also demonstrating that I understand my positioning in my study. The following sections described my study's setting and participant selection techniques. The detailing of my data collection follows and provides specific descriptions of the way I structured and conducted my interviews. Here, I explain my interview protocol, and I detail how I guided conversations around emotional labor. To complete the current section, I explain the analytic memos I created following interviews.

Anonymity was extremely important to me as I conducted my study. Therefore, in this section, I detail how I de-identified the participants of my study and created general categories for job titles to prevent unintentional identification. Following this, I explain my coding technique and go into detail about my first and second cycle coding methods.

Finally, I discuss the data integrity of my study. This Chapter 3 should serve to explain my method of inquiry, and chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7 present the findings of my study.

CHAPTER IV

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7 present a synthesis of over 16 hours of interviews, over 250 pages of transcripts, and many pages of my analytic memos, notes, and journaling. Here, I attempt to make meaning of the understandings and experiences of emotional labor of 12 women. I found the process to be difficult as I did not want to reduce the rich and impactful stories shared with me into what Kuntz (2016) refers to as "logics of extraction" (p. 44). The logics of extraction, according to Kuntz (2016), require researchers to choose the "best" methods to extract *thing*s or *objects* for analysis. Then, utilizing legitimate methodological techniques, these extracted *things* and *object*s offer an *illusion* that there is full knowledge or the *perception that something should be, and could be, known*. Extraction is not the goal of my study; rather, I provide these in-depth interviews and analyses to tell each individual's stories. Through these stories, we can begin to unpack how participants understand and experience emotional labor through interviews, thus answering my study's research question.

As part of my analysis presented in the following chapters, I use the term *understand, understands, or understanding* extensively. The term was used purposefully as it was part of the research question. However, I will acknowledge that there is only so much that I can infer in relation to *understanding*. That is, through member checking and communication with my participants, I feel I was able to capture the essence of each participant's understanding at a particular point in time. However, that is not to say that their understandings may actually vary from what was captured in my dissertation. Nevertheless, the terms *understand, understands,* and *understanding* should serve to

provide an avenue for me to theorize how the participants made meaning of the experience of emotional labor.

Chapter Chronology

Chapter 4 beings with descriptions and profiles of each participant. These profiles should serve as an opportunity for readers to "get to know" the participants of my study. Each participant provides us with insights to their thought processes, and the profiles should give us a familiarization with each participant on an individual basis. As part of each profile, I analyze how participants understand emotional labor within the context of their work environment. As part of the chronology of Chapter 4, participant understandings of emotional labor are presented on an individual basis to provide context to the unique ways in which each participant contextualized and conceptualized their understandings of emotional labor which should serve to inform and support findings that emotional labor is understood and conceptualized on a situational and individual basis.

The underlying assumptions and definitions of emotional labor remain constant for my study and participant's narratives showed that the phenomena could be abstracted and understood depending on each person's lived experiences and understandings of what is critical within the context of their work environment which adds support to the multi-dimensionality of the phenomenon as discussed in Chapter 2. As an example, some participants see emotional labor as the managing of their emotions for career advancement, whereas some see it as a form of worrying or balancing professional and personal responsibilities. These conceptualizations, while different, all stem from the concept that emotions and feeling must be managed to fulfill the requirements of one's

job. Furthermore, it can be argued that higher education administrators are hired and monitored (in large part) for their capacity to be able to do so.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 present the three major themes that emerged from data analysis. These themes are work environment, culture, and emotional labor; professionalism, leadership, and emotional labor; and, gender and emotional labor. These chapters present thematically organized analyses of the three emergent themes derived from data analysis. For each theme, I include excerpts from interviews to support my analysis.

Introduction of Participants

I recruited 12 women to participate in my qualitative interview study. As previously mentioned, I contacted 18 women, six declined or did not answer, and 12 agreed to participate. Participant descriptions are based on the date and time participants participated in my study. Here, I provide short profiles of each participant. As part of each profile, I *italicize* overarching participant conceptualization of emotional labor for reference.

Becky

Becky has worked in Higher Education for more than ten years. She is a mid-level administrator who oversees a team of 1-5 full-time staff. Becky thinks her current role is too formal. She wishes she could be "honest" all the time, "like the faculty around here, they cut the bullshit. It just sounds so appealing to me to be able to be yourself like that, and I'm jealous." Becky perceives that faculty have different expectations of emotional management and she wants to work in an environment like that.

Becky explains that she understands emotional labor within the context of what she has experienced as an employee working in higher education. She states that emotional labor relates to "the emotional things that come into work that are not either planned or expected. Or maybe they *are* expected and just having to *fake it 'til you make it."* She goes further by suggesting that emotional labor involves *obligations*. Becky describes a time where she had to purchase something for a former supervisor that she felt she should not have to purchase. She told me: "I'm not supposed to do that, but it's my boss, and I felt like I couldn't say no." During the interaction, she had to act complacent with the purchase because expressing concern would have placed her in what she perceived as professional danger. Here we can see that linking emotional labor to obligation forced Becky to carry out a task for her supervisor that she would not have otherwise which suggests that in relationships with power dynamics, employees feel a societal obligation to manage not only their facial and bodily displays but also their actions to meet the expectations of those in authoritative roles.

Becky revealed to me that she spends a great deal of time *planning* her interactions to make sure she responds appropriately. She considers planning to be a form of emotional labor because as she told me:

> I'll think about what I'm going to say, how I'm going to say it to get my point across that's also not going to insult them or make them upset in some way. And that takes a lot of time to think about that, a lot of thinking when I could be doing [*and*] thinking about other things.

In the following excerpt, Becky further elaborates on how she conceptualizes pre-planning as part of her emotional labor and all the work that goes into it:

> I feel like the pre-planning, it's like when you dress up for a wedding. I normally don't wake up and naturally put on the gown. It takes a lot of

> pre-planning and thinking what goes together and how it's going to look, and that's kind of how I feel about pre-planning and coming to work. It's not really my thing to actually wake up in a ball gown and go to work. So, I think in general, it takes a lot of pre-planning. Like what's coming up, what meetings are coming up, what do I need to prepare to say, what do I think someone's going to say or ask me that I need to come prepared [*for*]. It seems like a defense, it's almost like going to war, it's not a meeting. It's almost like going to war. Like what weapons do I need to bring with me in anticipation of some BS that I'm pretty sure it's going to happen.

In the quote above, Becky compares going to a meeting to going to war, which is a strong comparison but provides us insight into how difficult it is for her to pre-plan her interactions at work. Given that Becky understands she must behave in a certain way at work, she spends a great deal of time and energy, making sure she is prepared to conform to the social norms of her work environment. Morris and Feldman (1996) discussed individual differences as an antecedent of emotional labor. However, they identified individual differences as affectivity and gender. Becky's quote demonstrates that individual differences as an antecedent of emotional labor extends into personality traits. Specifically, as Becky explains that she pre-plans her responses because this is the way she feels she can best prepare to be successful at work.

Finally, as part of her interview, Becky mentioned the concept of sterilization of employees via a process she named "*Fabuloso*." *Fabuloso* is the name of a popular cleaning product, and Becky uses the metaphor often when referring to her "alternative self," or the person she is when she is at work. She also uses the metaphor to refer to others who she perceives to have been "sterilized."

Lisa

Lisa has worked in higher education for more than 20 years in various roles. She now serves in a strictly administrative role but also has a faculty title. Lisa considers herself cut and dry and to the point. She is a high-level administrator who oversees a small team of 1-5 full-time staff. She thinks women get "a bad rap for being emotional at work" and that there is "a time and place for emotions."

When discussing emotional labor, Lisa conceptualizes emotional labor as, "maybe it is about how we as women kind of internalized a lot of things, especially at work and, or how it can take a toll on us." As we progressed in our conversations, Lisa spoke about *code-switching*:

> It's called code-switching. Figuring out what you need to do to be in that room and how you need to behave in that room and learning the dynamics. I mean, it just, it's a lot. I think women have to do a lot of that, but I think women of color have to do with twice as much. There's a lot behind all of the things when you walk into a room, and the meeting and you look at the lay of the land and who's in the room, and it's like, all right, who am I going to be now? Who do I need to be today at this point in time? You have to figure that out. Split second decision, and you got to go in with that idea, that mindset and stick to it.

In speaking about code-switching and identifying as a woman of color, Lisa explains her understanding of emotional labor as examining the environment she is stepping into, then acting accordingly. I did not identify the race and ethnicity of all participants to prevent unintentional identification. However, Lisa was the only participant who explicitly spoke about being a woman of color in relation to emotional labor. Her comment about code-switching adds to the dimensionality of emotional labor by acknowledging a racial understanding of the emotional labor experience.

Adding a racial understanding of emotional labor is supported by Evans and Moore (2015) who explain that "the inclusion of people of color into previously exclusively white institutions in the post-civil rights era has resulted in racially complex and emotionally hazardous spaces that people of color must navigate in order to participate in the resources and rewards these institutions offer" (p. 452). Specifically, Evans and Moore discuss:

> People of color carry the burden of having to choose between tacitly participating in their marginalization or actively resisting racist ideologies with the possible consequence of institutional alienation, exclusion, or official reprimand. White institutional spaces inscribe white privilege and power in the very social institutions that people of color must actively engage in order to experience upward mobility—education and employment. As a result of the additional burden of emotion work for people of color in these racialized institutions, and the need for people of color to sometimes choose an emotional strategy to not engage or challenge racial oppression in order to succeed in these spaces, the racialized relations of power are reproduced (p. 452).

My study did not have specific aims to examine the intersection of race and emotional labor. However, Lisa provided me with a unique space to examine such intersections and acknowledge the social dynamics within higher education administration that demand increased emotional labor from people of color. By making explicit how she experiences emotional labor through code-switching, Lisa demonstrates how she navigates social interactions within her work environment; an environment (higher education) which has traditionally reproduced white institutional power and privilege.

Vanessa

Vanessa has worked in higher education for about a year. She is a mid-level administrator with a faculty position. She understands emotional labor as impactful for

career growth. She explains to me that "you are constantly being scrutinized on how you respond to situations and the implications that it has on your ability to move and grow in an organization." Vanessa understands that to grow within her work environment she must carefully monitor how she reacts to situations.

As a relatively new higher education administrator, Vanessa spoke a great deal about the future implications of her actions and reactions. To her, acting in a way that is seen as professional or non-emotional is extremely important for her growth as a professional. She explains:

> I'm a go-getter, and I want to continue to grow, and I know that every decision I make and how I react to situations or how I express my interpretation of a situation is going to leave a lasting impression on the person who could potentially be making a decision regarding my growth. Right? As well as their willingness to trust me or work with me because of the way that I might react or feel about certain things.

Vanessa thinks about how her reactions and emotional responses can impact her in two ways; first in her ability to move up in an organization, and second, in her continued ability to work with faculty in her role. She points out that "the faculty are my client, so it might be a disagreement…and the way you respond, or how you do the dance in that situation has implications." Therefore, to do her job effectively, Vanessa must suppress feelings to maintain engagement with her *clients*. The view of faculty as clients is indicative of neoliberal ideals within the academy, which should serve to support the notion that neoliberal ideology sets the expectation for employees to assume a subjectivity amenable to the corporate culture. The corporate subjectivity requires employees to suppress feelings and manage emotions to be successful.

Nicole

Nicole has worked in higher education for over 30 years and is a seasoned high-level administrator. She holds a mainly administrative role, but also has a faculty position and teaches a few classes a year. She points out that "my role is not only with students but also with faculty issues. Emotional labor [*is*] for working out issues and problems. Whether it is in calming people down or motivating them, that's all in my mind and the emotional labor bucket." Nicole understands emotional labor as part of her role in mediating issues. She often finds herself managing the emotions of others either by calming or by motivation.

When discussing emotional labor, Nicole emphasizes the idea that it is imperative to *know when one can express their emotions and when one cannot*. She indicates that "it's not a struggle to manage your emotion as much as being clear what's the right time to speak up and how much to say and when to say it." Nicole also discusses how some individuals may need to work at being less explosive, whereas she has worked in the past 5-10 years at being more vocal. In her opinion, it is about *finding the right balance* based on the environment. She does, though, think explosive people have it more difficult. She says:

> I think people who are more explosive have a harder time managing that because they have to hold back and sometimes you see them, their face will get red or whatever. I'm at the other end that it's not that I don't have opinions, but it's, it takes a lot for you to really trigger me and really get me angry.

Nicole understands that there is a need to find a balance between being quiet and being explosive.

Marlen

Marlen has worked in higher education for more than 15 years and is a high-level administrator overseeing a team of 10-15 staff. Marlen's central identity is as a mom. She also identifies as a wife, university leader, faculty advocate, and social justice champion. She remarks that emotional labor is "woven into practically every minute of my work. I would be very naïve to think that anything that happens in my work is purely intellectual." Essentially, Marlen understands that emotional labor is part of her everyday interactions.

Marlen maintains that emotional labor is part of everything she does. She asserts that "my work depends on people and is aimed at people. And so, because of that, *emotions are always present everywhere,* and so I need to attend to them both in my team and in people we are asked to serve, in the students for whom we are here, *it's omnipresent*." Since Marlen understands emotions and emotional labor to be at the heart of her role, she is careful to pay close attention to her emotions and those of others. During our time together, she shed some tears as she spoke about her gratitude for her team and for her work environment which demonstrates her deep compassion and commitment to her role and team. She understands tending to emotions to be beneficial for the work environment as shown by the following quote:

> We have such varied emotions in our room at any moment in time, and I think that if we forget that, we limit our effectiveness from our work side. But also, we can miss out on what is most fulfilling as being human, which is connection, right? We account for emotions in order to reach connection, both for the benefit of our work and for the benefit of our human need to be connected.

Marlen spends a great deal of her time attending to emotions in her workplace. When I asked her how she managed her feeling at work, she replied, "by expressing them. Most of the feelings that I feel at work are gratitude, kindness, and love. And I hug people every day." Marlen explained that love and gratitude are her main emotions at work, and she tries to express them as much as humanly possible. She further described to me: "I see this as such fertile ground and so foundational, so I'm becoming even more committed to the presence and the role of emotions [*which*] as a foreground in our workplace and in our work." Overall, Marlen enjoys working in an environment that fosters empathy and care, so she hopes to cultivate a working environment that continues to nurture these emotions.

Rose

Rose has worked in higher education for more than 25 years and is a mid-level administrator who oversees a small team of less than 3. She calls herself a "jack of all trades" and considers herself to be a nurturing person. Rose says to me that "if you said everything you were thinking or feeling, you would really frighten a lot of people." She also emphasizes: "I think that you cannot really be emotional in settings like that [*male-dominated environments*]. They'll ignore you, or they'll think your just a waste of space." Here, Rose illustrates how gendered power relations regulate women's everyday experiences within higher education administration through emotional labor.

Overall, Rose understands emotional labor in relation to *worrying*. She works in a small office, so she explains:

> When you work in a small office, I think you tend to take on more than is humanly possible, and I believe that is where the emotional labor comes from, when you're driving to work, and you're thinking about all the things you have to do. It's the responsibility, I think that for me, the level of responsibility, that has the worst part of the emotional labor, is worrying.

However, even during very stressful and work intensive times, she maintains that one has to control their emotions because she explains: "I would suspect that if you are an extremely emotional person at work, people will be turned off."

Rose spoke of emotion management in relation to victimization. Rose suggested:

> The problem is that you have to be able to control some level of your emotions because you know, crying when somebody talks harshly to you is certainly not going to make that person speak less harshly to you. In fact, it makes you a *victim*. So, I think there is some degree of emotional control that everybody needs to have.

Rose understands that controlling one's emotions at work is important, especially with strong emotions that lead to crying, as crying makes one a victim. Therefore, as supported by Morley (2006), social practices construct and regulate Rose's everyday experiences.

Maria

Maria has worked in higher education for almost 15 years and currently works as a high-level administrator for the university. She says her current role is a "mixed bag" and considers herself "high energy." Maria provided the following powerful statement about all the things she must take into account daily:

> People will say, "Oh, you look tired," or "Oh, you look like you've had a rough day" or "oh, that meeting didn't go so well. Huh?" It's like well, yeah, because we're working on overdrive times 10, 20, 30 more than the average person in the room because we [*women*] have to worry about all these other things that you [*men*] don't have to worry about. You know, you [*men*] have one outfit, you have a suit, right? We [*women*] need to

> worry, is our dress too short? Is our skirt too tight? Should I wear pants? Should I wear heels? [*Should*] I wear flats, do I wear stockings? Do I not? Is My hair up, is my hair down? Do I wear makeup? Is it too much makeup? All of that, plus the professional decorum, plus the intellectual capacities that we need to bring forth, plus the emotional response to our comments. So yeah, it's exhausting.

