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The dissertation of Christopher D. Wooleyhand, entitled *An Analysis of the Relationship Between the Self-Reported Shared Leadership Practices of Maryland Elementary School Principals and African-American Student Performance on the Maryland School Assessment,* submitted to the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Instructional Leadership for Changing Populations at Notre Dame of Maryland University has been read and approved by the committee:

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An Analysis of the Relationship Between the Self-Reported Shared Leadership Practices of Maryland Elementary School Principals and African-American Student Performance on the Maryland School Assessment

by

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A Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between the self-reported shared leadership practices of Maryland elementary principals and the academic achievement of their African American students, as measured by their performance on the Maryland School Assessment (MSA). This study sought to answer the following questions: Do principals who report utilizing a shared leadership approach to managing their schools subsequently improve the academic performance of African American students? Is the academic achievement of African American students higher in schools where the principal reports a strong commitment to shared leadership? Elementary principals in 14 Maryland school districts were surveyed using a modified version of the Shared Education Decisions Survey (Ferrara, 1992b). The MSA scores of their students were examined for the strength of relationship between the identified variables, which were embedded in the survey. The researcher found no significant correlation between the self-reported shared leadership practices of principals and the performance of African American students on MSA. Additionally, no significant correlations were identified for other student groups (White, Hispanic, Asian, FARMS, ELL, Special Education). Further investigation of the relationship between shared leadership and African American student achievement is warranted by school districts, private foundations, and universities.

Dedication

To my wife, Debbie, and my children, Lucas and Lillian. You inspire me every day to be a better husband, father, educator, and person. This accomplishment would have little meaning were I not able to share it with the three of you. I love you.

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Working with many talented teachers over my career has been an honor and a privilege. I would like to thank the staff members of Hillsmere Elementary and Richard Henry Lee Elementary for their support and encouragement over the last several years. I literally could not have completed this work without their flexibility and strong leadership skills, which are always directed toward doing what is best for children.

Thanks to the Maryland principals who took the time to participate in this study. I am keenly aware of the demands that are placed before them on a daily basis. Their participation serves as an example to their peers of what it means to be committed members of their profession. Thanks to my regional assistant superintendent, Dawn Lucarelli, and my former regional assistant superintendent, Christopher Truffer, for their support over the years. Additional thanks to Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kevin Maxwell for his strong leadership in Anne Arundel County. I would also like to thank my fellow doctoral students who shared this journey with me. Your support and encouragement helped me through challenging times.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents, my father, Bill, and my late mother, Maxine, who raised four sons who went on to become respectable men. To their sons, they served as an enduring example of what it means to be a parent. Mom, I had hoped to complete this while you were here with us. That was not to be, but I think you'd be proud.

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AC	America's Choice
AP	Advanced Placement
API	Academic Performance Index
ASP	Accelerated Schools Project
AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress
COLME	Collegial Leadership Model of Emancipation
CSE	Collective Self-Efficacy
CSR	Comprehensive School Reform
CTBS	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills
ELA	English Language Arts
ELL	English Language Learner
FARMS	Free and Reduced Meal Students
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LDCM	Leadership in Diversity Continuum Model
LSE	Leadership Self-Efficacy
MSA	Maryland School Assessment
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
SBDM	School-Based Decision Making
SCI	School Characteristics Inventory
SEDS	Shared Education Decisions Survey
SEDS-R	Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised

SES	Socio-economic Status
SFA	Success For All
SLQ	School Leader Questionnaire
SPED	Special Education
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TDI	Teacher Decision-making Instrument

Chapter I

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

Introduction

The progress and success of public schooling over the past 50 years is well-researched and documented. The percentage of young adults ages 25-29 who graduated from high school rose from 53 percent in 1950 to 86 percent in 2005 (Vannemann, Hamilton, Anderson, & Rahman, 2009). While academic progress has been made by both black and white students, and the achievement gap is narrowing, black students do not perform as well as their white peers (Vannemann, Hamilton, Anderson, & Rahman, 2009). Inequities and disparities remain abundant in U.S. society (Rogers & O'Bryon, 2008). Black students are less likely to participate in academic clubs, and they are more likely to be suspended from school and to be retained during their schooling experience (Lewis et al., 2010). (It is important to note here that the literature and research on race and education uses the terms black, African American, white, and Caucasian relatively interchangeably. This researcher will reference African American and Caucasian to

ensure consistency in terminology. The terminology of other researchers will not be altered or edited to ensure accuracy in citing their work.)

The need to address educational inequity looms over American society. The general public must look to school leaders as an essential ingredient in eliminating the achievement gap. School districts must provide these leaders with the training and support they need to raise the academic achievement of all students and eliminate the pervasive inequality in education. Schools are increasingly asked to expand their role in meeting the needs of all students. They are asked to provide a blend of synergistic ideas that are both traditional and progressive, while dealing with huge differences in skill levels (Pogrow, 2006). The response to this challenge can make a difference to children being raised in a world that is increasingly diverse. This responsibility cannot be shrugged off, delegated, or outsourced (Wooleyhand, 2008). If African American students are to make progress at anything resembling an acceptable rate, decisions will have to be made by individuals who, on a very personal level, realize they really *can* make a difference.

While some argue that the challenge of closing the achievement gap serves to perpetuate it by camouflaging the historical inequalities embedded in American education policies (Murrell, 2009), few would argue against the crucial role that school leaders play in ensuring the academic achievement of all students. In the era of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Race to the Top, principals are rightly being held accountable for the progress of African American students. Despite this responsibility, empirical studies find mixed results regarding the principals' influence on student achievement (Ross & Gray, 2006). While proponents of school restructuring promote teachers' participation in

school decision making and argue the importance of supportive principal leadership, organic forms of management are not a particularly powerful determinant of student achievement in elementary and secondary schools (Miller & Rowan, 2006). Studies designed to examine the direct effects of leadership on achievement rarely detect statistically significant results. Many studies of the indirect effects do, however, find a link between leadership and achievement (Seashore Louis et al., 2010).

Studies on leadership tend to focus on the leadership practices that foster high levels of student achievement (Crum & Sherman, 2008). These studies have found the following: (1) School leaders who develop personnel and facilitate leadership promote and sustain student success (Crum & Sherman, 2008); (2) School leaders impact student achievement largely through their influence on working conditions and teacher motivation (Seashore Louis et al., 2010); (3) In general, collective leadership has a stronger effect on student achievement than individual leadership (Seashore Louis et al., 2010); and (4) When principals and teachers share leadership, student achievement is higher (Seashore Louis et al., 2010). The views associated with shared leadership and its effect on student achievement have gained national interest (Camburn, Rowan & Taylor, 2003; Chance & Segura, 2009; Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Marks & Printy, 2003; Seashore Louis et al., 2010).

Research directed specifically at shared leadership and African American student achievement remains a missing piece of the puzzle. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the shared leadership practices of principals, as measured by the Shared Education Decisions Survey (SEDS), and the academic achievement of African American students, as measured by the Maryland School

Assessment (MSA). As the federal government increases its efforts toward eliminating the achievement gap, school leaders are at a critical moment in U.S. educational history. It is imperative that researchers identify the school leadership practices that facilitate improved performance for African American students. School districts and school leadership preparation programs must uncover the pedagogical and systemic practices that lead directly to improved African American student performance.

Study Significance

Policy and politics are not, nor have they ever been, the sole driving force behind the educational achievement of African American students. It takes individual teachers and administrators working actively and tirelessly on behalf of students to make a difference. As Singleton and Linton (2006) noted, educators must have a passion for addressing equity *and* a willingness to change their practices. Additionally, educators need to adopt the mindset that allowing students to fail is not a feasible option. While this may seem counterintuitive to the American view of competition, remaining entrenched in archaic practices will only ensure a widening of the academic divide. When school leaders begin to purposefully and thoughtfully address the needs of all students, they invest in their community. That investment pays dividends that can be measured by both qualitative and quantitative methods.

The importance and value of building relationships is recognized as a critical factor in the success of African American students (Blankstein, 2004; Kuykendall, 2004; Singleton & Linton, 2006). Educators readily agree that schools are charged with

establishing and fostering sustainable relationships with children before they can even hope to help them (Blankstein, 2004). Kuykendall (2004) calls this *people oriented learning* (p. 72). School leaders who hope to reach students from diverse backgrounds value their need to be educated via pedagogy that incorporates extensive social interaction. The leaders must also model leadership skills to their teachers, who can, in turn, model the same skills to their students.

Children from minority communities will put forth little, if any measurable effort, if they do not feel valued. However, they have the capacity to become lifelong learners, if they can connect with at least one caring person who is willing to serve as a positive role model (McNulty & Quaglia, 2007). Schools and school leaders who value the shared nature of teaching and learning can make an impact on the academic achievement of African American students by modeling the values associated with a collective consciousness (McNulty & Quaglia, 2007).

The results of this study may inform and benefit administrators, district-level supervisors, superintendents, school boards, and universities as they develop training programs for aspiring school administrators. Through such programs, school leaders may enhance their capacity to meet the needs of African American students and thereby eliminate the achievement gap. The results of this study may promote the use of shared leadership in meeting the needs of other marginalized students and their families as well.

Theoretical Framework

This study is centered in a theoretical framework that places school leaders at the forefront of meeting the needs of minority students. It seeks to establish a relationship between the self-reported shared leadership practices of Maryland elementary principals and African American student achievement. This study is rooted in a theoretical assumption that charges principals with creating model programs at the elementary level that promote and ensure an equitable education for all. It assumes that improving educational practices and student learning begins with identifying the nature of successful educational leadership (Seashore Louis et al., 2010).

Administrators with a shared leadership focus have a keen understanding of what lies within their circle of influence, and that is where their time and energy is spent (Houston, Blankstein, & Cole, 2007). School leaders who accept their responsibility in the fight for equity will work until each student reaches his or her potential. This study, therefore, sought to uncover a positive correlation between shared leadership and the academic achievement of African American students and to expose the key shared leadership practices that school administrators will need to lead their schools in the cause for educational equity.

