

RACE, GENDER AND EMOTION WORK AMONG SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

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Researchers have highlighted how gendered associations of femininity with emotional labor can complicate professional women's attempts to exercise managerial authority. However, current understandings of how race and gender intersect in professional women's emotional labor remain limited. We draw on 132 interviews from eight white women and 13 women of color who are novice principals. White women began the principalship wanting to establish themselves as emotionally supportive leaders who were open to others' influence. They viewed emotional labor as existing in tension with showing authority as a leader. Over time, however, most white women reported adopting more directive practices. By contrast, women of color reported beginning the principalship with a more directive, take-charge leadership style. They viewed emotional labor and authority as part of a blended project and did not talk about these two aspects of leadership as existing in tension. Over time, their self-reported leadership style changed little. We analyze our findings in light of recent theorizing about gender and intersectionality.

KEYWORDS: emotion work; leadership; gender theory; intersectionality; principals

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In workplaces such as hospitals, schools, airports, law and consulting firms, restaurants, and shopping malls, employees of all ranks must manage their own and others' feelings. Hochschild ([1983] 2012) used the term "emotional labor" to describe this phenomenon, defining it as the "management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display" that will "produce an emotional state in another person, gratitude or fear, for example" (141). She noted that the demand on women to do emotion work has a long tradition in the private sphere, where it is primarily they who do the unpaid work of catering to others' emotions.¹ As wives and mothers, women "affirm, enhance, and celebrate the well-being and status" of others (156). In fact, Hochschild argued that women are in danger of becoming "overly concerned with the needs of others," and thus, "susceptible to being used," both at home and at work (131).

Given longstanding associations of altruism, emotional nurturance, and care with women, the question of how professional women balance emotional labor with efforts to maintain power and influence in the workplace is of interest. Gendered emotional labor expectations can undermine women employees' ability to establish professional authority with coworkers and clients (e.g., George 2008; Pierce 1995; Ridgeway 2011). However, current understandings of how race and gender intersect in professional women's emotional labor and efforts to maintain authority and power at work remain limited. To address this gap, we draw on 132 interviews from a multi-year, longitudinal interview study of novice principals in the United States who are white women ($N=8$) and women of color ($N=13$).

There are several reasons why a racially diverse sample of novice women principals is useful for a study on emotional labor. First, the principal job requires a great deal of emotional labor. School principals are expected to provide moral support to teaching staff and to show

sensitivity and sympathy to the needs of parents, students, and teachers (Auerbach 2009). At the same time, within their school buildings, principals enjoy great authority. Relative to the staff they interact with, principals are better paid and enjoy more prestige, and they have the greatest authority to hire and fire staff and allocate resources (Hill, Ottem, and DeRoche 2016). Second, research suggests the need for a racially diverse sample when studying emotional labor. Scholars find that “feeling rules,” or “standards ... that determine what is rightly owed and owing in the currency of feeling” (Hochschild [1983] 2012, 35), vary for workers of different races (Harlow 2003; Wingfield 2007; Wingfield 2010). Others caution against positioning white women as the “universal female subject” (Glenn 1999, 3) when it comes to women’s emotional labor. Third, for a study that depends on textured accounts of how women leaders experience and manage emotional labor, novice principals may be especially insightful. Neophytes are often more self-conscious about themselves and their environments than veterans are; their situations have not yet become as familiar to them as to be unremarkable. Further, while veterans often depend on practiced work routines to avoid challenges, novices must invent or adopt strategies to cope with problems (Berger and Luckmann 1966). Thus, novices may be uniquely able to articulate their internal struggles and experiences with emotional labor.

Our results showed that white women began the principalship wanting to establish themselves as emotionally supportive leaders who were open to others’ influence. They viewed showing emotional support as existing in tension with showing authority as leaders and talked about needing to “balance” the two. Over time, most white women reported adopting more directive practices as a way to protect themselves from burnout and improve the quality of teachers’ classroom instruction; the one who did not suffered from professional fatigue. By contrast, women of color reported beginning the principalship with a more directive, take-charge

leadership style. They viewed emotional labor aimed at showing support for others, on the one hand, and showing authority, on the other, as part of a blended project. They did not talk about these two aspects of leadership as existing in tension. Over time, the self-reported leadership style of women of color changed little.

Our analysis contributes to current understandings of how race and gender intersect in the work of professional educators. Specifically, we extend recent theorizing about the “freedoms” and “binds” that occur for people when their race and gender identities convey conflicting or overlapping stereotype content (Ridgeway and Kricheli-Katz 2013). We also suggest that longitudinal research on emotional labor can provide novel insights. To date, most research on emotional labor takes a cross-sectional approach. However, we find that changes and continuities in workers’ emotional labor over time uncover how—even as workers gain experience, acumen, and knowledge—race and gender still enable (or limit) their ability to engage in various strategies for managing their emotional labor.

