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Leadership and the Politics-Administration Dichotomy: A Comparative Study of Political Influences in Four Florida State Agencies

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LEADERSHIP AND THE POLITICS-ADMINISTRATION DICHOTOMY: A

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF POLITICAL INFLUENCES IN FOUR FLORIDA STATE

AGENCIES

By

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iii

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

This study examines state agency leadership and the viability of the traditional politics-administration dichotomy in state government. Despite all the academic theorizing about how appointed public managers should be involved in policy making, the ground truth is much different. Standing at the uncomfortable nexus of politics and administration, senior public managers face a difficult task of managing the political environment while simultaneously leading and managing their own organizations. In so doing, they face the most difficult and sensitive aspect of public sector leadership. Powerful, politically-connected actors seek to influence public sector leaders and have policies formulated and executed in ways beneficial to them. This type of political influence can often have a significant impact on the decisions of these senior appointed officials. This study examines how appointed state agency heads manage political influences to their leadership in the context of the politics-administration dichotomy. The research explores how political influence impacts agency head leadership priorities and examines the strategies developed to accommodate those influences.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

"The decisions of public managers must be integrated with decisions of others to form the mosaic that is public policy. " -- Charles Lindblom (from "The Science of Muddling Through, 1959)

With the leanest and least compensated state workforce of any state in the nation, Florida's state agency heads have their hands full. Their job is to be leaders in executing public policy that puts government into action (Wilson, 1887). These senior public executives stand at the uncomfortable nexus of politics and administration to provide the leadership to efficiently and effectively run state government agencies. Public administrators are particularly challenged by the dual instrumental and constitutive nature of their roles in governance (Larsen, 2011). They practice bureaucratic politics as the "agent" under the "principal-agent" theory responding to the elected official "principals" (Waterman, Rouse and Wright, 2004). Potential conflict occurs when the goals and objectives of principals and agents differ (Waterman, Rouse and Wright, 2004). Since state agency leadership is exercised against the backdrop of its political context, there are many entities – in and out of the government - that consider public executives as their agent. These many political influences from a wide variety of stakeholders make public sector leadership is an exceedingly complex dynamic (Collins, 2005). These powerful, politically-connected actors seek to influence agency decisions and have policies formulated and executed in ways beneficial to them. This type of political influence can often have a significant impact on the decisions of senior appointed officials. Add to that an extremely polarized political climate

and a constant push by elected officials to reduce the size of government and the job of state agency heads becomes even more difficult.

Public managers are not politicians concerned with staking out positions or posturing for the next election. Instead, their leadership is focused on solving the difficult problems in practical and pragmatic ways that further the public interest. These public sector leaders are charged with tasks of governance framed by various philosophies of public administration, regime values, structures, processes and public values (Larsen, 2011). To be a successful leader in the public sector requires unique political skill, the ability to understand others and to use that knowledge to influence others through persuasion, manipulation and negotiation to act in ways that serve to enhance personal or organizational objectives (Ferris, Davidson and Perrewe, 2005). Senior state leaders must constantly consider the possible political ramifications of their actions. Governors and state legislatures jealously guard their turf and can relegate bureaucrats to the more mundane and thankless duty of carrying out the policies they create.

But state agency heads are expected to do more than merely implement policy set by elected officials (Waldo, 1984; Montjoy and Watson, 1995). Their talent, experience, intellect and leadership at the pinnacle of large governmental organizations positions them to be influential players in actually formulating public policy as well as implementing it. They require a competent political judgment and skill so as to persuasively apply ambiguous but enduring values to dynamic world of governance (Green, Wamsley, and Keller, 1993). The application of common premises and public values to changing circumstances provides a necessary check on the narrow partisanship of modern polarized politics. This type of political judgment is integrative and puts government into action.

Leaders must make difficult choices that balance political considerations with policy making and execution while simultaneously managing their own organizations. In so doing, they face the most difficult and sensitive aspect of public sector leadership. They must continually assess their roles and seek productive working relationships with their elected political bosses – the Governor and the Legislature -- as well as other political stakeholders in state government in order to successfully fulfill their mandated missions and contribute to democratic governance. Indeed, public executives can assume many roles in government ranging from instrumental (policy implementation) to constitutive (policy making). (See Figure 1) Not only do they need to be technically competent in their field, they are required to be "political managers" along with their traditional responsibilities for public administration (Moore, 1984). Being sensitive to and aware of the political environment is a key survival skill for public executives (Moore, 1984).
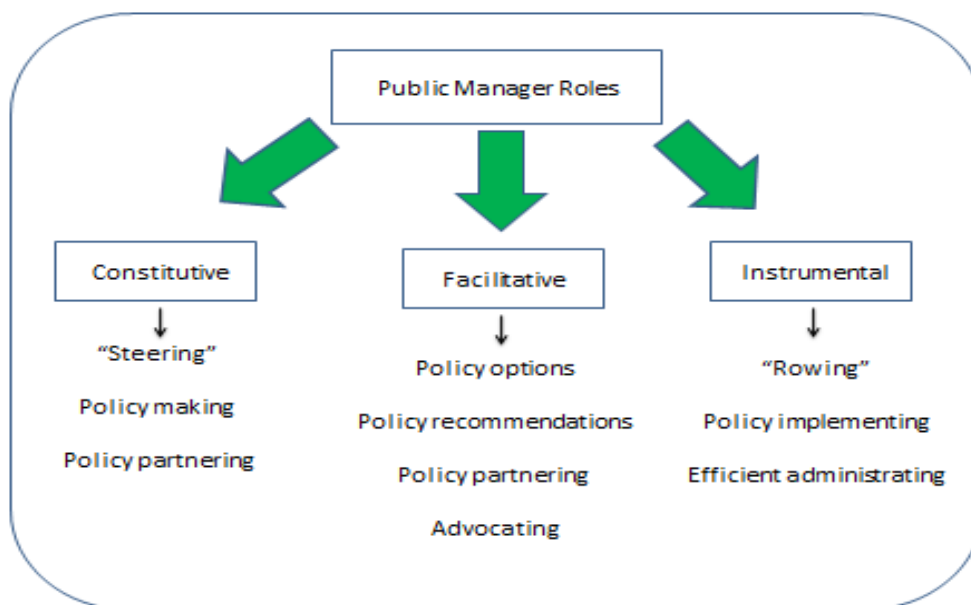
Figure 1   Public Manager Roles

The natural distinction between elected and appointed leaders – captured in public administration history as the politics-administration dichotomy (Wilson, 1887) -- creates a tension when it comes to who has primacy in policy making. Legislators jealously guard their policy-making role and do not appreciate appointed officials encroaching on their turf.   Once policies are decided and authorized by elected officials, it is expected that they be implemented in conformity with legislative intent (Demir and Nyhan, 2008). Public managers are strongly discouraged from taking actions that may change the range and objective of the authorized policy. Legislators see independent administrative actions as a violation of the principle of legislative supremacy (Demir and Nyhan, 2008). Yet other literature suggests that public managers exercise more of a constitutive, policy-making role rather than merely neutral administration of policy, especially given the difficult and complex problems faced today (Cook, 1998,). So, public managers must continually assess their roles and seek best possible working relationship with their elected political bosses – the Governor and the Legislature -- as well as other political stakeholders in state government so that they can successfully fulfill their mandated missions and contribute to democratic governance. It is the difficulty in managing political influences while being efficient, effective and principled that is at the heart of this study.

Purpose

The main purpose of this study is to examine how appointed state agency heads manage political influences to their leadership. Qualitative research best meets this purpose by allowing senior public managers to speak for themselves. To meet this purpose, the research explores how political decision making impacts agency head leadership priorities, examines the strategies

developed to overcome political obstacles and determines how public managers define their roles as policy makers and in state government in general as similar or different from elected officials.

This study seeks to connect public administration theory to practice at the state level. Public administration has its feet firmly planted in two worlds. One is in the real world foundational institution where public administrators implement the policy of government (Larsen, 2011). The other is the academic discipline that has as its subject matter the field of practice of public administration (Larsen, 2011). Both are embedded in the broader institution of governance – one institution focused on its exercise and the other on its study (Larsen, 2011). Specifically, this study examines the legitimacy of the politics-administration dichotomy in state government and compares it with the academic theory. The purpose is to evaluate the applicability of the dichotomy and assess how it impacts public manager leadership.

Research Question

The research question for this dissertation focuses on how state agency heads view and cope with political influences to their leadership in the context of the classical politics-administration dichotomy. Specifically:

> **How do senior appointed public managers in state government manage political**
>
> **influences to their leadership?**

The answer to this question is drawn from a grounded analysis study of how senior appointed executives from four Florida state agencies have responded to political influences. The study relies on data drawn from semi-structured interviews of 14 current and former state agency heads. The interviews have been digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim to provide a record

of the interviewees' in depth responses. First I examined their individual narratives and developed categories and codes inductively from each. After analyzing these results from several perspectives, I generated theoretical assertions of their actions and responses to state government political influences and the meanings held for these actors. I used the data to validate the patterns and close with grounded analysis from which I drew my conclusions.

Significance of the Study

This is a study focused on the leadership behavior of the most senior appointed officials in the turbulent, unpredictable political environment of state government. Buffeted by many political influencers seeking to bend them to their own selfish purposes, these public managers need to successfully navigate the treacherous political minefields to formulate and implement policy while effectively managing their organizations. This study will contribute to an understanding of the role of appointed state agency leaders, how their leadership is affected by political decisions and how they develop innovative strategies to cope with political influence.

Although there is an ongoing debate about the nature of the distinction between politics and administration, there is a scarcity of research on how senior public managers view this distinction and what, if any, impact it has on their ability to be policy leaders in government. In an environment where politics has an impact on both leadership and decision making, political considerations place tremendous normative demands on public managers. To provide effective leadership and make policy decisions in the public interest, public managers need every bit of their political savvy and leadership skills to achieve the optimum balance. Exploring these areas

provides valuable insight into the decision making of senior public managers and the role it serves in democratic governance.

This dissertation aims to contribute to public policy literature by examining senior public managers in state government. Much of the existing literature addresses public administration and public management in a very general manner, focuses on local government and tends to center on elected officials. However, very little has been written about how politics influences public manager leadership at the state level and how public managers understand their roles in the context of the classical politics-administration dichotomy. Although there is still an ongoing debate about the nature of the politics-administration dichotomy, there is a scarcity of research on how senior managers themselves view this dichotomy and how political decision making impacts appointed public executives. This research should contribute to the public policy literature on state level public manager leadership and address the relevance of the politics-administration dichotomy in the 21st century. Few organizational scholars have attempted to understand the political pressures on senior public managers from the vantage point of the public manager. The expectation is that this research will fill a void in the body of literature on the leadership of senior state-level public managers by allowing the views of these leaders to be compared to existing theory. Additionally, the results will answer important questions about leadership, politics, and the relevance of the politics-administration dichotomy. By examining what it is practitioners in state government actually do, the hope is to provide assistance to other practitioners in improving the practice of public management in state government and with it, improved governance outcomes.

Background

This study is tempered by an understanding that government service in Florida is not held in the highest esteem by its elected decision makers. Florida has shown a consistent history of not only resisting a strong civil service, but trying to dismantle any effective civil service system whatsoever. In the early 1990's, the legislature voted to sunset its civil service system. The next decade saw Governor Jeb Bush take actions to eliminate career service protections. In 2001, citing the old system as "outdated", Governor Bush under the "Service First" initiative moved over 16,000 out of career service status to "at will." The move made senior career public servants more vulnerable to summary dismissal, more easily dominated by elected officials and some say, less willing to challenge their elected bosses (West and Bowman, 2004).

In the state government agencies examined in this study, all but one was led by career public servants. Those people who have worked their way up the agency and held positions of increasing responsibility. Although the agency head selection is made by the Governor and in the case of Cabinet agencies, by the Governor and Cabinet, the appointment is not truly a political one. The choices at state level for agency heads of Department of Revenue (DOR), Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), Department of Corrections (DOC), and Department of Children and Families (DCF) usually are among career public servants who have subject matter expertise pertinent to their agency and a background in public service. Of all the subjects interviewed for this study, only one could be considered having primarily a private sector management background and even he had extensive experience with the non-profit world. Most have had long careers in public service and have built long term working relationships with people employed in the same organization. Loyalties are mostly to the organizations that raised them and the people in those organizations. So, these agency heads are not really political

8

animals by nature that have cut their teeth on political campaigns and owe prior allegiance to the Governor. Certainly, the Governor picks those public servants who he/she thinks will do the best job and will carry out duties in synch with the Governor's beliefs and philosophies. When these agency heads are finished with their term of service, they retire, continue in another public service sector, or seek another venue for employment. My point is that there is normally no "golden parachute" for them to land a political job

I chose this topic for research because I have had a lifelong interest in leadership beginning with my personal experience as an Army officer. I have had many opportunities to practice leadership both in the Army and then later in state government. Along the way, I have been fortunate enough to attend military schools that focused on leadership development. In my later career in state government, I served as a senior appointed public manager in the Governor's Office of Drug Control and then later as an Assistant Secretary in the Department of Corrections. From these vantage points, I was able to participate in public sector leadership as well as observe it. I observed some very principled leaders who stood up for their convictions and others who did not. I saw first-hand how government agencies can do great things for the citizens of the state as well as how poor leadership can lead to bad outcomes. I came away with a greater appreciation for the need for good leadership at all levels in state government.

Given this background, I appreciate the power of good leadership in organizations as well as the potential for poor leadership to stymie effective government and destroy employee morale. This has given me the motivation to find ways to improve leadership in government. I see this as especially important as the government sector continues to shrink. I have seen very dedicated public servants in state government working hard every day to provide services. In order for them to be effective, especially with diminished numbers, they deserve good

leadership. In short, I firmly believe that leadership matters. I believe that the biggest challenges faced by leaders are the areas of political influence, initiative and discretion, and practicing principled leadership. That is why I have undertaken this study. My hope is that I can serve to assist state leadership to focus on improving leadership at the top of state agencies and then throughout the ranks. Our citizens deserve the best governmental organizations and leadership is a huge part of that.

The leadership of state government organizations is important because the covenant between a government and its citizens is redeemed through the performance of its executive agencies (Larsen, 2011). Moreover, the legitimacy of a government depends on the ability of public administrators to deliver on the promises of goods and services made by the government to its citizens (Larsen, 2011). The institutions of government matter. When they fail, citizens suffer and it is nearly impossible for our society to function. Yet, when government agencies succeed, many great things are possible. Society can function smoothly and citizens are able to enjoy the blessings of a free, democratic nation. Government agencies are indispensable assets in the equation, but they do not run themselves. They require strong, principled leadership (Wilson, 2013). Through this study, I hope to examine political influences on leadership in a manner that ultimately contributes to the betterment of Florida government.

Definitions

At this point, I would like to address and define the different terms to be used in this study. Politics, to borrow Lasswell's definition, is concerned with "who gets what, when and how." To flesh this out a bit, politics is about the control, allocation, production and use of

resources and the ideas underlying those activities (Ball, 1993). The behavior regarding

producing, distributing and using resources can range from cooperation to debate to bargain and

compromises to conflict (Kirkvliet, 2009). Defined is this way, politics is not the partisan,

electoral politics associated with elections, but rather a multi-faceted concept regarding the

policies that determine resource allocation. These politics are found everywhere in the public

sector. They can range from "official" politics with governmental actors making and influencing

policy to "advocacy" politics with direct efforts to support, criticize and oppose authorities and

policies to "everyday politics" with people from all walks of life embracing, complying with,

adjusting and contesting norms and rules regarding authority over the production and allocation

of resources in quiet mundane ways that are rarely organized (Kirkvliet, 2009). The first two of

these are areas on which this study is primarily focused. These definitions of politics correctly

assume that much of politics is based on relationships between and among actors that are in turn

defined by hierarchical position, roles, influence and power. The policy outcomes spawned by

these relationships go a long way in determining the "who gets what" Lasswell called politics.

I define state agency heads as public executives -- career government professionals

responsible for the overall performance of the institutions they lead. Another term used is public

managers, senior appointed officials and even public administrators. Regardless of the specific

term used, these are all senior non-elected public sector leaders in state government and

practitioners in the field of public administration and leadership. The term politician may be used

when referring to elected officials – specifically the Governor and the Legislature. Political

influence is defined as the power to affect something or someone and can be exerted by a

number of different actors both in government and in the private sector. Political pressure is the

undue influence/manipulation by political masters (executive and legislative) based on profit, ideology or political/economic gain. The politics-administration dichotomy refers specifically to the division of responsibility for policy making with elected officials responsible for formulating policy and appointed officials responsible for carrying out that policy. In reality, it would be better categorized as a *policy*-administration dichotomy.

As I address leadership in this study, I fall back on three primary references for my definitions and explanations of leadership. The first is that leadership is the art of motivating a group of people to achieve a common goal. Leaders' responsibilities can be simplified into two basic tasks: accomplishing the mission and looking out for the welfare of personnel – a concept that undergirds basic leadership theory to this day (Barnard, 1938). Secondly, leadership credibility is based on communicating clear goals, developing a shared vision and values, creating trust, empowering employees, setting the example and recognizing the achievements of employees (Kouzes and Posner, 1988). Finally, to be effective, public sector leaders must possess six specific leadership skills: communication, social skills, influence skills, analytic skills, technical skills and continual learning (Van Wart, 2005). Indeed, I agree with Warren Bennis who told us, "Leadership is like beauty: it's hard to define, but you know it when you see it."

In Chapter 2, I will detail the theoretical framework for this study. The literature review will address what the state of the field is, list the most important works and provide a sense of what other scholars have written about this topic. I intend to discuss the literature as a whole, explain what the disputes are and where the open questions lie. Finally, I will offer a unique insight into state level public management as viewed by its practitioners.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK / LITERATURE REVIEW

"In theory there is no difference between theory and practice. In practice, there is."

-- Yogi Berra

Overview

Public administration scholars have contributed divergent perspectives about political pressures experienced by unelected public managers. Often, the perspectives directly contradict each other and create more confusion than clarity. Moreover, public managers' behavior in the crucible of state government politics does not match neatly with the written theories. The policy roles of public managers and elected officials may not be as complementary as portrayed in the literature. Additionally, elected officials often seek to dominate policy making while leaving only the execution of policy to the appointed bureaucrats. Consequently, the scholars' views may or may not reflect how public managers actually operate. Nevertheless, it is important to examine these divergent perspectives to discover what is useful and not useful within each view and how these views match the perspectives of senior managers actually holding top management positions.

Much of the research in this area has focused on national level case studies, with only scant attention to political influences present in state government. One of the few exceptions is Mark Moore's case studies on public value in which he describes strategic public management as a balancing of external political support and internal agency capabilities (Moore, 1995). Other state level studies have emphasized political influences on public managers with regard to their impact on the budget process (Wright, 1967; Ryu, Bowling, Cho and Wright, 2007). Generally, the research and theory has had some limitations. Some literature suggests public managers simply act as neutral administrators of policy determined by elected leaders (Kaufman, 1956).

At the other extreme, scholars insist that public managers have a responsibility to innovate, lead and use initiative (Behn, 1998; Moore, 1995). In some scenarios, managers are seamlessly integrated as partners in policy making. Yet, there is little evidence in the literature of how senior state level public managers cope with and manage political influence to their leadership or how that affects their ability to initiate and influence policy.

In this chapter I will review the literature that is germane to this research topic. Initially, I will highlight how politics is an integral part of public manager decision making. I will examine how public managers exercise discretion as they operate within a zone of acceptance and contribute to democratic governance. Additionally, I will assess how the literature frames distinction between politics and administration on the roles of public managers. In this literature review, I will examine the shortcomings and gaps and attempt to carve out a niche for the research to be conducted.