Since the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown v. the Board of Education* decision, which made racial segregation illegal, states have been charged with providing equal access to education for all students. Perlstein (2004) noted that current discussions on integration vary from those who claim that racism has been eliminated to those who lament that racial hierarchies have not, and will not, change. To better understand the current climate, it is important to take a brief look at the historical context of equity and

education. The life works of John Fischer and William P. Foster serve to provide a deeper understanding of the theoretical framework and underpinnings for this study.

John Fischer was two years younger than Thurgood Marshall and began his teaching career in Baltimore in 1930. At age 25 he became an assistant principal and swiftly moved through the administrative ranks. Fischer was the superintendent of Baltimore City Public Schools during the time of *Brown v. the Board of Education* (Perlstein, 2004). He acted expeditiously at the time to inform Baltimore's 5,000 teachers that racial segregation was no longer the policy or practice of the city schools. Fischer's efforts were hailed at the time as a model for school leadership and vision, as well as for professionalism and democratic education (Perlstein, 2004). Fischer's forethought and actions in 1954 must be considered in the context of current efforts toward equity in education. He was a strong advocate for racial equality. Perlstein (2004) asks a relevant question regarding the historical context of Fischer's actions and the current state of education: "Can educational leaders enhance rather than inhibit (our) civic capacity to build democratic coalitions?" (p. 300).

Like Fischer, William P. Foster provides historical context to the questions surrounding school leadership and equity. Foster's postmodern view of educational leadership critiques the excessive interference of the state in local school matters (Grogan, 2004). Foster wants school leaders to be suspicious of those who generate policies such as NCLB and Race to the Top. He questions whose interest they have at heart (Grogan, 2004). He worries that educational leaders are "defined by a conservative discourse that homogenizes education throughout the country" (p. 222). In discussing Foster, Grogan (2004) ruminates on whether the focus on eliminating the achievement

gap will lead to mediocrity. In essence, Grogan questions whether pervasive accountability reforms have caused educators to look at students as categories, not individuals (Grogan, 2004).

Fischer and Foster offer foundational support and context for studying the ongoing need of school leaders to actively work for equity in education. Fischer's vision and Foster's passion are qualities from which all school administrators would benefit. They both recognized the social value of education related to the role of schools in promoting community and citizenship (Grogan, 2004; Perlstein, 2004). Their philosophies serve as the impetus and foundation for this study.

In determining the qualities and skills that school leaders need to promote equity, Fischer and Foster offer two salient points to ponder. From Fischer, the lesson is that educators must be forward thinking and pragmatic in planning to meet the needs of minority students. From Foster, educational leaders are urged to avoid being hemmed in by state and federal policy. He advises educators to write about and research local issues so they might develop "oppositional imaginations" (Grogan, 2004, p. 223). This view supports the aims of this study because it is directed at local school systems, principals, and schools in this researcher's home state. Finally, Foster chides leaders to adopt an ethical perspective that moves away from passivity toward active commitment in the fight for educational equity. This study will examine whether shared leadership might be a plausible vehicle for implementing Foster and Fischer's ideas.

Thus critical race theory serves as a foundational layer of this study's theoretical framework. Evans (2007) noted that critical race theory serves as an interpretive lens when viewing race in relation to the organizational and institutional context in which

school leaders operate. Consistent with critical race theory, this study aims to reveal the relationship between competent shared school leadership and the success of African American students. School systems, districts, and schools have an obligation to look within their organizations to identify best practices related to the academic achievement of African American students.

Themes

While reviewing the literature related to school leadership, academic achievement, equity, and shared leadership, five themes emerged. First of all, there is ample research addressing *pedagogy* that supports African American student achievement (Bondy, 2007; Booker et al., 2007; Chan, 2006; McCallister 2002). Secondly, the relationship between *school leadership and student achievement* is of paramount importance and needs further examination (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008; Seashore Louis et al., 2010; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). Thirdly, specific *leadership qualities* are a focus of research aimed at the relationship between leadership and student performance (Evans, 2007; Goddard & Hart 2007; Grogan, 2004; Henze 2005). Fourthly, colleges and universities are reflecting on *leadership training* and its role in ensuring equity in education (Grogan, 2004; Hambright & Franco, 2008; Henze, 2005; Kaplan, Owens, & Nunnery, 2005). Finally, *shared leadership* stands out as an increasingly effective practice for improving student achievement (Harris & Spillane, 2008; Lambert, 2006; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Rasberry & Mahajan, 2008; Singh, 2005). Discussion of these themes will further support the rationale for studying the effects of shared leadership on African American student achievement.

Pedagogy

Schools that succeed in meeting the needs of African American students have consistent teaching practices in place. The teachers in those schools offer positive classroom climates that support student resilience, as well as a sense of community. They also maintain high expectations for behavior and academic performance (Bondy, 2007; Booker et al., 2007). These educators recognize the importance of establishing relationships with their students. They foster a supportive school environment that promotes positive attitudes about race, which motivates students to perform better academically (Bondy et al., 2007; Chan, 2006; McAllister, 2002). The emphasis in these schools is placed on using a *community* response to the bureaucratic impersonalization that educational reforms and standardization have placed on them (Grogan, 2004).

In researching key schools, Booker et al. (2007) found common successful practices. Thriving schools spent time emphasizing the repetition of skills related to emergent reading skills. Administrators and teachers demonstrated extensive knowledge related to reading instruction. The sense of community was strong internally and externally. Finally, the schools had effective leaders who monitored progress thoroughly. These practices imply that a shared approach to meeting the needs of students may be the most effective in regards to academic success.

The need to communicate in culturally responsive ways is viewed as an essential skill for teachers working with minority students. Using sincere terms of endearment and humor captures the students' attention and stimulates their will to participate (Bondy et al., 2007). Effective teachers must be culturally knowledgeable and able to analyze how

culture impacts their perceptions of student behavior. They must approach culture as a positive vehicle to support, nurture, and respect students (Bondy et al., 2007; Kose, 2007).

Pedagogy that emphasizes relationships, high expectations, and accountability is critical for those who wish to improve the performance of minority students. The challenge for teachers is putting into practice what they believe and know. Schools must provide for interaction among students of diverse backgrounds in a supportive environment that fosters positive attitudes toward race. If leadership is shared, the capacity for teachers to foster that interaction increases (Chan, 2006).

Many teachers verbalize the value of mutual respect needed to effectively teach African American students, but they have been provided inadequate tools for implementation and lack the professional knowledge base or the personal experience to "walk the talk" (Bondy et al., 2007; Chan, 2006). This again speaks to the need for school leaders to provide the leadership and training for their teachers. There is a call for teacher training that promotes pedagogy that is culturally responsive, culturally aware, and based on content that is adapted for culturally diverse students (McAllister, 2002). This study suggests that shared leadership may be the way to meet that staff development need.

Leadership and Student Achievement

Prior to examining the relationship between shared leadership and African American student achievement, the relationship between leadership and student

achievement must first be investigated. In perhaps the most comprehensive study related to school leadership and student achievement, Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of nearly every study conducted since the 1970s. The data from their study demonstrated that there is a significant relationship between leadership and student achievement (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). Their work produced the McRel balanced leadership framework, which serves as a tool that can help leaders and leadership teams work toward raising student achievement (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). Their work will be further examined within the literature review.

In a more recent and comprehensive study, Seashore Louis et al. (2010) examined the direct and indirect leadership practices that foster the improvement of educational practices and student learning. Their six-year study focused on leadership at the school, district, and state levels. They found that leadership matters at all levels. Educational leaders provide direction for, and influence over, policy and practice. Their contributions are critical to the initiatives aimed at improving student achievement (Seashore Louis et al., 2010).

When school leaders take an interest in, and focus on, specific pedagogical work, they increase the potential for improved student achievement. Leadership that focuses strictly on the relationship aspects of leadership is not predictive of the quality of student outcomes (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). However, there is evidence in the literature that suggests a relationship exists between leadership and teachers' beliefs about their capacity and professional commitment. This indirect evidence suggests that student achievement is positively impacted by principals who adopt a transformational leadership style (Ross & Gray, 2006).

The relationship between leadership and student achievement needs further illumination. Specifically, a better understanding of how school leaders influence student achievement is needed. Once this relationship is firmly established and understood, the relationship between shared leadership and African American student achievement can be explored. Leadership and student achievement will be further examined in the literature review.

Leadership Qualities

While the role of the teacher in ensuring equity is undeniable, that mission can be very challenging if school leaders, through their action or inaction, undermine the efforts of teachers. It is, therefore, critical that school leaders possess the qualities and exhibit the behaviors that are consistent with the goals of equity and shared leadership. Leadership must ensure that schools are places where children interact socially, engage in recreation, and learn to be compassionate (Grogan, 2004). The potential for that to occur increases when teachers and school leaders model those behaviors consistently.

Schools leaders are struggling to end the predictable representations associated with *high achievers* and *under performers* (Henze, 2005). For school leaders to understand their role in promoting equity, they must examine their own sociopolitical identities within the context of their profession (Evans, 2007; Johnson, Jr. & Uline, 2005).

Education is driven by humanistic and altruistic values (Frankel & Schechtman, 2006). Effective leadership, through active and intentional means, entails combining

values that nurture and protect individuals while also enforcing rules and regulations. When leadership and organizational values are shared, the potential for student success increases (Frankel & Schechtman, 2006). Equity and social justice are processes built on respect, care, recognition, and empathy (Theoharis, 2007).

Understanding the issues associated with equity is a starting point, but school leaders must also grasp the complex role of race and demographic change in their schools and their lives. Evans (2007) uses the term *sensemaking* when discussing this concept. She defines sensemaking as "the cognitive act of taking in information, framing it, and using it to determine actions and behaviors in a way that manages meaning for individuals" (Evans, 2007, p. 161). Evans (2007) also notes that school leaders, must interpret meaning for themselves before they can "shape and influence events in their schools" (p. 162). This is a complex and critical skill for school leaders motivated by equity issues. Evans (2007) advises that, if school leaders are to address the needs of a racially diverse student population, they must acknowledge their own dominance and marginalization of others.