DOING GENDER VERSUS DOING PROFESSIONALISM

Within the contemporary literature on emotion management, *The Managed Heart* (Hochschild [1983] 2012) stands out as a classic text. Using the case of flight attendants and bill collectors, Hochschild documented how work organizations require employees to perform highly gendered emotional labor. Flight attendants, who were mostly women, were expected to boost the status and emotional well-being of customers and clients through cheerful responsiveness. Bill collectors, who were mostly men, were expected to handle debtors oppositely—reducing their status and arousing a sense of fear and intimidation. As part of their jobs, both flight attendants and bill collectors were called upon to do emotional labor.

Since the publication of *The Managed Heart*, scholars have continued Hochschild's inquiry into how gender matters for the emotional labor that workers are expected to perform (Fields, Copp, and Kleinman 2006; Steinberg and Figart 1999; Wilkins and Pace 2014). A handful of studies have investigated how gendered emotional labor expectations can undermine women's ability to establish professional authority with coworkers and clients.

For instance, George (2008) and Pierce (1995) examined the emotional labor of expert service workers.² Both researchers found that professional or semiprofessional women's emotional labor involved decisions with steep trade-offs. In particular, it involved either "doing professionalism," which required emotional detachment, or "doing gender," which required a "caring orientation" (Pierce 1995, 121). Women professionals and semiprofessionals reported that they could not simultaneously embody and convey professional authority and warmth (George 2008; Pierce 1995). However, both of these studies were based primarily on ethnographic observations of white professional men and women.³ Thus, the authors lacked the data needed to explore how race matters for women workers' experiences of a similar either/or bind. Interviews with high-status professional women of color can address this gap.

Early theorizing about the relationship between gender and emotional labor assumed white women as the norm (Glenn 1999, 3) and posited them as "naturally" caring (Mirchandani 2003). This gendered assumption is also classed, as the "idealized relationship oriented-woman" (Mirchandani 2003, 736) is also middle class (Mirchandani 2003). In her study Wingfield (2010) found that some black professional women went against feeling rules for both blacks and women by occasionally showing anger. Although her study did not include white women, Wingfield speculated that black professional women may have more freedom to express anger and

frustration than white women. As she wrote, “White women ... are subjected to racialized, gendered stereotypes that depict them as submissive and passive, but not angry” (263).

We are aware of only one study that directly compares how professional women of color and white women enact authority in the workplace. Harlow (2003) found that both black and white women professors sought to establish “authoritative” classroom environments. In this article we refer to a similar leadership style as “directive.” The term is well-established in the literatures on leadership (Eagly, Karau, and Johnson 1992; Somech 2006) and parenting (Ispa et al. 2013). Directive leadership, unlike participative leadership, involves establishing an agenda for decision making and action that supports the leader’s vision (Somech 2006). Directive parenting, as opposed to permissive or uninvolved parenting, involves firm control and rule enforcement (Ispa et al. 2013). In Harlow’s (2003) study, students interpreted black women professors’ directive leadership styles through the lens of stereotypical images of angry black women, viewing them as “overaggressive.” In response, black women sought to maintain emotional detachment when it came to students’ evaluations and impressions of them. Although Harlow does not elaborate on white women professors’ responses to students, it seems likely that black and white women were engaged in different kinds of emotional labor, given students’ different reactions to their expressions of authority.

In sum, researchers have highlighted the conflicts that can arise for professional women because of gendered associations of femininity with expressions of care for others’ emotional well-being, on the one hand, and masculinity with authority and expertise, on the other (George 2008; Pierce 1995; Ridgeway 2011; Wharton 2009). At the same time, the literature has yet to elaborate on how race could matter for women’s ability to express authority and care simultaneously. Such a comparison is critical for developing understanding of how gendered

expectations of emotional labor can complicate professional women's attempts to gain and maintain authority in the workplace.

Although they have yet to be applied to empirical studies of emotional labor, recent concepts from gender theory provide a way to understand and theorize potential differences in how white women and women of color may experience and enact authority and care as leaders. According to this recent theorizing, gender and race stereotypes vary in their content, but they are similar in that they bias perceptions of competence and suitability for leadership for those who deviate from the "standard" (of white men) (Fiske 2010, as cited in Ridgeway and Kricheli-Katz 2013).

The content of gender and race stereotypes can share common ground, such that members of some race/gender groups will be constructed as "prototypical" for their race/gender group, while others will be constructed as "unprototypical" (Ridgeway and Kircheli-Katz 2013). For instance, white men occupy the most prototypical (and advantageous) position, as essentialized images of masculinity as agentic, civilized, and socially powerful overlap with essentialized images of whiteness. Similarly, essentialized images of femininity as polite and deferential overlap with essentialized images of whiteness as civilized. Thus, white women match the prototype for "women." Essentialized images of blackness are gendered as masculine and powerful, although in the physical rather than social sense. Therefore, the content of cultural stereotypes about blackness involves masculinity. As a result, black men match the prototype of "blacks." In sum, white women and black men occupy prototypical social identities: their race and gender identities convey overlapping stereotype content. However, neither group fits with the dominant image of a professional leader, which involves male-typed social power (Correll 2017). Black men's masculinity is predicated on physical, rather than social power, and white women's

femininity is predicated on a relative lack of social power (Goff, Thomas, and Jackson 2008; Ridgeway and Kricheli-Katz 2013; Schippers 2007).

