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Servant leadershp style of Michigan public school superintendents and MEAP reading and math proficiency

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Servant Leadership Style of Michigan Public School Superintendents and MEAP Reading and Math Proficiency

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Doctoral Candidate

A Dissertation

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Educational Leadership

Eastern Michigan University

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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December 4, 2014

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between servant leadership style and Michigan public school superintendents as measured by student proficiency on the MEAP Math and Reading tests for grades 3rd – 8th.

The methodology for this qualitative study consisted of the Wong and Page's (2003) Servant Leadership Profile Revised Instrument (SLPR). The survey consisted of a 62 item survey, using a 7- point Likert type scale, comprised of 10 subscales used to represent the presence of servant leadership characteristics. There were 7 additional items created by the researcher to gather demographic information. The participants were convenience sampling identified from the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI), according to the criteria set for the study.

The study examined how servant leadership characteristics (listening, empathy, healing, persuasion, awareness, foresight, conceptualization, commitment to the growth of people, stewardship and building community) are used by the superintendent to create a culture within their district that promotes academic success as measured by the MEAP test. The literature framed the historical definition and description of the superintendent and their role, a comparison and transition from transformational leadership to servant leadership as a result of public demand to reform school districts and how the culture determines growth and academic success for staff and students.

The data from the survey is a result of self-reporting from superintendents in urban, suburban and rural districts. The study produced insights into how 3 of the 7 traits of servant leadership influences trends in student proficiency on the MEAP. Summarily, the results strengthen the discussion regarding a superintendent's leadership influence on

academic achievement, particularly those superintendents who practice servant leadership. A leader must lead considering the affective aspects of leadership that encompass supporting the whole individual, ultimately, influencing the goals of the organization.

This is dedicated to

Reverend James “PaPa” Frazier

Everlasting laughter you brought

Agnes “Grandma” Hoston

Always loving and thoughtful

Barbara Ann Pearson

Mother of “My Heart”

Andrea Lynette Hoston, my baby sister

A reminder to live life carefree

TO ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE LEFT A MARK ON MY MIND, HEART, AND SOUL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me." Philippians 4:13

First I want to thank God for giving me the strength, patience and endurance to complete this momentous task. It was not an easy journey and often times I felt defeated. Yet God gave me the strength to press forward. In Him do I live, move and have my being.

I want to thank my committee, Dr. Maylone, Dr. Saunders and Dr. Tracey for being patient and supportive through the momentous task. I also want to thank my committee chair, Dr. Ronald Williamson. He has always being my "Cheerleader." Ron always extended a kind, encouraging word and NEVER gave up on me. He pushed me and guided me. He stretched my thinking and helped me develop professionally. Our relationship evolved from professor to student, mentor to mentee and now from colleagues to friends. I am thankful to you for all you have done for me.

I want to extend special thanks to my church family, my professional family and my personal family (Mammo, Poppy and Angie). No matter where I was, someone would always encourage me to keep moving forward. They would remind me that I have come too far to quit. They would always tell me that I could do this. Thank you to those special individuals.

I would be remiss if I didn't thank Dana Johnson and June Cline for helping me with editing and data analysis. Your assistance helped this study to be what it is today.

I want to thank my three daughters; Alexis, Casey and Breann. Thank you for allowing your mother to be away sometimes studying and not playing with you. Thank you for giving me that quiet time I needed late at night to finish my reading. Thank you for always telling me that I can't be a college dropout. I love you all!!

Finally, to my heart, my rock and my BIGGEST SUPPORTER EVER – my husband, Rodney. None of this would have been possible if you hadn't allowed me the time to do it. You stepped in and helped with the kids when I wasn't around. You kept telling me that I would do it. You loved me even when stress from this work caused me to not be so nice. I love you!!

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The public's demand that schools provide excellent education for students has been the driving force for educational reform for many decades. The overall focus has been to strengthen policy, to provide reform models, and to equip school leaders with tools and solutions to correct the educational processes of schooling and to effectively manage resources. Until recently, educational outcomes were considered to be secondary objectives (O'Day, 2013).

Now, the focus of educational reform has shifted and intensified, centering on educational accountability and specifically targeting student performance outcomes as the means to promote excellence, to close the achievement gap between ethnic minorities and White children, and to mitigate the impact of poverty in America's schools (Elmore, Abelmann, & Fuhrman, 1996; Reeves, 2004, O'Day, 2013). Responsibility is being placed not only on district management but also on the schools where accountability in both teaching and learning is grounded in high stakes state-mandated testing and teacher evaluations (Hoffman, 2014).

Although academic success of minority students has been documented in individual schools across the country, reform efforts have failed to demonstrate large-scale transformation in entire school districts where the population is predominately minority (Elmore, 1996; Stringfield & Datnow, 1998, Burks & Hochbein, 2013). School districts in every state need to become places where impoverished children of color experience the same school successes that most White children from middle- and upper-income families have always enjoyed (Scheurich, Skrla & Johnson, 2004; Johnson, Jr. & Willis, 2013).

The call for social and moral responsibility to provide educational equity to all

students was ignited by A Nation at Risk, a report produced in 1983 by the National Commission on Excellence in Education. The report was generated to shed light on a growing educational crisis of poor academic performance, high dropout rates, and declining quality and morale of the teaching force, as well as weak and uncoordinated curricula. The commission made recommendations to public school systems regarding five major categories: Content, Standards, Time, Teaching, and Leadership and Fiscal Support. These recommendations were based on findings that showed "poor performance at nearly every level" and intended to stop the trend of the education system "being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity" (Banks, 2008; Banks, Dunston & Foley, 2013). Improved methods and strategies were immediately called upon to ensure educational excellence and to hold educators responsible for school success. A catalyst for decades of education reform, this report caused states to multiply their efforts to improve school performance (Morrison, 2013).

This report has not been without controversy, however. A Nation at Risk has essentially led to reforms that are often politically inspired and coerced by state governments. Interpretation of the report has led to stressed higher student achievement based on prepared standards from professional associations; shifted education control from local levels to state and national levels; fragmented reform agendas that had been broad in scale and encompassing of most of the country; and sparked reform initiatives grounded not in empirically sound studies but in political enthusiasms and intentions. Finally, the report overwhelmingly implies that there will be a dramatic increase in student achievement with more standards and high-stakes testing and assessment programs (Orclich, 2000, pp. 468-472).

The drive for these politically inspired federal reforms was then heightened with the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. President George W. Bush's reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act centered on the use of rigorous content standards and accountability supports to ensure continuous improvement of student performance for all children and to eliminate achievement gaps among student population groups (Rebora, 2004).

The public today continues to demand accountability from public school districts to produce a more educated, more flexible, and more prepared workforce matriculating from the school system. Although accountability frameworks for academic improvement and success have been developed, conversations around strengthening leadership, building district capacity, and structuring cohesive external and internal accountability systems have surfaced (Adams & Kirst, 1999; Elmore, 2002; O'Day, 2013).

Success of an educational institution is directly correlated to the effectiveness of the leader (Leithwood, 2005). Success of any organizational reform, including that of educational institutes, follows only when effective leaders are in place (Leithwood, 2005; Leithwood, Harris & Strauss, 2013). It is the ultimate responsibility of these leaders to begin developing the conditions, culture, and environment for wide-scale reform; their role is to establish vision, purpose, and shared meaning as a precondition for change (Morrison, 2013). The landscape of educational leadership has changed dramatically over the past decade as accountability has become paramount, bringing emphasis on collaboration, effective professional development on research-based learning strategies, development of leadership capacity, and creative use of resources.

Although the complex dynamics surrounding the management of school districts and

student performance are not completely understood, the constant is the continuous demand for schools to improve and change in order to prepare students for success in a rapidly evolving, technologically complex, and diverse global society (Elmore, 1995; Murnane & Levy, 1996; Schlechty, 1996; Sheppard & Brown, 2014). Educational institutions must be responsive to change if they are to survive and thrive.

The challenge of leading in an era of change and reform requires an innovative, nontraditional form of leadership that helps organizations learn from and adapt to an environment of accelerating change (Senge, 2006). The realm of leadership must transcend beyond the traditional hierarchical flow of power to members of the organization. Leaders must have the skills to shape followers' goals and values toward a collective purpose in the active pursuit of higher educational objectives (Batista-Taran, Shuck, Gutierrez & Baralt, 2013). Nothing is more important to the success of an organization than leadership nurturing its people and moving them into positions where they can make meaningful contributions (Gardner, 2000).

"Leadership only manifests itself in the context of change, and the nature of that change is a crucial determiner of the forms of leadership that will prove to be beneficial" (Leithwood, 1994, p. 499). One such leadership style is transformational leadership, an imperative strategy for organizational reformation. Transformational leaders are able to transform the vision and the goals of an organization into an action plan that mobilizes individuals to act and to reshape the entire organization (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006).

Furthermore, the success of an organization requires a leader possessing a level head, a willingness to collaborate, and an understanding of the importance of relationships. Transformational leaders in education must have completely different focuses today:

> Leadership in the future will be about the creation and maintenance of relationships: the relationships of children to learning, children to children, children to adults, adults to adults, and school to community. The increasing complexity of our society, the deterioration of families, and the loss of social capital available to support children and families mean that superintendents must be adept at creating a web of support around children and their families. (Houston, 2000, p. 431)

Organizations that improve do so only because leaders create and agree on what is worth achieving and set in motion internal structures and processes by which people learn how to do what is needed "to achieve what is worthwhile" (Elmore, 2000, p. 25). Achieving effective change is complicated because what works for one system or organization may be inadequate for another; change is contextual and must be readjusted and redesigned in every setting. "Improvement is a function of learning to do the right thing in the setting where you work" (Elmore, 2000, p. 26).

As leaders, superintendents in public schools systems can no longer simply focus on perfecting learning organizations to produce students who are academically successful on standardized tests. Leaders can no longer operate in isolation, divested from those societal issues that have shaped the community. Superintendents must be willing to create opportunities for communication, collaboration, community building, child advocacy, and curricular choices within their districts. The paradigm shift brings them to focus on "the organic and holistic qualities of learning and who structure learning that speaks to the hearts and minds of the learners" (Houston, 2000, p. 432). Servant leadership is an emerging trend in education that encourages school leaders to reflect on their own ability to promote change within the organization, as well as to support and encourage interest in maximizing the

potential of others (Spears, 1996; Nsiah & Walker, 2013). Traditional leadership of top-down authority organizations has shifted to a model that seeks to cultivate a culturally rich and professional environment for students and teachers.

The leadership style of superintendents is largely determined by their interpretation of the three spheres of influence that merge at the office: the external environment (government, business, community, and parents), the internal processes of the superintendents themselves, and the context of the local school district (culture and climate) (Johnson, 1996; Leithwood, 1995). Power must no longer be the essence of effective leadership but now be embedded in the vision of the district superintendents and demonstrated only in how they lead.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between the degree of servant leadership style used by Michigan public school superintendents, self evaluation of their ability to promote change while supporting and encouraging within the organization, and their districts' student achievement. Some case studies have documented and revealed evidence of wide-scale academic success in districts with a high percentage of economically disadvantaged minority children in states such as Texas, North Carolina, Connecticut, and New York. These studies concluded that wide-scale academic success could be linked to implementation and sustainability of best teaching and learning strategies as a result of district-level leadership, not to policies (Elmore & Burney, 1999; Scheurich, Skrla & Johnson, 2004; Johnson & Willis, 2013).

Although district effectiveness has been reported about in educational literature, little research exists specifically about superintendents, their leadership style, and how that

style affects the creation and implementation of a vision for reform, especially in the context of high-performing, high-poverty school districts (Coleman & LaRocque, 1990; Scheurich, Skrla & Johnson, 2004; Johnson, 2013). Viewing the school as the exclusive unit of change is inconceivable without considering the sources of change and support from the district. There is a fundamental relationship between district leadership and school leadership, with the leadership of the superintendent being particularly crucial if school improvement is to occur (Fullan, 2002; Huberman & Miles, 1984; Lambert, 2003). According to Fullan (2002), the district superintendent is "the single most important individual for setting the expectations and tone of the pattern of change within the local district" (p. 191).

This study will examine the relationship between servant leadership style of Michigan superintendents of public school districts and their districts' academic success as measured by overall student proficiency on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) Reading and Math tests for Grades 3 through 8. This study will contribute to the sparse body of literature available that discusses solutions for reducing the blatant achievement gap that exists between children of color in urban districts and other ethnicities within the same districts.

Research Question

Is there a relationship between servant leadership style of Michigan public school superintendents and their districts' academic achievement as defined by the percentage of students who scored proficient on the MEAP Reading and Math tests for Grades 3 through 8?

Hypotheses

Hypothesis, H_1:

There will be a relationship between Michigan public school superintendents who practice servant leadership and their districts' academic success as measured by the percentage of proficient students in Grades 3 through 8 on the MEAP Reading and Math tests.

Null Hypothesis, H_0:

There will be no statistical significance between Michigan public school superintendents who practice servant leadership and their districts' academic success as measured by the percentage of proficient students in Grades 3 through 8 on the MEAP Reading and Math tests.

Design of the Study

This study will evaluate quantitative empirical data regarding the servant leadership style of Michigan public school district superintendents. The primary focus of quantitative research is "collecting facts of human behavior, which when accumulated will provide verification and elaboration on a theory that will allow scientists to state causes and predict human behavior" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 38). The target population is superintendents of public school districts in the state of Michigan. The researcher will send via Google Forms the Servant Leadership Profile Revised Instrument (SLPR) developed from the research of Page and Wong (2003) along with 7 demographic questions created by the researcher. Scores generated from 3rd through 8th grade Reading and Math MEAP tests from the districts of superintendents who participated in the survey will be analyzed to establish a relationship between servant leadership style and student achievement.

This study is exploratory and research based. It is exploratory because true servant leadership is just emerging from infancy in the world of education (Spears, 1996). The theory still requires definition, refinement, and empirical validation. This study is also quantitative. The goal of the research is to collect data regarding the leadership values and characteristics of public school superintendents of Michigan with the intent of categorizing the superintendents as either servant leaders or non-servant leaders and evaluating their impact on their respective districts, as self-reported.

The researcher's desire to study the concept of servant leadership in education has been sparked by the need for effective leadership to transform current public school districts to meet the demands of society by closing achievement disparities between minority and White students in hopes of preparing all students to thrive, compete, and succeed in the global workforce.

As today's youth has evolved into digital learners where resources and responses are available immediately via technology, and as their instruction has evolved into hands-on, applied practicing of concepts learned, so has evolved the necessity for competent public school leaders to lead this educational revolution. Leaders must create a climate and culture that emanates collaboration, distributed leadership, and employee empowerment. Employees' and stakeholders' needs in the organization and the subsequent response to those needs as a means of creating a responsive organization appear to have spawned a new theory that has extensive merit: servant leadership (Autry, 2007). Through impactful and thoughtful use of a survey, the research will reveal deeper insight into the practices of servant leaders and their overall impact on district academic success.

Significance of Study

A clear deficit in research literature will support the significance of this study. Although there is evidence on how to develop high-performing schools, little exists about how to develop high-achieving school districts (Cawelti & Protheroe, 2001; Anderson, 2013). There is even less research on the influence of district leadership in creating high-achieving school districts. The concentration in research has predominately been on the principal's leadership (Cuban, 1984; Johnson, 1996; Leithwood, Harris & Strauss, 2013). However, the superintendent is in a pivotal role to interpret, leverage, and implement reform that can produce academic success for the district.

