

A COMPARISON OF THE LEADERSHIP STYLE PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL
BOARD PRESIDENTS AND PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

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Presented to Faculty of the
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

by
Linda L. Kinsler
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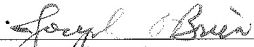
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A Comparison of the Leadership Style Preferences of School Board Presidents and Public School Superintendents


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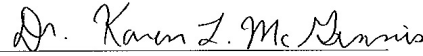
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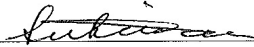
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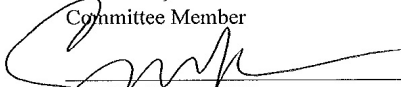
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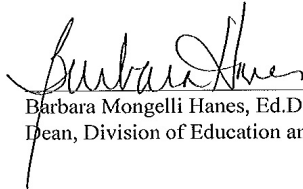
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ABSTRACT

A COMPARISON OF THE LEADERSHIP STYLE PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENTS AND PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

Linda L. Kinsler

Joseph O'Brien, Ed.D.

This dissertation determined the perceptions of school board presidents regarding their superintendent's leadership style and the self-perceptions of superintendents regarding their personal leadership style. The leadership framework of Bass and Avolio (2004) was used to focus on three specific leadership styles of superintendents: transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. This information was vital because superintendents are considered the chief executive officers responsible for the day-to-day management of school districts.

The methodology for this study was quantitative with a correlational design. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire ([MLQ], 2004) was used to gather perceptions regarding transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles from school board presidents regarding the leadership style of their superintendent and from superintendents regarding their personal leadership style. Seventy-five matched pairs (school board presidents and superintendents from the same school district) were collected to analyze research questions.

To address research questions one and two, the researcher conducted descriptive statistics on the data to describe the school board presidents' perceptions regarding superintendent's leadership style. In addition, a one-sample *t*-test was used to compare the

mean leadership style scores to a hypothesized mean. Once analyzed, data indicated that school board presidents perceived their superintendents to exhibit transformational and transactional leadership styles and did not perceive their superintendents to exhibit a laissez-faire leadership style. Superintendents' ratings of their own leadership style indicated a strong tendency towards transformational leadership, with some tendencies towards the transactional leadership style. Superintendents scored lowest in laissez-faire leadership style.

For research question three, the assumption of linearity was assessed using a Pearson r correlation analyses. There were no statistically significant relationships between public school board presidents' and superintendents' behavior scores.

This study illustrated the importance of finding a superintendent's leadership style and skills. It specifically highlighted the importance of ensuring a positive fit between a superintendent's leadership style, the needs of a school board, and the needs of the district. The research established a statistically strong link between school board presidents' and superintendents' perceptions of leadership.

DEDICATION

This dissertation has affected the lives of my family, friends, and colleagues. I am deeply indebted to everyone who has helped. I want to extend my appreciation to every single person who walked the dissertation path with me, especially the following:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract.....	iv
Dedication.....	vi
Table of Contents.....	ix
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY.....	1
Background of the Study.....	1
School Boards.....	2
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.....	4
Statement of the Problem.....	6
Purpose of the Study.....	8
Research Questions.....	10
Significance of the Study.....	11
Rationale for Methodology.....	11
Definition of Terms.....	12
Limitations.....	15
Delimitations.....	16
Assumptions.....	17
Organization of the Study.....	17
Summary.....	19
CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW.....	21
Introduction.....	21
Theoretical Framework.....	22

History of the Superintendency.....	23
Current Superintendent Demographics.....	26
School Board Role and Responsibilities in Hiring Superintendents.....	27
The Superintendency and Leadership.....	32
Definition of Leadership and the Difference Between Leaders and Managers.....	34
Transformational, Transactional, and Laissez-faire Leadership Styles.....	35
Transformational Leadership.....	36
Transactional Leadership.....	45
Laissez-faire Leadership.....	50
Summary.....	54
CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY.....	58
Introduction.....	58
Statement of the Problem.....	58
Research Questions.....	60
Research Methodology.....	61
Research Design.....	61
Population and Sample Selection.....	62
Instrumentation.....	64
Validity.....	68
Reliability.....	69
Data Collection and Management.....	69
Data Analysis Procedures.....	71

Ethical Considerations.....	73
Limitations and Delimitations.....	74
Summary.....	75
CHAPTER IV DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS.....	77
Introduction.....	77
Descriptive Data.....	78
Data Analysis Procedures.....	79
Results.....	83
Summary.....	95
CHAPTER V SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
.....	
Introduction.....	98
Discussion of Findings and Conclusions.....	98
Implications.....	103
Theoretical Implications.....	104
Practical Implications.....	105
Limitations.....	106
Recommendations.....	106
Recommendations for future research.....	107
Recommendations for practice.....	108
Summary.....	109
References.....	113
Appendix.....	124

List of Tables

Table 1.....81

Items included in the MLQ Subscales.....81

Table 2.....83

Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability Statistics for Composite Scores of Public
School Board Presidents’ Perception of Superintendents’ Leadership Style
.....83

Table 3.....83

Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability Statistics for Composite Scores of
Superintendents’ Leadership Style.....83

Table 4.....85

Results of the Shapiro-Wilk Test for Normality for Research Question One.....85

Table 5.....86

Descriptive Statistics of Public School Board Presidents’ Perception of
Superintendent's Leadership Style.....86

Table 6.....87

One-sample *t*-test for School Board Presidents’ Perceptions of Leadership
Style from the Mean Value (2)87

Table 7.....88

Results of the Shapiro-Wilk Test for Normality for Research Question Two.....88

Table 8.....89

One-sample *t*-test for Superintendents’ Perceptions of Leadership Style
from the Mean Value (2)89

Table 9.....	90
Descriptive Statistics of Superintendents Perception of their Leadership Style.....	90
Table 10.....	92
Descriptive Statistics for the Correlation Analyses.....	92
Table 11.....	95
Pearson Correlation Matrix for School Board President and Superintendent Leadership Behavior Scores.....	95

List of Figures

Figure 192
Scatterplot between School Board Presidents' and Superintendents'
Transformational Leadership Scores.....92
Figure 2.....93
Scatterplot between School Board Presidents' and Superintendents'
Transactional Leadership scores.....93
Figure 3.....94
Scatterplot between School Board Presidents' and Superintendents'
Laissez-Faire Leadership Scores.....94

List of Appendices

Appendix A	Mind Garden Purchase Permission.....	124
Appendix B	Rater (school board president) MLQ Form 5x-Short	125
Appendix C	Leader (superintendent) MLQ Form 5x-Short.....	126
Appendix D	Request Letter to School Board Presidents.....	128
Appendix E	Request Letter to Superintendents.....	129

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This study determined the perceptions of school board presidents regarding their superintendent's leadership style and the self-perceptions of superintendents of their own personal leadership style. The population for this study included all school board presidents and superintendents from the 500 public school districts that comprised the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's public education system during the time of this study. There were 500 school board presidents and 500 superintendents in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The leadership framework of Bass and Avolio (2004) was used to focus on three specific leadership styles of superintendents: transformational, transactional, and/or laissez-faire leadership. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire ([MLQ], 2004) was used to gather perceptions regarding transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles from school board presidents regarding the leadership style of their superintendent and from superintendents regarding their personal leadership style. The MLQ was used to integrate diverse findings, compute an average effect for different leadership scales, and probe for certain moderators of the leadership style-effectiveness relationship (Sadeghi & Pihie 2012).

Background of the Study

School districts across the nation have strived to find a superintendent who can lead their district in the ever-changing 21st century environment (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Bjork et al., 2014; Ravitch, 2016). The governing body of a school district is a school board (Blumsack & McCabe, 2017). School board members are community citizens who are responsible governance of their local district. School board members in

the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are volunteers (Gildea, 2012; Blumsack & McCabe, 2017). There are usually seven to nine people on a school board (Ravitch, 2016; Blumsack & McCabe, 2017). They are tasked with the responsibility of hiring a superintendent who can lead their school district successfully and on a full-time basis (Ravitch, 2016). This task can be an especially difficult responsibility due to the immense scope of the job required of a superintendent (Kowalski & McCord, 2011; Ravitch, 2016; Blumsack & McCabe, 2017). During the superintendent search, school board members must be able to determine the type of leadership qualities they seek in a superintendent as this leadership can have far reaching implications for a school district (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Ravitch, 2016; Blumsack & McCabe, 2017). The selected candidate must be able to supervise the education of students, follow state and national mandates, build community relationships between and among various stakeholder groups, and report to the school board and community about the various needs required by the school district and its students (Gildea, 2012; Ravitch, 2016; Blumsack & McCabe, 2017).

School Boards

Since school boards are comprised of seven to nine volunteers who are elected by citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to govern school districts, an educational leader who can handle the daily business must be hired (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Howell, 2013; Bjork et al., 2014; Ravitch, 2016). Therefore, the hiring of a superintendent is by far the most important work of a school board (Blumsack & McCabe, 2017). Additionally, based on a comparison of the turnover rate among board members and superintendents, it can be assumed that school board members will have had the responsibility of hiring a new superintendent sometime during their tenure on

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school boards (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Rasmussen, 2013).

Superintendents must be educational leaders, business managers, and politicians (Ravitch, 2016). For a school board, finding a multi-talented educational leader has been a challenging and complicated process (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Howell, 2013; Bjork et al., 2014; Ravitch, 2016). Additionally, the majority of superintendents have been in their positions for only three to four years, resulting in fairly regular changes (Kowalski & McCord, 2011; Chingos et al., 2016). Because of the enormity of this responsibility, the style of leadership that superintendents employed determined whether schools are successful (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Chingos et al., 2016). In selecting a superintendent, school board members must also keep in mind the wide range of leadership styles and understand how the role of the superintendent has fundamentally changed from being a systems manager to being an educational leader (Bjork et al., 2014; Storey, 2016). Being able to identify the leadership style used by a superintendent may help a school board hire a superintendent who may effectively lead their school districts and work successfully with the school board (Bjork et al., 2014). However, school board members come from varying backgrounds and experiences, having differing opinions regarding the leadership style they prefer in a candidate (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Howell, 2013; Bjork et al., 2014; Ravitch, 2016). Additionally, the relationship between the superintendent and the school board was considered an essential part of the overall success of any school district (Collinson, 2014; Chingos et al., 2016; Storey, 2016). Therefore, matching a superintendents' leadership style with a school district has been

shown to assist in creating a better working relationship between the superintendent and the school board (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Bjork et al., 2014).

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is a Mid-Atlantic state situated in the Northeastern part of the United States. Historically, it was one of the thirteen original founding colonies. There were 67 counties hosting 500 school districts within the state at the time of this study. The largest cities in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania included Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Allentown, and Reading.

In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, citizens of each school district have the responsibility of electing nine board members to govern their school districts. The school board has the responsibility of hiring a superintendent to handle the day-to-day leadership of districts. In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, school boards and superintendents are charged with the education of 1,743,160 students from pre-kindergarten to 12th grade (Keaton, 2013). Districts vary in student demographics, enrollment, and geography across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The National Center for Education Statistics ([NCES] Keaton, 2013) delineates school districts into four categories. Urban school districts were defined as districts located inside of urbanized areas of principal cities. Suburban school districts are defined as territories outside of a principal city but inside an urbanized area. Town school districts were defined as land that is inside an urban cluster but could be more than 35 miles from an urbanized area. Rural school districts were defined by the Census and could be more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and also more than 10 miles from an urban cluster. In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, there were 3,068 school districts responsible for the education of 1,743,160 students (Keaton,

2013). Urban school districts in Commonwealth of Pennsylvania accounted for 594 schools and 19.2% of students. Suburban school districts had 1,256 schools and 45.7% of students. School districts defined in a town had 379 schools and account for 12.1% of students. Rural school districts had 859 schools and 23% of students. For purposes of this study, this information served as background information only and was not used to identify school districts (Keaton, 2013).

While some districts served students who lived in affluent areas, others served students who were considered socially and economically disadvantaged. School district community dynamics, political pressures, and many other concerns have made it difficult for school boards to find a superintendent who can meet all--or even most--of the needs of a school district (Butcher, 2014; Ravitch, 2016). Other concerns with finding a superintendent for a school district included increased demands nationally and statewide for higher student achievement and decreased funding of school districts at the state and national levels (Howell, 2013; Bjork et al., 2014). The average per pupil expenditure in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is \$13,364 annually (Keaton, 2013). Since school districts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are mostly funded by a combination of residential and commercial real estate taxes, significant disparity in funding among districts in differing socioeconomic areas has been a concern (Rasmussen, 2013; Butcher, 2014; Ravitch, 2016). Also, due to the federal No Child Left Behind ([NCLB] 2002) Act of 2001 (currently entitled ESEA), districts are being pressured to fund national and state government mandated laws without proper funding (NCLB, 2002). Districts are increasingly being held accountable for unfunded special education mandates, testing requirements and regulations that have required many hours of financial support

(Chingos et al., 2016; Ravitch, 2016). There has been a concern that many school boards have difficulty finding qualified people who are willing to assume the responsibilities of the leadership position of superintendent (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Bjork et al., 2014; Ravitch, 2016).

Statement of the Problem

The problem for this study determined the perceptions of school board presidents regarding their superintendent's leadership style and the self-perceptions of superintendents regarding their personal leadership style. While there are nine board members, the board president was selected to represent all school board members in this study. The board president has been responsible for guiding school board members to reach consensus when making decisions to govern their school districts (Blumsack & McCabe, 2017).

There was a wide range of leadership types and studies that could have been used for this research. However, because the historical timeline of the superintendent's role showed how it had evolved from being a manager to being a leader (Bjork et al., 2014), leadership theory based on the seminal work of Burns (1978), and further expanded and expounded by Bass and Avolio (2004) was used for this research. This leadership framework focused on three specific leadership styles: transformational leaders, transactional leaders, and laissez-faire leaders. Transformational leadership style was found to be in alignment with the role of an educational leader, while the transactional leadership style was found to be in alignment with the role of a systems manager (Antonakis & House, 2014). Laissez-faire leadership was actually a dimension of transactional leadership; however, for the purposes of this study, it was defined as a

separate leadership style altogether (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Laissez-faire has been defined as one in which leaders simply waited to see what developed instead of proactively pursuing any action.

A study entitled *The American School Superintendent: 2010 Decennial Study* provided a detailed overview of the role of the superintendency (Kowalski & McCord, 2011). Findings in this study indicated that America's superintendents were increasingly required to be knowledgeable in a wide variety of areas. Some of these areas included understanding student diversity and how it related to achievement; planning and implementation of technology integration; understanding the role of government in education; advocating for students and school community in political settings; working to nurture and develop positive school board and community relationships, and developing an educational system to prepare students for the globalization of society (Kowalski & McCord, 2011). Additionally, the study indicated that the average age for superintendents was 52.5 years and that approximately half of the 13,000 superintendents who were surveyed during the time of the study were eligible for retirement. Out of the superintendents who were interviewed for the Decennial study, only 51% of them indicated they would continue to work as a superintendent. This information suggested a high turnover for superintendents in the future. This turnover rate, combined with the approximately 14 months it may take to fill a superintendent's position (Kowalski & McCord, 2011), may make it difficult for school board members hire a superintendent for their specific school district (Chingos et al., 2016). Other concerns that school districts faced in hiring superintendents included issues regarding board-superintendent relationships, continual education bashing in the media, compensation packages that were

public and controversial in nature, yet which may not appropriately compensate a candidate for the superintendent position, and public search processes that deterred some candidates from even applying for a job (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Howell, 2013; Bjork et al., 2014; Ravitch, 2016).

Along with concerns regarding candidate qualifications and recruitment, school board members were also typically divided when choosing an appropriate candidate (Howell, 2013; Bjork et al., 2014). Because board members come from a wide variety of backgrounds, having differing experiences in education, it may be helpful for them to formulate a list of ideal leadership qualifications and characteristics they see as important in a possible candidate for the superintendency (Rasmussen, 2013; Ravitch, 2016). This list of qualifications may help them choose a superintendent who has a leadership style that is able to meet the needs of their district (Howell, 2013; Bjork et al., 2014).

Purpose of the Study

This quantitative with a correlational design study investigated school board president's perceptions of their superintendent's leadership style. Superintendents were surveyed to determine their self-perception of their leadership style. Although there was a wide range of research regarding leadership styles, this study focused on the seminal leadership framework of Burns (1978) on transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. This work was expanded by further research by Bass and Avolio (2004). This leadership theory was selected over other research theories because this study was a replication of a dissertation completed in Ohio by Burgess (2002).

The first style of leadership noted in this research included the transformational leader. A transformational leader or who (?) was seen as someone who inspired and

motivated people. This person was deemed to be a leader who was interested in relationships between among people and was able to help others see a higher purpose in their given assignments (Cherry, 2014). The second type of leadership style noted in this study was the transactional leader. The transactional leader was seen as a person who motivated others by a system of rewards and punishments, while “appealing to their own self-interests” (Burns, 2010, p. 303). The third style of leadership within this leadership framework was the laissez-faire leader. Laissez-faire leadership was seen as a form of "non-leadership" attributed to those who had "abdicated the responsibilities assigned to them" (Bergen & Bressler, 2014, p. 3). The laissez-faire leadership style was deemed to be easier to employ because it often involved taking no action at all (Burns, 2010).

It may also be of importance for school board members to examine the differences between leaders and managers in order to help their districts achieve the goals of their institution (Rasmussen, 2013). Both leaders and managers were considered important roles, but the focus was different for each. According to Bennis (2014), leaders inspired and motivated, while managers planned, organized, and coordinated. The major difference between the two was that leaders initiated change (Bennis, 2014), and managers focused on policy and procedure (Cherry, 2014; McCleskey, 2014).

For the purposes of this study, school board presidents and superintendents were the targeted population. Since school board presidents were charged with the leadership of their school boards, it was presumed they represented the majority of the elected school board members' decisions in choosing a leadership style in a prospective superintendent (Blumsack & McCabe, 2017).

This study was quantitative with a correlational design and used the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire ([MLQ][Appendices B & C] Bass & Avolio, 2004). Two forms of the MLQ were used for this study. Appendix B showed the rater Form 5x-Short, which was used to survey school board presidents. Data from this survey determined school board presidents' perceptions regarding the leadership style of their superintendent. This information was then compared with the leader Form 5x-Short (Appendix C), which was taken by superintendents from the same school district. Data from superintendents' survey information determined their self-perception of their own leadership style.

The leadership style selected by the surveyed school board presidents may determine the short-term and long-term growth of a given school district (Chaudry & Javed, 2012; Bjork et al., 2014; Chingos et al., 2016). It may also serve as a guide in developing partnerships among school districts, community members, and board members by enabling all stakeholders to have common language they can share regarding the leadership style they prefer in a superintendent (Bjork et al., 2014; Meador, 2016). Similarly, the MLQ could be used as part of the interview process for prospective superintendents to assist in finding a match with school districts and their mission statements.

Research Questions

Research questions guiding this study were as follows:

RQ1: What were the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board presidents' perceptions regarding leadership styles in their superintendents?