Unprototypical, or “off-diagonal,” social locations belong to those whose race and gender identities convey conflicting, rather than overlapping, stereotype content (Ridgeway and Kricheli-Katz 2013). As blackness is culturally stereotyped as masculine (Goff, Thomas, and Jackson 2008), black women are in an “off-diagonal” social location. Those who hold unprototypical social identities experience a particular set of “binds” and “freedoms” that are not experienced by those with more prototypical identities. The context may heighten or diminish these binds and freedoms. For instance, in contexts where gender and heterosexual attraction are salient to interaction, black women are at a disadvantage. The cultural stereotype content of their race conflicts with the cultural stereotype content of their gender; essentialized images of blackness as masculine create unique “binds” for them (Ridgeway and Kricheli-Katz 2013). In other contexts, unprototypical individuals may experience distinct freedoms. For instance, in settings where agentic behavior and leadership (culturally constructed as masculine) are prized, black women may experience specific freedoms (Livingstone, Rosette, and Washington 2012; Ridgeway and Kricheli-Katz 2013). By contrast, white women will face a heightened risk of backlash for behaving agentially. Their prototypicality will heighten the sense that they have violated cultural expectations of feminine deference.

Taken together, such theorizing is consistent with emerging psychological research on organizations. Although harsher performance standards are applied to black women than to white women (Eagly and Carli 2007), once they become leaders, black women who enact dominance and agency incur less of a penalty for transgressing gender norms than white women (Livingston, Rosette, and Washington 2012).

To our knowledge, studies of race, gender, and emotional labor have yet to incorporate insights about the unique freedoms and binds of those with prototypical and unprototypical identities. White and racial-minority women principals' reflections of their workplace interactions offer an excellent window into how race and gender prototypicality could matter for how professional women exercise authority, express care, and think about how to balance these two kinds of activities. We ask: Are there differences in how white women principals and principals of color report interacting with staff, especially when it comes to exercising authority and expressing care? Do women in the two groups think differently about the need to balance these two kinds of activities?

METHODS

Data came from a multi-year, longitudinal study of 21 women novice principals. All the principals identified as cisgender. Principals were recruited from a larger survey-based study of novice principals (www.distributedleadership.org). In 2009 and 2010, all novice principals in the district were sent an email inviting them to participate in an online, 30-minute survey. The online survey included two cohorts of novice principals. Cohort 1 began their jobs in 2009 and included 67 men and women novice principals, with a response rate of 69 percent. Cohort 2 began their jobs in 2010 and included 78 men and women novice principals, with a response rate of 78 percent.

Following these online surveys, researchers used purposeful sampling (Glaser and Strauss 1967) to recruit 35 men and women principals for a multi-year interview study. Principals were told that they would receive a \$100 gift card at the end of the interview study, to be used at their discretion on behalf of their schools. All of the principals who were asked to participate in the interview study agreed. Cohort 1 principals ($N=18$) were asked to participate in

the interview study based on the researcher's desire to obtain a diverse sample of novice principals in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, career trajectory, and school characteristics (www.distributedleadership.org). Cohort 2 principals ($N=17$) were selected through random sampling so that findings could be generalizable to the population surveyed. In total, 35 men and women principals were interviewed for the study that forms the basis of this research. The broader study aimed to understand the struggles that new principals faced, and how they coped with them. Because of our theoretical interest in the relationship between care and authority for women leaders, and how race could matter for this relationship, we conducted a close analysis of the 21 women in the sample. We compared the white, black, and Latina women to each other. All participants were provided with pseudonyms.

Cohort 1 ($N=11$) of women principals participated in the interview study from July 2009-November 2015. They were interviewed in-person five times and by phone four times. The in-person interviews were conducted at a place of the principal's choosing, usually at his/her school. The intermittent phone interviews were designed as a sub-study meant to tap into the retrospective and prospective nature of principals' sense-making. In total, Cohort 1 principals were interviewed nine times. Cohort 2 ($N=10$) of women principals participated in the interview study from Fall 2010-July 2015 and were interviewed in-person five times. However, they were not interviewed by phone, because the researchers concluded the sub-study with the first cohort of principals. In total, 132 interviews with 21 women novice principals were conducted. See Table 2 for more information on when principals in each cohort were sampled. Occasionally, a principal was not available for an interview. If all principals had been interviewed at each time point, the total number of interviews with the 21 women novice principals from Cohorts 1 and 2 would have been 149, instead of 132.

[TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

Each interview lasted between 45 and 100 minutes. Interview protocols were semi-structured to ensure that data would be comparable across principals (Cohen and Crabtree 2006). None of the semi-structured interview protocol prompts explicitly asked about emotions. Instead, principals often brought up others' emotions, especially negative emotions, in response to open-ended questions about ongoing challenges and prompts about "how things are going since I last saw you." We view this as an asset to our study. The fact that principals brought up others' negative emotions and their emotional labor spontaneously, and not in response to specific questions, reveals that managing others' emotions was a fundamental preoccupation.

