Exploring the Leadership Experiences of Principal-Identified Teacher Leaders in American PK-12 Christian Schools Contextualized in a Distributed Leadership Environment: Told from the Teacher Leaders' Perspectives

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Dedication

To Eddy—my husband and friend, for your unconditional love, support, and belief in me

to *finish well*.

Abstract of the Dissertation

Exploring the Leadership Experiences of Principal-Identified Teacher Leaders in American PK-12 Christian Schools Contextualized in a Distributed Leadership Environment: Told from the Teacher Leaders' Perspectives

The purpose of this exploratory research study was to investigate leadership experiences of teacher leaders in American PK-12 Christian schools. An overarching research question guided the study: How do principal-identified teacher leaders in PK-12 faith-based Christian schools experience leadership in a distributed leadership environment, as told from the teacher leaders' perspectives? As researcher, I chose a distributed leadership practice conceptual framework as the lens for the research study. The literature review focused on three areas: (a) Christian school structure and culture, (b) teacher leaders, and (c) distributed leadership. The research design consisted of purposeful sampling using semistructured interviews and a constructivist epistemology (Merriam, 2009). The research study involved 24 participants from PK-12 American Christian schools; 16 were principal-identified teacher leaders and 8 were heads of school or principals. Through the data analysis, six intangible themes emerged from the teacher leaders that proved to be central tenets of the research. The emergent themes constituted (a) an unconditional love for the school community, (b) a global school perspective, (c) an influencer, (d) a leader by example, (e) a mentor to other teachers, and (f) a desire to improve their schools. Then, using a comparative analysis, four themes emerged from the heads of school and principals. The themes converged with those of the teacher leaders, with two exceptions. First, a dichotomy occurred in the definition of *teacher leader* among the teacher leader participants; respectively, this dichotomy occurred between the teacher leader participants and the heads of school and principal participants.

Second, with regard to human capital, a talent management and leadership succession theme for identifying and developing teacher leaders emerged from the heads of school and principals. Interestingly, the data analysis revealed that the study's findings have implications for PK-12 public and private schools in theory, practice, and policy.

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Qualitative Researcher's Note

As a former secondary principal in a private Christian school, I embedded this research study in a leader development premise, which I practiced out of professional necessity. During my career, I initially learned through my experiences, and later through the theories of Maxwell (1995) and other leadership theorists, that leaders must have followers to accomplish goals. Then, I learned from experience that leaders have influence. Therefore, considering my former leadership experiences, I realized the value of leadership in setting a vision and reaching goals. As a new curious principal with a limited budget, I reasoned and then later concluded, "What better place to invest in leadership development, than in a school with a captive audience of talented problem-solving teachers, as they interact in leadership situations inside and outside of the classroom?" According to my premise, I began to view the teachers as potential leaders. As a secondary principal and a former secondary teacher with more than 25 years of experience in Christian education, I decided to implement my premise. Pragmatically, I first decided to develop the teachers and strengthen their leadership skills and confidence; then, I created a plan to accomplish my institutional, instructional, and spiritual goals, using a teacher leader team.

For you, the reader, to understand how this research evolved, I share with you how I came to this study. My life's experiences, my goals, my ideology, and my curiosity as an educational researcher motivated me to explore this research. I desire to share the findings of the study to encourage future teacher leaders to develop their God-given talents and abilities as confident, motivated teacher leaders within their schools.

According to York-Barr and Duke (2004), teacher leaders constitute a newly recognized research phenomenon in education. With this new 21st-century phenomenon, school administrators and teachers have many unanswered questions (Spillane, 2006; York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

As the researcher, I enabled the voices of the teacher leaders to be heard (Covey, 2004) through this qualitative research study. According to the Secretary of Education, Dr. Arne Duncan, at the 2014 Teaching and Learning Conference in Washington, DC, held March, 14, 2014, [I paraphrase] teacher leaders will be needed in 21st-century schools to improve schools with a "teach to lead" philosophy (A. Duncan, personal communication, March 14, 2014).

According to Merriam, "all qualitative research is interested in how meaning is constructed, how people make sense of their lives and their worlds. The primary goal of a basic qualitative study is to uncover and interpret these meanings" (Merriam, 2009, p. 24). Merriam also stated, "Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (Merriam, 2009, p 5).

In summary, I conducted this qualitative study to serve as a testament to the voices and perspectives of teacher leaders in PK-12 Christian schools, as they relate their leadership experiences.

Chapter 1: Introduction

"Teacher leadership demands frequent interactions with other adults"
(Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009, p. 73)

Overview

My investigation revealed a lack of scholarly research on the leadership experiences of teacher leaders in private American PK-12 Christian schools. Therefore, to contribute to the body of knowledge on teacher leaders in a distributed environment, I conducted an exploratory qualitative research study on the leadership experiences of PK-12 teacher leaders in faith-based Christian schools, as told from the teacher leaders' perspective. Based upon the study and the literature, findings indicated that teacher leaders can function as vital contributors to school leadership teams, affecting both leadership policy and practice (Elmore, 2007; Gronn, 2003; Harris, 2008; Spillane, 2006). For the literature review, I used a conceptual map that focused on three literary areas relevant to the purpose of this study. I embedded those sections in the areas of (a) Christian school structure and culture, (b) teacher leaders, and (c) distributed leadership.

This study revealed that in Christian schools the belief statement and school mission create the cultural foundation of the school. The mission statement may imply or state directly that the school has a challenging biblically based academic program. Also, in Christian education, the research literature revealed that diverse religious denominations are represented in Christian schools. The Christian school denominations can include, but are not limited to, Baptist, Catholic, Methodist, Church of God, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Quaker (Association of Christian Schools International [ACSI, 2012], Evangelical Lutheran Education Association [ELEA, 2013], National Catholic Educational Association [NCEA, 2013], and National Association of

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Episcopal Schools [NAES, 2015]). Although the religious denominations differ, the

universal mission and doctrinal belief in Christian schools is that Jesus Christ is the only

begotten son of God the Father (John 3:16, *The Holy Bible*, King James Version;

American Association of Christian Schools [AACS, 2013]) and that inviting Jesus Christ

into one's life to become Lord and Savior is the way to spiritually receive eternal life

(Romans 10:9-10). Therefore, in PK-12 Christian schools, teacher leaders are expected

to support the doctrine, the mission, and vision of their Christian school organizations.

Devink (1996) offers a historical view on the history of Christian education: "The earliest

schools in America were religious in character. Most of them used the Bible as the

foundation of the curriculum and taught the academic subjects from the framework of a

Christian interpretation of Scripture" (Devink, 1996, p. 1).

    For this study, I also provide a brief insight into the organizational and physical

structures of Christian schools. The research revealed that through leadership practice,

teacher leaders seek innovative ways of operating and promoting Christian education in

their school communities (Devink, 1996; Devink & Carruthers, 2008). For example, the

study revealed possibilities for future teacher leaders in Christian schools to function as

part of a school's leadership team, under reformed organizational leadership structures.

Regarding curriculum, the Christian teachers teach an academic curriculum coupled with

integrating biblical knowledge and applications into their lessons (Devink & Carruthers,

2008). In addition, Christian schools vary in physical size and structure according to

geographical locale, enrollment population, and other factors. With reference to physical

structures, some Christian schools have stand-alone, site-based facilities, although others

may consist of classrooms in church buildings or be housed in large historical buildings or cathedrals.

As part of the conceptual map, I introduced a teacher leader section in the literature review, in which I investigated the Christian teacher leaders' views on leadership experiences, practices, and leadership skills. Using Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice theory as the conceptual framework, I found this theoretical lens both feasible and pragmatic for examining the leadership experiences of the identified teacher leaders. In the literature review, I referred to the literature of noted theorists (e.g., Bolman & Deal, 2008; Burns, 1978; Collins, 2001; Cook, 2001; Greenleaf, 2002; Gronn, 2003; Harris, 2008; Heifetz & Linsky, 2000; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). York-Barr & Duke made a case for teacher leadership:

> The concept and practice of teacher leadership have gained momentum in the past two decades. Teachers are assuming more leadership functions at both instructional and organizational levels of practice. Empirical literature reveals numerous small-scale, qualitative studies that describe dimensions of teacher leadership practice, teacher leader characteristics, and conditions that promote and challenge teacher leadership. (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 1)

Yet, York-Barr & Duke (2004) concluded that little was known about teacher leadership development and its effects. According to the researchers, the construct of teacher leadership was not well defined, conceptually or operationally (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 1). Furthermore, they stated that the concept of teacher leadership had become increasingly embedded in the language and practice of educational improvement (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). The central tenet of teacher leadership aligns with notions of individual empowerment and localization of management that have extended throughout the history of the United States (Clark, Hong, & Schoeppach, as cited in York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Although their assertion was not a new concept, Smylie and Denny

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(1990)), noted that recognition of teacher leadership, visions of expanded teacher leadership roles, and new hope for the contributions that these expanded roles might make in improving schools is important for the future (as cited in York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

The last section of the literature review focuses upon distributed leadership, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 2. Distributed leadership is a means of looking at leadership as it pertains to interactions and interrelated leadership actions involving multiple actors (Harris, 2008; Spillane, 2006)

Statement of the Problem

Review of the literature revealed limited research on the leadership experiences of teacher leaders within PK-12 Christian schools, specifically in the context of a distributed leadership practice model (Spillane, 2006). As I began the study, I realized that the actual performance of distributed leadership in the schools would be revealed during the study. Therefore, as a goal, I sought to explore the leadership experience of the teacher leaders to better understand their views on the leadership phenomenon.

According to the theory espoused by Spillane (2006), teacher leaders, as human capital, already exist as resources within schools. Therefore, teacher leaders can function in needed leadership roles, performing leadership routines and tasks that contribute to instructional and organizational leadership goals within the school organization (Spillane, 2006). Therefore, organizationally, teacher leaders may operate in formal and informal leader roles, again, relative to Spillane's theory of distributed leadership practice. With regard to instructional, Elmore stated, "Leadership is the guidance and direction of instructional improvement" (Elmore 2007, p. 57). Elmore asserted, "People succeed

because of their personal characteristics more than because of effort, skill, and knowledge" (Elmore, 2007, p. 57). Hence, I summarize Elmore with regard to distributed leadership, the lens for this study:

> In any organized system, people typically specialize or develop particular competencies that are related to the predispositions, interests, aptitudes, prior knowledge, skills, and specialized roles. This competency varies considerably among people in similar roles; some principals and teachers, for example, are simply better at doing some things than others. Organizing these diverse competencies into a coherent whole requires understanding how individuals vary, how the particular knowledge and skill of one person can be made to complement that of another and how the competencies of some can be shared with others. (Elmore, 2007, p. 58)

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this basic qualitative interpretive research study was to explore the leadership experiences of principal-identified teacher leaders in American PK-12 Christian schools, told from the teacher leaders' perspectives. I investigated how the Christian teacher leaders viewed school leadership as it pertained to the teacher leaders. Then to create a comparative analysis, I interviewed the heads of school or principals in each school in which I conducted research.

As researcher, I used a primary research question to guide the study: How do principal-identified teacher leaders in faith-based PK-12 Christian schools experience leadership in a distributed leadership environment? The research question will be answered from the teacher leaders' perspective. Four subquestions added support to the primary research question:

1. How do teacher leaders define leadership?

2. What are the teacher leader roles in Christian schools?

3. What leader tasks and routines do teacher leaders perform?

4. How do the teacher leader responses compare with the heads of school and principal responses?

Delimitations and Limitations

In the study, I experienced several limitations and delimitations. I chose a subpopulation for the study, which consisted of teacher leaders in private PK-12 Christian schools located on the east coast of the United States. Then, I provided leadership criteria to the heads of school or principals to guide the teacher leader identification process. For credibility, I grounded the criteria, or guidelines, in established leadership theories from noted leadership theorists. With regard to the leadership criteria, I aligned the leadership characteristics with established Christian school beliefs and values, such as integrity and collaboration. Although the heads of school and principals were provided selection guidelines, as gatekeepers, they could still exert their preferences in the teacher leader selection process. According to Morgan, "gatekeepers exert political influence opening and closing channels of communication and filtering, summarizing, analyzing, and thus shaping knowledge in accordance with a view of the world that favors their interests" (Morgan, 2006, p. 175).

As a former Christian school secondary principal, my leadership thoughts and experiences could have an influence on the interpretation of the data. Nevertheless, the responses from eight interviewed heads of school and principals from seven different Christian schools allowed me to juxtapose their responses with those of the teacher leaders, thereby adding a higher degree of validity or trustworthiness to the interpretations.

Conceptual Framework

For this research study, I chose a distributed leadership practice conceptual framework based upon Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice theory. This theory focuses on the interactions of leaders, followers, and leader situations. Using Spillane's distributed leadership practice model as my lens, I conducted data collection and data analysis. In randomly selecting the seven schools for research, distributed leadership was not preidentified in the schools. In using Spillane's distributed leadership practice theory as a framework, however, it became apparent that leadership practices for identified teacher leaders were in operation. Afterwards, I constructed meaning from the findings of the research study on teacher leaders' leadership experiences (Merriam, 2009). According to Spillane's distributed leadership practice framework, leaders' and followers' interacting in leadership situations in school organizations constitutes a leadership practice (Spillane, 2006). Moreover, Spillane expressed in his book, *Distributed Leadership*, "Frameworks for studying leadership practice are scarce, and they tend to privilege individual actions" (Spillane, 2006, p. 14). Therefore, in this study, the identified teacher leaders held formal or informal leadership roles. Then, as additional leadership situations occurred in their schools, the teacher leaders assumed (or were assigned) leader or follower roles to complete the leadership task or routine. To explain the *follower* phenomenon, I reference Spillane's research statement: "My own data suggest that teachers, specialists, and administrators do construct others as leaders (whether formal or informal), depending on the particular circumstance" (Spillane, 2006, p. 71).

According to Spillane, three elements are essential in a distributed leadership

practice arrangement:

1. Leadership practice is the central and anchoring concern.
2. Leadership practice is generated in the interactions of leaders, followers, and
   their situations: each element is essential for leadership practice.
3. The situation both defines leadership practice and is defined through
   leadership practice. (Spillane, 2006, p. 4)

In addition to using Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice model as the

conceptual framework or lens for this study, I investigated the following areas in the

review of the literature: (a) Christian structure and culture; (b) teacher leadership

(interactions, communication, development, followers, leaders, leadership, formal and

informal roles, routines and tasks, and situations); and (c) distributed leadership. Figure 1

presents a diagram of Spillane's distributed leadership practice model, the conceptual

framework for this study.
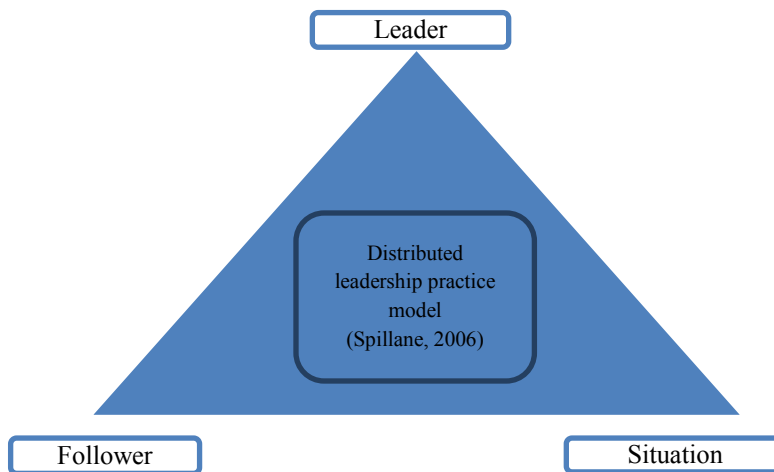
Figure 1. Conceptual framework, Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership model.

Statement of Significance

This research contributes to the body of scholarly peer-reviewed knowledge on the leadership experiences of PK-12 Christian teacher leaders, in a distributed leadership practice environment. In the study, I explored teacher leaders' experiences, as told from their perspectives. As a result, I gained professional insight into the teacher leaders' roles and functions as part of their leadership experience. This insight contributed to constructing meaning of the teacher leaders' roles, routines, and tasks (Spillane, 2006). Based upon the teacher leaders' responses, the research suggests tenable recommendations for school leadership reform. Also, the research findings suggest considering new and innovative talent management planning initiatives for teacher leader staffing in Christian schools. The research findings have the potential to inspire private school educators to reform their organizational structures and perhaps include teacher leaders as part of a distributed leadership model (Spillane, 2006).

The qualitative research study contributes to the scholarly literature for the PK-12 Christian school subpopulation. In 2009-2010, the religious school population consisted of approximately five million students in PK-12 schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). The study's findings also hold significance for other school populations, such as private Christian schools not included in this study, nonreligious private schools of similar structure, and public charter schools operating as site-based schools with limited resources. Potentially, the study's results can impact Christian schools, other private schools, and public charter school populations.

With regard to personal importance, the study provides answers to my investigation as a researcher and my curiosity as a former secondary principal. In the

study, I investigated how teacher leaders defined themselves as leaders and, further, how they perceived their leadership roles and leadership experiences in their schools. Also, I explored teacher leader expectations and desires for leadership development in their schools. This research could contribute to teacher leader influence and provide insights for potentially enhancing student achievement, parental and student relationships, and teacher leadership practices. As has been the trend in American education leadership reform (Camburn, Rowan, & Taylor, 2003; Frost & Durrant, 2003; Marzano, Walters, & McNulty, 2005), independent PK-12 Christian private school leaders also seek innovative ways of identifying, developing, and sustaining teacher leaders (Harris, 2008) that can promote the school's mission, policies, and vision.

The research has future policy and practice implications (Fowler, 2009). The research results suggest implications that can affect the leader policies and practices in faith-based Christian schools, as well as public site-based schools that have an organizational structure similar to that of private schools. Christian and non-Christian private schools may experience significant policy and practice changes, prompted by this teacher leader research. The research findings indicate potential policy and practice guidelines that might be manifested in the following ways: policies for new guidelines for teacher leader compensation packages, policies accommodating organizational restructuring, policies regarding teacher leader professional development programs, institution of leader internship programs, and career path policies for teacher leaders. Also, the study's results could affect policies that support the sharing of teacher leader human capital among multidenominational Christian schools.

Methodology

In this qualitative study, I used a basic qualitative, interpretive, interview methodology. The purpose of qualitative research is to describe how people interpret what they experience. Therefore, a characteristic of qualitative research is the role of the researcher as the human instrument collecting the data. According to Meriam, "the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis" (Merriam, 2009, p. 15). The product of qualitative research is richly descriptive with words and pictures that are used to convey what the researcher has learned about a phenomenon (Merriam, 2009).

Subsequently, using an inductive approach, I moved from the raw data to more abstract categories and concepts as I searched for the emergent themes (Merriam, 2009). According to Merriam, the primary goal of the basic qualitative study is to uncover and interpret meanings from the data findings (Merriam, 2009).

For this research, I randomly chose seven PK-12 Christian schools on the east coast of the United States. I randomly chose Christian school locations in multiple states and areas, in densely populated suburban or urban areas. The research study included a population of 16 teacher leaders in PK-12 Christian schools and 8 heads of school and principals. In a qualitative study, an adequate sample size typically involves 5-25 participants to reach saturation (Polkinghorne, 1989). I provided leadership criteria to the heads of schools and principals for their use in identifying teacher leader participants. All participants in the study were 18 or older, in compliance with the adult informed consent process.

Also, I reached saturation or redundancy in the interviews (Merriam, 2009, p. 80). The data analysis and collection are covered in subsequent sections of this chapter and in detail in Chapter 3.

Statement of Epistemology

For this research, I chose a constructionist–interpretive epistemology (Merriam, 2009). Using this epistemology, I constructed meaning from the data that surfaced in the research findings. Then, in Chapter 5, I have provided an interpretation of findings and emergent themes based upon the data analysis. For the conceptual framework, I used a distributed leadership practice framework (Spillane, 2006). Merriam wrote,

> A central characteristic of qualitative research is that individuals construct reality in interaction with their social worlds. Constructionism underlies a basic qualitative study. The researcher is interested in understanding the meaning a phenomenon has for those involved. Therefore, meaning is not discovered, but constructed. (Merriam, 2009, p. 22)

Data Collection and Analysis

As noted in the methodology section, I used a semistructured, purposive interview protocol to collect data from teacher leaders and from the heads of school and principals. I interviewed the teacher leaders and heads of schools and principals twice, using a semistructured interview. I used the first interview as an introductory interview to establish rapport and a relationship between each participant and myself, followed by actual data collection. The second participant interview informed the first interview. Next, I interviewed the heads of school and principals to provide a comparative analysis of the findings. I coded all collected data and then analyzed the data to identify emergent themes and patterns. I digitally recorded each participant interview, followed by transcription using open and in vivo coding (Merriam, 2009). Later, I recorded the

responses and analyzed the data to identify all emergent themes. To construct meaning from the study, I aligned the findings with my research questions and with the conceptual framework, using Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice theory.

Trustworthiness

In this qualitative study, I was the primary instrument for research (Merriam, 2009). As such, I digitally recorded each interview and wrote reflection memos during each interview session. Then, I used member checking to provide each participant an opportunity to review the findings from the preliminary analysis for accuracy, clarity, and accuracy. To add to the trustworthiness of the study, in the subjectivity statement, I acknowledged my position as Christian school principal, my formal education, other educational experiences, and my leadership experiences.

I conducted pilot interviews to test the principal and teacher leader protocols and to increase the trustworthiness of the interview protocols. For the principal interview protocol pilot test, I interviewed a former Christian school principal with more than 20 years of experience. Because of involvement in the pilot interview, that principal was not included as a participant in the research. The piloted principal interview took less than 60 minutes to complete, as the principal spoke with clarity and conciseness. Two questions were redundant and others did not solicit enough data. I reworded the two redundant questions on the protocol. I revised the two questions that returned insufficient data as open-ended questions to solicit more informed responses from the participants. Then, I added other questions to the protocol to solicit other desired data. (See Appendix C.)

Similarly, I conducted a pilot interview of the teacher leader interview protocol, with a teacher who had 8 years of teaching experience in a PK-12 Christian school. The pilot interview revealed redundancy in several questions and some serial questions, which became awkward during the pilot interview. As a result, I repeated the questions and rephrased the serial questions. This interviewee was not a participant in the study. To remove the redundancy in several questions, I combined some of them and rephrased others. The pilot interview lasted 90 minutes; therefore, I reduced the number of questions on the interview protocol to 14 meaningful, open-ended questions. In the final protocol, I adjusted the questions and conducted a second pilot interview. (See Appendix B.)

For triangulation, I utilized the following techniques: (a) multiple interviews of teacher leader participants, (b) multiple interviews of heads of school and principals, (c) member checking the findings with all participants, and (d) a comparative analysis of teacher leader responses with head of school and principal responses. I also added to the trustworthiness in the study by using multiple data collection sources, such as reflection memos written during each digitally recorded interview (Merriam, 2009).

Statement of Researcher Subjectivity

My educational background in Christian education allowed me to witness the organizational structure and culture of Christian schools. My experiences included service in the positions of principal, guidance counselor, academic dean, and secondary teacher. Although I possessed a personal understanding of how an administrator views teacher leadership within a school, I lacked understanding of the teacher leaders'

perspective regarding personal leadership experiences; also, I did not know if and how the teacher leaders viewed themselves as leaders in 21st-century schools.

I looked to the data to provide a clear understanding of how PK-12 Christian teacher leaders perceive leadership experiences in their Christian schools. The research findings can impact future Christian school leadership planning, providing leadership insights into the needs of the schools. I viewed teachers and teacher leaders as the "front-line" warriors who facilitate the teaching–learning process, assuming additional leader activities and responsibilities because they care about their school organizations. Thus, teacher leaders sometimes assume leadership roles without formal training and without additional compensation or titles (Harris, 2008; Spillane, 2006).

In this study, I wanted to investigate the teacher leaders' sphere of influence in their PK-12 Christian schools and gain a clearer perception of their views on leadership. In addition, I hoped that the study would illuminate teacher leaders' ideas for preparing future Christian educational leaders. Then, finally, insight from the study might reveal data that could impact leadership reform, affecting Christian school policies, research, and leadership practices (Devink & Caruthers, 2008; Fowler, 2009; Spillane 2006).

Definition of Key Terms

Collaborative leadership. For the study, and as defined by Rubin & Futrell (2009) collaborative leadership presents a principal and faculty leadership team approach to leadership, an approach in which all members contribute to the leadership task and are responsible for the outcome. Collaborative input is solicited from teachers and other members of the leadership team. Issues are resolved and decisions reached with the input of faculty, teacher leaders, staff, and others.

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Formal teacher leaders. Formal teacher leaders are teachers promoted or assigned to nonclassroom leadership positions, such as resource teacher, curriculum specialist, part-time guidance counselor, or technology specialist. Simultaneously, those in formal teacher leader positions may also be classroom teachers. Formal teacher leaders may receive an additional administrative title, compensation, or both for their leadership duties (Harris, 2008; Spillane, 2006).

Informal teacher leaders. Informal teacher leaders are classroom teachers who possess demonstrated leadership skills and influence, but do not have formal assigned leader titles. The informal leader performs leader duties, without title or compensation, in addition to being a classroom teacher (Spillane, 2006).

Leadership definitions. Chapter 2 includes several definitions of leadership, as related to power, which were derived from leadership theorists. One example focused on Burns's view of power, as related to this study: "Power is not a property, entity, or possession; but rather, it is a relationship in which two or more persons tap motivational bases in one another and bring varying resources to bear" (Burns, 1978, p. 15). Further, Burns asserted, "Leadership, unlike naked power-wielding, is inseparable from followers' needs and goals. Leaders encourage followers to achieve goals that represent the values, motivations, wants, needs, aspirations, and expectations of both the leaders and the followers" (Burns, 1978, p. 19).

Leader development. For this research study, leader development is based on enhancing human capital by building capacity within individual leaders, as espoused by Day (2001). This development targets knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with formal leadership roles. Coleman (1988) concluded that these acquired capabilities

enable people to think and act in new ways. Day suggested that leader development characteristics embody human capital, individual power, knowledge, and trustworthiness: "Leader development is intrapersonal with self-awareness, self- regulation, and self-motivation as the target areas for development" (Day, 2001, p. 584).

Leadership development. According to Fiedler, leadership development involves creating social capital that involves a complex interaction between the designated leader and the social and organizational environment (Fiedler, as cited in Day, 2001). Moreover, Day suggested that "leadership development embodies relational commitments, mutual respect and trust; and is interpersonal in nature, focused upon social awareness and social skills for building bonds and teams" (Day, 2001, p. 584).

Level Five, good-to-great leadership. As defined by Collins, Level Five leadership is predicated upon disciplined people, with disciplined thoughts and disciplined actions, exhibiting professional will and humility (Collins, 2001, p. 22). Collins advocated an organizational discipline that promotes greatness in an organization, where the *right* people are strategically placed in the *right* positions; then reciprocally, the wrong people are removed from the wrong positions. As a result, this strategy promotes perpetual, momentous greatness. According to the researcher, "good is the enemy to great" (Collins, 2003, p. 1).

Site-based organization. A site-based organization is a school organization that is a stand-alone, independent facility with its own governance, facility, school population, faculty, and staff.

Teacher leader. For this study, the term teacher leader denotes a teacher leader identified by the principal as a leader in the school, demonstrating leadership actions that

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influence organizational and instructional goals and objectives. The teacher leader, as a classroom teacher, assumes additional assigned leadership roles outside the classroom (Harris, 2008; Spillane, 2006).

Transformative leadership. For this study, and as defined by Burns (2003), this type of leadership involves a leader who changes the very nature of the people and conditions around him or her. A metamorphosis occurs as a transformational leader champions and inspires followers (Burns, 2003).

Unconditional love. With regard to this study, unconditional love implies an overarching care (love) for the school and its community that transcends personal expectations, replacing them with an emphasis on first serving others or the organization. This service is without condition, focused on the needs of the school, relative to its mission and vision (Greenleaf, 2002; I Corinthians 13, *The Holy Bible*, King James Version).

Figure 2 presents a summary of the five sections included in this research study, beginning with the Introduction section and continuing to the Interpretations and Recommendation section.
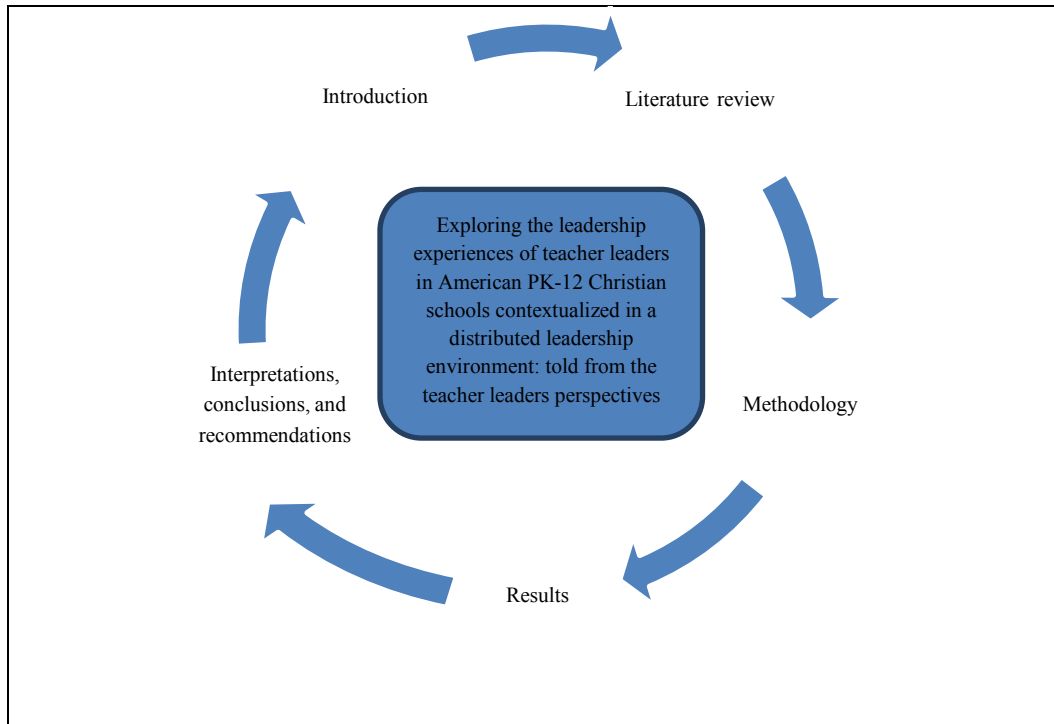
Figure 2. The research study process for the teacher leader study.

Summary of Chapter 1 and Review of Future Chapters

Chapter 1 has provided an overview of this qualitative exploratory interpretive study (Merriam, 2009). As a lens for the study, I chose a conceptual framework grounded in Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice framework. Then, I organized the review of the literature into three sections, discussed in detail in Chapter 2. Finally, I chose a basic qualitative, interpretive, interview-based methodology for this study, as detailed in Chapter 3 (Merriam, 2009).

Chapter 2 includes the review of literature. The conceptual map for the literature review consisted of three sections: (a) a historical context of the Christian school structure and culture, (b) teacher leaders, and (c) distributed leadership. I analyzed and synthesized the theories and studies for convergent and divergent themes.

In Chapter 3, I describe the use of a basic qualitative, interpretive, interview methodology (Merriam, 2009). I discuss all facets of the research design that informed the research purpose and research questions. For data collection and data analysis, I used Maxwell's (2005) interactive design.

In Chapter 4, I present the findings from the data collection and the data analysis, which involved the use of open coding (Merriam, 2009). Based upon the data findings and analysis, I developed the emergent themes.

In Chapter 5, I summarize the results to provide an interpretation of the findings, as well as possible implications for practice, policy, and recommendations for future research. I used Merriam (2009) and Maxwell (2005) as references to construct meaning from the study, employing the constructionism epistemology (Merriam, 2009).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

"In a knowledge-intensive enterprise like teaching and learning, there is no way to
perform these complex tasks without widely distributing the responsibility of leadership"
(Elmore, 2007, p. 59).

Topics and Purpose

    I conducted this literature review to provide a scholarly conceptual framework to
support my qualitative research on the leadership experiences of principal-identified PK-
12 Christian teacher leaders. In this exploratory research, I investigated the leadership
experiences of Christian teacher leaders and their perspectives, captured through one-on-
one interviews with the teacher leaders and the heads of school and principals. I
constructed this literature review using the references of Bryant (2004), Galvan (2009),
and Hart (2008) as resources. The literature review provides a meaningful conceptual
analysis that can add to the body of knowledge on teacher leaders in private, faith-based
PK-12 Christian schools. This literature review also can have implications for other
private schools and public charter schools with site-based organizational structures
similar to the Christian school structure.

    Based upon research and projected growth trends reported by the U.S.
Department of Education (2010), religious schools in the United States are declining in
population. According to Christian associations such as the Association of Christian
Schools International (ACSI) (2012), and the American Association of Christian Schools
(AACS) (2013), factors that have contributed to this decline include: (a) an increase in
annual tuition costs, (b) a decline in the desire to adhere to biblical morals, (c) a need for
competitive school computer technology, (d) a changing academic emphasis from bible-
focused curricula to college preparatory curricula (Dill, 2010), and (e) increased human

and financial capital expenses required for specialized courses, such as advanced placement courses. Christian schools will need innovative educational leaders who successfully navigate Christian schools during the 21st century, in the midst of great societal, moral, and economic changes affecting Christian schools (Dill, 2010).

In the literature review, I focused on revealing theories and studies on teacher leaders. The literature indicated that teacher leaders provide an uncultivated, often untapped reservoir of leadership human capital, preexistent within schools (Spillane, Hallett, & Diamond, 2003). With regard to the research on distributed leadership conducted by Spillane et al., the literature review informed this study on teacher leaders and the ways in which they contribute to leadership practices within schools. Similarly, Christian teacher leaders represent a vital leadership resource in Christian schools, with the potential to develop as future educational leaders in their schools. Based upon the organizational structures of Christian schools, leadership influence can spiral downward from the principal or head of school, upward from teacher leaders, or across faculty and staff lines. This leader influence, whether desired or undesired, can create a contagion and eventually reach a tipping point in a school (Gladwell, 2002). In faith-based schools, Christian school leaders strive to maintain leadership unity and harmony among the faculty, administrators, and staff as part of the mission of the schools (ACSI, 2012; AACS, 2013; Devink, 1996).

In this chapter, I explore the literature using a conceptual map that includes (a) Christian school structure and culture, (b) teacher leaders, and (c) distributed leadership. In addition, I discuss leadership models and challenges to teacher leadership according to the conceptual framework of distributed leadership practice (Spillane, 2006).

Methods of Literature Review

The methods utilized in this literature review involved Internet searches of ProQuest, Aladdin, ERIC, J-STOR, and other databases of scholarly journal articles, dissertations, books, and reviews. The search terms included the following: teacher leader, teacher leadership, leadership traits, leadership skills, principal leadership, leaders, leadership, Christian school history, Christian school associations, distributed leadership, transformational leadership, professional learning communities, Christian school trends, Christian, NCES school statistics, servant leader, and teacher leader dissertations. The dissertation guidelines of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)* (6th ed.) (APA, 2010) were used in the development of this research study.

I conducted a review of literature and studies by various education and leadership theorists, which had been published in peer-reviewed articles, research reports, and current periodicals. The King James Version of *The Holy Bible* grounded the primary foundational literature that undergirds the Christian school belief and philosophy.