The quote above should serve to highlight the multi-dimensional experience of women within their work environment. To further her argument, Maria provided me with several rich descriptions of her understandings of emotional labor and the many ways in which women experience *various dimensions and intensities* even in a single encounter. Here she shares:

> On the emotional side, I think for women it takes a lot more out of us because we want to make our point, we want to seem intelligent, and we want to contribute to the table. But at the same time, we also have to worry about how our words are being perceived, how our body language is being perceived, and are they going to think that we're smart enough? Is that a good enough idea? Did I present it properly? And all of these things are constantly working as variables in an equation, and we have about 10 seconds to make it work, you know? And that takes a lot out of people.

Maria is describing what I would compare to the "chilly climate" reported by Sandler and Hall (1986). Despite the perceived diminished discrimination of women within the workplace, it is clear that gender biases and fear of discrimination still control and guide the thought processes of women employees.

Maria understands appropriate displays of emotion as a complex concept that encompasses more than just managing one's emotions; she says that "you have to watch what you say and watch what you do. Body language matters. Your attire matters. How you respond to people matters." Overall, Maria understands emotional labor along various aspects of her role and also understands it not just as the managing of emotions

but the managing of appropriate displays of professionalism in both *verbal and non-verbal interactions*.

Stacey

Stacey has worked for the university for more than five years and currently works as a mid-level administrator. Stacey discusses her internal struggles with her *identity as a mom and a working professional*; "those things clash consistently," she explains. Regarding emotional labor, she states that she cannot be "herself 100% of the time" while at work due to the need to interact with varying stakeholders.

As a relatively new mom, Stacey often has internal struggles regarding her home life and work life. During one of our interviews, she got teary as she spoke about her child and the balancing act she is continuously performing as a mom and higher education professional. Stacey remarks:

> I think the pressure, the stress, that you feel to have to maintain a certain level of productivity because you don't want having a baby to ruin your career is real. So, I think basically it's that unseen labor that goes into everything, the emotional aspect of dealing with people. And I think it's hard too when you're a woman because you're supposed to be seen as the calm one in the room, or helping people navigate, or not getting upset, and even holding those emotions in is a form of emotional labor to me.

In the quote above, Stacey is tying in motherhood to emotional labor. Since she does not want her identity as a mother to impact her professional identity, she works very hard not to have those identities clash. To add to the discussion on identity, Stacey explains some essentialist notions of women's behaviors that guide her thoughts, emotions, and actions. Through her narrative, Stacey confirms the gendered ways in which she views emotional labor.

Stacey discussed with me an intense situation she encountered when she had a medical condition that required her to be hospitalized. During her time in the hospital, she was still responding to emails and working because of organizational pressures to "keep up." Stacey explains that the pressures were not so much external, as much as her own internal pressures to maintain a presence of professionalism and not allow her personal life to interfere with her career. Here she explains her perspective: "I relate it to being a wife and a mother. I think there's a lot of emotional labor that goes into balancing work and life or creating boundaries, which has been very difficult because you have to keep up, right?" As a new mom, Stacey is working to find a balance between her home life and work life while also trying to prevent those two realms of her reality to interfere with each other.

Bailey

Bailey has worked in higher education for almost 45 years and currently works as a high-level administrator. She grew up in a difficult household, so to deal with difficult situations at work she operates with the mantra "tomorrow will be better. You wake up in the morning, reboot, and that's how you keep your sanity." When it comes to large university initiatives, she pushes her frustrations aside because of the perception of "if you can't get it done, we'll find somebody who can." Rather than getting mad or frustrated, she explains that "I immediately go into problem-solving mode…It may not be helpful for me because I'm not able to express my feelings, but it gets me into solving it." As a long-time administrator, Bailey understands that often, the job just has to get done. So, getting frustrated, or expressing strong emotions, can be unproductive, which is indicative of the corporate logic present within higher education which privileges

rationality over emotions. As a long-time employee, Bailey understands that the social norms of her organization require her to suppress feelings and emotions to get the job done; otherwise, they will find someone else to do it.

As previously mentioned, Bailey and I only had one interaction as part of my study. During our time together, she shared with me her working style, as well as her evolution as a professional throughout her long career in higher education administration. Bailey told me that "it's an interesting phenomenon of women growing up, trying harder to be perfect, to please others…Talk about the emotional toll that it takes on someone." As a person who likes to keep others happy, having to work on issues that may displease others can take a toll on her.

Bailey told me that she is a *people pleaser*, so she often spoke about the importance of relationships and connections. When talking about emotional labor and relationships, she explained that "there is more to getting a job done than the task at hand. That the human factor and the elements brought to the table by the individuals, they are just as important." Therefore, Bailey has worked very hard throughout her career to build strong working relationships, which she states is very important to her.

Olivia

Olivia has worked in higher education for approximately 30 years and currently works as a high-level administrator. She describes herself as high energy and enjoys a challenge. Regarding professionalism and emotions, she declares to me "I can be professional by the decisions I make, by being timely, meeting deadlines, having accurate work, but also by being yourself and that's where I do bring my emotions into what I do." However, she explains that *managing one's emotions "is the crux of climbing the ladder.*

I look at the executive team at the university, and the ones that can manage [*emotions*] the most are, in my opinion, what I see as the better leaders." Therefore, even though Olivia realizes that one demonstrates professionalism in many ways, she also understands that managing one's emotions is an integral part of ascending to the upper echelons of higher education administration. Olivia's statements supports Kellett, Humphrey, and Sleeth's (2002, 2006) claim that the ability for employees to display empathy, identify others' emotions and the ability to express one's own emotion is related to leader emergence. However, Olivia's narrative adds to Kellett, Humphrey, and Sleeth's findings by validating that expressing *desired emotions* can lead to leader emergence.

Olivia initially described emotional labor as the "sweat equity" that one puts into their job. To elaborate on the concept of "sweat equity," she equated emotional labor to childbirth in the quote below:

> As a woman, labor, you think of it as *childbirth*, what a woman does. Right? So, if I correctly translated it, it is the pains that you go through to give fruition to a good thing. So, I cut that down to sweat equity; I cut it down to the heartache, the pains that you need to endure so that at the end you would give birth to a healthy child, you would give birth to a good job or good outcome in your position.

Olivia conceptualizes emotional labor to be part of the hard work she puts into her position, both in mental and physical work. In Chapter 1, I discussed emotional labor in relation to labor as understood by Marx (1867). That is, emotional labor in relation to economic terms such as exchange-value. In her quote, Olivia provides us with a completely different conceptualization of "labor" which allows us the opportunity to analyze different ways participants understand and experience emotional labor that may not be directly linked to economic justifications or explanations.

Rachel

Rachel has worked in higher education for almost ten years and works as a mid-level administrator who oversees a team of approximately five full-time staff and many student employees. Rachel considers herself more of an educator than an administrator, and she explains that "as an educator, I'm having to work with individuals on a holistic level. I'm never working with [*employees*] just on the academic side of things."

During the time the interviews for my study were conducted, Rachel was enduring a very difficult time in her personal life. Rachel was the second participant to get teary when describing her gratitude for her team and the support they provided her during an extremely tumultuous time. She told me: "I enjoy this so much, I really have a stance of gratitude and thankfulness. I thank God for them every day." Rachel spent a great deal of time telling me how much she appreciates all that her team does for her.

As an administrator who works with many *student employees*, she spoke about not getting involved in their emotional "tornado." She explains, "I have to see their emotions for what they are. I have to acknowledge why they feel the way they feel, and I need to work with them. If I get emotionally involved with that [*pause*]." After her statement, she chuckled, which indicated she works with very emotionally charged issues when working with student employees. She further explains the dynamics of working with student employees:

> It's also what their own experiences bring in. Sometimes that includes some resentment, sometimes that includes some joy. That [*also*] includes the dynamic among themselves, [*and*] how they work with each other. So, you're dealing with the entire human being, not [*just the*] education aspect of the job.

Working with young adults is a welcome challenge for Rachel, who is well versed in working with young adults. She spends a lot of time *teaching* young adults how to be professionals and act appropriately; this is important, as the literature demonstrates that emotional norms, such as professionalism, are learned through observation and lived experiences (Kramer and Hess, 2002). Therefore, through teaching, Rachel is socializing her employees to demonstrate normalized performances of emotions.

Finally, Rachel describes how emotions can be constructive and do not always have to be managed:

> If they get really upset about something, it's because they really care about what's going on. So, I have to take those emotions into account. So yes, emotions very much have a place in the workplace, constructively, because I think if there weren't emotion, you wouldn't care. We don't run a clinic. Right?

Rachel understands that emotions can be linked to passion and caring, so they play an important role in the work that she and her employees do. Nevertheless, she strives to teach her employees the appropriate ways to behave in a professional setting.

Kelly

Kelly has worked in higher education for about 25 years and works as a high-level administrator. When asked about emotional labor in the context of higher education, Kelly declares that "it's *integral to everything* that every one of us in higher ed does." Furthermore, she notes: "To me, the epitome of *professionalism* is that you perform emotional labor at the highest level." Therefore, Kelly conceptualized emotional labor as directly related to professionalism.

Kelly and I only engaged in one interview for my study. Kelly is an extremely busy administrator who works with sensitive faculty issues. When discussing what

emotional labor meant to her, she explains that "it's the management of my emotions, while I'm attempting to navigate and manage the emotions of the other, all for the purposes of the job." Furthermore, she explains that emotional labor is not always a negative experience, "it's both the upside and the downside, and it's stimulating and engaging and exciting." Kelly explains that emotional labor is at the heart of what she does every day and is an integral part of her role.

Summary

Participants provided me with many narratives that described their understandings and experiences with emotional labor. Through participant profiles, I recreate and highlight the essence of each participant's understandings and experiences with emotional labor. Through these unique profiles, I created a persona for each participant, which should serve to help answer the research question and provide context for each participants' understanding of emotional labor. Since each participant had their own understandings and experiences with emotional labor, we can conclude that the performance of emotional labor is a deeply personal experience that is individual and situational.

Emotional labor can be understood and conceptualized by participants in a myriad of ways, stemming from various motivational aspects, and can be experienced in innumerable ways. Through these participant profiles, I demonstrate that emotional labor is, indeed, a part of the administrative culture within the participant's work environment. Specifically, emotional labor is experienced by the participants of my study, and emotional labor contributes to their personal and professional experiences as administrators.

CHAPTER V

WORK ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE, AND EMOTIONAL LABOR

The University is not like a corporation; it is a corporation
(Readings, 1996)

Everyone's worried about accountability and policies and procedures.
- Becky

Work environment and culture are presented in Chapter 5 as the first emergent theme because it lays the foundation for understanding the work environment in which the participants dwell. The theme is not meant to provide generalizations of higher education culture in general. Rather, it should serve to provide an understanding of the participant's work environment and culture as told through participant narratives. Chapter 1 discussed the corporate nature of higher education which encourages employees to assume a corporate identity that requires them to act professional, even-keel, and rational; the theme should justify this claim. The theme should also provide perspective for the intersection of participant's work environment, culture, and emotional labor.

As part of my qualitative interview study, I asked participants if they thought there were aspects of working for higher education that makes it a unique space for employees navigating the performance of emotional labor. Some of the data collected in Chapter 5 come directly from the question above, while others come from mentions of individual work environments without prompt. For my study, the corporate nature of higher education is discussed by participants based on their understandings of how *politics* and *corporate America* looks and behaves. We did not go into detail as to how each participant conceptualized the concept of a *corporation, corporate America,* or

politics. Rather, these terms were generally used by participants to describe interactions in their workspace or to describe dealing with sensitive or complicated issues.

The first theme is separated into two sub-themes. The two subthemes are "Remnants of the Ivory Tower" and "The Politics of Emotion in The Corporate University." The "Remnants of the Ivory Tower" section analyzes participant narratives on historical conceptualizations of higher education and their work environment. "The Politics of Emotion in The Corporate University" section analyzes participant narratives around conceptualizations of *politics* within their work environments as well as discussions from participants about the *corporate* nature of higher education. All themes presented in Chapter 5 are in relation to participants' understandings and experiences with emotional labor within their work environments.

Remnants of The Ivory Tower

> *We're slower to the party, we're slower to get there, and [in] academia we keep insisting that if we create more dashboards and have more data and analytics that that's going to solve our problems.*
>
> - Marlen

Several participnats described higher education in relation to its history. Maria discussed higher education as an institution that is stuck in its old ways, while still challenging employees to be *disruptive*. She says:

> I think that's one of the challenges with higher education because we're such an old institution that started in the sixteen hundreds, at least here in the United States, those very antiquated traditions have just kind of stayed in education. So, it does make being creative and innovative a little more challenging because of that very old way of being, and you've got to stay within the lines while at the same time being disruptive.

In the excerpt from her interview, Maria explains that higher education is rooted in old traditions, some many hundreds of years old which creates for her an interesting

dichotomy when she is faced with the notion of being "disruptive" with her work, while simultaneously working in a role that very much follows an order. She explains that "there's definitely a certain level of protocol we have to follow. [*When*] a lot of us interact with each other, we're pretty casual, but in the professional setting titles matter, hierarchy matters." Therefore, Maria understands that in her work setting, it is important to keep titles and hierarchy in mind when interacting with others. Her mindset is indicative of the ways Maria's work environment requires employees to be innovative while still operating in antiquated traditions and norms.

Becky discussed higher education as a space that should be rooted in free thought and the pursuit of learning. She asserts that "we work in higher ed. This is supposed to be a place where people can be free to talk and express ideas and think of new things. That's what higher education is." Conversely, she explains, she experiences many employees "looking at this as just another corporate job of theirs." She states:

> Yes, higher ed is such a great place where you can be free to express yourself and talk about new ideas and get people's minds thinking about other things, [*but*] other people are just thinking about management and how to get people to do things I want them to, without actually saying it.

Becky understands her workplace to be shifting from a space rooted in traditional ideas of higher education to a corporate work environment specifically, an environment where management is carefully crafting their statements and interactions to encourage others to do as they want (while not being completely honest).

When discussing the difference between academic and corporate spaces in relation to human resources dedicated to the emotional and human aspects of work,

Marlen makes explicit claims about the downfalls of academia in relation to the human aspects of work. She tells me:

> In academia, we take pride in being logical, and in systems and processes [*so*], for faculty emotions are not on the table like that. They have almost been socialized away through graduate study with this emphasis on logic and evidence and reason and where emotion isn't really talked about or seen as anything positive.

Marlen asserts that how faculty are promoted leaves out emotion, so there is little to no benefit to attending to them.

Olivia went through a difficult time during several years of her career. As she told me stories about the issues she had faced, she commented: "You hear about the good old boy circuit." The "good old boy circuit" she is referring to is a tight-knit group of male colleagues that often dominate leadership positions in higher education. She makes the statement and admits that she had not seen it throughout her career until she was faced with various difficult circumstances. The "good old boys circuit," or the perception that there is still one, I would argue, is a remnant of the ivory tower where academic privilege separated academics from the realities of the world. The statement demonstrates Olivia is working in an environment where a privileged few holds much of the power.

Rose understands higher education as a respectful place. She grew up on a campus and mentioned the respectful rivalries between academics alongside the difficulties of working in administration:

> I grew up on a campus, and I was very comfortable around academics. I knew there's rivalry between academics, but there basically is a very respectful environment for the most part. And I think that that was what I had anticipated, and I didn't realize in administration how difficult some people could be.

In her reference to respectful rivalries among academics, Rose is referring to intellectual arguments academics engage in; some rivalries are probably stemming from centuries ago. Nevertheless, she understands higher education as a space to be respectful for academics, but much more "difficult" or disrespectful in administration.

Participants often separated administrators and faculty as two separate entities, implying, often explicitly, fundamental differences between these two groups in higher education. Furthermore, participants often made statements that supported the idea that degrees, ranks, and hierarchies matter in higher education. When discussing how she works around difficult faculty issues, Bailey explains that she is a tenured full professor so she can connect with faculty on a level that administrators cannot. Bailey asserts:

> I know I get away with stuff because I've been here, I'm a tenured and a full professor rank, and that means more to faculty than any associate [*or*] vice [*indicating administrative rank*]. So, I can say things that [*administrators*] can't, even [*that other person who*] is new can't. I can just say, "Well no, we're not going to do it that way." I can cut to the chase, which is a benefit of my length of time here.

Through her academic rank, Baily maintains that she can connect with faculty in a unique way. Therefore, Bailey finds herself to be extremely effective at working through difficult faculty issues by using her rank within the institution to her advantage.

Vanessa does not hold the same terminal degree as many of the high-ranking officials within her department. Therefore, she explains that she is often seen as a "guest at the party." Here, she further explains the issue she faces by not having the same degree as her peers: "you're part of this academic circle, but you also don't belong because [*you don't have the same terminal degree they do*], so you don't really have anywhere to necessarily belong." Since she does not hold the same terminal degree as her co-workers,

at times, she feels excluded. Vanessa implies that your terminal degree *does* matter when operating in a space such as higher education. Vanessa also explains that within her work environment, hierarchies can appear in explicit ways, such as the way she describes the importance of degrees within her work environment. Further, these hierarchies can either lead to a sense of belonging or exclusion and can exacerbate these feelings by affirming essentialists notions of what "academics" look and act like.