Time 1 interviews asked principals about stakeholders' expectations of them. For example, principals were asked, "What do you think school staff/the local school advisory group/the district/parents expect from you?" Most of these interviews took place in the summer before the academic year; due to scheduling conflicts, a few started within the first month of the school year. Although they were new to their schools, they had already interacted with staff over the summer. In this district, principals work full-time and do not have summers off. They typically use summers for analyzing data, working on the budget, and placing teachers in classrooms.

Interviews after Time 1 included questions about each principal's perception of his or her progress in the principal role, such as: "What has surprised you, or not gone as expected?" Principals also were asked about difficulties, with questions such as: "What has been a challenge so far?" Finally, principals were specifically asked about their strategies for dealing with challenges with questions such as, "How did/ do you deal with [the challenge]?"

We used deductive and inductive strategies to develop a structured codebook, with definitions of each code. Having an explicit codebook ensured that, across the two co-authors,

we could code systematically, as we often referred to the codebook for definitions of codes. Our early coding scheme included a general code marking all principals' statements about emotions. Under this general code, we generated more specific codes regarding principals' strategies for maintaining authority at work, the desire to provide emotional care to others, and emotional burnout. We also coded statements that indicated how principals interpreted the feeling rules at work, using codes such as "display rules" and "emotional culture." In addition to descriptive coding, we wrote 10-15-page interpretive memos on the first 14 principals that we coded. In these memos, we interpreted the data more analytically than was possible to do while coding. We investigated, clarified, and speculated about the relations among gender, positional authority, and emotional labor. (See Charmaz 2000 on memo-writing in qualitative work.) In the memos, we also noted any ambiguous or difficult-to-code passages. Over the course of weekly meetings held during an academic year and summer term, we discussed the memos, logged agreements and disagreements over coding, and revised the codes and the codebook. The codebook underwent five significant revisions as we narrowed and refined our research focus.

In coding and writing memos, we found that white women principals and principals of color began their principalships with a markedly different orientation to leadership, authority, and emotional expression. We then returned to our coded data with the goal of examining whether and how these differences persisted over time and searching for disconfirming evidence. In the final stages of analysis, we compared the coded interview data of white, black, Latina, and multiracial women. We examined how white women spoke about authority and emotional care over time, comparing their earlier to their later response and did the same with women of color.

WHITE WOMEN: WANTING TO BE OPEN TO OTHERS' INFLUENCE

At the beginning of the principalship, white women did not want to use their positional power⁴ to make unilateral decisions, believing this would undermine trust and rapport. Instead, they sought to display openness and receptivity to others' influence. They said they wanted to hear the staff's views and have it be known that they would be the kinds of leaders who were interested in "making every voice matter." For instance, Anastasia, in the summer before her first year of principalship, described her goals for her first weeks and months in the following way:

At the beginning, it's a lot of just taking in, seeing what's going on. And starting that process of building relationships and building relational trust ... A good principal ... is somebody who is able to ... involve everybody in the process in terms of asking input, and is very clear that every voice matters.

Instead of starting the principalship with the notion that her job was to influence the faculty, Anastasia was intent on starting the principalship by showing the faculty that she was open to hearing their perspectives.

Promising Emotional Support

At the beginning of their principalships, White women also wanted to establish themselves as people who would be emotionally supportive and available to the staff. For instance, during the summer before first year of principalship Lori said that a "good" principal is someone who makes it clear to the staff that they can always "talk to you about almost anything." She said, "Being a good school principal is like walking into a place where everybody knows your name and they know that they can come to you and talk to you about almost anything and you'll listen and support them, or find ways to support them." Lori's description of a good principal, like that of other white women, did not emphasize the need to maintain power,

influence, or professional boundaries. Instead, it emphasized a willingness to make oneself available to others and to support them emotionally.

Emotional Labor and Authority: Needing “Balance”

At the same time, throughout the study, white women expressed a tension about how expressions of care for others’ emotional well-being and expressions of authority could co-exist. They talked about the need to “balance” or walk a “fine line” between these dimensions of their work as principals, which they saw as clearly distinct. White women principals worried that in appearing nurturing, they might undermine their authority as principals, and therefore reduce their potential to improve their schools. The summer before her first year of principalship Laura explained, "I view teachers as people who need to be nurtured and some need to be hand-held, but also you’re [the teacher] already a college educated person with a job, and these children aren't, so I need to make hard decisions to help me get the children to be where they need to be, so I need to find that fine balance." For Laura, the “fine balance” was between recognizing that she might need to provide emotional nurture to teachers, and that she also has a responsibility to hold teachers accountable for the quality of education they provide to children.