Conceptual Framework

I chose a distributed leadership framework as the conceptual lens for this study. According to Jones, Lefoe, Harvey, and Ryland, "distributed leadership is being recognized as an emergent leadership concept relevant to the culture of the educational sector (primary, secondary and higher education)" (Jones et al., 2012, p. 70). In an article on distributed leadership, the researchers defined distributed leadership as, "a form of shared leadership that is underpinned by a more collective and inclusive philosophy than traditional leadership theory that focuses on skills, traits, and behaviors

of individual leaders" (Jones et al., 2012, p. 71). To explore the leadership experiences of the teacher leaders, I chose a distributed practice framework according to Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice model. The framework focuses on the interactions of leaders, followers, and leadership situations. Using Spillane's distributed leadership practice framework as my lens, I conducted data collection and data analysis and then constructed meaning from the findings of the study (Merriam, 2009). According to Spillane, leadership occurs throughout school organizations when leaders and followers interact in leadership situations or routines, which Spillane referred to as leadership practices. As noted previously, Spillane asserted that three elements are essential in a distributed leadership practice arrangement:

1. Leadership practice is the central and anchoring concern.

2. Leadership practice is generated in the interactions of leaders, followers, and their situation; each element is essential for leadership practice.

3. The situation both defines leadership practice and is defined through leadership practice. (Spillane, 2006, p. 4)

The theoretical, conceptual framework guided the research study in conjunction with the primary research question: How do principal-identified teacher leaders in PK-12 Christian schools experience leadership in a distributed leadership environment, as told from the teacher leaders' perspective?

Structure and Culture of Christian Schools

Christian school structure. This section serves to explain the Christian school structure. Mawdsley (2000) wrote in the book, *Legal Problems of Religious and Private Schools (*4th ed.):

Religious and private education offers parents and students distinctive educational opportunities. For over 350 years, religious and private schools have been part of the fabric of American life. From home instruction to world-prominent universities, these schools have provided parents and students with pedagogical and philosophical choices. (Mawdsley, 2000, Preface)

For this literature review, teacher leaders in Christian schools included those in elementary and secondary schools. In a PK-12 Christian school, the principal or head of school manages the leadership and operation of a site-based independent Christian school or multiple Christian schools, which may consist of a district or diocese of Christian schools (e.g., Catholic schools). Christian schools sometimes function as stand-alone schools that report to a board of directors. Others may be centralized under a chancellor, a pastor, or a board of directors as part of a particular church ministry. The schools are sometimes called church schools (Devink, 1996, p. 83). Other Christian schools qualify for leadership from a board of directors. According to Christian school associations, a Christian school can consist of a lower school (PK-5), middle school (6th – 8th), or an upper school (9th – 12th). Some PK-12 Christian schools include all three divisions at one location, according to various Christian school associations (e.g., ACSI, AACS). According to the U.S. Department of Education (2010), the size of religious schools can vary from fewer than 100 to more than 750 students. Schools vary in organizational structure relative to the physical size of the Christian school.

The financial resources of some Christian schools depend primarily upon tuition charged to the parents of children attending the school (Devink, 1996; Devink & Carruthers, 2008). Gifts or endowments granted to the schools do exist, but they do not constitute the main financial contribution to sustain budgets of Christian church schools (Devink, 1996). Hence, when budgets decrease and financial resources are limited,

Christian school administrators allocate their human capital strategically throughout the Christian schools to accommodate the faculty and staff needs (Devink, 1996; Devink & Carruthers, 2008). The Christian head of school, chancellor, president, principal, or administrator functions similarly to a public school superintendent, who has the responsibility and oversight for a school system or district (Devink, 1996; MacCullough, 2010). In Christian schools, the heads of school typically can have institutional and organizational oversight over a number of areas (ACSI, 2012; AACS, 2013; Devink, 1996; Devink & Carruthers, 2008). The following are several examples of these areas: (a) instruction; (b) curriculum development; (c) enrollment and recruitment; (d) budget; (e) facilities management; (f) transportation; (g) policy; (h) fundraising; (i) board meetings; (j) advertising, marketing, and promotion; (k) teacher and employee hiring and dismissals; (l) professional staff development; (m) teacher–staff evaluations; (n) principal duties and responsibilities; (o) athletic program; (p) IT support and technology; and (q) security. As a result of limited budgets, teachers may be asked occasionally to assume leader roles in fulfilling vacant leadership responsibilities and tasks.

According to the U.S. Department of Education (2010), Christian schools may have fewer than 100 students or more than 750 students at one site-based location. Others may be Christian schools that are a part of a diocese or parish with multiple locations. Christian schools may have different organizational structures, based upon their size, religious denomination, or location. In accordance with various Christian school associations, Christian schools may elect to use different curricula. Some religious schools use all Christian texts, others use secular-based texts, and some use a combination of Christian and secular textbooks. Christian school curricula typically

reflect rigor. Therefore students operate in an academically challenging and disciplined school environment (AACS, 2013; ACSI, 2012).

The religions of Christian schools include denominations such as Baptist, Catholic, Church of Christ, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, and many other denominations. The Christian school's ontological belief is central to that of the Christian church that regards Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of mankind and the way to receive eternal life (John 3:16).

According to Christian school associations, enrollment requirements vary among Christian schools. In some Christian schools, one parent must be a confessed Christian. In other Christian schools, the mission may be evangelical, with the enrollment policy not predicated upon either a parent's or student's initially professing Christianity, but rather, the Christian school's evangelical mission, allowing for students to optionally choose to accept eternal salvation (Romans, 10:9-10). The Christian school's policy handbook typically outlines the school's policies, such as discipline policies, classroom conduct, academic requirements, and the grading scale of the school (Devink & Carruthers, 2008).

Christian school statistics. The U.S. Department of Education Private School Universe Survey (2010) found that the total number of religious and nonsectarian schools during 2009-2010 in America was an estimated 33,366, with 4.7 million students and 437,414 teachers. Christian and parochial schools enrolled approximately 3.7 million students, which represented a significant PK-12 school population requiring qualified educational leaders. The U.S. Department of Education predicted enrollment of 50.6 million students in K-12 public schools and 5.1 million in K-12 private schools by 2015 (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

Christian school culture—belief and philosophy. Christian schools believe in the Trinity of God manifested as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (ACSI, 2012; Devink, 1996; Mathew 28:19). The central belief of Christian schools is that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God the Father (John 3:16). According to biblical scriptures, God the Father offers eternal life to all those who accept Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9-10). This biblical belief is different from other religions that view Jesus only as a prophet and teacher, whereas Christianity's belief is that Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah), a member of the trinity of God, who once manifested himself in flesh and is the way to receive eternal life (John 3:16; I John 4:15).

Other basic tenets of the Christian faith include love, hope, faith, peace, joy, goodness, respect (or decency) toward self and others, justice and mercy, self-discipline, and endurance (Galatians 5:22-23; John 15:1). These values emanate from the Christian belief in the Holy Bible or Word of God, which presents God Almighty as the eternal being manifesting himself as God the Father, God the redemptive Son (Jesus Christ), and God the Holy Spirit who provides spiritual guidance to any Christian believer's life, as one exercises free will choices (John 14:26).

Christian schools' mission and vision. Although the Holy Bible does not mention the Christian school, it says much about study and training of children and gives a historical account of life (Devink, 1996; Devink & Carruthers, 2008; Proverbs 22:6; II Timothy 2:15). In PK-12 Christian schools, academics are integrated with the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. Although the mission statements and visions of Christian schools may vary in relation to a school's size, denomination, and purpose, the mission and belief are centralized in the belief that an acceptance of Jesus as the Christ is the catalyst

for redemption from sin (Romans 10:9-10). The Christian education philosophy

integrates academics, performance, and character development with the concepts of

unconditional love and forgiveness using principles of the Holy Bible as the moral

compass, such as the Godly principle of sowing and reaping (Galatians 6:7), understood

more commonly as a cause-and-effect theory. According to Devink,

> This [Christ centered education] then is the reason for the Christian school, not to get students away from drug abuse, poor academics, poor discipline, or racial integration. The Christian school has been established to allow parents to obey God's command to give their children a Christian education and, at the same time, to obey the law of the land. (Devink, 1996, p. 19)

Subsequently, in a Christian school, enrolled students expect to adhere to the

policies and standards of the specific Christian school. According to Dill (2010),

Christian schools can vary in their mission statements and goals but should not differ in

their mission belief.

Christian school education and moral authority. In Christian schools,

academic education is provided and coupled with teachings of wisdom and moral

standards based upon biblical principles and commandments (AACS, 2013; ACSI, 2012;

Devink, 1996). According to mission and vision statements of Christian schools,

character development is an integral part of the Christian school curriculum. Christian

school policies, processes, and practices are reinforced in the governance of Christian

schools (Devink, 1996; Devink & Carruthers, 2008; Mawdsley, 2000).

Current Christian education based upon unchanging ideologies and morals from

the Holy Bible contribute to the foundation of Christian education. Dewey (1933/2009),

who is considered the father of American education, said that education is moral;

although, according to Devink (1996), Dewey encouraged belief in moral principles, but not for spiritual reasons. Dewey stated,

> The one thing needful is that we recognize that moral principles are real in the same sense in which other forces are real; that they are inherent in community life, and in the running machinery of the individual. If we can secure a genuine faith in this fact, we shall have secured the only condition which is finally necessary in order to get from our education system all the effectiveness there is in it. (as cited in Devink, 1996, pp. 5-6)

Moreover, regarding the issue of morality, Devink (1996) related how Dewey's belief in morality diverged from the beliefs of Christianity. According to Devink, Dewey's moral theory of education converged with Christian education ideology in the areas of morality. However, in this account, Dewey's moral philosophy, while honorable, diverged from Christianity in philosophy. According to Devink, Dewey, who lived from 1859-1952, was influenced by Darwin's evolutionary theories. Dewey "applied them to aspects of child development and theories of learning" (Devink, 1996, p. 5). Conversely, the Christian belief in morality is based upon the belief of God Almighty as the spiritual Creator, as recorded in the book of Genesis in the Holy Bible (Genesis 1-3).

Christian school history. For this study, one should understand the origins of Christian education. According to Devink, "The earliest schools in America were religious in character. Most of them used the Bible as the foundation of the curriculum and taught the academic subjects from a framework of a Christian interpretation of Scriptures" (Devink, 1996, p. 1). Devink also wrote, in the book, *Management Principles for Christian Schools,*

> Education existed for the express purpose of teaching young people how to read so that they could read the Bible. One of the more prominent examples of this religious purpose was the Old Deluder Satan Act, passed by the General Court of

> Massachusetts in 1647 acknowledging that a purpose of Satan is to keep men from knowledge. That act provided for the instruction of youth in order to thwart him [Satan]. (Devink, 1996, pp. 1- 2)

All towns of 50 or more households were required to appoint someone to teach children to read and write (Devink, 1996, p. 2). The Bible was used as the foundation for life and learning from the philosophy of a Christian interpretation of Scripture. Devink noted that school was formerly held in homes of Christian teachers, with reading as the primary emphasis. Education was predominantly private and fervently religious (Devink, 1996).

In the early 1800s, during the colonial period, Massachusetts was the leading supporter of a public system of education, according to Devink (1996). "In 1837, James. G. Carter was instrumental in establishing the first effective State Board of Education in the United States" (Devink, 1996, p. 4). Horace Mann, who lived from 1796 to 1859, became the first secretary of the State Board of Education the same year. Horace Mann was a distinctly religious person, thereby gaining credibility for his theories. Mann studied many religions, eventually espousing the notion that education, not Jesus Christ, was a means for society's salvation (Devink, 1996). Mann eventually became a Unitarian, with an educational philosophy based upon the theory of the *perfectibility of man* (Devink, 1996). By definition, "the Unitarian is a person who denies the doctrine of the Trinity, accepting the moral teachings, but rejecting the divinity of Jesus and holding that God exists as one person or being" ("Unitarian," 1997, p. 1459). Mann's views on responsibility echoed an attitude that was convergent with some educational attitudes of the 21st century; according to Rushdoony, Mann said, "The pupil is therefore a person with rights rather than responsibilities. Instead of being accountable to God, parents,

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teachers, and society, the pupil can assert that God, parents, teachers, and society are responsible to him" (Rushdoony, as cited in Devink, 1996, p. 5). Subsequently, parents who had traditionally supported the public schools began to establish schools in which prayer, Bible reading, and teaching the tenets of the scriptures could be acknowledged freely and openly. Hence, the establishment of Christian schools began to spread (Devink, 1996).

Christian schools versus other faith-based schools. Christian schools may vary in religious beliefs from other faith-based schools that believe in Jesus as a great teacher or prophet, but not as the Son of God, Christ the Messiah (John 3:16). Faith-based schools, even those considered as Christian, sometimes have motives other than Christ-centered motives for their existence. Devink wrote,

> Not all schools that are called Christian produce students conformed to the image of Christ. A school that does not have as its goal the development of Christ like character in its students is not truly a Christian school. On the other hand, it is possible for a child to obtain a Christian education without ever attending a Christian school. (Devink, 1996, p. 21)

Christian school associations. Christian schools may choose to belong to Christian school associations. According to the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), Christian school associations provide professional resources, consulting services, educational products, curriculum analysis, accreditation, teacher certification, standardized testing, and analysis. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2010) statistics, an estimated total of 4,700,119 students and 482,947 teachers were in schools that belonged to a private school association with a religious or nonsectarian orientation

According to the U.S. Department of Education (2010) statistics, the top five Christian associations based upon student populations they serve included (a) the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) (1.7 million); (b) Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), (537, 500); (c) National Association of Episcopal Schools (NAES) (82,500); (d) American Association of Christian Schools (AACS) (77,300); and (e) Christian Schools International (CSI) (74,700).

Christian school accreditation. A Christian school association can accredit a Christian school after a school meets the required accreditation standards and remits the required membership dues (AACS, 2013; ACSI, 2012). Christian schools also may obtain dual accreditation with a Christian association and a non-Christian regional accrediting association such as the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSACS). According to the guidelines of Christian associations such as ACSI, schools that wish to become accredited must meet the criteria established by the accrediting associations. The accreditation criteria for various Christian associations can pertain to a plethora of areas: the board of directors, facilities, media center, curriculum maps, professional development, budget, financial accounting, teacher and other personnel evaluation tools, teacher education degrees and certifications in their areas of subject content, school policies, practices, classroom arrangements, cafeteria compliance, and other criteria. The accrediting association provides requirements and timeframes for an accrediting team to visit the school and conduct an accreditation review.

Christian school teacher certification. According to Christian association guidelines for their member schools, Christian school teachers in accredited PK-12 schools can complete a teacher certification program. Subsequently, teacher

certifications are required of practicing teachers in their subject content areas. Based

upon the requirements of the Christian association, Christian teachers have a maximum

number of years to certify, usually 2 years. Some smaller Christian schools may elect not

to become accredited through associations because of accreditation requirements

regarding facilities, structure, media center, faculty, and staff support. The Christian

associations provide specific guidelines for schools to become accredited and for teachers

to become certified.

Teacher Leaders

   Leadership. In Spillane's (2006) book, *Distributed Leadership*, Bass defined

leadership:

> [Leadership is] the interaction between two or more members of a group that
> often involves a structuring or restructuring of the situation, and the perceptions
> and expectations of the members. Leaders are agents of change—persons whose
> acts affect other people more than other people's acts affect them. Leadership
> occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of
> others in the group. (Bass, as cited in Spillane, 2006, p. 10)

   According to leadership theorists (several of whom are mentioned below),

leaders possess certain traits or characteristics such as the following: initiator, decision

maker, problem solver, strategic and tactical planner, active listener, good

communicator, creator, goal setter, visionary, influencer, power broker, change agent,

and servant (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Burns, 2003; Collins, 2001; Drucker, 1993; Heifetz

& Linsky, 2002; Kouzes & Posner, 2012; Maxwell, 2010; Morgan, 2006; Northouse,

2009).

   According to many leadership theorists, leaders are individuals who are

influencers, power brokers, gatekeepers, and motivators within organizations such as

school systems (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Burns, 1978, 2003; Morgan, 2006). Leaders are

change agents that make a difference in the lives of others (Burns, 2003; Morgan, 2006).

Teacher leaders may have the official title of classroom teacher only, yet their influence can be felt throughout the school organization as they serve as mentor teachers, resource teachers, math lab tutors, counselors, and advisors. In this manner, teacher leaders possess a legitimate power (Greenleaf, 2002).

Leader theories and traits. Teacher leaders possess leader traits and characteristics. Although this study focused upon a distributed leadership framework, the personality leader traits of teacher leaders emerged in the data analysis and findings of the study. According to Northouse (2009), leadership can be defined as a trait, ability, skill, behavior, or relationship. As depicted in Figure 3, Northouse categorized core leadership skills as administrative, conceptual, and interpersonal (Northouse, 2009, p. 66). With regard to exploration of the leadership experiences of teacher leaders, the Northouse model defines traits that can contribute to the placement of teacher leaders, according to their skills, as they assume leader routines and tasks either as formal or informal leaders (Spillane, 2006). Northouse summarized leadership as follows:

> The meaning of leadership is complex and includes many dimensions. For some people, leadership is a trait or ability, for others it is a skill or behavior, and for still others, leadership is a relationship. Each dimension explains a facet of leadership. (Northouse, 2009, p. 4)

To manage human capital, Talent and Succession Management becomes a leadership option. According to Sims (2009), organizations institute talent and succession management programs to identify internal talent within their organizations. In the case of teacher leaders, heads of school and principals can institute such programs to facilitate teacher leader identification, development, and retention.

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Administrative

- Showing technical competence
- Managing resources
- Managing people

Conceptual

- Creating visions
- Strategic planning
- Problem solving

Interpersonal

- Being socially perceptive
- Showing emotional intelligence
- Managing interpersonal conflict

Core leadership skills
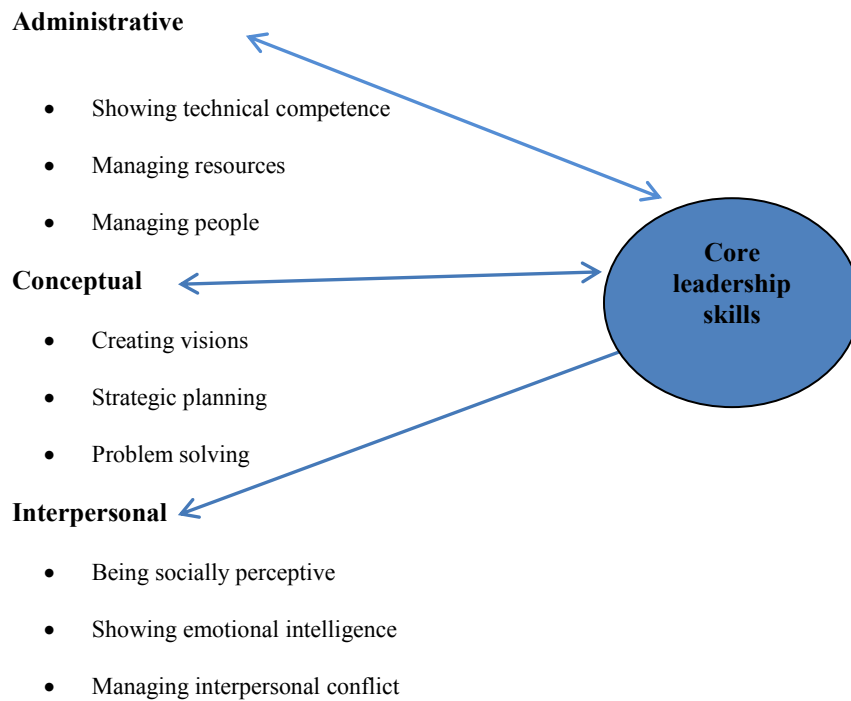
Figure 3. Northouse's core leadership skills.

According to Collins (2001), there is another dimension to developing leader capacity that great organizations have used successfully for decades. Leaders must possess self-discipline, professional will, and humility (Collins, 2001). Collins suggested that greatness can be manifested in business or social sectors by using disciplined planning, disciplined people, disciplined governance, and disciplined allocation of human resources, coupled with humility, professional will, and right placement. Collins' (2005) theory for the social sector implies that the *greatness* theory can be leveraged in any organization, not just in business environments.

Moreover, from Collins's (2005) theory of *good to great for the social sectors*, one can infer that teacher leaders who are placed in the *right* positions to utilize their unique talents and skills must possess a mentality that is disciplined and committed to leadership. This leader mentality can become contagious in relationships with adults or

students (Gladwell, 2002). As school leaders consider Collins's theory of leader greatness and Gladwell's contagion theory, teacher leadership in schools can become a realizable, prolific practice in school organizations. According to Collins's theory, the momentum of teacher leaders can produce a fundamental greatness in the culture in the Christian school that can affect the entire school community. Thus, Gladwell's contagion theory, Collins's greatness theory, and Northouse's (2009) core leadership skills theory converge in that all three support greatness, unique traits, momentum, and strategic placement of leaders for optimum success in an organization.

Farr (2010), a Teach for America proponent, suggested that classroom teachers are traditionally trained in pedagogy, classroom management, and curriculum development as adept instructors of subject content and knowledge. Farr further stated that teachers traditionally do not possess a leader mentality, and consequently, do not use leadership skills, motivation, and high expectancy goal setting and visionary tactics vital to students' overall academic success. According to Farr, teachers can be taught to behave as leaders inside and outside classrooms, changing their knowledge, skills, and mindsets to those of leaders. Farr's (2010) theory of teacher leadership as a mindset corresponded with Collins's (2001) theory on selective placement of teacher leaders, that is, placing the right person in the right position. Northouse's (2009) theory of trait leadership, however, places leaders in three specific core areas: (a) administration, (b) conceptual areas, or (c) interpersonal skills. In all three theories, leadership emerges as a key to teacher leader development based upon creating a new leader mindset in teacher leaders and placing them strategically in leader positions in schools in which their unique talents and abilities can be utilized. Further, the three theorists viewed leadership first as

a part of the teacher leader's mindset, followed by leader skill development and strategic placement within the organization.

Teacher leader roles. Recent research has revealed that teacher leaders exist in schools functioning in informal or formal roles (Spillane, 2006). The research indicated that teachers who can be classified as teacher leaders may neither have actual leadership roles nor view themselves as leaders (Harris, 2008). Many do not associate their efforts with leadership or leader skills. Yet, these unidentified teacher leaders perform leadership tasks and routines, often because needs surface in their schools (Harris, 2008; Spillane, 2006).

Patterson and Patterson noted that teachers who are leaders are considered champions who stretch the boundaries of their schools and promote them to higher levels (as cited in Ghamrawi, 2011). Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, and Hann (2002) asserted that teacher leaders are not meant to abdicate the power of the principal, but rather to expand it. Through the theoretical lens of Harris (2008) and Spillane (2006), the literature suggested that leadership does not reside in a single person in the school. Teachers engage in decision making at the school level as well as the classroom level (Harris, 2008). The literature on teacher leaders converged in a culture of *trust* as the premise for a successful teacher leadership foundation, as expressed in the research of Harris and Muijs (2005), Murphy (2005), Ghamrawi (2011), and Levenson (2014). In the literature, the term *teacher leader* invokes different meanings for different audiences in the field of education (Farr, 2010; Harris, 2008; Levenson, 2014; Nichols, 2011; Spillane, 2006). In this research study, Christian teacher leaders were defined as principal-identified teacher leaders who exhibited specific leadership characteristics

grounded in the classic leadership theories of theorists such as Burns (1978), Collins (2001), Greenleaf (2002), Heifetz and Linsky (2002), Spillane (2006), Bolman and Deal (2008), Harris (2008), Fullan (2009), Maxwell (2010), and Kouzes and Posner (2012). A discussion of leadership theories is included in a later section of the literature review.

Based upon multiple theories in the literature, it can be stated that teacher leaders within a school can be categorized into formal or informal teacher leader roles (Elmore, 2007; Harris, 2008; Spillane, 2006). Thus, informal teacher leaders may possess not only positional authority but also legitimate power (Greenleaf, 2002). This legitimate power can be demonstrated in leadership practices and interactions among teacher leaders, students, and colleagues. According to Spillane, in a distributed framework, leadership practice takes shape in the interaction of leaders, followers, and a situation. The situation is focused upon what Spillane called tools and routines. Relative to this literature review, teacher leaders in the research study functioned in formal or informal leader roles.

Formalizing teacher leadership roles. According to Levenson (2014), teachers in more formal leadership roles, developed by district or outside reformers, usually receive more training and external support, but their goals may be constrained. Many are evaluated based on their ability to achieve certain specific goals, such as raising student achievement on state assessments in public schools (Levenson, 2014). The researcher wrote,

> A disadvantage to this model is that leadership tasks are defined too narrowly, leaving teachers little space and authority to respond to unanticipated issues or to strengthen the school culture. Moreover, unless the focus on improving instruction is coupled with organizational changes, such initiatives may not have a lasting impact. (Levenson, 2014, p. 100)

Advantages and disadvantages of teacher leadership roles. Regarding the role of a teacher leader, Levenson stated, "A teacher may want to devote all of her professional energy and focus to the classroom, or she could decide to move temporarily into a more visible teacher leader role" (Levenson, 2014, p. 115). The informal structure offers a flexibility that affirms the centrality and importance of the teacher's work and classroom contributions. According to Levenson, advantages and disadvantages exist with the informal or semiformal secondary school teacher leader roles. Although the roles provide flexibility, along with the opportunity to contribute and to be heard within a school, informal leadership roles require teachers to assume additional responsibilities above and beyond their primary classroom responsibilities. Further, Levenson suggested that having teacher leaders volunteer their efforts continuously can be problematic. Moreover, Levenson suggest that teacher leaders are aware that their level of pay is symbolic of the respect afforded to the career of teaching in their country (Levenson, 2014). The researcher further asserted,

> Given the prevailing widespread criticism and lack of appreciation of teachers, they may be reluctant to volunteer for still more work. In addition, the lack of training and the isolation in which many teacher leaders find themselves can make them feel as though they must address problems by themselves. (Levenson, 2014, pp. 116-117)

Conversely, new models for utilizing teacher leaders emerged relative to particular schools' and school districts' structures.

As shared by Levenson (2014), teacher leaders must learn how to mobilize colleagues who may not share their enthusiasm for yet another change initiative. Further, Levenson stated that teacher leadership roles often raise questions about relationships among colleagues, especially once a teacher is elevated to the role of

teacher leader, with additional power, and is asked to contribute to another teacher's evaluation. Therefore, Levenson posited that this change in status could erode trust among former colleagues. Hence, she asserted that "if teachers are not willing to be led or to work together to change teaching and learning, leadership positions will not be perceived as effective" (Levenson, 2014, p. 100).

Three emerging teacher leadership models were presented in Levenson's (2014) book, *Pathways to Teacher Leadership: Emerging Models, Changing Roles.* The emerging models in Ohio and Massachusetts included (a) a teacher leader-led alternative school model in Ohio, (b) a teacher leader cohort turn-a-round teacher team model in Boston, and (c) a collaborative coaching and learning systemic support model for teacher leadership development in Boston (Levenson, 2014).

Teacher leaders experience internal leadership challenges in their schools. According to Spillane (2006), principals may have a distrust and reluctance to share leadership responsibilities with teacher leaders and may be hesitant to develop them as teacher leaders. In addition to challenges, many formal teacher leaders, who work as department chairs, sponsors, and curriculum coordinators, may lack leadership training and familiarity with K-12 school law (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Spillane, 2006). This factor makes it challenging for school leaders to relinquish leader responsibilities to teacher leaders who may lack leadership skills.

According to Northouse's (2009) model, leadership skills can be grouped into three categories: administrative, interpersonal, and conceptual skills (See Figure 3). Using Northouse's theory, it becomes apparent that teacher leaders' abilities and talents for leadership opportunities occur in three different areas. Thus, the principal can assess

the leadership skills of teacher leaders and fill vacancies based upon opportunities within the school with regard to Northouse's administrative, interpersonal, and conceptual core leader skills. Northouse's view and those of Collins (2001), Greenleaf (2002), Bolman and Deal (2008), and Kouzes and Posner (2012) have the potential to enable principals to consider teacher leaders for a variety of teacher leader positions that correspond to their particular abilities and interests, even for succession advancement.

There is also a connection for Christian teacher leaders, who promote moral conscience as part of their biblical mission, with Greenleaf's (2002) servant leader theory, which emphasizes how the servant leader executes moral authority. Further, servant leaders can motivate followers through the use of legitimate power, especially with those who share the same moral authority and shared vision (Greenleaf, 2002). Yet, according to the literature, it must be acknowledged that legitimate power is not always positional power; but rather legitimate power is influential power as perceived by one's peers (Greenleaf, 2002). Thus, it becomes apparent that Greenleaf's legitimate power converges with Northouse's (2009) great man theory, in which leaders and followers can motivate and participate in a shared vision of leadership, and contributes to a distributed leadership framework (Harris, 2008; Spillane, 2006). Then, further examination of Collins's (2001) Level 5 theory indicates that the *right* or unique leader in the *right* position can motivate followers, with a shared vision. Review of the literature revealed that the theorists shared a commonality in terms of leadership, followership interactions, shared motivation, and a shared vision, potentially operating in a distributed environment (Spillane, 2006). From another perspective, however, although Levenson's theories on teacher leaders contribute to the need for developing teacher leaders, there has developed

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a sensitivity to not overloading teachers with added responsibilities that some teacher leaders do not embrace (Levenson, 2014).

Teacher leaders in Finland. According to Sahlberg (2013), Finland has become a target of international education pilgrimage. Multitudes of educators and policymakers have visited Finnish schools and observed in classrooms in this small Nordic nation leading the Western world in many education rankings (Sahlberg, 2013). Sahlberg stated that leadership was closely tied to teaching in Finland. In addition, distributed leadership, was a common strategy in many Finnish schools (Sahlberg, 2013). In an article, "Teachers as Leaders in Finland," Sahlberg allowed readers to see how Finnish teachers were viewed as professional leaders. Sahlberg interviewed Finnish teachers at Aurora Primary School in Espoo, a city in the Helsinki metropolitan area. He discovered that the teachers perceived themselves as professionals with both the obligation and the responsibility to plan, implement, and evaluate the outcome of their work (Sahlberg, 2013). The researcher learned that teams of teachers worked on curricula, discussed individualized support for pupils with special needs, and developed activities for mathematics lessons. Sahlberg's interviews with teachers and principals revealed how teachers were viewed and what they contributed to the teaching–learning process. The Finnish author wrote, "Teaching is based on collaboration rather than isolation, autonomy rather than top-down authority, and professional responsibility rather than bureaucratic accountability reflects professional practice more than mere implementation of prescribed procedures" (Sahlberg, 2013, p. 36).

According to Sahlberg (2013), teamwork in Finland schools was a fundamental principle throughout the schools. "Lone riders have no role in this school," stated a

principal interviewed by the researcher (Sahlberg, 2013, p. 36). Further reflections from

the article revealed that teacher collaboration was possible because a teacher's teaching

load was lighter than in the United States. In primary schools, teachers were teaching

four or five 45-minute lessons daily; in junior high school, five or six. Further, a 15-

minute recess, normally spent outdoors, followed every 45-minute lesson. Another

reflection in the article revealed that although teacher leadership was not a commonly

used term in Finland, teachers had a sense of leadership as members of a professional

learning community in their schools. Finally, all teachers engaged in designing the

school curriculum and setting the learning goals for their pupils. Regarding teacher

leader autonomy, the teachers assessed how well their pupils achieved the learning goals,

because external standardized tests were not used in Finland (Sahlberg, 2013). Sahlberg

shared a final reflection:

> [According to] research in progress at the University of Jyvaskyla on teacher job
> satisfaction and working conditions, many Finnish teachers would consider
> leaving teaching if the government were to limit their professional freedom and
> autonomy, for instance by introducing external school inspections or standardized
> testing to control more of teachers' work. (Sahlberg, 2013, pp. 36-38).

Further comments by Sahlberg (2013) indicated that primary school teachers in

Finland studied education for at least 5 years as their major academic subject and were

required to write a thesis that met the same academic standards as in any other field of

study offered in Finnish research universities. The primary teacher program was

considered to be just as rigorous as the pathways for junior and high school teachers.

Schools had autonomy to design teaching programs, create school schedules, set their

own learning standards, and assess pupils' progress because teachers were well versed in

these matters. According to Sahlberg, instead of having expectations imposed on them

without any consideration of context, schools had internalized their own high expectations. The researcher reported, "Finnish teachers have a high level of general knowledge, good social skills, and clear moral purpose" (Sahlberg, 2013, p. 38).

Teacher leader styles. First, according to Maxwell (1998), there are 21 irrefutable laws of leadership that distinguish leaders. The laws of influence, empowerment, connection, and reproduction provide characteristics that can apply to a study on teacher leaders. According to Maxwell, leadership is influence, and a leader cannot be a leader without followers. In contrast, Collins (2001) suggested that disciplined people with disciplined thoughts, disciplined actions, and a large degree of humility are potential Level 5 leaders. As do Maxwell's influential leaders, Collins's (2001) Level 5 leaders exert influence on others as they perpetuate leadership momentum.

Then, Heifetz and Linsky (2002) concluded that leadership is adaptive. Therefore, the people with the problem, rather than an authority, are best at resolving problems. The adaptive leader learns new approaches to solve problems, whereas managers typically apply current knowledge to resolve issues. Heifetz and Linsky explained the difference between technical managerial decisions and adaptive leadership as seeking new ways of solving leadership problems. These approaches empower leaders to solicit new ways and means to resolve problems. Maxwell's (1998) *influence* theory is similar to Heifetz and Linsky's (2002) *adaptive change* theory in that they both require influential persons, who possess a league of followers, to achieve a desired leadership outcome. Then, Collins (2001) metaphorically presented leadership using a flywheel concept. Thus, the concept simulates a heavy flywheel, which, when turned, creates a continuous, cumulative motion

that increases in speed and momentum as the wheel turns (Collins, 2001). In contrast, Collins's flywheel concept depicts leaders as disciplined individuals working together in tandem, cumulatively interacting and motivating each other. Using Collins's theory, momentum occurs as leaders and followers use their individual strengths to influence each other, thereby creating a contagious flywheel effect. According to the theory, the flywheel momentum affects organizational greatness, impacting how well the leaders and followers resolve problems, make decisions, and accomplish organizational goals.

Therefore, Heifetz and Linsky's (2002) theory appears to be more consistent with Maxwell's (1998) notions of followership and leadership influence. According to Maxwell, connectivity among leaders is critical to greatness and leadership success. In the next section, I present the principals' perspective on teacher leaders.

Principals' influence on teacher leaders. According to the theories of Spillane (2006) and Harris (2008), teacher leader development requires principals to establish and model a professional learning culture (Lieberman, 2007; Senge, 1990) within their schools: preferably, a culture that requires leadership training courses as part of a professional development teacher leader curriculum. Therefore, without the endorsement and support of principals who are confident in their roles and leadership abilities, teacher leader development may become encumbered or nonexistent (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001). In many Christian schools, the head of school or principal sets the leadership tone in the school, acting as the role model for leadership (Devink, 1996). Subsequently, based upon the literature, one can presuppose that the head of school or principal is the catalyst for ensuring that the identified teacher leaders are properly trained.

A principal who utilizes different modalities of leadership, for example, instructional, servant, or transformational leadership, may still perceive potential teacher leaders as uncomfortable competitors or potential threats (Harris, 2008). According to Harris's (2008) theory, it is clear that untrained teacher leaders may compete for the principal's time via the need for training and mentoring. As Burns (1978) suggested, leadership training and development take time and are intentional. The principal may choose to neither identify teacher leaders nor invest time and resources into teacher development and training. Harris also inferred that principals fail to identify or develop potential teacher leaders because of time constraints. Principal mentoring and support are important for teacher leaders to develop as leaders (Malone, 2001). Thus, potential teacher leaders who could become assets in a school organization can be overlooked due to principal time constraints or constrained due to a lack of principal mentoring.