Stacey identifies higher education as a space that is becoming more business-like, but still embedded in the traditional ideals that join the community. Stacey says:

> I think the beauty of higher ed is that you're here for a joint purpose, right? You're here to serve the students, you have that public service piece. Generally, the people who are in your same area, have that feeling. So, I think that's important. And public service oriented versus profit is very different. I mean we need to get a good ROI [*return on investment*] on our investments, but you're not like, "time is money." Now with the metrics, it's become a little bit more businessy in that regard. But whenever you're in the nonprofit or public space, it's a different kind of feeling.

Stacey sees her work environment and higher education in general as a space that is adopting more corporate elements, yet still rooted in traditional public service. The quote connects the following segment of the theme, which includes the corporate university and the understandings and conceptualization of "politics" within the participant's institution.

Summary

The findings should serve to situate the participants of my study within their work environment and culture. Specifically, these findings should contextualize the participant's understandings of emotional labor as they occur within their work environment in relation to historical conceptualizations of higher education. Maria provided a compelling statement regarding the changing nature of the university when

she discussed working within a traditional institution who expects her to be disruptive which is indicative of a dichotomy faced by employees who understand the traditional nature of higher education, but also acknowledges that current expectations are different. Similarly, Becky spoke about higher education being rooted in free expression but executed through management. Marlen furthered her argument when she described how academia takes pride in logical systems and processes. Marlen then argues that academics are socialized away from emotions through their graduate study, therefore making higher education a unique space to perform emotional labor.

Olivia told me many stories about her time working within higher education. When she talked to me about a particularly difficult time, she discussed the "good old boy circuit." The "good old boy circuit" I would argue, is a remnant of the ivory tower. Specifically, the idea that men and masculinity still operate as the driving force behind higher education. The culture appears to be shifting, though, as women continue to occupy powerful and influential positions within the higher education administrative hierarchy.

Participants often discussed academics and administrators as two completely different entities; generally, we know this not to be necessarily true. Further, the literature did not support this finding, as Woods (2010) stated that the staff and academics are often conflated and used synonymously within the literature. Nevertheless, these conceptualizations of academics and administrators as different demonstrates that the participants of my study may see themselves as completely unlike their academic counterparts. Since the differentiation of academics and administrators was not part of the research question, the concept was not further explored. However, Rose and Bailey both

spoke in detail about their perceived fundamental differences. Rose understands academics as being more respectful than administrators. Bailey understands that her academic rank provides her opportunities to engage with faculty in ways that her strictly administrative counterparts simply cannot. To add to the complexity of the university hierarchy, Vanessa told us about the issues she faced when her degree was compared to those around her. Though she holds a terminal degree like the rest of her colleagues, she still feels marginalized by those who hold degrees different than hers. Vanessa's narrative brings forward some of the implicit and explicit biases left behind from the ivory tower where knowledge production from specific disciplines was (and likely still is) emphasized.

The analysis provided in the current section should serve as a starting point for understanding the work environment in which the participants of my study operate and provides us insights as to how participants perceive the university setting. These historical understandings of the academy set the foundation for beginning to answer the research question presented in my study.

The Politics of Emotion in The Corporate University

> *You have to know the political agenda of everyone that you're meeting with and make sure that you navigate that correctly.*
>
> - Stacey

Various participants referenced the "politics" of their work environment. In analyzing participant narratives on politics, they often referenced politics when discussing conflicts among individuals and power struggles that required emotion management. Emotion management was discussed in terms of the ways participants

themselves managed their emotions in the presence of politics, but also how participants observed others managing (or not) their emotions within highly politicized spaces.

To begin, Rachel discussed her workplace of higher education in comparison with her previous role, which was outside of higher education. She noted that "the dynamics very different here. Diplomacy is key." She further describes:

> I also work with faculty a lot, whereas [*in my previous job*], you'll have a [*boss*] who tells his or her [*employees*], "You will do this because it's what's coming down." And that doesn't take place here. We have a Senate, we have faculty who, essentially, tell the administration "make me." I mean, for all intents and purposes that doesn't work here. So, if you want to get anything done here positively, you really do [*have to be diplomatic*].

Rachel understands her work environment as a unique space where she must navigate social relations differently than she ever did working in her previous role. Rachel also understands that in higher education, faculty has an autonomy that is unique to the profession. That is, *requiring* faculty to do certain things may require a diplomatic approach that one may not need in other fields of work. Therefore, Rachel understands she must behave in specific ways if she wants to be able to get her job done.

When asked if she deals with emotionally charged issues as part of her job, Stacey claimed:

> I don't think the issues themselves are emotionally charged really, but I think what people want out of them or the perceived power people could get for owning some of them or developing some of them makes it emotionally charged. So again, it goes back to that kind of politics and power sort of thing.

The quote above demonstrates that Stacey sees many of the issues she handles as emotionally charged because of the power that can be obtained by creating or completing

certain tasks. She ties power into her understanding of emotional labor and further remarks:

> I think for me it's a lot of regulating emotion. So, there are sometimes when you can be in meetings and you can share how you really feel, [*but*] most of the time you can't, right? So, you always have to be on, and you have to know the political agenda of everyone that you're meeting with and make sure that you navigate that correctly. So, for me, that's a big part of it. You have to be on 100 percent of the time, and to me, that's mentally exhausting.

Stacey directly ties in her understanding of emotional labor into the political nature of her job responsibilities. She explains that she has to know the climate of the room and understand what each person is vying for, then she must act accordingly; she explains this is exhausting but necessary. She must know how to properly navigate these highly politicized spaces to do her job successfully.

As part of our first interview, Marlen mentioned that she has access to some more "heated" incidences as a result of her access to upper administration which she describes as "highly, highly politicized." When I followed up and asked her about these highly politicized spaces, she remarked:

> I think that in these highly politicized spaces something that enters, and I see kind of pervading the spaces is ego and pride and fear and insecurity and those are kind of heightened, right? So, at the highest political incidents, you have people with very, very high positions. So, they have positional authority, and their view of leadership might be more around "I have the higher title, so then my opinion is better." I find a lot less listening. I was saying that I don't have lots of reflection time. I find that becomes even more scarce as you go up, and so you have people who have very real pressures on them who are frustrated by people and almost wanting the people to just do things and kind of wishing emotions away even though they're there. So that's some of the complexity. I don't know that I can do justice to it. It's messy.

Marlen recognizes the "real" pressures placed on high ranking administrators within her work environment. She further emphasizes that these pressures can lead to frustration and the desire to completely remove emotion from interactions when stress is high. Essentially, some of the administrators in highly politicized spaces will push for getting the work done, regardless of how it may make employees feel.

Olivia discussed her work environment as a space where decisions are made slowly. She did not talk about private work environments from personal experience; instead, she discussed her point of view from the perspective of colleagues who have come to work in higher education from the private sector. She explains:

> People who have come to work from the private sector to higher ed find it harder, it's more political. What I see is in the private world, there's more privacy, like in the [*state*] university system, salaries are transparent to everybody. There's the right to know, there's all that. You go into any other private sector, Google, whatever, you are not going to know what your colleague or your coworker, what they're paid. I think that keeps some of this political stuff away from them.

Olivia perceives that the transparency of salaries in the state of Florida adds to a dimension of her work environment as a political space. In her experience, since everyone knows everyone's salary, she insinuates that knowing everyone's salary adds to the pressure of working within her institution. Olivia also states that higher education, as a workplace, often moves much slower than "corporate America," thus adding to levels of frustration. She further presents the following example:

> I think higher ed has a lot of politics and we don't move fast about things. In private, the decision is made. It's done. By the end of the week we've set up a whole new division. Here it's got to be vetted. It's got to be discussed. It takes so much longer, and I think it's more painful and people are more at edge.

Olivia understands that bureaucracy can lead to frustration. Given that higher education is often notorious for bureaucracy, she understands her work environment to be a unique space that is different than "corporate America."

I asked Becky about the emotional norms of her workplace. She explained that "it's all a façade." She tells me that it is very difficult for her to naturally speak in the "jargon" that many of her colleagues have adapted. She uses the term jargon several times to support the concept that employees in her work environment pick up a specialized language to be successful. She declares:

> Everyone's worried about accountability and policies and procedures, which I completely understand. But if we're thinking about [*my job*] I don't want to have to worry about which political jargon I'm going to use today in this email. [*Whereas*] I [*could*] just completely be honest and be like, "Hey, you didn't reply to my email. I just wanted to---" instead of writing "Per my last email I email, I indicated blah blah blah." You know what I mean? It just seems so gross, and I hear that out of people's mouths and I'm like, I know that's not you and I know you're being passive-aggressive. It's just the F*abuloso* version of everyone.

Becky explained that many of her co-workers use what she sees as jargon when communicating via email which can be tied to the political nature of higher education as it is indicative of the way Becky purposefully crafts her communications to successfully navigate her workplace which she sees as filled with "political jargon." Becky finds the use of jargon to be frustrating and wishes she could be more authentic in her written communications.

Contrary to what many of the other participants stated, Lisa understands her work environment to be a space where emotional labor may not be needed because of the nature of her type of job and the overall work environment. She contrasts the higher education work environment with corporate America in the below statement:

> I don't think this environment allows people to pretend. I don't know what it is. I don't think this environment allows you to wallow I guess because there's so much going on. Students and other people, it's just like we're always surrounded by someone. It's rare that you can sit someplace and just be into your own mood because someone's going to walk in and say "Hey!" or students can walk in, we're never alone. Like I feel like in corporate people can literally sit for hours and not talk to somebody and we don't. That never has happened. There's not an hour that goes by where there's not some kind of word spoken to another individual, so it's hard. You can only fake it for so long because then you're just like it's not that bad. You realize it's not that serious and you can move on from it. You're just not allowed to be sad here. I don't think that's a bad thing, I think it's actually a good thing. I think it allows us to step outside of whatever is bringing us down and allows us to step out of ourselves and focus on other things so that we don't go into and stay in that bad place.

I would equate Lisa's to Hochschild's (1983) concept of deep acting, which is different than surface acting. Through deep acting, individuals try to experience the desired emotion, whereas surface acting, includes hiding or faking emotions. Therefore, even though Lisa says that higher education is a space that doesn't allow "you to wallow…because there's so much going on." Lisa's quote would appear to be a description of deep acting. As such, we can understand that Lisa's work environment forces deep acting upon employees.

Lisa's narrative does not have a specific mention of politics, but the politics of Lisa's work environment are implied through the description of her work environment in contrast to "corporate." Further, Lisa understands her work environment as a space where "you can only fake it for so long," and compares higher education to corporate America which adds to the argument that participants often understand and experience their workspace as one that is unique and different from their counterparts who may work in other fields.

Summary

To continue to build the foundation for understanding the participant's work environment, I have presented narratives from participants that include the mention of *politics*. These narratives include how participants themselves managed their emotions in the presence of said *politics*, but also how participants observed others managing (or not) their emotions within highly politicized spaces.

Rachel spent many years working outside of higher education. She explains that in her previous field, a top-down approach was taken to implement initiatives. To bring back some remnants of the ivory tower, Rachel explained that a top-down approach does not work in her work environment education because "diplomacy" is key, and faculty has a unique autonomy. Therefore, Rachel, like many other participants, uses her political skill (Ferris et al., 2007) and emotional labor to approach difficult and politically charged initiatives. Olivia also describes her work environment as a space that is more political than the "private world."

When discussing highly politicized spaces and emotionally charged issues, Stacey discussed always having to be "on" as a form of emotional labor. She understands that she can sometimes show her emotions. But, for the most part, Stacey explains that she has to know the "political agenda" of people she meets with to make sure she navigates those politics appropriately, and she spends a lot of time managing her own emotions and thoughts to navigate highly politicized spaces. Stacey also discussed power dynamics within said highly politicized spaces that can lead to heated incidents. Power dynamics were also discussed by Marlen, who explained that people with "very real pressures" often "wish away" emotions. In explaining how these arenas operate, Marlen explained:

"it's messy." The description of her workplace as messy encapsulates the complexity of describing and explaining how these social interactions occur and how they force individuals to modify their behaviors.

When discussing politics, Olivia spoke about a couple of unique aspects of her work environment. To begin, she spoke about the transparency of the Florida State University System (SUS). The state of Florida publishes employee salaries online. The transparency of salaries, Olivia claims, adds to the political nature of her work environment. As she explains, in the private sector, you are unlikely to know the salary of your co-workers, which she attributes to "keeping the political stuff away from [*the private sector*]." Olivia then proceeds to explain that politics within her work environment lead to a slower pace for work. That is, she perceives that implementing initiatives may take longer in higher education, which then adds to a level of frustration among employees. Frustration can then lead to an increased need for behavior modification as she navigates bureaucratic processes put in place that may lead to increased feelings of frustration.

Becky discussed politics within her work environment by analyzing the ways in which her co-workers communicate. Becky, as previously mentioned, understands that higher education should be a space rooted in free thought. However, Becky sees that her co-workers have adopted a unique language which includes "political jargon." Becky maintains that political jargon clouds messages and is part of the *sterilization* process that employees within her work environment go through to appear professional.

Finally, Lisa spoke about differences between working within higher education and corporate America as grounded in her own experiences. Because of the nature of her

work, Lisa maintains that she does not have the ability to “fake it.” Lisa explained that it is because she must maintain constant communication with others as part of her job responsibility. The constant communication leaves little room for hiding or modifying behaviors as she eventually experiences the appropriate emotion.

Participants often referred to their work environment as both a corporation, while still being a traditional space of academia. Furthermore, participants conceptualized their work environment as a highly politicized space situated somewhere between the traditional idea of higher education and a corporation operating under neoliberal ideals. Overall, participants generally implied that within their work environments, the management of emotions, or emotional labor, is essential for successfully navigating dynamics in their work environments. The ways in which participants conceptualize their work environment is an important finding of my study because it properly situates us to understand how women administrators in higher education experience and understand emotional labor within participant’s work environments.

CHAPTER VI

PROFESSIONALISM, LEADERSHIP, AND EMOTIONAL LABOR

In my mind, I'm like, how do I say this without being completely honest, and still get my point across.

-Becky

In Chapter 6, I present the second theme of my study, which includes participant narrative that described experiencing emotional labor either along conceptualizations of professionalism or leadership. Some participants discussed professionalism as a performance, while others understood that acting professionally is part of the social norms of working within higher education. Participants discussed leadership qualities that they felt fostered environments of emotional inclusivity and understanding. Professionalism and leadership have been split into two distinct categories in Chapter 6, though they sometimes intersect in participant narratives.

Professionalism and leadership are split into two categories because I coded them into two distinctive themes. Despite their similarities, I took a nuanced look at the ways in which emotional labor either coalesced with or presented as professionalism and leadership. I provide a closer examination of the distinctions I made within these sub-themes in the introduction of each section. Chapter 6 should serve to explain how participants understand and experience emotional labor as professionalism and leadership.

Professionalism

> *To me, the epitome of professionalism is that you perform emotional labor at the highest level.*
>
> - Kelly

> *You have to be very professional. You have to put up the front*
>
> -Olivia

I present professionalism as the first sub-theme of Chapter 6. In my study, *professionalism*, or *being professional*, is often discussed by participants based on how they see themselves through other people's eyes. Further, participants often discuss professionalism in relation to their status, standing, regard, or levels of professional reward (Hargreaves, 2010). Professionalism can also be seen as the socially accepted normal behaviors expected within participants' work environments. That is, I understood professionalism discussed by participants as general rules and acceptable behaviors such as workplace etiquette. Further, mentions of professionalism often equated to being rational as opposed to emotional, which makes sense considering the participants of my study operate in an environment that privileges rationality. More importantly, though, it should be noted that professionalism plays a role in power relations within the participant's work environment specifically, as it relates to socially accepted behaviors and the power granted to those who demonstrate such desirable behaviors. The concept of power and professionalism ties into emotional labor as participants often discussed engaging in emotional labor to appear *professional* or *be professional*.

As part of my conversation with participants, I asked how they thought emotions and emotional labor might be connected to professionalism. Some of the answers in the current section came directly from that question while others did not. When asked if

emotional labor is tied to professionalism, Kelly immediately declared: “to me, the epitome of professionalism is that you perform emotional labor at the highest level.” She further remarks that part of her job is attending to the emotions of her colleagues, she states:

> Being professional is, for me, being honest, being fair, being clear in communication. Ultimately, I believe strongly that every one of us wants to feel valued in the work that we do. So how can I, in this [*colleague’s*] distress, have them have a sense of finding value in the work that they do.

Kelly continues to describe a difficult circumstance and conversation she had at work. Kelly explains that at the moment, she acknowledged to herself: “well, this is the performance of emotional labor.” As she sat across from her colleague, she had to hold back how she really felt when she was presented with an issue that she saw as “simple.” She says that “I wish [*other problems*] were this simple.” However, Kelly cannot express strong emotions in the described situation because she states: “professionalism is, to me, it’s everything, it’s how we treat ourselves and how we look after ourselves and how we interact with others, and I don’t care who they are. Everybody.” Therefore, Kelly understands that suppressing emotions is part of professionalism and being a professional.