Anastasia’s comments also revealed her sense that there was an inherent tension between being an authority figure or supervisor who sometimes has to sanction the staff, and being someone who can provide “nurture.” She reported, "You are somebody who has to find a fine line between the nurture, the leader, the manager, the colleague, the supervisor, the learner. The one who models and yet has to make sure that the others follow through and if they don’t, you need to put that other hat on (sighs)." For Anastasia, these hats involved, on the one hand, expressions of care and concern for others’ emotional well-being and, on the other, firm expressions of authority. Anastasia continued this balancing act throughout her principalship.

Going into her third year as a principal, she had established a work culture that prioritized students' educational needs over teachers' emotional needs, and she was using a more directive leadership style. However, she still felt the need to balance concern for teachers' emotional well-being with the need to provide leadership and authority. In her summer before the third year, she explained:

We've said in the meetings "children first and everything else second" and we leave the personal stuff out. But when situations do come up, all those norms that we've agreed upon go out of the window and it's like ok, how do I politely remind you what the norms were without putting you on the spot? It's never directly stated, but ... yeah, the group thinks I expect too much—my expectations are too high—and they want me to be softer.

Several years into her principalship, Anastasia continued to view expressions of care and authority as existing in tension, questioning how she could deliver critical feedback without “putting [anyone] on the spot” and injuring their feelings. Further, the feedback Anastasia received from her staff suggested that they, too, saw these two aspects of her leadership as conflicting. Anastasia's adoption of more directive practices coincided with staff complaints that she had become too “hard.”

Moving Towards Directive Practices

After their first year in the principal's office, all but one of the white women principals reported embracing a more directive approach. In addition, although they still reported showing teachers that they cared about their emotional well-being, white women principals were placing less of a priority on showing teachers that they wanted to be emotionally supportive at all times.

White women's past experiences had led them to the conclusion that a more directive approach was needed—both for the sake of the school and for their well-being. Emily spoke about how, in the past, grade-level meetings had been overrun by teachers who wanted to "vent or gripe." In response to this situation, she decided to establish a set of top-down rules about the range of topics that could be covered in meetings. Before the second year of her principalship Emily explained:

If you allow teachers to control a lot of topics in grade level meetings—and it makes me sound like a dictator and I'm not trying to come across this way—but a lot of what they'll talk about are concerns that they have; this student is acting up, I don't have enough copy paper. All legitimate concerns but ... how do I know the students are getting what you're teaching? Because you could be teaching all day long but if the students aren't learning it you're not effective. So just by me saying, "Ok, no. Grade level meetings will always be about instruction. They will always be about student work." And I think being very upfront about that and saying "this is what I want" kept most people on the right track.

Emily was explicit about the fact that she had moved towards more directive practices after spending a year in the principal's office. Compared to interviews with Emily at earlier time points, it also seems that Emily had come to place a lesser priority on showing the staff that, as their leader, she placed a premium on being emotionally supportive. It was not that Emily was uncaring to the staff now, but rather that her emphasis had shifted towards keeping the staff focused on goals instead of making them aware of her potential role as a nurturing figure.

However, towards the end of the study, it became apparent that Emily faced sanctions for adopting a more directive approach. Her staff now perceived that she was not sufficiently invested in their emotional well-being. Indeed, in the seventh year of her principalship, Emily

reported that her staff let her know that they felt she was too cold and distant. Emily accepted this criticism even though, as she noted, she had been busy “doing everything” she could to get her school off probation and had been successful in doing so. As Emily reported:

I recognize that I have too much task orientation, and not enough human relationship building ... I think I was so busy last year trying to do all that stuff and you forget about—you know, building relationships—and I had—something happened personally in my life, and I ended up sharing it with the staff. And afterwards, a bunch of the staff members came up to me and said, "That's what we were waiting for, is to see the personal side of you—that you're not this huge monster." It was a real awakening. Like, you think you're doing everything you can, but you're not slowing down to build up those relationships.

Emily appeared to face sanctions when she did not display, or was perceived as not displaying, the traditionally feminine traits of caring and warmth (DeVault 1994). Emily accepted this message, telling the interviewer that it was imperative for her to work harder at showing care for her staff, and to improve her skill in “building relationships.”

In using the word “monster” to describe their initial impression of Emily, her staff seemed to be punishing Emily for being a gender deviant—failing to uphold an image of the caring, nurturing, and interpersonally oriented woman. Emily was reminded that, despite her leadership position and success as a school principal, she was still being held accountable to gendered expectations regarding women’s need to appear “nice” and “caring.”

Questioning Fit with the Principal Role: “It Stresses Me Out to Make Someone Unhappy.”

By the end of the study, only one white woman, Laura, remained markedly uncomfortable with adopting some directive practices. Further, Laura was beginning to question

whether she was fit for the principal role. She also appeared to be suffering from burnout. In her seventh year of principalship, Laura explained:

There are times when I have a hard time pulling the "because I said so" card. And as a principal, you sometimes have to do that; "because I said so." And I hate—I know that teachers are gonna take that so harshly—being such a small staff, everybody knows everybody's business. And that stresses me out to make somebody unhappy ... I hope I don't show it but I feel it. Then I go home and think I don't wanna do this anymore ... Last week I was telling my husband that maybe being a principal is not for me. Maybe I'm too attached and I don't have that detachment from my mind that you need sometimes to make the best decisions for everybody. There's that part of me like, "please like me"; you know that little, "please like me!"