RQ2: What were the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school superintendents' perceptions regarding their own leadership styles?

RQ3: To what extent, if any, were Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board presidents' and superintendents' perceived leadership styles related?

Significance of the Study

This study addressed gaps in the pertinent literature with regards to perceptions of superintendent leadership styles as reported by school board presidents and the self-perceptions of current superintendents of their own leadership styles in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This dissertation provided practical and relevant information for school boards, individuals who were considering a career as a superintendent, current superintendents, search consultants, and university level programs for superintendent development (Butcher, 2014; French, 2014). Most specifically, it may enable school board members in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to identify their perceptions of leadership styles, which could assist them in superintendent searches (Rasmussen, 2013).

Rationale for Methodology

The methodology for this study was quantitative with a correlational design (Garner & Scott, 2013). The researcher used the MLQ (Appendices B & C) as the primary research instrument. The MLQ (Appendices B & C) was created by Bass and Avolio (2004) to measure the perceptions of raters and leaders for transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles.

The design of this study was descriptive and correlational (Garner & Scott, 2013). The design had been selected because the researcher intended to survey school board presidents' perceptions regarding their superintendent's leadership style and the self-perception of superintendent's regarding their own personal leadership style. As noted in

research provided in Chapter II, quantitative designs were the best method used when research intended to investigate relationships among quantifiable variables (Howell, 2013), and when the researcher intended to use statistical analyses to test relationships among numerical data (Hemlin et al., 2012).

Definition of Terms

Contingent Reward (CR)

A subscale of transactional leadership as shown on the Multi Factor Leadership Questionnaire survey (MLQ) that revealed how some leaders gained approval from subordinates in exchange for some type of reward or compensation (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Idealized Influence (IIA, IIB)

Two distinct subscales of transformational leadership that provided subordinates with a sense of vision and mission (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Impact Indicators

On the MLQ, three subscales that explained the way a particular leadership style influenced or impacted the work ability of subordinates (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Individualized Consideration (IC)

A subscale of transformational leadership wherein leaders provided a supportive climate for the personal needs of subordinates (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Inspirational Motivation (IM)

A transformational leadership subscale wherein leaders communicated high expectations to followers (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Intellectual Stimulation (IS)

A subscale of the MLQ that was ascribed to leaders who were capable of enabling subordinates to be creative (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Laissez-faire Leadership

A leadership style in which leaders were hands-off, took little or no action, and allowed group members to make all decisions (Burns, 2010; Bergen & Bressler, 2014).

Management by Exception, Active (MEA)

A subscale of the MLQ wherein leaders supervised subordinates closely and were deemed to take immediate corrective action in case of errors (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Management by Exception, Passive (MEP)

A subscale of the MLQ wherein leaders were seen as taking action towards subordinates only when a history of accumulated problems had occurred (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)

A survey instrument used to measure for perceptions regarding transformational, and transactional leadership styles (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

A federal law aimed at improving public, primary and secondary schools via school performance on standardized tests and increased accountability for schools, school districts and states (NCLB, 2002). Currently, this law was reauthorized as ESSA, "Every Student Succeeds Act" (Elementary and Secondary Education Act Reauthorization, 2017).

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)

The state governing body charged with the responsibility of overseeing student education by the allocation of funds, implementation of laws, and by working to assist district leadership to educate students.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania School Board's Association (PSBA)

A major professional association focused on assisting local school boards with school governance.

School Board

The PSBA (2014) stated, “A school board is a legislative body of citizens called school directors, who are elected locally by their fellow citizens and who serve as agents of the state legislature. Each board consists of nine members who serve four-year terms of office without pay. Roles and responsibilities of board members included but are not limited: (a) to provide adequate and effective personnel for school programs; (b) to provide and maintain educationally efficient school facilities; (c) to secure adequate financial resources; (d) to maintain two-way communication between the board and students, employees, parents, taxpayers and the community; and (e) to select the chief executive officer, and work harmoniously and honestly with that person (What is a school board, 2017).

School Board President

The chairperson of a school board. The responsibilities of the board president included but were not limited to: (a) running meetings; (b) working with board members to reach consensus; (c) engaging community members in the work of the schools; (d)

serving as spokesperson for the school board; and (e) working to ensure student success through effective governance (What is a school board, 2017).

Superintendent

The chief executive officer (CEO) selected and hired by a school board for the purpose of operating the day-to-day administration of the district. Some of a superintendent's responsibilities include: (a) determining and allocating the school district's budget; (b) providing educational leadership as it related to the curriculum; (c) assigned, supervised and ensured highly-qualified staff members; (d) oversaw the operations and maintenance of district properties; (e) ensured positive community relations; and (f) kept apprised of laws and policies that affected education while ensuring compliance of said laws and policies (Meador, 2016).

Transactional Leadership

A leadership style based on a system of rewards and consequences. This theory was originally created by Burns in 1978 and further developed by Bass and Avolio (2004) and other researchers in the area of leadership styles.

Transformational leadership

A leadership style based on a leader's ability to motivate workers by aligning personal values with the outcomes of a company. This leadership style had four components as developed by Burns in 1978: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Burns, 1978; Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Limitations

The researcher identified several limitations of this study:

The study was limited by the questions and specificity of the survey instrument. Additionally, the survey data was limited to those people who chose to respond. Due to the self-selection of participants, personal thoughts, background, perceptions and misconceptions of the participants was reflected in completion of the survey instrument. Finally, focusing on three different leadership styles instead of a broader range of leadership styles oversimplified the difficulty a school board may have in selecting a leader for a school district.

Delimitations

This research included all public school districts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It included a wide range of school districts such as small, mid-sized, and large districts, as well as suburban, rural, and urban school districts. Public schools were selected for this research because of the organization of governance utilized by school boards and because of the history of school governance founded in school reform movements. Additionally, due to the timeline and scope of this research, school board presidents were the only board members selected to participate in this study. The role of the board president was determined be one in which he/she presided over board and executive session meetings and led the school board (Blumsack & McCabe, 2017). This person, "influences how the board uses its time, the selection of board members and its future leadership" (Leaman, 2016, pp. 1). Therefore, the board president was the most likely school board member to be surveyed regarding projected perceptions of the board as a whole (Leaman, 2016; Ravitch, 2016; Blumsack & McCabe, 2017). Data from this study cannot be applied to private and parochial schools since they have their own form of governance, which may or may not be standardized for their given schools.

Additionally, the use of the rater (school board president) and leader (superintendent) subscales of the MLQ (Appendices B & C) limited the scope of the study to three specific leadership types: transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. The data obtained from this study was not compared with other research instruments or to measure perceptions for other leadership styles.

Assumptions

The researcher and this study assumed:

All participants who responded to this study were honest and open regarding their answers. All participants were representative of their districts.

Organization of the Study

This dissertation has been divided into five different chapters. The first chapter of this research set the background necessary for the study. By understanding the role of the school board in the hiring of a superintendent, one can generalize as to the importance of hiring a person who can lead a district to success (Kowalski & McCord, 2011; Bjork et al., 2014; Ravitch, 2016). The superintendent was considered to be the full-time leader of a school district (Bjork et al., 2014; Chingos et al., 2016). Due to the ever-increasing demands of this role, and the 14 months it takes to hire a superintendent, it could be difficult for school boards to find an educational leader that best fits their district (Kowalski & McCord, 2011; Ravitch, 2016; Sawchuk, 2016). The superintendent must be an educational leader, be able to build community relationships with various stakeholders, and report to the school board the different needs required by the school district to be successful (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Howell, 2013; Bjork et al., 2014; Ravitch, 2016). He or she must ensure the district is in compliance with all federal, state,

and local mandates (Kowalski & McCord, 2011; Howell, 2013). Research questions outlined in Chapter I served to define the goals of this research. School board presidents were surveyed regarding their perceptions of their superintendent's leadership style and superintendents had been surveyed regarding their self-perceptions of their personal leadership style.

In Chapter II, a review of the literature included a historical timeline of education and the impact school boards and superintendents have had on the governance of school districts (Gunter, 2016). The role of the school board in hiring a superintendent was explained, and superintendent demographics were included to give further insight into the need for research in leadership styles (Cherry, 2014; Blumsack & McCabe, 2017). Chapter II served to define transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles as currently found in literature on leadership styles. Due to the combined research on transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership, sections of this study included explanations of all three leadership styles.

The methodology for this research was explained in Chapter III. The study utilized the MLQ (Appendices B & C). Two forms of the MLQ were used for this study. Appendix B showed rater Form 5x-Short, which had been used to survey school board presidents to find their perceptions regarding their superintendent's leadership style. This information was then compared with Appendix C or the leader Form 5x-Short. The leader form had been taken by superintendents to determine their self-perceptions of their personal leadership style. A one-sample *t*-test was then conducted on screened data from school board president responses to find their perceptions regarding their superintendent's

leadership style. Another one-sample *t*-test was then conducted on screened data from superintendents to find their self-perceptions of their own leadership style.

In Chapter IV, an analysis of the data was reviewed and discussed. In Chapter IV, the summary, findings, conclusions, and recommendations for further study have been presented.

Summary

This study addressed a gap in the relevant literature regarding perceptions of school board presidents of their superintendents and the self-perceptions of superintendents of their own leadership styles. Demographic information regarding the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was included in order for the reader to realize the role of the school board president and superintendents and the immensity of the job they have had in leading their school districts.

The MLQ was used to collect perceptions regarding transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles from school board presidents regarding the leadership style of their superintendent and from superintendents regarding their personal leadership style. This leadership framework was selected over other research theories because this study was a replication of a dissertation completed in Ohio (Burgess, 2002).

The sample population for this study included all school board presidents and superintendents from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's public education system during the time of this study. There were 500 public school districts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Charter schools, private schools, and religious schools were not included in this study due to differences in governing systems from public

schools. Additionally, while there are nine board members, the board president was selected to represent all school board members in this study. Superintendents were surveyed to determine their self-perceptions of their own leadership styles.

Chapter I included a definition of terms, research questions, limitations, delimitations, and assumptions. The organization of this dissertation was also included. Chapter II included a literature review related to this study. Chapter III included the methodology that had been used to obtain necessary data. Chapter IV included the data analyses and results obtained from the data. Chapter V presented a summary, conclusion, and recommendations for this research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Studies in leadership styles have been found in schools of management and education. A review of literature regarding general leadership theory indicated that there were many different philosophies and viewpoints concerning what qualifications were needed to determine leadership skills (Bass et al., 1996; Bass & Avolio, 2000; Burns, 2010; Collinson, 2014; Ravitch, 2016). Much of the literature for this research focused on the notion that traditional managers of organizations have been lacking in terms of long-term sustainable organizational success (Chaudry & Javed, 2012; Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013). Therefore, in order for school districts to achieve higher levels of success required by school boards and their constituents, leaders must be selected to be more than managers (McCleskey, 2014; Chingos et al., 2016).

While there has been much research that described current leadership theories in general, there was a gap in the literature regarding the leadership styles of superintendents of school districts. More specifically, there was a gap in the research regarding educational leadership in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This study addressed the gap by surveying the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board presidents' perceptions of their superintendent's leadership style and the self-perceptions of superintendents regarding their personal leadership style. Additionally, no research existed that indicated any correlation between school board presidents' perceptions of leadership style in their superintendents and their superintendents' self-perceptions (Willert, 2012; Bjork et al., 2014).

The purpose of this chapter was to give a thorough analysis of leadership styles, and to provide a critical review of the literature associated with the leadership framework of Bass and Avolio (2004). The study of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles has been reviewed and explained in detail. Information regarding these three leadership styles has been discussed further in the literature review. This information provided the theoretical foundation for the research.

The literature was reviewed and organized into the following sections: the history of the superintendency; information regarding superintendent demographics; the school board's role and responsibility in hiring superintendents; the superintendency and leadership; the definition of leadership; the difference between leaders and managers; transformational leadership; transactional leadership; laissez-faire leadership, and a final review and summary of the research.

Theoretical Framework

Leadership theory based on the seminal work of Burns (1978) was used in this research. The leadership framework created by Burns (1978) was later expanded by Bass and Avolio (2004). While older research, Burns' work is seminal and provided the background with which current literature on transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership has been researched. The MLQ (Appendices B & C) was used to survey for three types of superintendent leadership styles as outlined in the leadership framework of Bass and Avolio (2004). Transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership has been explained in detail.

History of the Superintendency

The position of superintendent was created more than a decade after the beginning of the development of public schools in the 1800s (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011; Lars et al., 2014). State boards initially managed schools, but due to the increased demands of public education, it was then delegated to local school boards (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011). Because education was not mentioned in the United States Constitution, the government determined public education to be a state responsibility under the Tenth Amendment to the United States Constitution (Kowalski & McCord, 2011). As part of this responsibility, state legislatures allocated funds to help communities support their public school efforts. As this funding increased, the need for committees to oversee the use of state funds was established. State and local boards supervised and managed state funds without the assistance of educational professionals ((Kowalski & Brunner, 2011).

The actual development of local school boards began with Thomas Jefferson in 1779 (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011). He proposed that each county elect three aldermen who would have general charge of schools. Eventually, a paid state officer was assigned to the management of public school funds. In 1812, the State of New York appointed the first state superintendent (Davis, 2014). The first state superintendents were charged with data collection, developing a plan for a common school system, allocating state funds, and were also given the responsibility of reporting district information to state legislatures (Lars et al., 2014; Gunter, 2016). However, the first state superintendents were seen as school managers and had very little influence on the educational processes of local school districts (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011; Gunter, 2016). As populations grew and communities expanded to the west, local control of public school systems intensified,

and the need for a local officer to manage funds became apparent (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011; Gunter, 2016). As a result of the need for a local officer to manage funds, local boards hired superintendents to manage, allocate funds, and supervise the day-to-day operations of schools. The first local superintendents were hired in 1837 in Buffalo, New York and Louisville, Kentucky, which marked the beginning of the professional superintendent (Davis, 2014). By 1850, 13 large urban school districts employed superintendents (Davis, 2014; Gunter, 2016; Sawchuk, 2016).

Since the position was introduced in the 19th century, it has changed according to demographic, social, political, and economic needs (Bjork et al., 2014). Superintendents were first hired to be managers of school affairs (Bjork et al., 2014). Their roles and responsibilities evolved through five different historical time periods as delineated over the course of the last 150 years (Kowalski & McCord, 2011, Bjork et al., 2014; Gunter, 2016). The first role of the superintendent was during the years 1865 to 1910 (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011). During this time, the superintendent was viewed as a scholarly leader (Davis, 2014). The superintendent was usually recognized as an effective educational leader and was empowered to train teachers as well as oversee the education of students (Kowalski & McCord, 2011). The second role of the superintendent occurred after 1910 (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011; Gunter, 2016). The superintendent was then viewed as a business manager. This change was caused by the Industrial Revolution and public interest with principles of scientific management (Kowalski & McCord, 2011). The role of the superintendent then changed for the third time from the 1930s through to the 1950s (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011). The superintendent was now defined as a statesman whose responsibility it was to promote education for a democratic society (Kowalski & Brunner,

2011; Davis, 2014). The fourth change in the roles and responsibilities of the superintendent occurred by the mid-1950s (Kowalski & McCord, 2011). The role of the superintendent was changed to applied social scientist (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011). American society was immersed during this time period in scientific discovery and the need to compete with other countries, especially communist Russia, to be more advanced scientifically (Davis, 2014). Also, changing demographics, increased populations of students, and newly established suburbs required the need for an educational leader who could bridge the educational needs of students in a multicultural, democratic society (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011). Finally, the fifth change in the role of the superintendent was noted from the 1970s to the present day and included the roles of communicator and politician (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011; Gunter, 2016).

The role of superintendent has continued to adapt with changing times (Chingos et al., 2016). Within the contemporary era, superintendents are required to be scholarly leaders, business managers, statesmen, applied social scientists, and communicators (Chingos et al., 2016; Ravitch, 2016). Superintendents are also required to be "educational leaders as well as managers of their school districts" (Davis, 2014, p. 443). Due to changes in the educational landscape, superintendents are required to be visionary educational leaders having the ability to promote long-term success in school districts (Bjork et al., 2014). Superintendents must be able to navigate the political and economic changes that continue to shape education (Bjork et al., 2014). As such, it has been important to note that school leadership evolved as necessary due to educational reform (Sawchuck, 2016). Leaders have had to be flexible, constantly adapting to balance the

needs of a school district with the changing economic and political demands and responsibilities of the broader community (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Ravitch, 2016).

Current Superintendent Demographics

Nationally and statewide, the superintendent was, essentially, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a school district, in which he/she set the tone, charted the course of the district, and worked closely with the school board to provide education for students (NCLB, 2002; Howell, 2013; Ravitch, 2016). The superintendent was also responsible for hiring and supervising other administrators in the district, including central staff members and principals (Phelps, 2012; Leaman, 2016). The traditional role of superintendent has evolved over time in response to various expectations, constraints, and a heightened level of responsibility in today's climate of accountability (Leverett, 2011; Leaman, 2016; Ravitch, 2016).

The responsibility for a school district's governance, operations, communications, public relations, and accountability for student performance have increased in importance due to changing public expectation (Phelps, 2012; Leaman, 2016; Ravitch, 2016). However, due to the tremendous amount of pressure and responsibilities placed on superintendents, it has become increasingly difficult for school districts to find superintendents who can lead their districts (Devono & Price, 2012; Leaman, 2016; Ravitch, 2016).

According to a study by Kowalski and McCord, (2011) the state of the superintendency as found in the 2010 Decennial Study conducted through the American Association of School Administrators Association (AASA) revealed the following demographic conditions: the majority of superintendents were married, and were

Caucasian males between the ages of 56 to 60 (Kowalski & McCord, 2011). The study also indicated that, while the percentage of female superintendents had "increased considerably since 1992" (Kowalski & McCord, 2011, p. 17), the number of female superintendents still lagged well behind their male colleagues. According to this study, only 3% of superintendents were leaders in large districts, consisting of 25,000 or more students, and about 9% of superintendents were employed in smaller districts with fewer than 300 students (Kowalski & McCord, 2011). The majority of superintendents were employed in low-diversity districts having "less than 5% minority students and about 15% were employed in high-diversity districts with more than 51% minority students" (Kowalski & McCord, 2011, p. 10).

School Board Roles and Responsibilities in Hiring Superintendents

In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, school board members have been elected to office by school district residents (Blumsack & McCord, 2017). School board members were charged with governing the school district they were elected to oversee. As elected officials, school board members were accountable to a wide range of stakeholders and were required to hire and evaluate the superintendent (Ravitch, 2016; Blumsack & McCord, 2017). This responsibility, in partnership with the superintendent, also included setting and monitoring financial goals, developing and passing district budgets, and levying and collecting taxes (Blumsack & McCord, 2017).

Since school boards were considered an extension of the policy-making role of state government (Leaman, 2016), school boards are not directly involved with the day-to-day operations of a district (Leaman, 2016). In essence, school boards created, wrote, and made (formulated?) policy, but the superintendent translated that policy into action

and operation (Blumsack & McCabe, 2016). The school board and superintendent must form a collaborative relationship because it can affect a school district's future (Bjork et al., 2014). Therefore, the most important job that a school board has is centered on hiring a superintendent (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Ravitch, 2016).