The issues of educational equity are not limited to the United States. In a Canadian study, Goddard and Hart (2007) sought to discover how principals facilitate access to schools for all children. They found that principals use avoidance strategies to minimize differences with the intent of creating equitable access. Unfortunately, this creates a situation where only those who adjust to the dominant culture meet success. Treating students with a colorblind approach tends to favor the dominant culture (Evans, 2007; Goddard & Hart, 2007). This point speaks to the impact of traditional leadership

roles. When schools are ruled or governed by a sole individual, they are at risk for employing myopic practices (Evans, 2007; Goddard & Hart, 2007).

Effective school leadership for equity requires principals to be reflective of their own racial identity as it relates to their instructional practice with learners of diverse backgrounds (Murrell, 2009). They must constantly ask themselves how their personal racial biases may be impacting the decision-making process. Reflective practice requires one to contemplate their racial identity enough to create true growth potential among African American learners (Murrell, 2009). For school leaders to be effective in meeting the needs of African American students, they must consider themselves as advocates for *all* students (Evans, 2007).

Through his research on race and leadership, Theoharis (2007) reminds educators that social justice leadership is what good leadership should be. Henze (2005) would also remind educators that leaders must improve their understanding and knowledge by constantly wearing their "equity lens," which will enhance their ability to promote equity as a consistent practice and improve the lives of underserved students.

Leadership Training

Recognizing that effective school leadership is at the core of equity in education, the issue becomes how school systems can provide meaningful and targeted training for administrators. School systems need to provide clear standards for principal efficacy related to fostering high levels of academic achievement for all students (Kaplan, Owens, & Nunnery, 2005). However, administrators need more than a cognitive understanding

of their settings; they need an emotional understanding (Grogan, 2004). Henze (2005) suggests that professional development should address school leaders' awareness of how discourse creates and reinforces ideologies.

While investigating leadership training, Hambright and Franco (2008) found that leadership programs need to respond to the needs of the candidates. Leadership training should strive to provide informational and transformational learning, which causes educators to internalize the content and embrace the knowledge as part of their professional practice (Hambright & Franco, 2008).

Targeting the concerns expressed by Evans (2007), Goddard & Hart (2007), and Theoharis (2007), Henze (2005) identifies the discourse of educational leaders as a focus for improving equitable access to education. She notes that educational leaders often talk about race and equity but suggests that leaders need to know how they *understand* these concepts.

Henze's research related to leadership and communication (2005) found that the discourse of educational leaders is a neglected topic in professional preparation courses. She suggests that educational leadership programs could, "encourage new leaders to use language more consciously" (p. 265). Barnett (2004) and Boske (2009) found that school leaders are reporting that their school leadership programs are not preparing them for equity issues emphasized in the national standards. Evans (2007) advises that to promote equity, educational leaders must recognize, challenge, and change traditional power relations. This endorses the need to examine shared leadership and African American student achievement.

There is increasing support for leadership training programs that produce administrators who will ensure equitable results for all students (Grogan, 2004; Henze, 2005; Lopez et al., 2006; Theoharis, 2007). As the K-12 student population becomes increasingly diverse, a *one-size-fits-all* approach is no longer appropriate (Kose, 2007; Lopez et al., 2006). The preparation of school leaders thus becomes central in the pursuit of equity. Student poverty, teacher experience, and previous student achievement have been found to be stronger predictors of student success than university and district leadership preparation programs (Vanderhaar, Munoz, & Rodosky, 2006). This strengthens the argument for clear and well-conceived programs for principal preparation (Vanderhaar, Munoz, & Rodosky, 2006).

It becomes the responsibility of professors of educational administration and school district leaders to direct leadership programs that promote equitable results for all students (Lopez et al., 2006). Grogan (2004) also suggests that school districts must create professional development programs that focus on ways for administrators to counter the negative effects of national school reform efforts. Grogan (2004) offers that school leaders should collaborate with teachers to provide a rich curriculum, and she implores superintendents and principals to ensure that the remediation efforts mandated by school reform laws do not become punitive for students.

Addressing the complicated relationship between school leaders and their communities, Evans (2007) effectively summarizes the concerns related to school leadership by positing that school leaders need to have a clear ideology related to the sociopolitical issues. School leaders who have a global awareness might be better able to challenge the *status quo* structure in schools. She is, however, concerned with how

social, historical, and political issues related to race influence the will and capacity of school leaders to understand the changing demographics of their schools.

School leaders must look for ways to improve teaching and learning for all students. Shared leadership has the potential to unlock the collective abilities of all staff members, which should result in the improved academic performance of all students. Leadership capacity grows as teachers experience a personal and collective journey through collaboration, which raises their ability to lead without a principal (Lambert, 2006).

Shared Leadership

The literature on pedagogy, leadership and student achievement, leadership qualities, and leadership training points to a need for inclusive school leadership practices. Shared or distributed leadership increases the self-determination of its members, which allows them to better anticipate and respond to the demands of the profession (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Singh, 2005). When school leaders engage in conversations about student performance, low-performing schools can improve through shared leadership and a culture that centers on professionalism (Lambert, 2006; Rasberry & Mahajan, 2008). There is increasing evidence that shared leadership improves organizational outcomes and student learning (Harris & Spillane, 2008).

The use of shared leadership has proven to contribute to improved student outcomes, increased recognition of the profession, and more effective change management (Duignan & Bezzina, 2006). Higher-achieving schools award leadership to

all school members and other stakeholders at a greater level than low-performing schools (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008).

Accountability has become a major focus of school leaders since the implementation of NCLB and the birth of Race to the Top. Elmore (2005) defines internal accountability as, "coherence and alignment among individuals' conceptions of what they are responsible for and how, collective expectations at the organizational level, and the processes by which people within an organization justify what they do" (p. 140). This suggests, again, that traditional models of leadership lack compatibility with more evolved forms of school improvement methods (Elmore, 2005). Shared leadership accommodates equity and accountability by empowering stakeholders (Singh, 2005). When school leaders foster planned approaches to leadership distribution, high levels of academic optimism prevail due to the transparency of the decision-making process (Mascall et al., 2008).

If educational leaders' core focus is on enhancing teaching and learning, then they must be challenged to be more fully aware of the possibility of transformation (Duignan & Bezzina, 2006). Distributed forms of leadership enhance opportunities for schools to benefit from the collective capacities of its members (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Raelin, 2006).

Shared leadership has motivational and cognitive advantages over more traditional methods using single-leader models (Solansky, 2008). With the development of shared leadership, members become comfortable enough to give and receive mutual influence when confronting tasks and empowering behavior (Bligh, Pierce, & Kohles,

2006). If shared leadership has the capacity to increase the academic achievement of African American students, then this relationship must be examined in greater detail.

Description of the Problem

The themes uncovered in the literature provide momentum and serve as a catalyst for this study. Further investigation of leadership and student achievement is needed. The benefits of shared leadership must be explored within the context of improving African American student achievement and to initiate a body of research that offers viable strategies for those working with minority students. The potential for shared leadership to improve the academic performance of African American students lies within its influence on transformational leadership, communication, collaboration, collegiality, vision, trust, and empowerment. These components of shared leadership will be investigated in more detail as well in this study.

From the time of the *Brown* decision in 1954 until 1990, there was a reduction in the gap between blacks and whites in educational achievement (Raudenbush, 2009). An equity lens perspective seeks to uncover why there are differences in the achievement of specific student groups. Academic progress has been made by both black and white students, and the achievement gap is narrowing, yet African American students still lag behind their white peers (Vannemann, Hamilton, Anderson, & Rahman, 2009). School leaders play a key role in eliminating the achievement gap. Colleges and school districts must provide them with the training and support they need to raise the academic achievement of all students and eliminate the pervasive inequality in education.

There remains a critical need for additional research on school leadership that facilitates the development of proficient and culturally competent schools capable of creating positive and productive climates (Nevarez & Wood, 2007). The diversity of American schools calls for leadership that promotes cultural pluralism and success for all students (McCray, Wright, & Beachum, 2004). The primary purpose of this study, therefore, is to explore the relationship between shared educational leadership and the academic performance of African American students. Secondarily, the relationship with other NCLB identified subgroups will also be examined.

Research Questions

This study is concerned with the use of shared leadership as a vehicle for improving African American student achievement and, therefore, seeks to answer the following questions: Do principals who self-report using a shared leadership approach to managing their schools, as measured by the Shared Education Decisions Survey (SEDS) (Ferrara, 1992b), promote the improved academic performance of African American students, as measured by the MSA? Is the academic achievement of African American students higher in schools where the principal reports a strong commitment to shared leadership?

Research Question: Is there a significant relationship in MSA test scores for African American students whose principals self-report strong shared leadership practices (as defined by the SEDS instrument) as compared with those students whose principals self-report using fewer shared leadership practices?

Definitions

To proceed in examining shared leadership and African American student achievement at a deeper level, it is necessary to define three key terms. For the purpose of this study, the following definitions will be used:

Shared Leadership: Shared leadership refers to, "a team property whereby leadership is distributed among team members rather than focused on a single designated leader" (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007, p. 1217). It is defined broadly to denote teachers' influence over, and their participation in, school-wide decisions with principals (Seashore Louis et al., 2010). In the literature, there are few significant distinctions between, *shared*, *collective*, *distributed*, and *collaborative* leadership. *Transformational* and *democratic* leadership, while not synonymous, also appear in the literature as co-opted terms for shared leadership. The key relating factor in all of these terms is the school leader's willingness and promotion of the collective responsibility of all stakeholders in the school's success. Therefore, shared leadership will serve as an inclusive term for these varied manifestations.

Shared Education Decisions Survey (Ferrara, 1992b): The Shared Education Decisions Survey (SEDS) was designed to accommodate measuring multiple stakeholders' shared decision-making beliefs. It was used in this research to obtain perceptions of principals concerning their practices in fostering shared decision making. This survey has been used in previous research related to shared leadership (Casciano, 1993; Ferrara, 1992a; McDonald, 2000; Reynolds, 1996).