Laura had not learned how to maintain a sense of herself as a good leader, distinct from the feedback she got from others. Like other white women principals, over time she had come to associate strong leadership with a directive approach and a degree of emotional detachment. However, Laura also found that she could not inoculate herself against caring about the staff's opinions of her emotional nurturance. Laura's example demonstrates how, for white women who continued to value others' opinions of their caring and warmth, leadership became strained, unpleasant, and practically untenable. It also shows how the inability to move towards a more directive leadership style can contribute to burnout and professional fatigue for women leaders who prioritize having a "caring orientation."

WOMEN OF COLOR: USING POSITIONAL AUTHORITY FROM THE BEGINNING

We found striking contrasts in the self-described leadership styles of white women and women of color. However, we could not discern any differences between the black, Latina, and

multiracial women. Thus, in the findings section, we group these women. In contrast to white women principals, women of color planned to take a directive approach to the principalship from the beginning. For instance, Andrea, a black principal, made it clear in her first interview that she was ready to take responsibility for making tough, top-down decisions. Rather than talking about hearing the staff's perspectives, Andrea seemed more oriented to enacting her vision of having a staff that was uniformly high quality—and letting some people know they were therefore in danger of being fired. Andrea had been an assistant principal at the school before becoming the principal. In the summer before her first year of principalship, she talked about the different way she expected to lead, now that she was the principal:

So now I am, I'm the buck. (chuckles) It stops with me. I can't look over my shoulder; I have to make those hard decisions and have to think twice and remember it's not personal; it's business ... If you're not up to par then either you're gonna have to work on it to prove yourself or we may have to counsel you out.

Andrea wholeheartedly embraced the idea that her job as a principal was to do “business.”

In general, women of color started the principalship by letting teachers know that they were prepared to use their positional authority to have them fired. Before her first year of principalship, Angela, a Black principal, reported on a conversation that took place with a teacher before school started:

Like I told you, I think I mentioned the one lady [teacher] that alluded to me that the principal before was trying to ... get rid of her. She was like, "If you'll have me here I'll stay." And I told her, I said, "I don't know what happened with that, but this is what I'm seeing. And ... if I decide that you shouldn't stay here I'm deciding you shouldn't stay

anywhere. And it's not gonna be about me talking to you and saying, 'Well you should leave,' and ...it's gonna be about the documentation so that you are not anywhere."

Rather than starting her principalship trying to convey an openness to others' opinions, or a willingness to be emotionally supportive, Angela started her principalship by conveying to the teachers that she was willing to end their teaching careers.

Nancy, a Latina principal, was also confident that it was best if the staff could learn to accept her authority, including the fact that she would not always explain her decisions. This was clear to her even as a first-year principal. In the winter of her first year, she explained:

And so the other piece [of that meeting with the teachers] was saying that we need to learn to trust each other and to trust each other's decisions. So when I make a decision, you have to understand that I will not always give you a rationale for every decision that I make. And you need to trust your leader and trust that your leader is making decisions that are in the best interest of the school.

From the beginning of her principalship, Nancy expected the staff to respect her positional authority and show deference to the decisions she made. She did not want the staff to feel entitled to question her decisions or have a "voice" in them.

Issuing Directives and Expressing Concern for Others' Emotional Well-Being: Not in Conflict

Black and Latina women principals' comfort with using positional authority came through in their early accounts of meetings with teachers, as did the fact that, for them, these expressions of positional authority were not in conflict with expressions of concern for others' emotional well-being. For instance, five months into her principalship, Adriana, a Latina principal, was describing a meeting she had with a teacher and an upset parent. In this meeting,

Adriana allowed the teacher to “save face” by appearing to ask her a question. However, Adriana said that everyone at the meeting knew that, in fact, she was issuing a directive to the teacher.

She explained:

I don't give [the teacher] an opportunity to say something stupid. I'm already directing what the interventions and what those next steps are. I'm asking her a question, but everybody at the table knows that I'm not asking; I'm telling her that this is what I'm gonna do. But I've done it saving dignity and saving face for all parties.

Adriana simultaneously told the teacher what to do in a top-down way and sought to maintain the teachers' sense of dignity. She, like other women of color, believed that it was possible to simultaneously issue a directive and show attention to another person's emotional well-being.

She did not see tension or conflict between the two imperatives.