While identifying the leadership style of Michigan public school superintendents may not be generalizable to other states, this study can provide information that can broaden the scope of research and lead to the support of theories regarding superintendent leadership in this society of educational accountability and reform. In addition, this study will serve to describe the leadership style displayed by superintendents that influence student achievement within their school districts. Wong and Page's model of servant leadership describes how character affects every action a leader takes. From this character flow the vision and compassion as well as the strategies needed to carry out the work of servant leadership. This study will offer district leaders clues about the critical role of superintendents in influencing student performance. Finally, the insights gained in this study may prove helpful both to current superintendents and to educational administrators who desire to become superintendents.

Limitations

Limitations are those conditions imposed by the research methodology of study. "Acknowledging limitations in research allows a researcher to add context for the reader and allows the reader to determine the usefulness of a particular study" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). The limitations of the research study are as follows:

1. The participants may not provide honest answers. The survey is a tool where participants self-evaluate their leadership style.
2. The answers yielded by the participants may not accurately portray the greater population thus limiting the validity of the generalizations to be derived from the survey.
3. Limitations imposed on the study may be a result of the research tool. Page and Wong designed the survey used for studying servant leadership.
4. The limited number of participants, their experiences as superintendents, and their district's demographics will provide a limited source of information for the research.
5. Very little research exists on superintendents successfully engaging their districts in systemic reform; thus, current research on the role of the superintendent, their leadership style, and its impact on district academic success is minimal and is found most prevalently in the years leading up to and including 2009.

Delimitations

Delimitations of the research are a result of restrictions imposed on the study by the researcher. "There are times in research where limits are placed on a particular study in order to help the researcher identify the boundaries of the study as well as to clarify the

boundaries for the reader" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). The following are delimitations for this research study:

1. The questions for the survey are a result of Wong and Page's studies and thoughts on the servant leadership style and the role of the superintendent.
2. The number and type of questions developed for the survey limits the extent to which responses of participants can adequately reflect opinions and thoughts on the servant leadership style.
3. The research study is limited to the reflections of public school superintendents in the state of Michigan.
4. Superintendents chosen to participate were selected from a superintendents roster provided by the Center for Educational Performance and Information website.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is Greenleaf's (1977) servant leadership model. Greenleaf (2002) defined servant leadership as an innovative vision for leaders to perform their duties in accordance with a belief system of service to others as the primary focus. Modern leaders' goals and objectives are to promote a service-first mentality and go far beyond any traditional form of hierarchal, authoritative management style (Greenleaf, 1977, 2002; Claar, Jackson & TenHaken, 2014).

Servant leadership is an educational trend that encourages school leaders to reflect on their own ability to promote change within the organization as well as to support and encourage interest in maximizing the potential of others (Spears, 1996). Traditional leadership of top-down authority organizations has shifted to a paradigm that seeks to cultivate a culturally rich and professional environment for students and teachers.

The vision of the servant leader must be created, communicated, and owned by all within the organization for goals to be achieved and potential to be maximized (Greenleaf, 1996; Spears, 1996; Claar, Jackson & TenHaken, 2014). Greenleaf (1977) defined servant leadership in the following manner:

> The servant–leader is servant first.… It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then, conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. He or she is sharply different from the person who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possession. For such, it will be a later choice to serve—after leadership has been established. The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them are the shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature.… The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. (p. 7)

Spears (1996) distilled Greenleaf's (1977) principled beliefs into 10 characteristics: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community.
These servant leadership traits are the manifestation of an intrinsic motivation that unleashes the potential of the organization and the participants to its fullest (Farnsworth & Blender, 1993; Spears, 1996).

Servant leadership is the perspective on leadership that identifies key moral behaviors exemplifying Greenleaf's principled values of servant leadership that leaders must continuously demonstrate. Greenleaf's description of these traits, along with Spears's (1996) expounding on the 10 characteristics, creates a solid scaffold for a review of the

literature. This review will support the relevance of servant leadership as a potential conceptual framework for the achievement of incredible results through people (Spears, 1996). The creation of school districts that minimize academic disparities through the practice of servant leadership by Michigan public school superintendents is shown in Figure 1.

Definition of Terms

The terms defined below are used throughout this study and hold specific meaning in the research literature.

accountability: a restructuring strategy that emphasizes measures of student performance as criteria for school responsibility.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP): a cornerstone of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. In Michigan, it measures annual student achievement on the Michigan Education Assessment Program (defined below) for elementary and middle schools or the Michigan Merit Examination for high schools. Other indicators, such as the number of students tested and high school graduation rates, are also considered in the calculation.

culture : the basic assumptions and beliefs shared by members of a group or organization that involve the group's view of the world and their place in it, the nature of time and space, human nature, and human relationships (Schien, 2004).

district-level leadership: those vertical positions above the principal up to and including the superintendent (Fullan 2002).

educational reform: the planned efforts to improve classrooms, schools, and school districts to correct perceived social and educational problems and to improve the future for students (Fullan, 2001; Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

MEAP : "The MEAP tests were developed to measure what Michigan educators believe all students should know and be able to achieve in five content areas: mathematics, reading, science, social studies, and writing. The test results paint a picture of how well Michigan students and Michigan schools are doing when compared to standards established by the State Board of Education. The MEAP test is the only common measure given statewide to all students. It serves as a measure of accountability for Michigan schools. Schools for school improvement purposes can use results of the MEAP tests. The results indicate overall strengths and weaknesses of a school district's curriculum and can be used to modify instructional practice. Results have been used for the Michigan Accreditation Program, and will continue to be used as one piece of this program as it evolves into an accountability model" (Michigan Department of Education).

servant leadership style: " Servant leadership is the natural feeling that one has of desiring to serve others. It seeks to develop individuals who ensure that others' needs are met and advocates a group-oriented approach to decision making as a means of strengthening institutions and society" (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 13).

transformational leadership: the set of abilities that allows leaders to recognize the need for change, to create a vision to guide that change, and to execute that change effectively (Moorhead & Griffin, 1995).

vision: a leadership strategy that involves maintaining focus in organizations through the creation of an image or a mental picture of beliefs about what the organization can become.

Summary

In Chapter 1, the research was introduced, and the backstory for the examination of public school superintendents, their leadership styles, and their impact on district academic

success was provided. This chapter included the introduction to the study, a description of the study, the research question to be addressed, and the hypothesis that will drive the research. Also highlighted were the design, the significance, the limitations, and the delimitations of the study. The theoretical framework of servant leadership theory that defines the rules under which those constructs interact was discussed. Finally, terms that hold specific meaning in the research literature were listed.

Now that the research has been introduced, a discussion of literature relevant and necessary to this study will be presented in Chapter 2. The review will highlight the need for this study as it discusses the historical and evolving role of the superitendent and its traditional demographics as well as the defining and comparing of the transformation and servant leaderhship styles.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Because this study examines how superintendents and their leadership style influence the culture of schools and, ultimately, student achievement, this review of literature is a combination of related research findings in three main areas: (a) the superintendency, (b) transformational and servant leadership styles, and (c) school culture.

The first section focuses on the history of the role of the school superintendent and the evolution of the position from its traditional function and image through today. This portion of the review is important for illuminating the pivotal influence of a superintendent's leadership from the community level down to the school level. Because the degree of servant leadership style practiced is a variable in this study, transformational leadership, about which is abundant literature, and its similarity to servant leadership, is explored next. The literature specifically about servant leadership outlines its origination, the characteristics of a servant leader, and how it has influenced the business sector. Finally, the third section includes research on school culture, including Schein's (2010) levels of culture, the role of the individual, and the function of leadership.

The Superintendency

The role of the superintendent is essential to the success of today's public school system. This position was not introduced until the latter 1800s, but by the 1890s most major cities had superintendents (Kowalski, 2006; Bjork, Browne-Ferrogino & Kowalski, 2014). The primary duty of the superintendent was to perform routine tasks assigned under the direction of the school boards. Generally, the superintendent ensured that the school board

was meeting the requirements of the state board of education and has been described as the "professional general manager of the entire school system" (Kowalski, 2006, p. 5).

> The development of the role of the superintendent was important in the evolution of the hierarchical educational organization. The primary reason for creating the position was to have a person work full-time at supervising classroom instruction and assuring uniformity in the curriculum. (Kowalski, 2006, p. 12)

As the superintendent became widely established and accepted, legal language on the role of the superintendent was created in individual state school codes. Sharp and Walter (2004) reference the Illinois School Code as an example of the typical wording of an official document defining the superintendent position with legal functions.

> The board of education may employ a superintendent who shall have charge of the administration of the schools under the direction of the board of education. In addition to the administrative duties, the superintendent shall make recommendations to the board concerning the budget, building plans, the location of sites, the selection, retention and dismissal of teachers and all other employees, the selection of textbooks, instructional material and courses of study. (p. 5)

The role of superintendent has changed immensely over the past 50 years with duties that call for increasingly more than being a manager and administrator but for serving as a leader. Today, the primary job of the superintendent is to move the district forward in a collaborative effort with the board to achieve academic success. In *Educational Administration Quarterly (2000),* an article details how representatives of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) and the National School Boards Association

(NSBA) approved a national report that has identified specific responsibilities for superintendents:

- to serve as the school board's chief executive officer and preeminent educational adviser in all efforts of the board to fulfill its school system governance role;
- to serve as the primary educational leader for the school system and chief administrative officer of the entire school district's professional and support staff, including staff members assigned to provide support service to the board;
- to serve as a catalyst for the school system's administrative leadership team in proposing and implementing policy changes;
- to propose and institute a process for long-range and strategic planning that will engage the board and the community in positioning the school district for success in ensuing years;
- to keep all board members informed about school operations and programs;
- to interpret the needs of the school system to the board;
- to present policy options along with specific recommendations to the board when circumstances require the board to adopt new policies or review existing policies;
- to develop and inform the board of administrative procedures needed to implement board policy;
- to develop a sound program of school–community relations in concert with the board;
- to oversee management of the district's day-to-day operations;
- to develop a description for the board of what constitutes effective leadership and management of public schools, taking into account that effective leadership and management are the result of effective governance and effective administration combined;
- to develop and carry out a plan for keeping the total professional and support staff informed of the mission, goals, and strategies of the school system and of the important roles all staff members play in realizing them;
- to ensure that professional development opportunities are available to all school system employees;

- to collaborate with other administrators through national and state professional associations to inform state legislators, members of Congress, and all other appropriate state and federal officials of local concerns and issues;
- to ensure that the school system provides equal opportunity for all students;
- to evaluate personnel performance in harmony with district policy and to keep the board informed of such evaluations;
- to provide all board members with complete background information and a recommendation for school board action on each agenda item well in advance of each board meeting; and
- to develop and implement a continuing plan for working with the news media.(pp. 117-142)

The evolution of the role of the superintendent was imperative to meet the needs of the societal demands on how the public education system should be managed. Just as the tasks afforded superintendents have evolved, so have the criteria with which the positions have been filled. Traditionally, superintendents were chosen or appointed based on perceived effectiveness as a teacher, political connections, image as a leader with political merit, or simply because they were male (Kowalski, 2006, p. 13). These qualifying factors did little to promote a leader that would be capable of fulfilling the managerial and instructional roles of a superintendent.

To address the issue of placing good quality superintendents into office, in 1993 the AASA developed general professional standards for the title. These standards concern leadership and district culture, policy and governance, communications and community relations, organizational management, curriculum planning and development, instructional management, human resources management, and leadership values and ethics (Kowalski, 2006, p. 21). These standards, along with the national standards for school leadership licensure, helped to create more fulfilling and relevant superintendent preparation programs

in college and university programs. Table 1 highlights these standards for interstate school leadership licensure.

As previously noted, school superintendents were on the management side of the public school equation for many decades until *A Nation at Risk* was published in 1983 (Glass, 1992). The effectiveness of public education became the core of a national debate. Furthering the call for accountability, the 1990s brought the infusion of school choice. This established the growth of competition within an arena that had been mostly a monopoly, forcing educational leaders to become more focused on the needs of the stakeholders (Kozol, 1991). The public demand for public school districts to produce a more educated, more flexible, and more prepared work force has in turn increased the pressure on superintendents to be more effective in leading the districts to positive results despite the many social, political, and economic barriers continually impeding the school districts.

Many districts have been exploring various options for school reform in hopes of achieving intensive results, even looking outside the realm of educators to secure a superintendent. The nontraditional individuals chosen have come from the business, government, and law sectors. Shaw (1999) concludes that this push for superintendents with noneducation backgrounds has been a result of school boards seeking creative and innovative leadership styles that will provide pathways to academic success. Despite this potential however, not much success with closing achieving gaps and improving academic success has been documented under the leadership of individuals with noneducation backgrounds.

Description of the Superintendent

Historically, the typical American superintendent has been described as

> ". . . male, white, Protestant, from a rural, small town area, about fifty-two years old, and in a district of fewer than 3,000 students . . . He taught for about six years prior to assuming his first administrative position . . . held a central office position just prior to becoming a superintendent for the first time" (Sharp & Walter, 2004, p. 17).

In education, the traditional role of women has been to teach. As positions in education ascend up the hierarchical chart, few women attain these higher level positions. Furthermore, only a very few reach the position of superintendent. Aspiration is not the issue; it is lack of opportunity for females who desire these positions.

Data on people in educational administration portray a White, male-dominated profile for the position of superintendent since its existence. The societal role for women in the 19th century was one of homemaker, teacher, or nurse (www.womeninushistory.tripod.com). Whereas women were traditionally servers in society, men were leaders such as politicians, ministers, and business owners. Such roles included holding positions in school administration. In 1910, only 8.9% of superintendents were women. By 1930, women held 10.9% of superintendent positions (Alston, 2005, p. 676). Women wishing to become superintendents found that their goal could be perceived as masculine, inappropriate, and ambitious (Friedan & West, 1971; Shakeshaft, 1989). Society allowed men to be directive and authoritarian; women could not be so without being considered "not feminine" (Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Reihl & Lee, 1996; Dunn-Jenson & Ryan, 2013). According to Montenegro (1993), most national studies were reporting that women occupy only 6% to 7% of all superintendencies.

As political events began to change the landscape of society, the impact was reflected in the face of education. With females winning the right to vote, feminist leaders

speaking on the need for equality, and women moving into nontraditional areas of society such as business, the 1930s saw women superintendents at a high of 11%. But during the 1940s and 1950s, after World War II, men began to enter the education field in droves as a result of the educational degree program sponsored by the government. This influx of male educators was the source of the pool of male educators who accessed administrative leadership positions through the 1950s and 1960s. Shakeshaft (1989) and Donmoyer (2014) noted that "men were encouraged to be leaders and administrators; women were encouraged to remain at home" (p. 45). Title IX of the Civil Rights Act and the Glass Ceiling Act of the Civil Rights Act of 1991 helped to shed light on the lack of women in educational leadership positions. This new exposure positioned women to once again begin making upward strides in filling educational positions.

By the early 1990s, women accounted for 6.6% of all superintendents, and by the year 2000, that number increased to 13.2% (Brunner, 1999; Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2001; Plotts & Gutmore, 2014). In 2005, there were nearly 15,000 superintendents nationally, yet only 2000 were women (Alston, 2005, p. 676). In December 2010, the AASA released *The American School Superintendent*, a 10-year study documenting the dramatic changes that have occurred in public school leadership. In the study, 24.1% of the public superintendents surveyed were female, tripling the number from 1993.