Student Achievement: The Maryland School Assessment (MSA) was used to assess student achievement in this study. The use of state-mandated assessment results and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for correlational studies related to leadership and student achievement is well-supported (Crum & Sherman, 2008; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Marks & Printy, 2003; Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009; Ross & Gray, 2006; Seashore Louis et al., 2010). The MSA is a test of reading and math achievement for grades 3–8. This test provides educators, parents, and the public valuable information about student, school, school system, and state performance.

Limitations, Assumptions, and Delimitations

One limitation of this research study is the response rate to the survey instrument (27%). A greater response rate would have provided a broader, more representative view of shared leadership practices of elementary principals in Maryland. A demographic profile of the population surveyed was generated to demonstrate how the surveys returned compared to the population studied.

This study does not address issues outside those listed in the research questions. It is assumed that not all of the principals in Maryland would complete the Shared Education Decision Survey; however, it is also assumed that those who completed the survey employed a professional diligence toward the survey items and responded truthfully to each item. Another assumption is that the survey measured the expected variables. Principals and schools were recruited to represent a wide range of MSA scores to ensure statistical power. Another limitation of this study is that a self-reporting survey

was used. In face-to-face surveys, interviewers can assist study participants by clarifying, probing, and motivating respondents to provide complete and accurate responses (Groves et al., 2009). This researcher was unable to clarify questions the respondents may have had regarding the survey items.

Delimitations of this study include that the survey was administered to a purposeful sample of Maryland school leaders (elementary principals). The study was delimited to principals who have spent at least two years in their schools. The geographical location of the study (Maryland) is also a delimitation of the study. Finally, the use of a standard scale prohibited being able to infer variable relationships that would have been possible in personal interviews.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I introduces the study significance, the theoretical framework, research themes, and describes the problem. Additionally, the chapter identifies the research questions, definitions, limitations, assumptions, and delimitations. The remainder of this study is composed of the following four chapters.

Chapter II presents a review of literature related to school leadership and academic achievement. Shared leadership is defined, and its effect on student achievement is investigated. Finally, the manifestations of shared leadership are discussed.

Chapter III includes the research methodology used in this study, as well as the research design and a discussion of the methods used for data collection and analysis.

Issues specifically addressed are participants, instrumentation, data collection, procedures, validity, reliability, and data analysis.

Chapter IV provides an in-depth description and analysis of the data collected through the research questions. This chapter includes a summary of the responses to the survey instrument employed, as well as relevant background information on the subjects and demographic data relevant to the study.

Chapter V concludes with a summary of the study, suggests conclusions, outlines implications, and makes recommendations. This chapter also addresses the limitations of the study and any unanswered questions that remain for future research.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

> For all of the current controversy surrounding issues of student achievement and accountability, we forget that there is far less controversy about our shared desire to help more children learn, to reduce the achievement gap, and to improve the quality of the complex work of teaching in all schools, from urban to rural, from economically struggling to affluent. (DuFour, Eaker, & DuFour, 2005, p. xi)

Despite long-term efforts with educational equality, there remains a widespread unequal and unjust treatment of many students in public schools in the United States (Castagno, 2008; Kuykendall, 2004). The gap between blacks and whites in educational attainment has strong implications for the labor market success of this country (Raudenbush, 2009). Economics, however, cannot be the only motivation for meeting the needs of the underserved. Despite the efforts and intentions of school leaders, the same groups of students continue to underachieve (Lopez, Magdaleno, & Reis, 2006). Minority graduation rates are improving the fastest, but a 15–18 percentage-point gap compared with white rates still exists (Balfanz et al., 2010).

Providing historical context to the current state of education, Perlstein (2004) shared the following regarding *Brown v. Board of Education*: Fiftieth-anniversary celebrations of the Supreme Court's 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* are inevitably refracted through the alternating complacency and hopelessness with which many Americans view the potential of urban schools and the possibility of creating an integrated society. Today's discussions of integration often pivot between excessively triumphal claims that the United States has already eliminated racism and excessively despairing lamentations that racial hierarchies are unchanged and unchangeable. Either way, according to Perlstein (2004), "*Brown* evokes nostalgia for a moment in history when Americans were committed to reshaping their schools and fostering democratic ideals" (p. 289).

Despite the nostalgia that Perlstein speaks of, schools today are almost as segregated as they were in 1954. Recent decisions by the Supreme Court have struck down attempts to integrate public schools in Kentucky and Washington (Frey & Wilson, 2009). Whether children will receive an appropriate and effective education remains a question that divides the court (Frey & Wilson, 2009).

Acknowledging that the United States has far to go in providing an equitable education for all and in reducing the achievement gap, this study seeks to examine the practice of shared school leadership as a vehicle for the improved academic achievement of African American students.

School leaders play a critical role in the success of their students. In this study, the shared leadership practices of educational leaders are examined in the context of equity and the academic achievement of African American students. Literature on

leadership and student achievement, shared leadership, and the manifestations of shared leadership are investigated to gain a deeper understanding of their role in the potential academic success of African American students. The themes of transformational leadership, communication, collaboration, collegiality, vision, trust, and empowerment, as they relate to shared leadership, are broadly examined to provide clarity in identifying the potential role of shared leadership in the success of African American students.

School Leadership and Achievement

This study sought to identify shared leadership as a tool for the improved academic achievement of African American students. To make that connection, the literature on school leadership and student achievement must first be explored. Does the literature on school leadership support the importance of the principal in academic achievement? Have researchers found relationships between the beliefs and practices of principals and the performance of their students? An examination of the empirical research related to leadership and student achievement will provide weight to the theoretical framework of this study.

Quantitative Studies on School Leadership and Student Achievement

With the goal of uncovering the role of leadership on student learning, Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) conducted a significant meta-analysis that examined the effects of leadership on student achievement. Their work initially looked at more than

5,000 studies completed over 30 years (approximately 1970 through 2003). From these studies, only 70 met their criteria for design, control, data analysis, and rigor. Their criteria addressed quantitative student achievement data measured on standardized, norm-referenced tests. Additionally, they used student achievement as the dependent variable and teacher perceptions of leadership as the independent variable (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003).

The findings of Waters, Marzano, and McNulty's study (2003) demonstrated that there is a substantial relationship between leadership and student achievement. They found that the average effect size (expressed as a correlation) between leadership and student achievement is 0.25 (see Appendix M). In addition to the general impact of leadership, they found that the following 21 specific leadership responsibilities are significantly related to student achievement:

- Culture
- Order
- Discipline
- Resources
- Curriculum instruction, assessment
- Focus
- Knowledge of curriculum, instruction, assessment
- Visibility
- Contingent rewards
- Communication
- Outreach
- Input
- Affirmation
- Relationship
- Change agent
- Optimizer
- Ideals/beliefs
- Monitors/evaluates
- Flexibility
- Situational awareness
- Intellectual stimulation

Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) are quick to point out that while their findings are important, another outcome of their study is equally significant. They noted that when leaders concentrate on the wrong school or classroom practices, they can impair student achievement (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). They identified two primary variables that determine whether leadership will have a positive or negative impact on student achievement. The first is the focus of change, whether leaders properly identify and concentrate on improving school and classroom practices that lead to improved achievement. Their second variable is whether leaders understand the magnitude and order of the change they are leading (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003).

Waters, Marzano, and McNulty adopted the terms "first order" and "second order" to clarify the difference between leaders who are able to understand the magnitude and order of the change they are effecting and those who struggle with that task. First-order leaders recognize the elements of change that are needed to improve instruction for students. Second-order leaders, however, understand the magnitude or *order* of change that is needed and how to skillfully use the appropriate leadership practices (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). The researchers noted that both first- and second-order changes lead to gains in student achievement, but school leaders must become adept at leading both to ensure that the depth of their work is addressed (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003).

Although debatable among scholars, Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) consider their research and resultant framework to be one of the most comprehensive, rigorous, and useful integrations of research that puts theory into practice. They caution

that there are no fail-safe solutions to educational and organizational problems; however, research that is easily applied to practitioners can enhance the potential for effective educational leadership (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003).

In a recent and comprehensive study, Seashore Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, and Anderson (2010) explored the direct and indirect forms of leadership that foster the improvement of educational practices and student learning. Their six-year study focused on leadership at the school, district, and state levels. They found that leadership matters at all levels. Educational leaders provide direction for, and influence over, policy and practice, and their contributions are critical to the initiatives aimed at improving student achievement (Seashore Louis et al., 2010). They noted that they were unable to find a single case of a school improving its student achievement record in the absence of talented leadership (Seashore Louis et al., 2010).

The Seashore Louis et al. study (2010), funded by a national philanthropic organization, the Wallace Foundation, aimed to identify the nature of successful educational leadership to better understand how such guidance can improve educational practices and student learning (Seashore Louis et al., 2010). A sizable portion of their research was directed at collective, shared, and distributed forms of leadership, which will be addressed in the shared leadership section of this literature review. The researchers also examined the leadership practices that high-performing principals and teachers consider to be instructionally helpful. Using qualitative methods, the researchers interviewed and observed teachers and principals in 12 schools that were evenly distributed across socioeconomic status (SES) levels (Seashore Louis et al., 2010). The principals and teachers sampled in the study identified, and agreed upon, the importance

of three specific practices: focusing the school on goals and expectations for student achievement, keeping track of teachers' professional development needs, and creating structures and opportunities for teachers to collaborate (Seashore Louis et al., 2010). These four additional practices attracted support from a smaller portion of the teachers and principals: monitoring the teachers' work in the classroom, providing mentoring opportunities for new teachers, being easily accessible, and providing backup for teachers with student discipline and with parents (Seashore Louis et al., 2010, pp. 71–72). The researchers found that principals must carefully attend to classroom instructional practices, but they should not neglect many other issues that are crucial to the long-term health and welfare of their schools (Seashore Louis et al., 2010).