Redefining the roles of teacher leaders. The principal role, as it is structured, encourages the best teacher educators to avoid formal leadership roles. Teacher leaders, who witness the responsibility and accountability requirements of principals, are sometimes discouraged by them (Donaldson, 2001). In Christian schools, the head of school or principal and the board of directors are typically the ones who are responsible for establishing institutional, instructional, and organizational goals (ACSI, 2012; Devink & Carruthers, 2008). Further, in both public and private schools, the administrator or principal is instrumental is building stakeholder relationships as part of leadership. Teacher leaders can assist with the leadership function or role, distributing the leadership through teams of leaders involved in leadership practices (Spillane, 2006). Chirichello (2004) suggested that distributed or shared leadership models that include teacher leaders

as a resource will replace the era of the mythic superprincipal. Copland (2001) suggested

that school districts working to fill vacancies for the principal position might be searching

for individuals who simply do not exist. According to Green (2010), school districts that

are struggling to find new principals to replace those retiring or leaving will be forced to

restructure the roles and responsibilities of future principals, considering teacher leaders

as part of the change.

From theorists Copland (2001) and Kennedy (2002), I learned that school district

officials will be challenged to fill future principal vacancies to replace superhero

principals. According to the Institute for Educational Leadership (2001), a principal's

focus should be focused upon leadership for learning versus the vast operational and

instructional responsibilities for which principals have oversight. According to Harris

(2008), principals must be willing to lead, follow, and develop teacher leaders as

leadership resources within their schools. Principals must build a vision in which the

school becomes a community of leaders and learners (Chirichello, 2004). Therefore, the

Christian school heads of school and principals face similar concerns, especially when

human resources and budgets are part of the leadership scenario.

Challenges to implementing teacher leadership practice. Teacher leadership is

a phenomenon with implications for 21st-century schools, according to the writings of

Anderson (2004), Barnett, Johnson, and Montgomery (2005), and Plecki and Knapp

(2009). Then, in support of principal roles and building capacity, Ballek, O'Rourke,

Provenzano, and Bellamy (2005) added to the literature with the premise that the

principal's role is to build capacity by developing the leadership potential of teachers in

the school, specifically, by developing teacher leaders with the capacity to become

successful principals. Nevertheless, the concept of developing and utilizing teacher

leaders is not without implementation challenges.

Regarding the concept of trust, the literature suggested that principals mistrust

teacher leaders and view them as a threat to their own employment (Harris, 2008). At

the same time, the principal's job has become so complex that effective school

leadership can no longer reside in one person. This need to diversify leadership in

schools has been approaching a potential tipping point (Gladwell, 2002). Moreover,

Harris suggested that identified formal and informal teacher leaders at school sites

require development—mentoring, nurture, and care—for sustainability (Harris, 2008;

Noddings, 1984/2003). According to Devink and Carruthers (2008) and Green (2010),

teacher leaders present possible solutions to the overwhelmed principal dilemma.

Spillane's (2006) theory of leadership, practiced in a distributed leadership environment,

offers an answer for some schools in which leadership tasks and routines are shared with

the teacher leaders in a distributed environment. As summarized by Harris, "the main

challenge facing schools and school systems is how to locate, develop, and sustain

committed and talented leaders of tomorrow" (Harris, 2008, p. 3).

Another aspect of the teacher leadership challenge presents itself in the attitude of

colleagues toward each other within the teacher leadership school communities.

According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009), teacher leadership demands frequent

interactions with other adults, a situation that may be uncomfortable for some teachers.

As a result, teachers may prefer working by themselves for many reasons, such as time

for themselves. Also, sometimes the structure of the work environment does not

encourage collaboration. Then, teachers who make large commitments toward school

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improvement can become impatient with teachers who do not, thereby causing

attitudinal differences (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009).

Teacher leader power and authority. Based upon a synthesis of the literature,

including the ideas and concepts of noted educational theorists who have supported the

phenomenon of teacher leadership through their scholarly research, the case can be made

that teacher leaders' assumption of leadership roles is not only feasible but also necessary

for reforming schools (Elmore, 2007, 2002; Ghamrawi, 2010; Nichols, 2011). Teacher

leadership can manifest itself in different roles and models in different schools, according

to the schools' structures (Levenson, 2014). The literature indicated that the time has

come to share the duties of principals, who are overwhelmed in their current

responsibilities. In many American schools, teacher leaders conceivably may provide the

missing component to the new leadership challenge (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004;

Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). According to the theories of several researchers, one can

assume that teacher leaders must be transitioned into higher levels of leadership with

caution (Beachum & Dentith, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Hargreaves & Fink, 2004;

Harris & Muijs, 2005; Lambert, 2003; Lieberman & Friedrich, 2010). The nature of

leadership requires understanding the essence of power. Leadership literature has

supported the idea that leadership is a special form of power in which there are two

interrelated essentials of power: motive and resource (Burns, 1978). Burns stated his

view of power: "Power is not a property, entity, or possession; but rather, it is a

relationship in which two or more persons tap motivational bases in one another and

bring varying resources to bear" (Burns, 1978, p. 15). Burns further asserted that a

duality exists in the role of purpose and the concept of power. In 1968 Weber said,

"Power is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will, despite resistance, and regardless of the basis on which this probability rests" (Weber, as cited in Burns, 1978, p. 12).

Teacher leaders, as followers in modern-day, hierarchically structured, private Christian schools, may have legitimate power (Greenleaf, 2002), with little to no positional power (Bolman & Deal, 2008) or the authority to exercise power over other teachers that administrators or principals have (Greenleaf, 2002). Greenleaf stated, "Power has many meanings; but, let us take it to be a coercive force either overtly to compel or covertly to manipulate others" (Greenleaf, 2002, p. 189). The author suggested that authority was a sanction bestowed to legitimate the use of power. The concept of followers and leaders emerged in the 21st century along with distributed leadership practices, as evidenced in the study by Spillane et al. (2001). Therefore, one can infer from the literature discussed in this section that teacher leaders may be assigned to formal teacher leader positions where the school administrator has assigned positional promotions or titles. These positions might include mentor teachers, class sponsors, media specialists, technology specialists, or curriculum coordinators.

From another perspective, teacher leaders can function in dual leader roles, working as teachers in the classroom and, simultaneously, as leaders outside the classroom (Morgan, 2006). Morgan suggested that power is the medium through which conflicts of interest are ultimately resolved and that power influences who gets what, when, and how. Furthermore, the researcher stated, "The first and most obvious source of power in an organization is formal authority, a form of legitimized power that is respected and acknowledged by those with whom one interacts" (Morgan, 2006, p. 166).

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Similarly, according to Greenleaf (2002), able servants with potential to lead will lead. Blaine wrote in 1988: "Legitimate power is rare. It is the mark of quality, distinction, and excellence in all relationships. Legitimate power is based on honor; with the leader honoring the follower and the follower choosing to contribute because the leader is also honored" (Blaine, as cited in Greenleaf, 2002, p. 12).

Subsequently, the intent or purpose of the leader can be to have individual power. In the case of the Christian teacher leader, the purpose of becoming a teacher leader could be presupposed as contributing to the overall vision and mission of the Christian school. According to Burns (1978), reliability and conformity are the hallmarks of bureaucracy. Conversely, teacher leaders may require a better understanding of how power, authority, and motives work together within their schools from a macrolevel. The power and motive concepts of Burns are not typically present on the teacher leader level. This could create a concern in decision making when teachers have partial input, whereas principals are well versed in leadership practices.

Analysis of teacher leader studies. Several teacher leader studies are presented in the next sections of the literature review. I begin with Ghamrawi's research on teacher leaders.

Ghamrawi's research on teacher leaders. Ghamrawi's (2013) mixed-methods research study, entitled "Teachers Helping Teachers: A Professional Development Model (PDM) That Promotes Teacher Leadership," was employed over 3 years and developed by one private K-12 school in Beirut, Lebanon. Ghamrawi noted in the problem section that successful school reform had been strongly linked to effective school leadership (Harris, 2004) and, particularly, that distributed leadership had been

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considered as a tool for school improvement and enhanced learning. Hence, it may be argued that teacher professional development that makes a difference in terms of school improvement, in general, and at the level of enhancing teacher leadership, would be quite a complex issue to tackle; therefore, this premise was the purpose for her study (Ghamrawi, 2013).

Ghamrawi (2013) revealed that, according to the Center of Educational Research and Development (CERD, 2010), approximately 70% of students in Lebanon are enrolled in private schools. The religious denominations own the majority of those private schools, whereas the rest are owned by foreign governments or organizations and secular individuals (Ghamrawi, 2013). Principals in the private schools are free to make decisions on policies, teacher recruitment, curriculum, textbooks, fundraising, professional development, enrollment, and all school matters. The only aspects that tie them to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) are the ninth-grade national exam and the end-of-school, twelfth-grade national certificate (Ghamrawi, 2013).

The aim of the study was to assess (a) school gains associated with teachers who participated as trainers during professional development, (b) school gains associated with teachers who attended professional development as trainees, (c) school gains associated with students who served as ushers during professional development, and (d) the potential of this professional development model for enhancing teacher leadership (Ghamrawi, 2013). A professional development (PD) was defined as a venue for teachers to collaborate under the motto of "teachers-helping-teachers."

A PD was an educational day comprising a number of in-house workshops (usually 20) taking place in two sets of 10 workshops, occurring concurrently. All workshops, usually three per year, were conducted by teacher trainers. The Professional Development Model (PDM) embraced a constructivist approach, whereby teachers trained colleague teachers, and some high school students provided ushering services during professional development events. The data were collected using focus group interviews with teacher trainers, surveys of teacher trainees, and request of student ushers to describe their most important gain from this model, using a single statement (Ghamrawi, 2013).

This study used data derived after PDs had been conducted for 3 years. The sample for the study included 21 teacher trainers ($N = 21$), 113 teacher trainees ($N = 113$), and 90 actively enrolled students who served as ushers ($N = 90$). This mixed-methods study utilized qualitative interviewing and quantitative surveying; 90 students were asked to write one statement each, describing their major gain from participating in the PDs. The questionnaire administered to the trainees consisted of 20 items with a 4-point Likert rating scale. The first 10 questions pertained to PDs and the second 10 questions to teacher leaders. The trainers provided data through four focus group interviews, each approximately 40 minutes long. The trainers' focus group interviews consisted of one question: What are your gains from participating as a teacher trainer within the professional development? Data derived from focus groups as well as student-written statements were subjected to thematic analysis of transcriptions. Survey data were processed using thematic analysis and SPSS 18.0 software.

The results of the study revealed that (a) the use of processes that promoted problem solving, shared visioning, collegial alliance, collaborative learning, and shared work played a role in developing teacher leaders; and (b) shared work seemed to play a role in rendering the school community into one that celebrates and appreciates new learning (Ghamrawi, 2013). The study was limited by (a) a 1-day method of training teacher leaders in which retention might have been limited, particularly without reinforcement by a leadership sponsor or mentor available daily as a leader sage; (b) the inclusion of only one school with short-term employees; and (c) asking only one question of the students.

Overall, the study met its objectives and its purpose to examine a PDM with teachers, trainers, and students. Nevertheless, the use of several K-12 schools on multiple days of PD training and additional focus group questions could have strengthened the study results (Ghamrawi, 2013).

Ghamrawi (2011) on trust and teacher leadership research. In a second article, Ghamrawi (2011), drawing upon empirical data, wrote an article, "Trust me: Your School Can Be Better—A Message From Teachers to Principals"; this article explored the concept of trust as a context for the establishment of teacher leadership. The article was part of a larger study that was carried out over a 2-year period and involved 21 teachers, 21 subject leaders, and 9 principals from three private K-12 schools in Beirut, Lebanon. Qualitative data were collected through 51, 60-minute semistructured interviews; teachers, subject leaders, and principals from the three private K-12 schools in Beirut, Lebanon made up the research sample. The students enrolled in these schools were of varied socioeconomic statuses. Moreover, the schools were considered high-performing

schools in Beirut in terms of their students' achievement in the rigorous Lebanese

Baccalaureate (LB) (Ghamrawi, 2011). Three semistructured interview schedules

consisting of 12 questions each constituted the instruments for data collection

(Ghamrawi, 2011). The participant teachers and subject leaders were selected randomly

from the pool of individuals who expressed an interest in participating in the study

(Ghamrawi, 2011). The research interests were the following: (a) Describe the school

culture that supports teacher leadership establishment; and (b)What kind of human

relations, in your opinion, ensures the sustainability of teacher leadership at your school?

Ghamrawi's findings indicated,

that teacher leadership may not flourish unless it is supported by a very strong
positive school culture. Several descriptors were offered by participants to
describe positive school cultures, however, all focused on the same theme:
courteous human relations emanating from trusting relations. (Ghamrawi, 2011, p.
336)

Specifically, the findings highlighted the pivotal role of trust in establishing

higher levels of teachers' (a) self-efficacy, (b) collaboration, (c) commitment, (d)

collective vision, and (d) strong sense of belonging to the organization (Ghamrawi,

2011). Further, according to the researcher, "the study suggested that trust anchors the

organization and allows its members to enjoy acting as a part of its community. This is

because trust demands trustees share responsibility for key decisions" (Ghamrawi, 2011,

p. 341). Ghamrawi related generic messages that could be conveyed to educators

regarding trust: "(a) high-quality relationships among teachers, especially trust, are

crucial to the success of promoting teachers as leaders within schools; and (b) trust is a

tool to encourage teachers to work harder, be optimistic, feel a sense of professionalism,

and model positive self-esteem, commitment, and a sense of ownership" (Ghamrawi,

2011, pp. 346-347). Certain limitations in the study could have affected the results. According to Ghamrawi, "the sample comprised of only private schools makes it a non-representing sample of the Lebanese schools. Public schools may have a totally different story to tell especially with the strict centralization of these schools" (Ghamrawi, 2011, p. 345). Also, the number of researched private schools in the qualitative study was quite small, thereby weakening generalizability

     Ghamrawi (2010) on promoting teacher leadership. According to Ghamrawi, in another article, "No Teacher Left Behind: Subject Leadership That Promotes Teacher Leadership," teachers have leadership potential, and their organizations can benefit from that momentum (Ghamrawi, 2010, p. 305). This article presented some of the findings derived from a 2-year qualitative study comprising 51 semistructured interviews with a cohort of three principals, seven subject leaders, and seven classroom teachers in three private K-12 schools in Beirut, Lebanon (Ghamrawi, 2010). The study first focused on the role of subject leaders in establishing and nourishing teacher leadership in their departments, followed by an emphasis on creating professional collaboration in subcultures and distributed leadership in schools. Finally, the study explored leadership structures and a shared system of teacher monitoring and evaluation (Ghamrawi, 2010). Ghamrawi suggested "that the demonstration of a professional code of ethics and values—the heart of which are the values of honesty, trust, fairness and respect by subject leaders—are imperatives for building teacher leader capacity" (Ghamrawi, 2010, p. 310). Ghamrawi's concept is synonymous with the Christian teacher leader philosophy and mission, in which trust, fairness, honesty, and respect are attributes of the Christian teacher and teacher leader (Devink, 1996).

According to Ghamrawi (2010), the research revealed that teachers tend to reject fraudulent subject leaders, being attracted to leaders who demonstrate honesty because it ensures fairness in their departments. Consequently, teachers as leaders are respected as humans and individuals, not only because of their accomplishments and work performance (Ghamrawi, 2010). This concept of the respected leadership of teacher leaders can be contrasted with moral leadership (Fullan, 2009), servant leadership (Greenleaf, 2002), facilitative leadership (Conley & Goldman, 1994), and ethical leadership (Lashway, 1996) in that all breed trust and care for teacher leaders as an inspirational aspect of their growth. Based on this study, Ghamrawi suggested that the boundaries of the classroom constitute the limits of teacher influence. Ghamrawi viewed these limits as a point of immense concern because "segregation among classroom teachers must be avoided if teacher leadership is to be leveraged within the school. Teachers with formal leadership roles should not be considered superior to those who do not [have such roles]" (Ghamrawi, 2010, p. 311). Ghamrawi further stated, "It is imperative that leaders wave the banner of fraternity, equality, collaboration, and collegiality to secure departmental solidarity" (Ghamrawi, 2010, p. 312). This position is similar to Bolman and Deal's (2008) symbolic leadership frame. Ghamrawi suggested, based upon the research findings, that leaders develop policies, strategies, and systems to create and support high performance teams focused on creating teacher leaders and meeting organizational needs. Her model reinforces the power of trust in teacher leadership development (Ghamrawi, 2010). Further, the findings suggest that emotional intelligence competencies act as a platform for leaders to develop flexible

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leadership styles that impact and shape teacher leadership development. Ghamrawi

stated.

> You can't lead your department if you don't reflect effective interpersonal skills, the ability to feel with the other person, and the inclination to be socially aware of what's going on around you in the department…these are key skills to any coordinator who considers him/herself responsible for teacher leadership establishment. (Ghamrawi, 2010, p. 312)

The limitations of the study were resident in the small sample size of participants

involved in the qualitative study in three private schools, which does not promote

generalizability. Also, public schools were not included in the study, which might have

generated a different result. According to the findings, teachers have mixed emotions

regarding being monitored and evaluated by teacher leaders as colleagues. This last

finding is consistent with the literature from other theorists on possible mistrust when

teachers evaluate colleagues (Harris, 2008; Levenson, 2014; Spillane, 2006).

Emira's research on teacher leaders. In Emira's (2010) article, "Leading to

Decide or Deciding To Lead? Understanding the Relationship Between Teacher

Leadership and Decision Making," she examined how Egyptian teachers and senior

teachers (formal leaders) defined leadership and investigated whether or not the length of

their teaching experience had an effect on their views. Further, the study explored the

relationship between teacher leadership and decision making. The research sample

comprised a mixed group of 20 Egyptian teachers of English language with 2-13 years of

teaching experience. It should be noted that the length of teaching experience was a key

criterion in the selection of teachers for leadership roles in Egypt (Emira, 2010). Three

of the participants were senior teachers. Questionnaires and interviews were used. The

questionnaires were administered to the 20 participants. The instrument was piloted in

two stages with a similar group. Semistructured interviews were used as a second tool to acquire a deeper understanding of the respondents' perspectives, using open-ended questions (Emira, 2010).

The findings from Emira's (2010) study revealed that length of experience did not seem to have a major impact on teacher leader views. There were many similarities among the participants (teachers and senior teachers) with regard to their responses to the questionnaires, regardless of the length of their teaching experience (Emira, 2010). Also, the study revealed that teacher leaders perceived a link between leadership and decision making (Emira, 2010). The findings in Emira's article further suggested that teacher leadership was defined in terms of characteristics of leaders, styles of leadership, and what teacher leaders did both inside and outside classrooms. The study had limitations. The small size of the research sample suggested that generalizations could not be made to the wider population. Also, the small scale of the research and time restriction did not allow for the inclusion of other teacher leaders in other locales in Egypt. These points might be a focus for future research (Emira, 2010).

Based upon the findings from this research and other studies, it became apparent that transforming the leader-follower divisions in schools might be necessary to achieve distributed teacher leadership. Top-down styles of leadership can impede the engagement of teachers in leadership (Harris & Muijs, 2003) and are not helpful in changing teachers' roles from followers to teacher leaders. Hence, the research suggested a need for other leader theories and models in education that are more accepting of teacher leaders as part of the actual school leadership experience (Emira, 2010; Gronn, 2003). Moreover, transformational leadership, as a model, creates a momentum for

replicating leadership in teachers who are inspired by a transforming leader (Burns, 2003). The next study analysis focuses on Anderson's (2004) empirical study of teacher leaders.

   Anderson's empirical study on teacher leaders. Anderson's 2004 study, entitled "The Nature of Teacher Leadership in Schools as Reciprocal Influences Between Teacher Leaders and Principals," was a qualitative study of six schools noted for teacher leadership. The study took place in six rural schools (two elementary, two high, and two all-grade schools) in one Canadian school district. The researcher interviewed 28 respondents ($N = 28$): 11 teachers as leaders, 11 teachers as nominators of teacher leaders (nonteacher leaders who referred the teacher leaders), and 6 principals (Anderson, 2004).

   A focus of Anderson's (2004) study revealed few formal teacher leadership positions operational in the schools under study, with only two teacher leaders as department heads. The findings of the study revealed nonexistent relationships between the administrators and the teacher leaders; however, an awareness of the influence of teacher leaders in these schools existed among the teachers, leaders, and administrators. Further, in the study, the nature of the relationship between teacher leaders and principals demonstrated leadership reciprocity. Therefore, three models of leadership relationships influenced leadership reciprocity: (a) the buffered relationship, (b) the interactive relationship, and (c) the contested relationship.

   In conclusion, the influences were discussed from the perspectives of the six schools and respondent status as a teacher leader, teacher nominator, or administrator (Anderson, 2004). The findings suggested relationships among teachers, teacher leaders, and principals in the schools. Formal teacher leaders, typically administrators, were

found to actually impede teacher leadership, as formal leaders sometimes excluded some groups or individuals from leadership roles and reduced the distribution of decision making and teacher leadership in the schools (Anderson, 2004). Females in particular saw teacher leaders as influencing the principals more often than did males. The relationship between principal and teacher leaders is problematic in the area of creating hierarchies among teachers who are more or less closely associated with the decision making, thereby excluding some teachers. Also, such relationships can broaden decision making, thereby enabling greater teacher involvement in decision making (Anderson, 2004).

According to Harris (2008), at the heart of distributed school leadership is the belief that the leadership models of the past are simply inadequate for the educational challenges of the future. Alternative leadership models that are both empirically grounded and practical are desired. Further, according to Harris, distributed school leadership in schools is a viable option for instituting leadership teams that include teacher leaders working in a 21st-century model for education. Anderson (2004) and Harris both viewed leadership as the foundation of future school success beyond pedagogy and traditional structures. Limitations to Anderson's study were that it occurred in a rural school district. The females and males differed in their perceptions of the support of principals, with females perceiving more support than males; this perception could be problematic. Also, the relationship between principal and teacher leaders has the potential to create hierarchies amongst teachers who are more or less closely associated with the principal, excluding some teachers (Anderson, 2004). In the next study, Stein and Nelson (2003) presented an instructional view of teacher leaders.

Stein and Nelson's instructional study on teacher leaders. Stein and Nelson (2003) conducted a cross-case analysis of leadership content knowledge as it pertained to the principals' and teachers' knowledge of the subject matter. They traced leadership content knowledge through three cases situated at different school and district levels, suggesting that as administrative levels increase and functions become broader, leadership becomes a priority. The researchers concluded that leadership content knowledge is a missing paradigm in the analysis of school and district leadership. Many teacher leaders possess this pedagogical knowledge even when the principal does not. Stein and Nelson recommended that all administrators have solid mastery of at least one subject (and the learning and teaching of that subject) and that they develop expertise in other subjects by "post holding," conducting in-depth explorations of an important but bounded slice of the subject, including how it is learned and how it is taught. The researchers said, "Without knowledge that connects subject matter, learning, and teaching to acts of leadership, leadership floats disconnected from the very processes it is designed to govern" (Stein & Nelson, 2003, p. 446). They differed from other researchers in their approaches to leadership with an emphasis on subject content knowledge in the schools. Stein and Nelson's leadership theory regarding an accumulation of knowledge does not agree with Anderson's (2004) and Harris's (2008) theories that view teacher leadership as an organizational and individual pursuit.

Although knowledge of the subject matter and the teaching process are vital, the individual who possesses the most pedagogical or subject knowledge in the school may not constitute the greatest school leader. According to Burns (1978), leadership manifests itself in vision, courage, influence, goal setting, and strategic direction. Thus,

according to the literature, teacher leaders who possess only subject knowledge and

knowledge of the teaching–learning processes can miss key managerial and leadership

skills that contribute to the leadership of the Christian school organization. Therefore,

knowledge in and of itself is not leadership; yet, knowledge informs leadership.

Teacher leadership styles and models. Although this research study's

theoretical foundation was centered in distributed leadership, I wanted to introduce

several versions of leadership models as comparisons that can manifest in various

Christian schools. As noted in Chapter 2, Christian site-based schools vary in

organizational and physical structure.

Collective leadership. Collective leadership is different from participatory

leadership or distributive leadership (Wallace, 2002). In a collective leadership

environment, which is built upon a culture that values learning, the whole organization

learns from the collective experiences of its members (Drath, 2001). Collective

leadership supports interrelationships and shapes cultures that value empowerment and

risk taking. Followers become leaders and leaders step out of the way to become

followers (Chirichello, 2004). Collective leadership goes beyond delegation, as it creates

a culture of self-empowerment rather than power.

Collective leadership (Chirichello, 2004) creates a structure in which principals

have more time to lead than manage. Collective leadership is at the heart of the

principal–teacher relationship because collective leadership can give principals more time

to build relationships among all members of the school and develop teacher leaders.

When teachers become leaders, principals have more time to lead and supervise the

instruction of teacher leaders. Principals have time to become leader developers rather

than manager directors (Chirichello, 2004). Four challenges emerged in the collective

leadership paradigm for reinventing the principalship (Pearce & Conger, 2003):

1. Members of the organization must have the knowledge, skills, and capacity to lead one another. Teachers can develop teams and increase their leadership capacity allowing principals and teachers to share the collective responsibility and accountability for student success and for the organization (Lambert, 2003).
2. The school's vision and mission must be clearly understood so that everyone is working toward the same goals.
3. Collective leadership requires time. Teachers need time to lead collectively. This requires a change in the school day and calendar restructuring.
4. The school's culture must support a belief in self-empowerment if collective leadership is to increase. (Chirichello, 2004, p. 3)

Adaptive leadership. According to Heifetz and Linsky (2002), there is a practical

and personal side to leadership, which can affect anyone. Each day, people are presented

with adaptive challenges that require them to make decisions that affect themselves and

others. Adaptive challenges require experiments, new discoveries, and adjustments from

numerous places in an organization or community (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002, p. 13).

Teacher leaders confront adaptive leadership situations daily in schools that require them

to take leader risks in problem-solving and decision-making capacities whether in or

outside the classroom (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). Relative to Greenleaf's (2002) theory,

teacher leaders who have established a leader-power relationship with their colleagues

and the administration use legitimate power. Teacher leaders can be observed using

informal leadership skills and traits in their schools daily. Although teacher leaders may

not have leader training and preparation to identify and apply a myriad of leadership

skills, teacher leaders wield decision-making capabilities daily through legitimate power

and influence (Greenleaf, 2002). Therefore, the convergence of the leadership styles and

theories of theorists (e.g., Collins, 2001; Greenleaf, 2002; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002)

validate this peril and power. According to Morgan (2006), leadership by teacher leaders involves professional risk and peril when resource power is needed for self-discipline, servitude, and the exercise of legitimate power and decision making without the benefit of formal authority (Morgan, 2006). Identifying the right leaders that promote greatness in an organization (Collins, 2001) helps to innovate and inspire leadership momentum throughout the organization. Nevertheless, according to Collins's theory of greatness, the servant leadership posture, highlighting traits of care, service, nurture, values, and respect, can be consistent within the school organization, regardless of whether the *right* person is in position (Collins, 2001; Greenleaf, 2002).

Servant leadership. According to Greenleaf (2002), a great leader is a servant first. The servant leader ensures that other people's highest priority needs are met. Greenleaf said that the best test of servant leaders is to determine if those who have been served grow as servant leaders, themselves serving others in society. Greenleaf's theory presupposes that teacher leaders who use this concept of servant leadership with their students may be able to stimulate student growth, maturity, academic achievement, performance, self-respect, and respect for others.

Then, Greenleaf's (2002) theory on servant leaders suggests one who selflessly initiates action, provides the ideas and the structure, and takes the risk of failure along with the chance of success. Hence, Greenleaf's servant leaders, as can Collins's (2001) Level 5 leaders, can be characterized as displaying professional humility; they inspire others toward greatness.

Kouzes and Posner stated, "Belief in others' abilities is essential to making extraordinary things happen as leaders. Exemplary leaders elicit high performance

because they strongly believe in the abilities of their constituents to achieve even the most challenging goals" (Kouzes & Posner, 2012, p. 276). Heifetz and Linsky (2002) spoke of the sacred heart of leadership; they also expressed a belief that the deepest wisdom and the most profound expressions of one's experience are rooted in compassion for others. Therefore, for leaders to guide and challenge people, they need the capacity to put themselves in the places of the followers and imagine what they are going through (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). This sacred heart concept converges with Greenleaf's (2002) theory of servant leadership and Kouzes and Posner's belief in support of others. Hence, the conceptual application for teacher leaders is that love, compassion, and a servant's attitude are attributes of successful leaders; this theory correlates to the Christian philosophy of love and service toward others.

Visionary leadership. According to Conley (1996), vision exists when people in an organization share an explicit agreement on the values, beliefs, purposes, and goals that should guide their behavior. Conley called this an internal compass that some school leaders view with ambivalence and sometimes cynicism. Lashway (1997) echoed the same importance of visionary leadership for school leaders. Sergiovanni (1994) characterized vision as an educational platform that incorporates the school's beliefs about the preferred aims, methods, and climate, and creates a "community of mind" that establishes behavioral norms. Whitaker and Moses (1994) described vision as an inspiring declaration of a compelling dream, accompanied by a clear scenario of how it will be accomplished. A good vision not only has worthy goals but also challenges and stretches everyone in the school accordingly.

According to Cook's (2003) strategic planning theory, in a school setting, teacher leaders, as part of the leadership team in a school, must possess and promote the same strategic vision and goals set by the superintendent, head of school, or principal. Not to do so is to create a leadership divergence that causes confusion, separation, and discord among the team members throughout the organization and fragmentation of purpose. As teacher leaders are developed, according to Burns (1978), leadership tenets of the organization flow upward and downward throughout the organizational structure, with all parties supporting the same philosophies and goals.

Collins's (2001) theory of Level 5 leadership suggests that great leaders display professional will, humility, and disciplined actions and perpetuate the same in others; Greenleaf's (2002) servant leadership model promotes humility and serving others. Burns (1978) described followers and leaders in a bifurcated pattern that showed how leadership is similar in authoritative leadership behavior and beliefs to followership behavior that displays humility and discipline. Burns further intimated how both leadership and followership simulate types of leadership, just from different views and time periods.

Shared governance model. Blasé and Blasé (1999) informed the literature regarding the practices, thoughts, and feelings of shared-governance principals as they confronted the challenges of school restructuring by introducing teacher leaders. The researchers suggested that movement toward teacher leader professionalism does not signal the death of the principalship, although the power of principals to lead through fear, domination, and coercion can be lessened. Blasé and Blasé asserted that future principals should possess virtues such as sharing, openness, trust, and respect for

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others—virtues found to be at the core of shared governance leadership. This thread of sharing vision and leadership is consistent with the theories of Senge's (1990) professional learning communities, Rubin & Futrell's (2009) theory of collaborative leadership for teacher leaders, and Collins's (2001) theory of getting the right leaders in the right positions "on the bus." The common thread with shared governance is that leadership is simply shared and no longer hierarchical.

A limitation to shared governance is that the members of the leadership group or team must recognize that everyone cannot lead the group as the decision maker. Providing input and recommendations as a teacher leader, for example, is not the same as being the decision maker. Rubin & Futrell (2009) asserted that with collaborative leadership, the teacher leader can make decisions within his or her sphere of influence, although a decision maker is critical with higher level decisions. The advantage of shared leadership is the teacher leader's acquaintance with the leadership environment. This exposure can benefit the teacher leaders in future promotions and the view that the school organizations are learning organizations for the future (Senge, 1990).

According to various studies, teacher leaders sometimes distrust principals' leadership for a cadre of reasons that can affect teacher leadership and corresponding principal support. Bulach, Pickett, and Boothe (1998) inferred that ineffective principals lack interpersonal skills and communication skills in the areas of evaluative feedback and in communication of sensitive information. Teachers cite the failure of principals to provide summative feedback after observations in classrooms, to instruct teachers on how to handle a fight and how to navigate successful parent conferences, and to make decisions on effective methods of student discipline. According to Bulach et al.,

principals might reprimand teachers in front of their colleagues instead of doing it privately. Data provided by teachers who participated in the study by Bulach et al. sent a clear message that school administrators are making mistakes that could be avoided with a greater level of awareness.

According to the theory of Burns (1978), power is not a property or entity or possession, but rather it is a relationship in which two or more persons tap motivational bases in one another and bring varying resources to bear on the interface between teacher leaders and students or staff. Weber was quoted as saying, "Power is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will, despite resistance, and regardless of the basis on which this probability rests" (Weber, as cited in Burns, 1978 p. 12).

Recent research has supported the notion that teacher leaders exist in schools, whether as informal or formal leaders (Spillane, 2006). Teacher leaders, considered followers in the modern-day hierarchical school infrastructure, may have positional power, whereas authority to exercise power over teachers is inherent in the administrators or principals (Greenleaf, 2002). Greenleaf said, "Power has many meanings…but let us take it to be coercive force—either overtly to compel or covertly to manipulate others" (Greenleaf, 2002, p. 189). Greenleaf presented authority as a sanction bestowed to legitimate the use of power.

From the perspective of Burns (1978), one of the most serious failures in the study of leadership has been the bifurcation between the literature on leadership and the literature on followership. Therefore, Burns further stated that it was time that the two literatures were brought together; that the roles of leader and follower be united

conceptually; and that the study of leadership be lifted out of the anecdotal and the eulogistic and placed squarely in the structure and processes of human development and political action. According to Spillane (2006), teacher leaders may be assigned to formal teacher leader positions for which positional promotions or titles have been assigned by the school administrator. These positions may be mentor teachers, class sponsors, media specialists, technology specialists, or curriculum coordinators. Teacher leaders can function in dual roles, working as effective teachers in the classroom and simultaneously assuming leadership positions outside the classroom, such as instructional council leaders. Teacher leaders can be placed in positions of authority in which they have power to make decisions beyond those of a classroom teacher (Harris, 2008; Spillane, 2006).

Another form of power, according to Morgan (2006), is to become a gatekeeper. Teacher leaders potentially can become gatekeepers, opening and closing channels of communication and filtering, summarizing, analyzing, and thus shaping knowledge in accordance with a view of the world that favors their interests (Morgan, 2006). According to Morgan, power is a route to power, and one can often use power to acquire more. In addition, Morgan stated that power, like honey, is a perpetual source of sustenance and attraction among "fellow bees" (Morgan, 2006, p. 192).

Transformational leadership. Transformational leadership, according to Burns (2003), occurs when a leader transforms the lives of followers for success. Innovative leaders build capacity within an organization by creating a learning community, with people becoming active practitioners to accomplish goals and achieve success. Heifetz and Linsky (2002) theorized:

While perilous, leadership is an enterprise worthy of the costs. Our communities, organizations, and societies need people, from wherever they work and live, to take up the challenges within reach rather than complain about the lack of leadership from on high, hold off until they receive a call to action, or wait for their turn for a top job. (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002, p. 3)

With reference to his transformative leadership theory, Burns (2003) summarized leadership as leaders' inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations, the wants and needs, and the aspirations and expectations of both leaders and followers. He further stated that the genius of leadership lies in the manner in which leaders see and act simultaneously on their followers' values and motivations. Transformational leadership is intellectual leadership according to Burns (2003). Transformational leaders are not detached from social conditions, but rather they seek to change conditions because of a relationship to the sociostructural dissent. In his book, *Leadership*, Burns stated, "*Conflict* is the catalyst that spawns a need for transformational leadership" (Burns, 1978, p. 78). According to Burns, leaders represent a particular kind of power holder; therefore, as is power, leadership is considered relational, collective, and purposeful.

A weakness of transformational leadership is that it has a life-changing capability and its followers must be of one accord with the belief system and desires of the leader to reap its corresponding rewards and consequences. Transformational leadership has merits in that the team members typically replicate the leader, perpetuating the same mission, tone, expectations, and objectives. Therefore, team members or teachers can exhibit weakness in following a leader as they abdicate thinking creatively for themselves as a choice. Choice is involved in transformational leadership. Subsequently, the teacher leader must desire a transformation to leadership (Burns, 2003).