Due to the complexity of the superintendency, hiring a superintendent could be a challenging job for school boards (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Howell, 2013; Bjork et al., 2014; Ravitch, 2016). Deep commitment and dedication to children and communities are required to effectively meet the challenges of school reform, and to determine what type of leader is needed for a specific school district (Ravitch, 2016). The relationship between school boards and superintendents has always been important to the overall well being of a school district (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Ravitch, 2016). The perception of school boards towards their chosen superintendent can determine the effectiveness of the superintendent and the ability of the superintendent to lead a district (Doty, 2012; Ravitch, 2016; Blumsack & McCabe, 2017). As such, school boards' perceptions regarding leadership styles can and have impacted the ability of a superintendent to lead a district (Davis, 2014). Regardless of leadership type, school board members and superintendents must have established goals and ideals that "are in alignment in order to best serve a school district" (Doty, 2012, pp. 7).

The selection of a school superintendent has often been the most critical decision facing a school board (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011; Chingos et al., 2016). With large scale retirements of school leaders, mounting political pressures, and the increased expectations for performance, coupled with waning authority for daily administrative functions, the talent pool for superintendent vacancies has been significantly diminished

(Kowalski & McCord, 2011; Davis, 2014). In addition, the NCLB (2002), enacted by the federal government in 2001, mandated greater accountability for superintendents, especially in the area of improved student performance (NCLB, 2002). As a result of NCLB (2002), superintendents across the nation have developed roles and responsibilities that included the leadership and management of all facets of the educational processes in their districts (Kowalski & McCord, 2011; Ravitch, 2016).

One area of significance for superintendents to consider was the idea of professional ethics. A theoretical ethical framework was developed based on Starratt's (2012) work on ethics. This study found that superintendents were confronted with a wide range of ethical dilemmas including balancing federal and state mandates against the needs of district stakeholders (Ehrich et al., 2015). Stakeholders in school districts included teachers, other administrators, students, families, and taxpayers. Superintendents and educational policy creators such as school boards and lawmakers needed to be "reflective in choosing programs that may impact the work of a school district" (Ehrich et al., 2015, p. 197). Leadership in school districts requires establishing trusting relationships, setting common visions for present and future success, assuming responsibility that the work of a school district be both successful and efficient, while simultaneously following strong ethical standards for personal and professional growth (Starratt, 2012; Ehrich et al., 2015; Leaman, 2016).

In addition to Starratt's (2012) work on ethical leadership, Fowler (2014) also researched ethical leadership in Ohio. Fowler (2014) attempted to determine how ethical leadership varied according to district demographics and leader characteristics. Using the Ethical Leadership Scale (ELS), Fowler (2014) surveyed 231 superintendents and

interviewed 15 superintendents to obtain information regarding ethical leadership. This work served to identify district characteristics and demographics associated with ethical considerations of superintendents' positions. Results from this study indicated that age was a primary predictor of the ethical leadership of superintendents, meaning the older the superintendent the more positive his or her ethical perspectives were overall.

Concerns in the state of Ohio regarding the role of superintendent included the anticipated retirement of many superintendents due to increased demands of the position, and changes in Ohio state retirement laws. The superintendent, as leader, encompassed a wide range of necessary characteristics. It has become a complex position and has had to evolve as society has evolved (Fowler, 2014).

Rasmussen (2013) researched the leadership selection procedure of school board presidents, and found that when selecting a superintendent, school board presidents chose one according to multifaceted action plans that enlisted the collaboration of all stakeholders. This served to build the trust of community members, and set the groundwork for a positive leadership transition (Rasmussen, 2013). The contention that the most important work of a school board was to choose a superintendent can be found in the longitudinal success of a school board being able to "articulate a strong mission and vision for their district" (Rasmussen, 2013, p. 121).

Butcher (2014) investigated the perceptions of the leadership styles of superintendents, as perceived by school board members, once they had been hired within a school district. Focusing specifically on schools in West Virginia, Butcher (2014) surveyed school board members using a survey instrument consisting of 26 questions. Findings indicated that three specific leadership behaviors were "seen as most favorable

in a superintendent by both superintendents and school board members" (Butcher, 2014, p. 4). These areas consisted of "vision, communication skills, and ethics" (Butcher, 2014, p. 7). These qualities "allowed superintendents to create and build strong leadership teams while developing collaborative leadership skills" (Butcher, 2014, p. 12).

Additionally, these areas "allowed superintendents to build trusting relationships with all stakeholders, including members of the school board" (Butcher, 2014, pp. 13). The findings of Butcher's (2014) study demonstrated that both school board members and superintendents have strong perceptions regarding traits necessary in a superintendent (Butcher, 2014). As such, superintendents needed to have, "vision, excellent communication skills, and ethics while being able to effectively implement leadership skills necessary to improve an organization" (Butcher, 2014, p. 81).

Similarly, French (2014) explored the experiences of four superintendents in Vermont as they implemented the Policy Governance Program (PG) with local school board practices. PG was a program that was piloted in 2006 by the Vermont School Boards' Association that required "clear role delineations and responsibilities between a board and superintendent and policies that outlined clear outcomes for the district from a future-oriented perspective" (French, 2014, p. 18). French (2014) used in-depth interviews and a narrative inquiry approach to gather data. Findings suggested that superintendents' perspectives regarding policy governance could be divided into three themes that were "responsibility, trust, and vision" (French, 2014, p. 34).

While school boards as a whole may have a challenging job finding a superintendent, it has been the role of school board presidents to guide the process of choosing a superintendent (Ravitch, 2016; Blumsack & McCord, 2017). The selected

board president then has the responsibility for leading meetings, setting up procedures for the work of the school board, and for trying to build consensus (Blumsack & McCabe, 2017). Due to their leadership position on the school board, the presidents' guidance and support of specific criteria for the hiring of a superintendent has been necessary in the final selection of a superintendent and for the long-term success of a district (Leaman, 2016; Ravitch, 2016; Blumsack & McCabe, 2017).

The Superintendency and Leadership

School districts have required strong leadership in order to build and maintain successful education systems (Bjork et al., 2014). Due to their roles as leaders within their respective field, superintendents are often highly experienced in the area of education. They usually have wide-ranging leadership experiences needed to succeed within the academic environment (Butcher, 2014). The superintendent has been considered the CEO of a school district. He/she sets the tone, charted the course of the district, and worked closely with the school board (Bjork et al., 2014). The superintendent has also been responsible for hiring and supervising the other administrators in the district (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011). The traditional role of superintendent has evolved over time in response to various expectations, constraints, and a heightened level of responsibility in today's climate of accountability (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011; Leaman, 2016; Ravitch, 2016; Blumsack & McCabe, 2017).

Studies in leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004; Bredeson et al., 2011; Ravitch, 2016) have shown similarities and differences in how superintendents lead their schools. Common practices of superintendents have been identified as being a byproduct of context-responsive leadership (Bredeson et al., 2011). Examples of this leadership style

included the ability of superintendents to see the larger picture in their educational organizations as well as having the patience to time their work in a way that developed relationships and trust with stakeholders. While Bredeson et al., (2011) outlined a useful base from which to see superintendent leadership, future research has been needed to find out how context-responsive leadership can be shown in larger samples. Additionally, research has been needed to see how superintendents used and improved their context-responsive skills to advance student development and academic performance (Bredeson et al., 2011). Context-responsive leadership was a separate leadership framework from the work of Bass and Avolio (2004). The context-responsive leadership style paralleled the work of Bass and Avolio (2004) in that superintendents can be transformational or transactional depending on their situations. However, context-responsive leadership utilized the idea of transformational and transactional leadership types and their implementation in specific situations (Bredeson et al., 2011). Leadership needs vary across school districts but all school districts have similar requirements in needing a superintendent to implement organizational vision, policy, and procedures that enable school districts to educate students (Bredeson et al., 2011). Through implementation of context-responsive leadership, superintendents were often able to provide systemic change to improve student achievement (Bredeson et al., 2011). In doing so, superintendents demonstrated leadership traits, core beliefs, behaviors and actions, and superb leadership qualities (Bredeson et al., 2011; Phelps, 2012). In particular, when a strategic plan was aligned with district goals, support was garnered from all stakeholders, a strong leadership team was hired, resources were appropriately allocated, and mentors and coaches were provided to aspiring leaders, the superintendent became a "highly-

qualified individual" (Phelps, 2012, p. 9) committed to student success. Thus, aligned systems worked. Strong leadership was needed for both systemic district success and for identifying strengths and weaknesses in school personnel and structures (Phelps, 2012). Strong district leadership was shown to be important in long-term student and district improvement (Bredeson et al., 2011).

In addition to influencing student achievement, the leadership style of a superintendent has been linked with principal performance (Davis, 2014). Davis (2014) set out to determine the perceptions of principals regarding their superintendents' leadership styles using the MLQ. The MLQ developed by Bass and Avolio (2004) was developed to measure the perceptions of raters regarding a leader's demonstrated leadership style. A separate MLQ survey was created to measure the self-perceptions of leaders regarding their own leadership style. Math and reading data for Southern Arizona school districts was also used in Davis' (2014) correlational study to determine the best leadership style for the sampled districts. Results indicated that while transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles of superintendents did not correlate positively with math data; laissez-faire leadership was positively correlated with reading data (Davis, 2014). Based upon these results, it was concluded that the laissez-faire leadership style might be more multifaceted than originally shown in previous research (Davis, 2014).

Definition of Leadership and the Difference between Leaders and Managers

Kruse (2013) defined leadership as "a process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal" (p. 2). However, there has been confusion between the defined roles of leaders and managers. Covey

(2014) explained that the difference between management and leadership was, “management is efficiency in climbing the ladder of success; leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall” (p. 32). While leadership and management are defined as different roles and having different responsibilities, they work together in order to ensure that goals were met (Dolan & Kawamura, 2015). Workers looked to leaders to define their purpose, and they looked to managers to assign them tasks to complete (Collinson, 2014; Storey, 2016). Drucker (2015) gave the opinion that, “The task is to lead people. And the goal is to make productive the specific strengths and knowledge of every individual” (p. 1). Because of differing opinions regarding leadership and manager roles, as well as the wide variety of demands placed on school districts, school boards are faced with the increasingly difficult task of finding superintendents who can provide leadership necessary to promote long-term, sustainable success within a district (Devono & Price, 2012; Ravitch, 2016). Further research was needed to assist school board members with this task and help them define the leadership style required for school districts (Ravitch, 2016; Blumsack & McCabe, 2017).

Transformational, Transactional and Laissez-faire Leadership Styles

In 1978, leadership research conducted by Burns established much of the framework for the transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership paradigm. Related to this research, Burns (1978) began the process of revising how people viewed and explained leadership. He viewed transformational leadership as the most powerful of the three approaches (Burns, 2003). Bass and Bass (2008) were given credit for linking transformational and transactional leadership by showing how transformational leadership did not replace transactional leadership so much as it expanded on it.

Hamstra et al., (2014) conducted a multi-level study to measure leaders' transformational leadership (focusing on individual needs and abilities, intellectual development, and a common team mission), transactional leadership (focusing on monitoring and achievement-related rewards), and their own mastery goals (aimed at learning, developing, and mastering job-relevant skills), and performance goals (aimed at doing better than others). In this research, followers of 120 organizational leaders were surveyed. Findings indicated that group-level transformational leadership predicted followers' mastery goals, while group-level transactional leadership predicted followers' performance goals (Hamstra et al., 2014). Within group differences, transformational leadership also predicted mastery goals. These findings suggested, "leadership styles play an important part in the achievement of goals" (Hamstra et al., 2014, p. 9). Organizations may have encouraged the use of transactional leadership in areas where employees were expected to outperform others (Hamstra et al., 2014, p. 9). In contrast, in areas requiring learning and development, organizations promoted the use of transformational leadership. Laissez-faire leadership was not included in this research (Hamstra et al., 2014).

Transformational Leadership

A transformational leader has been determined to be someone who inspired and motivated people. Burns (1978) developed the idea of transformational leadership, stating, "transformational leadership can be seen when leaders and followers make each other advance to a higher level of morality and motivation" (p. 22). This type of leadership has been noted for enhancing follower motivation, morality, and their ability to work effectively (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013). This was considered a leader who was interested in the relationships among people and was able to help others see a higher

purpose in the task at hand (Cherry, 2014). Transformational leaders were perceived to do more than lead others; they often inspired employees to change or adapt their viewpoints, work towards higher levels of performance, as well as helped them embrace a mutual vision of goals that enabled a community of people to succeed (Antonakis & House, 2014). Transformational leadership stimulated and inspired or transformed followers to transcend personal goals to achieve group goals and work for the larger collective (Burns, 1978; Bass & Avolio, 2004; Cherry, 2014).

Bass & Avolio (2004) extended Burns' (1978) ideas of transformational leadership to what is now referred to as transformational leadership theory. Bass and Avolio (2004) suggested that there were four different components to transformational leadership: (1) intellectual stimulation, (2) individualized consideration, (3) inspirational motivation, and (4) idealized influence (p. 31). The first component, intellectual stimulation occurred when transformational leaders enabled and encouraged creativity among employees (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 31). During the intellectual component of leadership, leaders challenged the status quo while giving employees new opportunities for growth. The second component, individualized consideration occurred when leaders developed supportive relationships with employees by encouraging open communication and building trust amongst employees (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 32). Inspirational motivation, the third component, occurred when transformational leaders had the ability to convey a clear message to employees and helped them embrace the same passion and motivation that the leader possessed (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 32). Bass and Avolio's (2004) theory has been repeatedly proven by further research, with some researchers finding how transformational leadership correlated with emotional intelligence,

intellectual growth, and higher performance in job capabilities (Shahhosseini et al., 2013). Bass and Riggio (2014) stated, "Transformational leaders...are those who stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity. Transformational leaders help followers grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers' needs by empowering them and by aligning the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leader, the group, and the larger organization" (p. 11). The final component of transformational leadership theory included idealized influence, which occurred when followers imitated the leader because they trusted and respected his or her beliefs (Bass & Bass, 2008).

Components of transformational leadership also included idealized influence and inspirational motivation. These two components were frequently grouped together and defined as charismatic leadership (Burns, 1978; Bass & Avolio, 2004; McCleskey, 2014). Charismatic leadership was a sub-leadership style found under transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Intellectual stimulation of followers was found to be necessary in order to increase followers' efforts at problem solving, questioning assumptions, and communicating effectively and honestly with the leader. Individualized consideration enabled leaders and followers to act as coaches or mentors so that followers could become more successful (McCleskey, 2014).

In support of Bass and Riggio's (2014) assertions, research indicated that groups that had been led by transformational leaders had higher performance levels and job satisfaction than groups with non-transformational leaders. Riggio, Murphy, and Pirozzolo (2013) theorized that transformational leaders had faith in their followers and

believed they would do their best work. These types of leaders were deemed as the change agents of any organization (McCleskey, 2014). While transactional leaders were selected to match a leader with specific situations and goals, transformational leadership has been much more a reflection of a person's whole self, and included the ability to reflect, reach higher stages of moral reasoning, and promote success through followers' self-efficacy (Riggio et al., 2013; McCleskey, 2014).

Robertson (2009) questioned whether or not transformational superintendents motivated their employees to implement a new school health and wellness program that was mandated by the state of Indiana. The health and wellness program was named PL 108-265. The study used the MLQ in a mixed methods approach to determine the type of leadership used to implement this law. It was founded that superintendents used a combination of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles to implement the program (Robertson, 2009). However, superintendents who had used a transformational leadership style had more success with the implementation of PL 108-265. In districts where superintendents were much more transactional in their implementation of the law, there was a greater tendency towards competitions and incentives to apply the law (Robertson, 2009).

While transformational leaders motivated followers by developing inspirational goals and visions that inspired them to set goals that were in alignment with the leader, research has shown that transformational leadership did not consistently move followers to higher job performance or increased positive motivation (Grant, 2012). In field experiments with Canadian banks and the Israeli military, as well as in laboratory experiments using business replication models, "transformational leadership was found to

be inconsistent with making visions a reality" (Grant, 2012, p. 472). One reason for this inconsistency was the "leader's ability to implement a vision into reality" (Grant, 2012, p. 473). Some leaders had transformational skills, but failed to set the groundwork necessary to transform rhetoric into reality (Grant, 2012). Given this development, it was important that rather than be applied as a fix-all, leadership behaviors were examined "in tandem with job characteristics" (Grant, 2012, pp. 472). The ideals that supported transformational leadership needed to allow for the actual process that enabled a leader to transform vision into reality (Grant, 2012; McCleskey, 2014). There was a need for this type of leader to have the ability to not simply engage in the rhetoric of change, but to also be able to apply it to goals and procedures that followers would be able to articulate (Bass & Avolio, 2004; Grant, 2012).

Transformational leadership has long been established as a preferred leadership style within the academic environment (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012). In focusing on academic department heads, Sadeghi and Pihie (2012) investigated leadership styles as they correlated with leadership effectiveness at Malaysian research universities. Using the MLQ, researchers examined 298 lecturers. Their findings indicated that lecturers perceived their department heads as having a "mixture of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles" (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012, p. 187). It was determined, through use of regression analysis, that "contingent reward, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, laissez-faire, intellectual stimulation, and management-by-exception attributes were significant predictors of leadership effectiveness" (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012, p. 190). The findings of this research empirically and theoretically contributed to current studies of transformational leadership

theory by examining the extent to which leadership styles influenced leadership efficacy. This research showed the relationship between the MLQ and the study of transformational and transactional leadership styles. The MLQ was used to integrate diverse findings, compute an average effect for different leadership scales, and probe for certain moderators of the leadership style-effectiveness relationship (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012). This study has been relevant to any research that investigated the perceived beliefs of followers towards leaders especially due to its use of the MLQ as a survey instrument. As such, Sadeghi and Pihie (2012) stated, “leadership effectiveness is crucial to success in any organization. It closely depends on outcomes and consequences of the leaders’ activities for followers and organization” (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012, p. 7).

In similar research, Sundi (2013) founded that both transformational and transactional leadership styles were designed to work with one another, not opposed to each other. By focusing specifically on the effects of transformational and transactional leadership on employee performance in the Konawe Education Department, Sundi (2013) examined transformational and transactional leadership as independent variables. Work motivation was used as an intervening variable, and employee performance was the dependent variable. Using a descriptive statistical analysis, Sundi (2013) founded that results indicated a positive and significant effect consistent with test results effect value of 0.628 with a confidence interval of 95%, which demonstrated that transformational and transactional leadership styles had significant and positive impacts on employee performance in the Konawe Education Department. Results indicated that the department was able to balance transformational and transactional leadership styles in a way that enabled employees to perform highly in five areas of work: quality, quantity, timeliness,

employment, and independence. These dimensions of work improved regardless of individual relationships (Sundi, 2013).