How Politics Influences Public Management Decision Making

"Reasoned analysis is necessarily political." – Deborah Stone

Politics plays an integral role in decision making for appointed government officials, but in ways that differ greatly from elected leaders. From a rational point of view, politics is messy, foolish, inexplicable and erratic (Stone, 1988). Rationality purports to offer a correct vantage point to judge goodness. However, the very categories of thought underlying rational analysis are themselves a paradox defined in political struggle (Stone, 1988). Much of the literature about public policy proceeds from the idea that policy making in practice deviates from some hypothetical standard of good policy making and thus there is something fundamentally wrong

with politics (Stone, 1988). In reality, policy analysis is political argument and vice versa (Stone, 1988). The struggle of ideas is the essence of policy making. So, rather than a rational process, policy making is a constant struggle over the criteria for classification, the boundaries of categories and definition of ideals that guide the way people behave (Stone, 1988). To begin with, defining the problem – the first step in rational decision making process – is not an objective or neutral evaluation that can be applied to politics. Behind every policy issue lurks a contest over conflicting, though equally plausible conceptions of the same abstract goal or value. The contest is determined by parties with a vested interest in presenting the problem in a certain light (Stone, 1988). So, decision making for public managers is not somehow magically separate from politics. Rather, politics is embedded throughout and so called "rational" decision making necessarily includes political considerations and limitations.

Public administration scholars argue that politics has a central role with public servants holding leadership positions because they are required to do more than merely implement policy set by elected officials (Waldo, 1984; Montjoy and Watson, 1995). Public managers must manage the political environment if they are to be effective (Moore, 1995). In so doing, they are faced with a set of opposing ethical challenges highlighted in the division between politics and administration. On one hand, public managers are expected to be neutral, responsive and carry out faithfully the mandates of their elected political masters, in which case public managers' views are irrelevant at best and suspect at worst. Their views of the public interest often have to be suppressed in favor of the elected officials. On the other hand, public managers are certainly independent moral actors who have the moral responsibility to express their own opinions of what is right and good and resist commands that are illegal and immoral (Moore, 1995).

The job of the manager is not merely to accept political constraints but to provide leadership in shaping the content of the constraints (Heymann, 1987). Merely implementing policies with neutral competence in conformity with legislative intentions and instructions is not enough to solve the wicked problems in a complex political environment (Demir and Nyhan, 2008). A key element of strategic management in the public sector is managing outward toward principals and politics. Political management involves building support and legitimacy for policy – especially among those outside the scope of the manager's direct authority whose assistance is necessary (Moore, 1995). Because the job is largely defined by implementing policies, public managers look for efficient organizational processes and policy designs that best serve the public interest. Hence, politics becomes central to the job and should shape the education and professional development of public managers (Cook, 1998). It remains an open question how much agency heads are permitted to provide policy leadership in state government.

Zones of Acceptance, Accountability and Discretion

Senior public managers operate within a zone of acceptance based on what their elected supervisors allow them to do. This concept, originally proposed by Chester Barnard and eventually modified by Herbert Simon, defined a realm of public sector behavior in which a public manager is permitted to retain personal freedom by electing to take directions and accept decisions made by elected officials (Barnard, 1938;Simon, 1976; Stewart, 1989). More specifically, Simon added the idea of accountability for public managers, arguing that they must be held accountable for decisions (Simon, 1976). Both concepts portray the condition of unquestioned authority and serve as positive organizational values. Moreover, in the public

sector, administrators supposedly carry out the will of elected officials who are accountable to their constituencies (Mitchell and Scott, 1988).

Barnard's zone of acceptance can be interpreted as a zone of expectations that encompasses the logic of accountability. With accountability, three distinct perspectives intersect: that of the self-interested individual; that of perceived expectations of the organization; and outside moral pressures (Dubnick and Justice, 2014). The public executive must decide upon a very individualized zone – a constitutive zone of expectations -- within which he/she can function as a senior, decision-making leader. Such a situation demands the actor exercise a high degree of discretion based on substantial organizational knowledge and years of experience performing tasks where the actor is rendered less effective if overly constrained (Dubnick and Justice, 2014).

Public managers' discretion is subject to the indirect and subtle impact of elected politicians. There is a system of checks and accountability that constrains the choices of bureaucrats and creates an incentive structure that leads public managers to choose policies reflecting the desires of elected politicians (Calvert, McCubbins and Weingast, 1989). Their policy choices are traceable to preferences of legislative and executive politicians rather than their own preferences. Discretion consists of the departure of agency decisions from positions generally agreed on by the legislative and executive branches (Calvert, McCubbins and Weingast, 1989). There is a great amount of room for discretion for agencies when information is poor and willingness is lacking, yet the more important a policy area to politicians, the lower the amount of agency discretion (Calvert, McCubbins and Weingast, 1989). This follows because in those areas in which they care the most, politicians will expend greater effort and resources in reducing the uncertainty that affords bureaucrats the opportunity for discretion (Calvert, McCubbins and Weingast, 1989). Hence, decision making is constrained by a model of public management

where elected officials choose the appointee, the public manager makes a policy choice, and the legislature and executive react to the decision of the public manager (Calvert, McCubbins and Weingast, 1989). This model shows essentially that well-chosen agents can be left alone to determine policy the elected officials would themselves have chosen, given the time and resources.

A divergent view is that the bureaucracy operates with considerable independence from elected officials and senior public managers have significant latitude in policy matters. In this constitutive perspective, appointed leaders may well be change agents who successfully initiate innovative policy (Riccucci, 1995; Roberts and King, 1996) Responsible discretion, with accountability, is the end goal for public managers (Cook, 1996). These leaders seek to create public value through their initiative, imagination and ethics (Moore, 1995). They enter public service to promote the public interest with the motivation to change things for the better (Riccucci, 1995). In state government, the executive branch simply does not have the time to micromanage agency leaders. Additionally, the legislative branch is often unable or unwilling to perform meaningful oversight, allowing public managers a great deal of discretion (Niskanen, 1971). In fact, discretion is a critical, positive force for maintaining democratic governance because of its stability, durability, and the application of knowledge to problems while complying with law and tradition (Cook, 1996). As long as there is recognition among the public and political leaders that public managers rightfully have a policy making role, then public managers can become the champions of practical reason empowered to put government into action, fully engaged in decision making about what should be done as well as how to get it done (Cook, 1996). These two divergent theories of discretion capture both ends of the operational spectrum. Reality of the situation in state government is somewhere in between. Where exactly

18

in between is a function of the actors' perceived distinction between politics and administration –
between followership and leadership.

Durability and Relevance of the Politics-Administration Dichotomy

The research question posed in this paper is firmly rooted in the division between politics
and administration and the debate over the proper role for public managers. The politics-
administration division first proposed by Woodrow Wilson in 1887 persists today as an influence
with practitioners and shapes their leadership practices. That administration of policy should be
separate and distinct from politics was a formative idea in early public administration theory.
Wilson wrote that "… administration lies outside the proper sphere of politics. Administrative
questions are not political questions." (Wilson, 1887) It was understood that while politics
influences policies, administration is the execution of policies (Goodnow, 1900). Scientific
management theory popular at the time eventually hardened this distinction into a dichotomy
(Svara, 2001).

Historically, advocating the existence of a politics-administration dichotomy was useful in
trying to establish public administration as a profession with a specified "zone of expertise"
much as other early 20th century emerging professions had done. Woodrow Wilson articulated
his concept in the late 1800's at a time when other professions such as lawyers, doctors,
accountants and engineers were organizing around the fundamental principles that define
professions. Changes from industrialization and immigration pressures changed people's
relationship with society and increased the need for government services such as health,
education, crime, protection of workers. Moreover, the corruption and excessive political

influence endemic to municipal governments brought increasing pressure to bear to professionalize government service.

Wilson argued for making government more like a business, professionalizing government and a creating a "science of administration" (Wilson, 1887). His dichotomy was intended to separate administration from politics and define it as a more scientific endeavor apart from political influence so that it could be viewed as a legitimate profession. Public administration claims many of the attributes of a profession. First and foremost is that it is a calling that requires a specialized knowledge. Public administrators possess a self-awareness as a group, a body of knowledge and theory, a social ideal (public service), ethical standards, a formal organization (ASPA) to promote its interests and a "hall of fame" to recognize outstanding leaders (Pugh, 1989). As public administration grew as a profession, it was reinforced by a belief in scientific approaches to problem solving promoted by Frederick Winslow Taylor in the early 1900's (Taylor, 1911).

But the problem public administration has in being a profession is the apparent political incongruity between professional public service and popularly elected public officials – the very same difference highlighted in the politics-administration dichotomy. Political responsiveness to elected officials is an important democratic value making patronage a viable method of retaining control over career government servants (Pugh, 1989) Even as public administration grew as a profession, the stubborn arguments underpinning the politics-administration dichotomy still refused to budge. Of the arguments against counting public administration as a profession, the most persuasive is this: the most senior and prestigious administrative posts are filled on the basis of partisanship and loyalty rather than merit. This is hardly a condition that would be tolerated in any legitimate profession (Pugh, 1989). If there were no separation between politics

20

and administration, then there would not have been a need to establish public administration as a discipline separate from political science. The separation of politics from administration has had a lasting influence on American governance. Intended to prevent undue political influence in administration, it also resulted in the civil service system, the Hatch Act, merit promotion and hastened the end of the "spoils system."

Eventually, the original understanding of politics-administration dichotomy began to change. Back during the beginning of the reform movement in the 1870's and 1880's, politics meant highly partisan, electoral politics. It did not necessarily include questions of public policy including administrative organization, budgeting, human resource management and decision-making. However, in the period from 1927 until 1936, the dichotomy was broadened to include political influences over public policy rather than limited to partisan politics. By the end of World War II, this expansion of the dichotomy became intellectually untenable with the field united behind a substantial policy-making role for public managers (Rosenbloom, 2008). Thus by the 1950's the "politics-administration" dichotomy was re-characterized as a "policy-administration" dichotomy which was quickly and thoroughly discredited in academic circles. The blurring of "politics" with "policy" reveals a belief that public managers remove themselves from partisan politics but not from policy making (Overeem, 2005). Some scholars claim the dichotomy was never truly intended as a guide to behavior since it narrowly prescribes roles that are neither practical nor desirable (Montjoy and Watson, 1995). Nevertheless, the dichotomy remained a major issue in the field of public administration and continued to influence the behaviors of public managers.

But even as scholars abandoned the traditional dichotomy, they have continued to embrace the concept of political neutrality of public managers as the "normative cornerstone of the

politics-administration dichotomy" (Overeem, 2005). Neutral competence has been endorsed as a defining characteristic of public administration by even those most critical of the dichotomy (Svara, 2001; Appleby, 1945; Frederickson, 1997; Kaufman, 1956). Neutral competence means acting solely as a neutral and competent arm of the government with no involvement in policy or politics (Demir and Nyhan, 2008). It serves to protect the autonomy of public managers from political intrusions. Indeed, neutral competence minimizes the identification of public administrators with political positions and makes them better able to resist interest group pressures (Demir and Nyhan, 2008). Thus, the enduring presence of neutral competence shows how the traditional dichotomy stubbornly remains an influence – and constantly negotiated relationship -- in the practice of public administration. (Demir, 2009)

The "seamless" coordination in policy making between elected officials and appointed public managers is anything but. The latitude and discretion granted at the local government level may not apply at the state government level (Montjoy and Watson, 1995). Governors and Legislatures jealously guard this power and do not easily share it. This harsh reality contradicts the theory of complementarity created out of the crucible of local government decision making where elected officials and public managers are full partners in the policy making process (Svara, 1998; Appleby 1945). Complementarity entails ongoing interaction, reciprocal influence and mutual deference between elected officials and appointed public managers (Svara, 2001). It is based on theory that because power is highly dispersed and fragmented under our Constitutional system of checks and balances, it is difficult to separate politics and administration. Rather than following directions from any one political leader or group of leaders, public managers are able – and often compelled -- to negotiate political support for their activities from a diverse set of political actors and stakeholders (Long, 1949).

Bureaucratic influence on the budget is another argument made to show the seamless complementarity between public managers and elected officials, but this argument has some major flaws. The literature on budgetary decision-making processes generally identifies bureaucrats as the most influential agents over budgetary choices (Wright, 1967; Ryu, Bowling, Cho and Wright, 2007). State agency head bureaucrats are portrayed as "budget maximizers" who are naturally predisposed to seek to enlarge their agencies (Wright, 1967; Niskanen, 1971; Ryu, Bowling, Cho and Wright, 2007). If indeed budget influence is a measure of policy influence, then public managers appear to have an active, partner-like role in policy making. Unfortunately the political facts since 1999 in Florida stubbornly refute this argument. In that time, with Republican control of the executive and legislative branches, there has been a concerted effort to reduce the size of state government. If bureaucrats cannot budget maximize because budgets are regularly reduced, what does that say about the influence of state agency heads and their partnership in policy making? Perhaps their influence is diminished because any possible policy influence through budget increases has not happened. Without this option, they cede policy making to the Governor and Legislature reinforcing a clear distinction between public managers and elected officials. It is easy to see how state agency heads might quickly abandon their independent agency goals unless those goals were to shrink their own agencies. Additionally, legislative budgets structure and constrain agencies' missions so that agency heads flexibility to manage is largely restrained (Berry, Brower, and Flowers, 2000).

The division between politics and administration may be overcome if only public managers appropriately define their role in the policy process. They can have great influence on policy depending on how they choose to engage and how they view their role (Cook, 1998). The literature suggests that public managers exercise more of a constitutive, policy-making role

23

rather than merely neutral administration of policy, especially given the difficult and complex problems faced today (Cook, 1998, Demir and Nyhan, 2008). Simply following directives of a single elected official fails to give sufficient weight to the values held by many stakeholders and limits the ability of the public manager to hear and take account of the views held by the various stakeholders (Spicer, 2005). Constitutive responsibilities focus more on the normative questions (What should be done?) rather than empirical ones and connotes a normative aspect in that public administration – knowingly or not -- helps constitute political ways of living that are unique to our society and in so doing presents citizens with political and moral choices (Green, Wamsley, and Keller, 1993). But this constitutive theory stands up only if public managers insert themselves into the policy process. If senior public managers choose to focus on the instrumental rather than a constitutive role in government or if elected officials do not afford them an opportunity to partner in policy making, then the division between politics and administration is reinforced and becomes an enduring reality.

Although the traditional division between politics and administration remains an influence today (Svara, 1998), the model has some significant shortcomings. It does not adequately describe the tension between constitutive role and instrumental role of senior public managers (Cook, 1998). The distinction does not appreciate the complexity of modern government and the difficulty of implementing policy to deliver government services over large populations and geographical areas. As a result, some have called for a change in this existing dichotomy as a way of rejuvenating the public workforce. They note that the current mentality is counterproductive to the long range development of a responsive and productive workforce (Klay, 1983). The management of contracts brought on by increased privatization of public services has greatly complicated the roles of modern public managers. Additionally, the

24

traditional dichotomy discounts the role of public service motivation. Public executives have

been career public servants dedicated to serving the public interest. To suggest that they merely

carry out the mandates of elected officials with little concern for the greater public good would

be a mistake (Moore, 1995). The dichotomy fails to take into account the leadership of public

managers and how implementing policy can actually modify or clarify policy itself. Although

the classic dichotomy seems to allow for administrators to practice neutral competence

(Kaufman, 1956), it does not fully address how neutral competence may stifle initiative and

restrict discretion among senior public managers responsible to implement policy.

So the distinction persists – and has become reality -- in the minds and actions of both

elected officials and public managers. As long as there is a strong anti-politics flavor in

American society, public managers still strive for objectivity in performing their tasks (Caiden,

1984). In examining how senior public managers handle political influence, we are essentially

reexamining relationships central to the politics-administration separation. These relationships

may well have an influence on the practice of public sector leadership.

Three Politics-Administration Dichotomy Models (See Figure 2)

As can be seen from the literature, public administration scholars have proposed numerous

explanations and theoretical models to understand the role of public administration in the

political process. These can be distilled into three models: separation, political and interaction

(Demir, 2009). The separation and the political models stand at the two extremes. The

separation model represents the classic dichotomy separating politics and policy from the

administration and implementation. Guided by the principle of neutral competence, separation

envisions a clear, structural division of authority between elected and appointed officials (Demir, 2009; Wilson, 1887; Goodnow, 1900). The separation school assumes that elected officials are eager to incorporate administrative knowledge and expertise into the policy making process (Demir, 2009). The political model rejects the subordinate, instrumental role of public managers in relating to elected officials. Instead, this model considers public administration an inseparable part of the political process and posits an active role for public executives in making policy (Demir, 2009). The American style of government does not generate enough power at any leadership level to allow a successful separation of politics from administration (Demir, 2009; Long, 1949). Additionally, the political school believes that administrators have a role in reflecting on the social and moral implications of policies (Demir, 2009; Frederickson, 1996). The interaction model reflects the notion of partnership or complementarity. It seeks the middle ground and emphasizes a high degree of collaboration between elected and appointed officials while maintaining the traditional roles and perspectives of each (Demir, 2009; Svara, 2001). This model views the elected legislators as "senior partners" in the relationship while it accepts the role of neutral administrative competence (Demir, 2009)

There has been some confusion about the dichotomy over the years. The traditional dichotomy represented by the separation model provided the field of public administration with two critical principles. One, the removal of partisanship and patronage from administration, an action provided the intellectual foundation for the progressive movement, civil service reform, and the emergence of council-manager forms of government (Demir, 2009). Secondly, the specification of roles with elected officials as policy makers and appointed officials as politically neutral experts who carry out the policies (Montjoy and Watson, 1995).
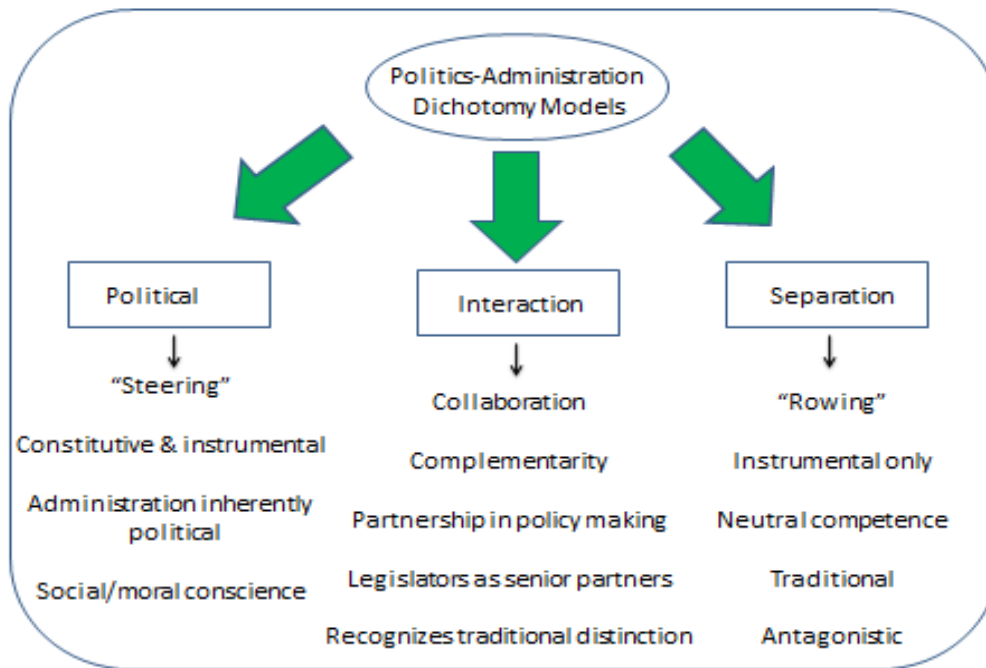
Figure 2   **Politics-Administration Dichotomy Models**

Protecting the Long Term Interests of Democracy

"The only possible source of governing impetuses that might keep our complex political system from either a dangerous concentration of power on one hand, or impotence or self-destruction on the other, is a public administration with the necessary professionalism, dedication, self-esteem, and legitimacy to act as the constitutional center of gravity." – Gary Wamsley, 1990.