To clarify the importance of principal beliefs, Seashore Louis et al., (2010) also examined the relationship between principal efficacy and student achievement. They researched the extent to which district leadership influences the following: principals' sense of efficacy, the influence of principal efficacy on leadership practices, learning conditions in schools, student learning, and the extent to which personal and organizational characteristics moderate the influence of principals' efficacy on student learning (Seashore Louis et al., 2010). Using a quantitative approach, the researchers surveyed principals to determine leaders' self-efficacy and collective efficacy. They also surveyed teachers to measure three additional variables: school leadership, class conditions, and school conditions (Seashore Louis et al., 2010). The researchers collected data on student achievement from school websites. Their findings suggest that district leaders should consider the importance of a school leader's collective sense of efficacy as it relates to improving student achievement. The researchers also noted that

school districts must offer high-quality staff development if the goal is to produce higher levels of principal efficacy (Seashore Louis et al., 2010).

The study by Seashore Louis et al. (2010) provides strong evidence of the effect of leadership on student achievement. School leaders with a strong sense of efficacy who use practices that promote student learning increase the overall achievement of their schools. The researchers found that in districts where the levels of learning are high, district leaders are more likely to emphasize goals and initiatives that reach beyond minimum state expectations (Seashore Louis et al., 2010). This bodes well for all students and reinforces the need for more research directed specifically at African American student achievement.

Adding to the growing research, Marks and Printy (2003) conducted a study that, like that of Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003), looked at the connection between school leadership and student performance. They examined the potential for active collaboration around instructional matters to enhance the quality of teaching and student performance. Specifically, Marks and Printy were looking at the relationship between transformational and instructional leadership. Data from this study were collected from 24 elementary, middle, and high schools (eight at each level) that were all in the restructuring process. The researchers used a mixed method of surveys, interviews, and observations to gather their information.

The key finding of Marks and Printy's study (2003) is that when leaders possess a combination of transformational and instructional leadership skills, their students perform at high levels on authentic measures of achievement. It is not enough to be just a one-dimensional leader (e.g. transformational, instructional, etc.). The schools that

outperformed others in the study demonstrated the effectiveness of integrated leadership in eliciting the instructional leadership of teachers for improving school performance (Marks & Printy, 2003).

In a study similar to the research conducted by Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003), Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008) completed a meta-analysis of 27 published studies on the relationship between leadership and student outcomes. A second meta-analysis was conducted on 12 of the studies to compare the effects of five inductively derived sets of leadership practices on student outcomes. As a response to the Marks and Printy study (2003), the researchers sought to compare transformational and instructional leadership and their specific influence on student achievement.

By addressing the role of leadership on learning, Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008) found that the impact of instructional leadership is three to four times greater than transformational leadership. They point out that educational leadership involves more than building collegial teams; it also involves very specific pedagogical work (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). Their conclusion suggests that transformational leadership is necessary, but it is insufficient for shared leadership (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). While their research places more emphasis on instructional leadership over transformational leadership, the five dimensions of leadership derived from their efforts include leadership practices that require the integration of task and relationship skills (see Table 1.)

Table 1
The Impact of Five Leadership Dimensions on Student Outcomes (n=199)

Leadership Dimension	Effect Sizes (n) From Studies (n)	Mean Effect Size	SE
Establishing goals and Expectations	49 effect sizes from 7 studies	0.42	0.07
Strategic resourcing	11 effect sizes from 7 studies	0.31	0.10
Planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and the curriculum	80 effect sizes from 9 studies	0.42	0.06
Promoting and participating in teacher learning and development	17 effect sizes from 6 studies	0.84	0.14
Ensuring an orderly and supportive environment	42 effect sizes from 8 studies	0.27	0.09

Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008

Like Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003), Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008) note that schools at different stages of development will need different leadership emphases (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). Their study, however, suggests that school leadership is, "more likely to have a positive impact on student achievement when it focuses on the quality of learning, teaching, and teacher learning" (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008, p. 668). Their research also points out that there is a lack of empirical studies focused on leadership and student outcomes. They noted that at the time of their study there were fewer than 30 published studies examining the links between leadership and student outcomes. This concern reinforces the need for this study.

Studies on leadership and academic achievement also address the indirect effects of leadership. Miller and Rowan (2006) examined the relationship between organic

management and growth in student achievement in elementary and secondary schools. Organic management uses participatory forms of decision making, supportive forms of leadership, and network forms of collegial control (Miller & Rowan, 2006). To test their hypotheses, the researchers used two large-scale data sets that both contained longitudinal information on student achievement in reading and mathematics. Using the common survey items as a base, they developed these three measures of organic management: (a) a measure of supportive leadership by school administrators, (b) a measure of teacher control over key instructional decisions, and (c) a measure of the amount of staff collaboration present in the school (Miller & Rowan, 2006, p. 227). The achievement data they used were student scores on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). Analysis of the data found that organic forms of school management are not strong determinants of student achievement in elementary and secondary schools. These results are consistent with the findings of previous researchers who identified instructional leadership as an indicator of student achievement.

Research on the indirect effects of leadership on student achievement addresses both principal and teacher self-efficacy (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Ross & Gray, 2006). The focus of this research is on how self-efficacy leads to improved student performance. Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) used a stratified random sampling of 180 schools in 45 districts within nine states. They surveyed teachers and principals, using 58 survey items for principals and 56 items for teachers. The principal survey measured leadership self-efficacy (LSE), collective self-efficacy (CSE), district conditions, and district leadership. The teacher survey measured school leadership, class conditions, and school conditions. Student achievement data were collected from the state websites. The researchers

focused on students meeting or exceeding the proficiency level, which this study uses for correlational purposes. The researchers found weak but significant effects of leadership efficacy on the proportion of students reaching or exceeding the state's proficient level. They noted that these effects are most likely indirect through their effects on school and classroom conditions (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008).

Adding to the body of research on leadership efficacy, Ross and Gray (2006) examined leadership efficacy through teachers' beliefs. They tested a hypothesis that suggests principals indirectly contribute to student achievement through teacher commitment and collective efficacy (Ross & Gray, 2006). Their study looked at two school districts in Ontario and included 3,042 teachers in 205 schools. The data they collected consisted of Likert items on transformational leadership, collective teacher efficacy, commitment to school mission, commitment to school as a professional community, and commitment to school-community partnerships. The student achievement data the researchers used focused on the mean percentage of students reaching the provincial standard in a mandated assessment. The results of their study indicate that principals who adopt a transformational leadership style are, "likely to have a positive impact on teacher beliefs about their collective capacity and on teacher commitment to organizational values" (Ross & Gray, 2006, p. 811). The researchers noted that, "principals in these schools should expect to see modest but significant contributions to student achievement" (Ross & Gray, 2006, p. 812).

Case Studies on Leadership and Student Achievement

A number of significant case studies focused on leadership and student achievement have been conducted over the past few years (Crum & Sherman, 2008; Jacobson et al., 2005; Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009; Penlington, Kington & Day, 2008). These studies tend to focus on the practices of identified schools and their leaders, most of which are selected based on their success with improving student achievement. They examine challenging schools; successful principals; improving schools; and leadership in high-performing, high-poverty schools, respectively.

Employing case study methodology, Jacobson et al. (2005) examined seven challenging schools in the United States and the practices the principals used in leading these schools toward success in terms of student performance. They first analyzed whether the principals exhibited the three core leadership practices of setting directions, developing people, and redesigning the organization. They found these principals fostered three enabling principles: accountability, caring, and learning. Their practices used data to focus teachers and students on improved student achievement. The principals in the study were able to create a positive school culture and support teachers' professional and personal development by actively responding to their needs on a daily basis. Finally, these principals placed the learning of students, faculty, parents, and the organization at the center of everyone's work (Jacobson et al., 2005). It is significant to note that all seven principals studied invited teachers to share instructional leadership functions aimed at improving student and adult learning. This provides support for the

focus of this study: the potential influence of shared leadership practices on African American student achievement.

In a similar study, Crum and Sherman (2008) focused on successful leadership practices in high schools. They conducted an inductive exploratory study that examined how successful high school principals facilitate high levels of student achievement. Twelve high school principals were purposefully selected from successful schools throughout Virginia (Crum & Sherman, 2008). The schools met state accreditation standards and federal standards (meeting AYP). The principals in the study had been in their schools for a minimum of two full years, which enabled them to have a moderate impact on student achievement. This supports this study's limitation of using data from principals with two or more years of experience. Through extensive interviews, the researchers identified six common practices that were categorized into the following themes: developing personnel and facilitating leadership, responsible delegation and empowering the team, recognizing ultimate accountability, communicating and rapport, facilitating instruction, and managing change (Crum & Sherman, 2008, p. 567). These findings are in line with Jacobsen et al. (2005), who found that successful principals are focused on accountability, caring, and learning.

A study conducted in the United Kingdom (Penlington, Kington, & Day, 2008) also used case study methodology to investigate the impact of school leadership on pupil outcomes. Ten primary and 10 secondary schools were selected based on their sustained improvement over three years. The researchers conducted interviews with 20 head teachers, 70 staff members, and 40 colleagues over a one-year period. The study identified four key themes of successful leadership: 1) the pivotal role of the headteacher

in leading school success, 2) the complex relationship between leadership distribution and school effectiveness with regard to improved student outcomes, 3) the strategies leaders use to develop capacities within the school, and 4) the effect of school context on leadership approaches (Penlington, Kington, & Day, 2008, p. 66). The researcher's case study data show that school leaders need to clearly communicate their vision and be responsive to the school and community context. Like the previous study (Crum & Sherman, 2008), the researchers found that all of the school leaders in the study distributed leadership in some way. This provides further support for investigating the impact of shared leadership on African American student achievement because the results of this study noted the importance of building staff capacity to learn, lead, and teach with the goal of improving student outcomes (Crum & Sherman, 2008).

In a recent study conducted in California, Masumoto and Brown-Welty (2009) examined the practices of educational leaders in three high-performing, high-poverty rural high schools. The authors used case study methodology that employed a variety of data sources, including document analysis, interviews, and observations. The schools in the study met AYP standards for all student groups for two consecutive years. They also met three or more of these criteria for high schools: Academic Performance Index (API) scores above the state median, above-average proficiency rates for English Language Arts (ELA), above-average proficiency rates for math, graduation rates above the state average for five years, lower-than-average dropout rates, and above-average completion rates (Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009). Qualifying schools had to have current principals in leadership roles at the school site for more than a year. This, again, supports the choice to use principals with two or more years of experience in their current position.