Although statistics on gender and on race of superintendents have been readily available, specific counts by both gender and race are largely nonexistent; that is, in most reports available on the public school superintendency, data are reported by gender only or race only (Bell, 1992, p. 24; Tallerico & Blount, 2004, p. 31). As education continues to shift, additional literature on understanding the superintendent relative to gender and race,

collectively, is necessary to expand knowledge of this topic. Yet, the subsequent sections will diverge from the typical White, male superintendent and explore the racial and gender diversity of superintendents through the years.

African American and Nonwhite Superintendents

African American superintendents were sparse from the 1930s through the 1950s. In fact, superintendents of color were practically nonexistent before the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision. "In 1981 and 1982, about 2.2% of superintendents were persons of color, and by 1998, approximately 5% of all superintendents were persons of color . . . . In no small measure, the current superintendency remains a position filled primarily by White men" (Brunner & Grogan, 2007, p. 12).

Although African Americans occupy a greater number of leadership positions than they did a decade before, leading schools at the secondary or district level in America is still unusual for African Americans. "In a society in which power and privilege are distributed at ease partially on the basis of one's education, Black school superintendents may very well represent the last hope for thousands of Black students that equal educational opportunity will become a reality" (Scott, 1990, p. 172).

African American superintendents (AASs) have held positions predominately in the South because of the larger population of African Americans served by public school districts (Kowalski, 2006, p. 321). According to Scott (1990), in 1988, AAS-headed school systems had a combined population of three million students with over half being African American. The majority of AASs work in urban districts with student populations of 50,000 or more students.

The number of AASs has increased, but the numbers are marginal in comparison to those of other minority groups. The most recent national study disaggregating data on racial and ethnic groups reported that slightly over 5% of superintendents were people of color: 2.2% being African American; 1.4%, Hispanic, 0.8%, Native American, 0.2%, Asian American; and 0.5%, other (Kowalski, 2006, p. 321).

These low incidences compared to percentages of White superintendents may be because the road to superintendency for most AASs is different than that of White superintendents. In general, most AASs rise to position from the central office, whereas White superintendents come from assistant principal or principal positions (Glass et al., 2001). Scott (1990) candidly discusses the scenarios, ripe with a plethora of barriers and challenges, in which AASs assume their roles:

> Black school superintendents often tend to be located in the more demanding of the superintendencies. They are most often appointed to systems with both inadequate financial resources and well-developed reputations as reservoirs of unmet needs (Scott, 1980). Their systems also tend to have large concentrations of Black students and students from disadvantaged socioeconomic environmental settings who suffer from declining achievement test scores and their communities frequently display large-scale unrest about the schools (Moody, 1980; Jordan, 2013). Black superintendents often inherit little that is worth preserving and much that needs changing. (p. 165)

Moreover, there is extreme pressure on superintendents of color to demonstrate exaggerated levels of professionalism and knowledge, and to outperform the normal expectations of the position. AASs providing leadership for predominately Black school populations therefore

often find themselves in an extremely peculiar position. Tensions normally exist between boards of education and superintendents, but causing more apprehension are the conflicting expectations for these superintendents that may result from varying sociological perspectives about education, particularly when there are differences in ethnic backgrounds. In all actuality, rarely is the African American school administrator permitted by Whites or African Americans to function as an educational leader. This occurs even though the race of the African American school administrator is incidental to his expertise and performance (Kowalski, 1995). Campbell-Jones and Avelar-Lasalle (2000) conducted a study in California, with five superintendents, three Hispanic and two African American, to understand the barriers and successes of minority superintendents. One participant articulated the expectations of minorities in this position:

> A minority is expected to know more than the norm. We are expected to know how to mobilize ethnic communities and have excellent resource skills to move an agenda. But we have to do it in a non-threatening way, to be both sides. It is an unwritten expectation. (p.13)

Gender and Leadership

Even more unusual than African Americans leading schools or districts is African American women leading schools and districts. Research from Bell and Chase (1993) and Kim (2013) provided numerical data profiles of women superintendents based on race and gender during the period of 1991 to 1992. Of 39 states reporting data, 469 superintendents were women: 424 White, 19 Black, 9 Hispanic, 4 Asian, and 3 American Indian (Bell and Chase, 1993). Young and McLeod (2001) concluded that although women superintendents had higher levels of professional preparation than their male counterparts (Spencer &

Kochan, 2000), they were paid less (Pounder, 1988; Gristina, 2014) and were dissatisfied with more. In addition, they were more likely to leave their positions because of disagreement with institutional decisions, lack of mentoring, and feelings of isolation (Blackmore & Kenway, 1997; Reisser & Zurfluh, 1987; Bishop, 2013). Although it is clear that women superintendents face unique challenges, many studies have shown some common characteristics of leadership that women exhibit that speak to their strength as leaders.

Four shared themes emerged from a 1998 study conducted by Hudson, Wesson and Marcano, it was shown that the African American woman superintendent (AAWS) and her professional characteristics. Those themes were strength, perseverance, high aspirations for educational leadership, and advocacy for all children. "As J. Hudson et al. (1998) noted, they [AAWSs] spoke of their passionate desire and willingness to address issues of equitable educational opportunities for all children; they were sensitive to racial, cultural, and socioeconomic differences; they challenged the status quo, raising the consciousness of right and wrong; and they confronted incompetence" (Tillman & Cochran, 2000, p. 46). In accord, Grogan (1999) notes that AAWSs have a deep commitment to all children, but particularly to children of color; a strong sense of community; and an activist stance to fight against processes and systems that fail people of color.

AAWSs are more cognizant of the low expectations and barriers that poor and minority students encounter because they are similar to the obstacles that AAWSs have had to overcome. Surmounting these low behavioral and academic standards placed on them by society seems to have provided a catalyst and credibility for AAWSs to achieve success with influencing and inspiring their staff and students. This effect allows AAWSs to serve

as role models and to influence change in their respective districts (Tillman & Cochran, 2000).

The question may arise as to why female superintendents display different leadership themes than do male superintendents. There is the argument that gender determines the leadership style as a result of socialization. Role theory is rooted in the idea that a role defines how individuals are expected to behave, how individuals occupying roles perceive what they are expected to do, and how the individuals actually behave (Toren, 1991). Role theory provides the foundation for understanding the socialization of societal roles and for explaining how people behave in occupational roles such as principal or a superintendent (Banks, 2007).

Helgesin (1990) argues "women's central involvement in managing households, raising children and juggling careers gives them a capacity for prioritization in leadership roles that men typically do not possess." Furthermore, the socialization process has helped to develop values and characteristics that are reflected in women leadership behaviors, which are "different from the traditional competitive, controlling, aggressive leadership behaviors of men" (Helgesin, 1990; Rosener, 1990; Vanello, Hettinger, Bosson & Siddiqi, 2013). Generally, the expectation, thus the behavior that follows, is that women will be more caring and relationship-oriented than men. This largely accounts for gender differences in approaches to leadership and, as a result, renders women more likely than men to practice and demonstrate the characteristics of servant leadership (Banks, 2007).

To expound, males and females have qualities distinct from one another that characterize their leadership style:

> Male gender qualities characterized as aggressive, independent, objective, logical, rational, independent, analytical, decisive, confident, assertive, ambitious, opportunistic and impersonal are distinguished from female gender qualities described as emotional, sensitive, expressive, cooperative, intuitive, warm, tactful, receptive to ideas, talkative, gentle, tactful, empathetic and submissive (Park, 1996; Osland et al., 1998) (Pounder & Coleman, 2002, p. 124).

The societal generalizations that resonate with traditional male and female characteristics transcend into the stereotypical perimeter associated with women and their perceived ability, or inability, to be effective leaders.

> Current thinking argues for the re-vision of a leader as one who is facilitator, a catalyst or a member of a group that together works for social change. For if research into women's lives and women's ways has revealed nothing else, it has shown that women's work has been valued for its emphasis on preserving relationships and striving to provide a decent survival for all. . . . Particularly in the light of the enormous diversity of ethnicity, culture, and values educators must deal with on a daily basis, it is necessary to approach administration from a relational, interpersonal standpoint. (Grogan, 1996, p.176)

Women are taught to exhibit those psychological qualities that are critical to leadership based on relationships, encouragement, and support, whereas men are not. These societal expectations can be both beneficial and detrimental. "From a female perspective, the downside of this process is that the view of women as nurturing may lead to justification of women holding supportive roles, leaving men typically to play leadership roles" (Pounder & Coleman, 2002, p. 125).

Leadership Styles: Transformational or Servant Leadership

Regardless of gender, solid leaders are needed to successfully navigate organizations through change in times of turbulence. Traditional settings and organizational hierarchy have evolved tremendously, changing from top-down and authoritarian to team-oriented and collaborative. As society has become more collective, globally competitive, and technologically connected, organizations are struggling to remake themselves under correspondingly changing leadership. "Uncertainty has become a constant as organizations are continuously reshaping themselves during merging and delayering processes" (Schruijer & Vansina, 1999, p. 1). Not surprising, Schruijer and Vansina (1999) have taken note of an intensifying interest in leadership and have observed that "a growing body of academic and action research on leadership and organizational change exists studying how leaders create conditions under which organizations can change how they manage the change, and motivate people by envisioning, empowering and energizing" (p. 2).

Many recently generated leadership theories address organizations where professionals see themselves as colleagues rather than in superior–subordinate relationships and where team projects are the norm (Bass, 2008; Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson 1988; Parris & Peachey, 2013). Organizational changes require leaders to become more transformational and less transactional. In educational organizations the same is true: "Effective school superintendents see themselves as superintendents of learning; they see their roles as transformative, democratic leaders who bring out the best in those around them" (Houston, 2000, p. 6). In contrast, transactional leaders practice conditional reinforcement with followers. Bass (1999) defines these two types of leadership:

> Transactional leaderships refer to the exchange relationship between leader and follower to meet their own self-interests. It may take the form of contingent reward in which the leader clarifies for the follower through direction or participation what the follower needs to do to be rewarded for the effort . . . Transformational leadership refers to the leader moving the follower beyond immediate self-interests through idealized influence (charisma), inspiration, intellectual stimulation, or individualized consideration. It elevates the follower's level of maturity and ideals as well as concerns for achievement, self-actualization, and the well-being of others, the organization, and society. (p.11)

Transformational leadership discussions first emerged in the 1990s. Senge and Schlecty (1990) describe transformational leaders as values-driven and committed to the learning community development. Leithwood (1992) has identified three comprising elements of transformational leadership: (a) a collaborative, shared decision-making approach; (b) an emphasis on teacher professionalism and empowerment; and (c) an understanding of change, including how to encourage change in others (p. 10).

Transformation leadership theory suggests that this leadership leads to independence, growth, and empowerment of followers (Bass, 1985). "An empowered person is self-motivated and believes in his or her ability to cope and perform successfully" (Kark, Boas, & Gilad[1], 2003, p. 246). Bass, Avolio, Jung and Berson (2003) have denoted three themes emerging from the characteristics of transformational leadership: questioning assumptions, promoting nontraditional thinking, and focusing on follower development (Tucker & Russell, 2004, p. 104).

One of the most recent theories, which mirrors transformational leadership but also further addresses changing society, is Robert Greenleaf's servant leadership model. Greenleaf published his seminal works on servant leadership in the 1970s (Greenleaf, 1977). His thoughts on the concepts of service, leadership, and stewardship of the resources of an organization were shared in a series of publications. Greenleaf's model rejects the top-down, authoritarian, hierarchical approach. He suggests that the greatest leaders are those who are centered on others rather than on themselves. The servant leader is most successful when subordinates are led to accept and own the leader's vision and mission as their own. This concept allows the visions of servant leaders to extend beyond the leaders' personal abilities, or even beyond the leaders' life span.

Greenleaf (1977) is widely recognized for coining the term *servant leadership* and for initially defining it:

> Servant leadership is the natural feeling that one has of desiring to serve others. It seeks to develop individuals who ensure that other's needs are met, and advocates a group-oriented approach to decision making as a means of strengthening institutions and society. (p. 13)

The servant leadership model has been effective in the business world as highlighted by *Fortune* magazine's 2001 issue on servant-led organizations. It has become increasingly popular in the corporate world with companies including Wal-Mart, Southwest Airlines, Federal Express, Marriot International, Pella, Herman Miller, Medtronic, ServiceMaster, the Container Store, and Synovus Financial adopting its approach (Hunter, 2004). Southwest Airlines ranked fourth in percentage of return to shareholders; Synovus, eighth; and TDI Global , sixth. Each outperformed others by yielding an approximate 50% higher return to

shareholders than their competitors. Interestingly, these profitable companies were lead by leaders who practiced servant leadership.

Although the servant leadership model has been widely proven to be effective in business, this model has been only recently gaining momentum in the educational setting. Because the superintendent is both highly visible and instrumental in achieving academic success, many studies on the image, the roles, the relationships with boards, and the preparation of superintendents have been conducted. Still, there is no specific research on leadership styles of superintendents, their effect on the districts' culture, and the impact on student achievement.

However, research on the link between student achievement and the building of constructive climates and positive relationships, roles where superintendents may play a critical part, has been conducted. When leaders foster leadership in others, encourage people to solve problems, and build a trusting environment, student performance will increase. According to Barth (2006), leaders must be willing to create a climate in which there is collegiality, open communication, collaboration, and conversation.

> The administrator's control rests not so much in personally making numerous decisions as it does in controlling the means by which decisions in the organization are made. . . . There is a link between individual decision making as employed by the superintendent and the influence of this administrator on the organization as a whole through his or her leadership (Sharp & Walter, 2004, p. 64).

Transformational leadership and servant leadership have relatively similar characteristics to one another as they both exemplify the kind of leadership described by Sharp and Walter. Both are defined as people-centered leadership styles that seek to emphasize the importance

of valuing people, listening, mentoring, and empowering. Individual consideration and appreciation of followers is key to both. Table 2 shows a comparison of the two leadership styles with traits characterized by under influence, motivation, stimulation and consideration. It is clear that actions taken by the leader may be indistinguishable, but the perspective of the leader is the focus when differentiating between the two leadership styles:

> While transformational leaders and servant leaders both show concern for their followers, the overriding focus of the servant leader is upon service to their followers. The transformational leader has a greater concern for getting followers to engage in and support organizational objectives. The extent to which the leaders is able to shift the primary focus of his or her leadership from the organization to follower is the distinguishing factor in determining whether the leader may be a transformational or servant leader. (Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2003, pp. 4 –5)

Characteristics of Servant Leadership

Changing leadership roles are redefining leaders as individuals who are facilitators, catalysts, or creators of social change. These leaders must know and understand the population they serve and be willing to meet its needs at all costs. This exceptional level of commitment to service was first described by Robert K. Greenleaf in the 1970 essay *The Servant as Leader* and later expounded on by Spears (1996):

> Greenleaf said that the servant-leader is one who is a servant first. . . . It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. The conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant – first to make sure that other people's highest-priority needs are being served. The best test is: Do those served grow as person; do they, while being

> served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? (p. 4)

Servant leadership is the belief that organizational goals will be achieved on a long-term basis only by first facilitating the growth, development, and general well-being of the individuals who comprise the organization; the desire to serve people supersedes organizational objectives.

It is important to note that choosing to be a servant leader doesn't denote any form of low self-concept or self-image. On the contrary, it requires the leader to have an "accurate understanding of his or her self-image, moral conviction, and emotional stability to make such a choice" (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002, p. 61).