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Distributed Leadership

Frost and Harris's (2003) research proposal, entitled "Teacher Leadership: Towards a Research Agenda," explored the emerging discourse about teacher leadership in the United Kingdom. Teacher leadership referred to the exercise of leadership by teachers regardless of position or designation. Teachers might become involved in leadership activity in a variety of ways, such as a school improvement group (Frost & Harris, 2003). The research study drew upon the international literature in exploring a classification of forms of teacher leadership and some theoretical perspectives of distributed leadership as part of a possible framework of factors affecting teachers' capacity to exercise leadership (Frost & Harris, 2003). The cadre of leadership options reflected in the study included teachers identified as middle managers as well as informal and formal leaders who affected the entire learning community.

Distributed leadership defined. Distributed leadership, according to Spillane (2006), means more than shared leadership. Spillane concluded that, too frequently, discussions of distributed leadership end prematurely with an acknowledgment that multiple individuals take responsibility for leadership and that there is a leader plus other leaders and followers at work in the school. Spillane further suggested that although essential, this leader-plus aspect is not sufficient to capture the complexity of the practice of leadership. (Jones, Lefoe, Harvey, and Ryland (2012) defined distributed leadership as, "a form of shared leadership that is underpinned by a more collective and inclusive philosophy than traditional leadership theory that focuses on skills, traits, and behaviors of individual leaders" (Jones, Lefoe, Harvey, & Ryland, 2012, p. 71).

Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice model. Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice model focuses on leadership practices in schools in which followers and leaders are part of an a priori leadership team. According to Spillane, distributive leadership practice involves many members of the organization contributing to leadership success rather than a lone leader, usually the principal. Spillane viewed distributed leadership as a viable leadership model for 21st-century schools. In Spillane's view, distributed leadership incorporates the interactions of a leadership team with the leaders, followers, and a leadership situation to create a holistic, distributed leadership approach.

Spillane (2006) suggested that the distributed school leadership framework differs from other leadership models because it fuses the older style of traditional leadership with the followers in an organization. This fusion culminates in leadership practice occurring throughout the organization. Spillane created a connection among teacher leaders, principals, and followers as part of a school's leadership team:

> Viewing leadership from a distributed perspective means that education policymakers must acknowledge that the work of leading schools involves more than the leadership of the school principal. Other leaders are critical, whether they be formally designated leaders, such as assistant principal, or teachers who take on leadership responsibilities. (Spillane, 2006, p. 101)

According to Spillane (2006), in a distributed leadership practice arrangement, three elements are essential:

1. Leadership practice is the central and anchoring concern.
2. Leadership practice is generated in the interactions of leaders, followers, and their situation: each element is essential for leadership practice.
3. The situation both defines leadership practice and is defined through leadership practice. (Spillane, 2006, p. 4)

To further explain the theory, distributed leadership is a phenomenon about leadership practice, not simply leader roles and positions. It is about interactions, not just the actions of heroes (Spillane, 2006). According to Spillane, a distributed perspective on leadership involves the leader-plus aspect and the practice aspect. The leader-plus aspect is vital, but it is insufficient on its own. The leadership practice aspect moves the focus from aggregating the actions of individual leaders to the interactions among leaders, followers, and their situations (Spillane 2006). A distributed view of leadership also recognizes that leading schools requires multiple leaders. Spillane stated,

> Distributed leadership is not just delegated leadership. It acknowledges and incorporates the work of all the individuals who have a hand in leadership practice and therefore is stretched over multiple leaders to obtain the ideas and innovations of all, not just one individual. (Spillane, 2006, p. 13)

The leadership practice aspect. According to Spillane (2006), the distributed leadership framework pushes one step further than the leader-plus approach that involves a formal leader; it focuses attention on leadership practice, not just on leadership roles and functions and those who take responsibility for them. Leadership practice takes shape in the interaction of leaders, followers, and their situations (Spillane, 2006).

According to Spillane (2006), in a distributed leadership framework, leadership practice is stretched over multiple leaders. Many of the leadership activities that he and his colleagues observed in the "Distributed Leadership Project" study were co-enacted. Both their design or initiation and their execution over time depended on the practices of two or more leaders (Spillane, 2006).

Followers and leadership practice. Spillane (2006) concluded that the follower dimension is another essential component of leadership practice. Depending on the leadership activity, classroom teachers, administrators, specialists, and others can find

themselves in the follower role. Through use of the term *follower*, those in leader roles

are distinguished from others involved in a leadership routine. A distributed perspective

of leadership not only acknowledges the centrality of followers to leadership but also

casts followers in a new light, as an essential element that constitutes leadership practice.

Followers interact with leaders and the situation, contributing to defining leadership

practice (Spillane, 2006). In her dissertation, Bunch (2012) stated,

> Rather than teachers' practicing in isolation, opportunities have emerged that have allowed teachers to grow as both informal and formal leaders. This greater collaboration and increased participatory leadership of teachers in schools paves the way for teacher leadership inside and outside the classroom. (Bunch, 2012, p. 47)

Situation and leadership practice. According to Spillane's (2006**)** distributed

leadership practice theory, leadership situations are one element of the leadership practice

definition, with the other two elements being followers and leaders. Leaders work in

interaction not only with followers and leaders but also with aspects of the situation,

including routines and tools (Spillane, 2006). Spillane suggested that school leaders do

not work directly on the world; they work with various aspects of their situations.

Routines are defined as part of the leadership situation in Spillane's distributed leadership

practice model. Routines, therefore, can be taken for granted as a part of daily life.

Moreover, routines can involve everything from getting to work in the morning to

teaching a reading lesson. Feldman and Pentland wrote, "Routines involve two or more

actors in a repetitive, recognizable pattern of interdependent actions" (Feldman &

Pentland, 2003, p. 96).

Distributed leadership studies analysis.

Spillane's study on distributed leadership capital. A distributed leadership

framework is a description of how leadership already exists in an organization (Spillane,

2006). The 4-year longitudinal study conducted by Spillane et al. (2003), entitled "The

Distributed Leadership Project," investigated how elementary teachers construct and

influence others as leaders. The multiyear study of elementary school leadership

involved observations and interviews with 84 teachers at 13 Chicago public elementary

schools in the winter and spring of 1999. The study focused on school leadership activity

rather than the leader-plus aspect, in which the principal is the focus of l leadership

(Spillane, 2006). The project involved several phases, beginning with a 6-month pilot

phase involving seven Chicago public elementary schools in the winter and spring of

1999 (Spillane et al., 2003). The first full year of data collection began in September

1999 and involved eight Chicago elementary schools, two of which also were used in the

pilot phase (a total of 13 schools). The schools were selected through the logic of

selective and theoretical sampling. High-poverty urban schools that varied

demographically were included in the study: seven predominantly African American

schools, three predominantly Hispanic schools, and three that were mixed. The

researchers were interested in schools that had shown signs of improving mathematics,

science, or literacy instruction as well as those that had not made progress (Spillane et al.,

2003).

The mixed-methods study incorporated observations, interviews, and

questionnaires for principals and teachers. The teachers were observed in their

classrooms prior to their participation in interviews. Then, after the observations, the

project researchers asked the teachers questions that focused on observed instructional

practices. The data collection and analysis were closely integrated, allowing the

researchers to uncover patterns and working hypotheses (Spillane et al., 2003).

The findings in this article were categorized into three areas of coding in the project: (a) who or what influenced classroom instruction; (b) the dimension of instruction over which influence was exercised, along two lines—subject matter and instructional aspect; and (c) the attribution of legitimacy to leaders, identifying the informant's rationale for identifying a particular leader as influential (Spillane et al., 2003, p. 3). The study focused on instructional leadership, defined by the researchers as an influence relationship that motivates, enables, and supports teachers' efforts to learn about and change their instruction practices. The researchers argued that leadership occurs through an interactive process in which followers construct others as leaders on the basis of four forms of capital: (a) human capital (skills, knowledge, and expertise); (b) cultural capital (ways of being); (c) social capital (networks and relations of trust); and (d) economic capital (material resources) (Spillane et al., 2003).

The researchers designed interview questions to elicit teachers' perspectives regarding influences on specific instructional activities. The researchers were able to observe the classrooms of 45% of the teachers who were interviewed. The study's focus on instructional behavior was intentional to avoid the claim that leaders were perceived as having certain qualities by virtue of their positions, rather than their actual behaviors (Spillane et al., 2003).

The researchers concluded that (a) accountability measures and other external policy levers coexist or work in tandem with leadership processes based on forms of capital; (b) leaders influence followers through social interaction and everyday interactions between teachers and administrators, and teachers and teachers; and (c) all four types of capital and the construction of leadership are important reflection points for

school reformers (Spillane et al., 2003, p. 12). By focusing on instructional leadership as an influence relationship that motivates, enables, and supports teachers' efforts to learn about and change their teaching practices, the researchers examined how teachers construct influence as leaders on the basis of valued forms of human, cultural, social, and economic capital. According to Spillane, capital is only one significant basis that contributes to instructional leadership in schools. The study indicated that forms of capital and the construction of leadership are an important point of reflection for school reformers.

A limitation to the study was that it was conducted in one large urban city with intentional populations. Nevertheless, because of the size and length of the study, its trustworthiness and validity are less questionable.

Goldstein's study of distributed leadership. According to Goldstein (2004), a teacher leader can become an instructional leader only when there is collaboration and a shared vision. Teacher peer assistance and review (PAR) is a formal process that involves teachers in the summative evaluation of other teachers. Although a variety of education policies increase teachers' leadership responsibility by placing them in such roles as mentors, curriculum developers, peer coaches, and researchers, Goldstein suggested that only PAR increases teachers' formal authority by altering district organizational structures for teacher evaluation, which plays a significant role in the advancement of teacher leaders to additional levels of leadership.

Goldstein stated in his 2004 thesis that charging teachers with formal responsibility for the evaluation of other teachers creates the potential for a struggle between teachers and administrators over occupational boundaries. The research

employed an embedded single-case study (Yin, 1989) of one urban, ethnically and economically diverse K-12 school district in the Rosemont unified school district in California, with approximately 100 schools and 3000 teachers. Rosemont's history included unpleasant relations between teachers and the school district caused by personnel policies that allowed *at will* hiring contracts for teachers, which were administered at the principal's discretion. The effects on teacher benefits and salaries created a culture of distrust at Rosemont.

The study focused on evaluation of beginning teachers and the potential for separating the task from the administrative role of the principal. Data collection began with the inception of a PAR panel in the spring prior to the year of the study's implementation, when data were collected via observations, interviews, and surveys. Goldstein (2004) sought to uncover the interaction among the stakeholder groups and the influence of stakeholders whether separately or collaboratively in deciding evaluative outcomes. The actors in the study were constantly engaged in negotiating the ways and degrees to which responsibility for teacher evaluation was divided among the consulting teacher, PAR panel, and principals.

A limitation of the study was its confinement to one school district with a history of distrust and animosity between administrators and teachers prior to the study. This situation created a potential bias in the study results. This study did not address any particular qualities and qualifications of principals, which could have influenced the findings. This may have been a critical omission because a principal's personal qualities play a large role in his or her ability to accept leadership by teachers (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001). Goldstein (2004) acknowledged a second limitation,

indicating that future research on PAR and distributed leadership should examine this important factor. In addition, Goldstein suggested that the study duration of a year and a half did not allow for a longitudinal view that might have discovered more change in the evaluation processes at Rosemont.

Distributed leadership insights. Spillane (2006) inferred that, to achieve success within a school organization using a distributed framework, teacher leaders are vitally important and should be placed in strong leadership positions, whether as formal or informal leaders. Moreover, Harris (2008) suggested that in a distributed leadership framework, teacher leadership identification is essential. Harris also stated that the designated roles that the teacher leaders are required to fill must be defined to optimize leadership capacity.

Spillane (2006) affirmed that teacher leaders need the support and encouragement of the principal within the school setting to grow and mature in leadership training and assignments. The overall development and support of teacher leadership within the school site emanates from the principal's support of the leadership function in the school. With support, teacher leaders can thrive in an environment with focused training, mentoring, encouragement, and acknowledgement.

Inferences from the Literature Review

This review of the literature informed the research study. I gathered data to help unveil the leadership needs and desires of teacher leaders in Christian schools to develop leader strategies and policies for growing and maintaining future Christian schools. From the literature, one can conclude that teacher leaders are vital to the leadership and

operation of schools. The teacher leaders can be expected to serve their schools in leader capacities, beyond the classroom.

Based upon Spillane's (2006) findings, one can conclude that a deficit exists in school leadership in the acceptance of formal and informal teacher leaders' contributions to leadership practices in PK-12 schools. Teacher leaders sometimes exist as influential leaders with legitimate power within a school system, without formal title or compensation.   From another view, Morgan (2006) seemed to suggest that teacher leaders inside or outside classrooms might not exert as much influence with followers as positional leaders.

Harris (2008) revealed another deficit in the area of teacher leadership development: the leadership development relationship among the instructional leader, the principal, and the teacher leaders. The principal may not be willing to share the responsibilities of leadership in a shared or distributed arrangement or to encourage the teachers in a nontraditional approach of leadership within a school. Harris suggested that many educators are hesitant to distance themselves from a hierarchical arrangement in a shared or distributed environment.

Based upon the review of the literature, it was apparent that more systemic, formal teacher leadership development programs might be needed for teacher leaders in private PK-12 Christian schools. Professional development of teacher leaders may prove necessary to build a collaborative relationship between the principal and the teacher leaders, contextualized in a distributed leadership environment, as described by Spillane (2006) and Harris (2008). The literature revealed that many challenges exist for teacher leaders. Many principals have a distrust and reluctance to share leadership

responsibilities with teacher leaders and are hesitant to develop them as leaders, noted

Spillane. Effective teachers may not be viewed as actual or prospective teacher leaders

by principals, as teacher efficacy is usually associated with pedagogy rather than

leadership.

Burns (2003), in his transformation leadership model, suggested that traditional

teachers often are not viewed as potential transformational leaders. Farr (2010)

recommended that teacher leaders be equipped with the desired skills, strategies, vision,

and techniques to motivate, strategize, and set goals. With reference to Pounder (2006),

the literature supported a relationship between teacher effectiveness and transformational

teacher leadership. Spillane et al. (2001) suggested that teacher leadership development

rests on the principal's ability and willingness to model a professional tone that values

learning in the school.

The literature revealed another challenge with teacher leadership sustainability in

K-12 schools, as identified by Harris (2008). Harris concluded that teacher leader

turnover is problematic from a leadership development perspective. After being

developed in a leadership role as a beneficiary of training and leadership support,

teachers may not remain in those positions (Harris, 2008). Thus, beyond the costs of

replacement, teacher turnover can weaken the leadership succession process in school

systems (Harris, 2008).

In addition, the literature review revealed current theories on teacher leadership.

The insight has potential to contribute to future solutions to the teacher leader human

capital needs within Christian schools that challenge school administrators. The

literature review explored different aspects of teacher leadership, focusing on advantages

and opportunities that need further exploration. The literature revealed that teacher leaders, once identified and developed, become a human capital resource that can vitally contribute to the leadership within schools.

According to Sims (2009), talent management and leader succession provides a focus on the identification, onboarding, assessment, development, and movement of internal talent. Therefore, the heads of school or principals, in Christian schools might want to consider instituting such a program to manage teacher leader identification, development, and placement in schools.

Summary of the Literature Review

Chapter 2 has presented a review of the literature pertaining to a theoretical perspective of leadership as the basis for informing the study. The conceptual framework consists of three sections: (a) Christian structure and culture, (b) teacher leaders, and (c) distributed leadership. The three sections were discussed and analyzed to provide a historical background of Christian schools inclusive of their structure and culture. In this exploratory study, convergent and divergent themes from the findings were analyzed and interpreted relative to the three sections delineated in the conceptual framework map of the literature review and to the research questions.

Chapter 3: Methodology

"Qualitative research is interested in how meaning is constructed, how people make sense of their lives and their worlds" (Merriam, 2009, p. 24).

In this research study, I explored the leadership experiences of Christian teacher leaders, as told from the teacher leaders' perspectives. I conducted an exploratory study of the leadership experiences of the teacher leaders using a basic qualitative interview-based interpretive methodology. Then, I collected and analyzed data from multiple semistructured interviews as the participants told their stories. For the study, I chose to involve teacher leaders as well as heads of schools and principals as the participants. To obtain rich, thick credible data, I triangulated the data in the research process. The triangulation included data collection from teacher leaders and reflection notes in multiple semistructured interviews. Also, I used a comparative analysis to contrast data collected from the heads of school and principals to that collected from the teacher leaders. Although the primary research question guided the study, the literature review informed this qualitative interpretive research study. For the theoretical lens, I used a distributed leadership practice conceptual framework (Spillane, 2006). I chose a constructionist epistemology, as described by Merriam (2009). According to Merriam, the goal of constructionism in basic qualitative research is to understand the meaning a phenomenon for those involved. According to Crotty, "meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting" (Crotty, 1998, pp. 42-43). My interpretation of the results occurred after completing the data analysis.

Statement of the Problem

The literature revealed that a gap existed in the scholarly literature and research studies on the leadership experiences of teacher leaders in American PK-12 Christian

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schools. Researching this phenomenon proved especially interesting to me in light of the teacher leadership opportunities facing most schools in the 21st century, accompanied by demands for reformed leadership (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Elmore, 2007; Harris, 2008; Spillane, 2006; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). According to the literature, Christian schools, as should other schools, must reexamine their current leadership structures and leaders in an effort to promote school leadership reform. This reform, the use of teacher leaders, can possibly influence future Christian school growth and teacher leader development and sustainability. Hence, I commenced this study to research teacher leaders and their leadership experiences in Christian schools. The research contributes to the body of knowledge on teacher leaders' leadership experiences in PK-12 Christian schools. In the next section, I state the purpose of the study.

Purpose

In this study, I proposed to explore the leadership experiences of principal-identified teacher leaders in Christian schools in a distributed leadership environment, as told from the teacher leaders' perspective. I conducted a comparative analysis of the responses of the teacher leaders and the responses of the heads of school and principals to determine the similarities and differences in the raw data as well as emergent themes. To select the teacher leader participants, I gave the heads of school and principals leadership criteria for identifying teacher leader participants for this study. I grounded the leader criteria in the seminal leadership theories of noted theorists (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Burns, 1978; Collins, 2001, 2005; Greenleaf, 2002; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002).

Research Questions

In accordance with my purpose, I guided the research with a primary research question: How do principal-identified teacher leaders experience leadership in private faith-based PK-12 Christian schools, in a distributed leadership environment, as told from the teacher leaders' perspectives? I used four subquestions in the research:

1. How do teacher leaders define leadership?

2. What are the teacher leader roles in Christian schools?

3. What leader tasks and routines do teacher leaders perform?

4. How do the teacher leader responses compare with the heads of school and principal responses?

Research Design

To accommodate the research study, I chose a methodology that allowed me to capture thick, rich data. I followed with a data analysis of the findings from the participants' perspectives, through their voices. Thus, I used a basic qualitative, interview-based interpretive methodology as part of the research design (Merriam, 2009). To illustrate the research design, I used Maxwell's (2005) interactive research design model. The model illustrated the goals of the study, the conceptual framework, the research questions, the methods, and the study's validity or trustworthiness (Maxwell, 2005). (See Figures 4 and 5.)
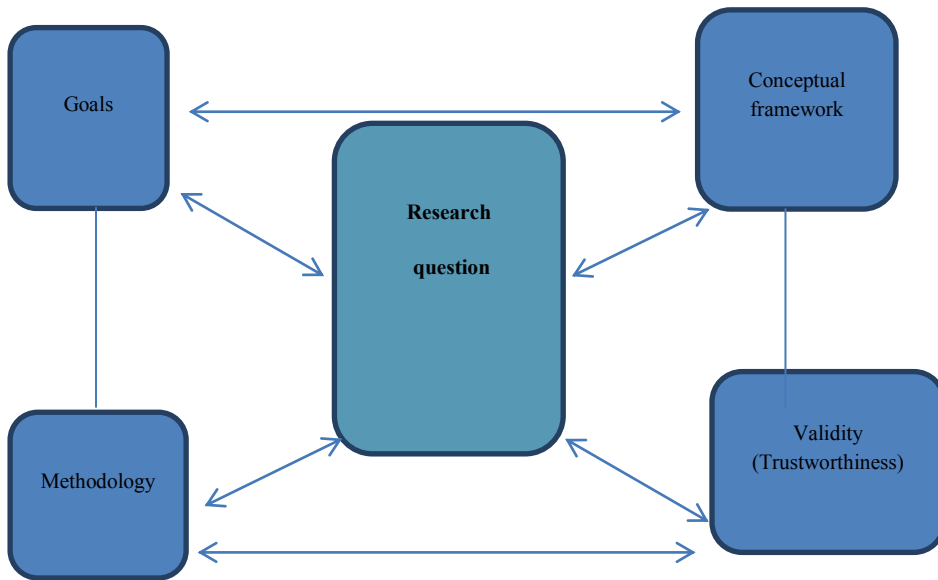
Figure 4. Maxwell's (2005) interactive design.

GOALS

- To define teacher leaders
- To explore how distributed leadership occurs in Christian schools
- To understand the perspectives of teacher leaders on leadership
- To explore leadership experiences of teacher leaders
- To add to the scholarly body of knowledge on teacher leaders.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK MAP

- Christian school structure and culture
- Teacher leader roles, routines, interactions, communication, development, situations, leaders, followers, and tasks
- Distributed leadership

RESEARCH QUESTION(S)

How do principal identified teacher leaders in faith-based PK-12 Christian schools experience leadership in a distributed leadership environment, as told from the teacher leaders' perspective?

- **How do Christian teacher leaders define leadership?**
- **What are the teacher leader roles in Christian schools?**
- **What leader tasks and routines do teacher leaders perform?**
- **How do teacher leader responses compare with head of school and principal responses?**

METHODOLOGY

- **Interview protocol for teacher leaders**
- **Interview protocol for principals**
- **Semi-structured interview protocol**
- **Two interviews per teacher leader and two interviews per principal**
- **Principals identify teacher leaders**
- **Purposeful sampling**
- **24 total participants**

TRUSTWORTHINESS

- **List the limitations and delimitations of the research**
- **Triangulation of sources, methods, and theories**
- **Multiple teacher leader interviews**
- **Principal interviews**
- **Member checking**
- **Comparative analysis**

Figure 5. Teacher leader interactive research design using Maxwell's (2005) design.

Participant Selection and Sites

In the study, I used purposeful sampling and interviewed both teacher leaders and heads of school and principals from American PK-12 Christian schools. As noted in the purpose section, I asked the heads of school and principals to identify teacher leaders based upon leadership criteria I provided to them. Prior to visiting the selected schools, I was uncertain of their formal use of distributed leadership. Therefore, I chose Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice conceptual framework as the lens for the study. This framework assumes the interaction of leaders, followers, and leadership situations in schools. In the study, the participants were 18 or older, in accordance with adult informed consent requirements of The George Washington University's Internal Review Board (IRB). The teacher leader selection guidelines are presented in Appendix D.

The leadership characteristics that I chose for the teacher leader selection guidelines are aligned with the Christian school belief, mission, and philosophy (AACS, 2013; ACSI, 2012; Devink, 1996; Devink & Carruthers, 2008). To achieve saturation, Polkinghorne (1989) recommended that qualitative researchers interview from 5 to 25 individuals who have all experienced the proposed research phenomenon. Hence, I chose an expected teacher leader participant sample size ($N = 16$), which achieved trustworthiness and saturation. The head of school and principal sample size ($N = 8$) achieved saturation (Merriam, 2009; Polkinghorne, 1989).

Data Collection

In the study, I collected data from 16 teacher leaders and from 8 heads of schools and principals. I interviewed participants in two (approximately) 60-minute sessions, with the second interview informing the first interview. Regarding the interview sites, I

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conducted two semistructured interviews with each participant at locations agreeable to the participant. For data collection, I digitally recorded each interview and assigned a pseudonym to each participant to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. Afterwards, I stored the data on a digital tape recorder, a laptop computer, and a flash drive to achieve maximum backup protection. For transcription and coding, I used ATLAS.ti.

Prior to the first interview, I established a rapport and relationship with each participant by telephone and e-mails, seeking to make each participant feel comfortable with the interview process. Then at the first interview, I collected data from each participant, respectively, using an interview protocol. I used one protocol for the teacher leaders (See Appendix B); I used another interview protocol for the heads of school and principals (see Appendix C). The data collection included questions on leadership relationships, leadership background, education level, longevity in the position, professional background, mentors, sponsors, years of service in the current position, interpersonal characteristics, career expectations, goals and future plans, leader traits, leadership training, and career paths. In the second interview, I revisited the same questions for clarity and to capture any additional data. To assure clarity and accuracy, I performed member checking during the second interview, which I discuss in detail in Chapter 4. During the second interview, I also used reflection memos to record data, as a backup to the digital recordings.

Epistemology

The epistemology for this study involved the constructionist interpretivist approach as proposed by Merriam (2009). This epistemology allowed me to make meaning out of the data findings. According to Creswell (2007), the constructivist is one

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who makes meaning out of investigation and discovery. According to Crotty (2003), human beings engage with the world they interpret as meanings are constructed from the data findings. According to Merriam, all qualitative research focuses on constructing meaning from the research findings to understand how people make sense of their lives and their worlds. In this study, I closely examined the commonalities of the participant experiences to uncover any convergent or divergent emerging themes emanating from the data.

Instrumentation

As the researcher, I served as the data collection instrument. According to Merriam (2009), the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis in this type of research:

> The human instrument has shortcomings and biases that might have an impact on the study. Rather than trying to eliminate these biases or subjectivities, it is important to identify biases and monitor them as to how they may be shaping the collection and interpretation of data. (Merriam, 2009, p. 15)

To test the effectiveness of the interview protocols, I conducted pilot interviews for both the principal and teacher leader protocols. For the principal interview protocol pilot test, I interviewed a former principal from a PK-12 Christian school with more than 20 years of experience. This individual did not serve as a participant in the research study. The principal took 30 minutes to complete the 60-minute interview, as the principal spoke with clarity and conciseness. The pilot revealed that two questions were redundant, and two others solicited insufficient data. Therefore, I changed the two questions that did not solicit enough data to open-ended questions to solicit more informed responses from the participants. Subsequently, to ensure that I collected enough data, I added several other interview questions that pertained to the research

question. I combined the two redundant questions and redesigned them as open-ended, thought-provoking questions to solicit thicker and richer participant responses.

Similarly, I conducted a pilot interview of the teacher leader interview protocol. The pilot revealed several redundant questions and two serial questions, which became awkward in the interview. Afterwards, I conducted an initial pilot interview using the teacher leader protocol and administered it to a teacher with 8 years of teaching experience in a Christian school. The teacher did not serve as a participant in this study. As redundancy appeared in several interview questions, I combined some of the affected questions and rephrased others. Also, the 60-minute teacher pilot interview session lasted 90 minutes. Therefore, I reduced the number of questions asked on the interview protocol to 10-14 meaningful, open-ended questions. I adjusted the interview protocols to accommodate the changes. To test the revised questions, I conducted a second pilot with a different teacher leader and analyzed the results, which I accepted.

Data Analysis

As the researcher, I used inductive and comparative data analysis in the research study (Merriam, 2009). According to Merriam, data analysis is the process of making sense of the data; it is the process of making meaning and answering the research questions. Therefore, in this study, I divided the data into categories commonly used in basic data analysis (Merriam, 2009). I constructed categories as I assigned codes to pieces of data to determine themes, patterns, and findings that pertained to answering the research questions (Merriam, 2009). According to Creswell, qualitative researchers build their patterns, categories, and themes from the "bottom up," by organizing the data into increasingly more abstract units of information (Creswell, 2007, p. 38). Hence, for

this study, I identified and analyzed the emergent themes and patterns from significant statements, sentences, or quotes that provided insights into the participants' leadership experiences.

In the research coding, I developed clusters of meaning and themes from the data. Then, I used the themes to compose a textual description of the participants' leadership experiences. Further, I used data coding to categorize the analyzed data from transcribed interviews and reflective notes from the participant interviews (Merriam, 2009). As a result, I charted the emergent themes into categories and subcategories.

For the conceptual framework, I used Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice model (See Figure 6). In addition, I investigated the following areas: (a) Christian structure and culture; (b) teacher leadership, including communication, development, followers, interactions, leaders, leadership, formal and informal roles, routines and tasks, and situations; and (c) distributed leadership.
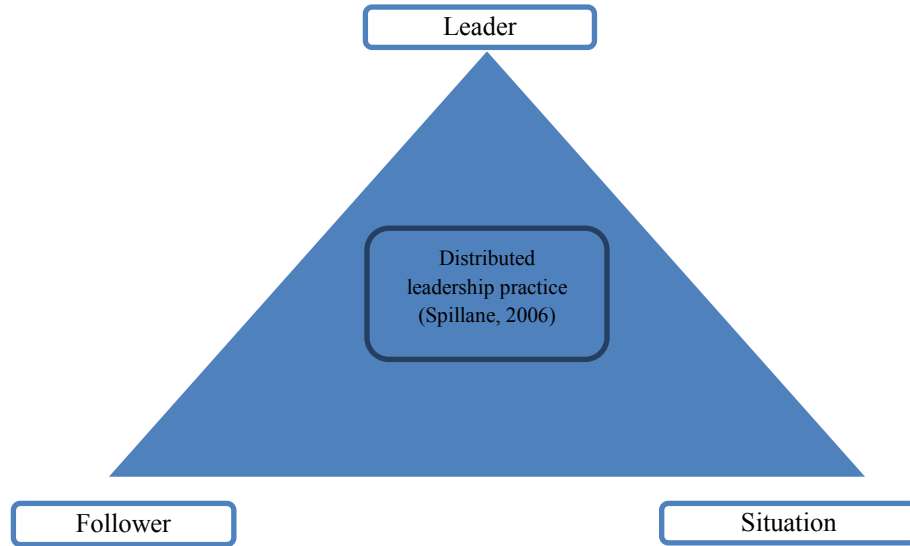
Figure 6. Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice model.

Subjectivity Role of the Researcher

I served as the secondary principal at a private, Christian school in Maryland for 15 years. The school was a PK-12 Christian school with approximately 800 students. I previously held several other educational leadership positions, as noted in the subjectivity statement in Chapter 1, totaling more than 25 years of experience in Christian education. Prior to entering the field of education, I held leadership and management positions in private enterprises and banking in the United States. Therefore, when I entered the field of education, I possessed a skill set in leadership and management. Soon, I realized that many of my colleagues, specifically faculty, possessed stellar pedagogical and instructional expertise, yet lacked leadership and managerial skills, such as setting short- and long-term objectives, practicing collaboration and reflective thinking skills, and utilizing motivational techniques.

As principal, I recognized the leadership talent resident in the faculty, along with a need for utilizing teacher leaders to meet other schoolwide goals. My vision involved developing and mentoring the teachers as leaders to accomplish the goals of the school organization. Over time, this vision became a reality. Nevertheless, my goal for this study was to investigate how various teacher leaders in private American PK-12 Christian schools perceived their leadership experiences, as told directly through the participants' voices.

Trustworthiness

According to Merriam (2009), the most important potential threats to the trustworthiness of a study center on a minimal sampling of data and a biased study sample. Both can weaken the study's credibility. According to Merriam, "validity and reliability are concerns that can be approached through careful attention to a study's conceptualization and the way in which the data are collected, analyzed, and interpreted and the way in which the findings are presented" (Merriam, 2009, p. 210). Therefore, for this study, I collected from interviewed participants data sufficient to reach saturation, according to Merriam's and Polkinghorne's (1989) theories. Triangulation in data collection minimized the potential for bias in the study (Creswell, 2007; Maxwell, 2005; Merriam, 2009). Any researcher interpretations or biases I found during the data analysis, I bracketed to maintain the integrity of the research findings.

Ethical and Political Considerations

I member checked all data collected from the participants to ensure that I conducted the research in an ethical manner that adhered to the IRB standards of The George Washington University. I obtained verbal and written consent from the

participants before I conducted the interviews, in accordance with the IRB requirements. Also, the participants validated the results of the research findings through member checking. During interviews, I encouraged all participants to answer questions as they felt comfortable. If a participant perceived that answering a question would result in professional jeopardy, I invited the participant to not answer the question; however, this situation did not occur. As stated in a previous section, I also informed the teacher leaders, heads of schools, and principals that the collected data would be confidential and listed under pseudonyms to protect their identities.

Summary of Chapter 3 and Implications for Chapters 4 and 5

This research study allowed me to explore the teacher leaders' leadership experiences and interactions in leadership situations (Spillane, 2006). Moreover, the results revealed in Chapter 4 and the interpretations in Chapter 5 led to future research recommendations. The results of the study possibly can contribute to resolving 21st-century teacher leadership challenges that face PK-12 Christian schools in a distributed environment (Harris & Spillane, 2008).

Chapter 4: Findings

"The essence of the leader-follower relation is the interaction of persons with different levels of motivations and of power potential…in pursuit of a common or at least joint purpose" (Burns, 1978, p. 23).

Overview

In this chapter, I present the findings discovered during the data collection and data analysis phases of this study. As a qualitative researcher, I conducted this study to investigate the leadership experiences of principal-identified teacher leaders in American PK-12 Christian schools and to construct meaning from the findings. I chose a distributed leadership practice conceptual framework as the lens for this study (Spillane, 2006). The distributed leadership practice conceptual framework presupposed that leadership experiences exist in school organizations connected in a triad arrangement with leaders, followers, and leadership situations interacting simultaneously. Using this conceptual framework, the teacher leader participant assumes the role of leader or follower in leadership situation occurring in the school (Spillane, 2006). Therefore, for the research, I chose the following primary research question to inform the study: How do principal-identified teacher leaders in faith-based PK-12 Christian schools experience leadership in a distributed leadership environment, as told from the teacher leaders' perspectives? To further define my research interest, I used four subquestions to inform the primary research question:

1. How do teacher leaders define leadership?

2. What are the teacher leader roles in Christian schools?

3. What leader tasks and routines do teacher leaders perform?

4. How do the teacher leader responses compare with the heads of school and principal responses?

Chapter Chronology

This chapter on findings began with a chapter introduction, followed by an overview of how I performed the data collection and data analysis. Next, I provide a detailed account of the research processes I used in the data analysis and collection processes. To this end, the account includes descriptions of the following elements: interactive collection and analysis process, member checking, data transcription and reflections, saturation levels, data coding, reliability and trustworthiness, site locations, facility tours and settings, and school organizational structures. After performing the data processes, I reveal the emergent, convergent, and divergent themes from the findings. Then in the next section, I profile the educational backgrounds of each participant. Finally, I present the findings from the data analysis, as they relate to the research questions and themes. I conclude with a chapter summary.

Data Collection and Data Analysis Overview

Although I provided a detailed account of the data collection and data analysis procedures in Chapter 3, in this section I explain the processes I used to collect and analyze the data. As researcher, I thought it important to the credibility of the findings that readers thoroughly understand the details of how the data collection, data management, and data analysis processes unfolded.

Interactive data analysis. I chose to use an interactive data collection and analysis process. Qualitative data analysis and data collection can be performed as a simultaneous and interactive process (Merriam, 2009). Therefore, after each semistructured interview, I began an interactive analysis of the interview findings using my interview reflection memos and notes taken during each interview. Later, I added

participant quotations from transcriptions of the recorded interviews. According to

Merriam, "data collection and analysis is a simultaneous activity in qualitative research"

(Merriam, 2009. p. 165). Correspondingly, Maxwell (2005) suggested that data analysis

and data collection are interactive in qualitative research.

Although unplanned, I informally observed the participants' interactions with

their colleagues at the interview sites, which added to the richness and validity of the

data. I did not plan the informal observations; however, they occurred spontaneously as I

interviewed at the actual school sites.