Public executives have an active and legitimate leadership role in governance because they are entrusted with the responsibility of preserving the integrity of public bureaucracies and the values and traditions of the American democratic form of government (Terry, 1995). Public managers are responsible to exercise "administrative conservatorship" to preserve the integrity of our governmental institutions using both professional expertise and political skill (Terry, 1995).

Dwight Waldo, no fan of the traditional politics-administration dichotomy, recognized the public manager's role in diffusing the tension between democracy and bureaucracy in order to protect democratic principles (Waldo, 1984). Some scholars argue that administrative leaders should not only carry out legislative mandates, but also influence and execute policies which improve the quality of life for all (Frederickson, 1996). Public managers may serve the public best not by being neutral, but rather committed to both good management and social equity as values and ends to be achieved (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2011).

Public managers can act as a stabilizing influence that helps government remain focused on the public interest regardless of which political party holds elected office. In this vein, public managers are seen as a bulwark against government corruption. Many public managers have a skeptical view of elected officials and their commitment to good governance. They see elected officials as more corrupt than responsive, ready to help powerful constituents and special interests and ultimately looking to serve their own financial good (Bozeman, 1993). There are case studies of elected officials using their position to make or influence decisions that will financially benefit them or their benefactors when they leave office. These officials do not care about the long term integrity of the government because they are using it to help themselves and their friends. This perception by some public servants reinforces the distinction between politics and administration even as it further demonstrates the role of public managers in protecting democratic governance.

Because public managers are active participants in governance, they are engaged in the art and practice of leadership (Terry, 1995). Tasked to solve the wicked problems of society, public managers apply reason, logic and common sense. Laurence Lynn described this best when he wrote, "In the final analysis, public management is also a matter of common sense.

Governments authorize imperfect people to use flawed procedures to cope with insoluble problems. The results of their efforts are remarkably effective given the exigencies of their roles. Responsible public management is indispensable to sound governance" (Lynn, 2001). To be effective, public managers have to exert leadership that is responsive to influence from a plurality of different and often conflicting interests and viewpoints – and they are ultimately held accountable for their actions. Simply being instrumental fails to give sufficient weight to the values held by many stakeholders and weakens any sense of moral responsibility public managers have for their own decisions (Spicer, 2010). A public manager that fails to step up on policy fails to lead on many levels. On a policy level, an expert voice is muted with great potential for adverse consequences for the citizenry and the interests of the state agency. As a trusted advisor to the Governor, the most knowledgeable leader abrogates responsibility. At an organizational level, the dedicated public servants have no one to represent their views of policy formulation and implementation. Public administrator leaders have a vital role in preserving the integrity of public institutions and keeping the gears of democracy working smoothly. Their silence in the policy process does nothing to make government work better.

John Rohr argues that public administrators should use their discretion to favor those policies that are most likely to promote the public interest, but they should assess the public interest against the background of constitutional principle (Rohr, 1986). Because of their specific expertise, they must continually relate specific institutions and practices to the broader constitutional order. They must meld substantive policy and administrative process concerns for institutional integrity – an integrity that is sustained by adherence to constitutional principle (Green, Wamsley, and Keller, 1993). Even though public managers' specialized knowledge is valuable in dealing with complex technical problems, it is the breadth of view that most clearly

provides state public managers with an important role in keeping the state government from

being distracted from a steady pursuit of the public interest by brief swings of public opinion

(Luton, 1994).   Additionally, public administrators as a group have an important perspective

from which to help government implement policies that lead citizens past the temptations of

immediate gratification toward a delayed, but longer lasting gratification found by pursuing the

public interest (Luton, 1994). Finally, the Blacksburg Manifesto laid out a democratic grounding

for public administrators and underscored their role in upholding the Constitution (Miller, 1993;

Wamsley, et al, 1990). So, public managers have an important role as constitutional agents

providing, technical expertise, experience and leadership that helps protect our democratic

governance.

Bureaucratic Politics

One of the many theories to explain relationships between elected officials and public

executives is the principal-agent theory (Waterman, Rouse and Wright, 2004). The theory

describes a dynamic process whereby elected political leaders (principals) seek to influence and

even control the actions of public managers (agents) (Waterman, Rouse and Wright, 2004). A

normative assumption of this theory is that political control by elected officials is desirable

because they are more representative of the public (Waterman, Rouse and Wright, 2004).

However, since public executives and politicians may not necessarily share the same goals, over

time conflicts can occur where the goals and objectives of both groups are at odds (Waterman,

Rouse and Wright, 2004). In some cases, public executives may seek to modify policy over time

as they develop expertise about how the policy should be implemented. In government agencies

where information asymmetry favors the public managers, the managers will become technocrats and form relationships with elected officials consistent with the traditional politics-administration dichotomy (Waterman, Rouse and Wright, 2004). The agency and leadership can generally dominate these kinds of areas by inertia and expertise (Waterman, Rouse and Wright, 2004). Not so coincidentally, this theory also describes the traditional politics-administration dichotomy with elected officials as "principals" making public policy and public administrators as the "agents" carrying out that policy.

Another famous theory pertinent to state public managers and policy making is Graham Allison's bureaucratic politics paradigm. Although designed for explaining national level decisions, it has great applicability at the state level. His concept of decision-making describes policy as a political outcome dependent on the hierarchy of players, preferences, the environment, channels, structures, and rules of the game (Allison, 1969). The actors have organizational positions that are accompanied by the baggage of perceptions and parochial priorities that may not match the political priorities set by elected officials (Allison, 1969). Where any public official stands on an issue is a function of where s/he sits (Allison, 1969). Public executives bargain on policy among other players "positioned hierarchically within the government" (Allison, 1969). Still this is the theory. It remains to be seen if state public managers are truly brokers who can bargain in the manner disclosed by Allison.

The Case for Management

Management has its own values having to do with performance and those values differ from those of elected officials (Wilson, 2013). Public executives are intensely focused on

31

organizational performance and exist in their own right separate from political values (Wilson, 2013). Management values are always subordinate to political values and when values conflict, political values prevail (Wilson, 2013). Political values concentrate not on problem solving, but rather on managing political interests and winning elections (Wilson, 2013). Elected officials cannot meet managerial needs of the institutions of government; their tenures are too short and there focus too limited (Wilson, 2013). Therefore, elected officials cannot be effective managers of government and public managers must do more than follow directions.

Leadership and initiative from public managers is an absolute necessity. Without leadership, governmental organizations will never mobilize themselves to accomplish their mandated missions (Behn, 1998). Organizations tend to focus on self-preservation and maximizing their own convenience. It takes leadership of public managers to set a vision, motivate employees so as to overcome that organizational stagnation (Behn, 1998). Since government does not work perfectly, it is leadership from public executives that often compensates for some of the shortfalls of the executive and legislative branches. For example, when the Legislature – through their law making -- gives agencies missions that are vague, conflicting and not properly resourced, then it is left to the talent, leadership and initiative of the public executive to figure out the best way forward.

One of the most difficult realities public executives must handle is temporal nature of political leadership. Lack of consistent direction and guidance makes management difficult. For example, setting a list of priorities is useful for public managers, yet repugnant to political leaders. Hence, decisions today are tentative at best and subject to reversal tomorrow (Wilson, 2013). Moreover, career public managers understand that tomorrow they will be working for the political adversaries of the people they work for today and they will have to account for what

they did. This fact leads them to conduct themselves with as much neutral competence as

possible so as to be accountable across the political spectrum Wilson, 2013).

In Chapter 3, I will lay out the organization for the study. The research design will address

the qualitative methods employed to capture the oral history of current and former state agency

heads and explain the use of grounded analysis. I will provide the research blueprint from sample

selection through data analysis while detailing the biases, trustworthiness and limitations.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN/METHOD

Overview -- Qualitative Methods

"Man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun." – Max Weber

The intent of this study is to examine the most difficult, sensitive and potentially dangerous aspect of public sector leadership and decision making – political influence. The research should yield insights into how appointed officials' public leadership roles are shaped by tensions inherent in the politics-administration dichotomy. The comparative analysis of leadership strategies in four agencies over the tenure of three Governors will allow greater understanding about the difficulties of providing leadership in a political environment.

I chose to conduct qualitative research into the effect of politics on leadership and decision making because it is designed to explore the various conditions and influences that alter how humans interact in social settings and how they make sense of these situations. In short, this type of analysis looks at how conditions are connected to actions and consequences. Qualitative methods facilitate describing multiple, subjective, politically-influenced realities within the context of bureaucratic culture. This type of research allows personal interaction with the participants, a fuller understanding of complex, nuanced human behavior and a greater appreciation of the values involved. Context is of utmost importance in this research. It provides for an inductive learning based on a critical analysis and a greater appreciation for the complex, subjective world in which public administration is practiced (Brower, Albolafia and Carr, 2000).

In qualitative research, multiple approaches work best because there is no one best way. In conducting this research, I used a combination of phenomenology, social construction and reality-oriented correspondence theory approaches. These approaches provided the best "fit" for a qualitative examination of senior public manager leadership. From a phenomenological perspective, my focus was on exploring how the actors described their lived experiences as senior appointed leaders immersed in a very political environment -- and how they made sense of it (Patton, 2002). I sought to answer the foundational question: What is the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience of this phenomenon for this person or group of people? My approach allowed me to bracket, analyze and compare the experiences of various people to identify their individual leadership techniques, methods and practices in a political environment.

Understanding that an ethos of public service motivates senior public leaders in their actions greatly assisted in the analysis. There is a unique political and social culture of state governmental public service that is very much different from either federal or local levels. This distinctive environment influenced by many different political actors and stakeholders took on an increasing level of importance in the actions of the senior pubic executives. My intent for this research was to ground theory and description in the subjective experiences of public managers and their everyday work lives (Patton 2002; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Lofland, Snow, Anderson & Lofland, 2006). This inductive approach was necessary in order to uncover public managers' own definitions of their behavior. Additionally, a social construction approach was appropriate for this type of research as it assumes that reality is socially constructed, subjectively created, interpersonally forged and contextually embedded. Political influences to the leadership process can best be understood within the context in which it is studied – state government. This approach undergirded my research and permitted me to understand how the participants

constructed their reality. Finally, I employed reality-based correspondence theory, the belief that knowledge comes from verifiable claims based directly on experience and then ensuring the findings correspond to the real world (Patton, 2002). This is particularly important since grounded analysis operates from a correspondence perspective that aims to generate explanations that correspond to real world phenomena.

Grounded Analysis

The intent of the research is to develop theory from qualitative data using a technique known as grounded analysis. Grounded analysis is a general methodology for inducing or deriving theory from an analysis of the patterns, themes, and common categories underlying observational data (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Brower and Jeong, 2008). It is especially well-suited to answering "how" questions that imply process and change because it is very good at tracing the processes by which humans accomplish tasks and deal with problematic situations. Grounded analysis is not concerned with hypothesis testing. Instead, it is a systematic method of generating theory through data analysis. Theory is therefore grounded in the everyday experiences of the individuals who have been interviewed. It is a pragmatic approach based in the perceptions of the participants and highly concrete (Patton, 1987). In conducting analysis of the data, the researcher conceptualizes and classifies events, decisions and actions and the categories that emerge, along with their relationships, and these form the basis for developing or confirming theories (Patton, 2002). Typically, researchers do not produce so-called "grand theories", but are more likely to confirm or add to existing theory. In so doing, researchers are careful to limit the parameters and the implications of their theories (Brower and Sang-Jeon, 2008). Still, the

research will address the foundational question for grounded analysis: What theory emerges from systematic comparative analysis and is grounded in fieldwork so as to explain what has been and is observed (Patton, 2002)?

A primary aim of this grounded analysis study is to examine the impact of the political environment on leadership and decision making. The primary decisions to be made prior to starting research are the group to study and the kinds of data to be used (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). For this research, I will be using interviews from former and current state agency heads. Data gleaned from the oral history of those leaders has the greatest potential to capture the kind of information desired. As often is the case in qualitative research, the research question has evolved somewhat during the research. This is because the open-ended analytic process leads to unexpected results and examining empirical materials and side questions that had not initially been anticipated (Brower and Sang-Jeon, 2008).

Theoretical Sampling

Theoretical sampling is a central part of grounded analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). It is a method of data collection base on concepts/themes derived from data. The purpose of theoretical sampling is to collect data from places, people, and events that will maximize opportunities to develop concepts in terms of their properties and dimensions, uncover variation, and identify relationships between concepts (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). The goal is to gain a deeper understanding of the research topic. Rather than being used to verify or test hypotheses about concepts, it is about discovering relevant concepts and their properties and dimensions. In theoretical sampling, the researcher is not sampling persons, but concepts. Often this means sampling across a variety of settings or individuals who are presumed to be able to illustrate

richness and variation for important concepts. It is based on the premise that data collection and

analysis go hand in hand (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Theoretical sampling is concept driven and

enables a discovery of concepts that are relevant to the problem and the population and allows

exploration of the concepts in depth. Theoretical sampling is especially important when studying

new or uncharted areas because it allows for discovery. In summary, theoretical sampling allows

the research to guide the data collection (Corbin and Strauss, 2008).

Data Collection

*"If you want to understand what a science is, you should look in the first instance not at its
theories or its findings, and certainly not at what its apologists say about it: you should look at
what the practitioners do.' -- Clifford Geertz*

Sample

I interviewed 14 former and current state agency heads from the following four agencies:

Department of Revenue (DOR), Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), Department of

Children and Families (DCF) and Department of Corrections (DOC).   I selected the agencies in

accordance with the principles of theoretical sampling described above. I chose DCF and DOC

because they are large executive agencies with missions in which political policy issues play an

important role. (See Figure 3) I chose FDLE and DOR because they are cabinet agencies with

missions that are more regulatory and enforcement-oriented. My intent is to provide a

representative, cross-sectional sample of key agencies in state government. This sample also

enabled me to conduct a comparative analysis between Cabinet and Executive agencies.

Focusing on four agencies over a 15 year time span provides an opportunity to identify common

patterns and themes about the leadership of senior appointed leaders in state government. I conducted semi-structured interviews with those leaders who served in the administrations of Governors Bush, Crist and Scott from 1999 to the present – a period of roughly 15 years (See Appendix B). I sought to capture their perspectives on how politics impacted their leadership. These interviews provided valuable insights into their leadership in a political environment. Additionally, the interviews shed light on how each leader perceived his/her role in government and each managed the political influences on their leadership. By narrowing the research to four agencies, I was able to make explicit comparisons about public manager leadership in a political environment across types of agencies and across three gubernatorial administrations. My method is based on the concept of theoretical sampling.

Setting up and conducting the interviews proved to be greater challenge than I expected. My sample was the entire population of agency heads of the four agencies from 199-2014. Many of the former agency heads has departed the area and required some intense research to locate. One leader had moved out of state and none of his friends or associates knew exactly where he was. I sent emails, made phone calls and even sent old-fashioned snail mail to locate him – all without success. Others required me to be an amateur sleuth, exploit a network of contacts and utilize influential state leaders to elicit a response to my request for interview. Of a total population of 21, I was able to accomplish 14 interviews. I had 3 agency heads decline outright, one I eliminated from the list because he had been serving an 8 year prison sentence for crimes committed while agency head, another I eliminated because he was an interim chief with one month on the job, one had suffered a stroke since leaving the agency and was unable to be interviewed and one mentioned above could not be located. So in the end, I interviewed 5 Cabinet agency heads, and 8 Executive Agency heads across the four agencies and among the 14

interviews I conducted. Appendix B, found at the very end of this study, details the

demographics of these agency leaders.
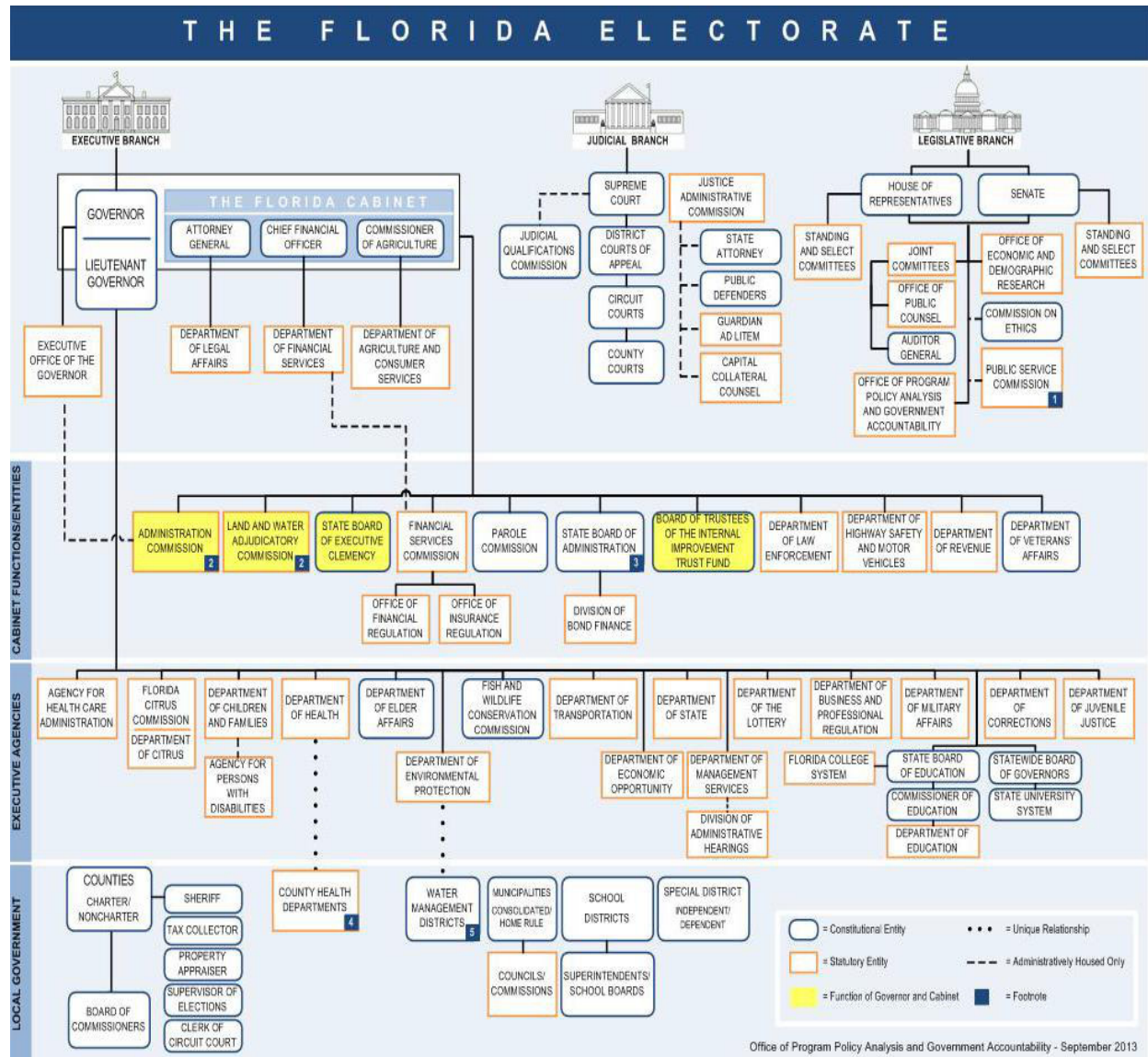
1. The Public Service Commission is an arm of the legislative branch of government (s. 350.001, *Florida Statutes*).
2. The Administration Commission and the Land and Water Adjudicatory Commission are composed of the Governor and the Cabinet (ss. 14.202 and 380.07, *Florida Statutes*).
3. The Commissioner of Agriculture is not a member of the State Board of Administration (Article IV, Section 4.(e), *Constitution of the State of Florida*).
4. County health departments have a contractual relationship with the Florida Department of Health (s. 154.01(3), *Florida Statutes*).
5. Water management districts have individual governing boards but the Department of Environmental Protection may exercise general supervisory authority over water management districts (s. 373.026(7), *Florida Statutes*).