When discussing her career growth as a female administrator, Lisa made the following statement:

> I feel as women, as we move up, we lose parts of ourselves as we make these transitions. Who I was ten years ago is different than I am today. I think that comes with knowledge, experience, things of that nature. We show less of who we really are as you move up. That lends itself to just a different way in which we interact with our peers and colleagues in the vein of saying I’m just being more professional.

Lisa explains that she has learned what is acceptable and has adjusted her behaviors to be what she perceives as "more professional." Lisa observed that she has modified the way she behaves and even describes "losing parts" of herself. Lisa's statement is significant, as we know what organizational structures and norms are not gender neutral and can lead to the subordination of women (Acker, 1990). Therefore, we can conclude that Lisa is succumbing to an organizational obligation to lose the parts of herself seen as undesirable or "unprofessional."

Professionalism is often seen as commonsense in higher education administration. Once one reaches a certain hierarchical level, employees are automatically expected to act in certain ways that are perceived as "professional." For analysis, we can equate professionalism to workplace etiquette or the social norms of behavior. Lisa revealed her assumptions of workplace etiquette to me in the following quote: "I think there is a time and a place for everything, and I think when you're in the work environment, there's just a level of professionalism that you just need to have. It just it's not up for question." Lisa explains there is little to no room for deviation from her conceptualization of professionalism when in the work environment. Lisa also explained to me:

> The whole idea that you can get further with bees and sugar and honey and vinegar or something like that, whatever it is. Like I don't want to piss this person off, but I need them to know that this is serious to me without being unprofessional. I always think about, you never know who you're going to need down the line. If you're running around pissing folks off it, it's a reflection on who you are as a professional, as an individual. And that's not a reputation that people want following them around. I definitely don't want it.

As part of her statement, Lisa recognizes that she does not know who she may need in the future, so acting professional is important to maintain productivity. Lisa's argument adds

to the antecedents of emotional labor by tying in motivation. Lisa appears to be operating with a promotion focused motivation, which is concerned with advancement, growth, and accomplishment (Higgins, 1998).

Maria echoed Lisa's sentiments in the following statement: "you have to be professional because you can't just be across the board room and be like, 'you're an idiot, what are you doing?' So, there's, there's a sense of decorum that has to be followed." Maria understands that there is an emotional norm that must be followed, which she refers to as decorum, or an appropriate display of emotions; an appropriate display that is very much expected.

Vanessa further solidifies expectation of appropriate emotional displays when I asked her what makes her workplace "professional." She proclaimed: "being non-emotional. So professional being that we keep things work-related. And work-related, meaning the work, not the inner workings of the people who intermingle in it. So, it's just the work." Vanessa made her statement very matter-of-factly, which demonstrates professionalism or being non-emotional, is expected in her workplace. The narratives from Maria, Lisa, and Vanessa point to employees developing emotional schemas and fabrics of habits within social situations in their work environments.

Becky explained that she would often censor herself for fear of being deemed "unprofessional." When discussing why she doesn't speak up when she is displeased with something at work, she said she does not speak up because "it doesn't matter, it's moot." Becky elaborated on the following statement and emphasized:

> They'll just use that information, not for good. They won't say, "Oh, thank God that you told me this. This is a really great idea. Let's work on this. What a wonderful thing. Thanks for speaking up." Instead, they'll use it, and they'll talk about me in [*other meetings*], and then I'll never get the opportunity to move up because I'll be either deemed unprofessional or hard to work with. So, if I want to move up, I have to be professional, I have to be easy to work with, and that's what I have to do.

Becky understands that she must modify her behavior and how she speaks to be seen as professional and easy to work with. Therefore, to get her job done and be able to progress professionally, Becky constantly monitors herself and does not let herself speak up too often. The need for Becky to censor herself as part of the persona of a "professional" leads me to believe that Becky's work environment has commodified her thoughts and behaviors by making them the currency necessary for her to grow professionally.

Rose also commented on her inability to speak up. When discussing an interaction she had with a supervisor who was being extremely difficult and borderline abusive to her, Rose proclaimed, "it's not like I could tell her to take your job and shove it…I never burn bridges. So, I didn't. There was nothing in the conversation we had that she would ever have known what I was thinking." Rose admits that even when she was treated extremely badly, she was unable to speak up because she knew she might have to work with the person she mentioned again in the future and she always wanted to maintain a demeanor of professionalism. Rose's narrative demonstrates the power relations present when employees must censor their thoughts, emotions, and actions in hegemonic and hierarchical relationships. As much as Rose wanted to speak up about the abuse she was experiencing, she did not because she wanted to remain professional. Censorship oppresses and frustrates employees who feel beholden to hierarchical structures which influence behaviors and feelings.

Stacey understands professionalism as "knowing who you're around." Specifically, it's the idea that one must modify their behavior depending on who they are around. She explains that "if [*upper administration*] is there, I want to make sure that what I say is as emotionally neutral as possible and well thought out as possible, so they don't feel like I'm coming off as emotionally charged." She furthers her thought by explaining that she can act differently around those she has closer relationships with:

> I think professionalism is really just about knowing who you're around and what they think of you. If you're around the right people, they won't take what you say the wrong way. So, I think the key there is knowing your audience.

Stacey understands that one must modify the way they express themselves depending on who they are interacting with to appear professional. Essentially, the concept of professionalism and emotional labor lies along a continuum, one that is measured and executed through relationships and trust. Further, Stacey's discussions around maintaining emotional neutrality through a semblance of professionalism in front of upper administration adds to the argument that power relations shape and encode her work environment through the modification of her thoughts and behaviors.

In discussing professionalism and emotional labor, Nicole states that "I think it goes back to the idea of being vulnerable. Once somebody really expresses vulnerable feelings, it's oftentimes seen as not professional. Yet, it's a strength to be able to do that, and to be willing to do [*that*]." Nicole explains that expressing vulnerable emotions can be seen as unprofessional while simultaneously perceived as a strength. For Nicole, finding the balance is complicated. She further explains:

> I believe that people always felt like "I don't trust [*them*] enough to say that because they'll use it against me." Well, that's what builds people to feel really close and connected, when I can be myself and I could let you know when I'm really hurting or when I'm really frustrated or whatever. But I think we still have like a lid of "keep those undercover."

Similar to Stacey, Nicole discussed trust when expressing emotions in her workplace. Nicole also understands that expressing emotions can lead people to feel connected and can build a sense of community at work. However, she also says that "I think there's still a bias and a judgment about crying publicly…we still have a sense professionally, don't lose, don't lose it. Keep your control; keep control of your emotions." Again, emotion expression is viewed along a continuum where employees must find a balance between displaying authentic emotion and acting professional.

I asked Marlen if she ever has to act to get what she wants, and she, like Stacey, also discussed positional authority and the need to act in front of upper administration. She described:

> Sometimes there's a little bit of that with people at the very, very top where they don't really want to see all of your true colors. So maybe there's a little bit of a nod to their positional authority and what do they. So, yes, rare. If with anyone, it would be with our most senior leadership where the outcomes outweigh my need to be my authentic self because I'm not here for me.

In the narrative above, Marlen admits that she is not her "authentic self" during certain situations at work. Specifically, when she has to work with the upper administration at the university. Lisa made a similar remark when discussing working with individuals at different professional levels at the university. Lisa remarked:

> I think we're chameleons. We do what we need to do to get shit done. How I act in front of [*person A*] versus even [*person B*], two very different levels. Or just anybody, right? Very different range of folk and so you act differently around them.

Lisa understands that interactions with different employees at different levels may require her to act accordingly to "get shit done." These examples of behavior modification are indicative of how the participant's work environment privileges "normalized" professional behaviors. These normalized professional behaviors reveal layers of the gendered and sexualized hierarchies present within participant's work environment.

Maria also mentioned that she interacts with people differently based on hierarchy as well as personality. Through time, she has learned how to manage her interactions with others. As she demonstrates:

> It was total trial and error. I'm like, okay, well this person always rolls her eyes when they're in a meeting with me, I'm going to try throwing jokes. Okay, well, they're not a funny kind of person. They are not picking up my jokes. Maybe let's, instead of having a meeting here in the office, let's go have a meeting at [*a coffee shop*]. I would try with all of these different people until like I finally got them into that comfort zone and I started seeing the changes. They started being kinder, they started being more communicative, they started being more collaborative. Again, that takes emotional labor. It's almost like a psychological game. To try to get to the end goal where we both win and we both feel comfortable. That's something that I have learned, very hard lessons from the start of my career to now. So, I've gotten better, I've grown a lot of patience. Patience is hard. It's a virtue that not all of us have.

Maria puts forward the concept that you learn to be a successful professional from trial and error. She told me:

> I have definitely gotten better. I think that when I started, I was [*a*] spry young buck, I [*wore*] my emotions on my sleeve. I was super sassy and responded to everything, and I had always had something to say, but I learned through the advice of great mentors and people that I trust that I was shutting people out.

Maria suggests that the ability to be successful at managing your emotions and those of others comes with time and through life experiences, thus adding to the temporality of

emotional labor. She further reveals the role mentors played in her development as a professional. Marlen stated something similar when she said that "in my youth, I was a lot more unbridled." Marlen's statement implies that Marlen has evolved over time, and her evolution has changed her into a less impulsive person who is now a "seasoned professional."

Olivia discussed a similar concept regarding her growth as a professional. She observed:

> I want to say that I was emotionally immature when I was younger, and if you had a spat with your husband, you'd come in and it'd be like, you want to be like, "Oh, you know, he did this, and that and woe is me" and you bring in to harp on that all day. I've learned to put things into a reality check, the world's not over. Sometimes you have to compartmentalize it and say, "Okay, and this is something that's going to be okay, and I'm going to deal with it later." This is something that I've learned through time and experience. To be professional, you have to do that. You can't go into your day with all this baggage.

Through experience and time, Olivia has learned how to compartmentalize and manage her emotions at work. She refers to bringing in emotional issues from home as "baggage," which indicates she has had negative experiences in the past that have led her to change her behavior to be professional at work. I asked Olivia if she thought her job had hardened her emotionally, and she further remarked that "it's matured me. I'm more careful how I respond in certain situations. I'm more alert." Through growth and maturity, Olivia has learned ways to modify her behavior to appear professional at work.

As a high-level administrator, Marlen explained to me that she has many opportunities to be around heated conversations. In discussing how she manages her emotions in these difficult and tense meetings, she describes that she often follows the lead of her boss. She describes her boss as the "epitome" of diplomacy. She states that

"I'm a professional. I'm also kind of poised and even-tempered. [*My boss is*] the epitome of diplomacy. So, both modeling and watching her but, but deferring to her and following her lead." Marlen describes being a professional as being even-tempered. She further explains that "in those moments, nobody's going to be more effective at taking care of emotions or responding to them than [*my boss*]. So, my general strategy there would be following [*my boss's*] lead in [*their*] absence." Marlen explains that she has learned how to be professional from her boss, the person she sees as the epitome of professionalism. Further, she explains that being professional entails appearing poised, even-tempered, and able to take care and respond to the emotions of others, even in the most difficult interactions. These statements from Maria, Olivia, and Marlen add a temporal component to the concept of emotional labor and professionalism and should serve to support the notion that understandings of professionalism are often learned through observation and lived experiences (Kramer and Hess, 2002).

Becky provided me with a compelling story about her conceptualizations of professionalism as "sterilization." As previously mentioned, Becky often mentions the concept of *Fabuloso*, the name of a popular cleaning product, when referring to the process she sees as sterilization. As part of her socialization as a professional, she claims that she has been sterilized in the way she talks and dresses. Becky says:

> I feel like this is the *Fabuloso* version of me and then when I'm at home and free to be whoever I am, it's my Chanel, it's my tennis shoes, but this is like, I walk in, I'm like *Fabuloso*, I'm completely sterilized.

Becky does not feel that the person she is at work is not the person she *really* is. She furthers her argument in describing how the professionals she interacts with speak. She says its "corporate lingo," and she finds that to be frustrating. As she discusses:

> It's always like when you have a situation, and then five minutes later, you're like, "Oh, I really wish I would have said that differently." And that's kind of how I experienced these things because some people are very good in their sterilized self and they speak this language, and I'm not really good at that because I prefer being myself. So, I'm not very good at being like completely off the cuff and rambling off this professional jargon that has these underlying messages that we're all trying to cover up. In my mind, I'm like, how do I say this without being completely honest, and still get my point across.

Becky further explains that she is not comfortable in her "alternative self" personality she must maintain to seem professional at work. She also hopes she never becomes comfortable with her "alternative self." I asked her if she thought her alternative personality would ever become second nature for her, and she declared:

> I hope not. I don't think I would want that. I'm so mindful, and I see it in other people, and it drives me bananas. The corporate lingo that people use drives me absolutely bananas, like go work for Carnival cruise line. Don't tell me "as per my last email" and blah blah blah. I don't know enough of the corporate jargon…we work in higher ed.

Becky sees herself as a different person than her authentic self when at work; she also hopes her alternative personality never becomes part of her authentic self. She recognizes the difficulties she encounters when dealing with others who act "professional," which is not a persona she is comfortable with. She further made a humorous remark when discussing her usual work attire of black pants and a shirt with the university logo. She said that "I looked in the mirror before I left, and I'm like, what the fuck am I wearing?" Becky's statement demonstrates that at that moment, Becky did not identify with the person staring back at her in the mirror; it actually stunned her. The separation of mind and body described by Becky is indicative of the ways her work environment forces her to modify her behaviors, actions, and even the way she dresses. The forced separation of

mind and body, again, points to the commodification of emotions and behaviors as part of employment within the participant's work environment.

Lisa also discussed the way she dressed in relation to professionalism. She explained to me that when she first started working, she went out and bought many suits even though she hates suits. Lisa explained:

> When I first got here, I wore suits every day. I went out and bought a bunch of suits, I have never worn suits, I hated suits, But I felt that in this new administrative position that this was the persona that I needed to project. To this day, I hate suits.

Lisa expressed that to fulfill the persona of a professional, she had to buy suits and wear them, even though she does not enjoy wearing them. Her reference to suits as a "persona" implies that she put on a facade to act and look in a way that she saw as expected within her work environment.

Crying was mentioned by Olivia as in relation to professionalism and emotional labor. Olivia stated that "I probably used to cry a lot more than I do now…you don't shed tears in a professional setting. You're not supposed to. If I do, the door's closed and if I can't control it, I go home." To Olivia, tears do not belong in the professional work setting. Rose made a similar statement but understands that sometimes getting emotional is unavoidable. She explained: "I think that sometimes you just can't help but be emotional. Luckily for me, I think I only cried once [*in my previous role*]. I never had to cry here." Rose understands that emotions and professionalism should not always coalesce, but it can be unavoidable. She further proclaims that "if you have an opinion, it is sometimes good to express that opinion. Hopefully a little less emotionally, but hey, it comes out the way it comes out." Rose understands that professionalism requires

behavior seen as *acceptable*, but she also understands that sometimes, *unacceptable* behavior may be displayed.

Rachel discussed how she handles situations where she meets with individuals with whom she may disagree. She told me that "I'm meeting with individuals who right I really don't like. So, you just, you put your game face on and you, you show the data, you just stand back and make it about the data." Rachel comments on putting her "game face" on, which indicates she is not her *normal* self. She further comments that when removing emotion from interactions, she often sets aside her own opinions or emotions, and she makes it "about the data" which implies not only that rationality reigns supreme in higher education, but also that emotions can come off as unprofessional and thus not allow for a productive conversation.

Finally, Bailey described her mantra for managing her emotions at work in a professional manner, and she calls her tactic "zip it." She told me:

> There's a phrase that I've learned in life, and that's called "zip it," and I'm capable of doing that. So, I would say that's good advice to people. I find opportunities to let my boss know the pitfalls, the issues that we're dealing with…but we've got to figure it out. We gotta move on.

In her statement, Bailey understands that expressing emotions is not a productive use of her energy. Rather, Bailey prefers to her mantra of "zip it" when dealing with extreme emotions, such as frustration, in her professional workspace. She maintains that one often just has to "move on" and get the work done without expressing their feelings.

Summary

The sub-theme should serve to situate participants' understanding and experience of emotional labor through the lens of professionalism. Professionalism for my study is

understood through a multi-faceted view that encompasses social norms, professional etiquette, as well as power relations. By understanding emotional labor through the performance of professionalism, we can further analyze how the participants of my study understand and experience emotional labor in their work environments.

Kelly began her conversation with me about emotional labor by proclaiming that "the epitome of professionalism is that you perform emotional labor at the highest level" which means that Kelly understands professionalism and emotional labor to exist concomitantly. Lisa echos' Kelly's sentiments when she explains that she has lost parts of herself "in the vein of saying I'm just being more professional." Lisa's statement implies that she understands she must act professionally within her work environment. Lisa tells me, "as we move up, I think we lose parts of ourselves." To her comment, I tie in previously mentioned concepts of professional mimicry. That is, Lisa may be noticing that she is losing parts of herself because she theoretically *is* through mimicking the professional behaviors exhibited by her colleagues (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1993).