Three primary findings were discovered in this study: prevalence of strong contemporary leadership practices (distributed, instructional, and transformative), multiple formal and informal mechanisms of school-community linkages, and common contributors to school success (Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009, p. 11). Like the previous qualitative studies, the researchers found strong evidence to support a direct relationship between effective leadership and student achievement. These school leaders maintain a school-wide focus on instruction and high expectations, and they develop multiple support systems for students and capitalize on the strengths of their teachers to enhance student outcomes (Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009).

Summary on Leadership and Student Achievement Studies

The quantitative research data on the effect of school leaders on student achievement clearly establishes a positive relationship. Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) provide educators with a framework of 21 specific leadership responsibilities. Marks and Printy (2003) remind those in education that leaders need an instructional and transformational focus. Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008) eschew the transformational aspects of leadership for those focused on instruction. Miller and Rowan (2006) also found leadership that focuses on instruction is more effective than that which is focused on the more organic forms of leadership. Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) and Ross and Gray (2006) provide other researchers with data that helps support the indirect effects of leadership on student achievement.

The qualitative case study data on leadership and student achievement provides a rich description of the effective practices of principals in successful schools. Providing insight that is difficult to gain through quantitative means, the qualitative data of Crum and Sherman (2008); Jacobsen et al. (2005); Masumoto and Brown-Welty (2009); and Penlington, Kington, and Day (2008) uncover the significant practices that are key to the leadership of successful schools. These studies also begin to shed light on the importance of shared or distributed leadership, which will be examined further. With an understanding of the effect of school leadership on student achievement complete, the associated manifestations of shared leadership will be examined.

Shared Leadership

The literature on school leadership and achievement points to a need for inclusive school leadership practices. This study suggests that shared leadership may be a vehicle to promote improved achievement for African American students. Shared or distributed leadership increases the self-determination of its members, which allows them to better anticipate and respond to the demands of the profession (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Singh, 2005). There is increasing evidence that shared leadership improves organizational outcomes and student learning (Harris & Spillane, 2008). Prior to discussing the benefits of shared leadership, it is important to define this complex and dynamic form of leadership.

Defining Shared Leadership

Seashore Louis et al. (2010) established a working definition for shared leadership that is consistent with that which is used in this dissertation study. Seashore Louis et al. (2010) define shared leadership broadly, "to denote teachers' influence over, and their participation in, school-wide decisions with principals" (p. 41). They also use the terms collective, distributed, and shared leadership interchangeably. With this definition in mind, the researchers sought to determine the influence of shared leadership on student achievement.

Additional researchers provide depth to the understanding of shared leadership. Collaborative leadership, as defined by Raelin (2004b), "means that everyone is in control of and can speak for the entire team, which promotes a mutual dialogue to determine what needs to be done and how to do it" (Raelin, 2004b, p. 66). Leadership should be collaborative and mutual so all members of the organization are in control of and speak for the entire organization (Raelin, 2004b, 2006). Distributed or shared leadership is about leadership practice rather than the roles, functions, routines, or structures (Allen, Morton, & Li, 2003; Murphy et al., 2006; Spillane, 2005). Shared leadership can be defined as teachers' influence over and participation in school-based decision making (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008).

In studying the nature of shared leadership, Spillane and Sherer (2004) identified three ways that leadership is "stretched over" leaders: collaborated leadership, collective leadership, and coordinated leadership. They noted that scholars and practitioners often use shared leadership, democratic leadership, and distributed leadership interchangeably,

which suggests that distributed leadership may be no more than a new label for a familiar phenomenon. This supports the view that there is fluidity in the use of the varied terms. Their work also suggests that a distributed leadership perspective "moves educators beyond seeing management as synonymous with the work of the principal and, therefore, involves multiple individuals, including teachers" (Spillane & Sherer, 2004, p. 6). Shared leadership is also considered a strategy for change that includes those committed to working collectively for the common good of the community (Allen, Morton, & Li, 2003). Using the term "leaderful practice," Raelin (2004b) suggests that leadership can be collective, concurrent, collaborative, and compassionate.

Throughout the literature, the terms shared leadership, distributed leadership, collaborative leadership, collective leadership, democratic leadership, and leaderful practice are used interchangeably to describe the practice of decentralizing leadership. Leithwood et al. (2004) found that distributed leadership was a term treated "reverentially" in the field of education. Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) first discussed the terms instructional, moral, participative, managerial, and contingent when speaking of distributed or shared leadership.

Leithwood et al. (2004) later added the term strategic. While some researchers and authors attempt to draw distinctions between the terms in play, it is important to note that all of these distinctions are considered in a context that views leadership as a team property whereby leadership is distributed among team members rather than focused on a single designated leader (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007; Grubb & Flessa, 2006; Spillane, 2005). For the purposes of this study, all of the derivative terms will be considered as entities of shared leadership.

Adding to the understanding of the terms, Spillane (2005) found that distributed leadership has garnered considerable attention in the United States and overseas. He noted that some use the term distributed leadership to describe school leadership that involves multiple leaders; while others argue that shared leadership is an organizational quality, rather than an individual attribute. Spillane et al. (2008) also lamented the lack of empirical work related to leadership distribution.

The concepts of shared and distributed leadership in education are broad and encompass any number of behaviors and processes (Duignan & Bezzina, 2006). Shared leadership occurs when team members with similar understandings of their objectives take steps to focus on collective goals (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007).

A common distinction between shared leadership and traditional forms of leadership is that the process of shared leadership includes peer or lateral influence (Bligh, Pierce, & Kohles, 2006). A distributed model of leadership centers on the interactions of individuals, rather than the actions of those in formal and informal leadership positions (Harris & Spillane, 2008).

There is general agreement that effective educational leadership can make a difference in improving learning (Leithwood et al., 2004). Effective school leaders foster staff members' growth to meet the goals of the school and school district (Grasinger & Barber, 2001). Shared leadership offers a framework for addressing the needs of all students (Rice, 2006). This, again, reinforces the potential for shared leadership as a vehicle for improving the performance of African American students.

Distributed leadership can be viewed as a diagnostic and design tool that focuses leaders on effective practices within and between schools (Harris & Spillane, 2008).

Elmore (2000) provides insight into the potential impact on academics through five principles for distributed leadership:

- The purpose of leadership is the improvement of instructional practice and performance, regardless of role
- Instructional improvement requires continuous learning.
- Learning requires modeling
- The roles and activities of leadership flow from the expertise required for learning and improvement, not from the formal dictates of the institution
- The exercise of authority requires reciprocity of accountability and capacity (p. 20)

School leaders must look for ways to improve teaching and learning for all students. Shared leadership has the potential to unlock the collective abilities of all staff members, which should result in improved academic performance. Leadership capacity grows as teachers experience a personal and collective journey through collaboration, which raises their ability to lead without a principal (Lambert, 2006).

Shared or distributed leadership increases the self-determination of its members, which allows them to better anticipate and respond to the demands of the profession (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Singh, 2005). By engaging in conversations about student performance, low-performing schools can improve through shared leadership and a culture that centers on professionalism (Lambert, 2006; Rasberry & Mahajan, 2008).

There is increasing evidence that shared leadership makes a positive difference to organizational outcomes and student learning (Harris & Spillane, 2008). The use of shared leadership has proven to contribute to improved student outcomes, increased recognition of the profession, and more effective change management (Duignan & Bezzina, 2006). Higher-achieving schools award leadership to all school members and other stakeholders at a greater level than low-performing schools (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008). Shared leadership accommodates equity and accountability by empowering

stakeholders (Singh, 2005). When school leaders offer planned approaches to leadership distribution, high levels of academic optimism prevail due to the transparency of the decision-making process (Mascall et al., 2008).

Elmore's (2005) definition of shared leadership highlights "the importance of internal accountability related to coherence and alignment among individuals' conceptions of what they are responsible for, the collective expectations of the organization, and the processes of accountability" (Elmore, 2005, p. 140). Elmore's (2005) findings suggest that traditional models of leadership are less compatible with more evolved forms of school improvement methods.

If the core focus of educational leaders is to enhance teaching and learning, then they must be challenged to be more fully aware of the possibilities of transformation (Duignan & Bezzina, 2006). Distributed forms of leadership enhance opportunities for schools to benefit from the collective capacities of their members (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Raelin, 2006).

Shared leadership has motivational and cognitive advantages over more traditional methods using single-leader models (Solansky, 2008). With the development of shared leadership, members become comfortable enough to give and receive mutual influence when confronting tasks and empowering behavior (Bligh, Pierce, & Kohles, 2006). However, for shared leadership to flourish, certain conditions must exist within an organization. Through examining the antecedent conditions and performance of shared leadership teams, Carson, Tesluk, and Marrone (2007) identified three dimensions that must exist:

> Shared purpose, the first dimension of an internal team environment enabling shared leadership, exists when team members have similar understandings of their team's primary objectives and take steps to ensure a focus on collective goals.
>
> The second dimension of an internal team environment that supports shared leadership is social support, which is defined as team members' efforts to provide emotional and psychological strength to one another.
>
> The third dimension of this internal team environment is voice. No standard definition of voice exists, as it has been used in a variety of research areas to describe constructive change-oriented communication, participation in decision making. (p. 1222)

Through a shared purpose, social supports, and voice, team members are empowered to make collaborative decisions. These dimensions reinforce and complement one another (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007). Many schools are now embarking on efforts to transform top-down hierarchies into collaborative communities where teaching and learning are shared responsibilities (Rasberry & Mahajan, 2008). With a broad definition and understanding of shared leadership in hand, the effects of shared leadership on student achievement will now be examined.