The findings from Sundi's (2013) study supported the work of Bass and Avolio (2004) in that both leadership styles should be implemented together to achieve success. School districts needed vision, direction, encouragement, and commitment, which were formed by transformational types of leaders whereas transactional leaders were needed to provide focus on detail; set direction for work procedures and processes; and apply reward systems when needed (Bass et al., 1996; Bass & Avolio, 2004). Both leadership styles allowed followers the chance to become more aware of their work habits and goals. Therefore, both leadership styles have their role in the leadership of organizations (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Another study that explored transformational leadership at the university level was researched by Martin (2015). His goal was to determine how this type of leadership impacted change in academic libraries. As a leader of public services at Stetson University, he was concerned with the decline of academic libraries and how to improve attendance at the university level. He stated that "Academic libraries must not only survive but thrive in the ever-changing world of information and higher education where traditional definition of academic libraries and librarianship is dying or already dead" (Martin, 2015, p. 391). Since research indicated that transformational leadership was "highly correlated with successful change" (Martin, 2015, p. 391), he utilized the MLQ to obtain data from librarians of higher education organizations. The goal of the research was to obtain data that would open conversations in academic libraries in higher education organizations in order to improve libraries at the university level. While the

research was focused on transformational leadership, it had included data regarding transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles. Data obtained from this research indicated a middling to low use of transformational leadership in the leadership of academic libraries. Transactional leadership scored very low, while the mean for laissez-faire leadership scored very high (Martin, 2015). Based on the results of this study, in order for academic libraries to be successful, they must have a transformational leader to “facilitate long-lasting, substantive change in organizations” (Martin, 2015, p. 395).

While the leadership framework of Bass and Avolio (2004) was used for this research, there were other leadership frameworks that outlined characteristics for transformational leadership. The work of Kouzes and Posner (2009) identified five traits of transformational leadership that could help an organization be successful. The traits of inspiring a shared vision, modeling the way, challenging the process, enabling others to act and encouraging the heart were researched in a study by Quin, Deris, Bischoff and Johnson (2015). It was found that inspiring a shared vision and challenging the process were the two practices that had the biggest impact on student achievement (Quin et al., 2015). In this research, data was obtained from 92 teachers in 10 school districts in Mississippi that were working in either a high performing school or a low performing school (Quin et al., 2015). Researchers were trying to ascertain if there were similarities and/or differences between leadership traits exhibited by principals in high and low performing schools. Findings suggested that principals in high performing schools utilized all five of the leadership traits as founded in the framework of Kouzes and Posner’s (2009) leadership framework (Quin et al., 2015). The principals from higher performing schools were founded to be consistently and effectively practicing the five

leadership traits as opposed to their colleagues in low performing schools.

Recommendations for practice focused on the need for principal training programs to provide professional development and real world application in school leadership utilizing the Kouzes and Posner's (2009) leadership framework. Additionally, researchers noted that following the five traits in this leadership framework indicated a leader was transformational in nature and would be able to inspire a shared vision and challenge the process in order to move towards higher performing schools (Quin et al., 2015).

While much of the research on transformational leadership has been obtained through quantitative and qualitative studies utilizing surveys, interviews, and observation, there was research on leadership that was based in cognitive neuroscience. Neuroscience was focused on the nervous system and the brain (Liu et al., 2015). There was a branch of this science that "seeks to analyze and understand behavior of leaders" (Liu et al., 2015, p. 143). The connection between the physiological reasons for leadership and studies on leadership are joined by the skills of decision-making, problem solving, collaboration, influence, and emotional adjustment (Liu et al., 2015). In order to examine if the brain would show differences based on transformational or non-transformational leadership, 200 leaders from different industries were tested. First, each person was given a multivariate leadership questionnaire to assess leadership style. Once this information was obtained, subjects were placed in two groups. One group exhibited transformational leadership traits, and the other group was considered the non-transformational leadership group. Then each person was given a quantitative EEG to view neural responses in the brain. Based on an EEG power spectral analysis, individuals who exhibited transformational leadership traits showed a positive correlation with the right hemisphere

of the brain. The results of this study were consistent with previous neuroscience research as “the right hemisphere amplitude asymmetry indicates a better mood confirmation, monitoring and management capability” (Liu et al., 2015, p. 145). This information is important as there may be a “nerve mark” (Liu et al., 2015, p. 145) shown in the brain of individuals who tend to be transformational leaders. Although the research on transformational leadership from the point of view of neuroscience was still in its’ early stages, studies on neuroscience and transformational leadership were consistent in showing there are specific neural responses in the brain based on individual behaviors. The future impact of neuroscience research on leadership may offer different companies the opportunity to add a testing component to their hiring process. This may assist them with hiring leaders that can more appropriately fit the positions needed in their companies (Liu et al., 2015).

Transactional Leadership

A transactional leader has been defined as someone who has motivated others by a system of rewards and punishments, while “appealing to their own self-interests” (Burns, 2010, p. 303). Transactional leadership focused on the relationship between leaders and followers. These exchanges enabled leaders to meet their performance goals, to complete required assignments, and to motivate followers through contracted, extrinsic rewards (McCleskey, 2014). Weber and Gerth (1947) described individuals with transactional leadership styles as managers of organizations instead of leaders of organizations. Bass and Bass (2008) expounded on Weber and Gerth’s (1947) definition of transactional leadership by maintaining that transactional leaders styles required followers to obey the directions of the manager. If subordinates followed their managers,

they are rewarded and if they do not, they were punished (Fitch, 2009). Transactional leadership has been viewed as necessary in short-term, cost cutting initiatives within organizations aimed at improving productivity within employees. However, transactional leadership should be viewed as a basis for good leadership and not the only type of leadership to be used within an organization (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

According to Bass and Avolio (2004), there were four dimensions within the transactional leadership style. The first was contingent rewards in which leaders set specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely goals for employees. The leaders then linked these goals to "necessary resources and various types of rewards" (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 8). The second dimension, active management by exception, consisted of leaders supervising employees closely to ensure that rules and processes were followed. Transactional leaders took corrective action when rules and procedures were not followed. The third dimension, passive management by exception, occurred when leaders took action only when standards were not met. In this situation, transactional leaders may have included punishment as a means to control employees. The fourth dimension of transactional leadership was defined as *laissez-faire*. A characteristic of this dimension consisted of a leader who allowed employees to make their own decisions with little to no input or supervision. This type of leader was rarely involved in the daily responsibilities of the position. The lack of involvement on the part of the leader frequently resulted in difficulty with job completion within an organization (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 12). For the purposes of this study, *laissez-faire* leadership has been defined as a third leadership style instead of existing solely as a dimension of transactional leadership.

Transactional leadership has often been combined with transformational leadership as an extension of instrumental leadership (Antonakis & House, 2014). According to Antonakis and House (2014), transformational and transactional leadership styles, when combined, incorporated the need for leaders to enlist the use of the internal and external environment, chart strategic task objectives, and provide feedback regarding job performance. "Instrumental leadership correlates well with transactional and transformational leadership types and allows for broader, more detailed research on leadership styles" (Antonakis & House, 2014, p. 764). However, not all leadership styles combined well. Chaudry and Javed (2012) founded that within certain sectors, such as the banking sector, transactional leadership correlated positively with employee motivation. As such, "transactional leadership was a better motivator for employees and resulted in a lower turnover rate" (Chaudry & Javed, 2012, p. 258). Transactional leadership styles were "more motivating to followers than laissez-faire leadership" (Chaudry & Javed, 2012, p. 258). Findings suggested that organizations that lead with a transactional model in mind were better able to motivate followers and retain workers. Laissez-faire was not a recommended type of leadership style for the banking sector due to its inability to motivate workers. Additionally, it was actually found to be destructive in the sense that followers made their own procedures for completion of work. Followers in this situation were found to not share a common vision, and implemented their own procedures to complete work (Bass et al., 1996; Burns, 2010).

Researchers who had examined transactional leadership styles in superintendents discovered that transactional superintendents were more likely to ask followers to obey their directions (Willert, 2012). Additionally, Fitch (2009) found that transactional

superintendents asked employees to follow directions without question. In his doctoral dissertation, Fitch (2009) developed the following research question: "Do transactional superintendents ask employees to obey their directions" (Fitch, 2009, p. 4). To test the research question, he performed a qualitative analysis on the data (Fitch, 2009). Survey participants were randomly selected from 187 superintendents in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Based on interviews Fitch (2009) used to obtain data from participants, he founded that "superintendents responded ethically to moral dilemmas as aligned to the AASA Code of Ethics" (p. 82) regardless of age or years of experience. The findings of this research focused on transactional leadership styles in superintendents. Fitch (2009) founded that transactional superintendents asked employees to obey their directions. The author's viewpoints regarding transactional leadership styles in superintendents were negative (Fitch, 2009).

In contrast to Fitch's (2009) work, Willert's (2012) viewpoints regarding transactional leadership styles in superintendents were positive. For his research, Willert (2012) developed the following research question, "Do transactional superintendents' reward, or motivate followers" (Willert, 2012, p. 44). To test the research question, he performed qualitative analyses on the data. Four superintendents were randomly selected out of the selected population and were interviewed for this study. His findings indicated "transactional leaders had to reward their followers in order to achieve specific outcomes" (Willert, 2014, p. 44). However, he also found that "transactional superintendents reward systems motivated followers" (Willert, 2014, p. 34). His conclusion was different from Fitch's (2009) outcomes, which indicated there were different viewpoints regarding transactional leadership styles in superintendents.

In a related study that investigated the relationship between secondary school administrators' transformational and transactional leadership style, skills to implement diversity management in the school were based on teachers' perceptions (Okcu, 2014). The MLQ was used to determine the leadership styles of school leaders and a questionnaire for diversity management was used to determine the degree of behavior related to diversity management. The study found that there was a positive and moderate relationship between transformational leadership and the contingent reward sub-dimension of transactional leadership (Okcu, 2014). This sub dimension of transactional leadership included the completion of administrative practices, the creation of policies related to diversity management, and organizational values and norms for diversity management (Okcu, 2014). The study also found that there was a negative and weak association between laissez-faire leadership dimensions of transactional leadership (Okcu, 2014). Dimensions of transformational leadership were significant predictors of management diversity in schools with respect to organizational values and norms. Findings of this study showed that practices such as individual attitudes and behaviors, managerial practices and politics associated with transactional leadership were significant predictors of management skills diversity within schools (Okcu, 2014). In summary, transformational leadership was perceived as being necessary with the implementation of a diversity program at the secondary school level. However, transactional leadership was seen as also being a positive predictor of the successful implementation of a diversity program due to the administrative requirements necessary to create, train and maintain a program (Okcu, 2014).

Similarly, in a study of safety performance in military Special Forces, it was found that avoiding fatal accidents and ensuring operational effectiveness were important aspects of paratrooper training (Martínez-Córcoles & Stephanou, 2017). Research using a structural equation model showed that active transactional leadership had a significant impact on paratroopers' performance. Dimensions of transactional leadership, contingent reward, and active management by exception impacted safety compliance, participation, and risky behaviors of parachutists (Martínez-Córcoles & Stephanou, 2017). Most specifically, the safety climate was a full mediator between contingent reward and the three performance behaviors of safety compliance, participation, and risky behaviors. It was found that transactional leadership was necessary with the implementation of safety protocols (Martínez-Córcoles & Stephanou, 2017).

Laissez-faire Leadership

Laissez-faire leadership has sometimes been considered a dimension of transactional leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004). For the purposes of this research, however, laissez-faire leadership was identified as a separate leadership style. Laissez-faire leadership has been compared with transformational and transactional leadership styles in order to determine which was the better leadership type for an organization (Bergen & Bressler, 2014).

Laissez-faire was described as the absence of leadership by Burns (2010). While it was originally thought of as being a non-leadership type, in recent studies, it has been referred to as "counterproductive leadership" (Nielsen, 2013, p. 128). Laissez-faire leadership has been perceived by subordinates as being unsuccessful and therefore was considered counterproductive in enhancing subordinates' motivation (Ali & Waqar,

2013). Other disadvantages of this type of leadership included the perception that leaders were not serious about their jobs, and employees had to "assume more responsibility than their positions allow for within an organization" (Sternberg, 2013, p. 27). Research to study the effects of laissez-faire leadership styles on work situations indicated that it has been negatively correlated with positive success in organizations.

In a study completed at the Quaid-i-Azam University, teachers working under transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership models were surveyed to determine their Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale ([OCB], Ali & Waqar, 2013). The OCB was a 36-item questionnaire that sought to determine whether or not employees were working in a way that would be considered altruistic (Ali & Waqar, 2013). This information was then correlated with MLQ results using an ANOVA and Post Hoc analysis. The findings of this research suggested that the OCB rating of teachers was significantly correlated with the leadership style of administrators. Teachers who were working under laissez-faire leadership had the least amount of altruistic organizational behavior (Ali & Waqar, 2013).

Other research on laissez-faire leadership indicated that there were consequences for hiring this type of leader (Bergin & Bressler, 2014). Responsibilities of leaders include supervising and providing reinforcement regarding work tasks. However, "Laissez-faire leaders provide basic but minimal information and resources" (Bergin & Bressler, 2014, p. 83). Leadership research indicated that there was a high cost to organizations when they hired this type of leader and that person failed to recognize or reward employees. It was especially detrimental for an organization to have leaders who ignore negative behaviors of employees. Ignoring negative behavior generally tended to

increase ineffective and inefficient conduct in employees (Bergin & Bressler, 2014). This behavior also increased the likelihood that employees would take shortcuts in completing work tasks. This in turn, could cause safety issues to occur, which could cause organizations to pay for employees who had been injured and/or permanently disabled on the job as a result of lack of attention by leadership. Additionally, businesses that continued to hire leaders that were laissez-faire in nature tended to lose good employees who left to find other organizations (Bergin & Bressler, 2014). This then created a continuous influx of leaders with the laissez-faire leadership style because the employee base that could have been used to fill leadership roles was now laissez-faire in leadership style (Bergin & Bressler, 2014). Based on this research, implications for managers included erring on the side of providing too much reinforcement as opposed to none or not enough. The more information employees have had to reflect on their performance could have a positive impact on an organization's success (Bergin & Bressler, 2014). Also, leaders were needed to apply contingent reward and discipline in order to respond to good or poor performance (Bergin & Bressler, 2014). Contingent reward and punishment reduced role ambiguity and improved employee motivation, satisfaction and effort. This process was also found to improve group motivation and cohesiveness. A third implication was that managers needed to understand that bad conduct would continue unless it was addressed (Bergin & Bressler, 2014). However, managers needed to know their employees well enough to determine if an employee was working poorly or to ask was that employee in the wrong role or not trained properly for a certain position. This information has long lasting effects for organizations since it could assist organizations with utilizing their workforce more efficiently. Instead of terminating

employees and then beginning the cycle of hiring and training a new employee, human resources could review workers' experiences to place them in positions that would be a better fit (Bergin & Bressler, 2014). The fourth implication was that managers should be sensitive to how they are criticizing employees (Bergin & Bressler, 2014). They needed to make sure they are addressing problems directly and staying focused on how to improve the employee behavior. The last implication in this research indicated that managers needed to be aware of their own behaviors and needed to understand they lead by modeling behaviors. Employees typically followed behaviors they saw or did not see a leader demonstrate (Bergin & Bressler, 2014).

In a study related to safety in the workplace, a meta-analytic review of 103 studies was completed to determine which leadership styles correlated positively with high levels of work place safety (Clarke, 2012). The results of the meta-analysis indicated there was a positive connection between workplace safety and compliance with transformational leadership styles. There was a significant, but smaller correlation found among workplace safety, compliance, and transactional leadership. However, there was a "negative effect in comparison with workplace safety and compliance with laissez-faire leadership styles" (Clarke, 2012, p. 24). These findings were expected in the sense that transformational and transactional leaders were deemed to be involved with the daily operations of an organization. In contrast, organizations with laissez-faire leadership tended to have less direction and supervision, which often resulted in poor safety conditions.

Similarly, research that tested the effects of laissez-faire leadership on employees demonstrated that it was positively correlated with employee role ambiguity (Skogstad et al., 2014). Using a stressor-strain framework, a prospective 3-wave research designed

with time lags of 2 and 3 years had been used to determine the effect of laissez-faire leadership on role ambiguity (Skogstad et al., 2014). A sample population of 1771 employees had been used from the Norwegian work population. The structural equation modeling used supported the hypothesis that organizations that had managers with a perceived laissez-fair leadership style had been positively related to experiencing role ambiguity at 3 consecutive measurement points (Skogstad et al., 2014). One finding suggested that managers needed to perceive situations and circumstances where employees demonstrated a need for leadership and then work to approach the situation instead of avoiding it (Skogstad et al., 2014).

In contrast to other research regarding laissez-faire leadership, research indicating that there were some advantages of laissez-faire leadership as outlined by Sternberg (2013). He stated that the advantages of laissez-faire leadership included enabling employees to guide the institution and make decisions relevant to the future (Sternberg, 2013). As a result, this action may have allowed for improved good will between employers and employees as there was the belief that this allowed greater employee input and control over work situations (Sternberg, 2013). Also, this study found that "administrative leaders are in the background instead of the forefront of decision-making, which enabled followers to make decisions" (Sternberg, 2013, pp. 26-27).

Summary

Scholars examined transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles, as possessed by superintendents, to determine how each style could impact school districts. The role of superintendent has evolved with changing times (Chingos et al, 2016). During the contemporary era, superintendents have been required to be

educational leaders, business managers, government liaisons, social scientists, and public relations communicators (Chingos et al, 2016; Ravitch, 2016). Superintendents have also been required to be "educational leaders as well as managers of their school districts" (Davis, 2014, p. 443). As such, it is important to note that school leadership has adapted as necessary due to educational reform movements as found in the history of the United States (Sawchuck, 2016). Leaders have had to be flexible and constantly changing to balance the needs of their school districts with the changing economic, political demands, and responsibilities of the broader community (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Ravitch, 2016). Due to the tremendous amount of pressure and responsibilities placed on superintendents, it has become increasingly difficult for school districts to find superintendents who were able to lead their districts (Devono & Price, 2012; Leaman, 2016; Ravitch, 2016).

The relationship between school boards and superintendents has been found to be important to the overall well being of a school district (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Ravitch, 2016). The perception of school board members towards their chosen superintendent has been found to determine the effectiveness of the superintendent and could impact the ability of a superintendent to lead a district (Davis, 2014; Ravitch, 2016; Blumsack & McCabe, 2017). Additionally, because of the need for superintendents in school districts, the selection of a leader has often been the most critical decision facing school boards (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011; Chingos et al., 2014; Blumsack & McCabe, 2017). Research indicated that school boards will have a harder time finding a leader that meets the needs of their school district due to large scale retirements of superintendents, negative political pressure, increased expectations for performance, and a superintendent talent pool for superintendent vacancies has been significantly diminished (Kowalski &

McCord, 2011; Davis, 2014; Ravitch, 2016; Blumsack & McCabe, 2017). Additionally, the contention that the most important work of a school board was to choose a superintendent has been found in the longitudinal success of a school board being able to "articulate a strong mission and vision for their district" (Rasmussen, 2013, p. 121).