As previously mentioned, Greenleaf named 10 characteristics of the servant leader: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community (Spears, 1996, pp. 4–8). Larry Spears, Executive Director of the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, offers his view (as cited in Livovich, 1999): "These ten characteristics are by no means exhaustive…. I believe that the ones listed serve to communicate the power and promise that this concept offers to those that are open to its invitation and challenge" (p. 6). This section includes an insightful description of each of these 10 traits followed by an expanded set of servant leadership characteristics from the work of Wong and Page (2000).

Listening. Traditionally, leaders have been valued for their ability to communicate and make decisions. Taylor (2002) stated that Greenleaf placed much importance on the leader's ability and willingness to learn. Servant leadership is, at its heart, an openness, an ability to listen, and an ability to speak in a way that engages people directly affected by the

choices to be made (p. 17).

Taylor (2002) also recognized the value of listening: "I see this as a key leadership quality of the servant-leader. It is virtually impossible to be empathetic, aware, persuasive, or conceptually adept without being a practiced listener" (p. 76). Well put and most telling was Greenleaf's (1977) statement that "the best test of whether leaders are communicating at the depth the servant-leader style advocates is for leaders to ask themselves if they are really listening to their subordinates" (p. 21).

Empathy. Loosely defined as the ability to understand and share someone else's emotions, empathy is a logical characteristic of one who practices servant leadership successfully. Taylor (2002) espoused that a servant leader "must be willing to stop, listen intently, and truly care about people" (p. 21). In agreement, Maxwell (1993) believed, "Leadership begins with the heart, not the head, and it flourishes when meaningful relationships are developed" (p. 36). These meaningful relationships, Maxwell (1993) suggests, are based on the leader's genuine love for the people and the followers' respect in kind and their willingness to follow (p. 89). Taylor (2002) expanded on Maxwell's thoughts on empathy: "A sincere love for others will promote open, honest communication and will foster a sincere effort to understand each other's point of view" (p. 29).

In addition to love and respect, Greenleaf (1977) thought acceptance was an important component of empathy: "The servant as leader always empathized, always accepted the person but sometimes refused to accept the person's efforts or performance as good enough" (p. 32). Greenleaf (1984) felt that "great leaders displayed demanding and uncompromising exteriors, but they must have empathy and an unqualified acceptance of the persons under their leadership" (p. 47).

Healing. One of the great strengths of servant leadership is the capacity for healing oneself and one other. Healing starts with the individual and, as wholeness is found within oneself, so the individual is able to influence others. Servant leaders must truly care about people and sincerely want them to grow and develop, not only to satisfy the needs of the organization, but to help them grow as individuals (Abel, 2002, p. 27). Spears (1998), too, believes that healing within the servant leader will eventually touch others:

> New leadership is needed for the times, but it will not come from finding new and wily ways to manipulate the external world. It will come as we who lead find the courage to take an inner journey toward both our shadows and our light, a journey that, faithfully pursued, will take us beyond ourselves to become healers of a wounded world (p. 208).

Awareness. In order for leaders to be listeners, empathizers, and healers, they must be aware of opportunities to serve their followers in these capacities. Awareness keeps leaders on alert, and as quoted Greenleaf (1977), awareness "is not a giver to solace. . . . It is just the opposite" (p. xx). Able leaders are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed. They do not seek solace but have their own inner security (p. 4). Abel (2002) emphasized that "awareness requires an act of faith on the part of the leader. It is the belief that the leader has the strength and ability to face the problem and find the solution" (p. 11).

Persuasion. Leaders possessing the quality of persuasion are able to convince their followers, not force them into conforming. Abel (2002) emphasized: "Servant leaders seek to convince others, rather than coerce them into compliance. The servant leader relies on persuasion and is effective at building consensus within groups" (p. 29). Using this tool effectively to build consensus within groups is what offers one of the clearest distinctions

between the traditional authoritarian model and that of servant leadership (Taylor-Gilliam, 1998).

Conceptualization. Spears (1995), following a review of Greenleaf's essays, defined conceptualization as servant leaders seeking to nurture their abilities to "dream great dreams." The ability to look at a problem from a conceptualizing perspective means that one must think beyond day-to-day realities. For many managers this is a characteristic that requires discipline and practice. Servant leaders are called to seek a delicate balance between conceptual thinking and a daily focused approach (p. 5).

Building community. Taylor-Gilliam (1998) referred to the significance of building community as the culmination of all the other nine characteristics. In order for there to be a successful outcome in creating an educational community, each of the other nine must be functional in order to support the structure of the final characteristic (p. 31).

Greenleaf advised that "One step at a time be taken so that all may benefit from the whole. An organization founded on these principles has the potential to generate the greatest reward for the organization as a whole" (Abel, 2002, p. 2).

Stewardship. As educational leaders, honoring stakeholders is essential to creating an environment of success. Peter Block (1996), in his book *Stewardship: Choosing Service Over Self-Interest*, defines stewardship as follows:

> Stewardship asks us to serve our organizations and be accountable to them…and in letting caretaking and control go, we hold on to the spiritual meaning of pursued purposes that transcend short-term self-interest (p. 9).

Abel (2002) noted that "servant leadership, like stewardship, assumes first and foremost a commitment to serving the needs of others" (p. 31), and "achieving this level of

service can only be obtained through a true commitment to people by genuine concern and love" (Taylor, 2002, p. 41).

Commitment to the growth of people. Servant leaders make commitments not only for accountability of all that has been entrusted to them but also to the growth of the followers themselves. Posner and Kouzes (1988) noted, "The most admired leaders are also leaders who make their followers feel valued, who raise their sense of self-worth and self-esteem" (p. 13). Servant leaders are deeply committed to the growth of every individual within their institution, recognizing the tremendous responsibility to do everything within their power to nurture the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of employees (Spears, 1995, p. 6).

Foresight. This characteristic is similar to conceptualization in that they both involve understanding through envisioning. The major difference between foresight and conceptualization is that conceptualization is more rooted in the ideal while foresight accounts for experiences and realities when making decisions. Foresight is a characteristic that enables the servant-leader to understand lessons from the past, realities of the present, and likely consequences for the future. Foresight allows for difficult experiences to become lessons learned (Abel, 2002).

Foresight is deeply rooted within the intuitive mind. As such, one can conjecture that foresight is the one servant-leader characteristic with which one may be born; all other characteristics can be consciously developed. Spears (as cited in Livovich, 1999) considered this characteristic critical to being a servant leader and felt that the ability to foresee the likely outcome of a situation is hard to define but easy to identify.

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community as the culmination of all the other nine characteristics. In order for there to be a successful outcome in creating an educational community, each of the other nine must be functional in order to support the structure of the final characteristic (p. 31).

"Greenleaf advised that one step at a time be taken so that all may benefit from the whole. An organization founded on these principles has the potential to generate the greatest reward for the organization as a whole" (Abel, 2002, p. 2).

To summarize, servant leaders use these 10 enviable qualities for the good of the community first. They are usually readers and experimenters. They are generally good predictors, listeners, and designers. And together, with others, they want to build a future, not just accept whatever may come.

Wong and Page's model of servant leadership. Wong and Page (2003) expanded upon Greenleaf's work by creating a multidimensional model that recognizes 12 servant leadership attributes (see Table 3). These identified attributes, a result of both literature review and their personal experiences in leadership, are placed into four categories relating to character, relationships, productivity, or process.

From this original conceptual framework, Wong and Page constructed a Servant Leadership Profile (SLP) that yields a factor analysis consisting of eight factors: leading, servanthood, visioning, developing others, team building, empowering others, shared decision making, and integrity. Under servant leadership, workers are driven by

> . . . inner motivation towards achieving a common purpose . . . . The leader does this by engaging the entire team organization in a process that creates a shared vision that inspires each to stretch and reach deeper within themselves and to use their unique talents in whatever way is necessary to independently

> and interdependently achieve that shared vision. . . . What about the need to develop and use talent, the mind? What about the need for meaning, for purpose, for contribution, for service, for adding value, for making a difference? (Wong and Page, 2003, p. 5)

Culture

The amount of research conducted on characteristics of effective schools is plentiful. This research has documented that a "positive school culture is associated with higher student motivation and achievement, increased teacher collaboration, and improved attitudes amongst teachers toward their jobs" (Stolp & Smith, 1995, p. 21). When discussing the effectiveness of schools, Glatthorn (1992) candidly comments, "The most important foundational element is the culture of the school" (p. x). Abundant literature exists on the topic of culture as it relates to organizations in general, and to schools specifically. Researchers Deal and Peterson (1990) and Peterson, Farmer & Zippay (2014) define culture as "deep patterns of values, beliefs, and traditions that have been formed over the course of the [school's] history" (p. x) Maxwell and Thomas (1991) explain culture as being "concerned with those aspects of life that give it meaning" (foreward).

Stolp and Smith (1995) have defined school culture as "historically transmitted patterns of meaning that include the norms, values, beliefs, traditions and myths understood, maybe in varying degrees by members of the school community" (p. 13). Some elements of culture in organizations are shared values, heroes, rituals, ceremonies, stories, and cultural networks (Sashkin & Walberg, 1993, p. 6). Culture is the feelings people have about their organization, their assumptions, values, and beliefs that create an identity for the organization and define its standards of behavior (Schein, 2004). This definition of culture will be used for this research.

When cultural improvements are to be made in schools, leadership practices such as creating a vision and building consensus around a goal show the greatest influence. Although principals can have immediate and direct impact on culture in schools, the principals can operate only within the parameters created by the school board and the superintendent. Because policies, budgets, and personnel decisions originate from superintendents, theyhave tremendous influence on how principals create the culture for their schools and, ultimately, affect student achievement. "What schools and the people in them do and believe makes a difference in student outcomes" (Stolp & Smith, 2000, p. 24).

Culture is important in the restructuring of schools and in improving student achievement. In a positive, supportive culture, people are dedicated and use their energy to work for what they believe in. They are excited and enthusiastic. They are inspired to work hard and to be successful. It is the obligation of the leader to create a "consensus around values that constitute an effective culture, such as high expectations, commitment, mutual respect, confidence, continuous improvement, experimentation and risk taking, and an insistence that students will learn" (Stolp & Smith, 1995, p. 15). Furthermore, the beliefs of the teachers in the principal's vision and the school's overall commitment to change increase dramatically when leaders have a strong vision and willingness to work toward change. Expressly, school-level change comes about as a result of the superintendent's vision and commitment to district change.

Leaders who are fully aware of the organization's culture know that focusing on behavior, beliefs, and values will drive effective change in the district and school as opposed to changing the organizational structure of the system. Zepeda (2013) support findings from

researchers Karen Seashore Louis, Helen Marks, and Sharon Kruse (1994) regarding the need to focus on culture and not structure.

> . . . structural elements of restructuring have received excessive emphasis in many reform proposals, while the need to improve the culture, climate and interpersonal relationships in schools have received too little attention. While it may be easier to imagine how to restructure schools rather than to change their culture, the latter is the key to successful reform. (p. 14)

Changing cultural patterns to increase student achievement has been researched and documented. Fryans and Maehr (1990) suggested that school culture has a direct impact on student motivation, concluding that there is preliminary evidence that culture increases motivation, ultimately influencing student achievement. Thacker and McInerney (1992) and Krug (1992) also support the idea of culture influencing achievement. Thacker and McInerney's research concluded that student achievement on state-standardized tests in Indiana improved as a result of its leadership conveying a mission and vision that promoted achievement and success. Krug's research "found a significant correlation between the instructional climate and student achievement scores. He also reported a positive correlation between instructional leadership and the instructional climate" (Stolp & Smith, 2000, p. 30).

Regardless of the leadership style exercised, the role that leaders play is crucial in school culture. Schein (1992) stated, "Culture and leadership are two sides of the same coin" (p. 15). Schein went further:

> Neither culture nor leadership, when one examines each closely, can really be understood by itself. In fact, one could argue that the only thing of real importance

> that leaders do is to create and manage culture and that the unique talent of leaders is their ability to understand and work with culture (p. 5).

Thus it is clear that school leaders have a powerful influence on the culture of the school by a variety of means. For established schools or organizations, the leader's assumptions become shared as a given and are no longer issues to be discussed. New members often view this as "how we do things around here." While some school leaders influence culture through charisma, there are a number of other mechanisms that help embed culture. For example, strong organizational leaders create strong culture. "Employees attend vigilantly to leaders' behaviors even to the rather mundane aspects such as what they spend time on, put on their calendar . . . follow up on, and celebrate . . . They convey much more to employees about priority than do printed vision statements and formal policies. Once leaders embark on the path to using culture . . . it is critical that they regularly review their own behaviors to understand the signals they are sending to members" (Chatman & Cha, 2003, p. 28).

Despite research that indicates that positive culture and relationships affect academic achievement in urban districts, districts with predominantly African American or Hispanic populations have not shown substantial gains with superintendents who focus on climate and relationships. What factors contribute to this phenomenon? What is needed to move predominately minority urban districts forward academically? This assertion from Chatman and Cha (2003) may help to address this challenge:

> The question is whether the culture that forms is one that helps or hinders the organization's ability to execute its strategic objectives. Organizational culture is too important to leave to chance; organizations must use their culture to fully

> execute their strategy and inspire innovation. It is a leader's primary role to develop and maintain an effective culture" (p. 32).

In other words, the development of a culture in any organization or group is inevitable. But it is the leader who spearheads the cultural change and so must have a sound vision about what exactly that change is to be.

Summary

Today, the superintendent's role is exceedingly complex, dealing with numerous competing issues and being measured by high standards tied directly to accountability. With such a seemingly impossible job to manage can superintendents truly affect student achievement? The review of the literature on superintendents, transformational and servant leadership styles, and school culture sets the foundation for this study. Now, building higher to address this question, this study of superintendents' leadership style, its influence, and the relationship between districts' academic achievement as measured by the 3rd through 8th grade MEAP Proficiency Scores in Reading and Math will be the focus of this research.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology and procedures that were used to answer the research questions in this study. This chapter includes five components: purpose of the study, research questions, participant selection, study design, and data collection.

The turbulent environments of public school districts across the nation have resulted in superintendents being mandated to increase student performance and being held accountable for implementing district-wide systems to produce academic success (Firestone, Fuhrman, & Kirst, 1991). Consequently, superintendents must use their leadership abilities to create an environment for success.

Studies in recent literature focus on the principal as the unit of change and leadership for school improvement and academic success (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1999). There is, however, only limited research on superintendents' leadership styles or on the effects of district leadership on student achievement (Skrla, Scheurich, & Johnson, 2000.)

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between Michigan public school superintendents who practice servant leadership (SL) and their districts' academic success as measured by the number of proficient students in Grades 3 through 8 on the MEAP Reading and Math tests.

The leadership of the superintendent is highly contextual. The superintendents' leadership style along with the context of the district shapes the environment that will potentially yield academic success. For this study, the practice of servant leadership by superintendents is critical to understanding how districts develop their culture and how academic success emerges from that culture.

Results of this study will aid educational researchers, scholars, and practitioners in understanding how superintendents' practicing servant leadership can develop successful environments for academic success. Second, this study will expand the research on the superintendent's leadership style to provide evidence of successful components implemented for equitable academic achievement for all students.

Derived from the purpose of the study, the research question asks, "Is there is a relationship between Michigan public school superintendents, the degree of servant leadership style implemented, and the academic success of their district as measured by the number of proficient students taking the Grades 3 through 8 MEAP Reading and Math tests?"

For this study, public school superintendents are defined as district leaders who are selected by a school board to manage a traditional public school district. Public school districts are defined by the following criteria: (a) serving a student population of over 3,000; (b) funded through public funds such as property taxes, state aid based on pupil population, and federal and state grants; and, (c) categorized as a K–12 district, K–8 district, or K–5 district.