Shared Leadership and Student Achievement

> In times of great challenge or dynamic change, such as schools are now experiencing, organizations must develop cultures that are significantly different than those needed in stable times. Schools, like most organizations, tend to seek consistency and equilibrium. Avoiding equilibrium enables living organisms to avoid extinction in periods of great change. (Blankstein, 2004, p. 7)

The potential dynamics of shared leadership may assist schools in avoiding equilibrium as well as extinction. The link between shared leadership and student achievement is beginning to be explored. In their large national study, Seashore Louis, Wahlstrom, Leithwood, and Anderson (2010) found a positive link between educational

leaders and student learning outcomes. Their study, conducted over six years, surveyed more than 8,000 teachers and administrators. They found that student achievement is higher in schools where principals share leadership with teachers and the community. It is generally agreed that leadership is necessary to stimulate people to think creatively, to identify problems, and to find solutions (Allen, Morton, & Li, 2003; Grasinger & Barber, 2001; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008). Leadership today is more challenging, complicated, and unpredictable; continuing to rely on individual leaders is risky (Crevani, Lindgren, & Packendorf, 2007; Drath, 2003). The shape of leadership must be molded to address the needs of all students.

The study by Seashore Louis et al. (2010), funded by the Wallace Foundation, provides some of the most compelling evidence related to shared leadership and student achievement. They examined collective, shared, and distributed leadership effects on teachers, students, and principals. This study on shared leadership and African American student achievement uses these terms interchangeably. While Seashore Louis et al. (2010) examined all of these effects through their study, the central quality of all three is that leadership is used as a shared property by parents, teachers, principals, and staff members. This, again, affirms the use of shared leadership as an inclusive term for the purpose of this study.

In examining the effects of collective leadership, Seashore Louis et al. (2010) surveyed 2,570 teachers in 90 schools and used state-mandated assessment data to determine covariance. The survey administered to the teachers measured nine items of collective leadership, nine items of teacher capacity, 17 items of teacher motivation, and 14 items of school conditions. According to the researchers, higher-achieving schools

provide all stakeholders with greater influence on decisions than lower-performing schools (Seashore Louis et al., 2010). Collective leadership is linked indirectly to student achievement through its effects on teacher motivation and workplace settings. The researchers estimated the contribution of student socioeconomic status (SES) to the relationships examined in the study and found it to have "minimal effect on results variation" (Seashore Louis et al., 2010, p. 27).

Seashore Louis et al. (2010) next studied shared leadership effects on teachers, students, and principals. This part of their study used two surveys and included 4,491 teachers in 43 districts and 157 schools. They did a second round of surveys that included another 3,900 teachers in 40 districts and 134 schools. The researchers were seeking to determine the effect of sharing leadership with teachers, the development of trust among professionals, and the provision of support for instructional improvement. They also questioned whether leadership behaviors and attributes lead to student achievement.

While examining the many iterations of leadership, Leithwood and Mascall (2008) found that collective leadership plays an important role in student achievement. Additionally they noted that:

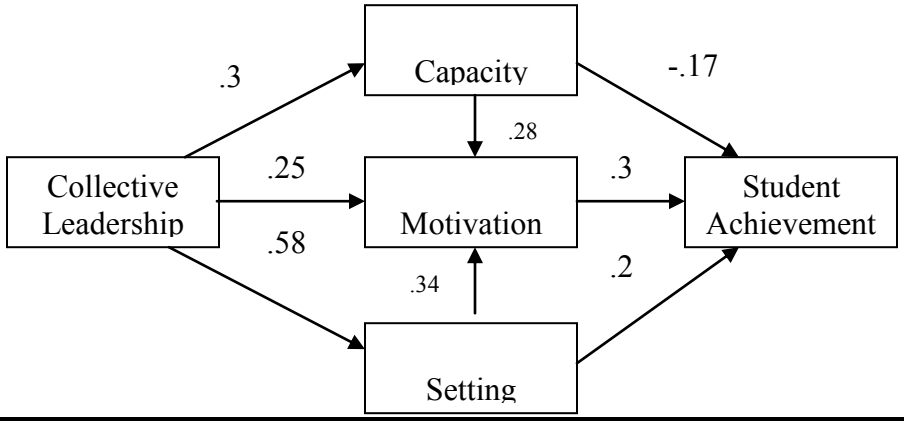
> Distributed leadership also enhances opportunities for the organization to benefit from the capacities of more of its members; it permits members to capitalize on the range of their individual strengths; and it develops among organizational members a fuller appreciation of interdependence and how one's behavior effects the organization as a whole. (p. 530)

Leithwood and Mascall (2008) argued that self-determination arises from use of distributed leadership. Their study aimed to estimate the impact of collective, or shared, leadership on key teacher variables and student achievement. Using quantitative

methodology, the researchers surveyed teachers and principals and then used website student achievement data for comparisons. The researchers found a significant relationship between variables that relate to this dissertation study. Schools with high levels of student achievement and high ratings for capacity, motivation, and setting were "more likely to see higher levels of influence from staff teams and parent advisory groups" (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008, p. 550) (see Figure 2). This suggests that shared leadership may enhance the home-to-school connection, which supports the need for this study.

Figure 2

Relationships between sources of collective leadership influence and student achievement (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008, p. 551)



It is significant to note that Leithwood and Mascall (2008) found that teachers perceived influence to be exercised in a distributed but still hierarchical manner in their schools. To address the perceptions of distributed leadership forms as they relate to student achievement, Leithwood and Mascall (2008) compared teachers' ratings of

collective leadership influences to student achievement data. Their evidence indicates that traditional leadership roles remain influential in high-performing schools, and that in the highest-performing schools, "everyone seems to have influence" (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008, p. 552). It should be noted that one of the authors (Leithwood) would later contribute to the study by Seashore Louis et al. (2010).

Seashore Louis et al. (2010) found that shared leadership indirectly affects student achievement through professional community as a locus for teacher leadership focused on instructional improvement. They noted that instructional leadership, shared leadership, and trust in the principal, when considered collectively, "have the potential to increase student learning" (Seashore Louis et al., 2010, p. 51). The researchers discussed the complex nature of the shared leadership dynamic and recommended further analysis. That recommendation supports the need for this study. Additionally, the researchers affirmed Marks and Printy's (2003) study that found that instructional leadership and shared leadership are complementary approaches. The results of the Seashore Louis et al. (2010) study affirm that principals will need to share the leadership and the workload, and their performance will be determined by how they inspire a culture of empowerment (Slater, 2008; Raelin, 2006). Principals who seek to share their leadership responsibilities may come to re-own the historical roots of modern democracy (Woods, 2006).

Adding to the research on shared leadership, Heck and Hallinger (2009) assessed the contributions of distributed leadership on school improvement and growth in math achievement. Their longitudinal study examined the effects of distributed leadership in 195 elementary schools in one state over a four-year period. Staff members, fifth-grade

students, and parents were surveyed. The math test used in the study was constructed to measure state math content standards (Heck & Hallinger, 2009). Their study found that school leadership and capacity building are mutually reinforcing in their effects over time. The researchers' findings imply the need to distribute particular types of leadership practices aimed at improving teaching and learning. Heck and Hallinger (2009), like Seashore Louis et al. (2010), noted that the indirect effects of shared or distributed leadership are substantial. They suggest more empirical studies into school leadership effects be conducted, which provides further validation for this study.

Case studies have also been conducted to examine the effects of shared leadership on student achievement (Camburn, Rowan, & Taylor, 2003; Chance & Segura, 2009; Lambert, 2006). These studies focus on leadership and collaboration at all levels of schooling. Camburn, Rowan, and Taylor (2003) studied distributed leadership in the context of elementary schools adopting comprehensive school reforms (CSR). The study was part of larger research on instructional improvement that looked at three comprehensive school reform models: the Accelerated Schools Project (ASP), America's Choice (AC), and Success for All (SFA). Data for the study were collected using the School Leader Questionnaire (SLQ) and the School Characteristics Inventory (SCI). Those sampled included principals, assistant principals, program coordinators, and others holding leadership positions. The researchers were assuming a connection between CSR models and distributed leadership. A key finding of their study was that the amount of professional development leaders received was associated with higher levels of instructional leadership and boundary spanning (Camburn, Rowan, & Taylor, 2003).

This further suggests the benefits of shared leadership on student outcomes and achievement.

Lambert (2006) conducted a study on high leadership capacity schools. Most of the schools in the study made tremendous improvements through shared leadership and a professional culture, which allowed them to remove the "low-performing" designation. Fifteen schools were selected for the study: 11 elementary schools, one junior high, and three high schools. Using qualitative measures, the researcher interviewed principals and staff members using a set of open-ended questions. The schools in the study "stopped at nothing to improve student learning" (Lambert, 2006, p. 240). Approaches to problem solving revealed a strong sense of collective responsibility in the schools. The principals led from the center or side with an emphasis on facilitating and co-participating rather than on dominance. The high leadership capacity schools in this study "created multiple interlocking groups in which conversations stimulated critical thought" (p. 251). Most importantly, the teachers in these successful schools experienced a personal and collective journey from dependency to high levels of self-organization, and they demonstrated a readiness to lead without a principal. Shared leadership, from this study's perspective, promoted student achievement and teacher capacity. Those are two highly important outcomes.

Using a similar qualitative approach, Chance and Segura (2009) examined the events and behaviors associated with improved and sustained student achievement in a rural high school. The high school highlighted in the study showed significant improvement in proficiency test pass rates, achievement of AYP, and attendance and graduation rates. The collaborative process emerged as the key theme in this study. The

three principles of collaboration that were evident were: time scheduled for teacher collaboration, structured and focused planning, and leadership that ensured planning was student-centered with accountability measures for teachers and administrators (Chance & Segura, 2009, p. 7). The Chance and Segura study (2009) validates the importance of shared leadership because it relates to student achievement. It also provides support for studying the relationship between shared leadership and African American student achievement.

The research on shared leadership and student achievement evokes the need to re-examine the role of leaders in education. When collaboration is embedded in the work of teachers and supported by school leaders, meaningful learning and improved teaching result (Helsing & Lemons, 2008; Kassissich & Barton, 2009; Kinney, 2009; Stevens et al., 2008; Zimmerman, 2006). Leadership can come from anywhere in a group (Komives et al., 2006). Shared leadership stands as a philosophy that may redefine the understanding of effective leadership and may provide educators with additional strategies for meeting the needs of African American students.