Figure 3   State of Florida Organization Chart

Oral History Through Interviews

 In qualitative interviews, there is much greater interest in the interviewee's point of view and rambling or going off subject is sometimes encouraged if it provides insight into what the interviewee sees as relevant. Qualitative interviewing can be flexible with follow up or probing questions asked when the opportunity arises. This allows pursuit of emerging issues and helps provide the rich detail that affords context for the interviewee's answers. In the semi-structured interview, the subject is posed a list of questions, but has a great deal of leeway in how to reply. The questions posed were "how" questions that require elaboration by the subject. This type of interview is essentially an oral history interview during which the subject reflects upon specific events or periods in the past. The chief problem with this type of interview is the possibility of bias introduced by memory lapses or distortions (Grele, 1991). However, in this study, I was able to control this through triangulation by examining news reports of the situations and challenges described by the respondents. In this way, I was able to verify their recollections of events.

 Each interview lasted approximately one hour and captured responses to of 18 open-ended questions. (See Appendix 1) The interview questions and process were previously submitted to and approved by the FSU Institutional Review Board. (See Appendix B and C) The agreed upon ground rules included a promise of not identifying these leaders by name – or connecting them to specific quotes -- in the final research paper. I had all tape recordings of the interviews transcribed and then began analysis.

Coding

The challenge of qualitative analysis lies in making sense of massive amounts of data. This involves reducing the volume of raw information, sifting for significant concepts, identifying patterns and establishing a framework for presenting the essence of what the data reveal (Patton, 2002). Coding helped structure the data, identify relationships and organize the thinking about a topic for further theorizing. It also provided the framework for grounded analysis by providing some standardization and rigor to the analytical process. In this study, the research yielded an amazingly large amount of data that required much time to code, categorize and analyze. Not all answers were clear or direct. There were many times when respondents wandered and addressed issues that were only tangential to the question posed. Variations in the answers made coding more difficult. In the end, some common perceptions, similar reactions, shared patterns of political influence and adaptive strategies that emerged from the interviews.

Open coding allows the researcher to break apart the raw data and assign concepts to stand for blocks of raw data (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). This is an inductive process when figuring out categories, patterns and themes (Patton, 2002). Grounded theory or grounded analysis depends on the researcher becoming "grounded" or immersed in the data so that embedded meanings and relationships can emerge (Patton, 2002).

I began coding by getting a sense of the whole. I reviewed the interviews and any field notes made at the time. I read and re-read the responses. I fully understood that my new software didn't really analyze qualitative data, but rather only provided a method for storing and organizing (Patton, 2002). I worked hard to decide what things went together to form a pattern,

what constituted a theme, and what the significant concepts were (Patton, 2002). One of the coding challenges was analyzing the data to identify core meanings that would emerge as patterns or themes (Patton, 2002). It required inductive analysis to discern patterns, themes and categories in the data (Patton, 2002).

My initial coding began by reviewing the answers to the questions, looking for patterns and grouping the major concepts that naturally fell from the questions posed; political influence (sources and impact), adaptive strategies to cope with those influences, the sense of the politics-administration dichotomy, relationships between public managers and elected officials, the roles of the executives relative to elected officials, the discretion allowed and the values and priorities of agency leaders. Again, this process was time consuming and necessitated the constant re-reading mentioned earlier. Next, I was able to compare the differences between Cabinet agencies and Executive agencies. This was a clear and definite distinction. I could quickly discern that there was a great deal more political influence – along with political controversy -- in Executive agencies. As I was coding, I was simultaneously analyzing and remembering the context of the information provided. There were instances I was convinced some of the answers were somewhat self-serving and painted a rosier picture than the actual history of the event recorded. For example, some of these leaders were fired, investigated or left under a cloud. Only one I interviewed bothered to mention that detail. Fortunately, I had historical documents, news accounts and my own personal history living through those times to balance out the bias. I had to factor all this into my analysis.

Once grounded and having allowed themes to emerge from the data, I proceeded to the final stage -- a deductive process of testing and affirming the authenticity and appropriateness of the inductive analysis. This included examining the deviate cases or data that did not fit the categories developed. For example, there was only one respondent who asserted that he was a policy maker. None of the others interviewed made this claim. This particular executive felt that way because his close political affiliation with the Governor allowed him to essentially make policy that was in synch with the Governor's philosophy – giving him that unique freedom. Another caution I heeded was to use what people actually said so that the data told their own story (Patton, 2002).

Analysis

No ways exist of perfectly replicating the researcher's thought process and no straightforward tests can be applied for reliability and validity (Patton, 2002). However, purpose must guide the analysis. Because qualitative inquiry depends on the skill, training, insights and ability of the researcher, qualitative analysis ultimately depends on the style and analytic skill of the researcher (Patton, 2002). That being said, I felt an obligation to monitor and report my own analytic processes as fully and truthfully as possible. Additionally, I was careful to separate description from interpretation (Patton, 2002). Interpretation involves explaining the findings, answering "why" questions, identifying significant results, and fitting patterns into a final framework (Patton, 2002).

That being said, I took considerable time to analyze the data. I used the most recent qualitative research software – NVivo 10 -- to store, organize and catalogue the results of 14

interviews, but I combined it with an old-fashioned use of hard copy transcripts as well. I began

by downloading the transcripts and then grouping them by agency, individual and finally by

question. This allowed me to examine the data from a number of different perspectives. I was not

able to maximize the software without a great deal of data manipulation that would have allowed

me to run queries and different methods of coding. However, the software was very helpful in

providing an initial organized repository. With the software, I was able to look at the groups and

even all respondents' answers to each question –one at a time. As I proceeded with my analysis,

I read and re-read the interviews, often listening to some of the critical parts of the interviews to

ensure I did not miss any subtle nuances or meanings in the responses. I found that repeated

readings over time were easier – especially on the eyes -- using hard copy. So, I compiled a book

of all the written transcripts and then highlighted the most important concepts from the

respondents. This allowed me to flip through pages and sift through the data as needed. There

was so much richness in the answers to the interview questions, that I found that a third or fourth

reading vital to not missing any critical information.

Trustworthiness

Some scholars have suggested trustworthiness be the overriding paradigm by which to

judge the quality of qualitative research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Denzin and Lincoln, 1994:

Patton, 2002). As an alternative to the traditional criteria, they suggest four factors be considered

in establishing trustworthiness of qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability

and confirmability. Credibility, confidence in the truth of the findings, depends primarily on

systematic, rigorous methods for fieldwork and the basic credibility of the researcher (Patton,

2002). Triangulation as a means of corroboration allows the researcher to be more confident of

the study conclusions. One way of triangulating is through capturing multiple perspectives from multiple sources (Patton, 2002). In this study, I interviewed multiple agency heads from the same agency over time as a means of gaining a number of different perspectives over time. Another is confirmation through document reviews. In this study, the document reviews included news reports from major events related to the specific state agency and agency annual reports. Transferability shows that the findings have applicability in other contexts and that researchers could apply the findings to their own studies. This quality is an analog to external validity and depends on the rich descriptions of the phenomena (Patton, 2002). In this study, the respondents' oral histories provide that extensive detail. Additionally, transferability is enhanced when the researcher thoroughly describes the research context and assumptions central to the research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Dependability is based on following a systematic process and shows that the findings are consistent and could be repeated (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002). An equivalent to reliability, this factor hinges primarily on the rigor in being true to the process and accurately accounting for the context in which the research occurs (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Conformability, a rough equivalent to objectivity, reflects the degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of the study are shaped by those interviewed rather than researcher bias. It is assessed based on the standards of the previous three factors (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002).

Biases, Reliability and Limitations

I am entering upon this research with some clear biases in favor of strong, principled leadership, integrity, selfless service and a belief that public managers have a difficult time

balancing politics and leadership in state government. I want to find out just how difficult this is for the senior leaders, but more importantly, how they accommodate conflicts between loyalty to the agency and its people and loyalty to the political leadership. Clearly, political considerations factor into almost every decision. One of my initial assumptions is that the classic politics-administration dichotomy is still relevant. Although I assume senior public managers have a responsibility to be partners in policy with elected officials, it is not clear the public managers experience that as reality.

In my research, I attempted to maintain a distinction between first and second order concepts. The first order concepts are the "facts" of and the subject's concept of what is going on. The second order concepts are the researcher's theories utilized to explain and organize the first order concepts (Van Maanen, 1979). This is key in presenting and understanding whose point of view is being reported. I continually assessed the believability of the information collected from the subjects. Because of my former leadership positions and familiarity with the challenges of public sector leadership, I was able to discern credibility and identify any possible areas of subject ignorance. This is the essence of sound fieldwork and adds a measure of validity to the study.

Along the way in this research, I attempted to incorporate reflexivity. Reflexivity reminds the qualitative researcher to be attentive to and conscious of the cultural, political, social and ideological origins of one's own perspective and voice as well as the perspective and voices of those being interviewed (Patton, 2002). This self-awareness is a requirement of qualitative inquiry (Patton, 2002). It includes self-reflexivity, reflexivity about those being interviewed and reflexivity about the audience for the study itself (Patton, 2002).

47

In quantitative research, reliability typically relates to the consistency or stability of measurement. Reliability refers to a situation in which repeated measurements of the same thing produce similar results (King, Keohane and Verba, 1994). Quantitative researchers usually try to establish the reliability of their measures before collecting data. In inductive research, however, one achieves consistency of measurement as the culmination of the process rather than before one begins collecting data (Brower and Jeong, 2008). Like quantitative research, qualitative inquiry seeks credibility to ensure reliability and validity of results. Rigorous data collection techniques, my credibility as a researcher and a fundamental appreciation for naturalistic inquiry comprise the primary elements upon which credibility is based. In this qualitative study, the first step in establishing credibility was to make certain the data collected presents a complete picture of the subject area. The interviews allowed me to assemble a fairly comprehensive look at how political influences affect the leadership of senior public managers. My documentation through extensive field notes and thorough analysis of coded data provided a systematic method to ensure accuracy, attention to detail, reliability and credibility. My revelation of biases and personal philosophy depicts both my subjectivity and reflexivity and affords another measure of legitimacy and validity of the findings. Moreover, because of my involvement in Florida state government since 2001, my own observations about agency leadership provide a different kind of verification. My knowledge of events offers me a unique perspective to ensure the oral histories from agency heads are accurate. This triangulation by observation (Corbin and Strauss, 2008) often provides more specific and defining information and increases the validity of the findings.

There are a number of benefits from using this technique and this sample. It provides actual, tangible instances of decision making at the most senior levels of state government. Although a

small, selective sample seems to hinder the ability to make sweeping generalizations, it is the preferred strategy when it comes to understanding the thought process involved and exploring the questions and motivations of senior level decision making. In fact, it may be the only way to glean this information. Additionally, it is the preferred technique when studying these kinds of contemporary phenomena within real life contexts. I would argue that context is important here. Context provides the rich description of the situation, pressures, perceptions and emotions of the participants involved and allows us to understand the choices they are asked to make, and the strategies they use to navigate political and management straits.

This study has some limitations. The sample size is relatively small and the time period is constrained. A larger number of interviews over a longer period would have provided much more data and allowed greater generalization of results within Florida state government. Another limitation comes from the participants themselves. Clearly, each leader had a vested interest in showing himself/herself in the best possible light. The answers could have been skewed by self-interest. My control was to pose penetrating queries and challenge with critical follow up questions. Additionally, having walked in their shoes as a senior public executive for eight years, I am fairly well-attuned to the issues and environment to spot inaccuracies and falsehoods. I also believe that using a longitudinal design ensured more accurate answers as sometimes people who are currently in the job feel a need to censor and maintain a party line during interviews. Once they are no longer part of the Administration and under pressure to maintain their agency's legitimacy and preserve their own job, they were more reflective and honest in addressing these sensitive topics.

In Chapter 4, I will detail the statutory and constitutional background on Florida's government agencies. I will provide a brief overview of the 4 agencies studied and then offer a

comparison of the 2 Cabinet agencies with the 2 Executive agencies. I will conclude this chapter

with an explanation about why Florida state agencies are unique and propose an assessment of

the political climate of 2014 in which these agencies function.

CHAPTER FOUR

BACKGROUND: AGENCY DESCRIPTIONS AND COMPARISONS

Statutory and Constitutional Backdrop

For many of the executive agencies in Florida government, the Governor appoints the agency head, subject to confirmation by the Senate. In such cases the Governor can remove the agency head. Consequently, any such agency head will certainly be responsive to the Governor advising him regularly and working to move the state in the direction the Governor desires – all within the parameters and limitations of the law the agency head is responsible to implement. With a few exceptions, executive agencies are creations of the Florida Legislature. As a means of checks and balances, both the state constitution and state laws require the agency head to independently carry out the provisions in law that apply to the agency (Florida Constitution, 2014). To the legislative and judicial branches, this requirement serves to provide for constraints on the executive.

To further ensure state agencies were responsive, the Legislature crafted Florida's budget laws requiring agency heads to submit a budget request directly to the Legislature before the Governor's budget recommendation is made. Those agency budget requests, which are also turned in to the Governor, must be "based on the agency's independent judgment of its needs." (Section 216.023 (1), Florida Statutes. Florida's Constitution passed during Reconstruction in 1868 had had centralized considerable power in the Governor (D'Alemberte, 2011). The 1885 Constitution, in seeking to set up checks on some of the worst excesses and abuses of Reconstruction, considerably weakened the powers of the Governor. It fragmented the power of the Governor and established a plural executive in the form of the Florida Cabinet, a unique body

consisting of statewide-elected officials (D'Alemberte, 2011) The Florida Constitution specifically limits the number of executive agencies to 25 (Florida Constitution, 2014). The Legislature established the agency head position in the Constitution (Article IV, Section 6) and specifically defined in Florida Statute, Section 120.52(3).

The Florida Cabinet is a body of the government of Florida that engages in the collective governance of the state. Created during Reconstruction when there had been wide distrust of the governors by the federal government, the Florida Cabinet was designed to decentralize authority from the Governor (D'Alemberte, 2011). Florida is unique among U.S. states in having a strong cabinet-style government. Members of the Florida Cabinet are independently elected, and have equal footing with the Governor on issues under the Cabinet's jurisdiction. Every Cabinet member is elected on a statewide basis. The Cabinet's size has varied over the years growing to as many as 6 members as recently as 2003. The 2014 Florida Cabinet currently comprises 3 members: the Attorney General, the Chief Financial Officer and the Commissioner of Agriculture. The Governor is a separate entity from the Cabinet and not considered to be a member of the Cabinet.

In state government, appointed public managers feel the weight of political influence to a greater extent than is generally acknowledged or understood. Since this study compares four different agencies with four different and distinct missions, I saw major variances in political interference. In recent Florida history, both the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and Department of Corrections (DOC) as agencies providing social and public safety services have been prone to policy changes driven by political philosophies. Never without controversy, these

agencies have social service missions that evoke strong feelings about the role of government and therefore attract tremendous political attention. Additionally, the state's push to privatize services magnified the political pressures and significantly increased the number of actors seeking to influence agency decisions. The Governors and Legislatures promoted the philosophy of smaller government and put on a "full court press" to have the private sector provide services at lower costs. This excessive attention to the agencies often resulted in micromanagement by both branches of government. The sizable budgets available for outsourcing attracted the attention of lobbyists, vendors, contractor and interest groups around the state. On the other hand, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and Department of Revenue are less politically interesting, have fewer policy disputes and generally have a more stable and less controversial pattern of activity. Moreover, FDLE and DOR have experienced very little of the micromanagement for which the Florida Legislature is famous (Berry, Brower and Flowers, 2000) As a result, the two cabinet agencies experienced fewer political challenges to agency leadership.

Florida Department of Revenue

Florida's Legislature has entrusted the Department of Revenue (DOR) with three major responsibilities: 1) Ensure that Florida children receive the financial support they need and deserve 2) Administer Florida's tax laws, collecting the funds that provide critical services and making it easy for businesses and individuals to meet their tax obligations 3) Oversee the assessment and collection of property tax by local governments, so the taxes that pay for education and local government services are based on uniform and equitable property assessments (Florida Department of Revenue Annual Report, 2012).

The Department of Revenue administers and collects tax revenues, enforces and collects

child support payments and provides general supervision over the property tax system.

Specifically, the department works on behalf of more than a million children to establish and

collect child support and collects and distributes more than $1.4 billion a year in child support

payments. It helps establish paternity for over 90,000 children a year, providing them with a

legal father. The department collects over $30 billion a year in taxes and fees and processes over

$4 billion in receipts for other state agencies annually. It distributes over a billion dollars in

discretionary sales surtax collections each year to 455 local jurisdictions, including counties,

cities, and school districts. Finally, the department oversees the local appraisal and assessment of

taxes on more than 11 million parcels of property with a total value of over 1.5 trillion dollars

(Florida Department of Revenue Annual Report, 2012).

Number of employees: 5,133 (State of Florida Budget, 2014)

Budget: $558 million (State of Florida Budget, 2014)

Leaders (Executive Directors) Since 1999:   3

Florida Department of Law Enforcement

The mission of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) is to promote public safety

and strengthen domestic security by providing services in partnership with local, state, and

federal criminal justice agencies to prevent, investigate, and solve crimes while protecting

Florida's citizens and visitors. FDLE is composed of five areas: Executive Direction and

Business Support, Criminal Investigations and Forensic Science, Criminal Justice Information,

Criminal Justice Professionalism and Florida Capitol Police. In addition, the department formally

coordinates boards, councils, and commissions. FDLE's duties, responsibilities and procedures

are mandated through Chapter 943, FS, and Chapter 11, FAC (Florida Department of Law

Enforcement, 2014).

FDLE has seven Regional Operations Centers and Crime Laboratories through which it

delivers investigative, forensic, and information system services to Florida's criminal justice

community. Their crime laboratory services respond to the requests of law enforcement agencies

for crime scene processing by recording, collecting, and preserving physical evidence for

investigative and laboratory examinations. The Department accepts physical evidence collected

and submitted for analysis by law enforcement agencies and/or collected by FDLE's crime scene

teams. FDLE conducts independent investigations and coordinates multi-jurisdictional and

special criminal investigations with local, state, and federal authorities in five key investigative

focus areas: major drugs, violent crime, public integrity, fraud/economic crime, and domestic

security. FDLE also provides specialized investigative assistance for computer crime cases

(Florida Department of Law Enforcement, 2014).

FDLE is the central repository of criminal justice information for the state of Florida

and their databases are made accessible to all criminal justice agencies statewide through the

Florida Crime Information Center (FCIC), which links agencies to the FBI's National Crime

Information Center (NCIC). FDLE is the one state agency that assists local law enforcement

agencies in gaining and maintaining accreditation. The department, through its Criminal Justice

Standards and Training Commission ensures all criminal justice education and training in the state is conducted to standard. FDLE is responsible for the development and implementation of criminal justice training curricula and certification examinations for officer applicants. Finally, FDLE is responsible for providing the Florida Capitol Police, a specially-trained security and law enforcement unit assigned to protect the security of the Governor's Office, the Cabinet, Legislature, visiting dignitaries, and other state officials, employees, and visitors to the Capitol (Florida Department of Law Enforcement, 2014).