Research Design

The methodology chosen to collect and analyze data is dependent on the type of problem under study and the disposition of the researcher (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The way the researcher asks the research question and frames the research problem is extremely important because it determines, mainly, the type of research method that is used (p. 36).

Quantitative research is an inquiry into an identified problem based on testing a theory composed of variables measured with numbers and analyzed using statistical

techniques; the goal is to determine whether the predictive generalizations of a theory hold true (Mason, 1996). There are three general types of quantitative methods: experiments, quasi-experiments, and surveys. For this study, a survey is the research instrument. A survey provides for a wide range of individuals to respond to the researcher. Surveys "include cross-sectional and longitudinal studies using questionnaires or interviews for data collection with the intent of estimating the characteristics of a large population of interest based on a smaller sample from that population" (Mason, 1996). Understanding the relationship between servant leadership style and a district's academic success requires collecting information from a population of superintendents. Through the analysis of survey responses and district MEAP data collection, generalizations provide foundational research on the superintendent's impact on district academic achievement.

Research Instrument

The Servant Leadership Profile Revised Instrument (SLPR), developed from the research of Wong and Page (2003), was used for this study. Wong and Page's (2003) opponent–process model is the origin of the SLPR survey and "is predicated on the interactions between two underlying opposing motivational forces: serving others vs. self-seeking" (p. 6). Using this model, the presence of authoritarian hierarchy and egotistic pride in the analysis translated into the absence of SL, which was not necessarily true. The possibility of inaccuracy in the results made it evident for the need to create two new subscales. The major difference between the SLP and the SLPR is that all the items in the SLPR are randomized so that resulting factors are not biased, as is the case of the original SLP (Wong & Page, 2003). The first SLPR instrument was developed and used by Wong

and Page to explore the various dimensions of SL in their subjects. In this study, the SLPR was used to measure the degree of SL among Michigan public school superintendents.

The SLPR is a 62-item survey that uses a 7-point Likert-type scale that ranges from 1, representing *strongly disagree*, to 7, representing *strongly agree*. The SLPR instrument measures an overall dimension of SL by summing the responses to each of the items on the SLPR. The SLPR comprises a total of 10 subscales. Eight of the subscales are used to represent the presence of SL characteristics; the remaining two subscales are intended to measure characteristics antithetic to SL.

This instrument considers the barriers to SL performance and includes both positive and negative leadership attributes, particularly those that encourage (e.g., empathy and integrity) and hinder (e.g., pride and egotism) a servant's heart. According to Wong (2003), this instrument "explains and predicts the absence and presence of SL" (p. 13).

Quantitative data obtained from Wong and Page's SLPR was entered into an SPSS 20.0 computer information system for statistical analysis by the researcher. The statistical test used for the data analysis was the One-Sample T-Test, which shows whether the collected data is useful in making a prediction about the population. From results of the T-Test, the researcher documented data summaries.

The researcher contacted Wong and Page via email for permission to use their instrument in this study. Permission to use their instrument was granted (Appendix A).

The researcher developed seven additional demographic questions that provided information on gender, district code, type of school district, geographic area of school district, size of school district, total number of years as a superintendent, and number of years in current district for superintendents responding to the survey. Participants remained

nameless, but district codes were requested in order to gather MEAP data for districts from where completed surveys were submitted. Once responses from the surveys were gathered from sample participants and the committee had approved the proposal, the final proposal to conduct research was submitted to Eastern Michigan Human Subjects Review Process for review and approval.

Reliability and Validity

In quantitative research, the research will demonstrate validity and reliability to establish authenticity. Klenke (2008), in his discussion about qualitative research, stated that credibility, or the extent to which the results are credible from the standpoint of the participants, is analogous to validity in quantitative research. Similarly, dependability in qualitative research, or the extent to which the same results can be obtained by independent investigation, is similar to reliability in quantitative research (p. 38).

For the SLPR, the validity was illustrated by using an exploratory factor analysis. The factor analysis was conducted in order to ensure that the items included on the survey instrument measured the intended subscales on the SLPR. Those items that were developed for particular subscales would, therefore, be expected to be correlated with one another and form a cluster, while items used to measure different subscales would not be expected to highly correlate with the other items. Results showed that the items on the SLPR did measure the intended variables, providing evidence that the SLPR is a valid instrument for measuring the degree of SL of the superintendents.

The reliability of the SLPR was illustrated by using Cronbach's alpha coefficients for internal consistency. In a study conducted by Denzin and Lincoln (2003) it was found that the SLPR had high internal consistency scores. Cronbach's alpha for internal

consistency measurements for the subscales had a range of values from a minimum of .89 to a maximum of .97. This range of values indicated that the SLPR provides a good measurement for the degree of SL. According to Salkind (2006), any Cronbach alpha score greater than the cut value of .80 indicates a good-fitting variable.

Selection of Subjects

The individuals selected for the survey were a convenience sampling (Cresswell, 2013). Individuals for the study were selected from the Center for Educational Performance and Information using the aforementioned criteria for public school districts. This database is public information and no permission was needed to acquire the email addresses of superintendents, which were then compiled in an Excel spreadsheet to be easily imported when surveys were to be emailed.

Google Forms was the medium used to distribute the survey. Emails to superintendents included the SLPR plus the 7 demographic questions generated by the researcher, and an introduction letter requesting their participation in the research, if they met the criteria. The individuals selected were from among the 550 public school districts located in Michigan. The participants were asked to complete the survey within 10 business days upon receiving the email.

After 10 business days, data results were reviewed in Google Forms summary reports. The summary indicated the number of superintendents who declined to answer and that of those who completed the survey. Additionally, the researcher reviewed emails from superintendents indicating their current statuses. These statuses were first-year superintendents (unable to participate because of a two-year minimum requirement of serving as superintendent), retired superintendents (unable to participate because they were

no longer working) who shared current information about the new superintendent, and superintendents of an independent school district (unable to participate because the district was not a public district as defined by the researcher for this study).

The email address list was filtered, adjusting the list based on new information received. Surveys were resubmitted for another 10-day period. Resubmission of survey occurred one additional time. This process concluded after a 30-day window. At the end of the process, there were 63 survey responses prior to data disaggregation.

Data Collection and Analysis

Using district codes provided from surveys, MEAP proficiency scores for Grades 3 through 8 in Reading and Math were collected from the MI School Data website for the school years 2011–12, 2012–13, and 2013–2014. Data from the MEAP proficiency rates for 2011–2014 and responses from the superintendents for the SLPR survey were entered into SPSS 20.0 software.

Using SPSS, a reliability test was completed, Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficients were calculated, and t-tests were performed. A reliability test was conducted for the 6 subscales of the SLPR. This reliability test helped to prove consistency and reliability with how closely related the subscales were as a group. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was measured between each of the three years of proficiency percentages for the math and reading tests and the subscales of the SLPR. The Pearson correlation coefficient is a measure of the strength of the linear relationship between two variables. It is referred to as Pearson's correlation or simply as the correlation coefficient. If the relationship between the variables is not linear, then the correlation coefficient does not adequately represent the strength of the relationship between the variables. Finally, t-tests

were conducted comparing the survey subscales to number of years as a superintendent, years in current district, geographic location, and gender. T-tests are used to determine the significant difference between the means of two groups. The results indicate if the differences found in the sample are probable to exist in the populations from which it was drawn. Results from all the tests will be discussed in Chapter 4.

It was the goal of the researcher to observe a correlation between the degree of the servant leadership style practiced by the public school superintendent and the academic success of their district's students. Through research replication, a theory will be offered. Another goal of the researcher was to demonstrate that this study will be reliable and operational for future researchers. Furthermore, the development of a new theory on the effectiveness of public superintendents will provide much-needed knowledge for individuals who desire to obtain future superintendencies and make substantial impact in fostering a culture of success in public school districts.

Summary

In a time where more accountability from schools and their administrators is the focus of public outcries and legislative programs, information that will help create educational environments more conducive for effective teaching and learning is warranted and welcomed. This quantitative study research design was developed to provide insight data into the specific demographics of the superintendent that practices the servant leadership style. Information from this research will spur further research on the leadership styles of public school superintendents and how they can influence a district culture that promotes academic success for all students. Also, data gleaned from this study can be used

to assist school districts when searching for leadership that will move districts forward academically and close achievement gaps for minority students.

Chapter 4

Results

In Chapter 4, results are presented of the data analyses that were used to describe the sample and address the research questions developed for the study. Divided into three sections, the first section provides a description of the participants with baseline information on the scaled variables discussed in the second section. Results of the inferential statistical analyses used to test the hypothesis and address the research question is presented in the third section.

This study examined the relationship between servant leadership style of Michigan superintendents of public school districts and their districts' academic success as measured by overall student proficiency on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) Reading and Math tests for Grades 3 through 8.

This study addressed the following research question:

Is there a relationship between the degree of servant leadership traits of Michigan public school superintendents and their districts' academic achievement as defined by the percentage of students who scored proficient or above on the MEAP Reading and Math tests for Grades 3 to 8?

H_1: There will be a relationship between Michigan public school superintendents who practice servant leadership and their districts' academic success as measured by the number of proficient students in Grades 3 through 8 on the MEAP Reading and Math tests.

H_0: There will be no statistical significance between Michigan public school superintendents who practice servant leadership and their districts' academic

success as measured by the number of proficient students in Grades 3 through 8 on the MEAP Reading and Math tests.

Description of the Sample

The superintendents were asked to complete a short demographic survey. Their responses to the items regarding their personal characteristics were summarized using frequency distributions. Table 5 presents results of this analysis.

Table 5

Frequency Distributions of Personal Characteristics of Superintendents (N = 54)

Personal Characteristic	*N*	%
Gender		
Female	15	27.8
Male	37	68.5
Missing 2 responses		
Years as a superintendent		
Second year	4	7.4
Third year	11	20.4
Fourth year or longer	38	70.4
Missing 1 response		
Years as a superintendent in current school district		
Second year	8	14.8
Third year	13	24.1
Fourth year or longer	32	59.3
Missing 1 response		

The majority of the participants (*n* = 37, 68.5%) reported their gender as male, with 15 (27.8%) indicating their gender was female. Two participants did not provide a response to this question. The largest group of participants had been superintendents for four or more years (*n* = 38, 70.4%), with 11 (20.4%) indicating they were in their third year. Four (7.4%) of the participants had been superintendents for two years. When asked how long they had been a superintendent in their current school district, 32 participants (59.3%) indicated four

or more years, with 13 (24.1%) reporting they had been in their current school districts for three years. Eight superintendents (14.8%) had been in their current school districts for two years. One participant did not provide a response either to the length of time as a superintendent or to the length of time in his or her current school district.

In addition to disclosing the length of time as superintendents, the participants indicated the geographic location and size of their current school districts. Table 6 presents results of the frequency distributions used to summarize these data.

Table 6

Frequency Distributions of Geographic Location and Size of School District (N = 54)

Geographic Location and Size of School District	*N*	%
Geographic Location		
Rural	25	46.3
Suburban	23	42.6
Urban	4	7.4
Missing 2 responses		
Size of School District		
Small (Under 5,000)	43	79.6
Mid-size (5,001 to 10,000)	5	9.3
Large (10,001 to 15,000)	2	3.7
Very large (15,001 and larger)	3	5.6
Missing 1 response		

Twenty-five (46.3%) superintendents indicated their school districts as being located in rural areas, with 23 (42.6%) reporting the location of their school districts as being in suburban areas. Four (7.4%) superintendents work in urban school districts. Two superintendents did not provide a response to this question. The majority of the participants (*n* = 43, 79.6%) reported that their school districts have less than 5,000 students. Five

(9.3%) superintendents serve student populations ranging from 5,001 to 10,000, and 2 (3.7%) have student populations in the range of 10,001 to 15,000. Only three (5.6%) superintendents are in very large districts of greater than 15,000 students. One superintendent did not provide a response to this question.

Description of the Scaled Variables

The participants completed the Servant Leadership Profile Revised Instrument (SLPR) developed from the research of Page and Wong (2003). The survey measures seven subscales: empowering and developing others, power and pride, serving others, open participatory leadership, inspiring leadership, visionary leadership, and courageous leadership. Participants rated each item using a scale ranging from 1 to 7, with higher ratings indicating greater agreement. The responses for each of the subscales were summed and divided by the number of items on each subscale to develop a mean score for that subscale. Higher mean scores indicate greater agreement with the subscale. The mean scores were summarized for presentation in Table 7.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics of Servant Leadership Profile

					Range	
Subscale	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*Mdn*	Minimum	Maximum
Empowering and developing others	54	6.13	.54	6.19	4.75	7.00
Power and pride	54	2.32	.93	2.25	1.00	5.00
Serving others	54	6.27	.40	6.27	5.09	7.00
Open participatory leadership	54	6.48	.45	6.55	4.90	7.00
Inspiring leadership	54	5.89	.60	5.86	4.29	7.00
Visionary leadership	54	6.12	.58	6.20	4.80	7.00

Courageous leadership	54	6.55	.49	6.80	5.00	7.00

The mean scores for the seven subscales were high, with the exception of power and pride (*M* = 2.32, *SD* = .93). The superintendents had mean scores that ranged from 5.89 (*SD* = .60) for inspiring leadership to 6.55 (*SD* = .49) for courageous leadership. These scores provided evidence that superintendents were implementing servant leadership in their school districts.

Thirty-three of the 54 superintendents provided their district's code on the survey. MEAP results for 2011–12, 2012–13, and 2013–14, were obtained from Michigan Department of Education publicly available databases. The percentages of students who scored proficient or advanced on the mathematics and reading MEAP in the reporting school districts were summarized using descriptive statistics. Table 8 presents results of this analysis.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics – Percent (%) Proficient on MEAP Mathematics and Reading Tests

					Range	
MEAP Test	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*Mdn*	Minimum	Maximum
2011-12 Mathematics	33	38.02	15.28	36.67	5.00	71.17
2011-12 Reading	33	66.09	14.87	66.83	5.00	90.00
2012-13 Mathematics	33	43.25	15.63	41.70	5.00	75.47
2012-13 Reading	33	68.24	14.71	69.15	5.00	89.88
2013-14 Mathematics	33	44.91	16.92	46.38	5.00	80.47
2013-14 Reading	33	70.54	15.09	71.43	5.00	92.15

The percent of students scoring proficient on the MEAP reading tests were higher in all years than the percent of students scoring proficient on the mathematics tests. However, the scores for both tests appear to be improving across the three years.

Research Question

Is there a relationship between servant leadership style of Michigan public school superintendents and their districts' academic achievement as defined by the percentage of students who scored proficient on the MEAP Reading and Math tests for Grades 3 to 8?

H_1: There will be a relationship between Michigan public school superintendents who practice servant leadership and their districts' academic success as measured by the percentage of proficient students in Grades 3 through 8 on the MEAP Reading and Math tests.

H_0: There will be no statistical significance between Michigan public school superintendents who practice servant leadership and their districts' academic success as measured by the percentage of proficient students in Grades 3 through 8 on the MEAP Reading and Math tests.

To test this hypothesis, the mean percentage of students scoring proficient on the MEAP reading and mathematics tests for the three years from school years 2011–12 through 2013–14 were correlated with the total score and subscale scores on the SLPR using Pearson's product–moment correlations. Table 9 shows results of this analysis.