Data collected. Using interview protocols, as stated in Chapter 3, I collected and

simultaneously analyzed data as I conducted two semistructured interviews of 24

participants during a 3-month period. The total interview time for each participant

ranged from approximately 90-120 minutes for the two interviews. The data collection

covered the period August 2014 through October 2014. Additional statistics revealed the

sizes of the participating schools in the data collection process. I randomly selected the

schools, which ranged in student population (or size) from 150-1100 students. The

average school size in the study was approximately 525 students. The faculty and staffs

at the seven schools ranged from 35-135 persons. For the study, I selected eight heads of

schools and principals, who, in turn, selected the 16 teacher leader participants

represented in seven PK-12 Christian schools. The schools represented various religious

denominations, such as Baptist, Catholic, or board of directors-operated PK-12 Christian

schools, located on the east coast of the United States. Although I interviewed at seven

schools, I listed eight heads of schools and principals. This occurred because one head of

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school recommended a principal, a former teacher leader, as a participant for the study. Thus, I used eight heads of school and principals for the comparative analysis.

Member checking. I determined the preliminary analysis themes using the interactive data collection and analysis process. Then, I member checked the preliminary analysis with each participant. Merriam wrote, "The process involved in member checks is to take your preliminary analysis back to some of the participants and ask whether your interpretation rings true" (Merriam, 2009, p. 217). I conducted member checking during the second interview with all 16 teacher leader participants; 100% agreed that the themes from the preliminary analysis positively resonated with them. Comparatively, I conducted member checking with 8 heads of schools and principals; 100% positively agreed with the themes in the preliminary analysis. I then asked participants to record any additional comments on their member checking preliminary analysis form. The participants opted to sign the forms as part of the validation process. Merriam noted, "The analysis of the data involves identifying recurring patterns that characterize the data. Findings are these recurring patterns or themes supported by the data from which they were derived" (Merriam, 2009, p. 23).

Data transcriptions and reflection memos. Next, I transcribed the majority of the digitally recorded interviews; however, I used a reputable transcription company to transcribe six of the interviews to shorten the transcription completion time. As a backup to the recorded data collection, I wrote detailed reflection memos during each interview session, with the participant's agreement. This was completed as an alternative method of data collection to guard against possible recording equipment failure.

Saturation. I reached saturation in the data from the teacher leaders after approximately 12 interviews; I reached saturation in the data with the heads of school and principals after approximately 6 interviews. When I initially scheduled the interviews, however, I did not know at what point I would reach saturation or redundancy. Therefore, I decided to conduct all 24 scheduled interviews. This decision was valuable as all interviewees contributed to the richness of the data.

Data coding. I coded the data using ATLAS.ti software; I used open coding and in vivo coding to extract direct quotations from the participant transcriptions. In addition, I used emic coding, which described categories with data taken from the participants' own words and concepts (Merriam, 2009, p. 97). According to Maxwell, "categories taken from participants own words and concepts, generally called 'emic' categories, are usually substantive" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 97). I numbered the interview transcriptions for easy coding and reference. To establish codes, I referred to several sources: the transcriptions, the reflection notes from the interviews, the recorded notes on flip chart pages, the drawn diagrams of evolving patterns, and my informal journal of interview reflections and notations. As a result, the coded raw data consisted of words, phrases, quotes, and statements from the data. Next, I separated the data into four categories using an inductive approach. The four categories aligned with the four research questions. The four categories were (a) leadership experiences and interactions, (b) definitions of teacher leaders, (c) roles of teacher leaders, and (d) tasks and routines of teacher leaders. Then, in the next step, I coded the raw data into the categories and constructed the emergent themes from the data. As a result, six major themes emerged from the teacher leader

data; correspondingly, four major themes emerged from the heads of schools. Later I separated the themes into convergent and divergent themes. (See Table 1.)

Reliability and trustworthiness. For purposes of reliability, I used an interpretive community to determine the consistency of the results and the collected data (Merriam, 2009). The results reflected consistency. My interpretive community consisted of all teacher leader interviewees in the study. Each of the 24 participants reviewed the emergent themes from the findings presented in the preliminary analysis, with unanimous agreement. In addition, I used a peer reviewer to review the data and determine the plausibility of the data findings based upon the data collected (Merriam, 2009). This peer reviewer, a certified teacher with a master's degree and 8 years of PK-8 teaching experience, did not participant in the study. After the review, the peer reviewer responded that the data findings appeared consistent and plausible with the research study. I also used triangulation in the data collection and data analysis processes.

Interview sites. I offered the interviewees the opportunity to interview on or away from their school campuses. Because the interviews occurred during the beginning of the school year, the teacher leader participants chose their school locations as conducive and convenient sites for the interviews. As a result, the participants and I met individually in quiet conference rooms, private offices, and sometimes in vacant classrooms. For both interview sessions, I interviewed each participant separately during office hours, extended preparatory periods, after school, or during extended lunch periods. Because I conducted the interviews at the actual school locations, I had an unplanned opportunity to observe the participants informally in their natural school

settings. I discuss the details of the unplanned informal observations in the facility tours and settings section.

Facility tours and settings. Several of the administrative participants offered me tours of their schools and introduced me to teachers, coaches, and administrative staff members. In addition, on two occasions a head of school and a teacher leader from another school, respectively, invited me to lunch at their schools. In one instance, I had lunch with the faculty; in the other instance, I had lunch in the cafeteria with the teacher leader, students, and the faculty. Touring the school facilities, visiting classrooms, and meeting school staffs provided me with the opportunity to view the participants in their environments. Firsthand, I informally observed the teacher leaders in their settings and observed participant interactions and conversations with colleagues, school staff, the administration, students, and other stakeholders. Other informal observations occurred as I sat in school reception offices, lunchrooms, classrooms, or conference rooms, and as I toured the facilities. With the exception of the lunches, I encountered spontaneous interactions in settings separate from the interview sessions. The informal observations allowed me to add another dimension to the authenticity of the data. According to Maxwell, "you [the researcher] are not only sampling people, but also settings, events, and processes" (Maxwell, 1995, p. 87).

At another school, I visited a grade-level team meeting conference area to see where the team captain held meetings with the teacher leaders on her team. The grade-level team captain and her team of teacher leaders had decorated and painted the meeting area. Hence, the grade-level leader displayed a strong sense of pride and ownership. During the interviews, I informally observed the school settings to be orderly, with

friendly, welcoming, and inviting atmospheres. During my visits, the teacher leaders demonstrated politeness and spoke to colleagues in a courteous manner. The staffs displayed camaraderie toward each other and toward incoming parents and visitors who entered the building. I informally observed order and a seeming peace and comfort in the schools when bells rang for class changes. Also, I observed that in most schools the teachers dressed modestly and professionally. In the schools I toured, the students exemplified the same seeming peace and orderliness, appearing comfortable.

  School organizational leadership structures. The organizational school structures in the seven Christian schools had hierarchical organizational structures; most had informal layers of leadership and utilized the team approach. For example, one school used a senior administrative team comprising three individuals to collaborate on major organizational decisions. Another school used the grade-level team approach in their middle school to collaborate and make team decisions that impacted the school community at their grade level; they interfaced directly with colleagues, students, parents and the administration. In other instances, team leaders or department heads collaborated with their colleagues on curriculum changes. In another example, the dean of students who usually administered student discipline collaborated with another colleague in a leadership situation involving the implementation of a technology program, which could significantly impact future school policies and procedures. The dean contributed to the project by providing input on potential discipline policy issues that could potentially affect the school community. The technologist welcomed the input. In each school the data indicated that the head of school or principal used some form of distributed leadership practice, team leadership, professional learning community, or collaborative

approaches to leadership practice, although the participants did not formally refer to their leadership organizational structures in terms of a specific leadership model, such as distributed leadership (Rubin & Futrell, 2009; Senge, 1990; Spillane, 2006). Edwards and Ewen wrote, in their book *360° Feedback*:

> Organizations are reducing hierarchy by removing layers of management and putting more emphasis on empowerment, teamwork, continuous learning, individual development, and self-responsibility. The 360° model aligns with these organizational goals to create opportunities for personal and career development and for aligning individual [teacher leader] performance expectations with corporate [schools'] values. (Edwards & Ewen, 1996, p. 5)

Emergent, Convergent, and Divergent Themes

I present the emergent themes in Table 1, with the accompanying supporting raw data, that contributed to the development of each theme. As shown in Table 2, six emergent themes surfaced from the responses of the teacher leader participants during the data analysis. Then, presented in Table 3 are four emergent themes that surfaced from interviews with the heads of school or principals.

In the majority of instances, the themes from the two groups converged; however, two divergences occurred. First, the theme on the definition of teacher leaders diverged among the participants. Second, the heads of school and principals diverged as they identified a theme on talent management and leader succession with regard to identifying and developing teacher leaders (Betof, 2009; Sims, 2009). I cover the divergences in more detail in a subsequent section on the six themes.

Next, in Table 1, I list emergent, convergent, and divergent themes from the data analysis, comparing the convergent and divergent themes of the two sets of participants.

Table 1. *Emergent, Convergent, and Divergent Themes of Teacher Leaders*

Theme	Type	TL/HOS
Teacher leaders have unconditional love for the school community	Emic/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher leaders have a global school perspective	Emic/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher leaders lead by example	Emic/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher leaders are influencers	Emic/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher leaders go the extra mile	Emic/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher leaders mentor others	Emic/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher leaders and nonteacher leaders	Divergent	TL
* Talent management and leader succession	Divergent	HOS

Note. TL means teacher leader theme and HOS means head of school (or principal) theme. Both codes indicate a convergence between the TL and HOS. The starred emergent theme emanated from the heads of school and principals, only, in this study.

Six Emergent Themes From Teacher Leaders

To validate the themes from the preliminary analysis, as noted in the data analysis overview, each teacher leader participant member checked the preliminary analysis, reaching 100% agreement. Based on the data, most of the emergent themes converged in comparing the heads of school and principal responses to the teacher leader responses. A divergent theme occurred, however, among the teacher leaders and the heads of school and principals with regard to the definition of *teacher leader*. This divergence resulted in a second definition that emerged from the teacher leaders, denoting a *nonteacher leader* definition. The data revealed that the teacher leader participants varied in their responses and did not consider all teachers to be teacher leaders. Comparatively, the heads of school and principals considered all teachers to be leaders, with each teacher developing at his or her individual pace on a continuum. A second divergence occurred in the *talent management and leader succession theme* based upon responses from the heads of school

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and principals. From the heads of school and principals emerged a theme related to identifying and developing teacher leaders. The heads of school and principals spearheaded informal talent management and leader succession actions in their schools. According to the research, none of the studied schools had formal talent management programs in place for teacher leader identification, development, sustenance, or utilization (Harris, 2008; Sims, 2009).

Figure 7 presents a diagram of the six emergent themes from the teacher leader responses. Table 2 depicts the six emergent themes, including the raw data supportive of each emergent theme.

Figure 7. Six emergent themes from teacher leader responses.

Table 2. *Six Emergent Themes From the Teacher Leaders, With Raw Data*

Six themes
Teacher leaders have an unconditional love for the school community.

(care and compassion for their colleagues, students, and the school community; faithful to the school's values and beliefs; promote the school's vision and mission; promote school policies)

Teacher leaders have a global school perspective.

(possess a big picture view of the school; care for the school community; engage in school life and activities; care about other teachers, staff, students, and parents)

Teacher leaders mentor other teachers.

(volunteer to mentor teachers informally or formally, care for others, support social justice, good listening skills, responsive to needs of others, counsel, patience, forgiveness of mistakes, professional development trainers, seek to build capacity in others)

Teacher leaders lead by example.

(initiate action in tasks and routines, motivate other teachers by their words and their actions, volunteer or assume informal or formal leader roles, demonstrate social justice, share ideas, communicate with others, collaborate, self-initiators, build teams)

Teacher leaders are influencers.

(voices are sought and heard, motivators, agreeable, positive, promote school initiatives, support and promote new ideas, exhibit energy, passion, desire to serve others)

Teacher leaders want the school to be better—Go the extra mile.

(exhibit a positive attitude, volunteer, passionate, growth mindset, problem solver, willing to stay late, go above and beyond duties, identify needs: "find a need and fill it")

Note. Reflects the six emergent themes from the teacher leaders and supporting data for each theme.

Four Emergent Themes Developed from Heads of School and Principals

As previously noted, four themes emerged from the responses of the heads of school and principal participants, as revealed through the data analysis. Figure 8 depicts the four themes that emerged from the responses of the heads of school and principals. Table 3 presents the four emergent themes, with the supporting raw data collected from the heads of school and principals.
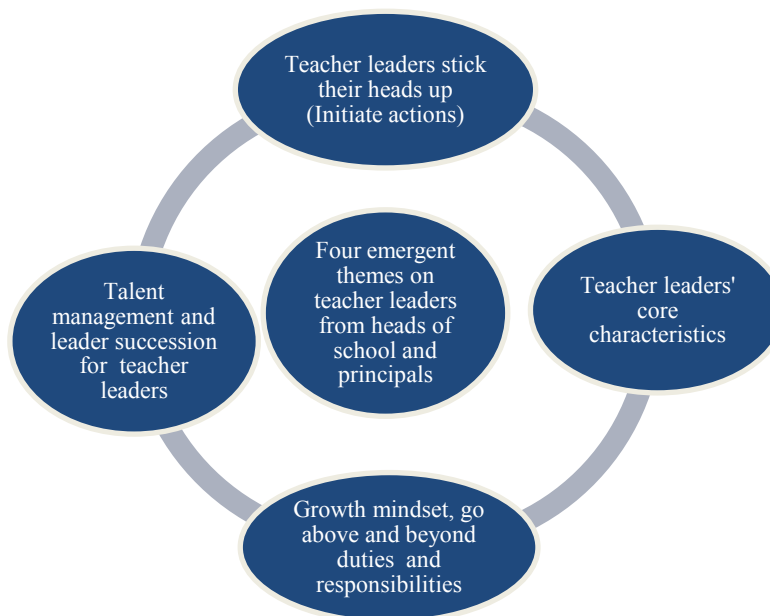
Figure 8. Four emergent themes from head of school and principal responses.

Table 3. *Four Emergent Themes Developed From the Heads of Schools, With Raw Data*

Themes

Teacher leaders "stick their heads up" (initiate actions)

(organized, initiate a call to action, assume leader roles, mentor other teachers, find a need and fill it, train other teachers, self-initiators, volunteer for school committees, projects, ideas, problem solvers, willing to serve, fulfill a need, problem solvers)

Teacher leader core characteristics

(promote the school's mission and vision, global view of the school instead of only a classroom view, growth mindset, love the school community, active in community life and activities, positive attitude, demonstrate passion, volunteer to serve, mentor other teachers, communicate, share ideas, support school governance, voice sought by other teacher leaders, collaborate, initiate leader tasks that need to be assumed, innovative, people skills, authentic, planner)

Positive growth mindset--Go above and beyond teacher duties and responsibilities

(positive attitude, passion, energy, desire to improve the school, collaborate with others, mentor other teachers, share ideas, stay extra hours, attend school-life activities, volunteer, volunteer or assume formal or informal leader roles, voices sought out by other teachers and administration)

Talent management and leader succession—Identifying and developing teacher leaders

(informal teacher leader identification process, administrator–strategic leader replacement philosophy, shadow administrators, give projects and professional development tasks and assignments as part of development for future promotions, create leader positions for them, distribute leadership, assign to leader roles, possess organization skills, recommend graduate studies, talk to teacher leaders about their desires for advancement, must love students and teaching, organizational skills required)

Note. Reflects four emergent themes with supporting raw data supportive of each theme.

Demographic Data for Participants

The mean age range for teacher leader participants was 36-45 years; 81% were female, and they had 18 years of experience, on average. Table 4 provides demographic data for teacher leader participants.

Table 4. *Demographic Data for Teacher Leader Participants*

Name	Gender	Age range	Education level	Approximate years of educational service
Esther	F	30-35	Master's	12
Debra	F	46-55	Bachelor's +	20
Martha	F	46-55	Master's	18
Mary	F	25-30	Bachelor's +	11
Naomi	F	30-35	Master's	10
Ruth	F	30-35	Bachelor's	5
Marie	F	36-45	Bachelor's + 30	25
Meriam	F	36-45	Doctoral ABD	11
Maude	F	46-55	Bachelor's + 9	15
Mindy	F	36-45	Bachelor's	24
Rachael	F	55-60+	Master's + 30	40
Eve	F	36-45	Master's	27
Elizabeth	F	36-45	Master's +	18
Luke	M	36-45	Bachelor's	22
Matthew	M	36-45	Master's	15
Mark	M	30-35	Master's	8
				281 Total years of experience

The total years of experience of the head of school and principal participants provided credibility to the findings, reflecting the participants as seasoned administrators

rather than novices. The data revealed that the eight heads of school and principals were all males, with a mean age of approximately 50 and an average of 20 years of service. Although I randomly selected the schools to represent different geographical areas and different Christian denominations, a commonality existed in the age, gender, and average years of service of the heads of school. This commonality constituted an unexpected finding in the research. Table 5 presents demographic data for the heads of school and principal participants.

Table 5. *Demographic Data for Head of School and Principal Participants*

Name	Gender	Age range	Education level	Approximate years of educational service
Principal 1	M	50-60	Master's	30
Principal 2	M	50-60	Doctoral candidate	26
Principal 3	M	45-49	Master's	14
Principal 4	M	50-60	Doctoral candidate	20
Principal 5	M	50-60	Master's	36
Principal 6	M	40-49	Master's	10
Principal 7	M	45-49	Doctorate	20
Principal 8	M	50-60	Master's	24
				180 Total years of experience

Participant Descriptions

In this section, I profile each participant using a pseudonym to distinguish him or her. I provide descriptions of the 16 teacher leader participants and the 8 heads of school and principals.

Teacher Leader 1, Esther.

Esther teaches middle school and has taught for 7 years. Esther attended a private Christian PK-12 school in the northeast followed by college, where she majored in physical education and sports medicine. After college, Esther worked as a Christian school teacher in a mid-Atlantic state. Esther earned a master's degree 6 years after receiving her undergraduate degree.

Teacher Leader 2, Debra.

Debra teaches middle school and is the grade-level chairperson. She has worked in her current school for more than 10 years. Debra received her undergraduate degree in education from a university in the mid-Atlantic area. Debra taught in a public school county system prior to coming to the Christian school.

Teacher Leader 3, Martha.

Martha is the Dean of Students and a former teacher. Martha attended a Christian elementary and high school in a mid-Atlantic state. Afterwards, she received her undergraduate degree in music education from a university in a southern state. Martha has a master's degree and was enrolled in an education administrator certification program at the time of the study. She was a member of the English department for 5 years, a sophomore guidance counselor, and a director of student life. Martha's ultimate goal is to become a superintendent.

Teacher Leader 4, Mary.

Mary is the Director of Student Life. She has a bachelor's degree in chemistry from a major university on the east coast. She came to the Christian school straight from college, accepting a position as a chemistry teacher. Mary pursued a degree in education leadership and policy studies from a university in a mid-Atlantic state. Mary taught high school at the same school for 11 years.

Teacher Leader 5, Naomi.

Naomi is a fifth-grade teacher. She has taught school for 10-years. Naomi studied business management and minored in marketing in college. Naomi taught business in high school at a public school prior to coming to the Christian school.

Teacher Leader 6, Ruth.

Ruth is a fifth-grade teacher. Ruth attended a state university on the east coast of the United States. She originally majored in accounting and worked in a consulting firm. Later, Ruth entered the field of education and became an elementary teacher. Ruth, who came from a family of educators, stated that she loved teaching fifth grade.

Teacher Leader 7, Marie.

Marie teaches sophomore English in the upper school and formerly taught fifth grade. Marie has taught at the same school for 25 years. Marie also coached the girls' basketball team and was a middle school coordinator. Marie has a bachelor's degree in English and history as well as a master's degree.

Teacher Leader 8, Meriam.

Meriam is a middle school teacher; she has taught at her school for 11 years. Meriam has bachelor's and master's degrees in chemistry from an established university in the southern portion of the United States. She pursued doctoral studies and then later changed her career path to teaching. Meriam stated that teaching makes her happy (Meriam, personal communication, September, 4, 2014). Formerly, Meriam was an adjunct professor at a university, teaching management courses; she also taught chemistry for 14-years in another school.

Teacher Leader 9, Maude.

Maude teaches seventh- and eighth-grade language arts and serves as the codepartment head for English. The year of the study was her 10th year of teaching at the current school, but her 15th year of teaching experience. Maude has an undergraduate degree and has obtained 9 credits toward a master's degree.

Teacher Leader 10, Mindy.

Mindy teaches middle school. She graduated from a college in the northeast with a bachelor's degree in education. Mindy stated that she always knew she wanted to teach (Mindy, personal communication, September, 4, 2014). Mindy has a total of 24 years of teaching experience.

Teacher Leader 11, Rachael.

Rachael is the Director of Faculty. Rachael teaches a foreign language class part time. She has 40 years of teaching experience, with 26 years of service at the current school. Rachael received her bachelor's degree in Spanish liberal arts from a university in the northeast. She has 30 credits in education beyond the master's degree. Rachael

taught in several public schools as well as a country day school; she also taught English at a school in the Middle East.

Teacher Leader 12, Eve.

Eve is the Director of Education; she was recently promoted to this position. Eve has an undergraduate dual degree in middle school education with an emphasis in science and Christian education. She holds a master's degree in educational leadership from a large accredited Christian university. Eve has 15 years of public school work experience in a southern state and 1 year of service in a mid-Atlantic state. Her total educational experience totals approximately 27 years. Eve served as science department chair at two schools and as grade-level team leader at her current school.

Teacher Leader 13, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth is the current Dean of Students. She has a bachelor's degree from a midwestern university. She majored in health care management and minored in business. She said, "I always wanted to be a teacher" (Elizabeth, personal communication, September 2, 2014). Later, Elizabeth entered a one-year residential teacher program in a public school education program in which she successfully received 26 graduate credits and became a certified teacher. Two years later, she received a master's degree in curriculum instruction with a certificate in Administration I. Formerly, Elizabeth served as a grade-level chairperson, teacher, curriculum specialist, and a school liaison between the elementary public school and the county. She left the public environment and became employed at the current Christian school.

Teacher Leader 14, Luke.

Luke is a middle school teacher and the Director of Student Services. He attended religious schools in both elementary and middle school. Luke received his bachelor's degree in physical education from a university in a southern state. After school, he began work at the PK-12 Christian school. This is Luke's 22nd year at the school.

Teacher Leader 15, Matthew.

Matthew is the Dean of Students and teaches English part time. He has taught for 10 years. Matthew has an undergraduate degree in psychology and a master's degree in education. He has taught at all levels of school. In addition to teaching, Matthew was a baseball coach for a number of years at two different religious schools. He has worked at his current school for 5 years, 3 years as an English teacher and 2 years as Dean of Students.

Teacher Leader 16, Mark.

Mark is an educational technologist and a part-time English teacher. He has taught for 8 years. Mark is a graduate of the high school at which he is now employed. After graduation, Mark attended a religious university in the northeast. His bachelor's degree is in English and professional writing. After college, Mark decided to return to his alma mater, his current private Christian school, for a year of service. Then, after the year of service, he accepted an English position at the current school. Mark received a master's degree in communications and technology.

Introduction of the Heads of School and Principals

For the purpose of maintaining confidentiality and anonymity, I introduce each head of school and principal using the pseudonym of *Principal* with an assigned chronological number ranging from 1-8.

Principal 1.

Principal 1 taught for 17 years. He served as middle school principal in a PK-12 Christian school for 19 years. Prior to living on the east coast, Principal 1 lived in a midwestern state with his family. Later he relocated to the east coast. Principal 1 said he had two choices when relocating to a Christian school on the east coast: to become the principal of a Christian high school or to become the principal of a Christian middle school. He chose the middle school. Principal 1 graduated from a Christian college in a midwestern state. He later obtained a master's degree.

Principal 2.

Principal 2 is the school's President. He served in this position for 5 years and for 13 years prior as principal. Principal 2 stated, "Excellent, so, this begins my 26th year in religious education in the [school district's religious order]" (Principal 2, personal communication, August 22, 2014). Principal 2 began his career as a guidance counselor in the late 1980s, serving in that capacity for 8 years. He received an undergraduate degree in psychology. Principal 2 later received a master's degree and a certification in counseling. Principal 2 formerly served as summer school principal, director of counseling, and director of admissions. He said that he became involved in all aspects of school life. Also, Principal 2 was chair of the curriculum committee. Principal 2 is a doctoral candidate pursuing a degree in educational leadership and administration.

Principal 3.

Principal 3 serves as head of school. He has held this position for 4 years. He formerly served as an administrator in a public school. He taught history in a large metropolitan county public school system. Principal 3 became an assistant principal in a local county school system and left to become an administrator in another district school system. Principal 3 stated, "What really brought me to a Christian education was, every day, I was dropping my daughter off at a Christian school, yet, I was an administrator in the public schools, and to me, there was a conflict of interest" (Principal 3, personal communication, August 19, 2014).

Principal 4.

Principal 4 serves as assistant superintendent and head of school for the middle and secondary schools. Principal 4 stated, "Four years ago we had a principal leave this campus. I was serving as assistant superintendent solely at that time. I was asked to step into this role on an interim basis. This is Year 5" (Principal 4, personal communication, September 4, 2014). Principal 4 still serves in a dual role at the school as assistant superintendent and upper and middle school principal of Grades 6-12. Principal 4 has an undergraduate degree in Christian education and a master's degree in school leadership. He is enrolled in doctoral studies in educational leadership and policy studies at a major university.

Principal 5.

Principal 5 serves as the head of school, a position he has held for 11 years. He began Christian education 36 years ago as a teacher and a coach. Principal 5 attended college and graduated with a major in history with an emphasis in teaching. He left one

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school after 8 years and came to his current school. He has served at his current school for 28 years. Principal 5 served as a teacher, coach, class advisor, student government advisor and later as a member of the steering committee for his school's first joint accreditation. Principal 5 served as the assistant administrator before becoming Director of the School. Later he attended graduate school and majored in educational leadership and administration.

Principal 6.

Principal 6 serves as the head of school. This is his 2nd year in that position and his 6th at the Christian school. Principal 6 graduated from a university on the east coast. He began in development, the fundraising side of education. He went on to receive a master's degree in business administration and finance. Principal 6 volunteered for 2 years, performing work as a teacher overseas. Later, he worked 2 years at a high school preparatory day school as the dean of the residence program. Afterwards, Principal 6 worked at a university on the west coast for 2 years, managing a graduate program and teaching classes. Then he returned to the east coast of the United States and began the position of dean of students at his current school, which he held for 4 years prior to becoming the head of school.

Principal 7.

Principal 7 has served as principal at his school for 4 years. Principal 7 began at his school as a theology teacher. He later became campus minister and was promoted to principal 2 years later. Previously, Principal 7 was a PK-12 teacher for 16 years. Principal 7 received a doctoral degree in education leadership. He has taught numerous

classes at the collegiate level and served as an adjunct professor at three universities over the past 8 years.

Principal 8.

Principal 8 serves as the interim head of school. He received his undergraduate degree from a college in a southern state. He served in Christian school education for 24 years. He taught history at his current school, first as a substitute teacher and then as a permanent teacher. Later, he received a master's degree in a history-related major at a major university on the east coast. During the tenure at his current school, he directed continuing education, chaired the history department, and served as college counselor, assistant head of school, associate head of school, and interim head of school.

Research Questions and Responses

In this section, I introduce the findings from the data. I used a distributed leader practice environment as the lens for the study (Spillane, 2006). In the responses, the teacher leaders assumed a leader role or a follower role in various leadership situations. From the data, I collected various statements of evidence of teacher leaders' role involvement as leaders or followers, shown as participant quotations, comments from researcher memo reflection notes, other data captured from the analysis, interviews, informal observations of settings, and participant documents regarding projects.

Then, in presentation of the findings, I provide long and short quotations from the participants. In each case, the quotations are the result of personal communications with the participants. I did not provide the personal communications statement behind each long quote in the findings due to the number of quotes, but rather I acknowledge them

here as occurring during the data collection. The short quotes do have personal

communication identifiers behind the actual quotes.

Overarching research question—Teacher leader experiences and

interactions.

For this research, I constructed an overarching research question to explore the

leadership experiences and interactions of teacher leaders in PK-12 Christian schools. As

researcher, I document participant reflections and perspectives, giving them voice. In the

following quotations from teacher leader Marie, Principal 7, and Principal 3, I provide

several reflections.

The following example from Marie provided evidence of how a teacher leader's

involvement with a planning situation impacted the school from a *global school*

perspective. The global school perspective theme emerged from the data analysis.

Specifically, Marie's contribution to the leadership situation involved interaction with her

colleagues as they brainstormed various ways and means to implement new technology.

Marie assumed a temporary leadership role as a member of the school's advisory board.

In this leadership situation, Marie's role as a teacher leader changed from follower to

leader to address a board leadership situation. In the following quote, Marie recounted

her leadership experience, which required planning and implementation strategies. Marie

stated,

> I serve on a teacher advisory board. We discuss and evaluate how we are doing
> as a school. We come up with suggestions, ideas for the school. Teachers and
> administrators of teacher leaders meet twice a year. For example, [regarding] the
> iPad rollout, I researched and gave insight to the effort. Teachers as leaders have
> input to strategic planning [regarding] students, teachers, staff, and the
> administration.

Then, I interviewed Principal 7 regarding his teacher leadership experience and

resulting interactions to obtain his perceptions of his teacher leadership experiences.

Principal 7 gave the following account:

> He [teacher leader] was an outstanding English teacher on the AP and Honors level. He developed great relationships with the students. [It was] him, when I thought of bringing a technology iPad program here; I wanted to have someone to integrate the teaching into the technology. Does it help the teacher facilitate what they do well? I wanted a teacher to lead that program. I have an information technology person who works on the technical aspects.
>
> The educational technologist role is to help teachers and students to incorporate learning and technology into their platform. He really helps them in conversation, [asking them] what they love most about teaching. What or how can this help you [the teacher] to be better and at a deeper level [do] what you really want to do as a teacher? So really watching him grow, last year was the first year seeing him in the role.

Principal 3 discussed his leadership experiences and how he handled leadership

practices at his school. He said he sought the advice and research of teacher leaders as

part of the administrative team; however, because his Christian school was small—

approximately 35 faculty and staff—he allowed anyone who initiated leadership desires

and skills to get involved. Therefore, Principal 3 gave his perspective regarding layers of

leadership:

> I try not to have too many layers and levels, and this person's the lead teacher and you're the team leader—we just try to take the resources and the strength from each person to make us all better. So I try to just keep us all on an even playing field so that we can spread the wealth and the knowledge.

Research Subordinate Question 1—Defining teacher leadership.

This research subquestion defined teacher leadership. After performing data

analysis, I found it necessary to separate the responses to the question into two

categories: a definition of teacher leaders and a definition of nonteacher leaders. During

the research, the teacher leaders readily defined whom they considered a teacher leader

and, conversely, whom they considered a nonteacher leader. First, teacher leader

participants defined the characteristics of a teacher leader, which are resident in the six emergent themes. Then, the teacher leader participants defined what is not considered a teacher leader and gave those attributes. Table 2 displays the six emergent themes. For additional details, I provide a thorough discussion of the definitions in the divergent themes section.

Based upon the data findings from all participants, I developed three scenarios for teacher leaders: (a) all teachers are teacher leaders; (b) only some teachers are teacher leaders; and (c) all are teacher leaders, but to lesser or varying degrees. Teacher leaders Maude and Mindy and Principal 1 agreed that all teachers constitute leaders to some degree. Rachael, Marie, and Principal 8, however, converged in agreement only regarding the positive attributes of teacher leaders.

Following, I provide the characteristics that define a teacher leader. Then, I provide direct quotations from participants and other comments that demonstrate the phenomenon. From the data, I identified the teacher leader characteristics. Table 2 presents the raw data, with the six accompanying emergent themes from the data collection and analysis process. In the table, the raw data are reflected in the words and phrases below each listed theme. The collected raw data included the following: (a) unconditional love for the school and the school community; (b) promote the school values and beliefs; (c) promote the school's vision and mission; (d) promote school governance; (e) global view of the school; (f) engage in school life and school activities; (g) care about other teachers, staff, students, and parents; (h) volunteer to mentor teachers formally or informally; (i) assume needed leader positions if a need arises in the school; (j) positive attitude; (k) problem solver; (l) influencers for good; (m) motivator; (n) voice

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sought by others, including the administration; (o) collaborator; (p) support social justice;

(q) great listening skills; (r) responsive; (s) patience; (t) forgiving of professional and

personal mistakes (with accountability); (u) volunteer professional development trainer;

(v) seek to build capacity in colleagues; (w) initiate leader actions in tasks and routines;

(x) lead by example; (y) mentor colleagues; (z) volunteer to assume informal or formal

leader roles as needed; (aa) initiate ideas or share ideas; (bb) open to new ideas and

supportive; (cc) counsel; (dd) communicate with others; (ee) self-initiator; (ff) team

builder; (gg) voices are sought and heard; (hh) passionate about the school; (ii) go above

and beyond duties; (jj) "find a need and fill it"; and (kk) organized.

After reviewing the characteristics that emerged through the data analysis, Mark

provided his definition of teacher leaders. He explained how he defined and perceived

teacher leaders and their involvement in the school community:

> I define a teacher leader as someone who is expert in the classroom combined
> with contact with kids outside the classroom. The individual is involved in
> student life, for example, coach, sponsor of activities. The teacher leader
> develops skills and habits acting as an ambassador.

When Principal 1 was asked his perspective on teacher leaders versus nonteacher

leaders, he stated (based upon my researcher memo reflection notes taken during the

interview after encountering a recorder issue),

> Comparing the traits of teacher leaders to teachers who are not leaders,
> nonteacher leaders reflect these traits to a lesser degree. The traits of (1) taking
> initiative, (2) restlessness—there is more to do, (3) big picture mentality, (4)
> what's next thinking. The principal sets a tone and culture that challenges teacher
> leaders to advance. The school climate and school culture must support
> movement. A never-stop-looking culture needs to exist.

Additional comments emerged from the voices of the various teacher leaders.

Teacher leader Rachael described her definition of a teacher leader, citing an emphasis on

mission, modeling, influence, and collaboration. Similarly, Rachael's comments

embraced the theme of mission:

> [Teacher leaders] focus on what's important—our mission. We want what's best
> by the direction. Modeling in front [of others] is influence. It's contagious to
> others. Well planned lessons, integrate [*sic*], punctuality, staying late.
> Collaboration is key.

Mindy gave a different definition of a teacher leader. She informed the research

stating that all teachers are teacher leaders, explaining how teacher leaders can have a

quiet presence as they lead by example:

> Every teacher has to be a leader. Some lead quietly, [in a] silent way. Sharing
> knowledge and faith constitutes leadership. Leadership can be individualistic—
> not what the world says: one person standing by being quiet—leading by
> example. Teacher leaders allow students to excel without it [information] [being]
> beaten [figuratively] into them. Encourage presence, silence, feels the
> atmosphere.

Further research on teacher leaders uncovered Maude's views on all teachers as

leaders. Maude gave her definition:

> I think all teachers are leaders. They are in front of the classroom. All teacher
> leaders want to help colleagues, support them, and help them. Others gravitate
> toward wisdom and some experience. As a leader, you are a servant leader who
> wants to serve and help others. Leadership tools they have are good listeners,
> discerning, professional, trustworthy, allow others to observe and come into the
> classroom—share with others. Why keep it to self?

Although the findings on teacher leader definitions varied, the positive attributes of a

teacher leader did not.

Research Subordinate Question 1—Defining teacher leadership (nonteacher

leaders).