In study's regarding leadership theory, Kruse (2013) defined leadership as "a process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal" (p. 2). However, there was confusion between the defined roles of leaders and managers. Covey (2014) explained that the difference between management and leadership was, "management is efficiency in climbing the ladder of success; leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall" (p. 32).

Additionally, Robertson (2009) found that transformational superintendents motivated their employees, whereas Fitch (2009) found that transactional superintendents merely asked employees to obey their directions. Additionally, while Burns (2010) identified laissez-faire as the absence of leadership, Sternberg's (2013) research indicated that laissez-faire leadership "enabled followers to make decisions" (pp. 26-27).

School board members who were interested in making long-term changes in their district may have selected a leader that was transformational in his/her leadership style (Bass & Avolio, 2000; Bass & Avolio, 2004; Bass & Bass, 2008; Bass et al., 2008; Kouzes & Posner, 2009; Robertson, 2009; Chaudry & Javed, 2012; Grant, 2012; Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012; Hamstra et al, 2014; Liu et al., 2015; Quin et al., 2015). In contrast, school districts that were looking to complete specific goals in short periods of time may choose a superintendent who was more transactional in nature (Bass & Avolio, 2000; Bass & Avolio, 2004; Bass & Bass, 2008; Fitch, 2009; Clarke, 2012; Willert, 2012; Hamstra et

al, 2014; Martinez-Corcoles & Stephanou, 2017). Research of laissez-faire leadership indicated there were also situations that required this type of leadership (Clarke, 2012; Ali & Waqar, 2013; Nielsen, 2013; Sternberg, 2013; Bergin & Bressler, 2014; Davis, 2014; Skogstad, 2014).

However, even with this research, there has been a gap in the literature regarding Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board presidents' and superintendents' perceptions of superintendent leadership styles, and how the perceived leadership styles of superintendents could impact the performance of the school district. Leadership researchers must continue to investigate and search for leadership styles that can help organizations become successful and stay successful to fill this literature gap (McCleskey, 2014).

This chapter included the literature review for this research. Chapter III included the methodology that had been used to obtain necessary data. Chapter IV included the data analyses and results obtained from the data. Chapter V presented the summary, conclusion, and recommendations for this research.

CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study investigated Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board presidents' perceptions of the leadership style of their superintendents and the self-perceptions of the same superintendents regarding their personal leadership style. School board presidents and superintendents must work together to guide the day-to-day management of school districts (Bjork et al., 2014). This information was important because superintendents are responsible for the daily administration of school districts (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Ravitch, 2016).

The superintendent serves as the chief executive officer (CEO) to the school board, oversees educational programming, develops and administers finances, implements and supports personnel in the daily education and discipline of students as well as handles the daily management of the district (Ravitch, 2016). The responsibilities of superintendents have been found to be wide ranging and were specifically designed to provide an environment that allowed for the education of students (Bjork et al., 2014; Ravitch, 2016). Therefore, the type of leadership style in a given district has been shown to determine whether or not schools are successful in educating children (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012; Bjork et al., 2014; Ravitch, 2016).

Statement of the Problem

The problem for this study was to determine school board presidents' perceptions regarding their superintendent's leadership style and the self-perception of the superintendents regarding their own personal leadership style. Due to the timeline and

scope of this study, the school board president was selected to be representative of the perceptions of school board members in this study. Additionally, while there was a wide range of leadership types and studies that could have been used for this research, the leadership framework from the seminal work of Burns (1978), and expanded by Bass and Avolio (2004), was used to narrow leadership parameters for this study. The three types of leadership styles identified for this study were transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. The first style of leadership considered was the superintendent as a transformational leader who used his/her style to inspire and motivate people. This was a leader who was interested in the relationships between people and who would use his/her style to help others see a higher purpose in their positions (Bass & Avolio, 2004; Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012; Cherry, 2014; Martin, 2015)). The transactional leader was the second type of leader studied. The transactional leader was deemed to be one who motivated others by a deployed system of rewards and punishments, while “appealing to their own self-interests” (Burns, 2010, p. 303). Lastly, laissez-faire leadership was the third style studied. Laissez-faire leaders were not involved with organizational responsibilities and allowed group members to make independent decisions regarding their organizational needs (Bass & Avolio, 2000; Bass & Bass, 2008; Sternberg, 2012; Smith et al., 2015).

This study has provided practical and relevant information for school boards, individuals considering a career as a superintendent, current superintendents, superintendent search consultants, and university level programs for leadership development (Freeley & Seinfeld, 2012). Most specifically, it has provided information that school board members in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania can use to identify

three different leadership styles that could be used to assist them with superintendent searches (Ravitch, 2016; Blumsack & McCabe, 2017).

Research Questions

The purpose determined the type of leadership style that school board presidents perceived in their present superintendent. This information was then compared with the self-perception of superintendents regarding their personal leadership style. This study focused on three specific leadership styles, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire. The MLQ (Appendices B & C) was used as the survey instrument, and it was adapted for school board presidents and the superintendents. The survey instrument was specifically designed to determine school board presidents' perceptions regarding their superintendent's leadership style and the self-perception of superintendent's regarding their own personal leadership style. The research followed a non-experimental, quantitative with a correlational design to find a correlation between data.

The research questions that guided this study were as follows:

RQ1: What were Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board presidents' perceptions regarding leadership styles in superintendents?

RQ2: What were Commonwealth of Pennsylvania superintendents' perceptions regarding their own leadership styles?

RQ3: To what extent, if any, were Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board presidents' and superintendents' perceived leadership styles related?

Research Methodology

The methodology for this study was quantitative with a correlational design (Garner & Scott, 2013). This researcher used the MLQ (Appendices B & C) as the primary research instrument. The MLQ (Appendices B & C) was developed by Bass and Avolio (2004) to measure the perceptions of raters and leaders for transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. The survey for the rater form was created for non-superintendents and the leader form was designed for superintendents to rate themselves. In order to test the reliability and validity of the MLQ, researchers Muenjohn and Armstrong (2008) conducted a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Results from 138 cases that used the MLQ indicated it was "statistically significant" and that it "appropriately and adequately captured the factor constructs of transformational and transactional leadership" (Muenjohn & Armstrong, 2008, p. 3).

This dissertation may provide practical and relevant information for school boards, individuals considering a career as a superintendent, superintendents, superintendent search consultants, and university level programs for leadership development. Most specifically, it may enable school board members in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to identify important leadership characteristics and qualifications to assist with superintendent searches.

Research Design

The design of this study was descriptive and correlational (Garner & Scott, 2013). This design had been selected because the researcher intended to determine school board presidents' perceptions regarding their superintendent's leadership style and the self-perception of superintendent's regarding their own personal leadership style. As noted in

the research provided in Chapter II, quantitative designs were the best method to use when the research intended to investigate relationships among quantifiable variables (Howell, 2013), and when the researcher intended to use statistical analyses to test relationships among numerical data (Hemlin et al., 2012). Since the superintendent's leadership style was a quantifiable construct, a quantitative methodology was used (Howell, 2013). A correlational design was also used since the data collection involved two or more variables with specific measurements. The data analysis focused on identification of relationships among variables (Garner & Scott, 2013), so correlational designs were used as the researcher intended to analyze prediction with adequate proof (Campbell & Stanley, 2015). Correlational approaches measured the association between variables, which were then employed in the study to assess the extent to which leadership styles in public school leaders were related (Hemlin et al., 2012). Specifically, a power analysis was necessary to establish the number of participant data necessary for the Pearson r correlations. For a Pearson r correlation analysis with an alpha of 0.05 and a power of .80, a minimum of 67 participants was necessary for empirical validity (Hinton, 2014).

Population and Sample Selection

The population for this study included all school board presidents and superintendents from the 500 public school districts that comprised the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's public education system during the time of this study. There were 500 school board presidents and 500 superintendents in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The researcher surveyed the entire population of school board presidents and

superintendents for participation in the research with a total of 1000 prospective respondents.

A G*Power version 3.1.9.2 was used to determine the minimum sample size necessary for statistical validity. Specifically, a power analysis was necessary to establish the number of participants necessary for the Pearson r correlations. For a Pearson r correlation analysis with an alpha of 0.05 and a power of .80, a minimum of 67 participants was necessary for empirical validity (Hinton, 2014). The number of participants available in the total population of the surveyed population ($n = 1000$) was sufficient to meet the sample size requirement for validity. The researcher attempted to recruit the full population to avoid issues related to not extending an opportunity to participate to all eligible participants. Seventy-five participants responded and their input had been included in the study.

Survey instrument information was mailed through the United States Postal Service (USPS) separately to school board presidents and superintendents in each school district. In an effort to keep the sample size to a reasonable number, the researcher elected to survey only the school board president instead of the entire board. School board presidents were selected because of their position and influence with their school board (Blumsack & McCabe, 2017). Surveys were mailed and addressed to "School Board President" and sent to each school district. Superintendents were addressed as "Superintendent" on the actual mailer. Specific names of school board presidents and superintendents could not be used when addressing envelopes for this survey because of the high amount of transition that occurred in these positions due to retirements, leave of absences, contract terms, and other unforeseen reasons (Devono & Price, 2012).

Instrumentation

This researcher used the MLQ (Appendices B & C) developed by Bass and Avolio (2004) to measure the perceptions of superintendents and board presidents regarding transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. The survey had been purchased from Mind Garden, Inc. (Appendix A). The goal of the MLQ was to determine the most generalized leadership types using transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership types (Bass & Avolio, 2004). The MLQ had been used extensively in a wide variety of research on leadership styles (Shahhosseini et al., 2013; Sundi, 2013). Results from these studies indicated reliability coefficients ranging between .74 to .94 for the total score and for each of the subscales (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Relationships among MLQ factor scores were generally higher for transformational leadership subscales, and there were positive and significant correlations between the Contingent Reward (CR) factor and each of the five subscales that make up transformational leadership indicators (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Transactional subscales included "Contingent Reward (CR) as a positive outcome and Management by Exception" (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 11). The "passive/avoidant or laissez-faire leadership style was listed as a negative outcome of leadership in the Management-by-Exception" (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 12) and Laissez-Faire (LF) subscales.

The MLQ (Appendices B & C) that had been used in this study was published in two different versions. One version of the MLQ was called the rater and was taken by school board presidents to determine their perceptions regarding their superintendent's leadership style (Appendix B). The second version of the MLQ was designed for leaders or in this study, the superintendents, to determine their self-perceptions of their own

personal leadership style (Appendix C). Questions on each version of the survey were correlated according to numbers. For example, question number one on the rater (school board president) form also indicated a tendency towards transformational leadership. Similarly, question number one on the leader (superintendent) form indicated a similar tendency towards transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

According to the MLQ manual, there were five subscales that identified transformative leadership styles. The subscales were as follows: Idealized Attributes (IA), where the leaders instilled pride in others, moved beyond self-interest, acted to build others' respect and displayed power and confidence in their abilities (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 30). Idealized Behaviors (IB) was another subscale in which the leaders demonstrated this attribute by talking about important values and beliefs, showing a strong sense of purpose, considering moral and ethical decision-making and emphasizing the importance of a collective mindset to reach goals (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 30). A third subscale of the MLQ included Inspirational Motivation (IM). Leaders using this attribute provided meaning and challenge to the daily work (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 103). Intellectual Stimulation (IS) was the fourth attribute associated with transformational leadership styles. This attribute was shown by leaders in their ability to challenge assumptions, and their use of creative thinking to fix old problems (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 53). The fifth attribute that identified leaders as transformational on the MLQ was Individual Consideration (IC) attribute, which determined if a person was a coach or mentor. In this role, the leader was able to identify follower strengths and weaknesses in order to maximize his or her effectiveness in a given role (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 53).

Questions on the MLQ were designed to find common attributes between the rater (school board president) and leader (superintendent) forms (Bass & Avolio, 2004, pp. 114-115).

Examples of questions on the MLQ rater (school board president) form that were used to survey for the transformational leadership style included:

- (a) “Provides me with assistance in exchange for my efforts”;
- (b) “Talks about their most important values and beliefs”; and,
- (c) “Articulates a compelling vision for the future.”

(Bass & Avolio, 2004, pp. 116-117).

Examples of questions that indicated a tendency toward a transformational leadership style on the leader (superintendent) form included the following questions:

- (a) “I provide others with assistance in exchange for their efforts”;
- (b) “I talk about my most important values and beliefs”; and
- (c) “I articulate a compelling vision for the future”

(Bass & Avolio, 2004, pp. 116-117).

To determine transactional leadership perceptions, the MLQ identified the following subscales: Contingent Reward (CR) was when the leader managed followers by recognition of goal achievement. Rewards were given when satisfaction with performance had been demonstrated (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 53). Management-by-Exception (Active MBEA) was when leaders determined whether or not followers met standards by focusing attention on mistakes and deviations from the norm (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 53).

Examples of questions on the rater (school board presidents) form of the MLQ that identified a tendency towards a transactional leadership style included:

- (a) “Focuses attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards”;
- (b) “Waits for things to go wrong before taking action”; and,
- (c) “Directs my attention towards failures to meet standards.”

(Bass & Avolio, 2004, pp. 116-117).

On the leader (superintendent) form, examples of questions that indicated a tendency towards a transactional leadership style were:

- (a) “I focus attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards”;
- (b) “I wait for things to go wrong before taking action”; and,
- (c) “I direct my attention towards failures to meet standards.”

(Bass & Avolio, 2004, pp. 114-115).

The last leadership style that was surveyed by the MLQ included attributes of the laissez-faire style. Management-by-Exception and Laissez-Faire (LF) attributes were subscales of the MLQ that indicated a leader was passive and avoided getting involved with followers’ actions (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 53).

On the rater (school board president) form, questions were similar to the leader (superintendent) form but they were listed as:

- (a) “Avoids getting involved when important issues arise”;
- (b) “Avoids making decisions”; and,
- (c) “Delays responding to urgent questions”

(Bass & Avolio, 2004, pp. 116-117).

Examples of questions on the leader (superintendent) form that showed a tendency towards laissez-faire leadership were:

- (a) “I avoid getting involved when important issues arise”;
- (b) “I avoid making decisions”; and
- (c) “I delay in responding to urgent questions.”

(Bass & Avolio, 2004, pp. 114-115).

Outcomes of leadership on the MLQ were measured as transformational, transactional leadership or laissez-faire using related subscales for each leadership style.

Validity

Bass and Avolio’s (2004) MLQ 5X (Appendices B & C) were used to determine school board presidents' perceptions regarding their superintendent's leadership style and the self-perception of superintendent's regarding their own personal leadership style. The MLQ has been widely used to assess transformational leadership among members in a variety of fields (Bass & Riggio, 2014). The MLQ 5X consisted of 45 items rated on a five point Likert scale and would have taken approximately 15 minutes for school board presidents and superintendents to complete. Items on the instrument focused on attributes and behaviors that gave evidence of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles (Bass & Avolio, 2004). School board presidents completed the rater assessment, and superintendents completed the leader assessment. Raters (school board presidents) responded regarding the degree to which they observed their leader engaged in specific attributes and behaviors (Bass & Avolio, 2004) and leaders (superintendents) reported how often they displayed attributes and behaviors on the self-report assessment.

The MLQ had undergone several revisions, including an expansion of the original model to a nine-factor model, which represented the full-range of leadership styles (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Prior to its initial implementation in 1991, six leadership field experts reviewed the MLQ (Form 5X) and suggested modifications based on a theoretical model of the full-range leadership. The MLQ 5X was then created by the combination of items from the original MLQ (Form 5R) and several external instruments that examined leadership styles and their effects on organizations (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Reliability

The MLQ 5X had been used to reliably and validly assess leadership across a variety of fields including the military, government, educational, technology, and manufacturing organizations (Bass & Avolio, 2004). In a study, which comprised a sample of 138 cases, a researcher assessed a Cronbach's alpha for reliability of .86 utilizing the MLQ 5X, which indicated acceptable reliability (Muenjohn, 2008). Bass and Riggio's (2014) analysis of internal consistency indicated a Cronbach's alpha of .80 across subscales of the MLQ 5X.

Data Collection and Management

Letters of request were mailed via the USPS to each of the 500 school districts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The letter of request to complete the study contained an explanation of the study, a description of the purpose of the study, participants' rights within the study, benefits and risks regarding participation in the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and a request for the rater (school board president) to complete his/her rater form (Appendix B) and for the leader (superintendent) to complete his/her leader form (Appendix C). A cover letter

accompanied the letter of request that had introduced the researcher, gave a brief overview of the study, and provided contact information for the researcher (Appendices D & E). The online link to access the survey was mailed with a three-digit access code that had been included in the letter of request. Once respondents completed their respective survey, responses for school board presidents and superintendents were then matched using a three-digit access code that had been included on their letter of request. For example, a school district, the Abington Heights School District was assigned the access code 001. A letter of request to respond to the MLQ was mailed via the USPS to the school board president of the Abington Heights School District with directions to use the 001 access code. A matching letter was sent to the superintendent of this district with directions to use the 001 access code to complete the survey. Once the school board president and superintendent completed their respective surveys using the access code 001, the matched pair of data was then used to conduct statistical analysis to assess the school board president's perceptions of the leadership style of their superintendent; the self-perception of the superintendent as to his/her leadership style; and to determine if a correlation existed between the school board presidents' perceptions of their superintendent's leadership style and the self-perception of superintendents regarding their leadership style. In order to maintain confidentiality of school districts, the access code of each district was the only information used to pair school board presidents and superintendent information. School district names were only used to assign access codes and mail letters of request to prospective respondents. School district names were not used to pair school board presidents and superintendents. Prior to accessing the survey, participants were required to complete an informed consent online before the survey

could be taken. A reminder postcard was then mailed to districts on February 2, 2017 to obtain the required sample.

Data Analysis Procedure

The researcher used the program Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 22 (SPSS) for Windows to conduct data analysis. Prior to conducting analyses, the researcher conducted preliminary data management. During this process, data was screened for missing values and outliers. Participants missing significant amounts of data (i.e. more than 50% of responses for the scale) were removed from the dataset. To assess for outliers, the researcher calculated z scores for MLQ scores. Cases with scores that fell outside of ± 3.29 were removed from the dataset (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Frequencies and percentages were calculated for the categorical demographic variables in the dataset. Composite scores were calculated for school board presidents' and superintendents' MLQ scores. Reliability analyses were conducted to determine how well the items on the MLQ worked together to measure leadership styles within the sample. Cronbach's alpha for reliability was calculated and assessed using the guidelines developed by Garner and Scott (2013).

The researcher conducted descriptive and correlational statistics. Specifically, the researcher calculated means and standard deviations to describe school board presidents' perceptions of their superintendents' leadership styles and superintendents' self-perceptions regarding their own personal leadership style. Means were reported to describe participants' average ratings as related to transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. Standard deviations were reported to describe the spread in respondents' data.

For research questions one and two, the mean of each of the attributes of the MLQ had been used to determine whether the specific leadership characteristic was evident. Answering selections on the raters (school board president) and leader (superintendent) forms included: (a) 4.0 meant “frequently”; (b) 3.0 meant “fairly often”; (c) 2.0 meant “sometimes”; (d) 1.0 meant “once in a while”; and (e) 0.0 meant “not at all” (Bass & Avolio, 2004). A score of two or below for a specific attribute indicated that the leadership characteristic had been desired, but not seen. A score of 2.5 or above meant the leadership characteristic was evident or was seen (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 16). The researcher conducted descriptive statistics analysis on questions one and two in order to compare school board president's perceptions of leadership style of their superintendents and the self-perceptions of the superintendent regarding their personal leadership style.