Angela felt the same lack of tension about showing authority and power, on the one hand, and attending to others' emotions, on the other. In the summer before her first year, Angela reflected on a conversation she had with a "problem" teacher, in which she sought to convey goodwill and firm expectations simultaneously. She explained:

Put out good, you treat people good, that's what comes back. And so trying to get her [the teacher] to understand it's not about, you know, like/dislike because as a person I like you ... I said but when it comes down to the work, this is what is expected ... At that training ... were you there? When the guy was like, he's like, "A smile is nice" ... he said, "A smile works, and a shotgun works, but a smile with a shotgun" ... I was like, that's me. (laughs)

Angela liked the idea of leading with “a smile with a shotgun” because this evoked her double aims of conveying warmth while also letting the other person know that she held the power. For

Angela, the “smile” and the “shotgun” were not at odds – instead, they worked towards the same purpose of helping her achieve her aims as a principal.

In sum, women of color did not feel the need to “balance” or “walk a fine line” between showing authority and control, on one hand, and showing warmth and concern for others’ emotional well-being, on the other. For them, educational leadership involved a blended project of top-down, directive communication combined with care about others’ emotional well-being.

Consistency over Time

Recall that, over the course of the multi-year study, white women principals shifted to adopt more directive leadership styles. By contrast, the leadership styles of women of color changed little. From beginning to end, they were steadfast in their commitment to a directive style of leadership. As Nancy remarked during her seventh year of the principalship, she remained committed to telling teachers what she felt they needed to hear to improve their practice. As she stated, “I’m not going to coddle you, I’m not going to tell you like—I’m not going to sandwich feedback⁵ that has the potential to propel you to the next level.”

CONCLUSION

Scholarship has identified how associations of expertise, power, and authority with masculinity can hamper women’s professional progress, especially as leaders of organizations (George 2008; Pierce 1995; Wharton 2009). However, the studies that contributed to this theory have been based primarily on white samples. By contrast, in our study we compared how novice principals who are white, black, and Latina women understood the links between expressions of authority and expressions of concern for teachers’ emotional well-being.

Our findings suggest that past critiques of the research on emotional labor as being overly centered on white women’s experiences (Mirchandani 2003) are justified. White women’s

accounts were consistent with past scholarship on how gendered associations of authority with masculinity may complicate professional women's efforts in the workplace (George 2008; Pierce 1995; Ridgeway 2001; Schippers 2007; Wharton 2009), but the accounts of women of color were not.

White women started the principalship hoping to establish themselves as leaders who were open to others' influence and ready to provide emotional support. They also viewed expressions of concern for others' emotional well-being and authority as existing in tension and needing to be "balanced." However, even as white women sought to adopt more directive leadership styles, they continued to struggle with fear of being seen as dictatorial. Further, several white women faced repercussions for taking an approach to leadership that did not include overt displays of warmth and concern for others' emotional well-being. One was tagged as a "monster;" another reported that her staff wanted her to be "softer." By contrast, for women of color, showing authority and showing concern for others' emotional well-being were not in opposition.

We believe that the notion of "off-diagonal" social positions (Ridgeway and Kricheli-Katz 2013) helps explain the differences that we find among the white women and women of color. Because whiteness and femininity are in prototypical alignment with one another, white women may face additional "binds" on their ability to express agency and authority. In Ridgeway and Kricheli-Katz's (2013) article on "off-diagonal" social positions, they suggest as much, although without direct empirical engagement with women's workplace emotional labor.

Our contribution is to direct attention to how these concepts can be utilized to advance studies of emotional labor that take an intersectional and longitudinal approach. In our study, it is clear that white women's understandings of authority and emotional labor initially created

“binds” for them, in terms of their ability to enact a full range of leadership practices. By contrast, from the start women of color experienced “freedoms” in their thinking about expressions of authority and emotional labor.

Data limitations lead us to several suggestions for future research. First, in our study, we lack data on teachers' expectations for the principals in our sample. Future research could tap differences in teachers' expectations of women principals, depending on the principals' racial background.

Second, we were unable to distinguish between the emotional labor of black and Latina women principals. We recognize that black and Latina woman have distinct histories and experiences. We believe that, with a larger sample, we may be able to tease out patterned differences in the emotional labor and authority practices of these two groups of women.

Third, it is possible that white women were more hesitant to use their authority than black and Latina women because, as whites, they were coming into majority-black and Latinx settings as racial outsiders. Would the white women principals in our sample have been more directive if they had been placed in schools with majority white student populations? To address this question, future research could vary the race/class composition of the schools that principals find themselves in.

On a related note, researchers have highlighted the class dynamics involved in women's expressions of emotional intensity, and some have identified differences in the class and race resources that allow women to behave in emotionally distant ways (Illouz 1997). As Illouz (1997: 56) wrote, "The ability to distance oneself from one's immediate emotional experience is the prerogative of those who have readily available a range of emotional options ... who are not overwhelmed by emotional necessity and intensity." We lacked systematic data on women

principals' socioeconomic origins. Future research would do well to trace how class origins, in addition to race, could relate to women leaders' beliefs about the kinds of emotional labor that belong in the workplace.