In this section, I reveal the definitions for nonteacher leaders, as provided by the

teacher leaders. This nonteacher leader definition constituted the second section of

Question 1. The research revealed that the teacher leader participants believed that

nonteacher leaders possess characteristics different from those of teacher leaders in Christian schools. Mark, Eve, and Rachael agreed on the attributes of the nonteacher leaders. Mark's second thought during the interview (an "ah-ha" moment) suggested that perhaps all teachers can be classified as leaders but have other reasons, such as age or family issues, that suppress them from exhibiting positive teacher leader qualities or engaging in active teacher leaders opportunities. Therefore, the teacher leader participants defined nonteacher leaders, citing the following characteristics: (a) classroom focused, not global school perspective; (b) complainer; (c) negative voice; (d) noncollaborator; (e) do not promote the school mission or vision; (f) seldom initiate solutions to problems; (g) nonproblem solvers; (h) isolated; (i) clock puncher; (j) work school hours only; (k) use leader skills only when asked; (l) reluctant to volunteer for additional assignments; (m) retreat from discussions or new ideas; (n) stagnant, complacent thinking; (o) do not like teaching; (p) do not like the students; (q) do not like the school community; (r) not motivated to do more; (s) older, veteran teachers displaying tiredness or complacency; (t) past leaders who want to teach only in the classroom; (u) do not attend school activities; (v) exhibit minimal passion for added duties; (w) exhibit minimal energy (or momentum) outside the classroom; (x) avoid new ideas or innovations; and (y) leader to a lesser degree.

Teacher leader Mark gave his perspective on what he considered to be a nonteacher leader:

> Instead of open minded, they are narrow-minded. They are centrally focused on their class and what has worked before, without seeing a bigger picture. Ah! Don't think it's one camp or the other. I think it is the nonteacher leaders…it may be that they are very comfortable where they currently are. So, if they see other leaders leading teachers away from where they currently are, that could be intimidating. It could be natural personality [characteristics]. Some may be

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introvert focused. They have that inability to see beyond themselves.

Teacher leader Eve focused on the low expectations and the premise of some teachers' not desiring to be a teacher, much less a teacher leader. Eve's comments follow:

> Nonteacher leaders have low expectations. They are encouraging and changing lives. They are good at what they do, but people that are substandard are where I would make the differentiation. They just do not want to be there. They are not on time; do not want to be bothered by young people. They do not put in their job, their responsibility. Some people are not meant to teach. Some may have a loving desire to teach. They do not necessarily have student contact or focus.

Rachael's view on nonteacher leaders focused on their poor performance and inflexibility. Her perspective on nonteacher leader attributes was reflected in her comments:

> The nonteacher leader characteristics are closed to growth, staid, I don't change, punch clock syndrome, 8 to 3 p.m. and leave, inflexible, negative attitude, critical, sarcastic, and bully others. Some teachers are not teacher leaders; for example, a teacher shopping online during class. It does not work to make [the] culture positive. Others are outliers, and this is not the school for them.

Relative to the teacher leader definition, the findings surprisingly revealed how teacher leaders perceived teachers they considered to be nonteacher leaders. The teacher leaders listed characteristics for nonteacher leaders that exemplified those of an undeveloped or marginal teacher (Danielson, 2006; Lambert, 2003). Conversely, the heads of school and principals viewed all teachers as leaders, with some developing at different paces, on a continuum basis. One head of school noted that some teachers need time to develop or to have a "personal renaissance" to realize they are teacher leaders. Using Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice framework, a divergence occurred in how the teacher leaders distinguished teacher leaders from nonteacher leaders. Also, the teacher leader definition diverged, creating a dichotomy between the two participant

groups; the heads of school and principals differed from the majority of the interviewed teacher leaders in the nonteacher leader definition. I discuss the interpretations in the final chapter.

Research Subordinate Question 2—Leader tasks and routines of teacher leaders.

The research revealed many teacher leader tasks and routines. Elizabeth, Mark, and Martha shared their personal thoughts and experiences about leader tasks and routines as teacher leaders. Teacher leaders volunteered to perform some of the tasks and routines; others met leadership needs initiated by the heads of school and principals that addressed needs of the *global school community*, an emergent theme. The teacher leaders responded positively to the needs of the school organizations with an attitude of care and compassion. The desire to help the school become better superseded any personal advancement or monetary reward. Although the teacher leaders used the leadership practice model of Spillane (2006), they did so without knowing it as an a priori theory. Rather, their *modus operandi* was to identify a situation that needed a response and then problem solve to bring resolution or engage in a leadership role to perform the needed leadership task or routine.

In addition, other examples provided evidence of the characteristics of leadership as it pertained to teacher leaders performing in a distributed leadership practice environment (Spillane, 2006). For instance, Mary, a teacher leader, asked other teachers to become chaperones for the Junior-Senior banquet. Mary used her teacher leader influence to motivate other teachers to get involved (Mary, personal communication, August 26, 2014).

In another example, Luke expressed a leadership need in a middle school for a youth small group advisor. The group would allow students to vent their concerns and express themselves and their faith. The head of school agreed with Luke's willingness to assume the role and the task. Demonstrating a leadership practice, Luke has continued, in the role of leader, to conduct this routine leadership task as part of a leadership situation.

A third example of a teacher leadership practice involved Ruth, a fifth-grade teacher. Ruth volunteered to train her colleagues on Common Core standards as part of a professional development session. As a result, Ruth prepared to lead the professional development training discussions and collaborate with her colleagues.

In another instance, Mark introduced a new iPad technology program to the teachers. He volunteered to train the other teachers and determined how best to meet their curricular needs during the implementation process. Mark, a teacher leader, became the new educational technologist and developed a team of colleagues as his technology assistants.

Elizabeth shared her thoughts on teacher leaders and collaboration as it related to leadership practices:

> I think, out of collaboration you get so much; you get a wide variety and perspectives and experience. So, what I bring to the table and someone else brings to the table, it might be totally different, but it will work because it's a collaborative effort.

Next, Mark commented on how teams work together for a better leadership product. His comment exemplified how teacher leaders interact and collaborate in leader situations. Mark made the point that leadership situations occur and necessitate solutions that teacher leaders can fulfill. He stated,

Oh yes, the natural reaction of the dean of students would be to restrict or to stop. The natural inclination of the educational technologist would be to push, to allow, to encourage. This document in front of me is about 50% me and 50% the Dean of Students. If it were 100% me or 100% [the] Dean, it would look very different. To have the flexibility to understand that someone else is in a different position and is contributing very good information, that is helpful; it is a plus.

Referring to tasks and routines that affect leadership practices (Spillane, 2006), Martha shared her characteristics of leadership. She stated, "Basic tools of leadership are good character, integrity, being reliable, being approachable, and excellence, and having patience in everything" (Martha, personal communication, September, 8, 2014).

The research substantiated how teacher leaders engaged in leadership practices often without the knowledge that they were participating in distributed leadership practices (Spillane, 2006). Yet, the data indicated that because of their *unconditional love for the school community* and promotion of the school's vision and mission, these teacher leaders willingly served their organizations with passion, excellence, and often humility. The teacher leaders exhibited the concepts of purposeful service, professional will, and humility, convergent with the literature of Collins (2001) and Greenleaf (2002).

Research Subordinate Question 3—Roles of teacher leaders.

This section refers to the roles of teacher leaders. In this regard**,** Martha, Maude and Elizabeth revealed several leadership roles they encountered. Many of the leadership roles existed, or were created, to accommodate a leadership situation. In several cases, teacher leaders received stipends, reduced class time, or titles for ready recognition of duties by colleagues. Teacher leaders assuming temporary leader positions, such as cocaptain of a project, appreciated receiving additional time and recognition above monetary compensation. Although the teacher leaders did not require a stipend to perform duties for the school, for example, as a grade-level leader, they appreciated any

remuneration or other extended benefits of extra time. When additional duties required

promotions or full-time service outside the classroom (e.g., director of student life, dean

of students, or director of education), the teacher leaders believed that monetary

compensation and titles should reflect the role and responsibilities. Several teacher

leader participants taught at least one class, and others were assigned leadership roles

outside the classroom. I discovered several teacher leader positions in my research: (a)

department head, (b) codepartment head, (c) grade-level team leader, (d) director of

faculty, (e) director of student life, (f) cocaptain of projects, (g) dean of students, (h) class

advisor, (i) freshmen team leader, (j) steering committee advisory to the principal, (k)

professional development trainer, (l) educational technologist, (m) youth group leader,

(n) director of education, (o) honor society advisor, and (p) athletic coach.

During the research, Martha revealed some of her roles as a teacher leader. She

said, "I know I am destined to be in education because it came back full circle [after a

myriad of other work experiences she had mentioned, including that of professional

singer and actress]." Martha was part of the English department at her school for 5 years.

She later held the positions of guidance counselor and director of student life. Martha

further related the leader roles she assumed as facilitator and her involvement as a teacher

leader. She reflected,

> Our freshmen team leader position…that was a position where all of the freshmen
> teachers would come together at least once per month to share ideas, to review
> challenges, to offer solutions to one another. So, our facilitator of the group
> would consist of 10-15 teachers.

Maude detailed her teacher leader role as codepartment head and coordinator:

> As a codepartment head, I often allow teachers to observe me in the classroom. I
> have held positions as a middle school department head, coordinator of the 8th-

grade banquet, the retreat, and have been the middle school honor society sponsor.

Two teacher leader traits identified in the study reflected team building and problem solving. These traits can be manifested in decision making. According to the literature on distributed leadership practices (Spillane, 2006), decision making is an inherent part of leadership. Elizabeth gave her perspective on leadership tasks and roles involving team building and making decisions:

> Sometimes as a leader, you also take on that I-can-fix-it role, and everything doesn't have to be fixed right away. Some things just have to work themselves out. Or being able to empower your team to problem solve, which creates ownership and accountability to the decisions that are made.

According to Levenson, regarding the roles of teacher leaders,

> a teacher may want to devote all of her professional energy and focus to the classroom, or she could decide to move temporarily into a more visible teacher leader role. The informal structure offers a flexibility that affirms the centrality and importance of the teacher's work and contributions in the classroom. (Levenson, 2014, p. 115)

Research Subordinate Question 4—Comparative analysis of responses from teacher leaders and principals.

I conducted a comparative analysis of the responses of the teacher leaders and the heads of school and principals. In most instances, the themes converged with the two sets of participants: the teacher leaders and the heads of school and principals. The responses diverged in two themes. The first convergence occurred in the emergent theme of talent management and leader succession, in connection with identifying and developing teacher leaders. Second, a divergent theme occurred in the definitions of teacher leader and nonteacher leader. I discussed the divergences in detail in Research Question 1 in Chapter 4. The convergent and divergent themes are revealed in Table 1.

Analysis of Six Emergent Themes From Teacher Leaders

In the following section, I analyze the six emergent themes. I presented the themes and supporting data in Table 2. I member checked all themes and grounded them in the data. As a result, all 24 participants in the study agreed with the preliminary analysis of the findings in the member checking. In this section, I provide comments from the interview sessions that related to the six themes.

Theme 1. Teacher leaders possess an unconditional love for the school community. Analysis of the research revealed that teacher leaders in Christian schools have an extraordinary love and compassion for their school community. The theme, *unconditional love*, emerged as a central and dominant tenet. Unconditional love for the school implied an unwavering devotion to the school for the good of the community. Regarding the unconditional love theory, the teacher leader participants displayed an attitude of devotion to the school, its vision, and its mission. Martha said, "Unconditional love is very powerful. It is necessary, especially when working with others" (Martha, personal communication, September, 8, 2014). Martha's and other participants' attitudes depicted evidence of the teacher leaders' loyalty and commitment to their school communities, for them to *be better*, to advance, and to improve. In several quotations, Martha, Elizabeth, Mindy, and Elizabeth shared their thoughts on the *unconditional love* theme, the tenets of which are included in the following list: (a) love their colleagues, their students, and the school community; (b) faithful to the school's values and beliefs; (c) promote the school's vision and mission; and (d) promote school governance and adhere to school policies.

In regard to the theme, Martha said,

I think that is what we have to do as educators. Pass whatever gifts or things we can do to help this next generation to be the best they can be. I think this is something we have to continue to do—we must do that, especially for our young people now. They have so many things pulling at them to distract them from achieving their goals. So, it is a passion, a commitment.

Elizabeth explained her concept of how teacher leaders' exhibiting care and compassion can affect the morale of others in the school community. Elizabeth gave her perspective in the following statement:

When you acknowledge them [colleagues] as a person and not just as an employee or even just a person who's right next door doing the same thing you're doing, it makes a big difference, and you're actually able to boost morale as well as performance.

Mindy said, "I love what I do. I love students and faculty. It is easy when you love it! Passion!" (Mindy, personal communication, September 4, 2014).

Similarly, Elizabeth said, "And so whenever I walked into this building, I always felt the love, I felt the camaraderie, and I saw the passion that I had as a teacher and saw it in the teachers here" (Elizabeth, personal communication, September 2, 2014).

Mary remarked, "My school is a fantastic place!" (Mary, personal communication, August, 26, 2014).

Mark, having earned a recent computer degree from a major university, wanted to bring fresh ideas regarding technology instruction to his school because of his love for the school. Mark, an alumnus of the Christian school, presented a proposal to the administration and began to work informally with his colleagues to implement technology into their instruction. Later, his program received approval. As a result, Mark, a teacher leader, received a promotion and became the first educational technologist at the Christian school.

Debra displayed an unconditional love for her school as she expressed why she believed her principal selected her to participate in this research study. She said, "It is because of my willingness to serve others, my propensity to not say no, and because I like to shower my team members with encouragement, with prayer, and with support."

The following quote summarized Mary's beliefs: "I believe in the mission of the school. I believe in what we tell our kids; I believe in the type of people we help to form. It makes it easy to spend the long hours here" (Mary, personal communication, August 26, 2014). Mary said that working in schools was her vocation and calling:

> This has chosen me and I have chosen it and embraced it. I may have started here because of a job opportunity, but I did not stay here because it is a job. I stayed here because I love it. I am doing something I am passionate about.

Luke shared with me in the school lobby after the interview that he loved Christian education and believed in it as part of his ministerial responsibility.

Theme 2. Teacher leaders have a "global school perspective." In the research, the theme of a g*lobal school perspective* emerged as another major tenet for a teacher leader in a Christian school. Teacher leaders Naomi, Rachael, and Eve have formal leader roles, having served as teacher leaders prior to assuming their current positions. Their reflections indicate that the participants seemed to prioritize meeting the leadership needs of their schools over their formal or informal role status. The findings also revealed that teacher leaders and heads of school and principals believed that teacher leaders should have a global school perspective and not just a classroom view. Mary stated, "The love for the community allows leaders to look beyond the problems that may occur and focus on big picture goals" (Mary, personal communication, August, 26, 2014). Then Marie shared,

Yes! Leaders think about and pray about the "big picture." They have a heart for those they serve. We are keenly aware of the influence we have and are careful to preserve the integrity of the ministry and the people we work with and for.

Further examination of the research data indicated that promoting the school's mission and vision was considered to be a vitally important characteristic of a teacher leader. The heads of school and principals and the teacher leaders agreed on this emergent theme. Elizabeth shared, "You have to be on one accord with the school community in order to fulfill the mission of the school and your purpose for being there" (Elizabeth, personal communication, September 2, 2014). Eve, Maude, and Rachael agreed in their assessment of a teacher leader's taking a global view of the school and involvement in vision, goal setting, and mission. The data revealed the following characteristics that supported the global school perspective theme emanating from the teacher leaders: (a) possess a "big picture" view of the school; (b) care for the school community; (c) engage in school life and activities; (d) care about other teachers, staff, students, and parents; and (e) promote the school's mission and vision.

Eve presented her comments enthusiastically with regard to her dedication to the school and the global (big picture) view:

Dedication! I think the ability to understand a global picture and not only what's happening in the immediate, but seeing the global picture for the department or the school or not just my classroom; I think that was a big contributor. I think understanding that it is a collaborative effort toward excellence is very important, and not a single person. It's a team effort!

Rachael further supported the theme by saying, "Teacher leaders focus on what's important—our mission" (Rachael, personal communication, September 5, 2014).

Naomi concurred with the theme on global perspective and vision, as she stated,

You definitely have to have a vision and a goal, for sure. You need to have short-term goals, long-term goals, and set objectives. I mean that is what every teacher

has to do, I think, to be effective. So, absolutely, good leaders should demonstrate that they have a vision and a goal and find a strategy to meet that goal.

Maude saw her school as a place where a spirit of trust flourished and a family atmosphere existed. She said that her administrative board modeled professionalism and a supportive culture, which reverberated throughout the school.

Theme 3. Teacher leaders "mentor other teachers." The findings indicated another compelling theme: *mentor other teachers*. Teacher leaders mentor other teachers, whether formally or informally. Regarding mentoring, the data responses revealed the importance of mentoring to new teachers. Principals sometimes assigned mentors to new teachers; however, the research revealed that teacher leaders initiated informal mentoring to help fellow teachers. They sometimes offered to have other teachers, typically new teachers, observe in their classrooms. This action occurred without the principals' assignment of mentoring duties. The mentoring theme was characterized in the following attributes noted in the data: (a) volunteer to mentor teachers informally or formally, (b) care for others, (c) support social justice, (d) good listening skills, (e) responsive to needs of others, (f) counsel, (g) patience, (h) forgiveness of mistakes, (i) professional development trainers, and (j) seek to build capacity in others.

Martha, Marie, Mindy, and Maude provided evidence of mentoring in their comments. Martha said, "Basic tools of leadership are good character, integrity, being reliable, being approachable, and excellence…and having patience in everything."

Interestingly, Marie included in her comments on mentoring the aspects of having a willingness to fail in front of others and using collaboration. Marie included modeling as a part of mentoring in her description of a teacher leader and the leader's relationship

with colleagues. She said,

> Mentoring, modeling, answering questions, whatever is necessary. Teaching can become an egg-crate mentality. We pull them out of the isolated, individual slot. We collaborate, and have a willingness to fail in front of each other."

Maude added her comments on the attitude that teacher leaders have toward others relative to the theme of mentoring: "All teacher leaders want to help colleagues, support them, and help them. Others gravitate toward wisdom and some experiences" (Maude, personal communication, September 4, 2015).

Mindy believed in collaboration with the other members of her team or grade-level leaders. She said that she is centered in having a close relationship with the Lord through prayer. Mindy served as a mentor to new teachers (Mindy, personal communication, September 4, 2014).

Theme 4. Teacher leaders "lead by example." The teacher leaders consistently mentioned the major theme, *lead by example*, as a hallmark of leadership. The research indicated that teacher leaders exhibit the lead-by-example theme in various leadership situations, with a realization that others imitate and follow their example. Volunteering for positions or acting in roles to accomplish a needed goal appeared to be a hallmark of leading by example. Teacher leaders Eve, Rachael, Marie, Naomi, and Maude provided evidence of agreement as they shared their thoughts regarding what *leading by example*, an emergent theme, looks like in a Christian school. Following are the data responses supporting the *lead by example* theme: (a) initiate action in tasks and routines, (b) motivate other teachers by their words and their actions, (c) volunteer or assume informal or formal leader roles, (d) demonstrate social justice, (e) share ideas, (f) communicate with others, (g) collaborate, (h) self-initiators, (i) build teams, and (j) organized.

Eve, in the role of teacher leader, provided her perspective on leading by example and how she viewed it as a tool of leadership, either inside or outside the classroom. Eve informed the theme as she stated,

> I think another tool of leadership is, abstractly, knowledge or research, because without the knowledge that we need, we can't wisely make decisions, if you don't have the knowledge necessary in whatever area that you're talking about, whether it's classroom management for a teacher or the actual subject matter that you're teaching. I think knowledge is important, collaboration is important. I think balance is also important, not to be so overwhelmed that you can't accomplish what you need to accomplish.

Rachael said, "Teacher leaders lead by serving. People respond to that. They respond to that" (Rachael, personal communication, September 5, 2014).

Teacher leader Naomi also commented on the lead-by-example theme. She focused on sharing leadership through collaboration:

> I think, out of collaboration you get so much, you get a wide variety of perspectives and experience. So, what I bring to the table and someone else brings to the table, it might be totally different. But, it will work because it's a collaborative effort.

Maude shared her thoughts: "Leading by example motivates others! It is contagious!" (Maude, personal communication, September 4, 2014).

Matthew stated," Modeling behavior is of vital importance" (Matthew, personal communication, October 24, 2014).

In general, the participants identified *lead by example* as a primary theme of leadership practice through which the teacher leaders asserted themselves in leadership situations and practices in their schools.

Theme 5. Teacher leaders are "influencers." Teacher leaders displayed another emergent theme, *influence*, in their leadership roles. Ruth, Marie, Maude, and Rachael shared their insight on the theme of influence. Ruth set a distinguishing parameter by

stating that a teacher leader exhibits a positive influence. The data further revealed that in PK-12 Christian school organizations, actions and attitudes of care and love generally permeate the PK-12 Christian school organizations. The teacher leaders identified the characteristics associated with the theme of *influenc*e in a teacher leader: (a) voices are sought and heard, (b) motivators, (c) agreeable, (d) positive, (e) promote school initiatives, (f) support and promote new ideas, (g) exhibit energy, (h) passion, and (i) desire to serve others.

Rachael said, "On leaders and vision, chairpersons come to the academic vision with ideas. Ideas are vetted (they must have proof to support them). It trickles down to students. It promotes student leadership—team captains, band directors, etc." (Rachael, personal communication, September 5, 2014).

Teacher leader Ruth commented on teacher leaders and their influence:

Now, if you are gonna [*sic*] [going to] be an influencer, make sure [that] what you're influencing is right and you're definitely of God, whatever you do. You don't want to influence someone to do the wrong thing—but I can see a leader carrying those traits [of influence].

Marie, who was highly respected as a teacher leader by her administrator and colleagues, added to the teacher leader theme of influence and setting examples for others. Marie made it clear that teacher leaders have influence in setting standards in a number of categories. She said, "Teacher leaders set an example for others in character, decision making, relationship building, and experience. This relationship building is in parents, teachers, students and the community. We live in a glass house."

Debra was highly esteemed by her colleagues, which her colleagues shared during my first visit to the school. Later, I gained evidence that validated this opinion as

I informally observed her interact at the school location with her colleagues, the administration, and with students.

In the literature, Levenson (2014) acknowledged that teacher leadership roles often spark questions about relationships among colleagues, especially once a teacher is elevated to the role of teacher leader, given additional power, and asked to contribute to another teacher's evaluation. Therefore, Levenson posited that this change in status can erode trust among former colleagues. Hence, she asserted, "If teachers are not willing to be led or to work together to change teaching and learning, leadership positions will not be perceived as effective" (Levenson, 2014, p. 100).

Theme 6. Teacher leaders want to "better the school—go the extra mile." Esther, Debra, Principal 4, and Naomi shared through their reflections their implications for the next emergent theme, *go the extra mile.* Based on this research, the extra mile denoted teacher leaders' performing additional duties beyond their regular responsibilities or job descriptions, with the purpose of making the school better or fulfilling a need. The concept of *go the extra mile* seemed to suggest a mindset of advancement or growth and an attitude of doing more than expected. The heads of school and principals revealed a *growth mindset* as one of the emergent themes. Comments from Naomi and Principal 4 provided evidence of the emergent theme as convergent. The data revealed the following responses related to the theme: (a) exhibit a positive attitude, (b) volunteer, (c) passionate, (d) growth mindset, (e) problem solver, (f) willing to stay late, (g) go above and beyond duties, and (h) identify needs: "find a need and fill it."

Naomi said, "I often volunteer wherever it's needed. Last year, I volunteered to

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help with the cheerleaders and help put that together" (Naomi, personal communication, August 19, 2014).

A constant theme from the research revealed that teacher leaders, in this study, wanted to better their school communities. Therefore, they proposed to do more than expected in their positions, to go the extra mile, to fulfill that desire to meet the needs of the school. Principal 4 recounted an example of a teacher leader who volunteered to serve in many roles when leadership tasks or roles surfaced in situations that required the need for leaders and followers to accommodate leadership situations (Spillane, 2006), for example, performing cafeteria duty or assisting coaches or the athletic department. Often, these situations led to new or replacement positions that met the needs of the school. Consequently, the principal earmarked the teacher leader for a future leadership position. Principal 4 stated,

> We did take a young man who we are grooming and could eventually become an athletic director. He is working as an assistant to the athletic director this year. But, we have not given him a formal title. It is not really an internship. He is learning about the athletic department. He is already a coach and physical education teacher. We see some skills in him. He could eventually be our athletic director. We are doing that, having him work alongside to be trained because we know the athletic director is going to leave in a year or so.

Debra, commenting on going the extra mile, cited a leadership encounter with her grade-level team as they addressed and resolved a school issue involving students, which became a leadership opportunity. Debra recounted in her statement,

> I took the leadership role. [We had] a 6th-grade girls' clique. That's not our community. Girls at lunch would not sit outside of their group. We brought the girls into the [teacher] team meeting, prayed and told them what it [the group] looked like to us and asked what it looked like to them. We see leaders and what you could do, could make a difference. "So, you think we are leaders?" [The students] named some things they could do.

Teacher leader Naomi volunteered to assist the principal in a leadership situation. When asked if she believed that her business skills had an impact upon her teacher leader skills, Naomi readily answered, "Yes." Naomi expressed her desire, as a servant leader (Greenleaf, 2002), to do whatever was needed, with a willing heart, to see the school community thrive. This servant leader attitude reverberated throughout my interview with Naomi.

Esther shared her thoughts on going the extra mile and what that looks like in building relationships and collaborating with colleagues:

> Collaboration is key. We work on teams of 7th-grade teachers. We meet daily during planning period to plan and coordinate. We plan together, build relationships with teachers and students. By building relationships, we influence them, past knowing their names.

In this section, I have covered the six themes emerging from the responses of the teacher leaders. The evidence that surfaced from the interviews demonstrated the existence of the themes, validated through member checking in the preliminary analysis. The research revealed that teacher leaders definitely have a presence in the Christian schools and that principals and heads of school seek to hear their voices because of their influence in their schools (Burns, 1978; Covey, 2004). The research also showed that teacher leaders have many ideas and a willingness to volunteer to lead and to embrace leadership situations as leaders or as followers (Spillane, 2006). Teacher leaders have definite ideas and perspectives on what should occur in their schools to contribute to improving their school communities. Although, they may be in partial, full, or unidentified administrative leadership roles, it is clear from the data that teacher leaders possess influence and legitimate power (Greenleaf, 2002) in causing the success of their PK-12 Christian school communities. In the study, the teacher leaders knew of and

verbally acknowledged the individual strengths of their colleagues, using terms such as idea person, organizer, encourager, or planner. Interestingly, some acknowledged personal leadership weaknesses that they considered strengths in certain colleagues. In the next section, the heads of schools and principals speak through the data.

Analysis of Four Emergent Themes for Headmasters and Principals

   Theme 1. Teacher leaders "stick their heads up "(initiate action). From the responses from the heads of school and principals, teacher leaders who *stick their heads up* (initiate leadership actions) emerged as another major theme in identifying teacher leaders. The teacher leaders took the initiative to act when a leadership situation occurred that needed to be addressed through leadership tasks or roles (Spillane, 2006). Leadership practices often occurred because the teacher leader knew that the need existed and he or she desired to address the need for the good of the school community. Principal 4 and Principal 2 provided their reflections regarding what "sticking one's head up" meant to them. The heads of schools and principals collectively mentioned the following traits or characteristics as keys to identifying teacher leaders in their schools: (a) teacher leaders "stick their heads up" (initiate action), (b) they are organized, (c) assume leader roles, (d) mentor other teachers, (e) identify a need and bring it to the administration, (f) problem solvers, (g) volunteer for school committees and projects, (h) share ideas, and (i) willingness to serve.

   Principal 4 informed the theme of "sticking their heads up" in his statement:

   I engage specific individuals who engage themselves in a broader base of the school. I create time for teacher leaders who show initiative without being compensated. The likelihood of compensating them later after a period of time and experience can happen. (Principal 4, personal communication, September 4, 2014)

   Principal 2 shared his thoughts about who teacher leaders are and how followers

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are included in leadership:

> I think first and foremost, that regardless of title or rank, we try to promote here that everyone is a leader. If they are impacting just one person, they are a leader. And certainly teachers have an influence over many more than just one person. So, as a teacher leader they are leaders and role models to the students.

With regard to the next theme, the heads of school provided core characteristics of teacher leaders, as they defined them. The raw data, the themes, and the accompanying support data are included in Table 3.

Theme 2. Teacher leader core characteristics. In analyzing the data, I discovered that heads of schools and principals in Christian schools identified the core characteristics of teacher leaders as an emergent theme. Principal 8, Principal 4, and Principal 3 converged in their comments, which supported the core characteristics theme exhibited by teacher leaders. Following are the characteristics (or codes) used by the heads of school and principals during the interviews: (a) promote the school's mission and vision, (b) global view of the school instead of only a classroom view, (c) growth mindset, (d) love the school community, (e) active in community life and activities, (f) positive attitude, (g) authentic, (h) demonstrate passion, (i) mentor other teachers, (j) communicate and share ideas, (k) support school governance, (l) voices sought by other teacher leaders, (m) collaborate, (n) initiate leader tasks that need to be assumed, (o) innovative, (p) positive attitude, (q) passion, (r) energy, (s) organizational skills, (t) people skills, (u) planner, (v) desire to improve the school, (w) collaborate with others, (x) stay extra hours, (y) attend school life activities, (z) assume formal or informal leader roles, (aa) initiate leader tasks that need to be assumed, and (bb) provide innovative ideas.

Principal 8 stated that teacher leaders model excellence and use their voices as an influence:

A teacher leader is someone who models excellence in the classroom, someone who speaks out in community faculty meetings. Their "voice" is sought. The teacher leader leads by example and by sharing ideas with others.

Principal 4 discussed the teacher leaders with regard to listening skills, vision, and implementation using necessary skill sets:

I think [teacher leaders] have great listening skills, vision; there is an ability to implement, so to plan. You cannot stop a vision. You have to have the ability to implement, so to plan. A relative need is to be able to pay attention to some level of detail. You have to be able to implement. You cannot just be an idea person all the times. In our schools, private schools especially, you do not have others to rely upon to do those things for you. I think strong people skills. If, I can, I would use the word, authenticity.

Principal 3 informed this theme of core characteristics of teacher leaders with his comments on the end results—educating others:

Commitment is key. Those committed to pouring into young people. They "rise to the top" in education. They become teacher leaders. Those that are committed to a career or a salary do just enough to get the kids along. And that's—in this business, whether it's in a secular school or Christian school, that is gonna [going to] be the definition of a lead teacher.

The heads of school identified core characteristics of teacher leaders that can be categorized according to Northouse's (2009 three leadership categories: administrative, interpersonal, and conceptual skills. Then, when implementing leadership practice with regard to leadership situations, followers, and leaders, the heads of school and principals considered the characteristics they identified and matched the teacher leaders to the particular needs of their school organizations. This identification occurred in two ways: the teacher leader related the need to the school administrator, or the head of school or principal related the need to the teacher leader.

Theme 3. Growth mindset: Go above and beyond teacher duties and responsibilities. Again, the heads of school and principals revealed a central theme: that teacher leaders have a positive growth mindset and *go above and beyond* their duties and

responsibilities to fulfill a voluntary or involuntary call to action. Therefore, teacher leaders assume leader roles to invest in their school community. Principal 4 and Principal 7 agreed with the previous research findings. The heads of school and principals suggested characteristics or codes for teacher leaders who displayed a growth mindset to *make their schools better* by growing organizationally and by developing themselves personally as leaders. The heads of school and principals identified the following characteristics of teacher leaders: (a) positive attitude, (b) passion, (c) energy, (d) desire to improve the school, (e) collaborate with others, (f) mentor other teachers, (g) share ideas, (h) stay extra hours, (i) attend school-life activities, (j) volunteer, (k) assume formal or informal leader roles, and (l) voice sought out by administrators and other teachers.

Principal 7 shared his thoughts on the growth mindset of teacher leaders and their attitude of making things better, for example, looking at problems as opportunities. He referenced a reading by Carol S. Dweck, Ph.D. (2008) of Stanford University on having a growth mindset:

> You are probably familiar with Carol Dweck. Her research [is] on those in a growth mode versus those in a death mode. We all see this as [current or former] teachers. The basic characteristics of those that are engaged in self-critical reflection [are] improving self, trying to get better. It does not mean that you are aged. If you are in that growth mode, that is a primary teacher leader characteristic. I also think a teacher leader is someone who does not look at a problem as a problem, but as an opportunity. Yes, looking at the positive rather than the negative, but not walking away from the issue. I would never consider a teacher leader looking at a problem and saying that is the administration's problem. They might bring the problem to the administrator and say, "How can I help?"

Theme 4. Talent management: Leader succession, identifying and developing teacher leaders. The last theme the heads of schools and principals uncovered was

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related to the identification and management of teacher leader resources. Principal 1 and

Principal 5 shared convergent comments. From the findings, it became clear that the

heads of schools and principals informally managed their teacher leader resources but did

not have formal programs in place. The research revealed a future desire to

accommodate that goal in PK-12 Christian schools.

The heads of school presented the following responses to the question of how

they identified and developed teacher leaders. The data revealed that all of the

interviewed administrators looked first within their schools to develop leaders for growth

opportunities, then looked outside their schools, and lastly for leadership replacement.

Several administrators reported supporting teacher leader advancement as a

means of talent management and leader succession strategies. None of the schools had a

formal leader pool for succession or a formal means of identifying and developing

teacher leaders. Yet, the research indicated they all thought it was necessary to identify

and develop teacher leaders. Following are the characteristics or codes the heads of

school and principals mentioned in their interviews that related to the *talent management*

leader succession theme: (a) informal teacher leader identification process, (b)

administrator leader replacement philosophy exist for administrator, (c) shadow

administrator if they see potential, (d) give them projects and professional development

tasks and assignments, (e) create leader position, (f) distribute leadership in practice, (g)

assign teacher leaders to leader roles, (h) organizational skills a plus, (i) recommend

graduate studies to teacher leaders, (j) talk to teacher leaders about their desires for

advancement, and (k) must love students and teaching.

To provide an example of how to implement the talent management

characteristics, Principal 1 shared thoughts on the talent management theme, referring to teacher leaders who had a broader understanding of the school:

> I engage specific individuals who engage themselves in a broader base of the school. I create time for teacher leaders who show initiative without being compensated. The likelihood of compensating them later after a period of time and experience can happen.

Principal 5 provided an example of how a teacher leader moved into the administrator ranks of the school:

> We moved [Mrs. Anonymous] from one department to the other and it opened up. Because she had been a teacher leader and an assistant administrator and done well at both, that led her to be able to become a full administrator with all the background, now, that we can use.

The findings of the study correlated to Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practices theory relative to all the identified themes. Teacher leaders represented a valued commodity in private PK-12 Christian schools where human capital was limited. The findings indicated that the teacher leaders and the heads of school converged in their thinking regarding leadership situations as well as who would initiate a solution to the issue or situation. In addition, according to Spillane and to Harris (2008), the development of teacher leaders requires heads of schools and principals to establish and model a professional learning culture (Senge, 1990) within the school: preferably, a culture that offers required leadership training courses as part of professional development courses. Spillane et al. (2001) suggested that without the endorsement and support of principals who are confident in their roles and leadership abilities, the development of teacher leaders might be encumbered or nonexistent. In private Christian schools, the heads of school or principals set the tone in the school, creating a role model for leadership (Devink, 1996; Devink & Carruthers, 2008).

In the next section, I provide an interactive diagram to visually depict the

elements of the study and findings: the research questions, emergent themes, and the

conceptual framework. (See Figure 9.)
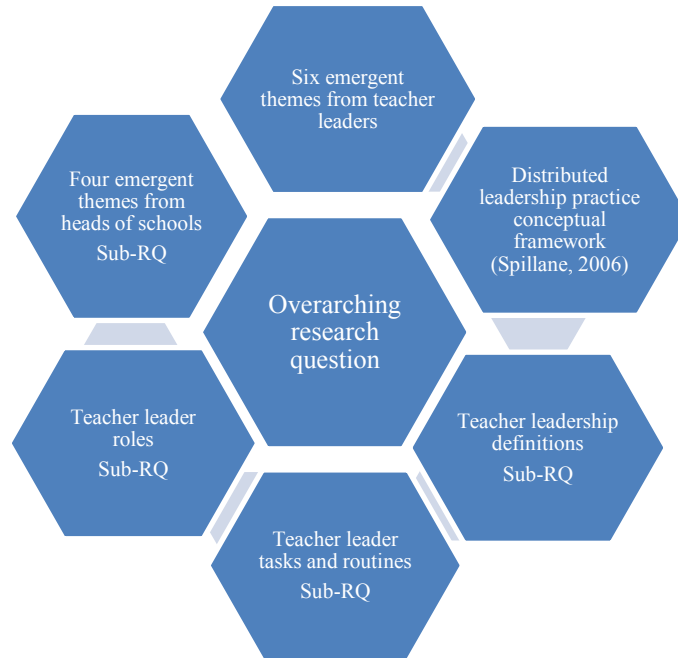
Figure 9. Interactive chart depicting alignment of research questions, emergent themes, and the conceptual framework.