Number of employees: 1,769 (State of Florida Budget, 2014)

Budget: $259 million (State of Florida Budget, 2014)

Leaders (Commissioners) Since 1999: 3

Florida Department of Corrections

The mission of the Department of Corrections (DOC) is to protect the public safety, to ensure the safety of Department personnel, and to provide proper care and supervision of all offenders under our jurisdiction while assisting, as appropriate, their reentry into society. To that end, DOC provides dozens of academic, vocational and substance abuse programs to inmates and offenders, including in such areas as GED, adult basic education and mandatory literacy; printing and graphics, carpentry and digital design; and Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous (Florida Department of Corrections, 2014).

The Department of Corrections has 143 facilities statewide, including 48 major institutions, 15 annexes, seven private facilities (contracts for the private facilities are overseen by the Florida Department of Management Services), 33 work camps, six road prisons and forestry camps, one boot camp, 20 DOC operated work release centers along with 13 more work release centers operated by various private vendors (DOC oversees these contracts).   About three quarters of its staff of more than 23,000 employees are either certified correctional officers or probation officers. Florida currently has seven privately run prisons (Florida Department of Corrections, 2014).

In January 2014, the Florida Department of Corrections housed 100,445 inmates in its 55 state prisons (including seven private prisons), and supervised almost 146,000 active offenders on community supervision at over 150 probation offices throughout the state. Florida's recidivism rate has dropped to 27.6%, which means almost one of every three inmates released from a Florida prison returns to prison in Florida within three years. (This does not include the number of inmates who return to county jails, federal prisons or prisons in other states.) (Florida Department of Corrections, 2014).

Number of employees 2014: 23,729   (State of Florida Budget, 2014)

Budget : $2.2 Billion   (State of Florida Budget, 2014)

Leaders (Secretaries) Since 1999: 7

Florida Department of Children and Families

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) provides social services to children, adults, refugees, domestic violence victims, human trafficking victims, the homeless community, child care providers, disabled people, and the elderly. The department was created in 1996 when the Florida Legislature split the former Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services into two new departments: DCF and the Florida Department of Health (Florida Department of Children and Families, 2014)

The Department of Children and Families Office of Child Care Regulation and Background Screening is statutorily responsible for the administration of child care licensing and training throughout Florida. The purpose of this program is to ensure that children are well cared for in a safe, healthy, positive and educational environment by trained, qualified child care staff. This program currently regulates licensed child care facilities, licensed family day care homes, licensed large family child care homes, and licensed mildly ill facilities in 62 of the 67 counties in Florida. In addition, the Office of Child Care Regulation and Background Screening administer the registration of family day care homes not required to be licensed (Florida Department of Children and Families, 2014)

The Florida Department of Children and Families is committed to the well-being of children and their families. Our responsibilities encompass a wide-range of services, including – among other things – assistance to families working to stay safely together or be reunited, foster care, youth and young adults transitioning from foster care to independence, adoption. The Department's Child Welfare Program works in partnership with local communities, courts and

tribes to ensure the safety, timely permanency and well-being of children. The people who work

in the Child Welfare Program conduct, supervise and administer programs for dependent

children and their families. The program is directed toward the following goals:

- The prevention of separation of children from their families.
- The protection of children alleged to be dependent or dependent children including provision of emergency and long-term alternate living arrangements.
- The reunification of families who have had children placed in foster homes or institutions.
- The permanent placement of children who cannot be reunited with their families or when reunification would not be in the best interest of the child.
- The transition to self-sufficiency for older children who continue to be in foster care as adolescents.
- The preparation of young adults that exit foster care at age 18 to make the transition to self-sufficiency as adults.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health (SAMH) Program is the legislatively appointed

state authority for substance abuse, mental health, and methadone designation. The program is

responsible for the oversight of a statewide system of care for the prevention, treatment, and

recovery of children and adults with serious mental illnesses or substance abuse disorders

(Florida Department of Children and Families, 2014)

Number of employees: 11,863 (State of Florida Budget, 2014)

Budget: $2.8 Billion (State of Florida Budget, 2014)

Leaders (Secretaries) Since 1999: 8

Cabinet and Executive Agencies – A Comparison

All functions of the executive branch of government are carried out by not more than twenty five departments – exclusive of those four departments (Veterans Affairs, Parole Commission, Fish and Wildlife Commission and Elder Affairs) specifically provided for or authorized in the Constitution (State of Florida Constitution, 2014). There are basically two types of agencies in Florida government – cabinet agencies and executive or Governor agencies. (See Figure 3) It is important to note that in Florida, the Governor and the Cabinet are separate entities and referred to as such. Hence, it is the Governor and Cabinet marking a conscious delineation. The Governor in Florida is technically not part of the Cabinet. Under the current Florida Constitution, the Cabinet consists of three members – Attorney General, Chief Financial Officer and Commissioner of Agriculture. The Executive agencies in this study, DCF and DOC have characteristics that differ greatly from the Cabinet agencies, FDLE and DOR (See Table 1).

The two Cabinet agencies studied appear to be less susceptible to political influence than the two Executive agencies. This observation is based on the impressions of the agency heads. There were fewer political influences on the Cabinet agencies. The mission and the nature of the agency mitigated any significant political influence. As one agency head noted, "Cabinet agencies are like the plumbing of state government. Nobody wants to change it much; they just want it to keep working." This is consistent with the principal-agent theory of bureaucratic politics where there is information asymmetry and the public executive has the expertise to keep political influence to a minimum (Waterman, Rouse and Wright, 2004) For both DOR especially, the following quote is most appropriate, "Bureaucracies dominate these policy areas by inertia and expertise (akin to the automatic controls on an oil tanker) but when something goes wrong,

politicians come to the bridge and yank on the tiller, They then go back to the party deck and wait to see if something happens." (Waterman, Rouse and Wright, 2004).

The two Cabinet agencies studied are significantly smaller in size (number of employees) and budget than Executive agencies. These departments report to, respond to and receive direction from a board rather than a single individual. Both the appointment of the agency head and firing requires a majority of the Governor and Cabinet. There has been greater stability in the leadership of these Cabinet agencies with each only having three leaders during the period from 1999-2014. The extended time on the job has assisted these leaders in developing strong relationships with and gaining the trust of key legislative leaders. All the leaders of each agency since 1999 have spent many years in leadership positions within the agency and have essentially "grown up" in the organization. Even in the years prior to 1999, DOR enjoyed an unusually long period of stability and continuity at the helm. Combine this with the internal grooming and succession of leaders from within the organization and you have a stable, well-run organization. Although budget pressures and the effects of the economic recession have resulted in some personnel reductions, privatization of services has not been a major issue with either Cabinet agency. Neither agency has had a history of political controversy since 1999.

The Executive agencies, on the other hand, received a great deal of political influence and much of it was because of the state's efforts to privatize services. During the interviews, this theme jumped out and dominated discussion concerning political influence with both DCF and DOC. The Governor and Legislature were the primary influences on initiating outsourcing. But once privatization began, lobbyists and vendors and others exerted significant influence on the agency leadership and ultimately in the making of policy.

61

Both these Executive agencies were much larger and had significantly larger budgets than their Cabinet counterparts. The Governor directly supervised these leaders and hired and fired them without having to consult with anyone else. Their recent histories have revealed great instability – larger number of leaders in a short time -- in the leadership of these Executive agencies with each having at least six leaders during the period from 1999-2014. Only one of the leaders of each agency since 1999 has "grown up" in the organization. The Governor has Executive agency heads report regularly to one of his four deputy chiefs of staff to as an intermediary. This structure adds a level of distance between the Governor and the agency head, although the agency head always has the ability to go directly to see the Governor on any issue. Privatization of services, both in child welfare and substance abuse in DCF and prisons, medical services and food services in DOC have been major issues drawing controversy and significant political attention to the agencies.

Table 1   Comparison of the 4 Florida State Agencies

	Executive Agencies (DOC and DCF)	**Cabinet Agencies (DOR and FDLE)**
Mission:	Social services	Regulatory/enforcement
Employees:	Greater than 10,000	Less than 6,000
Budget:	$2+ billion	Less than $600 million
Direct report to:	Governor	Governor and Cabinet
Agency head turnover:	High	Low
Amount of political influence received:	Significant	Minimal
Services subject to privatization:	Significant	Minimal

Why Florida State Government Agencies are Unique

State agencies in Florida function under a structure that gives a great amount of power to the Legislature. Both Constitution and statutes have set it up this way and as a result, the agency head's power is constrained. This plays out in other ways as well. State agency leaders do not enjoy great fame or influence outside their own organization. They do not receive much attention in the news. Florida's weak civil service, further weakened by Service First initiative in 2001, is not a potent political force in Florida politics. The unions of government workers are not particularly influential in government – especially in a "right to work" state like Florida. Appointment to senior leadership positions generally go to career public servants who appear to be competent, politically loyal to the Governor and willing to carry out the policies the Governor desires. State agencies mirror federal agencies, but operate on a much smaller scale with fewer employees, a smaller budget and a smaller population served. Since 1999, Florida's Legislature and Governor's office have been controlled by Republicans, a party that has sought to reduce the size and influence of government. This scenario has seemed to have diminished the importance of state agencies. Increased privatization of government services especially in the field of corrections and child welfare has further lessened the prominence of state government departments. The economic recession and the unrelenting pressure to cut state budgets has elevated the Legislature and left state agencies struggling to hold on to their people and positions. Executive initiatives have slowed during the economic slump – except for those aimed at reducing the size of government agencies. Finally, an increasingly polarized political environment has made agency heads less willing to propose policy changes – especially those that cost money – and more prone to let the Legislature take the lead.

For the purposes of this study, I will refer to DOR and FDLE as Cabinet Agencies and DCF and DOC as Executive or Governor Agencies. I found that the two Cabinet agencies were very similar to each other in the categories compared and found the same phenomenon between the Executive agencies.

Florida's Political Landscape in 2014

It is important to understand the state's political environment in which state agency heads operate. Florida' government has been dominated by the Republicans since 1999. The GOP majority has controlled both the Florida Senate and House of Representatives and every Governor since 1998 has been a Republican. Since 1998, the state has sought to reduce the size of state government and increase the outsourcing of services. Governor Jeb Bush famously spoke about "emptying out state buildings" in his 2003 Inaugural Address. Since 1999, the Governor and Legislature have worked hard to privatize services wherever possible, but especially in social welfare and prisons. The constant and continual effort over the term of three Governors to outsource services is particularly important in understanding the political pressures exerted on both DOC and DCF during this time period.

The lack of career service protection has been substantial factor in the political climate. The removal of 16,300 senior leaders from a protected career status to "at will" in 2001 has changed the dynamic and allowed senior public managers to be more easily removed (West and Bowman, 2004; Council of 100, 2000). This weakening of state civil service had great potential for

inducing greater compliance and reducing the ability for candid policy discussions. This reform served to make agencies more susceptible to political influence and did little to empower those in state agencies (West and Bowman, 2004). It is against this backdrop that we examine the impact of political influences on state agency leadership.

In Chapter 5, I will discuss the results of the qualitative research. I will weave the agency head interviews through a narrative of the common themes that emerged during the course of the research. I will address the impacts of the political and institutional influences on the areas of policy and budget. This discussion leads to detailed listing of the many and varied sources of political influence to public executive leadership. I conclude this chapter with a compilation of the different strategies and techniques used to accommodate political influences on state agency leaders.

CHAPTER FIVE

POLITICAL INFLUENCES

"The greatest power is not money power, but political power."   *-- Walter Annenberg*

Impact of Political and Institutional Influences on Policy and Budget

The external political environment is a significant influence on senior appointed state officials' leadership and decision making. The interviews revealed clear agreement on this statement. Moreover, they confirmed established theory that politics plays an integral role in decision making for appointed government officials (Stone, 1988; Waldo, 1984; Montjoy and Watson, 1995; Moore, 1995). The interviews further reinforced the importance of managing the political environment in order to have influence on policy (Moore, 1995). Some of these state leaders succeeded while others did not. Nevertheless, that political environment was dominated by a variety of political influences that seek to affect "who gets what, when and how." These elements provided the primary sources of political influence.

Cabinet agency heads generally did not feel much political influence compared to Executive agencies. Their status as Cabinet agencies and the nature of the job limited the amount of political influence they received. As the "plumbing" of state government, they had to work. The leaders at DOR consistently observed that any political involvement in their agency was "minimal" and that "politics did not really shape what we did." After all, one noted, "they (the Florida Legislature) found out fairly quickly that it was not smart for a Cabinet agency to have legislators play games with an agency responsible for collecting taxes and collecting child support. There was no political advantage for a politician to meddle in tax and child support."

Likewise with FDLE. The law enforcement and investigatory mission discouraged political meddling. As one FDLE Commissioner noted, "I've never had anyone try to interfere with a case or ask us to back off an investigation." The FDLE leaders cited the state bureaucracy as a political influence that impeded their ability to get things done especially in taking care of the people in their agency. As a result, the number of actors ever attempting to exert influence on Cabinet agencies was limited to the Governor and Cabinet and the Legislature. Occasionally, the press and public weighed in on policy, but that was the exception.

The Cabinet agency heads were generally able to accomplish their initial goals with a minimum of interference. In the Department of Revenue, the executive directors followed a fairly stable long-range plan and continued to use technology and business process management to reduce costs of running their agency and improve efficiency. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement sought to improve their support to local law enforcement agencies and expand the use of DNA databases to apprehend criminals. Both agencies, at some point during this studied time period, pursued policies to restore employee morale in light of either recession-induced situations or internal turmoil. The leaders' biggest problem in accomplishing these missions came from budget shortfalls rather than other over political influence.

Contrarily, the Executive agencies received a great deal of political interference in the performance of their missions. One who had spent time earlier in a Cabinet agency remarked that, "there was significant difference in the political influence for a Governor agency versus a Cabinet agency. It is noticeably different." Some of this attention came from the sizable budgets of DOC and DCF – both exceeding $2 billion annually. Such a large pot of money attracts the

attention of lawmakers along with vendors, contractors, lobbyists and others. Privatization of

services in the prison system and welfare systems brought significant political attention to these

agencies from legislators interested in reducing the size of government through outsourcing.

With the outsourcing comes funding to private businesses represented by those lobbyists,

vendors and contractors mentioned earlier. One DOC Secretary related a story of how a $75,000

time keeping system was proposed by a vendor, pushed by a lobbyist and then inserted into the

budget (which ultimately passed) by a legislator as a good idea for the department to implement.

The only problem with this action was that the department never asked for it and did not need it.

In fact, their most pressing need was for funding to restore their staffing levels in the prisons to

ensure the safety of correctional officers working inside. DCF had similar problems with

political influence particularly with the privatization of child welfare. The Governor and

Legislature wanted to have private providers pick up this responsibility as soon as possible, yet

almost every DOC Secretary since 1999 has urged a more cautious and measured approach. In

DCF by 2010, most of the child welfare in the state had been outsourced at a higher cost than

when accomplished by state workers. The political pressure to privatize resulted in a situation

described by one DCF Secretary, "If you look at the cost of privatizing all the child welfare

compared to what it cost the state, it's more than three times more expensive in having privatized

organizations do it." Both Executive agencies received pressure from a host of sources including

the Governor, Legislature, press, vendors, lobbyists and even local judges. All these influencers

had a definite impact on their decisions and ability to exercise leadership.

The initial goals of the Executive agency heads were remarkably and pointedly different

from one another. In the Department of Corrections, one Secretary focused on rooting our

corruption left over from his predecessor who was sent to prison for taking kickbacks. Another zeroed in on preserving budget and staving off further legislative privatization initiatives. Other DOC chiefs sought to restore credibility to the agency and improve employee morale. With the exception of the DOC chief eliminating corrupt correctional officials, all other leaders found significant political influence to their agenda and would admit only a limited success in achieving their goals. The Department of Children and Families leaders also had modest attainment of initial goals due to political pressures. It must be noted that 2 of the DCF chiefs resigned because of child tragedies occurring under their watch and the political scrutiny that resulted from those. Other initial goals included providing better support from the headquarters to the field, preserving the budget, restoring credibility and reputation to the agency, and achieving greater transparency and openness in departmental actions. Again, both agencies faced tremendous pressure to privatize and both executive and legislative branches worked to impose policies that furthered that end.

The budget exerted its own unique effect on state public executives in both Cabinet and Executive agencies. Reduced revenues forced cutbacks in all state agency budgets especially as Florida faced budget deficits after the economic downturn of 2008. Budget requests were reduced and agencies had to get by with less. Fewer resources limit what the agencies can do and how with many people they have to do it. However, separate from this dire fiscal reality, there was constant pressure on Executive agencies to reduce their budgets every year to show a reduction in the size of state government. As one DCF Secretary recounted, "We were given significant guidelines on what to ask for and how." This politically-driven agenda forced Executive agency heads to ask not for what they needed to run their agencies, but rather what the

Governor's budget experts would allow. Cabinet agencies on the other hand felt no pressure to reduce their budget requests, although they were politically astute enough to understand fiscal realities and did not press for increases in tight budget years. One Cabinet agency head observed, "We accepted the premise that if we did not ask for what was needed, then we'd get blamed for not delivering on it. We asked for what we needed (in the budget)."

Sources of Political Influence (See Table 2)

Table 2   Sources of Political Influence

Political Influences to Leadership and Decision Making

1. Governor
2. Legislators
3. Policy Advisors/Staffers
4. Local community officials
5. Lobbyists
6. Vendors/Contractors
7. Interest groups /Associations
8. Unions
9. Political donors
10. Press
11. Public
12. Bureaucracy
13. Judges
14. Budget

Political influences on public executives in state government come from many different areas. Indeed there seems to be an endless number of actors seeking to sway policy choices. The interviews with former and current state agency leaders yielded 14 separate sources of political

influence. Some of these are discrete political actors, while others are structural and institutional entities. Yet all coexist in Florida's state governmental garbage can of policy development.

The strongest and most dominant political influence emanates from the Governor. That influence can take many forms. First, there are the garden variety political considerations that may include political favors, trade-offs, political negotiations (horse-trading), political paybacks to legislators or interest groups for their support and a host of other considerations. Secondly, state agency leaders often find their proposed solutions to thorny issues being held hostage to political dealings. Additionally, the Governor has certain priorities and philosophies that appointed officials must consider. Often, these reflect campaign promises, address issues important to key constituents and stakeholders, and meaningful to those who raise funds for campaigns. There may be political ideologies that influence what courses of action the Governor will accept and sometimes national level think tanks can have an impact on state policy decisions.

The Legislature has a great deal of influence on state public managers. Legislators jealously guard their policy-making role and do not appreciate appointed officials encroaching on their turf. Public managers are not allowed to take actions that may change the range and object of the authorized policy. Independent administrative actions are seen as a violation of the principle of legislative supremacy (Demir and Nyhan, 2008). State agency leaders are routinely called before committees to explain policy, budget and even internal agency personnel decisions. Although agency leaders have some discretion on managing their organizations, they are

accountable to the Legislature for their decisions. In some cases, legislative leaders exert themselves to short-circuit rational decisions for the sake of benefitting their home districts.

Local community officials have an impact on state public executives. Local constituencies vote and thereby have great influence on elected officials. When they are dissatisfied with state agencies, they make their voices heard. When DOC was preparing to close a prison that was the major employer in the county, local officials quickly elevated the issue to their state legislators and the press. Within days, DOC was forced to reevaluate their closure list and remove that particular prison from it. On the positive side, FDLE found that garnering local grass roots support with sheriffs and police departments for policy development helped smooth its way through the Legislature. One FDLE Commissioner pointed out that, "Most public policy in the policing world has been driven more from the bottom up than the top down."