Table 9

Pearson Product Moment Correlations – Servant Leadership Profile by Percent of Students Scoring Proficient on MEAP Reading and Mathematics (2011-12 to 2013-13; N = 33)

	Percentage of Students Scoring Proficient on MEAP Reading and Mathematics											
	2011-2012				2012-2013				2013-2014			
Servant Leadership Profile	Mathematics		Reading		Mathematics		Reading		Mathematics		Reading	
	r	*p*	*r*	*p*	*r*	*p*	*r*	*p*	*r*	*p*	*r*	*p*
Servant Leadership	.07	.692	.08	.653	.09	.609	.08	.643	.17	.358	.08	.646
Empowering and developing others	.13	.479	.19	.281	.15	.410	.20	.261	.56	.195	.21	.235
Power and pride	**-.60**	**<.001**	**-.55**	**.001**	**-.62**	**<.001**	**-.58**	**<001**	**-.61**	**<.001**	**-.60**	**<.001**
Serving others	.17	.344	.05	.800	.18	.307	.06	.727	.18	.315	.08	.678
Open participatory leadership	**.43**	**.013**	**.36**	**.037**	**.45**	**.008**	**.37**	**.032**	**.46**	**.008**	**.37**	**.035**
Inspiring leadership	.24	.188	.22	.211	.28	.116	.23	.191	.34	.051	.23	.195
Visionary leadership	.03	.885	.06	.740	.02	.912	.07	.715	.19	.281	.09	.626
Courageous leadership	**.39**	**.024**	**.42**	**.015**	**.42**	**.015**	**.43**	**.013**	**.41**	**.018**	**.41**	**.018**

Note: Correlations that are bolded are statistically significant.

When the total scores on the SLPR inventory were correlated with the percentage of students who were proficient on MEAP reading and mathematics tests for the three years, the results were not statistically significant. This finding indicated that servant leadership, when considered holistically, was not affecting student outcomes on the MEAP.

When the seven subscales were considered separately, statistically significant correlations were obtained between three subscales (power and pride, open participatory leadership, and courageous leadership) and the percentage of students scoring proficient on the MEAP mathematics and reading tests for the three years. The correlations between power and pride and the 2011–12 percentage proficient in mathematics ($r = -.60$, $p < .001$) and reading ($r = -.55$, $p = .001$), 2012–13 percentage proficient in mathematics ($r = -.62$, $p < .001$) and reading ($r = -.58$, $p < .001$), and 2013–14 percentage proficient in mathematics ($r = -.61$, $p < .001$) and reading ($r = -.60$, $p < .001$) were all statistically significant. The negative correlations provide evidence that superintendents who use power and pride as a leadership style tend to have lower percentages of students scoring proficient on the MEAP mathematics and reading tests.

The correlations between open participation leadership and the 2011–12 proficiency in mathematics ($r = .43$, $p = .013$) and reading ($r = .36$, $p = .037$), 2012–13 proficiency in mathematics ($r = .45$, $p = .008$) and reading ($r = .37$, $p = .032$), and 2013–14 proficiency in mathematics ($r = 46$, $p = .008$) and reading ($r = .37$, $p = .035$) were each statistically significant as well. The positive correlations indicate that superintendents who exhibit an open participatory leadership are more likely to have higher percentages of students scoring proficient on MEAP mathematics and reading tests.

Last, when the scores for courageous leadership were correlated with MEAP mathematics and reading tests for the three years, the results were also statistically significant: 2011–12 mathematics ($r = .39$, $p = .024$) and reading ($r = .42$, $p = .015$), 2012–13 mathematics ($r = .42$, $p = .015$) and reading ($r = .43$, $p = .013$), and 2013–2014 mathematics ($r = .41$, $p = .018$) and reading ($r = .41$, $p = .018$). The positive correlations provide support that superintendents who use courageous leadership are more likely to have a higher percentage of students scoring proficient on the MEAP mathematics and reading tests.

Correlations between the other subscales and the percentage of students scoring proficient on the MEAP mathematics and reading tests were not statistically significant, indicating that the use of these leadership styles is not influencing MEAP outcomes.

Ancillary Findings

To further explore the use of servant leadership among superintendents, t-tests for two independent samples were used to determine if superintendents who are new to the position (serving 2 to 3 years) differ from those with more experience (serving 4 years or more) on the seven subscales measuring servant leadership (see Table 10).

Table 10

T-Tests for Two Independent Samples – Servant Leadership Profile by Length of Time as a Superintendent

Subscale	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*DF*	*t*	Sig
Empowering and developing others						
2 to 3 years	38	6.21	.49	51	1.47	.148
4 or more years	15	5.98	.60			
Power and pride						
2 to 3 years	38	2.26	.86	51	-.66	.514
4 or more years	15	2.45	1.14			
Serving others						
2 to 3 years	38	6.30	.36	51	.64	.522
4 or more years	15	6.22	.50			
Open participatory leadership						
2 to 3 years	38	6.56	.37	51	2.22	.031
4 or more years	15	6.26	.59			
Inspiring leadership						
2 to 3 years	38	6.01	.57	51	2.29	.026
4 or more years	15	5.61	.61			
Visionary leadership						
2 to 3 years	38	6.17	.61	51	1.21	.231
4 or more years	15	5.96	.50			
Courageous leadership						
2 to 3 years	38	6.63	.39	51	1.88	.066
4 or more years	15	6.35	.69			

Two subscales, open participatory leadership and inspiring leadership, differed significantly between superintendents who had been in their positions for 2 to 3 years and those who had been in their positions for 4 years or more. Superintendents with 2 to 3 years of experience (M = 6.56, SD = .37) had higher scores for open participatory leadership than superintendents with 4 or more years (M = 6.26, SD = .59), t (51) = 2.22, p = .031.

Superintendents with 2 to 3 years of experience (*M* = 6.01, *SD* = .57) also had significantly higher scores for inspiring leadership than superintendents with 4 years or more (*M* = 5.61, *SD* = .61), $t(51) = 2.29$, $p = .026$. The remaining subscales did not differ significantly relative to the number of years that the superintendents had been in their positions.

In addition to comparing total years of superintendent experience with the SL subscales, the number of years the superintendents had served in their current school districts was examined. The scores for the seven subscales measuring SL were compared between superintendents with 2 to 3 years in their current school district and those with 4 years or more in their current school district. The results are displayed in Table 11.

Table 11

T-Tests for Two Independent Samples – Servant Leadership Profile by Length of Time as a Superintendent in Current Position

Subscale	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*DF*	*t*	Sig
Empowering and developing others						
2 to 3 years	32	6.24	.52	51	1.69	.097
4 or more years	21	5.99	.51			
Power and pride						
2 to 3 years	32	2.48	.96	51	1.58	.121
4 or more years	21	2.07	.87			
Serving others						
2 to 3 years	32	6.35	.33	51	1.69	.098
4 or more years	21	6.17	.43			
Open participatory leadership						
2 to 3 years	32	6.63	.33	51	3.16	.003
4 or more years	21	6.25	.54			
Inspiring leadership						
2 to 3 years	32	6.05	.57	51	2.42	.019
4 or more years	21	5.66	.58			
Visionary leadership						

2 to 3 years	32	6.15	.64	51	.56	.574
4 or more years	21	6.06	.49			
Courageous leadership						
2 to 3 years	32	6.61	.39	51	1.18	.244
4 or more years	21	6.45	.63			

Two subscales, open participatory leadership and inspiring leadership, differed between the superintendents who had been in their current school districts for 2 to 3 years and those with 4 years or more in their current school district. The comparison of superintendents with 2 to 3 years in their current school district (M = 6.63, SD = .33) on open participatory leadership and those with 4 years or more in their current school district (M = 6.25, SD = .54) was statistically significant, $t(51) = 3.16$, $p = .003$. For the subscale inspiring leadership, superintendents who had been in their current school district for 2 to 3 years (M = 6.05, SD = .57) had significantly higher scores than superintendents who had 4 years or more in their current school districts (M = 5.66, SD = .58), $t(51) = 2.42$, $p = .019$. The remaining subscales did not differ significantly between superintendents who had been in their current school districts for 2 to 3 years and those with 4 or more years in their current school districts.

The superintendents' scores on the seven subscales measuring SL by geographic location of the school districts were compared using t-tests for independent samples. The geographic locations were grouped into urban, suburban and rural. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 12.

Table 12

T-Tests for Two Independent Samples – Servant Leadership Profile by Geographic Location of the School District

Subscale	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*DF*	*t*	Sig
Empowering and developing others						
Urban–Suburban	27	6.26	.41	50	1.97	.055
Rural	25	5.98	.59			
Power and pride						
Urban–Suburban	27	2.12	.98	50	-1.71	.093
Rural	25	2.56	.86			
Serving others						
Urban–Suburban	27	6.24	.37	50	-.63	.529
Rural	25	6.31	.43			
Open participatory leadership						
Urban–Suburban	27	6.57	.36	50	1.70	.095
Rural	25	6.36	.53			
Inspiring leadership						
Urban–Suburban	27	6.00	.54	50	1.41	.166
Rural	25	5.77	.64			
Visionary leadership						
Urban–Suburban	27	6.25	.51	50	2.13	.038
Rural	25	5.93	.61			
Courageous leadership						
Urban–Suburban	27	6.61	.42	50	1.15	.257
Rural	25	6.46	.57			

One subscale, visionary leadership, differed significantly between superintendents working in urban–suburban school districts ($M = 6.25$, $SD = .51$) and those working in rural school districts ($M = 5.93$, $SD = .61$), $t(50) = 2.13$, $p = .038$. The remaining subscales did not differ between superintendents in urban–suburban school districts and those in rural school districts.

Using t-tests for two independent samples, MEAP mathematics and reading test scores for the three years of the study were compared between superintendents who had been in their positions for 2 to 3 years and those who had been superintendents for 4 years or more. Table 13 displays analysis results.

Table 13

T-Tests for Two Independent Samples – Test Results by Years as a Superintendent

Subscale	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*DF*	*t*	Sig
Mathematics (2011-2012)						
2 to 3 years	23	42.60	13.28	31	2.90	.007
4 or more years	10	27.47	14.77			
Reading (2011-2012)						
2 to 3 years	23	70.12	9.34	31	2.56	.016
4 or more years	10	56.82	20.87			
Mathematics (2012-2013)						
2 to 3 years	23	47.77	13.02	31	2.77	.009
4 or more years	10	32.85	16.77			
Reading (2012-2013)						
2 to 3 years	23	72.15	8.48	31	2.50	.018
4 or more years	10	59.24	21.55			
Mathematics (2013-2014)						
2 to 3 years	23	50.04	13.48	31	2.94	.006
4 or more years	10	33.12	18.76			
Reading (2013-2014)						
2 to 3 years	23	73.89	8.35	31	2.03	.052
4 or more years	10	62.84	23.34			

The differences in percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on MEAP mathematics and reading tests differed between superintendents with 2 to 3 years of experience and those with 4 or more years of experience. For each of the school years, the superintendents who had less experience served in school districts with higher mean percentages than those who had more experience. The comparison of the percentage of students scoring proficient on the mathematics MEAP test for the 2011–2012 academic year was statistically significant, $t(31) = 2.90$, $p = .007$. Also, superintendents with 2 to 3 years of experience were in districts with higher mean percentages of students scoring proficient on mathematics MEAP tests ($M = 42.60$, $SD = 13.28$) than superintendents with 4 or more years of experience ($M = 27.47$, $SD = 14.77$).

Similarly, the superintendents' years in their present district (2 to 3 years and 4 or more years) was used as the independent variable in a t-test for two samples. The dependent variables were MEAP reading and mathematics test results for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, and 2013–2014 academic years. See Table 14 for the results.

Table 14

T-Tests for Two Independent Samples – Test Results by Years in Present School District

Subscale	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*DF*	*t*	Sig
Mathematics (2011-2012)						
2 to 3 years	19	41.32	12.74	31	1.47	.151
4 or more years	14	33.54	17.67			
Reading (2011-2012)						
2 to 3 years	19	68.92	9.97	31	1.29	.208
4 or more years	14	62.25	19.46			
Mathematics (2012-2013)						
2 to 3 years	19	47.18	12.55	31	1.74	.093
4 or more years	14	37.91	18.17			
Reading (2012-2013)						
2 to 3 years	19	71.34	8.87	31	1.43	.162
4 or more years	14	64.03	19.76			
Mathematics (2013-2014)						
2 to 3 years	19	50.18	13.13	31	2.21	.035
4 or more years	14	37.76	19.23			
Reading (2013-2014)						
2 to 3 years	19	73.07	8.76	31	1.13	.269
4 or more years	14	67.11	20.79			

When the percentages of students scoring proficient was compared between the superintendents who had been in their positions for 2 to 3 years with those who had been for 4 or more years, one statistically significant result was obtained: Superintendents who had been in their positions for 2 to 3 years (M = 50.18, SD = 13.13) had significantly higher percentages of students scoring proficient on the mathematics test for the year 2013-2014 than superintendents who had been in their current school districts for at least 4 years (M = 37.76, SD = 19.23), $t(31) = 2.21$, $p = .035$. The remaining comparisons were not

statistically significant, indicating that tenure in their current position was not contributing to the significant difference.

Summary

This study examined the relationship between servant leadership style of Michigan superintendents of public school districts and their districts' academic success as measured by overall student proficiency on the MEAP reading and math tests for Grades 3 through 8. The majority of the 54 superintendents completing the survey was male and had been superintendents for more than four years. Most of the school districts were located in rural (n = 25, 48.1%) or suburban (n = 23, 44.2%) areas. Superintendents in small school districts of less than 5,000 students were the majority of the sample.

The research question was concerned with the relationship between the superintendents' servant leadership style and the MEAP reading and mathematics test scores from the 2011–12 through the 2013–14 academic years. Statistically significant correlations were found between each of the tests over the three years and the SL subscales of power and pride, open participatory leadership, and courageous leadership. The relationships between the percentage of students scoring proficient and the power and pride subscale were in a negative direction, indicating that superintendents who were more likely to demonstrate this type of servant leadership were in school districts with lower percentages of students scoring proficient. Open participatory leadership and courageous leadership styles were associated with higher performance on the MEAP reading and mathematics tests.

The seven subscales measuring servant leadership styles were compared between superintendents who had been superintendents for 2 to 3 years and those with 4 or more years of experience in the role. Statistically significant differences were found for open

participatory leadership and inspiring leadership. Participants who had been superintendents for 2 to 3 years had significantly higher scores for both open participatory leadership and inspiring leadership than those who had been superintendents for 4 or more years. Superintendents with 2 to 3 years of serving in their current school districts also had significantly higher scores for both open participatory leadership and inspiring leadership than those with at least 4 or more years in their current school districts.

When servant leadership subscale scores were compared by geographic location of the school district, one statistically significant difference was noted. Superintendents in urban–suburban school districts had significantly higher scores for visionary leadership than superintendents in rural school districts.

Additional analyses were conducted to compare MEAP mathematics and reading test scores between superintendents who had 2 to 3 years of experience and those with 4 years or more of experience. Statistically significant differences were found for all tests scores, except reading for the 2013–2014 academic year. In each instance, superintendents who had been in their positions for 2 to 3 years were leading school districts with greater percentages of students scoring proficient than superintendents who had been in their positions for a minimum of 4 years. In contrast to the findings for total length of time as a superintendent, the comparison of the percentages of students scoring proficient on the MEAP reading and mathematics tests by length of time in their present positions, the results were not statistically significant. While superintendents in their present school districts for 2 to 3 years had higher percentages of students scoring proficient on the tests than the superintendents with 4 or more years, the results were not statistically significant.