Summary of Chapter 4

In Chapter 4, I have presented the data findings and discussed the data analysis

from the research study. Afterwards, I charted and discussed six emergent themes from

the teacher leader participants. In the case of the heads of school and principals, I charted

and discussed four emergent themes from the data findings. Then in the next step, I

discussed four categories that related to the four research questions, presenting data

through in vivo quotations from the interview transcriptions, data reflecting other

comments from the participants, data from informal observations, and data from the

memo reflection notes taken during the interviews. In Chapter 5, I discuss the summary

of results, interpretations, and recommendations for future studies.

Chapter 5: **Conclusions, Interpretations, and Recommendations**

"A useful theory 'illuminates' what you see. It draws your attention to particular events or phenomena and sheds light on relationships that might otherwise go unnoticed" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 43).

Overview

I began this research journey to explore the leadership experiences of teacher leaders in American PK-12 Christian schools, in the context of a distributed leadership environment. After reviewing the literature, I discovered that a gap existed in the peer-reviewed literature and research on teacher leaders, in PK-12 Christian schools. My primary goal was to better understand the leadership experiences of Christian teacher leaders operating in a distributed leadership environment, in private religious schools; and, then, to construct meaning from those findings. Although, the presence of teacher leaders, as well as distributed leadership are pervasive in all schools, my study focuses on teacher leaders in one set of schools. For my second goal, I wanted to provide a meaningful contribution to the scholarly peer-reviewed body of knowledge on teacher leaders' leadership experiences in a distributed leadership context. For this exploratory research study, I chose a basic qualitative interpretive interview-based methodology with a constructivist epistemology (Merriam, 2009). As a result of the data analysis, six major themes emerged from the teacher leader interviews. In the comparative analysis, four major themes emerged from the heads of school and principal interviews.

To address the inquiry, an overarching research question guided the research study: How do principal-identified teacher leaders in faith-based PK-12 Christian schools experience leadership in a distributed leadership environment, as told from the teacher leaders' perspective? To further enhance the research, I added four subquestions:

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1. How do teacher leaders define leadership?

2. What are the teacher leader roles in Christian schools?

3. What leader tasks and routines do teacher leaders perform?

4. How do the teacher leader responses compare with the head of school and principal responses?

A Review of the Journey

Prior to the first chapter, I began the study with a researcher's reflection note. Then, in Chapter 1, I presented an overview of the entire study, including the problem, the purpose, the research questions, the conceptual framework for the literature review, the theoretical (conceptual) framework, the methodology, the limitations of the study, and the key definitions. In Chapter 2, I mapped the literature review into three sections. First, I began with a historical overview of the structure and culture of PK-12 Christian schools (Devink, 1996; Devink & Carruthers, 2008; MacCullough, 2010). Second, I conducted a thorough review of the literature on teacher leaders and related leadership models and theories (Elmore, 2007; Harris & Muijs, 2005; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Levenson, 2014; Spillane, 2006; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Third, I reviewed literature on distributed leadership models (Camburn et al., 2003; Harris, 2008; Spillane, 2006; Spillane et al., 2001; Spillane et al., 2003). I obtained information from peer-reviewed documents for the literature review. After reviewing the literature, I performed an analysis and synthesis of the literature to reveal the areas of convergence and divergence. In Chapter 3, I described a basic qualitative interpretive interview methodology (Merriam, 2009), using purposeful sampling. According to Maxwell, "purposeful sampling is a strategy in which particular settings, persons, or activities are selected

deliberately in order to provide information that cannot be gotten as well from other choices" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 88). Finally, I used a constructionism epistemology (Merriam, 2009) to make meaning of the results. In Chapter 4, I presented the results.

Summary of Results

For the study, I collected and analyzed data primarily from semistructured interviews over a 3-month period from August 2014 through October 2014. After each interview, I began an interactive analysis of the interview responses, combining data analysis and data collection (Maxwell, 2005). During data collection, I interviewed 16 teacher leader participants and 8 heads of school and principal participants from seven PK-12 Christian schools on the east coast in the mid-Atlantic area. In one school, both the head of school and the principal were interviewed, resulting in eight participants in the heads of school and principals comparative group. Each of the 24 participants member checked the preliminary analysis, with 100% of the participants agreeing that the emerging themes were pertinent and relevant to their individual input (Merriam, 2009). To triangulate the data, I conducted member checking of the data followed by comparative analysis of the findings and themes. I also collected data on reflection memos during interviews, informally observed the participants at the school sites, and conducted peer reviews and an interpretive review of the data.

In the comparative analysis, I contrasted the data and emergent themes from the teacher leader interviews with the data and emergent themes from the heads of school and principal interviews. I presented the raw data findings and associated themes in Chapter 4. During the data analysis, six themes emerged from the teacher leaders and four themes emerged from the heads of school and principals. I analyzed the themes in the

presentation of findings in Chapter 4. Following are the six themes that emerged from the teacher leaders' responses: (a) unconditional love for the school community; (b) global school perspective; (c) lead by example; (d) influencer; (e) mentor other teachers; and (f) want the school to be better—go the extra mile. In comparison, following are the four themes emerging from the responses of the heads of school: (a) teacher leaders "stick their heads up" (initiate action); (b) teacher leaders have core characteristics; (c) growth mindset—go above and beyond teacher duties and responsibilities; and (d) talent management and leader succession—identify and develop teacher leaders.

The themes from the teacher leader participants and the heads of school and principal participants converged, with two exceptions. The first exception, or divergence, involved the definition of a teacher leader. When asked to define teacher leader, several teacher leaders agreed that all teachers can be defined as teacher leaders; however, many of the teacher leaders disagreed with the concept of viewing all teachers as teacher leaders. As a result, the teacher leaders provided characteristics to define teacher leaders and to define nonteacher leaders. In contrast, the heads of school and principals subscribed to the concept of all teachers as leaders, with their development occurring on a continuum. The second exception or divergence focused on the theme of talent management and leader succession (Sims, 2009), which targeted the identification and development of teacher leaders. The talent management and leader succession theme emerged from the heads of school and principal responses; however, this theme did not emerge as a theme from the teacher leaders.

Conceptual Framework

I chose Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice conceptual framework as the lens for this research study. For the study, the heads of school and principals selected the teacher leader participants, whom they identified as existing teacher leaders. During the study, I researched existing teacher leaders' leadership experiences. As a result of researching principal-identified teacher leaders, I chose a conceptual foundation that involved the existence of leadership practice in the schools. According to Spillane's (2006) definition of distributed leadership practice, leadership practice occurs when teacher leaders interact in roles that require a leader and a follower interacting in a leadership situation. For this reason, I used Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice model as my conceptual framework. Next, I constructed meaning from the findings of the research study, using a constructivist epistemology (Merriam, 2009). Moreover, with regard to the conceptual framework, Spillane provided in his book, *Distributed Leadership*, an explanation of a leadership framework: "Frameworks for studying leadership practice are scarce, and they tend to privilege individual actions. Instead, from a distributed perspective, leadership practice takes shape in the interactions of leaders, followers, and their situations (Gronn, 2000; Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond, 2001)" (Spillane, 2006, p. 4). According to Spillane, three elements are essential in a distributed leadership practice arrangement:

1. Leadership practice is the central and anchoring concern.
2. Leadership practice is generated in the interactions of leaders, followers, and their situations; each element is essential for leadership practice (See Figure 1).
3. The situation defines leadership practice and is defined through leadership practice. (Spillane, 2006, p. 4)
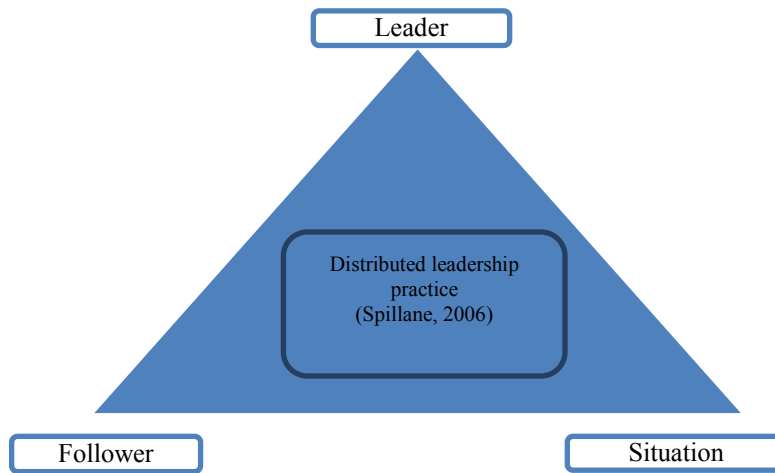
Figure 1*:* Conceptual framework, Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice model.

Table 1 presents the emergent, convergent, and divergent themes contrasted between the two sets of participants in the research study.

Table 1. *Emergent, Convergent, and Divergent Themes of Teacher Leaders*

Theme	Type	TL/HOS
Teacher leaders have unconditional love for the school community	Emergent/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher leaders have a global school perspective	Emergent/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher leaders lead by example	Emergent/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher leaders are influencers	Emergent/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher leaders go the extra mile	Emergent/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher leaders mentor others	Emergent/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher leaders and nonteacher leaders	Divergent	TL
* Talent management and leader succession	Divergent	HOS

Note. TL means teacher leader theme and HOS means head of school (or principal) theme. Both codes indicate a convergence between the TL and HOS. The starred emergent theme emanated from the heads of school and principals, only, in this study.

Interpretations of Teacher Leaders' Responses

To interpret the responses of the teacher leaders regarding their leadership experiences, I approached my interpretations of the research by revisiting each research question. I considered the relevancy of each question to the emergent themes of the teacher leaders, to the emergent themes of the heads of school and principals, and to the literature review. To begin the interpretation, I address the six major themes that emerged from the teacher leaders, as referenced in the summary of results.

Next, I use the six emergent themes to interpret the findings in the context of the primary research questions and four subquestions. The primary research question asked, How do principal-identified teacher leaders in faith-based PK-12 Christian schools experience leadership in a distributed leadership environment, as told from the teacher leaders' perspective?

I used the research question to guide the research on the leadership experiences of teacher leaders in Christian schools. I targeted various leadership experiences in the participants' schools. The research findings reflected numerous examples of leadership interactions. (See Chapter 4 for a detailed account of the findings.) I soon discovered that the interviewed teacher leaders were an integral part of the school community and, as such, they participated in various leadership situations as formal or informal leaders. Moreover, the teacher leaders exhibited their leadership experiences as they interacted with their colleagues, the administration, and others in leadership situations that included routines and tasks (Spillane, 2006). The findings revealed that the teacher leaders occasionally assumed leader roles as they interacted in leadership situations, with their colleagues sometimes assuming the follower role, for example, in professional

development training sessions. In the schools, the teacher leaders assumed many formal

and informal leadership roles as mentors, motivators, initiators, and problem solvers.

When leadership situations occurred, the teacher leaders initiated or responded to the

leadership needs.

The teacher leaders' experiences showed them to be influencers as mentors and as

leaders by example. The teacher leaders and heads of school and principals viewed their

schools as tightly woven communities, similar to families.

Considering the literature and the research question, in several leadership

situations, I discovered that the teacher leaders used collaborative and transformational

leadership, which called for a loosening or exchange of the leader–follower roles as

required by the leadership situation (Burns, 2003, Emira, 2010; Rubin & Futrell, 2009,

Spillane, 2006). Moreover, the study revealed that the head of school or principal's

endorsement and assignment of a teacher leader to a leadership situation and leadership

role were necessary components for teacher leader development; this finding converged

with the literature on identification and development of teacher leaders (Harris, 2008;

Spillane, 2006). Also, the data revealed that formal leadership training became an

essential element for promotions.

Further, as I examined the literature, I discovered a connection between the

leadership practices of Spillane (2006), relative to the findings of this study, and Collins's

(2001) *Good to Great* publication, which focused on the person performing the task,

rather than the task performed. In this study, the teacher leaders' willingness and

voluntary actions to help their schools *become better* (an emergent theme) could be

associated with Collins's Level 5 leadership theory. According to that theory, personal

humility and professional will are leadership factors that lead to greatness in an organization or school, coupled with getting the right person [teacher leader] in the right position, in a culture of discipline (Collins, 2001, pp. 12-13). I began to realize from the interviews that the heads of school or principals considered the individual leadership attributes of the teacher leaders before assigning them to certain leadership opportunities. Therefore, the data indicated that proper placement of teacher leaders in select or *right* positions (Collins, 2001) could impact the school's leadership practices. Inversely, the teacher leaders initiated actions that placed them in leadership positions to satisfy leadership situations occurring in their schools.

In the study, it became evident that the Christian teacher leaders believed strongly in serving others as a primary tenet of their biblical mission and faith in God. Another emergent theme, *go the extra mile*, that surfaced from the research converged with Greenleaf's (2002) servant leadership theme. The teacher leaders often demonstrated servant leadership as they assumed leadership roles, routines, and tasks demonstrating personal accountability and responsibility (Greenleaf, 2002). In addition, teacher leaders, heads of school, and principals expressed the emergent theme of *influencer* as an important attribute of teacher leaders. The influencer theme converged with the research of Burns (1978), Greenleaf (2002), Morgan (2006), and Bolman and Deal (2008) with regard to power and influence.

Based upon the research, one can conclude that teacher leaders do experience leadership through distributed leadership practices, as defined by Spillane's (2006) conceptual model. For instance, participant Debra, an experienced teacher and grade-level team captain, met with parents to resolve a discipline issue regarding a student.

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Debra led the meeting, interfacing directly with the parent, child, and other members of her team, and brought resolution to the issue. As a teacher leader, Debra took responsibility and ownership of the leadership situation and made decisions with respect to the school's mission and policy. Using a distributed leadership team-level approach to leadership, the principal supported this leadership action. In this instance, the team captain was a full-time middle school teacher interacting in the teacher leader role in the leadership situation.

Many of the leadership experiences that surfaced in the study validated the distributed leadership practice theory (Spillane, 2006), with teacher leaders' assuming dual roles in and outside the classroom. The research revealed that monetary compensation did not emerge as a primary factor when teacher leaders fulfilled the leadership needs of the school, but rather, the central motivating factors involved meeting the global needs of the school organization and its related mission from a global school perspective, based upon a love for the school community. I provided various examples of leadership experiences and interactions in the findings presented in Chapter 4.

Subordinate Research Question 1. How do teacher leaders define leadership? The findings of the study answered this question demonstrating how teacher leaders defined themselves as leaders and, interestingly, how they defined those teachers they considered nonteacher leaders. I asked each teacher leader to define the term teacher leader. Then, I asked the teacher leader participants to list several leadership characteristics. Similarities occurred in most of the responses and in the definition of a teacher leader. Although the teacher leader participants converged on certain attributes they assigned to the definition of a teacher leader, they distinguished negative

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characteristics they used to define a nonteacher leader. For the category of nonteacher leader, they cited several negative attributes: for example, complainer, clock puncher, classroom focused only, introverted, dislike for the school community. Conversely, the participants defined a teacher leader as an influencer; a mentor to other teachers; an initiator; and a positive, energetic, passionate problem solver who loved the school community and possessed a global school perspective. Therefore, using the research findings, I reflected the teacher leader participants' definition of a teacher leader in the six emergent themes.

With regard to the literature, the definition of teacher leaders from the research findings converged with much of the literature on the attributes of teacher leaders (Harris, 2008; Levenson, 2014; Spillane, 2006). The literature on teacher leaders placed emphasis on the core leadership skills of teacher leaders, for example, collaboration, motivation, and interpersonal skills (Northouse, 2009). In addition, the research data revealed that teacher leaders defined themselves in Christian schools in terms of intangible qualities resident in the six emergent themes, which relate to love of school and community, the school's mission, a global view of the school, and other intangibles that pertained to furthering the mission of the school and its community. A divergence with the literature occurred in the definition of nonteacher leaders. The research further revealed that from the perspective of the majority of teacher leaders, all teachers are not leaders, nor do they desire to become teacher leaders. Conversely, the heads of school and principals interviewed indicated that all teachers are leaders to some degree, with their leadership developing on a continuum basis. Most teacher leaders disagreed with this premise. Although the findings diverged between the teacher leaders and the heads

of school and principals on the definition of the nonteacher leaders, all participants agreed on the positive attributes, definitions, and emergent themes delineating teacher leaders. With regard to attitudinal differences of teacher leaders, such as those surfacing in the study, Katzenmeyer and Moller wrote, "Those teachers who make large commitments toward school improvement are often impatient with teachers who do not. Teacher leaders must understand that not all teachers have the same level of interest in their work or life circumstances" (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009, p. 73).

Subordinate Research Question 2. What are the teacher leader roles in Christian schools? The research provided answers to this question, as evidenced by the numerous and varied leader roles each participant experienced. In Chapter 4, I listed several formal and informal roles assumed by teacher leaders. They included, but were not limited to the following: class sponsor, athletic director, department head, educational technologist, and dean of students. Regarding teacher leader roles, the findings converged with the literature on teacher leader roles (Bond, 2015; Levenson, 2014). The teacher leader roles in the PK-12 Christian schools manifested themselves in three areas: (a) performing as a teacher leader in the dual roles of classroom teacher and part-time staff member or administrator; (b) performing as a full-time classroom teacher and informally performing as a mentor, influencer, or problem solver; and (c) performing in a full-time position outside the classroom, usually as the result of a promotion. All 16 teacher leader participants claimed current or former classroom teaching as part of their background. Thus, in their leader roles they held either informal roles, without title or compensation, or formal roles, with acknowledged title, compensation, or both.

Further, teacher leaders, as defined in this study, readily "stuck their heads up" (initiated a leadership action or role). Teacher leaders fulfilled a need of the global school community, collaborating and building relationships, as they practiced problem solving through collaborative actions. The data revealed that the teacher leaders assumed leader roles, whether or not the principal or head of school attached a title or compensation to the leadership role. According to Rath and Conchie, "those who lead through relationship building are the essential glue that holds a team together" (Rath & Conchie, 2008, p. 25). Teacher leader Mark stated,

> Teacher leaders possess a resolve to be self-reflective, self-aware, and self-critical as they examine themselves in terms of advancement, initiation of tasks, and routines. They volunteer to serve or respond to an invitation to serve in both formal or informal leader roles. (Mark, personal communication, August 25, 2014)

The study revealed that although teacher leaders appreciated compensation for performing leadership tasks, such as extra time, stipends, or reduced course loads, these considerations were secondary compared to fulfilling the needs of the PK-12 Christian school community. The research showed that teacher leaders appeared motivated by intangible values, such as unconditional love for the school community, a global school perspective, and improving their schools (*making the schools better*) as a means of helping their schools to advance and fulfill their missions.

Subordinate Research Question 3. What leader tasks and routines do teacher leaders perform? Through the research, I obtained an answer to this question. The teacher leaders, using the definition generated from the six emergent themes, performed whatever leader tasks and routines the school community required. For example, Martha, in the role of dean of students, as well as promoted teacher leader, saw the need to

improve the school's security communication system and decided to research what other schools utilized. She presented the information to her head of school and to an administrative committee for review. Her idea was accepted and a new system was installed. Martha did not relegate the need to another person, nor did she think that she could not initiate an informed problem-solving solution that would benefit her school. Rather, her attitude was one of *find a need and fill it.* Also, Martha's example demonstrated distributed leadership practice theory (Spillane, 2006).

Another leader routine occurred with informal mentoring. In one school, teacher leader Maude noticed a new teacher's uncertainty regarding grading procedures and lack of classroom management. Maude invited the teacher to observe her classroom. Throughout the year, Maude became an informal mentor to the teacher. This informal leadership routine demonstrated a leadership practice (Spillane, 2006) that positively affected the new teacher, helping her to meet her instructional and class management goals; the leadership action also met a microneed of the school in strengthening the teacher. The school did not provide compensation for the teacher leader performing this informal role, nor did the teacher leader expect it. Rather, the teacher leader responded to a global need of the school by helping another teacher.

Patterson wrote about leadership: "Alignment and execution is working through others to maximize performance and deliver" (Patterson, 2015, p. 78). In *Leader Evolution: From Technical Expert to Organizational Leader*, Patterson described four leadership alignment and execution competencies, which aligned with the PK-12 Christian school philosophy regarding trust, respect, love, personal accountability, and responsibility. The four competencies included the following:

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1. Shaping the culture and political landscape—shapes a culture based on mutual respect, trust, and accountability

2. Building an adaptive organization—creates a high-performance organization that gets results by continually aligning strategy, roles, skill sets, and leadership responsibilities

3. Developing talents—takes pride in role as coach and teacher who gets the most out of individuals and teams

4. Leading by example—models the leadership behaviors and values expected of others (Patterson, 2015)

Subordinate Research Question 4. How do the teacher leader responses compare with the head of school and principal responses? The research revealed that the teacher leader responses converged with the heads of school and principal responses, with two exceptions. First, the teacher leaders and the heads of school had different definitions of teacher leader. The heads of school described all teachers as teacher leaders. The majority of the teacher leaders disagreed, stating that not all teachers are teacher leaders. Because of this perspective, the teacher leaders provided definitions for the teacher leader and the nonteacher leader. The emergent, convergent, and divergent themes are presented in Appendix L. Second, I collected data from the heads of school and principals that created a talent management and leader succession theme for the identification (for placement) and development of teacher leaders. The theme came solely from the heads of school and principals. The convergences and divergences were discussed in detail in the analysis of Research Subquestion 4 in Chapter 4.

Interpretation of Responses From Heads of School and Principals

This study involved a second view of the teacher leaders in PK-12 Christian schools to provide triangulation. In the study, I asked seven heads of school and one additional principal ($N = 8$) similar questions regarding teacher leaders to ascertain their views of the teacher leaders' leadership experiences. The responses from the heads of school and principals converged with most responses from the teacher leaders. Nevertheless, the data reflected the responses from heads of school and principals as more intentional and measured.

Responses from the heads of school and principals answered the overarching research question on teacher leader experiences in PK-12 Christian schools. The heads of school and principals presented four emergent themes relative to the four research questions. The first theme indicated that teacher leaders *stick their heads up*, meaning that they initiate actions, assuming leadership roles, tasks, and routines based upon the needs of the global school community (Spillane, 2006). Theme 2 referred to teacher leaders' exhibiting a positive growth mindset (Bond, 2015; Dweck, 2008): They *go above and beyond* expected duties and responsibilities, with or without compensation, assuming needed roles, tasks and routines. According to Theme 3, teacher leaders possess *core characteristics*, which equate to a definition of teacher leaders. Characteristically, teacher leaders responded to leadership situations in formal or informal roles as leaders or followers, reflecting Spillane's model of distributed leadership practice. Spillane's leadership practices model requires a leader, a follower, and a leadership situation in the school, for example, department chair, class sponsor, or freshman orientation advisor. Finally, Theme 4 indicated that heads of school and principals need *talent management*

and leader succession programs for teacher leader development and identification (Betof, 2009; Betof, Owens, & Todd, 2014; Sims, 2009).

The research revealed that none of the schools had in place a formal talent management program for identifying and developing teacher leaders. Neither formal leadership succession programs nor human capital leader pools existed. In part, this phenomenon was due to limited human capital and the smaller sizes of the Christian schools. In the context of this research, a leader pool is a list of potential leaders earmarked for eventual promotion to leadership positions (Sims, 2009). Based upon the emergent theme of teacher leaders' initiating a desire to be involved through their leadership actions or conversations, *people sticking their heads up*, the heads of school and principals could then institute individual improvement plans for particular teacher leaders. The improvement plans could include assigning teacher leaders to shadow the principal, chair projects, perform professional development training, or collaborate with teachers on technology projects. The responses revealed that the heads of school and principals needed additional human capital as leadership resources. Subsequently, the principals needed to willingly create talent management improvement plans to develop those teacher leaders desiring to move the school forward. A subjective talent management improvement or development process could have negative consequences, however, based upon potential personality conflicts between teacher leaders and heads of school and principals. Such a process also would require time from the principals to develop and train teacher leaders.

Thus, in the study, the comparative analysis between teacher leaders and heads of school and principals converged in most themes. Nevertheless, the first area of

divergence was the *talent management and leader succession* theme that emerged from the heads of school and principals, which is associated with a school administrator's role. The second divergent area revealed that teacher leader participants did not define all teachers as teacher leaders, whereas, conversely, the school administrators in the study did consider all teachers to be teacher leaders, but at different levels of growth. I believe the premise that all teachers are leaders can potentially have a bearing on the advancement of teacher leaders. If the principals consider all teachers to be teacher leaders, when teacher leaders distinguish themselves through leadership actions, the actions possibly can go unnoticed. Secondly, as expected, the actions of servant leaders (Greenleaf, 2002) in Christian school leadership could be considered the norm rather than being distinguished as leadership actions. Positively, if heads of school and principals consider the six themes that originated in the data from the teacher leaders as indicators of leadership, they can easily identify teacher leaders within their organizations, as revealed by the research. Hence, once identified, a development plan for the teacher leaders could logically follow.

My Findings—The Revelations

The findings regarding the leadership experiences of teacher leaders exposed how valuable teacher leaders are to the overall success of their school communities. I recognized from the findings that future leadership advancement for teacher leaders can be predicated upon the degree of leadership training and knowledge they possess. The data revealed that teacher leaders exist and are visible in their organizations, contrary to my past belief that they are suppressed, waiting to be developed and utilized in their school organizations. This research revealed that the teacher leaders are characterized by

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the six themes revealed in the data; the themes offer a viable definition of Christian school teacher leaders. Using this information, heads of school and principals can easily identify teacher leaders. Nevertheless, as previously noted, once identified, the teacher leaders need intentional, formal leadership training, followed by exposure to and performance of leadership tasks and routines, to advance. Clearly, the utilization and strategic placement of teacher leaders, in accordance with their desires and skill sets, exposes another reason for equipping identified teacher leaders with training and opportunities. The fact that teacher leaders take ownership regarding their current school communities is another benefit of utilizing identified teacher leaders, through intentional talent management programs.

I agree with the research findings that all teachers do not desire to become teacher leaders, yet many have the potential for leadership. The research showed that potential teacher leaders who desire to be leaders initiate actions within their schools, such as volunteering to serve in leadership capacities. Teacher leaders make their leadership abilities evident in their schools. Teacher leaders do not have suppressed voices because they find ways to be involved in their schools, whether as formal leaders with titles or as informal leaders without additional titles or compensation. A constructed meaning from this study is that teacher leaders invariably lead! The teacher leaders initiate actions and embrace leadership opportunities in alignment with the school's mission and vision; they unselfishly provide solutions to improve their schools. Therefore, to earmark teacher leaders for specific positions, in the implications section, I recommend that heads of school establish a talent management and leader succession development plan for teacher leaders.

Through the research, I discovered that Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership framework existed in the schools as a practice, and the participants often unknowingly recognized it as a leadership model. In addition, leadership needs often occurred in the school community that required the teacher leaders to assume formal or informal leadership roles and to intervene in various leadership situations. The definitions of teacher leaders in this research, however, remained consistent with the literature on teacher leader characteristics and traits (Bond, 2015; Crowther, 2009; Danielson, 2006; Harris, 2008; Levenson, 2014; Lieberman & Miller, 2004; Spillane, 2006).

Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership practice conceptual framework allowed me to research leadership experiences of teacher leaders to determine how the leadership experiences actually looked, not whether they existed. Finally, I share an insight from Danielson with regard to the loving and supportive teacher leaders in this study who cared enough to share their "hearts and heads" with me:

> Open-mindedness is accompanied by humility. Teacher leaders don't assume that their own idea is the best one or indeed that a proposed course of action will turn out to be the best approach. They are quite willing to admit that they don't know everything and that information may surface that would cause a shift in their plan. This open-mindedness and humility, of course, are consequences of a deep respect for colleagues and a commitment to collegiality. (Danielson, 2006, p. 37)

The Implications of the Study

In this section, I provide various implications pertaining to the contributions of this research study in the areas of policy, practice, professionalism, population, and personal importance.

Implication for professional importance. This research contributes to the body of knowledge and scholarly literature on the leadership experiences and practices of teacher leaders in American PK-12 Christian schools. I explored the teacher leaders'

leadership experiences. Therefore, the revealed professional insight can positively

impact future Christian school leadership planning. Also, the research findings can lead

to school leaders' formalizing new leadership models to identify, develop, and utilize

teacher leaders within PK-12 Christian schools. It became apparent in the research that a

teacher leader identification and development model can have application for other

private schools or charter schools that have organizational structures similar to the

structure of PK-12 Christian schools.

Implication for practice. Potentially, teacher leadership models can be

considered for school leadership reform in various schools. This reform can manifest

itself in the creation of leadership pools for the development of teacher leaders using

leader internship programs and internal shared leadership program initiatives. In the

future, the existing body of teacher leaders could become vital contributors to school

leadership teams, affecting both policy and practice as a part of reformed leader models

in PK-12 schools (Bond, 2015: Elmore, 2008; Fowler, 2009).

I recommend that Christian school leaders create talent management programs to

identify and further develop leadership skills of teacher leaders earmarked for

advancement. I also recommend that, when feasible, school administrators place teacher

leaders in a tier of collaborative leadership within their schools, providing them with

appropriate compensation, such as monetary stipends, additional time, assigned titles, or

other benefits. In identifying teacher leaders, heads of school and principals can consider

the teacher leader criteria and definitions of a teacher leader that emerged from this

research. The findings from the study have the potential to precipitate leadership reform

in PK-12 Christian schools as teacher leaders are viewed as vital and influential human capital assets in those schools, as well as other private schools.

The research findings converged with the literature regarding the positive attributes of teacher leaders, the various roles they can assume, and the leadership tasks and routines teacher leaders can perform in schools. According to York-Barr and Duke (2004), the construct of teacher leadership is not well defined, either conceptually or operationally. Further, according to Smylie and Denny, the recognition of teacher leadership, visions of expanded teacher leadership roles, and new hope for the contributions that these expanded roles might make in improving schools, although not a new concept, is important for the future (Smylie & Denny, as cited in York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 1).

Implication for population. This research study contributes to the scholarly research pertaining to the PK-12 Christian school population. In 2010, the religious school population was approximately 5 million students in PK-12 Christian or related religious schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). The school populations affected by this research might include additional private PK-12 Christian schools not involved in this study, other nonreligious private schools of similar structure, or public charter schools operating as site-based schools. The Council for American Private Education (2014) reported that in the years 2011-2012 more than 30,000 private schools existed in the United States (24% of all U.S. schools) and that 10% of American students attended private schools, the majority of whom were in PK-12 Christian schools.

The research findings could provide futuristic insight for the PK-12 Christian school population: insight through leadership reform models that contribute to PK-12

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Christian schools, enhancing student achievement, parental and student relationships, and teacher leadership practices in schools. In PK-12 Christian schools, teacher leaders are usually contained in a single school location, or for larger divisional school systems, they may be spread across multiple school locations, for example, upper, middle, and lower schools. I recommend, based upon the research findings, that school leaders consider the advantages of distributing teacher leaders within and across their organizations.

Implications for private and public school leadership models. This research study contributes to the body of knowledge on teacher leaders. Thus, the research findings can have implications for PK-12 public and private schools in considering teacher leadership school reform models. The reform models can contribute to the development of teacher leaders to manage leadership situations occurring within their schools. Based upon the research findings, the *unconditional love* emergent theme could be considered as a potential model through which schools exhibit care, trust, and respect as priorities in developing teacher leaders, thereby creating a new mindset within school leaders (Galatians 5:22; Greenleaf, 2002; Kouzes & Posner, 2012). This implication is not to assume that the intangible values of care, trust, and respect do not currently exist in schools, but rather, based upon this research study, that school administrators could make this potential *care model* intentional and a priority. The process could begin with the heads of school and principals instituting the model, leading by example; then, the teacher leaders could model the same leadership behavior with other teachers and with the students.

The research exposed the relevance of this possible implication to other schools. What works in the PK-12 Christian schools could impact significantly what occurs in

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other schools. In this study, the heads of school and principals demonstrated that intangible values of care, trust, and respect toward the teacher leaders work in the PK-12 Christian school community. Reciprocally, the teacher leaders modeled this same attitude with their colleagues, the administration, and the school community, exhibiting the modeled characteristics. The interview data seemed to indicate that the teacher leaders witnessed care and trust in their schools and expected that care and trust to exist for them as teacher leaders and then to permeate their school community. The teacher leaders also exhibited the traits of vision and energy; they were goal setter and planners. The teacher leaders were loyal, committed, and prepared educationally and instructionally. They took their teacher leader positions seriously as educators and sought to improve themselves personally through activities such as seeking advanced degrees and attending professional conferences.

The research further revealed that problem solving and collaboration with teacher leaders in a distributed environment can be essential keys to *making the schools better*. This potential theory of love and care is consistent with Standard 6 of the revised 2014 ISSLC Standards: Professional Culture for Teachers and Staff (University Council for Educational Administration, personal communication, November 20-23, 2014).

Implication for policy. The research findings from this study could contribute to future school leadership reform regarding teacher leadership policies in PK-12 schools (Fowler, 2009). The research results from this study have implications that can effect change in the teacher leadership policies of numerous private PK-12 Christian schools as well as other site-based schools, with similar organizational structures. PK-12 Christian and non-Christian private schools alike could experience significant policy changes.

First, through leadership reform, they could institute a distinct level or tier of leadership for teacher leaders in the organizational structure, offering new or adjusted job descriptions. Second, they could institute new or revised leadership policy guidelines that manifest in increased compensation packages for teacher leaders, organizational restructuring, shared teacher leadership opportunities, institution of teacher leader peer assistance and review programs, teacher leader internships, and guidelines for career advancement. In addition, Christian schools could unite and share teacher leader resources among similar PK-12 Christian schools instead of having each Christian school operate in a singular manner. Elmore (2008) suggested that such a policy was in process. Fowler stated,

> A working definition of power is essential in a book about education policy. Thus, the ability to exercise power includes the willingness to deploy resources causing an actor to act, preventing an actor from acting, and shaping the nature of the actor's action. (Fowler, 2009, p. 25)

Implication for personal importance. This research study answered many questions regarding teacher leaders that I had as a former secondary principal in a PK-12 Christian school. My goal was to explore how teacher leaders in private PK-12 Christian schools experienced leadership, as told from their voices and their perspectives. In the study, I investigated how teacher leaders defined themselves as leaders and, further, how they perceived their leadership roles and leadership experiences. In PK-12 Christian schools, opportunities exist for heads of school and principals to seek innovative ways to identify, develop, and sustain teacher leaders, those who promote the school's mission, policies, and vision (Harris, 2008). Based upon the research findings, perhaps school leaders, in collaboration with teacher leaders, can brainstorm and develop ways for sharing human capital leadership resources among PK-12 Christian schools.

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Recommendations for Future Studies

Having researched the leadership experiences of teacher leaders in PK-12

Christian schools, first, I desire to conduct research that focuses on talent management

programs for teacher leaders in PK-12 private or public schools or public charter schools

in a mid-Atlantic state. The future study would contribute to the body of knowledge in

the areas of school leadership development related to practice, research, and policy. The

study could add to the research on talent management programs in Christian schools and

perhaps public charter schools, and create new approaches to leadership distribution in

schools. Such a study could contribute to identifying additional leader resources for

schools as part of a talent management program. The study could have an impact upon

building leadership capacity in teachers and teacher leaders. It could provide research for

redesigning school organizational structures to accommodate teacher leaders as an

integral part of leadership. Also, the study could have significance regarding leadership

practices in schools and policy implementation changes.