For research question three, the researcher conducted Pearson r correlations to assess the relationship between school board president’s perceptions of their superintendent's leadership styles and superintendent’s self-perceptions regarding their personal leadership style. The Pearson r correlation analysis was a bivariate measure of the strength of the relationship between two variables. Pearson r correlation analysis were considered the appropriate method of analysis when all variables were continuous and the hypotheses sought to assess relationships between variables (Punch, 2013).

Correlation coefficients (r) varied between -1 and +1. A coefficient of +1 indicated a perfect linear relationship, and a coefficient of -1 indicated a perfect negative linear relationship. A correlation coefficient of 0 suggested that there was no relationship between the variables. Positive coefficients denoted a direct relationship, so that when one variable increased the other variable also increased. Negative correlation coefficients

denoted an indirect relationship, so that when one variable increased the other variable decreased. The strength of association was evaluated according to Cohen's (2013) standard. A correlation coefficient of 0.2 represented a weak association between the two variables, 0.5 represented a moderate association, and a correlation coefficient of 0.8 or more represented a strong association (Howell, 2013).

Ethical Considerations

Sound educational research has been guided by adherence to ethical considerations, which served to protect the well being of participants and the treatment of the data that has been collected (Hemlin et al., 2012). The researcher did not include participants from any of the protected classes of participants, which included children, mentally disabled persons, or prisoners because they were not related to this study. There was no inherent risk to participation in the study. The surveys did not request any personal information from participants so as to eliminate the risk associated with harm to their personal privacy. Individuals were assured that participation was voluntary, and there were no negative consequences for non-participation in the study. Participants were also informed that they could have withdrawn from the study at any time. This study was not geared towards any one particular school district but was designed to help improve the ability of a school district to identify and hire suitable superintendent candidates. Data was stored securely through online prior to being uploaded to the researcher's personal, password protected flash drive. Raw data was only shared with dissertation committee members. Data was reported in the aggregate to further protect the anonymity of participants. The researcher stored data collected during this study on a personal, password-protected computer. This information was to be maintained for a period of

seven years after the conclusion of the research. At the end of the seven-year period, all information related to the study has been scheduled to be deleted and destroyed.

Limitations and Delimitations

The researcher identified several limitations and delimitations of this study, which included the study being limited by the questions and specificity of the survey instrument. Additionally, survey data was limited to those people who had chosen to respond. The respondents' personal thoughts, background, perceptions, and misconceptions of participants were also deemed to be a limitation. Another area that limited this study had been the focus on using only three different leadership styles instead of a broader range of leadership styles. This limitation may have oversimplified the difficulty in selecting a leader for a school district.

The study only included public school districts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Public schools were selected for this research because of the mandated laws of organization for governance utilized by school boards and because of the history of school governance founded in school reform movements. Thus, this study can not be applied to private or parochial schools since they have their own unique form of governance, which may or not be standardized for their given schools.

There were also limitations in the utilization of one theory of leadership and one survey in this study. This researcher reviewed many leadership theories, but due to the scope of this study and because this study was a replication of a dissertation completed in Ohio (Burgess, 2002), chose to highlight the work of Burns (1978) and Bass and Avolio (2004). Leadership theory based on transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership served as the basis for this research. In addition, the survey used for this study

was specifically designed for research in the areas of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. The use of a closed-ended Likert scale was the tool respondents used to answer questions on the MLQ. This was a necessary form of data retrieval for this quantitative study as it was part of this instrumentation, but it also represents a limitation of the study. However, the use of open-ended responses would not have been appropriate for this study as it was designed as a quantitative study to elicit specific types of answers.

Participation in this study was anonymous, and there was no inherent risk to participants since surveys did not request any personal information. Surveys were also voluntary, and there were no negative consequences for non-participation in the study. Participants could have withdrawn from the study at any time.

Summary

The problem for this study determined school board presidents' perceptions regarding their superintendent's leadership style and the self-perception of superintendent's regarding their own personal leadership style. The survey instrument used was the MLQ developed by Bass and Avolio (2004). There were two forms of the leadership survey, which included the rater (school board president) and the leader (superintendent) forms. Letters of request were mailed to all 500 school districts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. School board presidents were asked to complete the rater form of the MLQ, and superintendents were requested to complete the leader form of the MLQ. Paired, anonymous samples were then grouped utilizing a three-digit access code to compare school board presidents' and superintendents' perceptions of leadership for their specific district.

The goal of the MLQ was to determine the most generalized leadership types using transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership types (Bass & Avolio, 2004). This survey was made up of 45 statements that were descriptive of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. Respondents answered statements on a 5-point Likert scale, which indicated agreement or non-agreement with each question.

Chapter III included the methodology that had been used to obtain necessary data. Chapter IV included the data analyses and results obtained from the data. Chapter V presented a summary, conclusion, and recommendations for this research.

CHAPTER IV
DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS
INTRODUCTION

The research problem addressed in this quantitative with correlational design study determined the type of leadership style that school board presidents and superintendents preferred in a superintendent. Research questions that had guided this study were:

RQ1: What were Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board presidents' perceptions regarding leadership styles in their superintendents?

RQ2: What were Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school superintendents' perceptions regarding their leadership styles?

RQ3: To what extent, if any, were Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board presidents' and superintendents' perceived leadership styles related?

The MLQ created by Bass and Avolio (2004) had been used to assess leadership styles among participants. The researcher assessed the preferred leadership styles of board presidents and the exhibited leadership styles of school superintendents. Statistical analysis was then conducted on paired surveys from school board presidents and superintendents to assess relationships between preferred and exhibited leadership style. Data analysis procedures, results of the data analyses and a summary of results were presented in this chapter.

For question number one, the researcher used descriptive statistics that showed mean scores for school board presidents' perceptions regarding leadership styles in their superintendents and assessed school board presidents' perceptions regarding leadership

styles in their superintendents by using a one-sample *t*-test. The results of the data analyses was obtained from survey information regarding school board presidents' perceptions of their superintendent's leadership styles using the MLQ (Appendix B) subscales for transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles.

For question number two, descriptive statistics were also used to show mean scores for superintendents' self-perception of their personal leadership style. Additionally, a one-sample *t*-test had been used to assess superintendents' perceptions of their leadership style. The study results for the self-perceptions of superintendents' regarding their personal leadership style were reported using the MLQ (Appendix C) subscales for transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles.

For question number three, a Pearson *r* correlation analysis has been used to find a relationship between rater (school board president) and leader (superintendent) responses.

Descriptive Data

The population for this study included all school board presidents and superintendents from the 500 school districts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania during the time of this study. There were 500 school board presidents and 500 superintendents with a total of 1,000 surveyed individuals combined in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The researcher mailed out the survey making it available to the entire population of public school board presidents and superintendents for participation in the study. Participants received a link to complete the MLQ online. Rater and leader versions of the MLQ had been used in this study (Appendices B & C). Additionally, a postcard reminder was mailed to all school board presidents and

superintendents who had not completed the survey by February 2, 2017. The researcher collected data for 75 matched pairs or 150 total participants. A matched pair included a school board president and a superintendent from a corresponding school district. Each pair received the online survey with a three-digit access code that was used to link pairs once surveys were completed by both participants.

Data Analysis Procedures

A power analysis was necessary to establish the number of participants necessary for Pearson r correlations. For a Pearson r correlation analysis with an alpha of 0.05 and a power of .80, a minimum of 67 participants were necessary for empirical validity (Hinton, 2014). Once a minimum of 67 pairs had been obtained, data was then analyzed to determine the school board president's perceptions regarding leadership style of their superintendents, the self-perception of superintendents regarding his/her own leadership style, and to determine if datasets from school board presidents and superintendents were related in any way.

Before conducting the analysis, all duplicate entries were removed from the preliminary dataset to create a screened dataset containing responses for 75 pairs of participants. Responses were then screened for outliers and missing values. There were no outliers and no missing values found in the dataset of paired school board presidents and superintendent responses. School board presidents completed the MLQ rater form 5X-Short to determine their perception of the leadership style of their current superintendents. Superintendents completed the MLQ leader form 5X-Short to determine self-perception of their personal leadership style.

Correlational approaches were used to measure the association between variables, which were then employed in the research to assess the extent to which perceptions of leadership styles by school board presidents and self-perceptions of leadership styles in superintendents were related (Hemlin et al., 2012). The raw dataset contained responses on the MLQ 5X, rater (school board president), and leader (superintendent) forms. This information determined school board presidents' perceptions regarding leadership styles in their superintendents and superintendents' perception of their personal leadership style.

As noted in the methodology section, a quantitative approach was appropriate when researchers intended to use statistical analyses to test relationships among numerical data (Hemlin et al., 2012). Because leadership style was a quantifiable construct, a quantitative design was deemed appropriate (Howell, 2013). A correlational design was also appropriate when data collection involved two or more variables with specific measurements and data analysis focused on identification of relationships among variables (Garner & Scott, 2013). Correlational designs were considered appropriate for use when the researcher intended to analyze prediction with adequate proof (Campbell & Stanley, 2015).

To address research questions one and two, the researcher conducted descriptive statistics on the data to describe school board presidents' perceptions regarding leadership styles in their superintendents (Bryman, 2016). The researcher also conducted a one-sample *t*-test to compare the mean leadership style scores to a hypothesized mean (Morgan et al., 2012). A mean score at or below 2 indicated that a leadership characteristic was desired, but not seen. A mean score of 2.5 was the benchmark value that indicated a leadership style was evident in participants (Bass & Bass, 2008). The

sample *t*-test was used to assess if individual leadership characteristics were evident in responses from participants. For the sample *t*-test the researcher used a value of 2 to compare mean scores for participant responses in the analysis. Effect sizes were evaluated using the guidelines recommended by Cohen (2013) where an effect size of 0.2 indicated a small effect, 0.5 indicated a medium effect, and 0.8 indicated a large effect.

To determine if there was a correlation between rater (school board president) and leader (superintendent) responses, a Pearson *r* correlation analysis was then conducted on the two datasets. Composite scores were calculated for the rater (school board president) and the leader (superintendent) for transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and laissez-faire leadership style subscales. The variables were then computed using the means of items in each subscale. Table 1 presented the items that were included in each subscale of the MLQ. Questions for transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership were combined because subscales were identical across the rater (school board president) and leader (superintendent) forms of the MLQ (Appendices B & C).

Table 1

Items included in the MLQ Subscales

Subscale	No. of Items	Items
Transformational Leadership	20	2, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 36
Transactional Leadership	8	1, 4, 11, 16, 22, 24, 27, 35
Laissez-Faire Leadership	8	3, 5, 7, 12, 17, 20, 28, 33

Table 1 showed questions from the MLQ listed numerically as they tested transformational, transactional, or laissez-faire leadership. Transformational leadership

was surveyed using the 20, or the majority of questions. Transactional and laissez-faire leadership were surveyed with 8 questions each.

Cronbach's alpha tests of reliability and internal consistency were performed on transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire subscales for raters (school board presidents) and leaders (superintendents). One test was assessed per subscale. The Cronbach's alpha test was used to tabulate the mean correlation between each pair of items, and the corresponding number of items in a subscale (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The alpha values were interpreted by application of the guidelines suggested by George and Mallery (2016) where $\alpha > 0.7$ indicated acceptable reliability. The Cronbach's alpha reliability statistics were presented in Table 2. Table 3 showed transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire subscales. As noted on Table 2, transformational leadership subscale for raters (school board president) indicated excellent reliability ($\alpha = .97$). The Table 3 subscales for transformational leadership for leaders (superintendent) also exhibited excellent reliability ($\alpha = .91$). The transactional leadership scale for raters (school board president), exhibited acceptable reliability ($\alpha = .72$). However, the transactional leadership scale for leaders (superintendent), did not meet acceptable reliability ($\alpha = .62$). Laissez-faire subscale of leadership for raters (school board president) approached acceptable reliability ($\alpha = .69$) but did not quite hit the targeted 0.7 measurements. The laissez-faire subscale for leaders (superintendent) scales did not meet the criteria for acceptable reliability, as the data demonstrated a low value of ($\alpha = .19$). The researcher cautions the reader in drawing inferences based upon these scales, as they did not meet the guidelines for acceptable reliability.

Table 2

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Statistics for Composite Scores of Public School Board Presidents' Perceptions of Superintendents' Leadership Style

Scale	No. of Items	α
Transformational	20	.97
Transactional	8	.72
Laissez-Faire	8	.69

The superintendents' data was compiled in Table 3, and presented statistically significant reliability measurement only for the transformational leadership style, although the transactional leadership data was close with a 0.62 α score. The laissez-faire data is not even close to reliable, with a low α score of 0.19.

Table 3

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Statistics for Composite Scores of Superintendents' Leadership Style

Scale	No. of Items	α
Transformational	20	.91
Transactional	8	.62
Laissez-Faire	8	.19

Results

The results of the data analysis were included in this section. Descriptive statistics and a one-sample *t*-test were calculated for research questions one and two. A Pearson *r* correlation analysis had been conducted for research question three to determine if there was a relationship between school board presidents' perceptions regarding their superintendent's leadership style and the self-perception of superintendent's regarding their own personal leadership style.

Research question one was listed below along with the recorded results for descriptive statistics and the one-sample *t*-test administered.

Research Question 1. What were Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board presidents' perceptions regarding leadership styles in their superintendents?

H₀1: There were no leadership styles in superintendents identified by Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board presidents.

H_A1: There was at least one leadership style in superintendents identified by Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board presidents.

The assumptions of normality and independence of data were assessed prior to conducting analyses of research questions one and two. Because the scores of individual respondents did not depend on scores of other respondents, the data was considered to be independent (Morgan et al., 2012). The assumption of normality was assessed using a Shapiro-Wilk test for school board presidents' transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire scores. The assumption of normality had not been met for transformational leadership, $W = 0.86$, $p < .001$. The assumption of normality was met for transactional leadership, $W = 0.97$, $p = .077$. The assumption of normality was not met for laissez-faire leadership, $W = 0.87$, $p < .001$. The results of the analysis were statistically significant, and indicated that the data for transformational leadership and laissez-faire leadership did not follow a normal distribution. Results of the Shapiro-Wilk test for normality for research question one were presented in Table 4. The results of the analysis were not statistically significant, and indicated that the data for transactional leadership followed a normal distribution.

Table 4

Results of the Shapiro-Wilk Test for Normality for Research Question One

Variable	W	p
Transformational Leadership	0.86	< .001
Transactional Leadership	0.97	.077
Laissez-faire Leadership	0.87	< .001

Research question one was explored using descriptive statistics. Means and standard deviations of the school board presidents' perceptions of superintendents' leadership styles were calculated. Scores on the MLQ ranged from 0-4, with higher scores corresponding to higher frequencies of a specific leadership style or behavior. The mean of each of the attributes of the MLQ determined the degree to which a specific leadership characteristic was evident.

School board presidents' rating of superintendents' transformational leadership style ranged from 0.45 to 4.00, with a mean of 3.22 (SD =0.79). For transactional leadership, public school board presidents' rating of superintendents ranged from 0.63 to 3.75, with a mean of 2.17 (SD =0.65). Laissez-faire leadership style scores ranged from 0.00 to 2.75, with a mean score of 0.76 (SD =0.59). Transformational leadership style had the highest mean score (M = 3.22, SD = 0.79), while laissez-faire leadership had the lowest mean score (M = 0.76, SD = 0.59). Table 5 included all score ranges, means, and standard deviations for school board presidents' perception of their superintendent's leadership style.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics of School Board Presidents' Perception of Superintendents' Leadership Styles

Continuous Variables	N	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Transformational	66	0.45	4.00	3.22	0.79
Transactional	65	0.63	3.75	2.17	0.65
Laissez-Faire	73	0.00	2.75	0.76	0.59

A one-sample *t*-test was conducted to evaluate whether the mean of the three leadership styles in superintendents as perceived by school board presidents was significantly different from 2, the accepted neutral value. The sample mean of transformational leadership style ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 0.79$) was significantly greater than two, $t(65) = 12.58$, $p < .001$. The 95% confidence interval ranged from 1.02 to 1.41. The effect size *d* of 1.54 indicated a large effect. The results supported the conclusion that the school board presidents' perception of their superintendent's leadership style was the transformational leadership style.

The sample mean of the transactional leadership style ($M = 2.17$, $SD = 0.65$) was significantly greater than two, $t(64) = 2.12$, $p = .038$. The 95% confidence interval ranged from 0.01 to 0.33. The effect size *d* of 0.26 indicated a small effect. Results supported the conclusion that the school board presidents' perception of their superintendent's leadership style was a transactional leadership style.

The sample mean of laissez-faire leadership style ($M = 0.76$, $SD = 0.59$) was significantly less than two, $t(72) = -17.93$, $p < .001$. The 95% confidence interval ranged from -1.38 to -1.10. The effect size *d* of -2.10 indicated a large effect. The results

supported the conclusion that the school board presidents' perceived their school superintendents as not following a laissez-faire leadership style. Results of the one-sample *t*-test were included in Table 6.

Table 6

One-sample *t*-test for School Board Presidents' Perceptions of Leadership Style from the Mean Value (2)

Variable	M	SD	T	p	Mean Diff	D	95% C.I.	
							Lower	Upper
Transformational	3.22	0.79	12.58	< .001	1.22	.54	1.02	1.41
Transactional	2.17	0.65	2.12	.038	0.17	0.26	0.01	0.33
Laissez-Faire	0.76	0.59	-17.93	<.001	-1.24	-2.10	-1.38	-1.10

This study's research question two was listed below along with results for descriptive statistics and *one-sample t*-test.

Research Question 2. What were Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school superintendents' perceptions regarding their personal leadership style?

H₀2: There were no leadership styles in superintendents identified by Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school superintendents.

H_A2: There was at least one leadership style in superintendents identified by Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school superintendents.

The assumptions of independence and normality of data were assessed prior to conducting the analyses. The scores of individual respondents had not depended on scores of other respondents; therefore, the data was considered to be independent and the assumption was met (Morgan et al., 2012). The assumption of normality was assessed

using a Shapiro-Wilk test for superintendents' transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire scores. The assumption of normality was not met for transformational leadership, $W = 0.95$, $p = .007$. The assumption of normality was met for transactional leadership, $W = 0.98$, $p = .526$. The assumption of normality was not met for laissez-faire leadership, $W = 0.96$, $p = .011$. The results of the analysis were statistically significant, indicating that the data for transformational leadership did not follow a normal distribution. The results of the analysis were not statistically significant, indicating that the data for transactional leadership followed a normal distribution. The results of the analysis were statistically significant, indicating that the data for laissez-faire leadership did not follow a normal distribution. Results of the Shapiro-Wilk test for normality for Research Question 2 have been provided in Table 7. Results of the one-sample *t*-test are included in Table 8.