Then there are the policy advisors. Every Florida Governor has a cadre of policy advisors who serve as the watchdogs and help guide policies across the state agencies that are consistent with the Governor's intent. Originally intended to review legislation and judicial actions impacting policy, the advisors have an active role in overseeing major agency actions to ensure they are in synch with the Governor's priorities. They have the ability to stop or sidetrack policy decisions if they judge them to be contrary to the Governor's agenda. Usually, these advisors are not career public servants with a long track record of working in government. Instead, they make up the "political class" that arrive with a newly-elected Governor, stay for a year or two and then leave for a high paying job in the private sector. Generally, because they know little about the workings of state government and even less about the inner workings of state agencies, their influence is ideological. If a proposed policy or program did not fit neatly into their interpretation of the Governor's philosophy, then it was either rejected outright or panned in any discussions.

In the executive branch, the policy advisors thought of themselves as the policy makers because they were "politically reliable" as opposed to the agency public managers who were responsible for performance." Power brokers close to the Governor often made the policy decisions that then are carried out by the state agencies. In one agency head's words, these power brokers on the Governor's staff "believe they are the policy makers." In the spirit of full disclosure, sometimes these powerful policy advisors were able to assist agency heads in having their policy recommendations move forward.

Some of these policy advisors or staffers are resident in the Legislature as well and they often have their own political agenda. Their subject matter expertise and experience in a certain field make them valuable to legislators who often come into office with a cursory knowledge about the operations of state government. The difference is that these legislative staffers are career public servants who stay for a long time. Their longevity in a time of legislative term limits has made them an increasingly powerful group. The legislative policy advisors had an inordinate amount of influence on the Executive agency leaders and not so much on the Cabinet agency chiefs.

The next group is the public and the press. These two have a symbiotic relationship with one greatly affecting the other. Although public executives are not elected, they are responsive to the public and consider public interest in their decisions (Bozeman, 2007). The agencies in this study all kept an eye on public opinion and sought ways to engage the public as they implemented policies and practices. One DOR chief used the press to garner greater public participation and support during the rule making process. This technique allowed for a greater understanding of the new rules and ultimately allowed for a smoother implementation of the new rules. Certainly the press has an influential role with state agency leaders. Their reports can

quickly sway public opinion and bring tremendous political pressure on their organizations. In

the case of two DCF Secretaries, negative press concerning tragic child deaths and the pressures

it created resulted in their resignations. The press may also have a desire to see certain policies

implemented and throw their weight around to sway the public and thereby the public manager.

Yet, perhaps the state's most troubled agency, DCF, has had tremendous scrutiny from the press

regarding the deaths of children under agency supervision. As a result, they made great efforts at

transparency and education of their processed for dealing with children as a way to generate a

more balanced press coverage. These efforts paid dividends and the reputation of the agency as

reported by the press improved greatly.

Internal governmental influencers apply pressure on state appointed leaders to influence

decisions. Judges, although from a separate branch of government, frequently interact with both

state social welfare and public safety officials. Seeing the results of certain policies from DCF

and DOC in their courtrooms, they then weigh in on how the agencies conduct business. In

extreme cases, they may be involved in lawsuits against the agencies themselves. The very

mechanisms of government bureaucracy may limit what agencies can do to benefit members of

their own organizations. One FDLE Commissioner noted that the state bureaucracy was "the

biggest obstacle" in allowing him to take proper care of his personnel. By this he meant that

rigidly applied personnel policies limited his flexibility to manage his agency's personnel.

Finally, the budget pressures mentioned earlier exert an influence on state public managers by

limiting the resources needed to accomplish their missions. Budget, or lack thereof, quickly

adjusts policy options and policy decisions into the "art of the possible" category. Public

managers are naturally constrained by budget considerations and learn to make the best decisions

within the funding constraints.

Last but not least are a group we will call the "other influencers" that includes unions, lobbyists, interest groups, contractors, vendors and the political donors. Although they do not show up on the state government organization chart, they exert a significant influence on public managers. Unions wield influence in the political process. The Police Benevolent Association (PBA) and more recently, the Teamsters Union represent the law enforcement and corrections community in the state. One DOC chief faced fierce resistance from the PBA in 2007 when he attempted to implement a new policy requiring physical fitness standards on all corrections and correctional probation officers. Lobbyists push the interests of their clients and are intimately involved in crafting legislation. They will seek out agency leaders to explain why their policy idea should be supported. Interest groups, not as well-funded as lobbyists and often representing non-profits, attempt to curry favor for their issues. These interest groups can acutely affect the implementation of policy – especially for agencies like DCF (Berry, Brower and Flowers, 2000).

Contractors and vendors who either have state contracts or are looking for them do their best to influence public managers in their direction. Both DOC and DCF affirmed this in their efforts to privatize services. In fact, the interviews revealed that Florida's privatization initiatives have given both lobbyists and contractors an extraordinary amount of influence on the Executive state agencies. Once services are outsourced, contractors become a powerful force to be reckoned with because of their influence with legislators. A DOC chief observed how the privatization of food service in the prisons had become a safety issue because the food was bad and the serving portions miniscule. The food service company was trying to maximize its profits and had been reducing the quality and amount of food provided. Because the poor food created the conditions for prison unrest and an increased danger to prison guards, the DOC chief pushed back seeking to end the contract and provide the food services internally. The vendors

immediately ran to their political mentors in the Legislature to pressure DOC to continue the contract. In another case, the DCF chief related a story about investigating the death of a child. He sought to ascertain what happened and hold accountable the private, contracted service provider. The service provider refused to turn over information. The DCF chief remembered, "I had press sitting outside my door demanding answers (about the death) and cameras sitting there waiting for me to give my perspective and I can't even get the information to know what happened in the case." Once services were outsourced, the providers sought to maximize their profits and use their political contacts to craft contracts favorable to them. This happened with both DOC's food service contract and DCF's child welfare providers. Finally, political donors routinely exert political influence and have instant entre into the political process through the elected patrons they supported.

Strategies to Cope with Political Influence (See Table 3)

"The greatness of America lies not in being more enlightened than any other nation, but rather in her ability to repair her faults".   -- Alexis de Tocqueville

Table 3   Strategies to Cope with Political Influence

1. **Understand the art of the possible**
2. **Communicate Effectively**
3. **Develop and Build Relationships and Trust**
4. **Follow the Law**
5. **Be Proactive and Cultivate Policy Champions**
6. **Employ Strategic Plans**
7. **Practice Neutral Competence**

Based on the responses received from the senior public managers in Florida state government, patterns and themes emerged from which the following adaptive strategies (See Table 3) are proposed for accommodating political influence in leadership and decision making:

1. **Understand the Art of the Possible**

Public managers understand that political considerations often define what is possible. They remain acutely aware of the constantly changing dynamic and intuitively grasp the motivations of the Governor and Legislature. The leaders need to make an assessment of organizational and environmental demands to determine what is achievable (Van Wart, 2005). This assessment takes the political climate into consideration. If political forces are lined up against certain policy actions, then the public manager has to recognize that and not fight battles that are unwinnable. One agency head noted, "Political considerations affect every decision made in state government. You must make the best decisions you can given budgetary constraints, the Legislature and Governor. You must be constantly aware of the political limitations. What you can get done is dictated by the art of the possible and the political environment." One DOR Executive Director argued that, "To say, 'Politics never influences any decision.' is not very realistic. You're always aware of the environment you are operating in. If you have a Governor and Legislature that is trying to lower taxes, then that becomes part of what you're incorporating into your mission."

The public executives in this study found that their initial goals were tempered by the current political and economic dynamics. As one DCF chief noted, "When I first got there, I put together a strategic plan of what I wanted to accomplish. I was 'head winded' by the reality. We were at the height of the recession and we were faced with dramatic budget cuts." This particular leader had to adjust his goals and settled for an initial goal of preserving his budget –

77

his only possible course of action. A number of the agency heads came into the job following the firing of their predecessors. That environment has an uncanny way of focusing efforts of the incoming leader to take actions that help him/her avoid a similar fate. Said one of these agency heads, "The most important mission I had when I got there was to stabilize the agency and to start looking at where we could go, but more importantly communicate with the rank and file as to what I wanted to do." These reactions speak very clearly about limiting grandiose plans to the art of the possible.

2. Communicate Effectively

One of the most important skills for agency heads is having the ability to communicate effectively with legislators and other governmental and non-governmental actors. Presenting ideas intelligently, persuasively and backed by good data is a critically important proficiency. Listening is equally important along with an ability to make changes if the facts and circumstances warrant (Mullen, 2012). Perhaps more important is the responsibility to take the initiative to begin a constant conversation about policy. One way to begin the conversation is to ensure key decision makers gain an understanding of the agency, its mission and its challenges as a way to inform and educate them before policy changes are undertaken. One FDLE Commissioner recalled how he invited various Cabinet members to his agency to ensure they gained a greater awareness of what the agency did and the challenges it faced. This practice brought home the reality of policy implementation to those decision makers far removed from street level bureaucracy. Providing good data and keeping the decision makers informed was another aspect of communicating. One FDLE Commissioner recounted how a simple one page daily information paper provided to the Governor and Cabinets office helped tremendously. He

said, "It helped control rumors and it built credibility. It got them seeing us as somebody that would keep them informed."

Good communication can allow public managers to anticipate rather than react – a key element to good leadership. Engaging early and often with elected officials and other influencers about policy permits public executives to find out about potential legislation impacting the agency. Then, agency leaders can work collaboratively with legislators to craft bills that both achieve policy ends and allow smooth implementation. Pursuing dialogue precludes conflicts, ultimately protects the agency from being blind-sided and epitomizes good governance. Frequent visits to influential legislators and a continuous dialogue serve to establish a sense of trust and understanding. The relationships built can overcome any distrust and lead to better understanding on both sides. This kind of regular communication also serves to reduce the tension between public managers and elected leaders. Tension is heightened when there is little communication, overabundance of ideology or agency micromanagement. It needs to be relieved by both Governor and Legislature if leadership is to be maximized (Cook, 1998).

3. Develop and Build Relationships and Trust

Both Cabinet and Executive agency leaders echoed the importance of building good relationships with decision makers – especially in the Legislature – in order to influence policy. Relationships are the key to getting things done in state government. One DCF Secretary reflected, "I was able to work with them (legislators). I got a great deal of help from both sides of the isle. I made a lot of friends and I had some credibility where they would listen to me." Credibility was the coin of the realm to these senior leaders. With it came trust and greater influence with lawmakers. Agency leaders sought to establish a solid track record of integrity

and consistency in dealing with legislative leadership. They found that honest, straightforward dialogue along with following through on promises built that trust and credibility needed to work with legislators. This can help prevent threats and challenges to leaders from political influences more concerned with politics than honesty. Since these leaders live in a normative world, they have a responsibility to live by values and instill values in the agencies they lead. If integrity is lost, value-based leadership is compromised and the public manager will quickly lose credibility with elected officials and his/her organization. One DOC Secretary submitted that leaders should never lose sight of the foundational documents – the Constitution and state statutes – as the basis for their decisions and a way to maintain integrity. One FDLE Commissioner insisted, "The way we did it (influence policy) is you develop relationships with key leaders and some of the most effective leaders I've ever seen didn't have a title in the Legislature." As noted in the communications strategy above, keeping decision makers informed greatly increases leader credibility (Kouzes and Posner, 1988)

4. Follow the Law

Both Cabinet and Executive agency heads expounded on their duty to follow the law. It served as a strategy upon which they could rely if ever they received questionable guidance from elected officials or policy advisors. One DOR chief related how a policy advisor asked him to do something illegal. He refused and went directly to the Governor who supported his refusal. Although it seems intuitive, public managers have a duty to follow and implement the laws of the land. Their duties are often defined in statute and even in the Florida Constitution. In fact, public law is not only an underappreciated element that binds the legislative, executive and

administrative together, it also ensures political and legal accountability of officials and restrains

abuses of administrative discretion (Moe and Gilmour,1995).

5. Be Proactive and Cultivate Policy Champions

In yet another effective strategy, both Cabinet and Executive agency heads promoted a

proactive approach to the Legislature to influence policy. Agencies would find out what

legislative initiatives were being considered for the upcoming session. Then they would go to the

legislative offices and provide information to help write a better bill or persuade lawmakers to

rewrite the bill to make it easier for the agency to implement effectively according to the

legislative intent. As one FDLE Commissioner stated, "The best strategy happened before it

ever gets put down in an appropriations bill." One DCF Secretary would go to the Legislature

every time they had a committee meeting during the year leading to session and would say,

"Here's our thinking and where we (DCF) are on this." Another FDLE Commissioner claimed,

"We went to two influential members of the Legislature and they helped us push the bill right

through." In fact, all the agencies in this study used this technique. Additionally, the agency

leaders worked to discover – and develop policy champions in the Legislature that would move

policy initiatives favorable to the agency. The agency would provide information and often

"plant the seed" for legislative actions and allowing it to be their idea.

6. Employ Strategic Plans

Three of the agencies advocated the use of long term strategic plans as a method of

deflecting political influence. Strategic plans are effective at identifying goals and objectives and

allowing an organization to remain on a fairly constant and predictable path forward. Both DOC

and DCF have used strategic plans with limited success. Unfortunately, neither the Legislature nor the Governor's office has approved these plans. Moreover, the plans often dissolve when the leadership of the agency changes or there is a new Governor. As noted previously, leadership changes have happened quite frequently in these two agencies. With more stable leadership over the years, DOR has had more success with being able to execute long range (five year) plans.

7. Practice Neutral Competence

One strategy public managers utilize to sidestep political conflict is to act as politically neutral as possible and assiduously avoid taking political sides. They try to establish themselves as reliable, dependable public servants who can implement policies and programs efficiently and effectively. They attempt to discover what the Governor and Legislature are truly trying to accomplish and avoid conflicts with either the Governor's office or the Legislature and as many other outside influencers as possible. One DOC Secretary was confronted with a huge controversy about privatizing prisons. His immediate predecessor had been fired for not supporting a significant privatization effort from both the Governor and Legislature. So, he "rode the fence" and observed that, "The only way I could address it (privatization) was to remain neutral and do my job as Secretary." This strategy of neutral competence is acting solely as a neutral and competent arm of the government with no involvement in policy or politics (Demir and Nyhan, 2008). It worked for this DOC Secretary who was then able to focus on some of the more pressing internal demands of his department.

There is no guide book for state agency heads. Through trial and error and experience, they have developed approaches to getting the job done for their agency that accommodate political

influence and help them find a comfort zone or a zone of acceptance in which to operate. Such approaches keep them from alienating key decision makers whose support they need and while allowing them the greatest influence of their own on public policy decisions. These strategies allow them their best chance at successfully recommending policy to elected officials while guiding their organizations to effectively and efficiently provide necessary services to the people of Florida.

In Chapter 6, I will continue the discussion on the results of the qualitative research with emphasis on how the state agency leaders viewed the politics-administration dichotomy. I will pay particular attention to how their perception of the dichotomy affected their role in policy making. I will also address the impact of political influence on two areas important to their leadership and decision making: discretion and freedom of action and internal agency management. I will conclude this chapter with a discussion on leadership and values.

CHAPTER SIX

LEADERSHIP AND THE POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION EFFECT

How Agency Heads View the Distinction and Its Impact on the Policy Making Role

Both the Executive and Cabinet agencies clearly perceived a division between elected officials as the policy makers and the public executives as policy implementers. They viewed their roles in state government in the separation model (Wilson, 1887; Goodnow, 1901; White, 1926; Montjoy and Watson, 1995; Overeem, 2005). They practiced a style of bureaucratic politics reflected in the principal-agent theory with state public executives instrumentally responding to elected officials (Waterman, Rouse and Wright, 2004). Because of the importance of this section, I will examine each agency separately concerning their impressions of the politics-administration relationship.

The Department of Revenue viewed a clear and definite dividing line between the roles. One DOR Executive Director asserted that, "Our job was to administer the law; their (Legislature) job is to set policy and change law." Another DOR chief noted, "I always viewed my job as implementing the policies that elected officials enacted." Still another stated, "We stay out of policy decisions. They (Legislature) set policy, they tell us what they want us to administer and that's what we go about doing." DOR leaders felt that their role was to provide the information legislators needed to make good decisions. They believed the Legislature was and should be the preeminent policy body because elected officials had a better pulse of what the electorate wanted. After all, elected officials stood for election and were both connected and

responsive to their constituents. In these responses, they reflect powerlessness over policy based on their lack of stature and influence. This confirmed Allison's theory and model of policy decisions being dependent on the hierarchy, clout of the players, structure and environment (Allison, 1969). Unfortunately, Florida public executives do not have any of those factors in their favor to make an impact on policy making.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement also saw a definite distinction between roles. However, the agency leaders viewed their role as informing and shaping policy decisions. They felt free to recommend policy. Since much of law enforcement policy is reactive, the agency called on local law enforcement to bring policy recommendations up from the local perspective. Concerning his role, one Commissioner suggested, "I think the key to being effective in impacting policy goes back to doing the right thing, being credible, being prepared and sharing your opinions with people in a leadership position." Another Commissioner described his role as an informing one, but still deferential to the Legislature and their role in making policy and setting priorities.

The Department of Corrections regarded their role as policy implementers. These agency leaders sensed that they were able to make policy but limited to that policy that affected operational security matters. Because of the history of political involvement in privatization, DOC chiefs were frustrated with the vicissitudes of policy from the Legislature and were more focused on internal agency issues over which they had more control. One DOC chief vented that, "As you look at policy making, I think the department because of a lot of years of instability, and changes in leadership did not have a good stand on policy. I think to some degree there has been

great frustration and they had given up on having input to policy." Another DOC Secretary commented, "I think a lot of the time for us there is no partnership with the policy makers." In fact, DOC chiefs complained about policy advisors in the Capitol having too much influence on agency operational decisions. Overall, privatization issues and significant contracts to vendors and providers for privatized services have changed the dynamic and sidelined DOC leaders from an effective role in policy.

The Department of Children and Families viewed their role as one of policy recommending and policy implementing. The agency leaders understood their role as state subject matter experts in social welfare and substance abuse with an extremely limited ability to make policy. As one DCF Secretary said, "The Legislature does set policy. We do execute that policy." Another commented, "There are some things that I may not like that the Legislature does, but if that's what their policy is, that's what the law is, I'm not going to advocate something different." The thinking of the leadership is that they are very much leaders in the Governor's administration and expected to carry out policies that are in accordance with his philosophy.

Much like DOC, DCF has struggled with privatization of services. With many of the services outsourced, the providers have coalesced and begun to exert dominance over the agency leadership. The contracts for services in many cases are specified directly by the Legislature and difficult for the management of DCF to hold accountable. This has diminished their policy role and given the Legislature a much more dominant role. As one DCF Secretary observed, "The way the vendors explained it to me when I got there was, 'The law is written that we are given the money and we go spend the money. You, as the bureaucrat, have no responsibility or authority to tell us how to do it or measure our effectiveness because that's not written in the

legislation.'" Privatization magnified the politics-administration divide as agency heads lost direct control of the people providing their services. As the DCF example points out, this loss of control over service providers coupled with strong influence from the Legislature affected their decisions and altered the way they led their organizations. Agency heads felt more constrained in their leadership and thus more likely to accommodate and acquiesce to elected officials and less likely to engage in policy making.

It was notable that only one public executive advocated a partnering role in policy making. All others sought a comfort zone in the art of the possible and did not seek a high profile. The politics-administration dichotomy made them more reactive than proactive. Initiative was limited and few agency heads were willing to stand up strongly and engage elected officials concerning policy – especially if their views were different from their political masters. Pursuing new policies or programs was tempered by a desire to support the desires of the Governor and the Legislature. For the longer tenured public executives, this course of action was the safest way to adapt and survive when the administration and political philosophies changed. Clearly loyalty was to their agency and their fellow state workers with whom they had long served and they realized that political battles would ultimately hurt their agency.