A second study could investigate how teacher leaders are identified and utilized in

PK-12 public charter schools and the resulting impact upon their school communities.

The study would be important with regard to policy, practice, and research by adding to

the literature about using teacher leaders to forge stronger relationships within the school

community.

The findings from the study revealed the presence of servant leadership in the PK-

12 schools. Therefore, a third study could investigate the effects of servant leadership

and legitimate power on teacher leaders in PK-12 Christian schools (Greenleaf, 2002). A

servant leadership (Greenleaf, 2002) study also could be considered for PK-12 public charter schools or other site-based private schools.

Finally, based upon the findings of this study regarding the characteristics of teacher leaders and nonteacher leaders, I could conduct an attitudinal study on teacher leaders and their colleagues as they interact in leadership situations.

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

A delimitation of the study was that the target group for the study consisted of private, PK-12 Christian schools located on the east coast of the United States. In addition, as researcher, I provided specific leadership guidelines for selecting the teacher leaders for the study (See Appendix D). I chose to ground the guidelines in established leadership theories of noted leadership theorists, such as Greenleaf (2002), Spillane (2006), Bolman and Deal (2008), Northouse (2009), and Farr (2010).

As gatekeepers (Morgan, 2006), the heads of school and principals used the leader selection guidelines to guide the teacher leader identification process. Nevertheless, as gatekeepers, the heads of school and principals exercised their preferences in the selection of teacher leaders. Therefore, principal selection of participants could contribute to a limitation in the study. According to Morgan, "gatekeepers exert political influence opening and closing channels of communication and filtering, summarizing, analyzing, and thus shaping knowledge in accordance with a view of the world that favors their interests" (Morgan, 2006, p. 175).

As the researcher, I share my background. I served as a secondary principal at two private PK-12 Christian schools with 14 years as a principal at one school and 4 years as the director of the high and middle school levels at another school. Prior to

becoming principal, I taught in both schools; and in one school served as guidance counselor and academic dean at the secondary level. Prior to entering the field of education, I also held leadership and management positions in the private business sector in the United States. My business background and formal education contributed to the analysis in this research. I do not view my background as a bias to the study, especially having the balance of eight Christian school heads of school and principals to provide interview data for the study, along with 16 teacher leader interviewees. Although I have more than 25 years of experience in Christian education, I considered my role in the research and found it to be an asset in having a prior knowledge base when analyzing the data. As a former Christian school secondary principal, my conscious and subconscious leader thoughts and experiences could influence the interpretation of data from an administrator's view. Nevertheless, responses from the eight heads of school and principals from seven different Christian schools allowed for a higher degree of objectivity to be juxtaposed in the study.

Summary of Chapter 5

In this qualitative study, I used a constructionist epistemology (Merriam, 2009) to make meaning of the data. I interpreted the findings after performing the data analysis. As a result of the study, I gained a greater understanding of how teacher leaders in private PK-12 Christian schools experience leadership, as I viewed the study through a distributed leadership practice conceptual framework (Spillane, 2006). From the collected data, I was able to construct what motivates teacher leaders to assume leadership roles and perform leadership tasks and routines as they encounter various leadership situations in their schools. The study provided answers to the overarching

research question and four subquestions. In addition, the study produced implications for policy, practice, and future research. The basic qualitative, interpretive, constructivist methodology aligned with the research questions and achieved the purpose of the study, which was to explore the leadership experiences of teacher leaders in PK-12 Christian schools. In the study, I addressed the findings of the study with regard to leader experiences, interactions, definitions of teacher leaders, roles, tasks, and routines in a distributed leadership practice environment (Spillane, 2006). Themes emerged, converged, and diverged. Most themes were substantiated in the literature. During the study, an unexpected, central theme of *unconditional love for the school community* emanated from the teacher leader participants as paramount, followed by a second theme, having a *global school perspective*. These themes subjugated leadership skills and career interest themes to a lower platform of interest for the teacher leaders. The words of Elizabeth represented the consensus: "You have to have the vision of the school. If you buy into it, you own it. If you own it, you live it out daily" (Elizabeth, personal communication, October 29, 2014).

Conducting this research study was a scholarly privilege. Completion of the study accomplished the purpose of professionally contributing to scholarly peer-reviewed literature and research on the leadership experiences of principal-identified teacher leaders in American PK-12 faith-based Christian schools.

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Appendix A: Research Design on Teacher Leaders

GOALS

- To define teacher leaders
- To explore how distributed leadership occurs in Christian schools
- To understand the perspectives of teacher leaders on leadership
- To explore leadership experiences of teacher leaders
- To add to the scholarly body of knowledge on teacher leaders.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK MAP

- Christian school structure and culture
- Teacher leader roles ,routines, tasks, communication, development, interactions, situations, followers, leaders
- Distributed leadership followers/leaders

RESEARCH QUESTION(S)

How do principal-identified teacher leaders in PK-12 Christian schools experience leadership in a distributed leadership environment, as told from the teacher leaders' perspective?

- How do teacher leaders define leadership?
- What leader tasks and routines do teacher leaders perform?
- What are the teacher leader roles in Christian schools?
- How do teacher leader responses compare with head of school and principal responses

METHODOLOGY

- Interview protocol for teacher leaders
- Interview protocol for principals
- Semi-structured interview protocol
- Two interviews per teacher leader; two interviews per principal
- Principals identified teacher leaders according to preselected leadership criteria provided by the researcher
- Purposeful sampling
- 24 total participants

TRUSTWORTHINESS

- List limitations and delimitations
- Triangulation
- Multiple teacher leader interviews
- Multiple principal interviews
- Comparative analysis
- Member checking

Appendix B: Teacher Leader Interview Protocol

Congratulations on your selection as a research participant. Your principal chose you for this qualitative interview study.

1. What leadership characteristics do you think may have contributed to your selection by the principal to participate in this research study?

2. Please describe your educational background and your prior work experience.

3. Tell me about any leadership training you may have had, in or outside your school, for example, training in a professional development session(s) or at a college or university.

4. The term teacher leader has many definitions. In your words, how do you define teacher leader?

5. What do you believe are some of the tools for leadership? Collaboration is considered a tool of leadership. As a teacher leader, can you tell me about one or several of your collaboration experiences with other teachers and staff?

6. Leaders are sometimes called influencers and motivators. How do teacher leaders in your school use their influence and motivation as leaders?

7. Tell me about any leadership experiences or interactions you have had with other teacher leaders in formal (titled) or informal (untitled) roles in your school.

8. What kinds of follower or leader roles do you participate in at your school?

9. Tell me a story about a situation in which you took the leader role at your school.

10. Leaders set visions and goals to accomplish tasks. Assuming teacher leaders are involved in leadership tasks and routines in your school, can you tell me about their tasks and routines?

11. What are your thoughts about a process being put in place in your school to identify and develop teacher leaders? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

12. Some schools use leader mentors to help teachers learn to become leaders. Assuming your school uses mentors, what are your thoughts about having a leadership mentor?

13. Can you compare and contrast the characteristics of teachers that are considered teacher leaders to those who you would not consider as teacher leaders?

Appendix C: Principal Interview Protocol

Thank you for participating in this study. Your time is valuable and appreciated.

1. I would like to begin by hearing a little about how you came to your current position and, then, gain some insight on your educational background and your work experience.

2. Many definitions exist for the term teacher leader. In your words, how do you, as head of school or principal, define teacher leader?

3. Again, in your role as the head of school or principal, would you share your insight on the leadership behaviors or skills you look for in teacher leaders, whether inside or outside the classroom? Further, could you share some specific examples of these behaviors that you have personally experienced?

4. If you have teacher leaders who hold positions in your school, I would be interested to learn the titles of those positions.

5. At your school, what is your process, if any, for identifying and developing teacher leaders?

6. Would you tell me about an instance in which a teacher became a formal or informal teacher leader in your school, and the resulting impact of that decision?

7. In some schools, teacher leaders participate in leadership tasks and routines. Can you give examples of how teacher leaders in your school contribute to leader tasks and routines?

8. Going a step further, can you share any interactions between teacher leaders and the administrative staff that influenced instructional leadership decision making?

9. What are your experiences, if any, regarding teacher leaders' involvement with school organizational leadership decision making?

10. At your school, if teacher mentors are assigned, what does this process look like (implementation) and how does it pertain to teacher leaders?

11. .From your experience, how can an administrator help teacher leaders advance to higher levels of leadership within a school?

12. Would you compare and contrast characteristics of teachers considered as teacher leaders to teachers not considered as teacher leaders?

13. Collaboration and motivation are two leadership tools. In your opinion as an administrator, do your teacher leaders use collaboration, motivation, or other leadership tools at your school?

14. Also, looking further at teacher leaders, what are your thoughts on teacher leaders receiving compensation or titles for their teacher leader responsibilities?

Appendix D: Guidelines for Teacher Leader Selection

1. Support mission, vision and policies (Burns, 1978; Fowler, 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Dill, 2010)

2. Motivator (Kouzes & Posner, 2012)

3. Influencer (Bolman & Deal, 2008)

4. Integrity (Maxwell, 2012)

5. Goal setter (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Morgan, 2006)

6. Team builder (Rubin & Futrell, 2009; Senge, 1990)

7. Encourager (Kouzes & Posner, 2012)

8. Professional will and humility (Collins, 2001, 2005; Dufour, Dufour, Eaker, & Karhanek, 2004)

9. Compassion/caring (Noddings, 1984; Greenleaf, 2002)

10. Communication (interpersonal) skills (Northouse, 2009)

11. Performance oriented (Collins, 2001; 2005)

12. Moral standards (Dewey, 1933, 2009; Dill, 2010; Fullan, 2009)

Appendix E: Teacher Leader Letter of Invitation

Date

Dear Teacher Leader:

I am conducting research on the leadership experiences of teacher leaders in Christian schools, as told from the teacher leaders' perspective. This study focuses upon teacher leaders who have duties inside or outside the classroom.

This letter is being extended to invite you to participate in the study, *Exploring the Leadership Experiences of Principal-identified Christian School Teacher Leaders in a Distributed Leadership Environment, as Told from the Teacher Leaders' Perspectives* (IRB #071446). You have been recommended as a professional educator who has met the above criteria. The data for the study will be collected through interviews of approximately 60 minutes duration. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may choose not to be a part of the study at any point. I, as researcher, will strive to maintain confidentiality and anonymity as to your identity, your responses to interview questions, and any other aspect of your participation in the study. No real names or identifying information will be published in the final study.

Your involvement in the study will assist in contributing to the body of knowledge relevant to the study of teacher leadership. Please feel free to contact me at any point to answer questions you may have about the proposed study, conducted under the direction of Dr. Jennifer Clayton of The George Washington University 757-269-2203. My e-mail is lc123@gwu.edu and my cell phone number is (301) 367-1591.

Please reply to this e-mail if you wish to be considered for the interviews, and I will contact you. Verbal permission will be obtained prior to the interview. A time and location will be scheduled at your convenience. Thank you for your time and consideration of this invitation to participate in this study on teacher leaders.

Respectfully,

Linda Campbell
Doctoral Candidate
Graduate School of Education and Human Development
The George Washington University

Appendix F: Teacher Leader Follow-Up E-Mail

Date

Dear Teacher Leader:

Congratulations, your principal selected you to participate in a study on teacher leadership in Christian schools, as told from the teacher leaders' perspective. As an educator, I understand the value of your time at this busy time of year and appreciate your assistance in this study.

This letter is extended to formally invite you to participate in the study, *Exploring the Leadership Experiences of Principal-identified Christian School Teacher Leaders in a Distributed Leadership Environment, as Told from the Teacher Leaders' Perspectives* (IRB #071446). The data for the study will be collected through interviews of approximately 60 minutes duration. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may choose not to be a part of the study at any point. I, as researcher, will strive to maintain confidentiality and anonymity as to your identity, responses to interview questions, and any other aspect of your participation in the study. No real names or identifying information will be published in the final study.

Your involvement in the study will assist in contributing to the body of knowledge relevant to Teacher leaders. The study is being conducted under the direction of Dr. Jennifer Clayton of The George Washington University (757 269-2203). Please feel free to contact me at any point to answer questions you may have about the proposed study. My e-mail is lc123@gwu.edu, and my cell phone number is 301 367-1591.

Please reply to this e-mail if you wish to be considered for the interviews, and I will contact you. Verbal permission will be obtained prior to the interview. A time and location will be scheduled at your convenience.

Thank you for your time and willingness to become a part of this study on teacher leaders. Your participation is greatly appreciated!

Respectfully,

Linda Campbell
Doctoral Candidate
Graduate School of Education and Human Development
The George Washington University

Appendix G: Head of School or Principal Letter of Invitation

Date

Dear Head of School:

I am hoping you may be able to assist with research I am conducting on teacher leadership in Christian schools, as told from the teacher leaders' perspective. I would like for you to provide the names of teacher leaders you recommend to be participants in the study. Each participant will then receive a letter. In addition, I would like your consent to be interviewed from the administrator level, as a participant.

This letter is being extended to invite you to participate in the study, *Exploring the Leadership Experiences of Principal-identified Christian School Teacher Leaders in a Distributed Leadership Environment, as Told from the Teacher Leaders' Perspectives* (IRB #071446). You have been recommended as a professional administrator. The data for the study will be collected through interviews of approximately 45-60 minutes duration. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may choose not to be a part of the study at any point. I, as researcher, will strive to maintain confidentiality and anonymity as to your identity, responses to interview questions, and any other aspect of your participation in the study. No real names or identifying information will be published in the final study.

Your involvement in the study will assist in contributing to the body of knowledge relevant to the study of teacher leadership in the classrooms. Please feel free to contact me at any point to answer questions you may have about the proposed study, conducted under the direction of Dr. Jennifer Clayton of The George Washington University 757-269-2203. My e-mail is lc123@gwu.edu and my cell phone number is (301) 367-1591.

Please reply to this e-mail if you wish to be considered for the interviews, and I will contact you. Verbal permission will be obtained prior to the interview. A time and location will be scheduled at your convenience. Thank you for your time and consideration of this invitation to participate in this study on teacher leadership.

Respectfully,

Linda Campbell
Doctoral Candidate
Graduate School of Education and Human Development
The George Washington University

Appendix H: Head of School or Principal Follow-Up E-Mail

Date

Dear Head of School:

As an educator, I understand the value of your time at this busy time of year. I am hoping you may be able to assist with research I am conducting on teacher leadership in Christian schools, as told from the teacher leaders' perspective. I would like for you to provide the names of teacher leaders you recommend to be participants in the study. Each participant will then receive a letter. In addition, I would like your consent to be interviewed from the administrator level, as a participant.

This letter is being extended to invite you to participate in the study, *Exploring the Leadership Experiences of Principal-identified Christian School Teacher Leaders in a Distributed Leadership Environment, as Told from the Teacher Leaders' Perspectives* (IRB #071446). The data for the study will be collected through interviews of approximately 45-60 minutes duration. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may choose not to be a part of the study at any point. I will strive to maintain confidentiality and anonymity as to your identity, responses to interview questions, and any other aspect of your participation in the study. No real names or identifying information will be published in the final study.

Your involvement in the study will assist in contributing to the body of knowledge relevant to teacher leaders. The study is being conducted under the direction of Dr. Jennifer Clayton of The George Washington University (757 269-2203). Please feel free to contact me at any point to answer questions you may have about the proposed study. My e-mail is lc123@gwu.edu, and my cell phone number is 301 367-1591.

Please reply to this e-mail if you wish to be considered for the interviews, and I will contact you. Verbal permission will be obtained prior to the interview. A time and location will be scheduled at your convenience. Thank you for your time and willingness to become a part of this study on teacher leadership. Your participation is greatly appreciated!

Respectfully,

Linda Campbell
Doctoral Candidate
Graduate School of Education and Human Development
The George Washington University

Appendix I: Teacher Leader Member Checking Form

Name:

Date: **Comments**

Teacher Leader Member Checking Form

Teacher Leaders Possess A Love For The School Community   *(care about other teachers, students, and the school community; faithful to the school's values and beliefs, promote the school's vision and mission , want to see the school become better, promote school governance)*
Teacher Leaders Have A Global School Perspective   *(possess a big picture view of the school, care for the school community, engage in school life and activities; care about other teachers, staff, students, and parents)*
Teacher Leaders Mentor Other Teachers   *(volunteer to mentor teachers informally or formally, care for others, support social justice, good listening skills, responsive to needs of others, counsel, patience, forgiveness of mistakes, professional development trainers, seek to build capacity in others)*
Teacher Leaders Lead By Example   *(initiate action in tasks and routines, motivate other teachers by their words and their actions, volunteer or assume informal or formal leader roles, demonstrate social justice, share ideas, communicate with others, collaborate, are self-initiators, build teams)*
Teacher Leaders Are Influencers   *(voices are sought and heard, motivators, agreeable, positive, promote school initiatives, support and promote new ideas, exhibit energy, passion, desire to serve others)*
Teacher Leaders Want The School To Be Better--Go the Extra Mile   *(exhibit a positive attitude, volunteer, passionate, problem solver, willing to stay late, go above and beyond duties, identify needs: 'find a need and fill It')*

Appendix J: Head of School Member Checking Form

Name: _____   **Date:** _____

Head of School Member Checking Form   <u>**Comments**</u>

Teacher Leaders "Stick Their Heads Up"   *(organized, initiate a call to action, assume leader roles, mentor other teachers, find a need and fill it, train other teachers, self- initiators, volunteer for school committees, projects, ideas, problem solver, willing to serve, fulfill a need, problem solvers)*
Teacher Leader Core Characteristics   *(promote the school's mission and vision, global view of the school instead of only a classroom view, growth mindset, love the school community, active in community life and activities, positive attitude, demonstrate passion, volunteer to serve, mentor other teachers, communicate, share ideas, support school governance, voice sought by other teacher leaders, collaborate, initiate leader tasks that need to be assumed, innovative)*
Positive Growth Mindset—Go Above and Beyond Teacher Duties and Responsibilities   *(positive attitude, passion, energy, desire to improve the school, collaborate with others, mentor other teachers, share ideas, stay extra hours, attend school life activities, volunteer, volunteer or assume formal or informal leader roles, voices sought out by other teachers and administration)*
Talent Management and Leader Succession—Identifying and Developing Teacher Leaders   *(informal teacher leader identification process, administrator strategic leader replacement philosophy, shadow administrators, give projects and professional development tasks and assignments as part of development for future promotions, create leader positions for them, distribute leadership, assign to leader roles, possess organization skills, recommend graduate studies, talk to teacher leaders about their desires for advancement, must love students and teaching, organizational skills required)*

Appendix K: Raw Data Analysis Spreadsheet for Teacher Leader Responses

Raw Data Analysis of 16 Teacher Leaders' Responses
Teacher Leaders (TL) Pseudonym Names

Six Major Themes from Teacher Leaders / Four Major Themes from Principals/Heads of School	Esther	Debra	Martha	Mary	Naomi	Ruth	Marie	Merriam	Maude	Mindy	Rachael	Eve	Elizabeth	Luke	Matthew	Mark
TL's are Influencers (convergent)																
TL's Have a Global School Perspective (emergent)																
TL's "Go the Extra Mile" to Make the School Better (emergent)																
TL's have an unconditional love for the school community (emergent)																
TL's Mentor Other Teachers (convergent)																
TL's Lead By Example (emergent)																
Principal Theme-" Teacher Leaders Stick Their Heads Up"(convergent)																
Principal Theme--Teacher Leaders Core Characteristics(emergent)																
Principal Theme--TL Talent Manag. and Leader Succession(emergent)																
Principal Theme- Teacher Leaders Have a Growth Mindset(emergent)																

Open- Code Data on Teacher Leaders from Interviews

	Esther	Debra	Martha	Mary	Naomi	Ruth	Marie	Merriam	Maude	Mindy	Rachael	Eve	Elizabeth	Luke	Matthew	Mark
demonstrate care for other teachers																
faithful to the school's values and beliefs																
promotes the schools vision and mission																
promotes school governance																
want the school to become better																
growth mindset																
possess a big picture, global view of the school																
care for the school community																
engaged in school life and activities																
positive attitude																
collaboration																
share ideas with other teachers and administration																
volunteer to serve others																
mentor other teachers																
good listening skills																
responsive to needs of the school community																
patient																
forgive teacher mistakes																
professional development trainers																
build capacity in other teachers																
initiate actions when needed																
support social justice for all																
counsel others to help																
assume takes and perform routines as needed																
support school life activities																
volunteer for informal or formal leader roles																
share ideas with other teachers and administration																
communicate with others																
self-initiator																
build teams																
self-aware																
self-reflective																
voice heard and sought by others																
agreeable																
promote school initiatives																
support and promote new ideas																
positive attitude																
passionate																
go above and beyond duties																
find a need and fill it																
remain after school hours																
problem solvers																

Raw Data Analysis of 16 Teacher Leaders' Responses
Open-Code Data on Non-Teacher Leaders from Interviews

	Esther	Debra	Martha	Mary	Naomi	Ruth	Marie	Merriam	Maude	Mindy	Rachael	Eve	Elizabeth	Luke	Matthew	Mark
negative attitude																
classroom focused, not global school perspective(divergent)																
critical of new school initiatives																
complainers																
perform only assigned duties and responsibilities																
do not go the extra mile for the school community (divergent)																
separate themselves from other teachers																
clock punchers																
teacher leader, but to a lesser degree																
quiet, introverted																
do not attend school activities																
personal reasons why they do not lead																
veteran teachers who are professionally tired																
suppress voice by choice																
dislike the school community																
dislike teaching and students																
pass problems to others, do not problem solve																
not professionally growth oriented																

Appendix L: Emergent, Convergent, and Divergent Themes of Teacher Leaders

Theme	Type	TL/HOS
Teacher Leaders Have Unconditional Love For the School Community	Emic/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher Leaders Have a Global School Perspective	Emic/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher Leaders Lead By Example	Emic/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher Leaders are Influencers	Emic/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher Leaders Go the Extra Mile	Emic/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher Leaders Mentor Others	Emic/Convergent	TL/HOS
Teacher Leaders and Non-Teacher Leaders	Divergent	TL
*Talent Management and Leader Succession	Divergent	HOS

Note: TL means teacher leader theme and HOS means head of school (or principal) theme. Both codes indicate a convergence between the TL and HOS. The starred emergent theme emanated from the heads of school and principals, only, in this study.

Appendix M: Six Emergent Themes From the Teacher Leaders With Raw Data

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Themes

Teacher Leaders Have an Unconditional Love for the School Community
care and compassion for their colleagues, students, and the school community, faithful to the schools' values and beliefs, promote the school's vision and mission, promote school policies

Teacher Leaders Have A Global School Perspective
possess a big picture view of the school, care for the school community, engage in school life and activities; care about other teachers, staff, students, and parents

Teacher Leaders Mentor Other Teachers
volunteer to mentor teachers informally or formally, care for others, support social justice, good listening skills, responsive to needs of others, counsel, patience, forgiveness of mistakes, professional development trainers, seek to build capacity in others

Teacher Leaders Lead By Example
initiate action in tasks and routines, motivate other teachers by their words and their actions, volunteer or assume informal or formal leader roles, demonstrate social justice, share ideas, communicate with others, collaborate, are self-initiators, build teams

Teacher Leaders Are Influencers
voices are sought and heard, motivators, agreeable, positive, promote school initiatives, support and promote new ideas, exhibit energy, passion, desire to serve others

Teacher Leaders Want The School To Be Better—Go the Extra Mile
exhibit a positive attitude, volunteer, passionate ,growth mindset, problem solver, willing to stay late, go above and beyond duties, identify needs: 'find a need and fill It'

Appendix N: Four Emergent Themes From Heads-of-Schools With Raw Data

Themes

Teacher Leaders "Stick Their Heads Up"

organized, initiate a call to action, assume leader roles, mentor other teachers, find a need and fill it, train other teachers, self- initiators, volunteer for school committees, projects, ideas, problem solver, willing to serve, fulfill a need, problem solvers

Teacher Leader Core Characteristics
promote the school's mission and vision, global view of the school instead of only a classroom view, growth mindset, love the school community, active in community life and activities, positive attitude, demonstrate passion, volunteer to serve, mentor other teachers, communicate, share ideas, support school governance, voice sought by other teacher leaders, collaborate, initiate leader tasks that need to be assumed, innovative, people skills, authentic, planner

Positive Growth Mindset--Go Above and Beyond Teacher Duties and Responsibilities

positive attitude, passion, energy, desire to improve the school, collaborate with others, mentor other teachers, share ideas, stay extra hours, attend school life activities, volunteer, volunteer or assume formal or informal leader roles, voices sought out by other teachers and administration

Talent Management and Leader Succession—Identifying and Developing Teacher Leaders

informal teacher leader identification process, administrator strategic leader replacement philosophy, shadow administrators, give projects and professional development tasks and assignments as part of development for future promotions, create leader positions for them, distribute leadership, assign to leader roles, possess organization skills, recommend graduate studies, talk to teacher leaders about their desires for advancement, must love students and teaching, organizational skills required

Appendix O: Demographic Data for Teacher Leaders

Name	Gender	Age range	Education level	Approximate years of educational service
Esther	F	30-35	Master's	12
Debra	F	46-55	Bachelor's +	20
Martha	F	46-55	Master's	18
Mary	F	25-30	Bachelor's +	11
Naomi	F	30-35	Master's	10
Ruth	F	30-35	Bachelor's	5
Marie	F	36-45	Bachelor's + 30	25
Meriam	F	36-45	Doctoral ABD	11
Maude	F	46-55	Bachelor's + **9**	15
Mindy	F	36-45	Bachelor's	24
Rachael	F	55-60+	Master's + 30	40
Eve	F	36-45	Master's	27
Elizabeth	F	36-45	Master's +	18
Luke	M	36-45	Bachelor's	22
Matthew	M	36-45	Master's	15
Mark	M	30-35	Master's	8
				281 Total years of experience

Appendix P: Demographic Data for Heads of School and Principals

Name	Gender	Age range	Education level	Approximate years of educational service
Principal 1	M	50-60	Master's	30
Principal 2	M	50-60	Doctoral candidate	26
Principal 3	M	45-49	Master's	14
Principal 4	M	50-60	Doctoral candidate	20
Principal 5	M	50-60	Master's	36
Principal 6	M	40-49	Master's	10
Principal 7	M	45-49	Doctorate	20
Principal 8	M	50-60	Master's	24
				180 Total years of experience

Appendix Q: Raw Data Analysis, First Eight Teacher Leaders

Six Major Themes from Teacher Leaders	Raw Data Analysis of first 8 of 16 Emergent Themes from Teacher Leader Interviews							
Four Major Themes from Principals/Heads of School			Teacher Leaders (TL) Pseudonym Names					
A = Agree; D = Disagree; N/C = No Comment	Esther	Debra	Martha	Mary	Naomi	Ruth	Marie	Merriam
TL's are Influencers (convergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
TL's Have a Global School Perspective (emergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
TL's "Go the Extra Mile" to Make the School Better (emergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
TL's Unconditional Love for School Community (emergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
TL's Mentor Other Teachers (convergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
TL's Lead By Example (emergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Principal Theme—" TL's Stick Their Heads Up"(convergent)								
Principal Theme—TL's Core Characteristics(emergent)								
Principal Theme—TL Talent Mgt. and Leader Succession(emergent)								
Principal Theme- TL's Have a Growth Mindset(emergent)								

Coded Raw Data from the First 8 of 16 Teacher Leaders on Teacher Leader Traits								
A = Agree; D = Disagree; N/C = No Comment	Esther	Debra	Martha	Mary	Naomi	Ruth	Marie	Merriam
demonstrate care for other teachers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
faithful to the school's values and beliefs	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
promotes the schools vision and mission	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
promotes school governance	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
want the school to become better	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
growth mindset	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
possess a big picture, global view of the school	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
care for the school community	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
engaged in school life and activities	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
positive attitude	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
collaboration	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
share ideas with other teachers and administration	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
volunteer to serve others	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
mentor other teachers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
good listening skills	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
responsive to needs of the school community	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
patient	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
forgive teacher mistakes	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
professional development trainers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
build capacity in other teachers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
initiate leader actions, when needed	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
support social justice for all	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
counsel others	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
assume leader roles to perform needed routines & tasks	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
support school life activities	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
volunteer for informal or formal leader roles	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
share ideas with other teachers and administration	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
communicate with others	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
self-initiator	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
build teams	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
self-aware	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
self-reflective	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
voice heard and sought by others	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
agreeable	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
promote school initiatives	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
support and promote new ideas	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
positive attitude	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
passionate	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
go above and beyond duties	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
find a need and fill it	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
remain after school	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
problem solvers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
organizational skills	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
energy	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

Raw Data Analysis of first 8 of 16 Teacher Leaders on Non-Teacher Leader Traits								
A = Agree; D = Disagree; N/C = No Comment	Esther	Debra	Martha	Mary	Naomi	Ruth	Marie	Merriam
negative attitude	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
classroom focused, not global school perspective(divergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
critical of new school initiatives	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
complainers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
perform only assigned duties and responsibilities	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
do not go the extra mile for the school community (divergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
separate themselves from other teachers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
clock punchers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
teacher leader, but to a lesser degree	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
quiet, introverted	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
do not attend school activities	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
personal reasons why they do not lead	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
veteran teachers who are professionally tired	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
suppress voice by choice	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
dislike the school community	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
dislike teaching and /or students	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
pass problems to others, do not problem solve	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
not professionally growth oriented	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

Appendix R: Raw Data Analysis, Second Eight Teacher Leaders

Six Major Themes from Teacher Leaders / Four Major Themes from Principals/Heads of School	Raw Data Analysis of second 8 of 16 Emergent Themes from Teacher Leader Interviews — Teacher Leaders (TL) Pseudonym Names						
A = Agree; D = Disagree; N/C = No Comment	Maude	Mindy	Rachael	Eve	Elizabeth	Luke	Matthew	Mark
TL's are Influencers (convergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
TL's Have a Global School Perspective (emergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
TL's "Go the Extra Mile" to Make the School Better (emergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
TL's have unconditional love for the school community (emergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
TL's Mentor Other Teachers (convergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
TL's Lead By Example (emergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Principal Theme–"TL's Stick Their Heads Up" (convergent)								
Principal Theme–TL's Core Characteristics (emergent)								
Principal Theme–TL Talent Mgt. and Leader Succession (emergent)								
Principal Theme– TL's Have a Growth Mindset (emergent)								

Coded Raw Data from the second 8 of 16 TL's on Teacher Leader Traits							
A = Agree; D = Disagree; N/C = No Comment	Maude	Mindy	Rachael	Eve	Elizabeth	Luke	Matthew	Mark
demonstrate care for other teachers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
faithful to the school's values and beliefs	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
promotes the schools vision and mission	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
promotes school governance	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
want the school to become better	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
growth mindset	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
possess a big picture, global view of the school	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
care for the school community	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
engaged in school life and activities	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
positive attitude	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
collaboration	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
share ideas with other teachers and administration	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
volunteer to serve others	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
mentor other teachers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
good listening skills	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
responsive to needs of the school community	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
patient	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
forgive teacher mistakes	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
professional development trainers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
build capacity in other teachers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
initiate actions when needed	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
support social justice for all	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
counsel others to help	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
assume leader roles performing needed routines and tasks	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
support school life activities	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
volunteer for informal or formal leader roles	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
share ideas with other teachers and administration	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
communicate with others	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
self-initiator	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
build teams	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
self-aware	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
self-reflective	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
voice heard and sought by others	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
agreeable	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
promote school initiatives	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
support and promote new ideas	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
positive attitude	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
passionate	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
go above and beyond duties	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
find a need and fill it	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
remain after school	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
problem solvers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
organizational skills	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
energy	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

Raw Data Analysis of second 8 of 16 Teacher Leaders' Responses — Coded Raw Data on second 8 of 16 on Non-Teacher Leader Traits							
A = Agree; D = Disagree; N/C = No Comment	Maude	Mindy	Rachael	Eve	Elizabeth	Luke	Matthew	Mark
negative attitude	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
classroom focused, not global school perspective (divergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
critical of new school initiatives	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
complainers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
perform only assigned duties and responsibilities	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
do not go the extra mile for the school community (divergent)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
separate themselves from other teachers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
clock punchers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
teacher leader, but to a lesser degree	A	A	D	D	A	A	A	D
quiet, introverted	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
do not attend school activities	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
personal reasons why they do not lead	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
veteran teachers who are professionally tired	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	A
suppress voice by choice	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
dislike the school community	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
dislike teaching and students	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
pass problems to others, do not problem solve	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
not professionally growth oriented	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

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Appendix S: Raw Data Analysis, Eight Heads of School and Principals

Four Emergent Themes	Raw Data Analysis of Eight Heads of Schools/Principals on Teacher Leaders from Open and In Vivo Coding							
	A=Agree; D=Disagree; N/C = No Comment							
	Principal 1	Principal 2	Principal 3	Principal 4	Principal 5	Principal 6	Principal 7	Principal 8
Teacher Leaders "Stick Their Heads Up" (Initiate Actions)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Teacher Leaders Possess Core Characteristics	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Teacher Leaders Growth Mindset, Go Above and Beyond	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Teacher Leaders, Talent Management and Leader Succession - identifying and developing TL's	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

Codes	Data Analysis Codes from Heads of School and Principal Interviews on Teacher Leader Characteristics							
	A=Agree; D=Disagree; N/C = No Comment							
	Principal 1	Principal 2	Principal 3	Principal 4	Principal 5	Principal 6	Principal 7	Principal 8
teacher leaders assume formal or informal leader roles	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
mentor other teachers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
identify needs of the school and fill the need	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
train other teachers through formal PD or informally	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
self-initiate	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
volunteer for school committees	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
promote the school's mission and vision	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
global view of the school instead of only a classroom view	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
growth mindset	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
love the school community	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
active in community life	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
attend school activities	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
positive attitude	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
demonstrate passion	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
volunteer to serve, mentor other teachers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
communicate	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
share ideas	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
collaborate	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
support school governance	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
voice sought out by other teacher leaders and administration	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
innovative	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
initiate leader tasks when a need arises	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
passion	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
energy	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
desire to improve the school	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
mentor other teachers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
share ideas	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
stay extra hours	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
given compensation when additional duties warrant it	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
compensated with extra time, stipend, or title	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
distribute leadership allowing teacher leaders to lead	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
create positions for teacher leaders	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
influencers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
motivate by their influence	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
lead by example in the school community	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
shadow administrators	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
intern for prospective positions	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
identified by their action	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
organization skills	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
must love students and teaching	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
promote the school's belief, mission,and vision	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
global view of the school	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
initiate personal advancement opportunities e.g. conferences	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
desire to attend school for advancement	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
assign to leader roles based upon talents and skill set	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
*everyone is a teacher leader	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

Codes	Heads of School and Principals (DO NOT SUPPORT AS A NON-TEACHER LEADER DEFINITION)							
	A=Agree; D=Disagree; N/C = No Comment							
	Principal 1	Principal 2	Principal 3	Principal 4	Principal 5	Principal 6	Principal 7	Principal 8
negative attitude								
complainers								
only assume regular duties and responsibilities								
not problem solvers								
pass on problems			Principals Did Not Support Non-Teacher Leader Definition; View All Teachers as Leaders, Developing on a Continuum					
classroom focused only								
No focus on the global view of the school								
clock punchers								
Seldom attend school activities								
separate themselves from teachers								
non supportive of new school initiatives								
roles suppressed by choice								
dislike the school community								
dislike the teachers and students								
veteran teacher not professionally motivated								
Other priorities than the school community								
avoid extra assignments								

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