The act of being a professional was discussed by participants as being commonsensical. Specifically, participants would make comments indicating that when they acted certain ways, it was expected, almost as if no other behavior would be acceptable. Lisa explained that it is unacceptable to be "running around pissing folks off" because you never know who you may need in the future. Lisa's remark can be linked to Lisa operating through promotion focused motivation (Higgins, 1998), but more importantly, it demonstrates the normative ways in which employees are expected to act to have favorable outcomes. Various other participants made similar comments regarding

the commonsensical nature of the decorum required to work within their organization. Through these participant narratives, we can understand that employees either amend to or accept the ways in which they are expected to act which is supported by Kramer and Hess (2002), who explained that general rules of civility are learned through socialization.

Leadership

> *I think that there's more of a mask that goes on the higher you get in an organization.*
>
> -Rose

Leadership intersects with emotional labor in various ways. As part of their narratives, participants discussed how leaders act, how they *should* act, leadership emulation, what leaders want, and leadership responsibilities such as teaching, mentoring, listening, providing understanding, empathy, and guidance. The current theme is separated from professionalism as it more closely focuses on participant experiences with leadership, or their understandings of the hierarchical nature of their job. More specifically, the notion that there are levels of employees and those considered to be in leadership roles have different expectations of emotion management. That is, leaders are expected to manage their own emotions as well as the emotions of others.

Weaved within the theme of leadership readers may find hints of the higher education work environment, including politics as well as gendered conversations. However, the section on leadership should highlight participant narratives that focus on aspects of emotional labor that relate to hierarchical perceptions of leadership. The theme is provided to show how participants understand and experience emotional labor as leadership because the literature demonstrates that leaders are seen as effective based on

both their abilities to complete complex tasks as well as emotional abilities (Kellett, Humphrey, & Sleeth, 2002).

Becky spoke to me about her experiences with leadership and emotional labor. Becky talked about how she manages her emotions and expressions when dealing with her employees or with other subordinates. She remarked:

> There's a lot of things happening in the department that of course, everyone knows about, [*so*] having to be a leader and exemplify professionalism and leadership in those instances when you just kind of want to join in their conversation and be like, "This is fucking bullshit. Did you hear what so and so did? Oh my God!" …I have to like kind of take a step back and be like, "Moving forward, we all have to…" It's different. When I get home and talk to my husband, I'm not like, "Well, you know, moving forward, we should do this, this way." I'm like, "No, this is fucking bullshit." So, it's having to kind of put on this different self. This alternative self.

To be a leader, Becky understands that she must act differently and suppress feelings. Becky refers to the persona she plays at work as her "alternative self." Becky further described her leadership style to me in the following excerpt:

> It's just not my style to show up to work every day in a suit recite the same corporate jargon over and over again. And my idea of being in a leadership role is to tell people exactly what I think and this is what you should be doing and let's not fuck around because it's counterproductive and why are we talking about this? There's so many things going through my head when I'm sitting in these meetings. It's like, why are we fucking talking about this shit? It is completely counterproductive. It's almost like people smelling their own farts.

Becky made her comment in a playful tone, but she is trying to explain that she often sees other colleagues discussing what she considers counterproductive topics in ways that she understands as *sterilized* or *fake*. Becky mentioning people smelling their own farts takes a humorous approach to how she sees others "acting" at work. Becky's analogy should serve to highlight her frustration with the ways her work environment forces her to act as

well as her frustrations with the ways she sees others acting as part of their work performance. Becky sees herself as a leader who would rather be honest and open with her employees in plain language, as opposed to using "corporate jargon."

Maria also discussed the need to suppress feelings of exhaustion during a large event put on by her staff. When walking into the event, Maria was extremely tired after several long and strenuous days. She explained:

> [*If*] I walked in and I was just tired with this terrible face on and shoulder[*s*] shrug[*ed*] down and just kind of like, "Yeah, good job." It would make everybody feel bad, and that wasn't the time. Even if something had gone wrong that day, it's not my time or place to be like, "Well that's not set up right." Talk about that after. Let's get through the event together, let me put on my happy face. So you do have to play the part a little bit.

Maria understands that the way she behaves can impact the dynamic of the environment. Maria further explains, "I tend to wear my heart on my face. All my emotions are on my face." Therefore, even though she says it can be "exhausting…because who wants to be fake, who wants to pretend they're something they're not," Maria understands modifying her emotions is an important part of being a leader and motivating others. She further asserts:

> I have a job to do and regardless of whether I got into a fight with my husband the night before, or I got bad news from my friends, or I just got three hours of sleep, there's other people depending on me.

The story from Maria demonstrates how she modifies her behavior and manages her emotions to get her job done and be a leader to the members of her team. Maria's narrative demonstrates that her hierarchical positioning requires her to suppress and manage her feelings, and Mara's sentiments are likely linked to her perceptions of emotional contagion. Through the framework of emotional contagion (Hatfield,

Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1992), we can understand why leaders modify their emotions and behaviors to mitigate the contagion of *unwanted* or *undesired* emotions.

Olivia spoke to me about her perceptions of leadership teams within a university setting. I asked how she thought the managing of emotions was related to climbing the proverbial professional ladder. She said:

> It is the crux of climbing the ladder. I really do see that. If I look at the executive team at the university, the ones that can manage it the most are, in my opinion, what I see as the better leaders.

Here Olivia discusses her perception of who the best leaders are. She discusses that professionals who manage their emotions are the best leaders. Olivia, similar to Maria, understands that as a leader, it is important to manage one's emotions. Further, both Maria and Olivia discussed that the ability to manage one's emotions is a strength and necessity in higher education leadership.

Rachel pointed out to me that as people grow professionally, they have to be less emotional. Rachel spoke to me about the support her supervisor provided her during a recent difficult time in her life. She explained:

> His response was very supportive, [*he said to me*] "Take care of your [*issues*] and not a problem. Hang in there." But I don't get emotional with [*my boss*]. I'm almost thinking about it now, how [*my boss*] has to work with so many people, [*they have*] to be less emotional, because you're responsible for more, which is kind of sad.

Almost mid-sentence, Rachel realized the emotional labor her supervisor has to work through every day when dealing with many employees. She understands that the more people a supervisor works with, the less ability they may have to be emotional which, again, points to the hierarchies present within her work environment and the different expectations of emotional management of leaders.

I asked Maria the same question regarding climbing the professional ladder. Maria made a similar statement to Rachel regarding emotional management as one progresses in leadership positions. Maria explained:

> The higher you go, the more diverse teams you tend to work with. So, you tend to work with more diverse people in the sense of title and the sense of experience, [*and*] in the sense of age… [*a*] coordinator might work with maybe five people, a director might work with 10 to 20 depending on how big [*the*] department is, and by the time you get into AVP, VP, presidential levels, [*they're*] working with hundreds of people. So, I think just by the nature of that diversity, you have to be more cognizant of your emotions because you have to be more flexible and you have to constantly change your leadership style to adapt to these different types of scenarios and people.

Maria considers herself a "situational leader," which is important in relation to emotional labor because she understands that she must manage many parts of her leadership style, including emotions, depending on the constituents she is trying to serve. Maria's narrative points to the flexibility expected of leaders as they navigate interactions with varying sizes and types of populations.

Rose answered the question on climbing the "proverbial ladder" similarly to Rachel and Maria. When discussing emotion management in leadership positions, she noted:

> I think it's more important outwardly. I don't know how you control it inwardly, and I think that's where the stress for women comes because you're trying to pretend to be something or even have a civil conversation with somebody sitting across the table that you cannot abide. That is not something you can show. I think that there's more of a mask that goes on the higher you get in an organization.

Rose understands that as leaders move up in an organization, they are expected to put on a "mask" or hide their actual feelings. Intertwined within her narrative on leadership, Rose also mentioned gender. Here, Rose indicates that women must navigate situations

differently when it comes to managing emotions. Rose's quote demonstrates that not only is there a "mask" that employees wear as they move up professionally within an organization, but the mask bears a heavier burden on women.

I asked Olivia if she thought doing her job, specifically the day-to-day tasks as described in her job description, or the managing of emotions and personalities was more difficult for her. Here Olivia said: "the managing of emotions without a doubt." She further emphasized:

> It's so much harder to manage emotions [*and*] other people because you have people that excel and are wonderful and want to deliver and there are people who just couldn't care less, and they have other priorities in their life. Yet, as a manager, it falls on you to get them to move and to deliver. If they don't, yeah, they look bad, but *you* look bad. You look like a bad manager. I still have to do the paperwork, I have to deliver on all these things, but at the same time, it's like, you got to get these people to move, and you got to get them to move in the right way because people get revengeful. If you force something on someone that they don't want to do, they could easily just do a crappy job, and if you don't look at it, they sabotaged you right then and there. So how do you get them to work, and how do you get them to *want* to do? That takes a lot.

Olivia is explaining that she still has to complete her everyday tasks, such as paperwork, but she also spends a great deal of time motivating her team and encouraging them to do good work. In the quote above, Olivia demonstrates the need for managers to manage and shape the emotions of their subordinates to motivate them to get the job done. Similar to Becky and Maria, Olivia understands that emotional labor is an important part of leadership. The narrative adds to the narrative on leadership and emotional labor by demonstrating how Oliva perceives the need to manage the emotions and behaviors of her subordinates. Further, Olivia's quote should also point to the difficulty and complexity of managing the emotions of others.

Marlen spoke to me about her responsibility as a leader to manage her emotions at work. She tells me that "I think it's my responsibility to manage some of my emotions at work. For example, frustration or impatience or anger, I don't think are really productive for my team to see." As a leader to her team, Marlen manages her emotions when she feels that displaying them will not be productive. Marlen discussed leadership and emotional labor along two conceptualizations. First, she described that to foster an environment of trust, she must manage the emotions and emotional responses of her team. She described to me:

> If we ever had any incidents, then we addressed them, and we talk about managing our emotions because they [*employees*] can't make others feel unsafe or uncomfortable. If we don't all feel comfortable and safe, connected, and trusted, we can't do our work well. That's part of being a member of this team and being here is working on relationships with everyone, especially where there might be issues.

Marlen is explaining that as a leader, she ensures that her team members are managing their emotions appropriately. She has to make sure that everyone on her team feels safe, trusted, and connected. As part of her leadership style, Marlen mentioned: "I go to the tables that I think are going to be most heated and if I think there's a political meeting or incident, I won't leave my colleagues to be there by themselves." Marlen understands that some of her staff may not be fully prepared to work within these highly politicized spaces, so she will either prepare them ahead of time, or protect her team if the meeting she is attending is particularly political which demonstrates the temporality of emotional labor; specifically, the idea that the ability to perform emotional labor is learned over time. Marlen further described:

> I think it's my responsibility to attend to some of it and also sharing a little bit with them so they're not kind of completely naive to the inner

> workings of academia. I want them to ascend too and have the ability to navigate political spaces. I think the best thing that I can do for them is the best thing that I did for myself unknowingly, or not on purpose, which was to build relationships everywhere because a key part of navigating any political sphere is using your networks and your connections. And so, I'm just lucky that I have them. But it is, again, luck. It wasn't a strategy.

The quote from Marlen demonstrates both the political aspect of higher education and also the responsibility she feels to both protect and teach her employees within highly politicized spaces. As Marlen states, to ascend in academia, one must be well versed in navigating their work environment, and she hopes to be able to teach her staff how to do so. Marlen's quote presents the importance of leaders teaching and mentoring their staff the appropriate ways to navigate political spaces to ascend in academia.

Rachel also spends a great deal of time teaching her employees about appropriate emotional displays within their work environment, specifically how to be professional. I asked Rachel how she thinks emotional labor fits into her everyday work, and she explained:

> In this place it is very high, like this job. If you don't accept that you have to get involved, and I don't mean emotionally involved. Meaning that I know every day [*emotions are involved*] because I work with [*young adults*]. So, because my [*employees*] range in age from 19 all the way through their early thirties, I have [*employees*] who get emotional. My [*employees*] can get emotional when they interact with each other, sometimes they're emotional. My [*other employees*] can get emotional. I know I'm going to come across something where I need to calm somebody down. I have tissues everywhere on purpose, [*I*] work through a problem, get someone to think through what's going on, and try to have a plan. My focus really is never to tell someone what to do, but help them figure out what the best plan is.

As Rachel mentioned before, sometimes her employees can go into emotional "tornados," as she affectionately referred to them. Therefore, she understands that as a leader, she must help her employees navigate these emotions. Rachel teaches her

employees how to navigate emotions by not telling her employees exactly what to do, but by sitting with them, talking, and working out a plan which demonstrates leadership skills in relation to emotional labor.

Rose, similar to Rachel, sees herself as a teacher and mentor to younger women in the profession. As a leader, she understands that mentorship and teaching is important to younger employees. She revealed to me that "I worry about younger women a lot, particularly when they're not coming in at the middle level. If they're coming in a program assistant level, I don't think there's enough support for women at that level. I really don't." Rose explained to me that she believes there should be more training for young employees, particularly females, because of the many personalities present within her work environment. Rose told me:

> Even to spend a day with a new person say, "Okay, this is how you would handle this, I'm going to tell you a little bit about each of the professors that you have." They're left to discover the difficult people that some of them in that [*hallway*] are. You might want to say, "Now this one has a peculiarity, and therefore, their work must come first." Now remember that's all well and good, but if you're working on something else, you have to find a diplomatic way of saying, "I can't do that just now, but I promise that and get to it right away." I just don't know that we have, at that supervisory level, enough training or it may be people who have enough empathy. They don't remember what it was like when they first came in, and that worries me a little bit about younger women who come in. It really does. Feeling underappreciated is a great way for a resignation letter to be put on your desk

Rose explained to me that she feels young women coming to work in her environment should receive training or at the very least some guidance from others within their work environment to be able to navigate difficult personalities. She even notes that people must find "diplomatic" ways to say things, which implies that one must manage their emotions and responses when dealing with certain individuals. Rose maintains that young staff

should receive training from leaders when they start a new job. However, she does not see training happening, and it is to the detriment of younger staff.

Bailey also expressed the need to work closely with her employees, particularly the individuals with children in her office. When I asked her how emotional labor fits into her role as an administrator, she said to me that "I am checking in with people or touching base with them and trying to find out how things are really going." She further elaborates:

> I have two individuals working with me now with [*multiple*] kids, each under the age of three. Heavy duty motherhood going on. I know that it's important for me to understand how things are going with them and [*figure out*] how they can approach their work.

Bailey explained that working with her employees with young children is important to be able to be successful within her department. Bailey understands that by providing her employees with understanding and flexibility, especially those with young children, she and her team can accomplish their goals and do their jobs. She further remarks that "I would not be here today still working at [*my*] age without my boss who if I need to do something or do whatever, it's 'of course.' [*My boss*] knows me. [*My boss*] knows I'll get the job done." Bailey says emotional labor is about "knowing people and understanding them." Therefore, she has learned from previous supervisors who provided her with room to grow both professionally and personally and is providing the same leadership style to her employees now. Through her narrative, Bailey explained to me that she views emotional labor as her ability to work and connect with her employees, especially those that she understands need her support as a leader the most. Bailey's quote also discusses the situational nature of leadership and emotional labor. Bailey expressed that it is

important for her to work closely with her staff with children because she understands the importance of flexibility and understanding.

Vanessa discussed leadership and emotional labor in relation to what leaders are looking for in employees. She explained that she thinks leaders are looking for impartial employees. When discussing the ability to manage emotions and how that is linked to trust she remarks:

> I think it leads to trust within working relationships where someone feels that they can trust you with information. They feel they can trust you with doing the job correctly, being emotionally impartial, those types of things. I think that when you work with people who are in the position of power or making decisions that yes, that trust is linked to that because those leaders feel that they can do their job if they can trust in you to do yours effectively.

To Vanessa, to work with individuals in power or those above her in the administrative hierarchy one should be emotionally impartial to build trust. Vanessa indicates that through providing logical and data-driven responses, leaders will trust employees and thus allow them to continue to do their job effectively. She further explains:

> I think people in power can only be successful if they have a strong team. So, they need to ensure that their team are able to function in non-emotional ways and make sure that they are calculated and know how to work under pressure and are going to accurately represent them and uphold whatever value, mission, or plan that they have without allowing the personal side or their characteristics to impede the following through.

Vanessa explained that she thinks leaders are looking for a team that functions in non-emotional ways to work effectively. Therefore, to be successful within higher education administration, Vanessa indicates that one must be non-emotional. Stacey echoed Vanessa's perception when she said that "if [*upper administration*] is there, I want to make sure that what I say is as emotionally neutral as possible and well thought out as

possible, so I don't feel like I'm coming off as emotionally charged." Therefore, these two participants understand that the upper leadership of a university is likely looking for individuals who are non-emotional and appear rational. The perception of traits and behaviors favored by leaders can lead to an increased need for emotional labor amongst employees who hope to continue their professional careers within the work environment described in my dissertation.