Table 7

Results of the Shapiro-Wilk Test for Normality for Research Question Two

Variable	W	P
Transformational Leadership	0.95	.007
Transactional Leadership	0.98	.526
Laissez-faire Leadership	0.96	.011

Thus, the assumption of normality had been met for transactional leadership, with a statistically significant score of $W = 0.98$, $p = .526$.

Table 8

One-sample *t*-test for Superintendents' Perceptions of Leadership Style from the Mean Value (2)

Variable	M	SD	T	P	Mean Diff	D	95% C.I.	
							Lower	Upper
Transformational	3.39	0.43	27.05	< .001	1.39	3.23	1.28	1.49
Transactional	2.31	0.53	5.00	< .001	0.31	0.58	0.19	0.44
Laissez-Faire	0.63	0.37	31.51	< .001	-1.37	-3.70	-1.46	-1.29

Research question number two had been explored using descriptive statistics. Means and standard deviations of superintendents' perceptions of their own leadership styles were calculated. Scores on the MLQ ranged from 0 – 4.0, with higher scores corresponding to higher frequencies of a particular leadership style or behavior.

For transformational leadership, superintendents' scores ranged from 2.25 to 4.00, with a mean of 3.39 (SD = 0.43). For the transactional leadership style, superintendents' scores ranged from 1.13 to 3.63, with a mean of 2.31 (SD = 0.53). For the laissez-faire leadership style, superintendents' scores ranged from 0.00 to 1.88, with a mean of 0.63 (SD = 0.37). Data obtained from superintendents' surveys indicated they perceived themselves to be highest in transformational leadership (M = 3.39, SD = 0.43), and lowest in laissez-faire leadership (M = 0.63, SD = 0.37). Table 9 presented all score ranges, means, and standard deviations.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics of Superintendents' Perception of their Leadership Styles

Continuous Variables	N	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Transformational	72	2.25	4.00	3.39	0.43
Transactional	72	1.13	3.63	2.31	0.53
Laissez-Faire	73	0.00	1.88	0.63	0.37

A one-sample *t*-test had been conducted to evaluate whether the means of the three leadership styles in superintendents were significantly different from 2, the accepted neutral value. The sample mean of transformational leadership style ($M = 3.39$, $SD = 0.43$) was significantly greater than 2, $t(71) = 27.05$, $p < .001$. The 95% confidence interval ranged from 1.28 to 1.49. The effect size *d* of 3.23 indicated a large effect. The results supported the conclusion that superintendents perceived themselves to be using the transformational leadership style.

The sample mean of transactional leadership style ($M = 2.31$, $SD = 0.53$) was significantly greater than 2, $t(71) = 5.00$, $p < .001$. The 95% confidence interval ranged from 0.19 to 0.44. The effect size *d* of 0.58 indicated a moderate effect. The results supported the conclusion that superintendents perceived themselves to be using the transactional leadership style.

The sample mean of laissez-faire leadership style ($M = 0.63$, $SD = 0.37$) was significantly less than 2, $t(72) = -31.51$, $p < .001$. The 95% confidence interval ranged from -1.46 to -1.29. The effect size *d* of -3.70 indicated a large effect. The results

supported the conclusion that the superintendents perceived themselves not to be following the laissez-faire leadership style.

Research question three has been listed below along with the Pearson r correlation analyses and scatterplots to assess if there was curvature in the plots between each pair of variables.

Research Question 3. To what extent, if any, were Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board presidents and superintendents perceived leadership styles related?

H03: There were no significant relationship between the school board presidents' and the superintendents' perceptions of leadership styles in Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school superintendents.

HA: There was a significant relationship between the school board presidents' and superintendents' perceptions of leadership styles in Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school superintendents.

The assumption of linearity was assessed for the three Pearson r correlation analyses conducted to address research question three. Scatterplots were created to assess if there was curvature in the plots between each pair of variables. Scatterplots were provided in Figures 1 through 3. The researcher had not found any curvature in the plots. Therefore, the researcher considered the assumption met for the three Pearson r correlation analyses.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics for the Correlation Analyses

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Leader			
Transformational Leadership	3.39	0.43	72
Transactional Leadership	2.31	0.53	72
Laissez-Faire Leadership	0.63	0.37	73
Rater			
Transformational Leadership	3.22	0.79	66
Transformational Leadership	2.17	0.65	65
Laissez-Faire Leadership	0.76	0.59	73

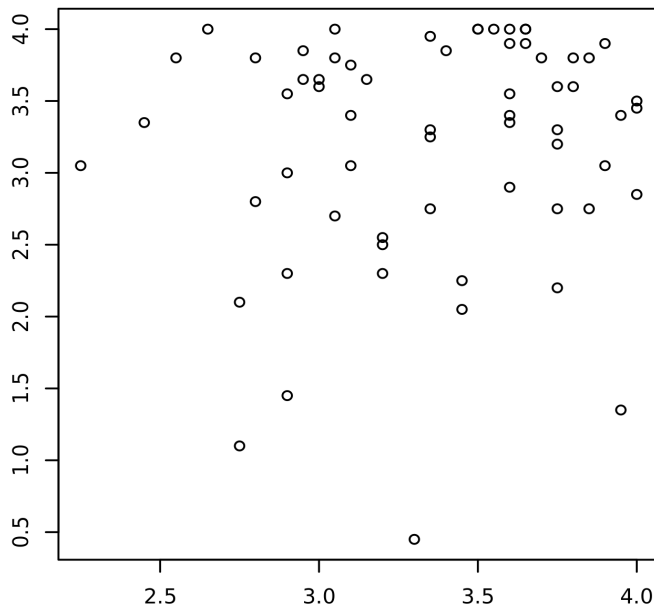


Figure 1. Scatterplot between School Board Presidents' and Superintendents'

Transformational Leadership scores

Figures 1, 2, and 3 demonstrated the linkage of scores of both school board presidents and superintendents. Scatterplots used in this study tested the linearity of the

three Pearson r correlation analyses that had been conducted on question three.

Scatterplots were created to test for curvature in the plots between each pair of variables,

No curvature had been found in the plots. Linearity had been demonstrated.

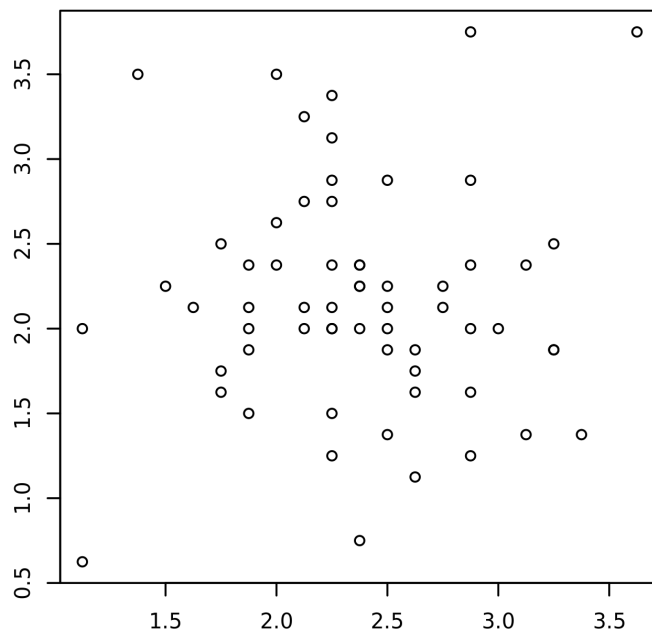


Figure 2. Scatterplot between School Board Presidents' and Superintendents'

Transactional Leadership scores.

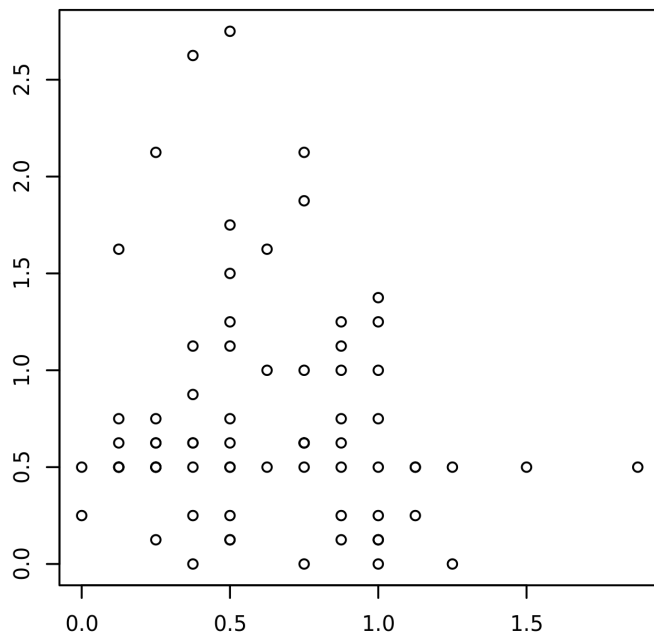


Figure 3. Scatterplot between School Board Presidents' and Superintendents' Laissez-Faire Leadership scores.

A Pearson r correlation analyses assessed the relationship between school board presidents' and superintendents' perception of leadership styles. The Pearson r correlation analyses were bivariate measures of the strength of the relationship between two variables. Pearson r correlation analyses are the appropriate method of analysis when all variables are continuous and the hypotheses seeks to assess the relationships between variables (Pagano, 2010). The results of the Pearson r correlation analyses are presented in Table 11. No statistically significant relationships were assessed between school board presidents' and superintendents' scores.

Table 11

Pearson Correlation Matrix for School Board President and Superintendent Leadership Behavior Scores

	Rater Transformational Leadership	Rater Transactional Leadership	Rater Laissez-Faire Leadership
Leader Transformational Leadership	.110	.216	-.074
Leader Transactional Leadership	-.027	.025	.007
Leader Laissez-Faire Leadership	.114	.224	-.126

Summary

Within this quantitative with correlational design study, the researcher assessed the perception of leadership styles from the point of view of public school board presidents' regarding their superintendents and the perception of leadership styles from the point of view of superintendents. The researcher assessed the relationships among the leadership styles. Participants completed the MLQ 5X rater (school board president), and the leader (superintendent) forms that provided data related to transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles.

For Research Question 1, the researcher conducted descriptive statistics and one sample *t*-test to assess the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board presidents' perceptions regarding leadership styles in their superintendents. School board presidents assessed their superintendents to be highest in transformational leadership ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 0.79$) and lowest in laissez-faire leadership ($M = 0.76$, $SD = 0.59$). The one-sample *t*-

test were statistically significant for all three leadership styles. The mean transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership style scores were statistically different from 2, which indicated a presence or absence of the traits in superintendents. The results indicated that school board presidents perceived their school superintendents to exhibit transformational and transactional leadership styles, and not to exhibit the laissez-faire leadership style.

For Research Question 2, the researcher conducted descriptive statistics and one sample *t*-test to assess Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school superintendents' perceptions regarding their own leadership styles. Superintendents assessed themselves to be highest in transformational leadership ($M = 3.39$, $SD = 0.43$) and lowest in laissez-faire leadership ($M = 0.63$, $SD = 0.37$). The one-sample *t*-test indicated statistical significant for all three leadership styles. The mean for transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership style scores were statistically different from 2, which indicated a presence or absence of the traits in superintendents. The results indicated that superintendents perceived themselves to exhibit transformational and transactional leadership styles, and to not exhibit the laissez-faire leadership style. The study noted that both the school board presidents and the superintendents believed the predominant leadership style demonstrated by superintendents was the transformational leadership, with elements of the transactional leadership style. School board presidents and superintendents did not perceive the superintendent as demonstrating characteristics of laissez-faire leadership.

For Research Question 3, the researcher conducted Pearson *r* correlation analyses to investigate relationships between school board presidents' and superintendents'

perceptions regarding leadership styles demonstrated by the superintendent. There were no statistically significant relationships between the leadership style scores of school board presidents' rating of superintendents and the superintendents' rating of themselves.

The results of the analyses indicated that public school board presidents perceived superintendents to be high in transformational leadership behavior, and low in demonstrating laissez-faire leadership characteristics. Superintendents' rated themselves highest in transformational leadership, and lowest in laissez-faire leadership. Results indicated there were no statistically significant relationships between public school board presidents' and superintendents' perceptions regarding leadership characteristics. However, similarities in perceptions between school board presidents and superintendents in that superintendents were perceived to demonstrate transformational leadership most often with some elements of the transactional leadership style was an interesting and important finding.

This chapter included the data analyses and results obtained from the data. Chapter V presented the summary, conclusion, and recommendations for this research.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Research questions that were addressed in this quantitative with correlational design study determined school board presidents' perception of his/her superintendent's leadership style and the self-perception of the superintendent regarding his/her personal leadership style. This information addressed gaps in research regarding educational leadership in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school districts regarding the position of superintendent. While there was much research that described current leadership theories, there was a significant gap in the literature pertaining to a superintendent's leadership style and the impact on board-superintendent relationships. Specifically, a correlation between Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board presidents' perceptions of leadership style in their superintendents and superintendents' self-perceptions (Willert, 2012; Bjork et al., 2014) was missing in the literature. The purpose of this study served to fill this void by examination of public school board presidents' perceptions of their superintendent's leadership style and self-perceptions of superintendents regarding their personal leadership style. This study could be used in the recruitment and hiring of superintendents in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school districts.

Discussion of Findings and Conclusions

This study supported the research that had been found regarding transformational and transactional leadership styles. Data indicated that school board presidents perceived their superintendents' leadership styles to be transformational in nature with some elements of transactional leadership. This finding was supported by past research that

indicated a higher success rate in organizations where transformational and transactional leadership styles were utilized (Bass & Avolio, 2004; Sundi, 2013; Bjork, 2014; Hamstra et al., 2014).

A key finding of this research was that school board presidents' perceptions of their superintendent's leadership style and the superintendent's self-perceptions of their personal leadership style showed strong tendencies toward using both transformational and transactional leadership styles. Another key finding was that school board presidents' perceptions of their superintendent's leadership style and the superintendents' self-perceptions of their leadership style did not tend towards laissez-faire leadership. Also, there was no direct and overt correlation shown between the perceptions of school board presidents and superintendents with regard to transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles.

This current study supported the research found on transformational and transactional leadership styles. A key finding in this research showed that school board presidents, who perceived their superintendents' leadership styles to be transformational leadership in nature, indicated their superintendents also displayed some of the characteristics of transactional leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004; Bjork et al., 2014; Martin, 2015; Quin et al., 2015). This finding has been supported by past research that indicated a higher success rate in organizations where transformational and transactional leadership styles were utilized (Bass & Avolio, 2004; Sundi, 2013; Bjork et al., 2014; Hamstra et al., 2014). While much of the literature focused on the notion that traditional management styles do not allow for long-term sustainable organizational success and change (Chaudry & Javed, 2012; Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013; Martin, 2015; Quin et al.,

2015) and prevailing research indicated that leadership must be transformational in nature in order to enable long-term change (Chaudry & Javed, 2012; Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013; McCleskey, 2014; Chingos et al., 2016; Martin, 2015; Quin et al., 2015), a balance of transformational and transactional leadership was shown to be beneficial toward promoting success in an organization (Sundi, 2013; Martin, 2015; Quin et al., 2015).

Studies that show the benefits of utilizing a combination of transformational and transactional leadership styles supported key findings of this research. A study conducted by Robertson (2009) questioned whether or not transformational superintendents were able to motivate their employees to implement a new school health and wellness program that was mandated by the state of Indiana. The health and wellness program was named PL 108-265. It was found that superintendents who used a transformational leadership style had more success in the implementation of PL 108-265. In districts where superintendents were much more transactional in their implementation of the law, there was a greater tendency towards competitions and incentives to the application of PL 108-265. However, even though different superintendents tended towards either transformational or transactional leadership in their implementation of PL 108-265, it was founded that the program was implemented successfully by both types of leaders (Robertson, 2009).

In comparison, a study that had used descriptive statistical analysis, Sundi (2013) found that results showed a positive and significant effect consistent with this study's test results, demonstrating that transformational and transactional leadership styles had significant and positive impacts on employee performance in the Konawe Education Department. Results indicated that the department was able to balance transformational

and transactional leadership styles in a way that had enabled employees to perform highly in five areas of work: quality, quantity, timeliness, employment, and the independent dimensions of individual relationships (Sundi, 2013). The findings from Sundi's (2013) study supported the work of Bass and Avolio (2008) in that both leadership styles must be implemented together to achieve desired (?) ends. School districts needed vision, direction, encouragement and commitment, which had been formed by transformational types of leaders whereas transactional leaders were needed for providing focus on detail, setting direction for work procedures and processes, and applying reward systems when needed (Bass et al., 1996; Bass & Avolio, 2004). Both leadership styles allowed followers the chance to become more aware of their work habits and goals. Therefore, both leadership styles have shown a close correlation with follower motivation and performance improvement (Bass & Avolio, 2004; Robertson, 2009; Bredeson et al., 2011; Sundi, 2013; Fowler, 2014; Quin et al., 2015).

Studies in leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004; Bredeson et al., 2011; Davis, 2014; Quin et al., 2015; Ravitch, 2016) showed similarities and differences in how superintendents have led their schools. Common practices of superintendents have been identified as being a byproduct of context-responsive leadership (Bredeson et al., 2011). Examples of this leadership style included the ability of superintendents to see the larger picture in their educational organizations as well as having the patience to time their work in a way that developed relationships and trust with stakeholders (Bass & Avolio, 2004; Bredeson et al., 2011; Davis, 2014; Martin, 2015; Quin et al., 2015; Ravitch, 2016). The context-responsive leadership style paralleled the work of Bass and Avolio (2004) in that superintendents can be transformational or transactional depending on their situations.

Context-responsive leadership was a separate leadership framework from the work of Bass and Avolio (2004). However, it utilized the idea of transformational and transactional leadership types and their implementation in specific situations (Bredeson et al., 2011). Leadership needs vary across school districts but all school districts have similar needs in regards to the superintendent's ability to implement organizational vision, policy, and procedures that enable school districts to educate students (Bredeson et al., 2011). Through implementation of context-responsive leadership, superintendents were often able to provide systemic change to improve student achievement (Bredeson et al., 2011). In connection to key findings of this research, context-responsive leadership was found to support the implementation of transformational and transactional leadership for organizations seeking leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004; Bredeson, 2011; Fowler, 2014; Quin et al., 2015).

Similarly, transformational leadership has often been combined with transactional leadership as an extension of instrumental leadership (Antonakis & House, 2014). According to Antonakis and House (2014), transformational and transactional leadership styles, when combined, incorporated the need for leaders to enlist the use of the internal and external environment, chart strategic task objectives, and provide feedback regarding job performance (Antonakis & House, 2014). "Instrumental leadership correlates well with transactional and transformational leadership types and allows for broader, more detailed research on leadership styles" (Antonakis & House, 2014, p. 764).