Discretion and Freedom of Action

Administrative discretion is the power to make a choice between courses of conduct in the administration of a duty or office. It involves using professional expertise and judgment, rather than sticking to statutes or regulations to make decisions or perform official duties or acts.
------ Web Definition

The debate over administrative discretion shifts back and forth between two extremes. At one end under the professional management school, discretion is viewed positively in light of the need for autonomy, competence, efficiency and effectiveness. While the other extreme, the democratic control school considers administrative discretion as something that demands responsiveness, subordination and most importantly, accountability (Morgan and Rohr, 1986). State agency heads' discretion lands somewhere in between, but certainly closer to the democratic control school. Public executives have a responsibility to exercise leadership and take initiative. Their actions can help the agency not only accomplish its missions today, but also create new capacity to achieve its objectives tomorrow (Behn, 1998). Use of discretion by public executives creates public value and can improve governance (Moore, 1995). Yet this will happen only if public executives exercise initiative within the framework provided by the law (Behn, 1998). Since their actions are taken publicly, public managers are held accountable by a number of entities including the executive, the legislature, the courts, the press and the public. The American system of government does not contemplate a fourth branch of government that exercises a will of its own, even if it does so efficiently, effectively and in the public interest (Morgan and Rohr, 1986). The underlying fear of the democratic control school is that bureaucratic discretion may work to frustrate and perhaps undermine the goals of other branches of government. Consequently, administrative discretion is, in fact, subordinated, responsive and accountable.

Public managers are granted limited discretionary power with the expectation that this discretion will be guided by reasonableness, fairness and should reflect the tenets of the agency. Despite repeated political attempts to control discretion, public executives still have the freedom

exercise discretion in relation to policy mandates and bureaucratic rules (Spence, 1999; Holzer and Yang, 2005). Managerial discretion can be a positive force for maintaining democratic governance and guiding its further development (Cook, 1996). Woodrow Wilson advocated giving administrators broad discretion in carrying out their duties in the public interest so that the field of public administration would attract the same type of successful leaders found in the private sector (Wilson, 1887).

Administrative discretion is bound by laws that create state agencies with carefully prescribed missions to be carried out through carefully prescribed laws, rules, and regulations (Larsen, 2011). It is the instrumental duty of public administrators to follow these laws, rules, and regulations. Generally, elected officials reserve the right to make the laws— except where legal provision is made for agencies to promulgate their own rules or regulations (Larsen, 2011). Accordingly, public managers are obligated to follow and administer the law while using leadership and judgment. However, this becomes extremely difficult in an environment filled with political influence. Therefore, it is critical that public executives demonstrate leadership by using responsible administrative discretion.

Leadership and initiative from public managers is an absolute necessity. Without leadership, governmental organizations will never mobilize themselves to accomplish their mandated missions (Behn, 1998). Organizations tend to focus on self-preservation and maximizing their own convenience. It takes leadership of public managers to set a vision, motivate employees so as to overcome that organizational stagnation (Behn, 1998). Since government does not work perfectly, it is leadership from public executives that often compensates for some of the shortfalls of the executive and legislative branches. For example, when the Legislature – through their law making -- gives agencies missions that are vague,

conflicting and not properly resourced, then it is left to the talent, leadership and initiative of the public executive to figure out the best way forward.

Administrative discretion in Florida state government is tempered by a strong state legislature. Strictly defined, discretion is the departure of agency decisions from positions generally agreed on by the legislative and executive branches (Calvert, McCubbins and Weingast, 1989). In many ways, external political forces can shape the use of discretion (Keiser and Soss, 1998). Nevertheless, there is some room in the implementation/interpretation of policy and the internal management of the organization for Florida public executives to apply their judgment. State agency heads found a comfortable "zone of acceptance" in which to operate. They exercised great discretion over internal agency operations and personnel decisions. Yet, that discretion did not necessarily extend to the realm of policy-making. From the perspective of the Florida Legislature, independent administrative action was sometimes seen as a violation of legislative supremacy (Demir and Nyhan, 2008). When a legislature does not quite know what the problem is and does not have the time and the technical expertise to find out, then administrative discretion may be a necessary final step to developing a solution (Morgan and Rohr, 1986). Never mind that this idea runs contrary to the real world necessity for agency heads to interpret laws since legislation did not always provide enough detail for an agency to give adequate guidance to street level bureaucrats for them to actually implement policy. Strong constitutional legislatures can wield influence and oversight to restrict administrative discretion. Such strict limits also precluded undertaking initiatives that promoted social equity – one of the more prominent theories in public administration (Frederickson, 1996). Additionally, government bashing tends to create a hostile environment in which administrative discretion may be overly reduced (Holzer and Yang, 2005). These many circumstances limited the public

90

executives to exercising great discretion mainly over internal operations and generally did not extend to policy.

The Cabinet agency heads perceived a significant amount of discretion in leading their agencies. DOR had been very successful in establishing performance based business processes to improve organizational outcomes. They leveraged technology and ran a very smooth, efficient, metrics-driven operation lauded by leaders around the state. This type of success allowed the DOR chief great latitude to manage his/her agency without interference. To further preserve freedom of action, the DOR leadership continued to build trust through communicating with the people they served. Said one DOR chief, "We do what is right for the citizens." Another noted that internal tranquility allowed him greater discretion, "My key role was managing the pace of change and convincing everybody they still had a better job and a better chance to earn a living after it was over." FDLE heads felt they had all the discretion and freedom of action in the agency to accomplish all the law enforcement activities they needed. The fact that they had the support of local law enforcement entities – a fairly cohesive group -- allowed them greater discretion.

The Executive Agencies enjoyed great discretion in internal operations and utilizing the resources of the organizations. DOC chiefs were able to eliminate wasteful programs and save money. Open and honest communications and relationships built on trust were both helpful in preserving the ability to exercise discretion. One DCF chief referred to this as a major "credibility booster." A DOC head observed that in order to maintain his freedom of action, "I tried to choose my battles wisely. However, at certain times, the fallout from privatization along with interference from policy advisors severely limited the freedom of the DOC Secretary to

make necessary operational changes DCF leaders were particularly astute in understanding that

organizational policies of openness and transparency gained them needed freedom to operate.

One DCF Secretary posited, "I think I tried to be sure that I was informing people what I was

doing so that supporters weren't surprised. Or, even if they disagreed with you, they kind of

knew why you were doing it. So, keeping lines of communication open as much as possible."

There were times when the deaths of children under DCF supervision in Florida created an

untenable situation with excessive press and political pressure. Then there was such scrutiny on

the agency and leadership that discretion was severely limited. The sense of trust between public

executives in state government and both the Governor and key legislators was the key element

granting leaders the discretion they needed to do their jobs.

Internal Agency Management

Do political influences and the general external political environment have an impact on

how agency heads are able to manage the internal operations of their agencies? In state

government, the political environment affects almost everything government does. It would be a

natural assumption to answer this question quickly and in the affirmative. But, agencies do have

control over internal operations and strong leadership can make a difference in how an agency

responds to difficult political and economic conditions.

In the Cabinet agencies, the political environment, for the most part, has very little impact on

managing the internal affairs of the agency. Recall the description of Cabinet agencies as the

"plumbing" of state government with which most politicians avoid interfering. However, during

the economic recession after 2008, DOR, along with many other state agencies, was under some

pressure to reduce its budget which meant reducing staff. This situation threw a real scare into

the employees and created a great deal of anxiety about losing their jobs. The DOR chief made a very visible and sincere promise to find ways to cut budget without letting anyone go. "I told them if there was any way possible for me to manage the agency through those cuts without producing layoffs of people and jobs, I would do it."

The Executive agencies found it much more difficult to manage internal operations in a very volatile political environment. The issue of privatization overwhelmed DOC and distracted leadership from necessary internal issues. One DOC Secretary noted that, "I think there were a lot of things we could have done but because of all those external pressures, I was not given the opportunity." One DCF chief mentioned the overwhelming pressure from the media and how it prevented him from focusing on internal operations, "Number one is just the magnitude of time you have to spend on that stuff every day, hours of time, every single day dealing with that. It affects your ability to roll out other things, and drive other initiatives." Another DCF head observed, "It impacts because the external political environment is always active. It never goes away. I would say that political environment is constituencies, unions, press and Legislature. You are always thinking about the external political environment." For both DOC and DCF, vendors and contractors have created a situation that often makes it difficult for the agency heads to manage. Contracts for services involve large amounts of money and bring influences that can detract from internal operations. Recall the story about how DOC was forced by the Legislature to purchase an expensive time keeping system when what they really needed was increased officer staffing at the prisons. One DCF chief narrated a vignette about how the child welfare service providers had become a powerful force and almost totally unaccountable to the

department for performance standards. Clearly political influences had a constraining impact on the internal management of the Executive agencies.

Leadership Theories, Leadership and Values

"Those who stand for nothing, fall for anything." *-- Alexander Hamilton*

Leadership begins with assessing the environment and leadership constraints in order to determine what can be accomplished. This estimate of the situation allows the leader to assess the organizational and environmental demands, understand the constraints and determine what can be done to accomplish organizational priorities (Van Wart, 2005). The public executives in this study evaluated their external political climate, including the preferences and priorities of elected officials as they began to understand how to lead successfully. As the interviews revealed, political oversight often limited their ability to fully exercise their leadership skills.

Leadership theories generally acknowledge the influence of three schools of thought – traits, skills, and behaviors – in comprising the complex process of leadership. Traits are distinguishing qualities that facilitate effective leadership and provide the basis for implementing leadership skills and behaviors. History has demonstrated that successful leaders differ from other people and possess certain core personality traits that significantly contribute to their success. The following traits are essential to good leadership: integrity, courage, confidence, decisiveness, initiative, loyalty, tact, enthusiasm and unselfishness. There are six specific leadership skills necessary to be an effective leader – and they are well-suited to senior public managers in state government (Van Wart, 2005). These skills are communication, social skills, influence skills, analytic skills, technical skills and continual learning (Van Wart, 2005). The adaptive strategies

94

of Florida's leaders touched on and employed each of these skills to a certain degree. Finally, leadership behaviors combine skills and traits and comprise the process of leadership. The following are top practices of exemplary transformational leadership from Kouzes and Posner (1988): (1) Challenging the process. (2) Inspiring a shared vision. (3) Enabling others to act. (4) Modeling the way. (5) Encouraging the heart. Again, the public executives in this study utilized these practices in leading their agencies and working to effectively and efficiently provide necessary government services to Florida's citizens.

Situations can have a major influence on how leadership is applied and this is definitely the case with Florida's senior public executives. Leadership theories – traits, skills and behaviors -- seem to leave out the role of politics in decision-making – and how political calculus forces public managers into less than optimal decisions. They underemphasize the role of the environment on leadership. None of the leadership theories quite capture the tension created by the separation of politics and administration, the Constitutional system of checks and balances and the large number of entities to which senior public managers are accountable. All have an impact on the leadership of state agency heads. The dense political climate makes it especially difficult to exercise great initiative or even to effectively manage the organization. Woodrow Wilson might be shocked to find that the broad discretion and large powers he envisioned for public administrators has not been realized. Traditional leadership theories don't completely capture the impact of the external environment impacts and constraints on public managers and the difficulty in being answerable to multiple entities. As a result, the strategies employed by the state agency heads demonstrate the extent to which the political environment alters their ability to exercise leadership.

How do leadership and the values associated with leadership differ between elected officials and appointed agency heads? Both Cabinet and Executive agencies were of the same mind on this issue. To them, the two types of leadership were difficult to compare. One agency head noted, "You cannot compare political leadership with organizational leadership." Political leaders are primarily concerned with getting reelected. With a responsibility to be informed on many and varied issues before the Legislature, legislators have a wider focus than just one agency. As one agency head observed, "They are focused on the hot topic of the day and they evaluate their positions based on their impact on reelection." Their efforts are centered on the motivational and inspirational impressions that sway voters. These elected leaders spend much of their time studying social problems, social resources and social responsibilities and are more concerned with the appearance of policy with the electorate and the press. Their actions and policy positions are taken with the next election in mind. As one agency head suggested, "Politicians' job is to get elected: legislators' leadership is passing laws." Public executives, on the other hand, do not stand in front of voters for election, so they do not have to bend to political expediency. In leading their own agencies they have the responsibility to accomplish the agency mission and ensure the welfare of their employees. "I must decide to do what is right despite political pressures," mentioned one agency head. Motivated by public service, these leaders try to make a difference in the short window of time they are in appointed positions. Yet, their goal is optimal organizational performance. Their jobs are all about getting measurable results and providing effective and efficient services to citizens. These public executives understand that their job is to provide leadership in the shaping of their political environment (Heymann, 1987). So, they spend the bulk of their time assessing internal capacities such as task skills, role clarity and other attributes that are generally of marginal interest to policy leaders (Van Wart, 2005).

This marks the greatest difference in the focus of their leadership. It also mirrors and reinforces the politics-administration dichotomy.

The values of public executives are shaped by public service motivation. Public service motivation represents an individual's inclination to respond to motives grounded uniquely in public institutions (Perry, 1996). One of the most commonly identified normative foundations for public service is commitment to the public interest (Perry, 1996; Bozeman, 2007). Additionally, there is a civic duty and sense of self-sacrifice inherent in career public servants that undergird their values. These public managers willingly forgo financial rewards they could reap in the private sector for the intangible rewards of serving something greater than themselves. The public executives in this study reflected this motivation in spades. They seek reward through the people in their agencies and cherish their reputations within the cohort of other career public servants. As one public executive noted, "To me, it was important to just get the job done. Perhaps it was simpler for me. I didn't have to explain myself daily to my constituency (voters)." Another observed, "I asked myself who was I really serving? Are you serving people? In my case, it meant I was serving that Mom who needed daycare and food stamps or the child in foster care." By faithfully doing their jobs and putting service before self, these state public executives preserved the integrity of government agencies, protected against corruption, strengthened the legitimacy of government agencies and ultimately upheld democratic governance (Terry, 1995; Bozeman, 2007).

However, there seems to be a basic conflict in values between the public executives and their elected political masters. The values of elected officials are shaped by their desire for reelection and continued position of power. These values may be situational and their political

positions on policy may change. Management values are always subordinate to political values and when values conflict, political values prevail (Wilson, 2013). But maybe they shouldn't. Our state's appointed public managers are actively leading people every day. They operate large bureaucratic organizations with a mission and responsibility to provide services to citizens in the most efficient and effective way possible. Sometimes these widely differing viewpoints generate values that are not completely compatible. Leaders must lead by example, set and enforce standards and infuse their organizations with values – courage, integrity, trust, pride, loyalty, accountability, commitment, excellence, fairness, teamwork, selfless service, and honor. These values can easily be at odds with the chief aims of political overseers – popularity, expediency, and influence in the electorate. Elected leaders live in a world dictated by power and influence. Additionally, they compromise to gain power and often live by situational values that reflect that compromise. Their values serve to promote survival. It appears that making decisions that accommodate political influence may bring public managers into reflecting situational values of the political leaders rather than the other way around. If leaders allow the environmental influences and situational values of the political arena to dominate them, then their leadership suffers.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

"In the final analysis, public management is also a matter of common sense. Governments authorize imperfect people to use flawed procedures to cope with insoluble problems. The results of their efforts are remarkably effective given the exigencies of their roles. Responsible public management is indispensable to sound governance." -- Laurence Lynn (Lynn, 2001).

Summary of Major Findings

Florida's public executives definitely have their hands full dealing with political pressures while implementing public policy in a resource-constrained environment. Theirs is a tough job that demands leadership and skills in navigating a political environment in which many forces seek to influence their decisions. State public executives face a myriad of political influences from numerous institutions, supervisors and stakeholders to whom they respond. In fact, the complexity of governance and diffusion of power make public sector leadership more difficult. Those who think of public sector leadership as less decisive than private sector leadership fail to understand the environment in which this leadership is practiced (Collins, 2005). They have to make decisions to ensure the large organizations they lead provide services to citizens of the state efficiently and effectively – but that is the easy part. The most difficult part of their job is making decisions that accommodate political pressures while at the same time carrying out the duties and responsibilities as a leader of a large governmental organization. Politics is central to their role in government and political influences play a significant role in shaping their decisions. At the same time, the political environment has a disproportionate impact on limiting the leadership of senior public managers in Florida state government. These leaders feel the pressure from many different stakeholders – both governmental and non-

governmental actors -- in the arena of state government. The strongest of these political

influences are the Governor, Legislature, policy advisors, and contractors. The pressures are

often substantial so as to back them into a corner and leaving them with less than optimal choices

for solutions to the difficult and complex problems.

   The advent of privatization in Florida has had a major impact on political influence. For the

Executive agencies, privatization of services brought tremendous political attention and

oversight to agency policies and operations. The political philosophy behind privatization and

making government smaller has steadily gained steam since 1999 from both the Governor and

Legislature. As more services are outsourced and the funding increasingly goes to private

contractors, power and influence moves away from the government organization and to the

private sector. Numerous mega-contracts have removed power from the state agency heads and

given it to contractors. Policy advisors have greater influence and exert influence (on operational

issues) on state agency heads so much so that in some cases, they seem to think they know better

than the agency head how to run the department.   Legislators, policy advisors and contractors

had considerable influence over state agencies while marginalizing those agency leaders.

Fundamental services formerly performed by state employees were outsourced in the pursuit of

budget savings. The agency heads were tasked with figuring out the best way to implement

privatization rather than being asked if it was wise to do so.

   The Florida agency heads in this study did not consider themselves to be policy makers or

equal partners with elected officials in formulating policy. They viewed their roles as

implementers of policy – far removed from Svara's concept of complementarity. Some of it has

to do with the Constitution and statutes – and history of Florida government. The rest has to do

with Legislative dominance. Florida's senior public executives do not enjoy the standing to be power players in the policy making process as described by Graham Allison (Allison, 1969). Additionally, with GOP control of the state house and Legislature, the status of state workers has been diminished. GOP leaders have consistently disparaged state workers and not considered their morale. In 2003, Governor Bush extolled the virtues of having buildings empty of government workers. More recently, Governor Rick Scott prominently attached colored graphs to every email that showed the decrease in the number of state workers. State workers received this message loud and clear: "You are not important." To this perception add the rush to privatization and smaller government. The result is less prestige and respect for state workers. In this environment, it is not surprising that agency heads' clout in government has also been diminished and their profiles lowered. The philosophy of smaller government and the actions taken to reduce government have decreased the power and influence of state public executives. This has further cemented their division from elected officials and distanced them from policy making roles.

The strategies employed by agency heads to cope with political influence were born of necessity and workable within the limits (the art of the possible) of a state government dominated by the legislative branch. These strategies kept public executives from alienating key decision makers whose support they needed to stay in their positions and be effective. The strategies allowed them their greatest degree of influence on public policy decisions. At the same time, these very strategies both reflect and reinforce the stronger role of the legislative branch in Florida government and respect the traditional model of separation between politics and administration. Still, public executives, to a degree, make policy simply by the way they

implement it. A great example of this was DOR's change in how they collected child support payments. The agency's "administrative" mandate that child support payments be collected within a short window of time after a judge's decision eliminated the previously lengthy waiting process while paternity claims were disputed and litigated. But mostly, Florida's agency leaders recommend and inform policy rather than partner with elected officials to make it. This reveals leaders very much understanding of "what is possible" with very few bucking the system to actively partner in policy making. If the struggle of ideas is the essence of policy making as Deborah Stone asserts (Stone, 1988), then Florida's public executives are not active participants. The scarcity of dialogue on ideas keeps them on the sidelines of policy making.