As a leader herself, Nicole understands that others may be treating her differently because of her positional authority. When discussing gaining respect from colleagues, Nicole indicated:

> One thing I try to keep in mind is that a lot of it has to do with my position. If people report to you, they tend to treat you with a different level of respect just because there could be consequences that they don't want to have.

Nicole explains that she understands that respect can be garnered from positional power alone. Though not always the case, Nicole is explaining that she has always worked in a very respectful and professional environment, and she attributes some of the respect she receives to her positional power which suggests that employees are more likely to engage with and perform emotional labor amongst those who are in leadership positions, and those in leadership positions expect respect.

Vanessa shared with me several unpleasant interactions with a former supervisor. Through these interactions, Vanessa told me that she has learned tremendously and now vows to be different with her employees. She asserted:

> I treat [*my employees*] much differently than I've been treated, and I empathize with certain things that [*they*] might be going through. I might get in the trenches with [*them*], choose to help [*them*] as opposed to

> leaving and knowing that I'm going to make you stay here until 7:00 at night.

Based on her past experiences, Vanessa understands that her leadership style must be different than that of her former supervisor if she wants to lead a happy and productive team. Therefore, she modifies her behaviors and reactions to be more supportive and empathetic. Vanessa's narrative describes the temporality of emotional labor as she has learned, through time and experience, the ways to lead a happy and productive team.

Stacey made a similar comment about emulating her leadership style. When discussing the relational aspect of her job, she said:

> I want to be like the people who I've worked for here. That's my goal. So, for me, that part is really important, and I see it as part of my job because they've taken it on as part of their job. You care about the people you work with, and they care about you as people. Like you're a colleague or a friend. You're not going to be friends with everyone you work with or who you report to. I think, again, boundaries. But, I see that as part of my job. So, to be a good employee, to be a good supervisor, I need to deal with emotional labor and understand that that's part of it.

Stacey is explaining that she tries to base her leadership style off of those that she highly respects within the profession. She takes it further by arguing that to be a good employee and supervisor, one must deal with emotional labor and attend to the emotions and emotional experiences of employees. Here, Stacey explains that she aims to emulate the successful leaders she has worked with in the past, thus demonstrating that with proper leadership, employees can learn proper displays of emotion.

Summary

The literature demonstrates that leaders are seen as effective based both on their abilities to complete complex tasks as well as emotional abilities (Kellett, Humphrey, & Sleeth, 2002). Therefore, the current theme presents the ways in which emotional ability

and leadership intersect via each participants' performance of emotional labor. As part of being a leader, participants often found themselves engaging in emotional labor, even if they didn't identify it as such at the moment. Participants such as Maria and Olivia understood that to be successful leaders, they must manage their emotions. I would argue that managing of emotions extends to any relational aspect of higher education administration. Therefore, to be effective as a leader, identifying moments when one can use emotional labor successfully can lead to positive outcomes.

Overall, participants provided many narratives that demonstrated how they experience emotional labor as part of their understandings and conceptualizations of professionalism and leadership. The narratives provided in Chapter 6 should serve to answer the research question by demonstrating that participants of my study understand and experience emotional labor in their work environment through the lenses of professionalism and leadership.

CHAPTER VII

GENDER AND EMOTIONAL LABOR

Don't let the bastards win.

-Rachel

I feel as women, as we move up, we lose parts of ourselves as we make these transitions.

-Lisa

Finally, I present gender in Chapter 7 as my concluding finding because most participants mentioned their gender to explain how they experience their conceptualization of emotional labor differently than their male counterparts. As the literature demonstrates, organizations are *not* gender neutral (Acker, 1990). Therefore, gendered assumptions within these spaces allow us the ability to theorize participant narratives from a gendered and embodied lens. I understand that Chapter 7 of my study is based on the gender binary of man and woman and does not take a nuanced approach to sex and gender. I also want to acknowledge that my study, and any study, would benefit from a deeper understanding and exploration of the explicit intersection of race, gender, and class and the discussed phenomenon. Nevertheless, the gender finding should provide context as to how the participants of my study understand and experience their gender in relation to emotional labor.

My study focused specifically on women as they are uniquely situated within the academic institutionally-produced hierarchies of emotion. Questions for my study were not purposefully gendered, that is, comparative, though participants knew they were participating in a study that focused specifically on women. Some participants, depending on the responses given throughout their interview, were asked about their experiences as

a woman in higher education; however, most of the responses for Chapter 7 did not come from this question. Almost every participant mentioned gender as parts of other stories they told me. In Chapter 7, I attempt to analyze how the participants of my study understand and experience their gender as it relates to emotional labor within their work environment.

I want to be careful in making gendered assumptions and conclusions as part of my study. Chapter 7 is not meant to make any generalizable conclusions; nonetheless, it should be used to analyze how the participants of my study understand their gender in relation to their understandings of emotional labor. Some of the statements made by participants can be considered "stereotypes," yet, participants made these statements as part of their own personal lived experiences. My study is not meant to feed into stereotypes; rather, these findings and analysis are presented as directly related to the research question and should not be used for any generalizable claims.

As part of our interview, I asked Rose if she thought there might be a cost for emotions or emotional labor at work. Rose discussed:

> I would suspect that if you are an extremely emotional person at work, people will be turned off, and if you work with more women than men, they probably would understand a bit more. I think when you're in essentially a male-dominated environment, and I don't know what the statistics are the case, but I think we have more males [*here*] than we have females. I don't know about the other [*places*], but we don't have that many female professors. I think that you cannot really be emotional in settings like that because they'll ignore you or they'll think you're just a waste of space. So, I think you do have to reign in emotions in this place. Any place, really, that that's a male-dominated field.

The question Rose answered was not asked in relation to gender, yet Rose conceptualized the cost of emotional labor to be tied to her gender; and as a woman, the cost could be

higher to her. To Rose, working in a male-dominated field means one must control their emotions more than they would while working alongside all women. She then further explains that "women at a certain level, they just take on way too much, which I don't see men doing." When speaking about the reasons she thinks women take on "way too much," she states that "we think we have to be better than men who just sail through life expecting that things are the way they are, and they'll get around to it when they get around to it." Overall, this is a generalization from Rose about how she understands herself in relation to her gender and emotional labor. Rose is also explaining how her gender impacts her need to control her emotions, particularly in her male-dominated work environment.

Stacey expressed a similar sentiment to Rose in relation to acting emotionally in male-dominated spaces. She asserted:

> I think a lot of it too is the higher up you get, the more men and less women that are going to be at the table. It shouldn't be this way, but we know that that's just the way it is. The more it becomes important when you're with them to not be based in emotion because they're more likely to write you off as well. "She's just having a bad day" or "she doesn't know what she's talking about."

Stacey is explaining that in male-dominated spaces, women who act emotionally can be written off by men who will say that "she doesn't know what she's talking about." During our initial interaction, almost immediately, Stacey said to me that she looks at emotional labor from "a gendered lens." Stacey indicated:

> I think it's hard too when you're a woman because you're supposed to be seen as the calm one in the room or helping people navigate or not getting upset. Even holding those emotions in is a form of emotional labor to me.

By making the above statement, Stacey is further explaining to me the gendered lens she views emotional labor through. As was previously revealed, Stacey discussed her internal struggles with her identity as a mom and a working professional in relation to her understandings of emotional labor. She explains that "this is not all cases, but traditionally, the men we go to meetings with, who is at home with their kids? It's [*the children's*] mom." Stacey then described a business trip she had to take that was cut short because she had to go home, and as a breastfeeding mother, there was no substitute for her. Stacey said:

> I was at a business trip, and the morning I left, my [*baby*] was starting to get a cold, and I was like, [*the baby will*] be fine, but I had to leave. Right? And then my husband calls me a day and a half later, [*the baby is*] not sleeping, [*the baby is*] not eating, [*the baby*] needs you. I guess it all relates because I'm still breastfeeding, because I'm still trying to be the mother and deal with all that. She needed me. She wasn't eating, so I had to go home. And that's not something you typically experience [*when*] you're male.

During her trip, when Stacey had to go home early because of her baby's illness, she recognized that her experience was very different than the men she was working with. When she had to leave her trip, she further discussed that her supervisor was extremely supportive. Stacey further understands that the need for women to take care of their family can have professional consequences. She explained:

> After FMLA, in general, the research shows that when you take those kinds of breaks, your progression is not as fast, or the ability for you to progress is diminished because of that kind of penalty. So, I think there's an internal pressure that goes along with it.

Stacey feels internal pressures because she took FMLA and understands, based on her research, that there are consequences to taking professional breaks. Stacey's quote is

significant as it demonstrates that women hesitate to use the rights afforded to them because of the perceived negative impacts on their careers.

Stacey also ties the gender and lived experiences of supervisors into the success of female employees:

> I think that the person that you report to has a lot to do with your success, especially if they have children and they understand what you're going through. But I could definitely see that being an issue if I worked for somebody that didn't understand that, especially a male. You hear people talk about how their female employees going on maternity leave as a burden, what am I going to do? There's not a lot of support around that if you haven't experienced that yourself.

Stacey further adds:

> It's good to work for people who have children. It's good to work for a woman because guys can say they understand, but you never see a guy leaving a business trip early because their kid is sick and home. I've never, I mean I'm sure it happens, but I've never seen that happen. On more than one occasion, I've seen a woman have to go home because their kid is sick and their husband is like, you know, I really need you here. So, that's hard. I think a lot of that is emotional labor. You don't expect to have to leave your family, but when you leave the family, you're not thinking that you're going to have to deal with all of these things when you're away, but you do.

Stacey understands that shared lived experiences, including that of childbirth and child-rearing, allow supervisors and employees to connect in a unique way. Also, Stacey suggests that shared lived experiences allow supervisors to empathize with their employees when they go through particularly difficult and stressful experiences, such as cutting a business trip short. Stacey also understands emotional labor as still having to manage one's family, even when they are away on business; the stress of that never goes away.

Similar to Stacey, Rose commented on the gender of supervisor when discussing emotions and professionalism. She stated: "if you have a male boss who thinks that you're all just too emotional for the job, then it's a different situation." She further added that "it's nice to be able [*to work alongside women*] because they understand, they get as emotional as we do, so it's nice working with women actually." Here, Rose is implying that a female boss or female colleagues may better understand emotions. On the contrary, a male boss or colleague may see emotional women as a "waste of space," a comment made by Rose when discussing emotion expression by females in male-dominated spaces.

I asked Bailey if she ever pretends to be in a good mood at work. As part of her answer to the question, she stated:

> The expectation that the female administrator is not going to be mad or say it like it is. This expectation for women has been very different in my generation. And I look at some of the women who made it to [*to the top*], and I believe [*they can speak their mind*], but [*they*] also know [*when their supervisor*] wants something.

Bailey implies that expectations of emotional management are different for women and men, especially for the women of her generation. Furthermore, she indicates that women who have made it to the "top" of higher education administration understand when to speak up, but also when to be complacent. Bailey's quote demonstrates the potential for power exploitation within the hierarchical organization of her work environment. To be more specific, here Bailey made explicit the notion that those who have ascended to the upper echelons of administration have developed a fabric of habits that made them successful.

Kelly describes being frustrated when women do not use their voices. I asked Kelly if she was an empathetic person when dealing with difficult issues at work. She said that "it depends," then described a situation where a colleague was not standing up for herself. She said: "I hate using the word tolerant, but perhaps a little bit less patient with somebody who's…just come on, you know, step up. I mean…women's rights…We fought for you to have a voice; please use it." Here, Kelly discusses the gendered nature of women's rights and the idea that women should have the right to speak up when they think something is wrong. However, Kelly often sees women suppressing their thoughts and concerns, and it can be frustrating to her.

When asked about what emotional labor means to her, Vanessa stated the following:

> To me, it means basically knowing that you are constantly being scrutinized in how you respond to situations and the implications that it has on your ability to move and grow in an organization. So, your reactions, your perceptions, the way that you carry yourself is used as a dangled the carrot to whether you can move or not and whether you're seen as being a girl or being a man.

As we know, Vanessa cares deeply about her ability to grow within an organization. Here, Vanessa is explaining that how she reacts to situations shapes others' perception of her, even her gender. In our second interview, I asked Vanessa to elaborate on her statement. Vanessa then analyzed how men and women progress in their careers in academia. She tells me:

> Women in higher ed, to be able to move up, you do have to play the part [*and*] look the part. What does a leader look like, right? How do you present yourself? Then you have men that are going to play off of that, and you have to play off of it because they make decisions as well. Whereas men don't have to do that. You have like a big tub of lard guy that smells like crap, and he'll still move up, right? But as a woman, I have to look

> pretty and smell pretty and talk to you in such a way that you feel like I'm stroking your ego to get what I need out of it. [*You also have to*] be so cautious of how intelligent you come across or how striking you are because then you can intimidate [*men*], but you have to be just dainty enough to get them to be like, "Oh, I'm going to root for this person," and you get them to do what you want.

Here, Vanessa explains to me that to move up in academia, employees have to play the part, which, to Vanessa, includes looking and acting a certain way. She describes playing the part as a balance she must find, one in which she cannot appear to be too intelligent or beautiful to avoid intimidating male counterparts.

Maria provides a similar statement relating to the balance women must find to make sure they can "make a point." Maria said:

> You have to be professional because you can't just be like across the board room and be like, "You're an idiot; what are you doing?" So, there's a sense of decorum that has to be followed. But on the emotional side, I think for women it takes a lot more out of us because we want to make our point across, and we want to seem intelligent, and we want to contribute to the table. But, at the same time, we also have to worry about how our words are being perceived, and how our body language is being perceived and, are they going to think that we're smart enough? Is that a good enough idea? Did I present it properly? And like all of these things are like constantly working as variables in an equation and we have about 10 seconds to make it work, you know?

Maria remarks that there are many things that go through her mind when she is in front of a large group of individuals, particularly in a "board room" type encounter. Maria precedes her statements by declaring that it "takes a lot more out of us," specifically referring to women because as she explains, she understands her thought process to be different than the men she sits across in these meetings. Essentially, she is implying that males are subject to different kinds of social obligations.

Regarding social obligations, Olivia described to me a time where she used to bring food items into the office. She quickly stopped bringing food to the office because as she asserted:

> I stopped bringing things into the office because I also read somewhere that when women bring things into the office, people see that as a female type trait. So, I stopped doing it on purpose because I didn't want to be categorized as the female [*or*] the caretaker. I didn't want to be that person. You have to deal with me as a professional, not as the one that's going to mommy the office.

As part of our interaction, Olivia explained that she also used to host functions within her department that were categorized by her colleagues as "girl things." She used to host functions and cook until she realized that it was shaping perceptions about her. Even though she enjoyed cooking and hosting functions, she held back on these activities to ensure, as she saw it, respect from the colleagues. However, she does mention that her gender has provided her with the ability to help out in ways she feels others do not. Olivia said:

> I feel that as a woman, I talked to you about how I would watch my supervisors back. I don't feel men do that. I think men just do their job, and it is what it is. Meanwhile, I'm always [*thinking*] "wait a minute, wait a minute; this is going to get you into trouble, don't do this." So, I do, by my nature, by being a mom and female I do watch out for [*my colleagues*].

Olivia explained that being a mom and female helps her to be cognizant of things that her other colleagues may not be.

Lisa tells me that everyone should be the nurturer at work, not just women. She explains:

> We're human, and we should act accordingly. It shouldn't just be a woman who is going to be the nurturer. No, I think we're in a work environment, and everyone needs to be cognizant of what is going on in the work environment and the people that they're working with. Nobody

> wants to come into a work environment where you're working around a bunch of mean people. It's just; it's not fun. So, you have to. I think we all have to censor ourselves, be it male or female and that it is not just up to us to have to censor ourselves.

As previously mentioned, Lisa considers herself a "cut and dry" kind of person. She also thinks that women get a "bad rap being emotional at work." Given these statements, Lisa situates emotional labor as everyone's responsibility, not just women's. However, she further explained:

> I think women just get this rap of being emotional at work because I think women do cry more at work than men do for various reasons. It's just kind of ingrained in us as being nurturing and more sensitive to things.

Even though Lisa explains that everyone has to censor themselves at work, she does also acknowledge that, in her experience, women cry more at work. She also observes that it is "ingrained" in women to be nurturing and more sensitive than their male counterparts. She further discusses crying in a gendered way by stating that men can take advantage of a crying woman. Lisa explained:

> I think there's a time and a place for emotions. I don't like crying in the workplace. Women crying, I feel, allows men to take advantage of the situation regardless of why they think a woman is crying or why the woman is actually really crying. So, women can cry because they are angry, and that's just their emotional outlet. Women can cry because they're intimidated or they fear something, but men don't know why she tears, and I think they don't know what to do with that, and I think it gives men an opportunity to use it against women.