This study has yielded much data and results from testing the sample group as well as a variety of subsample groups along many parameters. A discussion of the findings, along with implications, limitations, and recommendations for further research is covered in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5

Conclusions, Implications, Recommendations, and Summary

This chapter summarizes the data and research from this study, which examined the relationship between servant leadership style of Michigan public school superintendents and its impact on academic achievement as shown by student proficiency in Math and Reading for Grades 3 through 8 on the MEAP test. Chapter 5 will also include insights from previous research on SL, recommendations, and implications for further study of this topic as it pertains to education.

Effective, successful, and dynamic leadership is a trait that school district leaders strive to attain even though the specific combination of characteristics that enables individuals to become successful as leaders proves to be difficult to describe. "The organizations that will truly excel in the future will be the organizations that discover how to tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels in an organization." (Grogan, 2013, p.9)

There is a dire need to search for more effective leadership styles and models for school leaders. Although superintendent leadership has been researched, there are superintendents throughout the nation who rely on management and competitive attitudes. There has been research about leadership styles and superintendents, but little has been studied about superintendents who consciously choose to be servant leaders. Jaworski (1998) states:

> Leadership is all about the reliance of human possibilities. One of the central requirements is the capacity to inspire the followers to help them become focused

> and operating at the peak of their performance ability. It is imperative that leaders acknowledge the belief that people matter and their input is valued. (p.66)

Many leadership styles described in literature have components of servant leadership, yet none have defined servant leadership like Greenleaf's (1977) initial definition. Servant leadership is the natural feeling that one has of desiring to serve others. It seeks to develop individuals who ensure that others' needs are met and advocates a group-oriented approach to decision making as a means of strengthening institutions and improving society (p. 13). Livovich (1999) expands this concept of servant leadership into the world of education by commenting on it use by the superintendency:

> Superintendents practicing SL have abandoned competitive attitudes and replaced them in collegial decision making models where the views of all involved participants are acknowledged and valued. Superintendents interested in developing the full potential in those with whom they work appeared to have embraced many of the elements of servant leadership. Servant leadership appears to have the potential of improving the total school environment in which educators live and serve. (p. 42)

Leadership styles vary from person to person, capturing through actions what one believes, what one desires to achieve, and how one will achieve it. As Executive Director of the Greenleaf Center, Spears (1995) compiled 10 characteristics that assist in identifying leaders who embrace the philosophy of SL. These characteristics are listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of others, and building community. Essentially, this people-centered approach to leadership can positively affect the relationship of the individuals, developed around a

common purpose and goal, ultimately changing factors in schools for increased student achievement.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the practice of servant leadership style by Michigan public school superintendents and its impact on academic achievement as shown by student proficiency in MEAP Math and Reading tests for Grades 3 through 8.

An electronic survey was sent through Google form via email to 271 Michigan public school superintendents. Of the 271, fifty-four superintendents responded to Page and Wong's (2003) Servant Leadership Profile Revised Instrument (SLPR), a 62-question survey including 7 demographic questions created by the researcher. The survey contained 7 subscale categories: empowering and developing others, power and pride, serving others, open participatory leadership, inspiring leadership, visionary leadership, and courageous leadership. These subscales were used to attempt to characterize individuals as SL through self-reporting. The survey results were compared to 3 years of MEAP proficient scores in Reading and Math for Grades 3 to 8 to identify a correlation between student achievement and higher scores on the SLPR questionnaire.

The data gathered were statistically analyzed to draw conclusions, develop recommendations for future studies, and present implications for personal and professional development for current and aspiring public school superintendents. This chapter details conclusions, implications of the study, recommendations for future study, and summarizes the research.

Conclusions

The conclusions for this study were based on data analysis outlined in Chapter 4. The analyses of the data were the results of 54 superintendents of 271 superintendents surveyed with the 62-question SLP survey, amended with 7 demographic questions created by the researcher. Responses to the survey were made by participating superintendents self-evaluating their leadership styles.

The research findings indicated that servant leadership, when considered holistically, was not affecting student outcomes on the MEAP. The total scores on the SLP inventory were correlated with the percentage of the proficient students on the MEAP reading and mathematics tests over three years, and there was no statistical significance. Yet, the three subscales of power and pride, open participatory leadership, and courageous leadership had statistically significant correlations with the percentage of students scoring proficient on the MEAP math and reading for the three years. The negative correlation between power and pride and student achievement indicated that superintendents who used power and pride as a leadership style tend to have lower percentage of proficient students. Superintendents with positive correlations between open participatory leadership and courageous leadership styles and student achievement had higher percentages of proficient students.

Additionally, superintendents with 2 to 3 years of experience had higher scores for open participatory leadership and inspiring leadership than superintendents with 4 or more years. Superintendents with 2 to 3 years of service in their current school districts had significantly higher scores than superintendents who had at least 4 years in their current districts.

Significance of the Study

As the role of the superintendent has evolved, accountability for poor standardized assessments increases, and the rise of social and emotional issues rapidly infiltrate the school population, it behooves district leadership to transition to another style of leading. Superintendents can no longer demand and operate in a top-down bureaucracy. The conversation on how to lead must transition to collaborative discussions among individuals within the organizations, leveraging talent and empowering people to be successful (Parris & Peachey, 2013).

Livovich (1999) described public schools at the time by stating, "The structure was bureaucratic in nature and had clean lines of authority" (p. X). Superintendents became known as "expert managers" with that image continuing into the 1980s (p. 70). With SL practices, people can begin to move student achievement towards a positive trend.

Under business model research, Jim Collins (2001) suggested that great leaders are Level 5. These individuals build "enduring greatness through a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will" (pp. 20–21). A servant leader embraces people building and development— giving care and support while upholding the expectations of exemplary performance.

Characteristics of a practitioner of servant leader include the ability to listen receptively to what others have to say, highly developed powers of persuasion in contrast to positional authority, commitment to building community in the workplace, and commitment to the growth of employees through the belief that people have an intrinsic value beyond their contribution or works. This mindset of empowerment motivates people to work

toward a goal that will yield sustainability, capacity in individuals, and success for the organization.

Limitations

The number of participants for this study was relatively small and was based on their status as a superintendent in a public school district for a minimum of two years. The study was also limited to the responses of those superintendents who voluntarily participated. In addition, the study was geographically limited to one state, Michigan. Finally, the responses were self-reported and were a reflection of self-assessments, experiences, and personal philosophies of the participants.

Implications

In his foreward to Spears' book titled *Reflections on Leadership* (1995), De Pree asks:

> Is servant-leadership pertinent? Is it essential to our task? I believe it is. And I believe there is a building momentum for enlightened leadership in the for-profit world, the non-profit sector, and in many areas of government today. In a number of areas, it has the mark of a movement (p. ix).

This study provided information for reflection of current and aspiring superintendents as well as school boards regarding the type of leader to run a school district. Businesses, the community, politicians are looking for new leadership models and methods to shift educational systems to systems that produce academic success as measured by standardized assessments. Just as practitioners of SL have influenced the business communities, so has SL influenced education (Hunter, 2004).

The research findings indicated that servant leadership, when considered holistically, was not affecting student outcomes on the MEAP. Yet, superintendents desiring to affect student achievement would benefit from becoming a student of SL. Data from this study supports that districts with proficiency in MEAP math and reading have superintendents that

reflect 3 of the 7 subscales of the survey; power and pride, open participatory and courageous leadership. Despite that 3 of the 7 subscales were significantly significant, the researcher accepts the hypothesis that there is a relationship between student achievement and servant leadership style of Michigan superintendents. Whereas the 10 subscales don't have to be practiced or exhibited, the three statistically significant characteristics that attributed to positive gains to move academic achievement and that have affected the academic culture of the district should become encompassed within the superintendent's leadership. Superintendents control the organizational climate. The vision and values of the superintendents directly influences the members of the organization and is demonstrated through their actions and interactions with each other, the community and the students.

Additionally, while superintendents in their present school districts for 2 to 3 years had a higher percentage of students scoring proficient on the tests than the superintendents with 4 or more years, the results were not statistically significant. The number of years as a superintendent for those that exhibited SL characteristics had no significant impact on student proficiency. Superintendents new to their district have little, if any relational connections. Novice superintendents are eager to establish their vision and define their role. Their interaction with members of the organization is more frequent as foundational relationships and processes are created. Tenured superintendents are established and have less of a need to establish networks. Their efforts and vision has become embedded within the organization. McLouglin & Talbert (2003) describe the trust that can exist between district administration and teachers. "Building teachers' trust in district administrators' commitment and ability to support their learning and change is key to an effective district instructional support role." (p. 18) This culture flourishes and becomes a part of the

members of the organization as a result of the foundational networks established in the early years of the veteran superintendent's tenure. The novice superintendent's entry into their district must be strategic as they interact with their staff. Their leadership must be driven by a collaborative spirit and shared decision-making versus a top down managerial style. Their approach must seek support and empower the members of the organization in order to facilitate change and results.

The study reported that Power and Pride subscale was statistically significant, negatively. This negative significance implies that superintendents who use the characteristics of Power and Pride to lead the organization will have minimal, if any, academic progress. Members of the organization under such leadership simply follow orders and are not vested in the goals of the organization. These members may operate out of fear of retaliation for not complying with assigned tasks. There will be no ownership of the work, no personal sense of accomplishments. Power and Pride leadership doesn't allow for professional growth, creativity or capacity building of the workers.

Participatory and Courageous leadership were statistically significant in the study. Academic proficiency on the MEAP in Reading and Math for grades 3 – 8 was positively correlated with these subscales. Superintendents who demonstrate and practice these characteristics experience more output and energy from the organization members. These superintendents value their members. "There is a strong relationship between the district the school in that sites are starting to trust and realize that the central office is there to be of help to them. . . and that their opinions are important." (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2003, p. 18). They provide opportunities for people to feel a part of the process. Their opinion and voices are heard. Essentially, the superintendent who exhibits these characteristics creates an

environment that allows members to not be afraid to take risks and to try new things. An empowered member is motivated to succeed because they believe their input is valuable and will move the organization forward. Members will exercise leadership and ownership of their actions under these SL characteristics.

As current and aspiring superintendents strive to meet goals set by the public, government and school boards relative to student achievement, the leadership style practiced should be analyzed. 3 of the 7 SL traits emerged from the study were statistically significant. Superintendents should develop the traits of open participatory and courageous leadership. It would behoove superintendents to hone on these characteristics to empower members of their organization to reach full, personal potential and organizational goals.

The pathway to becoming a practitioner of SL begins with a self-inventory of leadership behavior as well as an inventory of the individuals within the organization amongst the leadership team. Using the SL survey, a superintendent can analyze their leadership and the individuals in the organization regarding their perception and understanding of SL.

The data from the survey will provide information on how leadership is perceived. The superintendent can use this assessment to begin the development of an environment that will support and enable SL to thrive. Superintendents can build an infrastructure that will create a comfortable space for individuals to collectively and individually have a voice regarding the development of the organization. Ideas are birthed in a punitive free environment. Creativity and innovation will emerge. Free flowing ideas and thoughts will be shared by the members of the organization as a desire to building a better organization.

From dialogue, members are engaged in the transformation process. The role of the leader is not to come up with all great ideas. The role of a leader is to create an environment in which great ideas can happen (Senek, 2009). Organizational members feel vested and take on additional roles and responsibility. A superintendent exercising these traits has created this environment where there are opportunities for growth, leadership and building capacity within members who could soon begin to be practitioners of SL.

It should also be noted that superintendents in urban/suburban school districts had significantly higher scores for visionary leadership than superintendents in rural school districts. This could be contributed to a variety of factors; influenced by politics, economics and diverse populations served in urban districts. The NCPEA International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation reports that

> . . . the dilemmas of today's superintendents as following: revenue and expenditure limitations; increasingly diverse and complex students and families; high public expectations and accountability for student achievement; rapid advances in knowledge and technology; business and political concerns about public education; international competition in education; more legal and law enforcement issues; violence, racism, and substance abuse; choice and vouchers; growing state control of education; increases in student enrollment; and erosion of public confidence and common agreement about public education. (p. 103-104).

The presence of these factors is more dominant as the number of schools, students, staff and community population increases.

Servant leadership is not a learned style but is intrinsically embedded within the individual. Servant leadership traits can be developed but not specifically taught (Hunter, 2004). As school boards seek leaders to transform districts into academically successful organizations, search criteria should reflect evidence of servant leadership.

Superintendents are crucial to student academic achievement. Although not directly teaching or instructing students, the superintendent's leadership style creates a path for members of the organizations to succeed. The leadership style can hinder progress, create a disconnection between members and the vision of the district, suppress creativity and collaboration, ultimately, resulting in total disengagement of the staff. However, superintendents who are servant leaders will encourage staff to work towards their overall district goals, empower staff to take ownership of actions, develop and strengthen their talents that will be used to move achievement forward.

Recommendations

As society, schools, and the student learner have evolved, so has the need for school leadership to evolve. Leaders who practice servant leadership and its characteristics have been prominent in the business sector for several years. This type of leadership is now surfacing in education. Servant leaders provide an answer to the need for leadership that is representative to both the situation and the people involved. Becoming a servant leader involves a personal choice. The idea of service cannot be dictated, but it can be modeled.

Servant leadership should be included in the administrative training dialogue that occurs with aspiring superintendents. The concept of servant leadership may become one aspect of the leadership style of educational leaders. Presenting the philosophy of servant leadership to classes of aspiring administrators provides a view of leadership that differs

from other leadership theories. This introduction to servant leadership qualities would be much appreciated because the behaviors are the same skills needed by effective administrators: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. Moreover, open dialogue about the leadership style will minimize the perception that practicing servant leadership is ineffective and weak as a leadership style.

Results of the surveys from participants demonstrated that the motivation for servant leadership is unique and that servant leaders become leaders who choose to make serving others a priority. Case studies of servant leaders could further provide insight to develop training from their life experiences and successes, which could lead to the development of other exemplary servant leaders.

The reverse possibility would be to study the lives of effective educational leaders and to analyze if they exhibit servant leadership qualities. The study could focus on the environment in which these leaders work with special attention to the challenges they face and the support they receive. This study should include dialogue with individuals in the districts and organizations in which they serve.

It has also been concluded that females tend to be more collaborative with decision making, which relates to servant leadership characteristics (Brunner, 1999; Spears, 1995). There should also be gender-based research on whether males or females are more servant leader-like. In a male-dominated profession, this research, if conducted in a larger geographical area generating a larger sample, can provide information on the type of superintendent that chooses to be a servant leader. This study can also include age of and

highest degree attained by participants to add to the research on the type of individual that is likely to be more of a servant leader.

Summary

Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) studied the effects of leadership on student achievement over 30 consecutive years. They claim that their analyses showed a relationship between leadership practices and student performance. During the study, researchers identified 21 specific leadership responsibilities that correlated with student achievement. Just as Waters et al. (2003) identified leadership behaviors, Posner and Kouzes (1998) identified the five fundamental leadership practices found. These five practices are (1) a sense of knowing when to challenge the process; (2) the capacity to inspire a shared vision; (3) an ability to enable others to act; (4) the stamina to consistently model the way; and (5) the spiritual connection to encourage the heart. Central to each skill must be a collaborative spirit when working with stakeholders. Effective leaders cultivate relationships and empower people in organizations to accomplish extraordinary things. Through this study it has become evident that those superintendents who practice servant leadership affect student achievement through the innate desire to serve others and through creating a culture that fosters this opportunity.