Notable by their absence were strategies based on performance management, stakeholder and citizen participation and even strategic planning processes. The kinds of management tools that keep agencies focused on consistent policy actions were, for the most part, conspicuously absent in Florida government. The more stable Cabinet agencies were more successful at implementing performance-based standards. The Department of Revenue was the lone agency to involve citizens and stakeholders in their policy decisions through rule making. As mentioned earlier, there were only a few agency heads that attempted to implement long term strategic planning. For the Cabinet agency DOR, this worked because of the stability in senior leadership. However, in the Executive agencies, those long-range plans became casualties when leadership changed.

The traditional politics-administration dichotomy phenomenon is alive and well in Florida and its presence constrains leadership by appointed officials. On the politics-administration model shown in Figure 2, Florida falls more in the "separation" category

characterized by neutral competence and an instrumental role for public executives. In theory, the separation school assumes that elected officials are eager to incorporate administrative knowledge and expertise into the policy making process (Demir, 2009). However, the reality revealed by this study is that Florida's political masters are not so keen on inviting pubic administrators to the table to help make policy. Further, the results of this study show the dichotomy to be thoroughly embedded in the culture of Florida state government. The reality of public administration practice in Florida does not neatly fit into the theory of complementarity (Svara, 2001). Nor does the real world of state government comport exactly with the constitutive role of public administrators (Cook, 1998). The state's political climate replete with a strong legislative branch, continual budget reductions, increased privatization and the weakening of state civil service has only reinforced the traditional division of politics and administration. The ideal of interdependence and complementarity (Svara, 2001) is still very much an ideal that has not yet been realized. Florida's Constitution serves to emphasize a division between policy and administration by granting significant power to the legislature. A great example of this is the state statute that has every agency head submit their annual budget requests directly to the Legislature and ask for the budget needed to run the agency. Additionally, the results of this study reveal agency heads to be enormously concerned with ensuring policies are in line with key legislative leaders. This shows the great deference to the Legislature in Florida on policy roles.

State level politics are uniquely different from those at the national level. In Florida government, state agency heads are less visible than their federal counterparts, thereby reinforcing the traditional dichotomy. Local government's closeness and practicality almost eliminate the dichotomy as a viable concept. Federal politics involves agencies so large that

those federal heads exercise greater autonomy. But the state level is like the porridge Goldilocks tried – it is just the right temperature to percolate and be a major influence. The impact is to limit the ability of state agency heads to exert leadership in the policy area and often within their own agencies.

Final Thoughts

Today's politically polarized climate has only strengthened the separation between politicians and public managers. Florida state government reflects the same ideological divisions present at the national level. Public managers are acutely aware of the political divisions and it strengthens the sense of division between policy and administration. In such an environment, very few public managers desire to be identified with any political position and thus they embrace a neutral role as the safest option --- and the only one that provides a chance to remain employed over the long term. Although such a stance may provide some job protection, it is detrimental to good governance. Neutral competence does not allow for solving of complex problems state government faces. Rather than simply "following orders" from elected officials, public executives would find that taking initiative and using their judgment in the intelligent implementation of policy to be effective in accomplishing what the elected officials desire (Demir and Nyhan, 2008; Behn, 1998).   This wider definition of their roles would allow them to be the leaders Florida needs to solve the complex problems faced by state government.   The retreat into neutral competence shows that politics-administration dichotomy shapes state agency leadership more than their leadership shapes the dichotomy. In the end, this separation constrains

their leadership and discretion and makes them reluctant to engage in policy discussions where they are so vitally needed.

The necessary balance to legislative dominance is strong executive branch leadership. The Governor plays a key role in keeping the Legislature from exerting excessive pressure on agency heads. Well-timed warnings from the Governor can alleviate excessive legislative pressure and meddling and allow the public executive some discretion and freedom of action. The Governor's political clout is one of the more effective tools to achieve a more balanced environment for agency heads. The Governor's active intervention in judiciously pushing back against key legislators would assist in empowering the agency heads and allow for them to take the initiative and leadership needed for government to be effective (Behn, 1998).

Florida's reining political philosophy since 1999 has been one of making government smaller and increasing privatization of services. State employees are not held in high esteem, but rather seen as a symptom of a too large, too wasteful and too inefficient state government that must continually be reduced. The impact of the loss of career service status among senior leadership in state agencies has strengthened the sense of separation from elected officials and put a chilling effect on healthy differences of opinion in the senior ranks for fear of being removed. Agency heads serve at the pleasure of the Governor, but if they displease the Legislature, they are quickly dispatched. Continuity and longevity in Executive agencies is non-existent. A recommendation for further study would be to examine various state constitutions and see if they have any bearing on political influence and politics-administration dichotomy. Is the politics-administration dichotomy stronger in states with less power centralized in Governor?

Public managers must lead for policy to be implemented. As the action arm of government, administration actually puts policy into action. Leadership requires principled decision making. Making choices based on accomplishing the mission and ensuring the welfare of employees – choosing the harder right instead of the easier wrong. Deciding based on values rather than expediency or political pressure. Leadership for agency heads can be simplified to integrity, courage, loyalty to the organization and doing what is right for the public interest/public good in the face of political influence to do otherwise. A measure of leadership is how leaders react to pressure – including political pressure. Hardship reveals character. Influence and controversy and smaller budgets provide plenty of controversy. Hence leadership is needed. It involves courage and the ability to speak truth to power and resign in the face of untenable circumstances. At some point, courage is required to refuse certain policies that are detrimental to the agency and to the public good as perceived by the leader – who knows better than anyone the impact policy changes have on the provision of services. If the organization core values are threatened, then employees may see politics as a perversion of their true (and enduring) mission. Leaders must be willing to challenge both Governor and Legislature to fight for what is right. Courage is required and the leader must be willing to be fired over principles. It begs the question: Can a leader be good if he/she does not show the persistence to fight through the bureaucracy with persistence and often risk losing it all – to maintain their principles and integrity and to make organizations better?

Another measure of leadership – integrity -- can help prevent threats and challenges to leaders from political influences more concerned with politics than honesty. Leaders act in a normative world: they live by values and instill values in the agencies they lead. In decision

making, their first priority must be to integrity-based decisions in the best interest of the agency. If a leader's integrity is lost, value-based leadership is compromised and the public executive will quickly lose credibility and effectiveness. The state's senior public managers fear political pressures might place them in a position where they may be asked to take action that is dishonest or unethical.

If leaders are weak, then the institutions they lead become weak. When that happens, democratic governance becomes ineffective. Although many institutions have a culture and institutional reputations, these can be impacted by leadership – either positively or negatively. When the institutions become systematically weakened by a series of weak or ineffective leaders, then the entire organization begins to break down and not accomplish its mission. If the Governor and Legislature are not committed to hiring quality leaders, allowing them some longevity, what are the chances that the state governmental organizations they lead will ever become truly effective teams and actually improve organizational performance? Hence my conclusion is that state government agencies need strong leaders with initiative who can build strong institutions that outlive their tenure. To do this, they must develop the next generation of leaders to replace them.

Implications of this research lead to recommendations to practitioners to remedy the current situation by allowing agency heads more of a role in policy formulation in order to improve governance in Florida. Senior leaders must overcome environmental pressures and take initiative in the policy area. There needs to be a more effective dialogue between state agency heads and the Governor and Legislature concerning policy. When public executives take initiative and proactively seek to engage prior to legislation being drafted or policies being

decided, then the state of Florida gets the best outcomes – and governance – from its public servants. When the states most senior public administrators are included in the "circle of trust" with legislators and executives, then intent can be understood, compromise achieved and effective implementation accomplished.

Both the Governor and Legislature can help break down the traditional politics-administration dichotomy and make public executives an integral part of policy making. The fix begins with empowering their state agency heads. The Governor can set a clear vision and intent for his/her administration and allow appointed state leaders more discretion to develop innovative policy options that support the Governor's vision. The Governor can ask the state agency heads for policy input and more effective strategies for policy implementation. Above all, the Governor must be open to dialogue. The Governor must protect state agency heads politically from excessive Legislative control and allow them some freedom of action. The Legislature should continue to hold state agency heads accountable, but avoid the temptation to excessively intervene and micromanage them. Following these principles can bring Florida government into balance and begin moving toward a real complementarity between elected and appointed officials.

Leadership matters in state government. Good leadership contributes to good governance and effective services to Florida's citizens. In governing, our elected officials would do well to allow management's performance values to have more influence in some cases than political values (Wilson, 2013). More consistent direction and less legislative meddling would free public executives use their initiative and leadership. Government agencies are indispensable assets that

require strong principled leadership (Wilson, 2013). Florida needs more than neutral competence to solve the wicked problems faced today (Demir and Nyhan, 2008). Lawmakers cannot legislate morality, values or common sense. These values do not make it into written word nor do they make it into policy. Often it is in the interpretation of policy and implementation that these values come to the fore. Because of this, strong executive leadership in government agencies is sorely needed. The institutions of government matter. Because when they fail, it is impossible for anything else to succeed. Yet when institutions succeed, many great things are possible through government. So, if state government is destined to be small, then at least let it be well-led and perform as efficiently and effectively as possible.

To move toward the ideal of interdependence and an open, constructive dialogue with elected officials, senior public managers from their side cannot be reluctant to initiate the dialogue and engage in discussion with elected officials. As Brian Cook noted, with a policy making role, public managers can "become the champions of public reason empowered to put government into action, fully engaged in decision making about what should be done as well as how to get it done." (Cook, 1996). Empowered public managers preserve the integrity of our governmental institutions and provide a hedge against corruption in government. Hired on the basis of their experience, savvy and leadership talents, senior public executives are grossly underutilized if they merely carry out orders from elected officials. They should be given some of the broad discretionary powers described by Woodrow Wilson in 1887. With Florida near the bottom of states in number of state workers per capita, it needs dynamic public managers who are empowered to take initiative. The Governor and Legislature could grant such discretion and freedom of action while maintaining accountability by approving long range strategic plans for

agencies. In this way, public managers would have more latitude and be less constrained by the numerous political influences currently encountered. They could move beyond acceptance of political constraints and provide leadership in the shaping of policy. These actions would go a long ways toward building trust with our state's most experienced senior appointed leaders and allowing them to use their talents to ultimately improve governance in the state.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Leadership and the Politics-Administration Dichotomy

Interview Questions

Research Question:

How do senior appointed public managers in state government cope with political influences to their leadership in the context of the politics-administration dichotomy?

Introductory Questions:

1. How long have you been in your current position? Or How long did you serve as the agency head?

2. Approximately how many employees are there in your agency?

3. How would you describe the basic mission of your agency?

4. Please briefly describe your management experience prior to being appointed to your current position.

Interview Questions:

1. Tell me a story about how politics impacted your ability to make an otherwise rational decision in the public interest and in the best interests of your agency. What did you do about it?

2. What was the most important action you wanted to accomplish when you assumed your position as agency head?

3. What action (s) did you take to accomplish this?

4. How did you assess the feasibility of accomplishing the desired action? What course of action did you pursue after the assessment?

5. Tell me a story about how politics influenced your ability to achieve your initial goals? Where did the political influence come from?

6. What actions did you take to accommodate the political conflicts you encountered as you pursued your agenda?

7. One of the founding principles of U.S. public administration is a distinction between the roles of public administrators and elected officials. The essence of this distinction is that politics and policy making should be kept separate from the execution of policy -- essentially that elected officials make policy and public managers execute policy. There are differing opinions as to how much appointed public managers should be involved in policy making. How did you view this distinction between state agency heads and elected officials? What effect did the distinction have on your leadership and ability to do your job?

8. How would you define your role in developing policy and/or taking initiative on new policy/legislation? What actions did you take to develop policy?

9. How much influence did politics and political views as expressed by the Governor or key legislators have on your ability to initiate policy or implement policy?

10. Can you tell me about your experiences with political ideologues from the Governor's office or Legislature? How did they impact your ability to make decisions or influence policy?

11. How much freedom/latitude did you have to make policy?

12. How did you determine the limits of what you could ask for in the budget? Did you ever ask for more funding in the budget? Was there pressure not to ask for more funding?

13. Can you tell me a little bit about how the external political environment may have impacted the internal management of your agency?

14. How did the political environment limit your ability to exercise leadership?

15. How did you preserve your freedom of action to make decisions and run your agency? What actions did you take?

16. Can you tell me about your approach to leadership and management of your agency? How did it differ from the leadership you observed in elected public officials in state government?

17. How did your leadership values differ from the values of elected public officials?

18. Part of my study is to examine how political leadership has influenced agency management and policy initiatives over time. For your agency, how do you see this relationship having changed in the past fifteen years?

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF AGENCY HEADS 1999 - 2014

Agency	Name	Time as Agency Head	Total Years Public Service	Remarks
DOR	Jim Zingale	8 years	20+ years	Served as deputy DOR chief for 9 years
DOR	Lisa Vickers	4+ years	20+ years	Served as deputy DOR chief for 7 years
DOR	Marshall Stranburg	2 years	16 years	Served as deputy DOR chief for 7 months
FDLE	Tim Moore	16 years	20 + years	Served as deputy FDLE chief
FDLE	Guy Tunnell	3 years	20+ years	Served as elected Sheriff
FDLE	Gerald Bailey	8+ years	20+ years	Served as deputy FDLE chief
DOC	Michael W. Moore	4 years	20 + years	Served as DOC Chief in SC
DOC	James V. Crosby	3 years	30 + years	Convicted of taking kickbacks. Served 8 years in federal prison.
DOC	Jim McDonough	2 years	30 + years	Served 26 years as Army officer and 8 years as FL drug czar
DOC	Walter McNeil	2+ years	30 + years	Served as police chief and DJJ Secretary
DOC	Ed Buss	11 months	25+ years	Served as IN state DOC chief
DOC	Ken Tucker	1 year	25+ years	Served as deputy FDLE chief
DOC	Mike Crews	1+ years	20 + years	Served as DOC deputy
DCF	Kathleen Kearney	3+ years	30+ years	Served as FL Judge
DCF	Jerry Regier	3 years	20+ years	Served as DCF chief in OK
DCF	Lucy Hadi	1 + years	20 + years	Served in DCF, AWI, Gov office and Legis.
DCF	Bob Butterworth	1 ½ years	20+ years	Served as FL Attorney General (elected)
DCF	George Sheldon	2+ years	20 + years	Served as deputy AG and DCF; elected legislator
DCF	David Wilkins	2+ years	2+ years	30 years in private sector
DCF	Esther Jacobo	Interim 10 months	20 + years	Served as DCF regional chief

APPENDIX C

IRB APPROVAL MEMORANDUM 2013

Florida State
UNIVERSITY

Office of the Vice President for Research
Human Subjects Committee
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2742
(850) 644-8673 · FAX (850) 644-4392

APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 05/17/2013

To: Bruce Grant ▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇

Address: ▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇

Dept.:   PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research
     Why Leadership Matters

The application that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Secretary, the Chair, and two members of the Human Subjects Committee. Your project is determined to be Expedited per 45 CFR § 46.110(7)   and has been approved by an expedited review process.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be required.

If you submitted a proposed consent form with your application, the approved stamped consent form is attached to this approval notice. Only the stamped version of the consent form may be used in recruiting research subjects.

If the project has not been completed by 05/16/2014   you must request a renewal of approval for continuation of the project. As a courtesy, a renewal notice will be sent to you prior to your expiration date; however, it is your responsibility as the Principal Investigator to timely request renewal of your approval from the Committee.

You are advised that any change in protocol for this project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee prior to implementation of the proposed change in the protocol. A protocol change/amendment form is required to be submitted for approval by the Committee. In addition, federal regulations require that the Principal Investigator promptly report, in writing any unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the chairman of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Human Research Protection. The Assurance Number is IRB00000446.

Cc: Frances Berry <fberry@fsu.edu>, Advisor
HSC No. 2013.10396

115

APPENDIX D

2014 IRB APPROVAL (FOR CHANGE IN RESEARCH PROTOCOL)

Florida State
UNIVERSITY

Office of the Vice President For Research
Human Subjects Committee
P O Box 3062742
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2742
(850) 644-8673 · FAX (850) 644-4392

APPROVAL MEMORANDUM (for change in research protocol)

Date: 02/04/2014

To: Bruce Grant

Address:

Dept: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Use of Human subjects in Research
Project entitled: Leadership and the Politics-Administration Dichotomy

The application that you submitted to this office in regard to the requested change/amendment to your research protocol for the above-referenced project has been reviewed and approved.

Please be reminded that if the project has not been completed by 05/16/2014 , you must request renewed approval for continuation of the project.

By copy of this memorandum, the chairman of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Human Research Protection. The Assurance Number is IRB00000446.

Cc: Frances Berry <fberry@fsu.edu>, Advisor
HSC NO. 2014.12191

APPENDIX E

IRB CONSENT FORM

FSU Behavioral Consent Form

Project Title: Why Leadership Matters?

You are invited to be in a research study about leadership. You were selected as a possible participant because of your position as a senior level leader in state government. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Bruce Grant, doctoral student at Florida State University.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to learn about leadership practices required by those in senior level appointed positions in state government.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

Agree to a one hour minute interview, answer questions on leadership, agree to written notes from the interview and agree to tape recording of the interview.

Risks and benefits of being in the Study:

In the very unlikely event the notes and recordings were released to the public, there would be some risk to the participant. The release of notes with names and positions could potentially lead to serious repercussions for the participant.

There are no benefits to participation.

Compensation:

There is no compensation for this interview.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private and confidential to the extent permitted by law. I will keep all written notes and recordings in a locked secure location in my home to which only I have access. In the final paper or dissertation I intend to publish, I will not include any names or position titles or other information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only I will have access to the records. I will have sole possession of any written notes and tape recordings made. I will keep them for a period of two years and then I will destroy them.

FSU Human Subjects Committee approved on 5/17/2013. Void after 5/16/2014.
HSC # 2013.10396

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Florida State University.

Contacts and Questions:

The only researcher conducting this study is Bruce Grant. You may ask any question you have now. If you have a question later, you are encouraged to contact me at ████ ███ or email: ████████████. You may also contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Frances Berry, at ████████ or email: ████████.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the FSU IRB at 2010 Levy Street, Research Building B, Suite 276, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2742, or 850-644-8633, or by email at humansubjects@magnet.fsu.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

_____   _____
Signature   Date

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Bruce Grant is an independent defense consultant under contract with Enterprise Florida, Inc. serving as the Executive Staff Director for the Florida Defense Support Task Force. He has had 8 years' experience in state level public administration. He served in the Governor's Office of Drug Control as the Chief of the Counterdrug Law Enforcement and then as Chief of Staff. Later, he served as the chief of the state probation system in the Florida Department of Corrections from 2007-2009. After a short stint in the Department of Business and Professional Regulation, he was the Director of the Florida Office of Drug Control. He took a sabbatical from state public administration when in 2005 he resigned his position in the Governor's Office and volunteered to return to active duty to serve with the U.S. Army in Iraq. From 2005-2006, COL Grant served with the 101st Airborne Division in Mosul, Iraq with a mission to rebuild the governmental, legal, and economic institutions of the province.

A 1974 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, he also holds a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Puget Sound. He served a 27 year career in the United States Army as an Infantry Officer before retiring in March 2001. During his active military service, he held several key positions including command at every level from platoon through battalion. He served in the 82nd Airborne Division, the 75th Ranger Regiment, the Southern European Task Force, and with NATO peacekeeping forces in Bosnia.

He has been an active volunteer in the Tallahassee community where he served as a Scout leader, youth baseball coach and church elder. He currently volunteers as the Chairman of the Leon County Responsible Decision Making Coalition and Chairman of the Statewide Veterans Advisory Council. Bruce is married with four children and three grandchildren.