

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

Discovering the Missing Link of Emotion in Leadership: A Case Study of Affect Valence and Emerging Leadership

This study was a provocative examination of leadership through the worldview of participants in an emotionally charged situation that is considered deviant by the parent organization. The focus of this study and the research strategy encompassed generating a greater understanding of leadership and conducting an analysis of how an Army officer's emotions influenced effectiveness in Iraq when he was forced to choose between standing orders from superiors and the life of his soldiers who were under his charge.

An interpretive approach using Mead's theory of emergence, accentuated by pragmatism and subjective interactionism in the form of a single case study, was used to describe and explain how leadership studies should be focusing on the integration of affect—more specifically love—in order to better understand leadership development, as opposed to concentrating on only the causal effects that leadership provides.

Historically, humans use reason to hide emotions; however, this study demonstrated that emotions indeed guide our living and adaptation, even when we claim that we are being rational, and it is this adaptive capacity that can lead us to the next stage in understanding human development.