Therefore, Lisa sees crying as emotion that men can take advantage of in the workplace. Specifically, Lisa refers to *women* crying and *men* taking advantage, which is an important distinction made by Lisa as she implies that men can hold positional power over women if women express certain emotions through crying.

Similar to Lisa, Rachel discussed crying at work in relation to gender. Rachel discussed crying in very explicit terms, explaining that she sees crying as weakness in the workplace, especially if the tears come from women. She expressed:

> Unfortunately, I am one of those who equates crying in the workplace with weakness, and that's from my own upbringing. The men in my life, my father, my grandfather, my husband, they're all like, "no, the only person who watches you cry is us" or you "cry in your pillow at night, but that's it. Don't let the bastards win." And that's the frame of mind that I have.

Rachel equates crying with weakness; by starting her statement with "unfortunately," I understand Rachel to wish things were not this way. Rachel's comment was made when she was discussing how she mentors young women in her department. She explained:

> The ones who are more outwardly emotional and they cry at the drop of a hat; I'm the first one to tell them, "stop. You need to stop, like, get a grip." It's with the girls who I tell them that, especially when they have confrontations.

Therefore, Rachel continues to teach the same mantra she learned from her family with the young women she mentors; she advises the young women no to cry because she tells them they've got to "toughen up." Rachel's narrative speaks to the argument about gendered relations requiring the suppression of natural feelings as well as the policing of it for other women.

Nicole discussed gendered perceptions of emotional expression and stated:

> It did dawn on me, this whole idea of women being judged harshly for expressing strong feelings, which is still an issue in our society. [*With*] men, it might still be uncomfortable, but I think they're given more leeway to do that than women.

Nicole's statement was made in the context of discussing an outburst another woman had during a high-level meeting, which she described as "hostile" and "aggressive." She

explained to me that her female colleague was very animated in discussions with her, but Nicole did not engage; she was later glad she didn't. Nicole understood, in reflection, that engaging with another woman in a way that may come off as confrontational, may have been met with harsh criticism from her co-workers.

Marlen discussed the gender of those in leadership positions when I asked her about bureaucracy and the impact on emotions. She explained:

> There's a large literature base about men having been told their whole lives to keep down their emotions because otherwise, they're going to be associated with being soft and not manly. So, we have the fact most of the positions of leadership are still occupied by men, and they have been told their whole life that emotions are not welcome. So, I think it's no wonder that structure and bureaucracy ends up being what we see and the cause of a lot of what's wrong with a lot of our workplaces.

In her statement, Marlen tries to analyze how emotions and bureaucracy coalesce. She further remarks that "bureaucratic [*and*] structural processes can be seen as more masculine." Marlen understands those female traits may not be welcome in the masculinized organizational structures that rule in higher education and her workplace in particular.

Finally, in discussing a potential "cost" for emotional labor, Marlen remarked:

> I read all of the literature so I know what [*they*] would suggest is that it's expected more of women leaders and so then it probably is consuming more of our time that we could be using for publishing and writing more grants and advancing our own careers and networking. But I think it's shortsighted.

I would agree with Marlen on her point. Nevertheless, the current theme should serve to demonstrate that the participants of my study often have gendered world views and understand and experience emotional labor in their own unique ways. While both men and women experience emotional labor, the participants of my study demonstrate that

there is something to be said about experiencing the phenomenon of emotional labor as a woman. Further, the narratives provided in the current theme should serve to justify the claim that women are uniquely situated within the academic institutionally-produced hierarchies of emotion.

Summary

The theme of gender and emotional labor includes narratives where participants discussed the gendered ways in which emotional labor manifests within higher education administration. Further, Chapter 7 looks at how participants experienced their conceptualization of emotional labor differently than their male counterparts. Though I do not want to make any specific conclusions, we can infer that gender plays into many of the participant's understandings of emotional labor.

Stacey and Rose explained managing your emotions within male-dominated spaces. These participants explain that acting emotional around men may lead them to be perceived as a waste of space or as ill-prepared. Stacey furthered her gendered argument by tying in her experiences as a mother and administrator. Supervisor's and colleague's genders were also mentioned as part of the discussion. As previously mentioned, I will hold off any specific conclusions regarding gender, as I want to be careful in making gendered assumptions as part of my study. Nonetheless, participants did describe that working *with* and *for* women provided a different experience than working for men.

Vanessa linked her gender and the performance of emotional labor to career advancement. Vanessa understands that the way she presents herself is important for her growth as an administrator. Vanessa describes a balance she must maintain as a woman, one in which she cannot appear too beautiful or intelligent. When Vanessa states:

"whether you're seen as being a girl or being a man," I can equate Vanessa's with the quote provided by Illouz (2007) where the author described objectivity as dominant in our conception of justice. Objectivity often assumes idealized male practices of emotional self-control are superior.

Maria also spoke about the balance women must find to appear professional. Though she does not mention men directly as part of her statements, she does say "as women, it takes more out of us." Through her narrative, I can infer that Maria is comparing herself in relation to men. As part of her participant composite, Maria provided an impactful narrative where she discussed her understandings of the complexities women experience in relation to their male counterparts. Here, she goes through a myriad of questions she regularly asks herself as she prepares for her day. As part of Maria's narrative, she explains that she not only has to worry about her outward appearance, but she also has to worry about her professional decorum and emotional responses. Hochschild (in Beck, 2018) explained that the anxieties of anticipation, as described by Maria, are indeed emotional labor, even if they are not welded into specific tasks.

As part of her discussion on her conceptualizations of emotional labor, Olivia explained that she understands emotional labor in relation to childbirth, which provides us with a unique conceptualization of the concept of labor. As mentioned in Chapter 1, I justified emotional labor through traditional understandings of labor. To justify emotional labor through traditional understandings of labor, I utilized the writing of Marx (1887) to demonstrate that emotional labor has exchange-value and is, therefore considered labor as defined by Marx (1887). However, Olivia has presented us with a completely different

conceptualization of the term labor, one that is rooted in childbirth. Some may consider Olivia's statement a "play on words." However, Olivia, without prompt, provided me with an opportunity to question my own understanding of "labor" and also provided a unique perspective from which to appreciate the multidimensionality of the term.

To conclude Chapter 7, I present a quote from Beatty (2000) who states that "leadership's stricter codes of emotional display rules may intensify this aspect of the leadership experience for females, who may be encouraged to undergo more extensive reshaping of the self" (p. 340). Beatty's quote should serve to justify and validate participant narratives that described the perceived increased expectations of women with respect to emotional labor and emotion management.

CHAPTER VIII

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Utilizing qualitative interviews with 12 women administrators, my research attempts to understand how women in higher education administration understand and experience emotional labor in their work environment. In chapter 4, I presented profiles for each participant that allows readers the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the women who participated in my study. Included within the profiles is each individual's understanding of emotional labor. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 offer rich descriptions of my study's findings which I present in three themes: work environment, culture, and emotional labor; professionalism, leadership, and emotional labor; and gender and emotional labor. These profiles and themes help to answer my study's research question, as will be described in Chapter 8. However, I should note that the answer to the research question presented in my study is not a singular or monolithic one. To answer the research question, one must understand the entirety of the context presented in the dissertation. Therefore, the various answers to my research question are weaved within the profiles and themes presented in Chapter 8. To conclude my work, Chapter 8 culminates with the implications of my research and recommendations for future study.

Gender

At the risk of being pegged a feminist killjoy (Ahmed, 2013), I presented gender as the final finding of my study to bring to light the gendered ways in which the university *still* operates. I presented gender and emotional labor as the final finding of my study but will discuss it first, as what undergirds my entire study is that organizations are inherently gendered, (Acker, 1990) and participant narratives demonstrate the gendered

nature. Gendered conversations are present throughout my study despite my attempts at asking mostly gender-neutral questions, which is important to note as focusing on gender was not part of the initial goal of my study. That is, I did not intend for this to be a comparative study of men and women. Women were studied because they face different expectations of emotional management, not because I wanted to study how emotional labor and gender coalesced. I wanted to study how women experience emotional labor in their work environments as a general phenomenon, not as a comparative study. As previously mentioned, I did ask some participants about their experiences as a woman working within higher education, but these were in the minority, and most questions asked in my study were not purposefully comparative on the basis of gender.

Given that participants knew they were part of a study that only focused on women, they may have been inclined to discuss their gender as part of our conversation. At any rate, the participants often discussed emotional labor in relation to their gender, which demonstrates the importance of gender relations within their work environment. Therefore, my analysis is presented in an exploratory fashion. Given that participants often discussed their gender in relation to emotional labor, I believe it is an important finding to explore and discuss. My analysis is not meant to feed into any stereotypes and should not serve to provide any generalizable findings. Rather, it is presented as a finding to highlight how the women in my study understand and experience emotional labor in their work environment in relation to their gender.

Acker (1990) provides us with a compelling narrative regarding the gendered nature of organizations. Acker explains:

> Organizational structure is not gender neutral; on the contrary, assumptions about gender underlie the documents and contracts used to construct organizations and provide the commonsense ground for theorizing about them. Their gendered nature is partly masked through obscuring the embodied nature of work (p. 139).

The mention of the "embodied" nature of work provides an avenue in which to theorize the findings presented in my dissertation on a tangible and personal level. Specifically, we cannot analyze how the university operates without looking closely at the individuals who run the institution or organization. However, looking at organizations often entails a disembodied assessment; one could say this is what I was trying to accomplish with my study. Upon closer examination and deep reflection, I realized disembodiment is impossible, and it should be. Acker (1990) further explains:

> Abstract jobs and hierarchies, common concepts in organization thinking, assume a disembodied and universal worker. This worker is actually a man; men's bodies, sexuality, and relationships to procreation and paid work are subsumed in the image of the worker. Images of men's bodies and masculinity pervade organizational processes, marginalizing women and contributing to the maintenance of gender segregation in organizations. This positioning of gender-neutral and disembodied organizational structures and work relations is part of the larger strategy of control in industrial capitalist societies, which, at least partly, are built upon a deeply embedded structure of gender difference (p. 139).

I would argue that emotional labor is an "abstract job" as described by Acker. The concept of abstract jobs highlights how women are uniquely situated within the academic institutionally-produced hierarchies of emotion; particularly by acknowledging the way the participant's institution privileges behaviors rooted in masculine concepts such as emotion-less rationality.

By using Acker's (1990) assessment of organizations as gendered, I can theorize that the privileged rational thinking that prevails within participant's work environment is

a gendered assumption. Marlen spoke about the gendered nature of the structural processes that pervade in higher education. Marlen said that "bureaucratic [*and*] structural processes can be seen as more masculine." She further stated:

> There's a large literature base about men having been told their whole lives to keep down their emotions because otherwise, they're going to be associated with being soft and not manly. So, we have the fact most of the positions of leadership are still occupied by men, and they have been told their whole life that emotions are not welcome. So, I think it's no wonder that structure and bureaucracy ends up being what we see and the cause of a lot of what's wrong with a lot of our workplaces.

This quote from Marlen ties in Acker's (1990) assessment of the gendered organization by further analyzing the ways in which the dominant masculine narratives and thought processes pervade this work environment. I do not want to take it as far as Acker by claiming gendered segregation, but I do want to bring to light how this work environment is inherently gendered and privileges traditional masculine traits.

Regarding implications for practice, this study should justify programs designed for women working as higher education administrators. As an example, the Educational Leadership Enhancement Program (ELEP) at FIU is a program whose mission is to "enhance the knowledge and professional development of women and minorities to make them strong and engaging candidates for senior level administrative positions in higher education" (http://leadershipprogram.fiu.edu). These programs, along with others such as Women in Student Affairs (WISA), provide spaces for women working within higher education administration to learn and voice themselves in safe and understanding spaces. Participants described that working *with* and *for* women

provided a different experience than working for men, and I would extend this argument to educational spaces such as ELEP and WISA. That is, spaces geared towards women can provide resources that others simply don't or won't (at least not yet). Finally, we should all pay close attention to the ways we consciously and unconsciously disembody our organization. By taking a closer look at what the university setting privileges as truth, we can slowly begin to unpack and restructure our work environment into a more inclusive environment.

Work Environment and Culture

Once we accept organizations as inherently gendered, we can begin to understand how the participants of this study conceptualize their work environment. Understanding this particular work environment is essential to answering the research question presented in this study as it properly situates us into the social context and norms experienced by participants. Specifically, to understand how participants understand and experience emotional labor within their work environments, we should understand the work environment in which they are operating. The reasoning behind this is that emotions are shaped by the social contexts in which we demonstrate them. As Kemper (1990) explained, norms inform individuals how to act and which emotions to demonstrate. Therefore, we should understand this particular social context to understand how the participants of this study engage in emotional labor to fit the perceived norm.

Remnants of the Ivory Tower

The section titled "Remnants of the Ivory Tower" provides various participant narratives that described historical conceptualizations of higher education. As discussed in the introduction of this study, the university environment is changing. As Readings

(1996) tells us in his book, we are dwelling within ruins of the university "whose functions (products?) is the granting of degrees with a cultural cachet, but whose overall nature is corporate rather than cultural" (Readings, 1996, p. 11). Similar to Readings (1996), I do not want to bash the university as this is the institution that employs me and has provided me with many opportunities. However, I *do* believe a critical eye is necessary to dwell and thrive within the university setting.

The narratives in this section should serve to demonstrate that in this work environment, a privileged few holds most of the power. "Power" was one of my original codes as it was discussed by participants in relation to emotional labor. Particularly, participants often made statements that supported the idea that degrees, ranks, and hierarchies *matter* in their work environment. When Bailey tells us that she can "get away with stuff" because of her rank as a tenured full professor, this is indicative of the said power structures that reign. These power structures are not unique to this work environment as organizations with a hierarchical structure are prone to power relations. Yet, when degrees and ranks undergird power, power can be misplaced in those who do not have a true grasp of the organizational culture. As a practical example, placing someone in power simply because they have a terminal degree can prove to be detrimental if the said employee does not have a grasp on the organizational culture of said space. Therefore, by knowing explicitly that degrees, titles, and hierarchies not only matter but provide extreme power within this setting, we can critically examine why some who holds such power *and* influence within this organization may have little to no knowledge of the institution's culture.

Embedded within the university structure are unwritten contracts, some of which are remnants of the ivory tower. These unwritten and implied contracts dictate who holds power and conversely those who hold none. While the contracts are unwritten, those who have been working within the university setting for some time have insights as to these contracts and their implications; participants noted that insights come through time and experience. Therefore, those in senior leadership positions, or those who hold knowledge regarding the power structures that guide this organization, should not only share their knowledge but also question the structures put in place that could lead to exploitation of power. I will further explore the potential for power exploitation in the following section of my analysis. Nonetheless, the narratives provided in this section bring forward some of the implicit and explicit biases that privilege knowledge production from specific disciplines. The analysis provided in this section should serve as a starting point to understand the work environment in which the participants of this study operate.

The Politics of Emotion in the Corporate University

In continuing to build a foundation for the understanding of the work environment in which the participants of this study operate, I present an analysis of participant narratives that include the mention of *politics* within their work environments. Specifically, how participants themselves managed their emotions in the presence of said *politics*, but also how participants observed others managing (or not) their emotions within highly politicized spaces. Further, participants also discussed ways in which higher education was different than "corporate America" which adds to the argument that participants understand and experience their workspace as one that is unique and different from their counterparts who may work in other fields.

Becky maintains that the "political jargon" used by her co-workers clouds messages and is part of the *sterilization* process that employees within her work environment go through to appear professional. I conceptualize this as a process in which employees begin working within this environment acting one way, then begin to mimic perceived desirable behaviors. Mimicry of emotions is well documented in the literature as a natural phenomenon that happens as early as infancy (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1993, p. 97). I would argue that the concept of mimicry of emotions can also be translated into the mimicry of professional behaviors. The mimicry of professional behaviors is supported by Kramer and Hess (2002), who explain that professionalism is learned gradually based on what professionalism means within specific occupations. So, the *sterilization* Becky discusses can be compared to a completely natural and normal process of mimicry that employees engage in to fit the norm.

The concepts of *sterilization* provided by Becky is an interesting one, as it ties in various concepts presented in the findings of this study. It ties in the political nature of the academy with the performance of professionalism as behavior modification or emotional labor. Therefore, through the lens of emotional labor, we can understand that employees may modify their behaviors or emotions as part of their job responsibility. That is, to be successful within this organization, Becky sees that her counterparts are expressing themselves in a way that is different than natural.

Organizations, particularly institutions of higher education, are inherently political. Therefore, employees must demonstrate a certain level of political skill to successfully navigate through organizations (Ferris et al., 2007). I understand emotional labor to be part of political skill. This connection of emotional labor and political skill is

supported by Treadway et al. (2005) who explain that integrating these two concepts provides a deeper understanding of the impact of politics on behavior. Therefore, we can understand that participants may engage in emotional labor because of the political nature of their work within their organization.