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Table 1

Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium Standards for All School Administrators

Standard	Content
1	A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.
2	A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
3	A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
4	A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
5	A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
6	A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

Note. From *The School Superintendent: Theory, Practice, and Cases* by Theodore J. Kowalski, 2006, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Copyright 2006 by Sage Publications, Inc.

Table 2

Comparison of Attributes of Transformational Leadership and Servant Leadership

Transformational Leadership	Servant Leadership
Idealized (Charismatic) Influence Vision Trust Respect Risk –Sharing Integrity Modeling	Influence Vision Trust Credibility and Competence Delegation Honesty and Integrity Modeling and Visibility Service
Inspirational Motivation Commitment to Goals Communication Enthusiasm	Stewardship Communication
Intellectual Stimulation Rationality Problem Solving	Persuasion Pioneering
Individualized Consideration Personal Attention Mentoring Listening Empowerment	Appreciation of Others Encouragement Teaching Listening Empowerment

Table 3

A Conceptual Framework for Measuring Servant Leadership

I. Character-Orientation (Being: What kind of person is the leader?)

Concerned with cultivating a servant's attitude, focusing on the leader's values, credibility, and motive.

- Integrity
- Humility
- Servanthood

II. People-Orientation (Relating: How does the leader relate to others?)

Concerned with developing human resources, focusing on the leader's relationship with people and his or her commitment to develop others.

- Caring for others
- Empowering others
- Developing others

III. Task -Orientation (Doing: What does the leader do?)

Concerned with achieving productivity and success, focusing on the leader's tasks and skills necessary for success.

- Visioning
- Goal setting
- Leading

IV. Process-Orientation (Organizing: How does the leader influence organizational processes?)

Concerned with increasing the efficiency of the organization, focusing the leader's ability to model and developing a flexible, efficient and open system.

- Modeling
- Team building
- Shared decision making

Note. From *Servant Leadership: An Opponent Process Model* by Paul T. P. Wong and Don Page, October 2003, Servant Leadership Roundtable.

Table 4

A Summary of Overall Characteristics and Responses of Initial Survey Participants

Personal Characteristics	*n*	%
Type of School District		
K – 12	56	
No response	2	
Geographic Area of District		
Suburban	23	42.6
Rural	25	46.3
Urban	4	7.4
Size of District		
Small (under 5,000)	43	79.6
Mid-size (5,001 – 10,000)	5	9.3
Large (10,001 – 15,000)	2	3.7
Very large (15,001 +)	3	5.6
Number of Years as a Superintendent		
Four years or more	38	70.4
Three years	11	20.4
Two years	4	7.4
Years Served in Current District		
Fourth year or more	32	59.3
Third year	13	24.1
Second year	8	14.8

Table 15

Survey Responses of Michigan Superintendents to Servant Leadership Profile Survey

Characteristics of Superintendent and District	*N*	Total
Female	54	15
Male	54	39
Rural	54	25
Urban	54	23
Surburban	54	4
Very large districts (15,001 and larger)	54	3
Large population (10,001 – 15,000)	54	2
Mid-size population (5,001 – 10,000)	54	5
Small population (under 5000)	54	43
4 years or more as superintendent	54	38
3 years as a superintendent	54	11
2 years as a superintendent	54	4
Nonresponders to years	54	1

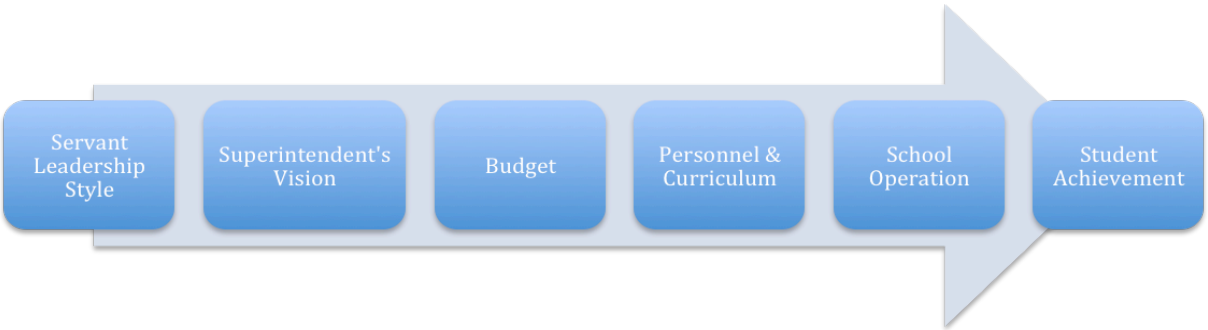

Figure 1. Conceptual framework for student achievement through servant leadership style as practiced by Michigan public school superintendents.

Appendix A

Permission Granted to Use Servant Leadership Profile Survey

Subject: Re: DrPaulWong.com: Use of Servant Leadership Profile Survey
From: Paul TP Wong (dr.paul.wong@gmail.com)
To: pearsonantoinette@yahoo.com;
Date: Monday, November 5, 2012 3:00 PM

Hi Antoinette,

You have my permission to use the Revised Servant Leadership Profile for your research. I have attached a copy to this e-mail. I would be interested in a copy of your findings once your study is complete.

Kind regards,

Paul Wong
www.drpaulwong.com

On Sun, Nov 4, 2012 at 10:31 PM, Antoinette Pearson <pearsonantoinette@yahoo.com> wrote:
This is an enquiry e-mail via http://www.drpaulwong.com/ from:
Antoinette Pearson <pearsonantoinette@yahoo.com>

Dr. Wong,

I am a doctoral candidate student at Eastern Michigan University. I am in the process of writing my proposal on the topic of Urban Public School Superintendents in Michigan and Servant Leadership.

I want to use The Servant Leadership Profile Survey designed by you and Dr. Page for my research. It is my belief that more often than not Servant Leadership is a leadership style used. I am looking to see what type of superintendent is more likely to use the servant leadership style as a means to address the academic achievement gap.

If you have any questions please feel free to email me.

Appendix B

Superintendent Demographic Survey and Servant Leadership Profile Survey (Page and Wong)

PART A: SUPERINTENDENT DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY AND THE SERVANT LEADERSHIP PROFILE REVISED SURVEY

Dr. D. Page and Dr. P. Wong, Authors

Instructions: This survey is for research purposes only. All information is confidential and once the study is completed and defended, the surveys will be destroyed. There are a total of 69 questions.

1. Gender

   Female _____ Male _____

2. District Code (used for MEAP testing): _____

3. Type of school district served:

   1 – K – 5 district

   2 – K – 8 district

   3 – K – 12 district

   4 – Other, please specify _____

4. The geographic area your district includes is considered to be

   1 – Urban

   2 – Suburban

   3 – Rural

5. The size of your school district is

   1 – Small (under 5000)

   2 – Mid –Size (5001 – 10,000)

   3 – Large (10,001 – 15,000)

4 – Very Large (15,001 +)

6. The total number of years as a superintendent. This is my

1 – First year as a superintendent

2 – Second year as a superintendent

3 – Third year as a superintendent

4 – Fourth or more year as a superintendent

7. The number of years served in your current district as the superintendent.

1 – First year in the district

2 – Second year in the district

3 – Third year in the district

4 – Fourth or more in the district

PART B

Servant Leadership Profile - Revised

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Leadership matters a great deal in the success or failure of any organization. This instrument was designed to measure both positive and negative leadership characteristics.

Please use the following scale to indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements in describing your own attitudes and practices as a leader. If you have not held any leadership position in an organization, then answer the questions as if you were in a position of authority and responsibility. There are no right or wrong answers. Simply rate each question in terms of what you really believe or normally do in leadership situations.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Undecided			Strongly Agree
(SD)						(SA)

For example, if you strongly agree, you may circle 7. If you mildly disagree, you may circle 3. If you are undecided, circle 4, but use this category sparingly.

1. To inspire team spirit, I communicate enthusiasm and confidence.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. I listen actively and receptively to what others have to say, even when they disagree with me.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. I practice plain talking – I mean what I say, and say what I mean.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. I always keep my promises and commitments to others.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. I grant all my workers a fair amount of responsibility and latitude in carrying out their tasks.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. I am genuine and honest with people, even when such transparency is politically unwise.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. I am willing to accept other people's ideas whenever they are better than mine.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. I promote tolerance, kindness, and honesty in the work place.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. To be a leader, I should be front and center in every function in which I am involved.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. I create a climate of trust and openness to facilitate participation in decision making. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. My leadership effectiveness is improved through empowering others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. I want to build trust through honesty and empathy. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. I am able to bring out the best in others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14. I want to make sure that everyone follows orders without questioning my authority. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

15. As a leader, my name must be associated with every initiative. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

16. I consistently delegate responsibility to others and empower them to do their job. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. I seek to serve rather than be served. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

18. To be a strong leader, I need to have the power to do whatever I want without being questioned. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

19. I am able to inspire others with my enthusiasm and confidence in what can be accomplished. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

20. I am able to transform an ordinary group of individuals into a winning team. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

21. I try to remove all organizational barriers so that others can freely participate in decision making. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

22. I devote a lot of energy to promoting trust, mutual understanding, and team spirit. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

23. I derive a great deal of satisfaction in helping others succeed. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. I have the moral courage to do the right thing, even when it hurts me politically. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

25. I am able to rally people around me and inspire them to achieve a common goal. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

26. I am able to present a vision that is readily and enthusiastically embraced by others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

27. I invest considerable time and energy in helping others overcome their weaknesses and develop their potential.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
28. I want to have the final say on everything, even areas where I don't have the competence.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
29. I don't want to share power with others because they may use it against me.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
30. I practice what I preach.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
31. I am willing to risk mistakes by empowering others to "carry the ball."	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
32. I have the courage to assume full responsibility for my mistakes and acknowledge my own limitations.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
33. I have the courage and determination to do what is right in spite of difficulty or opposition.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
34. Whenever possible, I give credits to others.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
35. I am willing to share my power and authority with others in the decision-making process.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
36. I genuinely care about the welfare of people working with me.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
37. I invest considerable time and energy equipping others.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
38. I make it a high priority to cultivate good relationships among group members.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
39. I am always looking for hidden talents in my workers.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
40. My leadership is based on a strong sense of mission.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
41. I am able to articulate a clear sense of purpose and direction for my organization's future.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
42. My leadership contributes to my employees'/colleagues' personal growth.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
43. I have a good understanding of what is happening inside the organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

44. I set an example of placing group interests above self-interests. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

45. I work for the best interests of others rather than self. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

46. I consistently appreciate, recognize, and encourage the work of others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

47. I always place team success above personal success. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

48. I willingly share my power with others, but I do not abdicate my authority and responsibility. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

49. I consistently appreciate and validate others for their contributions. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

50. When I serve others, I do not expect any return. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

51. I am willing to make personal sacrifices in serving others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

52. I regularly celebrate special occasions and events to foster a group spirit. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

53. I consistently encourage others to take initiative. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

54. I am usually dissatisfied with the status quo and know how things can be improved. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

55. I take proactive actions rather than waiting for events to happen to me. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

56. To be a strong leader, I need to keep all my subordinates under control. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

57. I find enjoyment in serving others in whatever role or capacity. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

58. I have a heart to serve others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

59. I have great satisfaction in bringing out the best in others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

60. It is important that I am seen as superior to my subordinates in everything. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

61. I often identify talented people and give them opportunities to grow and shine. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

62. My ambition focuses on finding better ways of serving others and making them successful. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Coding Key

Factor 1: 16, 21, 23, 27, 31, 37, 38, 39, 42, 46, 48, 49, 53, 59, 61, 62 Factor 2: 9, 14, 15, 18, 28, 29, 56, 60 Factor 3: 6, 17, 30, 44, 45, 47, 50, 51, 52, 57, 58 Factor 4: 2, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 34, 35, 36 Factor 5: 1, 13, 19, 20, 22, 25, 26 Factor 6: 40, 41, 43, 54, 55 Factor 7: 3, 4, 24, 32, 33

Factor 1: Empowering and developing others Factor 2: Power and pride (Vulnerability and humility, if scored in the reverse) Factor 3: Serving others Factor 4: Open, participatory leadership Factor 5: Inspiring leadership Factor 6: Visionary leadership Factor 7: Courageous leadership (Integrity and authenticity)

Appendix C

Introduction Letter for Survey Participation

Dear District Superintendent:

I am a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership Program in the College of Education at Eastern Michigan University. I am conducting a research study on Michigan superintendents as servant leaders and how their leadership style impacts district achievement as reported by proficiency on the MEAP. I will be using a self-assessment instrument that explores servant leadership.

I am requesting your participation, which requires no more than 10 minutes of your time, to complete the survey. Your participation is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at anytime, there will be no penalty to me. The results of the research will be published, but no names or districts will be used. Although there may be no direct benefit to you for your participation, one possible gain is obtaining a greater understanding of your own leadership and how it impacts student achievement.

A link to the survey will be provided via email. If you would like to receive a pdf version to complete, email me at pearsonantoinette@yahoo.com. The paper survey can be faxed to me at (734) 404-5930, or scanned and emailed back to me. If you have any questions concerning the research study, please call me at (734) 945-2483. You may also email any questions to me at the address listed above.

This research protocol and informed consent document has been reviewed and approved by the Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Committee (UHSRC) for use from _____to _____ (date). If you have questions about the approval process, please contact the UHSRC at human.subjects@emich.edu or call (734) 487.0042.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in helping me to complete this research.

Sincerely,

Antoinette Pearson

Appendix D

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Education First

February 5, 2014 **UHSRC Initial Application Determination: EXPEDITED APPROVAL**

To: **Mrs. Antoinette M. Pearson - Eastern Michigan University**

Re: **UHSRC # 140101**
Category: Approved Expedited Research Project
Approval Date: February 5, 2014

Title: **The Relationship Between Servant Leadership Style and Michigan Public School Superintendents as Measured by MEAP Reading and Math Proficiency**

The Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Committee (UHSRC) has completed their review of your project. I am pleased to advise you that **your expedited research has been approved** in accordance with federal regulations.

Renewals: Expedited protocols need to be renewed annually. If the project is continuing, please submit the **Human Subjects Continuation Form** prior to the approval expiration. If the project is completed, please submit the **Human Subjects Study Completion Form** (both forms are found on the UHSRC website).

Revisions: Expedited protocols do require revisions. If changes are made to a protocol, please submit a **Human Subjects Minor Modification Form** or new **Human Subjects Approval Request Form** (if major changes) for review (see UHSRC website for forms).

Problems: If issues should arise during the conduct of the research, such as unanticipated problems, adverse events, or any problem that may increase the risk to human subjects and change the category of review, notify the UHSRC office within 24 hours. Any complaints from participants regarding the risk and benefits of the project must be reported to the UHSRC.

Follow-up: If your expedited research project is not completed and closed after three years, the UHSRC office will require a new **Human Subjects Approval Request Form** prior to approving a continuation beyond three years.

Please use the UHSRC number listed above on any forms submitted that relate to this project, or on any correspondence with the UHSRC office.

Good luck in your research. If we can be of further assistance, please contact us at 734-487-0042 or via e-mail at gs_human_subjects@emich.edu. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Jennifer K. Fritz

Dr. Jennifer Kellman Fritz
Faculty Co-Chair
University Human Subjects Review Committee

University Human Subjects Review Committee · Eastern Michigan University · 200 Boone Hall
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197
Phone: 734.487.0042 Fax: 734.487.0050
E-mail: human.subjects@emich.edu
www.ord.emich.edu (see Federal Compliance)

The EMU UHSRC complies with the Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations part 46 (45 CFR 46) under FWA00000050.