Fourth, in our dataset, black and Latina women were not statistically more likely to begin their principalships in schools that were on probation, or went on probation, during the multi-year study.⁶ Thus, the differences we find in women's orientations to educational leadership, based on race, do not appear related to differences in the quality of the schools they inherited. Nonetheless, studying this topic with a large and racially diverse sample of women principals could shed light on how race, gender, and organizational health matter for women's emotional labor and leadership.

Bolton & Boyd (2003) pointed out that emotional self-management in organizations is not always prescribed; sometimes, employees manage their own and others' emotions because it gives them pleasure, it supports a non-work identity, it feels like being social, and/or they wish to follow general social convention. We lacked the data to systematically ascertain the *motives* behind principals' acts of emotion management. However, future research could gather such data, leading to a better understanding of how a combination of organizational requirements, personal wishes, and social norms shape principals' emotional labor.

Overall, this study opens a comparative inquiry into how white women and women of color enact leadership and show care for others' emotional well-being. Further research linking broad structures of race and gender inequality to educational leaders' emerging leadership styles would be productive. Clearly, a more intersectional approach to women, emotional labor, and leadership is needed—one that takes into account that women from different race groups may

access different meanings about the relationship between gender, emotional labor, and authority, with different implications for their everyday practices as leaders.

NOTES

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1. For Hochschild (1983), emotion management that takes place in the context of paid employment is “emotional labor;” emotion management that occurs in the private sphere is “emotion work.” For a critique of the public/private distinction, see Bolton and Boyd (2003).
 2. Expert service workers draw upon a combination of specialized knowledge and emotional labor to meet the needs of clients (George 2008; Wharton 2009).
 3. Pierce (1995) does not include a racial breakdown of participants but mentions in the appendix that the sample is largely white. The methods section of George’s (2008) paper does not include a racial breakdown of participants.
 4. Positional power or authority (or formal or legitimate authority) is the authority that comes from title, rank, and status. It comes from the hierarchy of an organization (Johnson-Bailey and Cervero 2008).
 5. Here, Nancy is referring to the “sandwich” model of feedback, in which a manager starts a conversation with an employee by offering a compliment, then giving critical feedback, and then ending with a compliment.
 6. In the district where we conducted the study, schools were placed on probation when their standardized test scores and attendance rates fell below a certain level. We ran two t-tests to determine whether there was a significant difference in the likelihood of being placed in a school on probation for white principals and principals of color. The first test indicated that a school was on probation at the beginning of the study (when a principal began her

principalship). The second test indicated that a school went on probation at any point during the multi-year study. There was no significant difference in either test ($p=.605$ and $.220$, respectively).

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TABLE 1: Principal and School Descriptives

Principal	Cohort	Principal's Race	School % Free Lunch	School % Black	School % Hispanic	School % White	School % Asian	School Probation Status During Year 1
Adriana	1	Hispanic	97.9	41.0	49.0	0.7	0.0	Yes
Anastasia	1	White	90.7	41.3	42.4	10.6	1.2	No
Andrea	1	Black	98.4	65.0	27.4	2.5	2.7	During 1st yr
Angela	1	Black	99.1	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Yes
Carol	2	White	97.2	1.1	98.0	0.8	0.0	Yes
Emily	1	White	98.5	78.7	20.5	0.0	0.0	Yes
Hannah	1	Black	Missing	Missing	Missing	Missing	Missing	Missing
Janice	2	White	100.0	2.7	95.4	0.0	0.0	No
Jennifer	2	Black	91.8	0.8	93.7	3.8	0.8	Yes
Joanne	2	White	84.8	7.4	31.2	29.6	28.2	N/A- New school
Joyce	2	Black	99.4	97.8	1.3	0.0	0.0	Yes
Kara	2	Multiethnic	94.9	97.8	0.0	0.0	0.6	During 1 st yr
Kathy	2	White	50.4	31.3	29.7	30.0	5.6	No
Laura	2	White	84.4	41.6	55.5	1.2	0.0	Yes
Lori	2	White	19.4	3.3	25.4	56.9	5.9	No
Lydia	1	Black	46.4	93.8	1.0	1.0	0.0	No
Nancy	1	Hispanic	87.2	18.4	77.3	1.6	0.0	N/A- New school
Rosana	1	Hispanic	95.8	1.9	96.2	1.5	0.0	N/A- New school
Sally	2	Black	98.8	98.5	0.9	0.0	0.0	Yes
Samantha	1	Black	70.6	98.5	0.5	0.0	0.0	N/A- New school
Yvonne	1	Black	98.4	99.1	0.5	0.0	0.0	Yes

TABLE 2: Data Collection Points for Multi-Year Longitudinal Interview Study of Novice Women Principals

	Time 1	Time 2	Time 3	Time 4	Time 5
Cohort 1	Fall 2009, Summer before first year	Winter 2009, Winter of first year	Summer 2010, Summer before second year	Summer 2011, Summer before third year	Fall 2015, Seventh Year
Cohort 2	Fall 2010, Summer before first year	Winter 2010, Winter of first year	Summer 2011, Summer before second year	Summer 2012, Summer before third year	Fall 2015, Sixth Year

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