The politics present within this work environment pushes employees to get work done, regardless of how it makes them feel. Bailey told me that she works under the assumptions that "if you can't get it done, we'll find somebody who can." This logic, I would argue, can lead to the exploitation of power in hegemonic relationships by forcing employees to complete tasks they may not have otherwise completed to appease those above them in the administrative hierarchy. That is, to "play the game" within this highly politicized space, employees have a general understanding that certain tasks *must* be completed. As a general example, if a mandate comes down from the State regarding performance metrics and funding, employees are often required to complete the tasks requested of them, even if the employee does not fully agree with what is being asked of them. This leaves little to no room to deviate from prescribed tasks, especially as they relate to mandates coming from those in power.

Those in power should keep this notion at the forefront of their psyche when working within this work environment and acknowledge the uncomfortable nature of completing tasks that do not align with personal beliefs. Rather than forcing employees to outright complete tasks, a space should be provided to discuss how tasks may impact employees on an emotional level. While we can acknowledge that sometimes the work has to be done, we should also acknowledge the *embodied* nature of our organization and pay close attention to the individuals working to accomplish the goals of the institution.

The analysis provided in this section should serve to provide understandings of how participants conceptualize their work environments. Further, this section should provide a foundation for continuing to answer how women in higher education administration understand and experience emotional labor within their work environments.

Professionalism and Leadership

In chapter 6, I presented the various participant narratives where they spoke about managing their emotions as part of being a "professional" or being a "leader." As part of data analysis, the patterns of similarity among participants regarding their conceptualizations of emotional labor as professionalism and leadership were noted; as this appeared as a prevalent theme among all participants. Professionalism and leadership were presented as separate entities even though they often overlapped in participants' narratives. The analysis provided in this section should serve to finalize the answer to this study's research question. Specifically, it should serve to explain how emotional labor is understood and experienced as both professionalism and leadership by the participants of this study.

Professionalism

As I previously mentioned, I understand the concept of professionalism as general rules and acceptable behaviors within this work environment. Professionalism can be generally understood as workplace etiquette, but professionalism also plays a role within the power relations present in this work environment. When discussing power, we can infer that power is granted to those who demonstrate desirable behaviors such as professionalism. Therefore, participants often engaged in emotional labor to appear

professional or *be professional*. Specifically, participants often discussed managing their emotions as part of being a professional. As Beatty (2000) explains, the ideal professional is mainly rational with their emotions carefully controlled. Through this lens, I conceptualize emotional labor as a performance of professionalism.

While emotional labor can be seen as a performance of professionalism, I would extend this argument to explain that this performance slowly becomes part of the fabric of habits individuals adopt as coping strategies as they navigate this space. By adopting this fabric of habits, or fabric of professionalism, employees can thrive within this organization. This fabric of habits can certainly lead employees to ascend within this space, but as noted by participants, it can also extract things from them. As Lisa noted that "as we move up, we lose parts of ourselves." As employees develop their fabric of habits as part of their social situations, these habits become taken for granted and individuals can flip into different behavioral scripts unconsciously. The insidious part about this it that is can be taxing, but due to its commonsensical nature, it is often taken for granted.

To further this argument, I present the commodification of human emotion within this work environment. Several narratives point to the commodification of thoughts, behaviors, and emotions as part of employment. Specifically, I am referring to mentions of behavior modification as part of "moving up" or professional growth. In this environment, participants discussed the need to act a certain way because of the perceived future benefits which is indicative of the neoliberal university ideals that expect employees to assume a subjectivity amenable to corporate culture. Further, through the commodification of the human experience, the neoliberal university reinforces power

relations inherent in hierarchical organizations by forcing employees into submission even when the reciprocating behavior is blatantly toxic. Therefore, we can deduce, based on participant narratives, that emotional labor within higher education administration is necessary to appear as a professional and demonstrate the socially accepted behaviors of this institution.

Leadership

Finally, I will analyze how participants understand emotional labor through hierarchical perceptions of leadership. Participants often discussed emotional labor in relation to themselves as a leader and also as perceptions of leadership styles. These narratives point to the hierarchies present within this work environment and the different expectations of emotional management of leaders. That is, leaders are not only expected to manage their own emotions but also manage the emotions of those "beneath" them in the administrative hierarchy. I do not use the word "beneath" in a pejorative way. Rather, it should serve to point to the layers of hierarchies that are present and demonstrate that leaders are expected to manage the emotions of those they lead. There were no conversations from participants about managing the emotions of those above them in this hierarchy. Rather, participants discussed managing their *own* emotions in the presence of those in authoritative positions. Also, Nicole points to her positional authority when she says, that her employees "tend to treat [*her*] with the different level of respect just because there could be consequences that they don't want to have." Nicole's narrative demonstrates that leaders *expect* the performance of emotional labor. Therefore, understanding the importance of emotional labor in relation to leadership helps us answer the research question presented in this study.

As part of my interviews, I asked almost all participants which part of their job they found most difficult: the managing of emotions and personalities or their job as described in their job description. Many participants, including Becky, Vanessa, Rose, Maria, Stacey, and Olivia, explicitly stated that the managing of emotions and personalities was most difficult which is important to note, as I previously mentioned that emotional labor can be taxing, but due to its commonsensical nature it is often taken for granted. I do not know if there is an exact recommendation I can present in relation to this finding, but I do want to acknowledge the daily struggles faced by employees who are expected to manage their own emotions as well as those of others.

Emotional labor is necessary to ascend to leadership positions within this organization. To support this claim, Burch, Humphrey, and Batchelor (2013) found that the role of the leader is evolving as employees continue to expect empathetic and engaged leaders. Participants who discuss managing their emotions as part of their leadership style have an understanding of the need to engage with emotional labor as part of their responsibility of a leader. Olivia discussed the ability to manage emotions as the "crux of climbing the ladder." This narrative supports Burch, Humphrey, and Batchelor's (2013) research as do various other narratives provided in this section that ties professional growth and leadership to the ability to manage emotions.

The concept of emotional contagion (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1992) provides a framework to understand why individuals in leadership positions may engage in emotional labor. When Maria remarks on the need for her to change her facial expression when working events, her comments imply that the emotions she displays can be picked up and caught, through contagion. Thus, she changes her reactions to avoid the

contagion of negative emotions. I would argue that emotional contagion transcends any hierarchies present within this work environment. Therefore, employees should be conscious of their emotions and know that they can be "caught" through emotional contagion.

The analysis provided in this section should have built upon each other to provide a holistic understanding of emotional labor within higher education administration. Overall, the themes and analysis provided in this section should serve to answer the research question by describing and analyzing how women in higher education administration understand and experience emotional labor in their work environments.

Discussions and Suggestions for Future Research

Throughout this process, I often found myself thinking that the term emotional labor was not enough to describe what the participants of this study were experiencing. As such, I call for a re-examination of emotional labor. To be more specific, I call for a reexamination of the political processes that surround emotional labor, how employees are disciplined to perform emotional labor, and underlying causal mechanisms for emotional labor. Therefore, researchers should spend more time and resources analyzing the phenomenon of emotional labor on a deeper level rather than through neoliberally motivated methods of inquiry which (sometimes) aim to measure the unmeasurable.

Emotional labor is complex, and while it is a generalized phenomenon experienced by most, I would argue emotional labor is unique to each individual. This individuality would explain why researchers have struggled to measure and consistently define the concept, and I would question the demand to be able to do these things. I do agree that studying emotional labor quantitatively can have an impact on the field as

these studies can serve to convince positivists and traditional quantitative researchers of emotional labor's scientific verifiability. However, I would argue that researchers should spend less time trying to measure emotional labor and the various consequences, antecedents, etc., and more time exploring how individuals actually experience this phenomenon. Therefore, I also call for a deeper exploration of emotional labor in varying organizational contexts through qualitative inquiry.

Given that emotional labor is a deeply personal human experience, I do not believe this phenomenon *always* warrants statistical exploration. To be more specific as to my own personal beliefs, the exploration of emotional labor as a measurable human output only adds to what Woodward (2008) has named statistical panic. Woodward asserts that "fatally we feel that a certain statistic, which is in fact based on an aggregate and is only a measure of probability, represents our very future" (p. 196). The potential for statistical panic around emotional labor is possible given the tendency of the academy to attach itself to data and analytics as truth. As Marlen said that "[*in*] academia, we keep insisting that if we create more dashboards and have more data and analytics that that's going to solve our problems." Therefore, I caution researchers who are producing data and measuring tools around human emotions as this may provide a platform for the hyper-surveillance of human experiences, such as emotional labor (Kuntz, 2016, p. 34).

By studying emotional labor quantitatively, we go back to Kuntz (2016), who explains the *logics of extraction*. Just because we can, doesn't mean we should, or could, measure the emotional labor of employees. I admit, I engaged in some logics of extraction with this study through coding and analysis of participant narratives; however, I spent a great deal of time trying to understand how the participants of my study

understood and experienced emotional labor outside of these processes. Therefore, I argue that studies on emotional labor are better suited for qualitative research methods because we can more deeply understand how each person understands and experiences emotional labor within various social contexts. That is, depending on the social context, people may experience emotional labor differently.

Future studies should look at the explicit intersection of race, gender, and class and emotional labor, specifically as they relate to the power structures that undergird the performance of emotional labor. By incorporating race and ethnicity into a study on emotional labor, researchers can examine how racist ideologies are realized through the management of human emotion in traditionally white spaces. Moreover, a study that examines men's experiences with emotional labor in higher education may yield findings that are not provided within my study that only examined women's experiences.

Though I did not fully explore labor through economic terms in this study, future studies can look directly at emotional labor through an economic lens. By discussing emotional labor through economic terms, we can view emotional labor as a commodity, one to be sold, fetishized, or objectified. In this case, if indeed, emotional labor is *labor*, then we can analyze the potential for the exploitation of such labor through an economic analysis.

Conclusion

When I began this analysis, I called for further exploration of the underlying causal mechanisms for the performance of emotional labor. Though this was not the purpose of this study, several concepts were presented within the literature review of this dissertation that can help with understanding the motivations behind the performance of

emotional labor. For example, dramaturgical theories to help to explain how individuals may seek to manage incongruences between what they actually feel and what is appropriate to display. Further, by tying in basic hedonic principles to emotional labor, we can understand that individuals may manage their emotions to avoid pain. Pain is used loosely in this context but provides an understanding for ways emotion management may be linked to avoiding unpleasant feelings such as awkwardness and embarrassment. Higgins (1998) provided a framework in which to conceptualize how hedonic principles operate. That is, hedonic principles operate with a promotion focus or a prevention focus. Utilizing this framework, we can analyze participants' motivating factors that lead to the performance of emotional labor. Some participants described operating from a promotion focus or engaging in emotional labor for advancement and growth, whereas some participant discussed more of prevention focus. This prevention focus is based on following rules and guidelines which I equate to the social norms of their work environment. Therefore, participants may have understood that managing emotions is just simply part of working within higher education. I believe future qualitative research focusing on the motivation behind emotional labor might help bring to light to the political processes that surround emotional labor and ways in which employees are disciplined to perform it.

I hope I cast my conceptual net further than traditional studies while keeping the concepts discussed in this dissertation grounded in Hochschild's (1983) framework. Further, this study should serve to bring attention to and increase social consciousness on the role of emotions and emotional labor in higher education administration. As supported by Staw, Sutton, and Pelled (1994), employees demonstrating positive

emotions can lead to favorable supervisor evaluations, higher pay, and greater social support. Therefore, employees should be mindful of the role of emotional labor in their working lives as they progress through their career.

To finalize this analysis and bring closure to this work, women in higher education administration understand and experience emotional labor within their work environments through a multidimensional construct as demonstrated by the findings of this study. That is, emotional labor is understood and experienced uniquely within the space of higher education, emotional labor was performed through leadership and professionalism, and participants of this study experienced emotional labor through gendered conceptualizations. Finally, we can conclude that emotional labor is, indeed, a part of the administrative culture within this work environment and emotional labor is understood and experienced by participants as presented in my study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview One Protocol

The purpose of this interview is to understand how women in higher education administration understand and experience emotional labor in their work environments. These questions should serve as prompts for conversations which then may lead to follow-up questions for clarification. These follow-up questions may emerge depending on the responses provided by participants. This protocol is meant to elicit authentic responses from participants by which they can communicate their experiences with emotional labor and does not intend to ask leading questions. The investigator does not perceive any risks from your involvement in this study.

Research Question

How do women in higher education administration understand and experience emotional labor in their work environments?

Thank you for taking the time to participate in my study and for taking the time to have a conversation with me. I am going to ask you some questions about your experience and understandings of emotional labor. Please relax and answer the questions honestly. I will protect your identity by using a pseudonym of your choosing. I have planned to record this conversation. However, if you are not comfortable with this, please let me know and I can stop the recording and we will conduct this interview without a recording. Only I will have access to these recordings. If you do not want to answer a question, or want to come back to one later, we can do that. You can refuse to answer any questions and we can stop the interview at any time. Also, you are free to stop participating in the study at any time. Do you have any questions for me before we start?

For this interview, I would like for you to tell me as much as you can about yourself as possible with respect to the topic of emotional labor and your role in higher education. Try to think of your time working in higher education and go back as far as you can to describe events throughout your employment.

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. How long have you worked in higher education?
3. Tell me about your role at FIU.
4. What is it like for you as an employee at FIU?
5. Can you take me through a typical day for you?

6. Do you know what emotional labor is?
    a. If participant answers ‘yes’: What does emotional labor mean to you?
    b. If participant answers ‘no’: Can you give me some examples of times you have experienced emotional challenges in your workplace?
7. How does emotional labor (or the managing of your emotions) fit into your everyday work?

8. Do you ever feel the need to control your emotions at work?
9. Do you ever pretend to be in a good mood?
10. Tell me how you manage your feelings at work.

The following questions should serve as conversations prompts for participants if the conversation stalls.

11. Would you consider yourself an empathetic person?
12. Which aspect of your job is more difficult: the managing of emotions and personalities, or your job as described in your job description?
13. How do you think emotions fit into your work environment?
14. Do you think you have a good understanding of your emotions?
15. Would you consider yourself sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others?
16. Are you able to control your temper and handle difficulties rationally?
17. Do you ever worry that your job is hardening you emotionally?
18. Do you think there is a cost associated with emotional labor (or the managing of your emotions at work)?
19. What do you do to de-stress from a particularly emotional day at work?
20. Do you ever find yourself censoring/suppressing your actual thoughts or emotions?
21. Is there anything else you would like to say?

Thank you for participating in this portion of my study.

Modified from Burns, 2011 and Seidman, 2013

Appendix B: Interview Two Protocol

The purpose of this interview is to understand how women in higher education administration understand and experience emotional labor in their work environments. These questions should serve as prompts for conversations which then may lead to follow-up questions for clarification. These follow-up questions may emerge depending on the responses provided by participants. This protocol is meant to elicit authentic responses from participants by which they can communicate their experiences with emotional labor and does not intend to ask leading questions. The investigator does not perceive any risks from your involvement in this study.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to participate in my study and for taking the time to have a conversation with me. I am going to ask you some questions about your experience and understandings of emotional labor. Please relax and answer the questions honestly. I will protect your identity by using a pseudonym of your choosing. I have planned to record this conversation. However, if you are not comfortable with this, please let me know and I can stop the recording and we will conduct this interview without a recording. Only I will have access to these recordings. If you do not want to answer a question, or want to come back to one later, we can do that. You can refuse to answer any questions and we can stop the interview at any time. Also, you are free to stop participating in the study at any time. Do you have any questions for me before we start?

1. Given what you have told me about yourself and your professional experiences, how do you understand emotional labor in your workplace?
2. What sense does emotional labor make to you?
3. Given what you have reconstructed in these interviews, where do you see yourself going in the future?

Modified from Burns, 2011 and Seidman, 2013

VITA

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	Born, Miami, Florida
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2010	Clinical Clerkship Coordinator Florida International University, Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, Miami, FL
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2015-2018	American Association of Medical Colleges, Group on Student Affairs, National Committee on Student Records, Southern Region Representative

PRESENTATIONS:

"Non-Standard Curriculum: Repeat Academic Years" Joint Professional Development Conference for Financial Aid and Student Records Administrators, San Antonio, TX, 2015

"The Emerging Registrar" GSA/CiM/OSR National Professional Development Conference, St. Louis, MO, 2016

"Examining the Impacts of Delaying USMLE® Step One" AAMC Health Professions Financial Aid Administrators Conference, Weston, FL, 2017

"The Struggling Student Continuum: Issues, Interventions, and Impact" AAMC SGEA/SGSA/SOSR Joint Regional Conference, Charlottesville, VA, 2017

"Experiences and Understandings of Emotional Labor from Women Higher Education Administrators" Paper presented at Southeast Philosophy of Education Society (SEPES), Decatur, GA, 2019

"Candid Conversations, Discussions on Emotional Labor" Women in Student Affairs (WISA), Florida International University, Miami, Fl, 2019