Another key finding of this research was that data indicated a negative response towards laissez-faire leadership. School board presidents had not viewed their superintendents as showing laissez-faire leadership traits and superintendents had not

indicated that they perceived themselves to be laissez-faire. This data supported literature reviews on laissez-faire leadership. Because laissez-faire leadership has been viewed as the absence of leadership (Burns, 2010), it was considered counterproductive toward promoting successful organizations because it did not enhance followers' motivation (Burns, 2010; Ali & Waqar, 2013; Nielsen, 2013). While it was originally thought of as being a non-leadership type, in recent studies, it has been referred to as "counterproductive leadership" (Nielsen 2013, p. 128). Laissez-faire leadership has been perceived by subordinates as being unsuccessful and therefore was considered counterproductive in enhancing subordinates' motivation (Ali & Waqar, 2013).

In a study related to safety in the workplace, a meta-analytic review of 103 studies had been completed to determine which leadership styles correlated positively with high levels of work place safety, wherein it was found that there was a "negative effect in comparison with workplace safety and compliance with laissez-faire leadership styles" (Clarke, 2012, p. 24). Additionally, in a study completed at the Quaid-i-Azam University, teachers who were working under laissez-faire leadership demonstrated the least amount of altruistic organizational behavior (Sternberg, 2013). Other disadvantages of this type of leadership included the perception that leaders were not serious about their jobs and employees had to "assume more responsibility than their positions allow for within an organization" (Sternberg, 2013, p. 27).

Implications

Possible implications of this study as suggested by the data included the need for school board presidents and superintendents to have discussions regarding the leadership styles they perceived to be important in a superintendent. There should be ongoing, open

dialogue with school board presidents and their superintendents regarding leadership styles. Also, school board presidents might want to consider using the MLQ in their hiring of prospective superintendents in order to obtain some useful information on the leadership styles of the prospective superintendent. School board presidents could also use the MLQ to survey all board members to determine the leadership style they perceive to be important in a superintendent. This information may make it easier for school board members to communicate with one another and with other district stakeholders (i.e., taxpayers, other administrators, teachers, students, staff members) with their decision-making regarding hiring a superintendent for their school district. Lastly, it should prove beneficial to implement professional development that focused specifically on transformational and transactional leadership styles to help personnel determine which style works best for their specific area of need.

Theoretical Implications

The leadership framework from the seminal work of Burns (1978), and was later modified and expanded by Bass and Avolio (2004) was used as the foundation for this research. This study continued the work of Bass and Avolio (2004) in discussions regarding school leadership, specifically about the position of superintendent.

A study of these leadership styles allowed for a wider view of perceptions regarding superintendent leadership styles as related to Bass and Avolio's (2004) leadership framework. It would also be beneficial for all administrative and leadership personnel to be able to identify all three styles of leadership, so the school district could move in the same direction in terms of leadership for the entire community. This study could provide a common language of leadership for all school district stakeholders.

Practical Implications

Based on the findings of this research, there were several implications for practice. First, prior to hiring a superintendent, school board members should have worked together to reach consensus as to the qualities they deem important in the role of superintendent. Having this consensus could assist school board members in the hiring of a superintendent who was aligned with their goals for the school district. In essence, the perceptions of school board members regarding the leadership style of a superintendent has been shown to impact the ability of a superintendent to lead a district (Doty, 2012; Ravitch, 2016). Also, professional development programs could be developed that focuses on the leader's educational philosophy and leadership style as related to the position of superintendent of a school district. Having knowledge of personal leadership styles can also assist prospective superintendents when interviewing for positions. Knowing when to be transformational, or transactional, in a leadership position may help prospective superintendents with both obtaining a position and then being successful once they have been hired as a superintendent. A key finding in this study was that a combination of leadership styles was more apt to serve the needs of school district than one leadership style in particular. Superintendents are almost always required to be "educational leaders as well as managers of their school districts" (Davis, 2014, p. 443) and should be able to adapt their leadership style to the needs of a district. This information may assist school boards and prospective superintendents build strong school districts.

Limitations

The researcher identified several limitations and delimitations of this study. The study was limited by questions and specificity of the survey instrument used to obtain data. Limitations in using one theory of leadership related to Bass and Avolio (2004) and one survey, the MLQ was also noted in this study. Another area that limited this study was that it focused on only three different leadership styles instead of a broader range of leadership styles. In addition, the survey used for this study was specifically designed for research in the areas of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. The use of a closed-ended Likert scale was the tool respondents had to use to answer questions on the MLQ. This was a necessary form of data retrieval for this quantitative study as it was part of the study's instrumentation. The use of open-ended responses would not have been appropriate for this study as it was a quantitative study designed to elicit specific types of answers. Additionally, survey data was limited to those people who had chosen to respond and respondents' personal thoughts, background, perceptions, and misconceptions would have been reflected in completion of the survey instrument. The use of one survey instrument may have oversimplified the difficulty with the selection of a leader for a school district. Also, this study only sampled school board presidents and superintendents from public school districts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Recommendations

There were multiple recommendations for both research and practice that resulted from the current study. As such, the researcher has presented the recommendations for both below. Recommendations for research included the use of different methodologies,

sampling different populations, and the use of a different survey instrument.

Recommendations for practice included finding and interviewing superintendents who have had a wide range of knowledge and experiences. Additionally, working with school board members who have experienced the process of hiring a superintendent for their respective districts would be helpful in leadership research for the future.

Recommendations for Future Research

The first recommendation obtained from this study, suggests that future researchers use a mixed methods approach to the topic of superintendent leadership. Qualitative data, such as interviews with respondents, could give greater depth toward understanding the reasons school board presidents select certain superintendents for their districts. Interviews could also add a secondary data collection method that could have determined other variables related to the hiring of a superintendent.

The second recommendation would be that future researchers open their research to a broader sample population, including teachers, past superintendents, staff members, and parents. Additionally, a nationwide survey could be conducted in order to allow for sampling from a larger population in order to gather this perception information from a wider audience. This information can also be used to help school boards, search consultants, and training programs for superintendents to find leaders who best match school districts' missions and goals. This, in turn, could have an even larger impact on the success of a school district. It would also help if studies could narrow the focus to leadership styles within city, suburban, and rural district settings because school districts often vary a great deal between these settings. Requirements regarding leadership styles vary across different settings.

Another recommendation would be that researchers find a study instrument that utilizes several leadership styles and allows for a broader range of leadership characteristics. This could prove helpful with the process of selecting a leader for a school district. The final recommendation for future research would be that researchers adopt a longitudinal approach. A five to ten-year study may be able to assist school boards with the process of understanding how leadership styles may affect their school districts. Because it takes approximately 14 months to hire a superintendent (Kowalski & McCord, 2011), it would be beneficial to study the position of superintendent leadership over a period of time where a variety of data points could be collected. This would also enable search consultants to obtain research that would help them work with school districts in finding the best candidate to fit school district goals.

Since there is now research relating neuroscience with the study of leadership styles, it is also recommended that scientists, leaders, and organizations needing leadership promote conversations and studies to continue this research. Future studies of the connection between brain development and leadership behavior may be beneficial in finding leaders that are suitable for specific positions.

Recommendations for Practice

In terms of recommendations for practice, school board presidents (and regular school board members) need to know the leadership style that works best for their district. It is recommended that school boards who are searching for superintendents to lead their district, utilize leadership studies to identify the type of leader they perceive to be necessary for their district. They should also consider the possibility of having board members, all stakeholders involved with the hiring of a superintendent, and prospective

superintendent candidates take the MLQ in order to determine their perceptions regarding leadership styles. Whether or not the MLQ is used, this researcher recommends that some type of objective testing be used along with other, more traditional hiring practices such as interviews and presentations in order to have several data points to select a prospective superintendent. It would also be helpful for school boards to have continuous, ongoing discussions regarding their goals for their school district from the viewpoint of determining a mission statement, setting goals, and reaching consensus regarding leadership style of prospective superintendents. For school districts that have a current superintendent, it is recommended that school board members and superintendents have honest conversations regarding the goals for their district and what leadership traits will assist with promoting goals and the mission statement of the district. In order to begin the conversations, it may be helpful for each board member and superintendent to take the MLQ so they have point of reference for their discussions. Additionally, it is recommended that superintendent training programs create programs that promote self-reflection of leadership style. Candidates that are knowledgeable regarding their personal leadership styles may be better able to find positions that can best be served by their specific leadership style.

Summary

The overarching idea of this research was that knowledge of leadership style could help school boards in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hire a superintendent to lead their districts. To help in finding a qualified superintendent, members of the school board must be able to reach consensus about the type of leadership qualities they seek in a prospective superintendent (Kowalski & McCord, 2011).

While various researchers have studied transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles to try and determine the impact these leadership styles may have on school districts, there was a gap in the literature regarding the types of leaders available. Many school board members and superintendents do not know their preferred leadership style, and they do not understand how this knowledge could assist them and help make their school districts successful. Robertson (2009) found that transformational superintendents motivated their employees, whereas Fitch (2009) found that transactional superintendents merely asked employees to obey their directions. Additionally, while Burns (1978) identified laissez-faire as the absence of leadership, Sternberg's (2013) research indicated that laissez-faire leadership "enabled followers to make decisions" (p. 26-27). However, even with this research, there had been a gap in the literature about Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board president's and superintendent's perceptions regarding transformational and transactional leadership styles in superintendents, and the correlation between Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school board president's and superintendent's perceptions regarding transformational, transactional, and laissez faire leadership styles (Willert, 2012; Bjork et al., 2014). This study sought to assist organizations seeking a superintendent by defining a specific leadership framework and demonstrating the steps a school board may use in interviewing and hiring a superintendent.

The results of this study also demonstrated that board presidents preferred their superintendents exhibit transformational and transactional leadership styles. School board presidents did not perceive their superintendents as exhibiting a laissez-faire leadership style. This study further indicated that the superintendents were aligned with board

presidents in regards to perceived leadership styles. The superintendents' ratings of their own leadership style were highest in transformational and transactional leadership style, and lowest in laissez-faire leadership. These practical and statistically valid findings are relevant to the field, and informed research for others.

Several recommendations of this study included the possibility of using a qualitative study for future research of this nature (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2017; Guetterman et al., 2017). Interviews, and open-ended questioning could have added a secondary data collection method to assist in other factors regarding superintendent searches (Guetterman et al., 2017). Another recommendation would be that future researchers open their research to a more varied sample population, including teachers, staff members, students, and parents (Carter & Lubinsky, 2016). Surveying a broader sample population could have given detail to studies on superintendent leadership styles and included the leadership impact on school districts from the viewpoint of various stakeholders (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011; Devono & Price, 2012; Bjork et al., 2014). Additionally, a nationwide and possibly longitudinal survey could be conducted in order to allow for sampling from a larger population in order to gather information from a wider audience (Carter & Lubinsky, 2016).

Information from studies on superintendent leadership styles may help school boards, search consultants, and training programs for superintendents to find leaders that best match school districts' missions and goals (Kowalski & Brunner, 2011; Chingos et al., 2016). This, in turn, could impact the success of a school district. "Ongoing, systematic research will enable districts to determine the type of leadership that is best for their schools" (Devono & Price, 2012, pp. 5). A five to ten-year study may assist school

boards with understanding the process of how leadership styles may affect their school districts. It may also enable search consultants to obtain research that would help them work with school districts in finding the best candidate to fit school district goals.

A key finding in this study was that a combination of leadership styles was more likely to serve the needs of a school district than one single leadership style.

Superintendents have to be required to be "educational leaders as well as managers of their school districts" (Davis, 2014, p. 443). In terms of recommendations for practice, school board presidents and school board members need to have an idea of the leadership style that may work best for their district. The selection of competent administrators who understand their role and was able to carry out public policies established by the board was determined to be one of the most important jobs a school board has to do (Blumsack & McCabe, 2017).

This study illustrated the importance of a determining a superintendent's leadership style and skills. It has specifically highlighted the importance of ensuring that there is a positive fit between the superintendent's leadership style, the needs of the school board, and the needs of the district. The research has established a statistically strong link between school board presidents' and superintendents' perceptions of leadership.

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Appendix A

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To whom it may concern,

This letter is to grant permission for the above named person to use the following copyright material for his/her research:

Instrument: *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire*

Authors: *Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass*

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Five sample items from this instrument may be reproduced for inclusion in a proposal, thesis, or dissertation.

The entire instrument may not be included or reproduced at any time in any published material.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Most", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert Most
Mind Garden, Inc.
www.mindgarden.com

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MLQ Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

Rater Form (5x-Short)

Name of Leader: _____ Date: _____

Organization ID #: _____ Leader ID #: _____

This questionnaire is to describe the leadership style of the above-mentioned individual as you perceive it. Please answer all items on this answer sheet. **If an item is irrelevant, or if you are unsure or do not know the answer, leave the answer blank.** Please answer this questionnaire anonymously.

IMPORTANT (necessary for processing): Which best describes you?

I am at a higher organizational level than the person I am rating.

The person I am rating is at my organizational level.

I am at a lower organizational level than the person I am rating.

I do not wish my organizational level to be known.

Forty-five descriptive statements are listed on the following pages. Judge how frequently each statement fits the person you are describing. Use the following rating scale:

Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
0	1	2	3	4

THE PERSON I AM RATING . . .

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Provides me with assistance in exchange for my efforts | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Re-examines critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Fails to interfere until problems become serious..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Focuses attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Avoids getting involved when important issues arise..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Talks about their most important values and beliefs | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Is absent when needed..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. Seeks differing perspectives when solving problems | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. Talks optimistically about the future..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. Instills pride in me for being associated with him/her..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. Discusses in specific terms who is responsible for achieving performance targets | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. Waits for things to go wrong before taking action | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. Talks enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. Specifies the importance of having a strong sense of purpose | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. Spends time teaching and coaching..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Continued =>

Appendix C

For use by Linda Fox only. Received from Mind Garden, Inc. on March 29, 2016

MLQ Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™
Leader Form (5x-Short)

My Name: _____ Date: _____
 Organization ID #: _____ Leader ID #: _____

This questionnaire is to describe your leadership style as you perceive it. Please answer all items on this answer sheet. **If an item is irrelevant, or if you are unsure or do not know the answer, leave the answer blank.**

Forty-five descriptive statements are listed on the following pages. Judge how frequently each statement fits you. The word "others" may mean your peers, clients, direct reports, supervisors, and/or all of these individuals.

Use the following rating scale:

Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
0	1	2	3	4

- 1. I provide others with assistance in exchange for their efforts.....0 1 2 3 4
- 2. I re-examine critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate0 1 2 3 4
- 3. I fail to interfere until problems become serious0 1 2 3 4
- 4. I focus attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards0 1 2 3 4
- 5. I avoid getting involved when important issues arise0 1 2 3 4
- 6. I talk about my most important values and beliefs0 1 2 3 4
- 7. I am absent when needed.....0 1 2 3 4
- 8. I seek differing perspectives when solving problems0 1 2 3 4
- 9. I talk optimistically about the future.....0 1 2 3 4
- 10. I instill pride in others for being associated with me0 1 2 3 4
- 11. I discuss in specific terms who is responsible for achieving performance targets0 1 2 3 4
- 12. I wait for things to go wrong before taking action0 1 2 3 4
- 13. I talk enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished.....0 1 2 3 4
- 14. I specify the importance of having a strong sense of purpose0 1 2 3 4
- 15. I spend time teaching and coaching.....0 1 2 3 4

Continued =>

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	Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
	0	1	2	3	4
16. I make clear what one can expect to receive when performance goals are achieved.....	0	1	2	3	4
17. I show that I am a firm believer in "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."	0	1	2	3	4
18. I go beyond self-interest for the good of the group	0	1	2	3	4
19. I treat others as individuals rather than just as a member of a group.....	0	1	2	3	4
20. I demonstrate that problems must become chronic before I take action.....	0	1	2	3	4
21. I act in ways that build others' respect for me.....	0	1	2	3	4
22. I concentrate my full attention on dealing with mistakes, complaints, and failures.....	0	1	2	3	4
23. I consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions.....	0	1	2	3	4
24. I keep track of all mistakes.....	0	1	2	3	4
25. I display a sense of power and confidence	0	1	2	3	4
26. I articulate a compelling vision of the future.....	0	1	2	3	4
27. I direct my attention toward failures to meet standards.....	0	1	2	3	4
28. I avoid making decisions.....	0	1	2	3	4
29. I consider an individual as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others.....	0	1	2	3	4
30. I get others to look at problems from many different angles.....	0	1	2	3	4
31. I help others to develop their strengths	0	1	2	3	4
32. I suggest new ways of looking at how to complete assignments	0	1	2	3	4
33. I delay responding to urgent questions.....	0	1	2	3	4
34. I emphasize the importance of having a collective sense of mission.....	0	1	2	3	4
35. I express satisfaction when others meet expectations.....	0	1	2	3	4
36. I express confidence that goals will be achieved.....	0	1	2	3	4
37. I am effective in meeting others' job-related needs.....	0	1	2	3	4
38. I use methods of leadership that are satisfying	0	1	2	3	4
39. I get others to do more than they expected to do.....	0	1	2	3	4
40. I am effective in representing others to higher authority.....	0	1	2	3	4
41. I work with others in a satisfactory way	0	1	2	3	4
42. I heighten others' desire to succeed	0	1	2	3	4
43. I am effective in meeting organizational requirements.....	0	1	2	3	4
44. I increase others' willingness to try harder.....	0	1	2	3	4
45. I lead a group that is effective	0	1	2	3	4

Appendix D

Request Letter to School Board Presidents

39 Abel Place

Media, PA. 19063

School District name

Address

Dear School Board President,

As a doctoral student at Neumann University, I am conducting a study for my dissertation to determine the most sought after superintendent characteristics from the perceptions of school board presidents, and superintendents. The results of this study will be of value to school districts that are engaged in the superintendent search process, prospective superintendents as well as superintendent preparatory programs. I am requesting your assistance in obtaining data for this study.

The attached survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes of time to complete. Included is a web address to an on-line survey to complete the survey online. The survey is available to the district superintendent as a "Leader" survey. The survey for board presidents is labeled as a "Rater" survey. Both the superintendent and board president of each school district in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are being invited to participate in this research.

Since I am collecting opinions, there are no correct or incorrect answers. Your responses will be strictly confidential; all answers are anonymous, and no individual school district will be named in any report of the research. Data from the electronic survey will be stored electronically on a secure flash drive and destroyed after 7 years.

This study has been approved by the Neumann University Institutional Review Board. Thank you in advance for your attention and cooperation. The results of this research will be sent to your district once the study is completed.

Online version of survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.foxrater.com>

Sincerely,

Linda L. Fox, Doctoral Candidate

Dr. Joseph O'Brien, Dissertation Chair

Dr. Philip J. Lowe, Neumann University Advisor

Appendix E

Request Letter to Superintendents

39 Abel Place
Media, PA. 19063
School District name
Address
Dear Superintendent,

As a doctoral student at Neumann University, I am conducting a study for my dissertation to determine the most sought after superintendent characteristics from the perceptions of school board presidents, and superintendents. The results of this study will be of value to school districts that are engaged in the superintendent search process, prospective superintendents as well as superintendent preparatory programs. I am requesting your assistance in obtaining data for this study.

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Sincerely,

Linda L. Fox, Doctoral Candidate

Dr. Joseph O'Brien, Dissertation Chair

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