Redefining the Role of School Leadership

The literature on shared leadership makes it clear that the traditional roles associated with school leadership are being redefined. Elmore (2000), in discussing accountable leadership, noted:

> Public schools and school systems, as they are presently constituted, are simply not led in ways that enable them to respond to the increasing demands they face under standards-based reform. Further, if schools, school systems, and their leaders respond to standards-based reforms the way they have responded to other

> attempts at broad scale reform of public education over the past century, they will fail massively and visibly, with an attendant loss of public confidence and serious consequences for public education. (p. 2)

These feelings have caused a fundamental shift in thinking related to the importance of leadership in public schools. Elmore (2000), in a paper funded by the nonprofit Albert Shanker Institute, focused on the "imperatives of public school leadership and the demands of the standards-based accountability placed upon it" (p. 3). Elmore used a historical approach to analyzing leadership and noted that standards-based reforms have created fundamental problems for public schooling. Citing literature on school leadership, Elmore noted that principals are expected to "embody all of the traits and skills needed to remedy all the defects of the schools in which they work" (p. 14). He made a case for distributed leadership and suggested that the two main tasks of distributive leadership are outlining the ground rules needed to engage in large-scale improvement and describing how leadership is shared. The question that is being asked relates to whether leadership development is better directed toward the role of leadership as a social phenomenon rather than a role of authority (Crevani, Lindgren, & Packendorff, 2007; Murphy et al., 2006; Raelin, 2004a; Scribner et al., 2007; Solansky, 2008).

Questions related to shared leadership and equity are being asked on a global level. Over the past several years, shared and distributed leadership have gained attention from researchers and educators throughout the United States, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom (Spillane & Sherer, 2004). Mayrowetz (2008) examined distributed leadership and its multiple uses within the field of education and identified four ways that the field has used the term distributed leadership:

1. As a theoretical lens for looking at the activity of leadership
2. Distributed leadership for democracy
3. Distributed leadership for efficiency and effectiveness
4. Distributed leadership as human capacity building (p. 424)

Mayrowetz's (2008) objective was to catalyze discussions about how to keep research around distributed leadership both theoretically anchored and connected to problems of practice central to the field. A key point of Mayrowetz's recommendations is that it may be unadvisable to seek one universal use of distributed leadership given the proliferation of definitions that have emerged. This view supports the interchangeable use of terms such as collective, distributed, and shared. These views are also consistent with the terms discussed in the Seashore Louis et al. study (2010).

By shifting the view of leadership as a single person to viewing it as a collective construction process suggests that new patterns in leadership might be uncovered (Allen, Morton, & Li, 2003; Bligh, Pierce, & Kohles, 2006; Crevani, Lindgren, & Packendorf, 2007; Grubb & Flessa, 2006). The research suggests that principals cannot lead alone and that collaborative forms of leadership teams are necessary to the school improvement process (Chrispeels et al., 2008; Crevani, Lindgren, & Packendorff, 2007; Elmore, 2005; Grubb & Flessa, 2006; Rice, 2006). Some would also suggest that relying on school leaders to solve the problem of systemic reform is asking people to do something for which they are unqualified (Elmore, 2000).

Using a post-heroic perspective, Crevani, Lindgren, and Packendorff (2007) took thematic data from four qualitative case studies to examine shared leadership as a collective construction. They noted that organizational leadership is complex and demands too much of individuals and that "shared leadership broadens the competence of management" (p. 40). To the authors, heroic leadership (single leader) creates unhappy

and stressed leaders, while the post-heroic ideal (shared leadership) represents societal norms that enable organizations to develop. A key finding of their study is that leadership "may gain legitimacy through representativity and the extension of management" (p. 54). This lends support to the argument that shared leadership is a vehicle for equity and the improved performance of African American students.

Providing another perspective to leadership, Bligh, Pierce, and Kohles (2006) conducted a study to address the increasing need for novel leadership approaches. They noted that "peer or lateral influences offer a distinction between shared leadership and more traditional forms of leadership" (p. 297). Adding to this study's definition of shared leadership, the authors found that shared leadership practice is a team-level phenomenon enacted by multiple individuals rather than solely by those at the top. Through their meso-level theoretical model, the authors were able to identify shared leadership as being particularly effective in addressing complex problems and optimizing knowledge creation (Bligh, Pierce, & Kohles, 2006). This is consistent with the findings of the study by Seashore Louis et al. (2010) that were related to shared leadership and improved academic achievement. Woods (2006) encourages school leaders to foster shared leadership thusly:

> The challenge for contemporary educational leaders is to re-enchant education so that it becomes something more than the servant bureaucracy, enterprise and the economy, without returning to a constraining fundamentalist religious logic. It is to infuse shared and distributed leadership, which has found favor in the dominant discourse about leadership, with a dispersed ethical rationality to which all contribute. (p. 333)

As a collective property, leadership emerges from among the group. Collaborative leadership means that everyone has a voice, and mutual dialogue prevails

(Raelin, 2004b). This view considers leadership as an emergent process that is dynamic, inclusive, and transformational (Allen, Morton, & Li, 2003).

Manifestations of Shared Leadership

What is it about the shared leadership model that makes it effective with staff members, students, and school communities? The following themes and terms emerged from the literature on shared leadership and will be explored further: transformational leadership, communication, collaboration and collegiality, vision, trust, and empowerment. These manifestations of shared leadership will be discussed in relation to equity and the academic achievement of African American students. This study, in seeking to identify the relationship between shared leadership and African American student achievement, also aims to identify how shared leadership is exercised and how it may enhance the potential for improved student performance.

The quantitative and qualitative data acknowledge the effect of shared leadership on student achievement. The indirect effects of shared leadership are often cited in correlational studies (Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Seashore Louis et al., 2010). Shared leadership is transformational; it increases communication, enhances collaboration and collegiality, establishes organizational vision, increases trust, and empowers schools toward success. By examining these concepts, educators may gain a better understanding of how shared leadership may lead to improved academic achievement for African American students.

Transformational Leadership

> With the plethora of research on the topic of leadership, we continue to see ambiguous and ill-defined concepts and theories on the topic of leadership. The all encompassing topic of "leadership" has subsumed such a diversity of perspectives and topics, that hardly anyone can determine what leadership actually is, nor how it should be defined. (Stewart, 2006, p. 3)

An examination of transformational leadership may help clarify the ambiguity of which Stewart (2006) speaks. The transformational nature of shared leadership is a recurring theme throughout the literature. Stewart (2006) examined the conceptual and empirical development of transformational leadership through the works of several theorists. She reinforced the importance of using empirical evidence to support developing theories on school leadership. Stewart also suggested that "the eclectic nature of educational leadership studies renders the field unfocused and purposeless" (p. 3). A study on shared leadership and African American achievement may add another layer to the current research on school leadership.

Transformational leadership is an appealing theory that defines the differences in leadership and offers a model for leadership development (Leech & Fulton, 2008; Tucker & Russell, 2004). Tucker and Russell (2004) investigated how transformational leaders provide new direction, new inspiration, and new behaviors in their organizations. In describing transformational leadership themes, Tucker and Russell (2004) noted that these leaders "want their followers to become leaders themselves" (p. 104). This gels with the shared leadership theory and reaffirms its transformational nature.

Leech and Fulton (2008) suggest that transformational leadership "empowers followers and renews their commitment to the organization's vision" (p. 641). Exploring the relationship between teachers' perceptions of leadership, they examined the level of

shared decision making practiced in their schools. Using the Shared Education Decisions Survey–Revised (SEDS-R), the researchers studied 646 participants in 26 schools (p. 637). They used Pearson product-moment correlations, multiple regression, and both one-sample and independent sample *t*-tests to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of leadership and the level of shared decision making. Their recommendations included replicating studies in schools with high levels of shared decision making. This study on shared leadership and African American student achievement helps to answer that call. The Leech and Fulton study (2008) also ties together the relationship between shared and transformational leadership.

Transformative learning theory deals with a deepened learning process based on critical reflection (Wilhelmson, 2006). In studying transformative leadership, Wilhelmson (2006) conducted semi-structured interviews with 14 leaders in the private and public sector. Wilhelmson noted that transformative learning is "simultaneously social and individual" (p. 497). She also found that transformative learning might be understood as a "deepened learning process built upon a communicative relationship" (p. 505). Sharing leadership leads to a deeper learning process, which confirms the potential for shared leadership to improve adult and student learning. Transformational and inspiring leaders have engineered the turnaround of low-performing schools throughout the country (Wilhelm, 2008).

Transformational leadership and shared leadership, while not synonymous, are linked in many ways. A transformational perspective on leadership views the identification, acquisition, allocation, coordination, and use of the social, material, and cultural resources for teaching and learning as paramount to that leadership role

(Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001). Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001) explored how leaders think and act by developing a distributed perspective on leadership practice. The authors believe their definition of leadership, which addresses the identification and use of social, material, and cultural resources needed for teaching and learning to occur, supports a transformational view of leadership. Their study, once again, links shared or distributed leadership with transformational leadership. This also supports the research that finds instructionally focused and change-oriented leadership to be especially effective frames in which to address the challenges of urban schools (Murphy et al., 2006).

Transformational leadership proponents identify motivational, collaborative, and interpersonal skills as essential to a leader's ability to improve teaching and learning (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). Transformational leadership has been identified as a suitable model for principals leading school reform (Marks & Printy, 2003; Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009). Leaders struggling to meet the Adequate Yearly Progress standards of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) may want to pay heed to the nature of transformational leadership. As a manifestation of shared leadership, transformational leadership attempts to move away from traditional hierarchical structures that constrain and debilitate the building of leadership density within schools (Carter, 2002). Leithwood et al. (2004) use transformational leadership interchangeably with other forms of distributed leadership. Transformational leadership is focused on higher order, more intrinsic and moral motives and needs (Allen, Morton, & Li, 2003).

Transformational leaders employ overt practices that include vision building and goal setting to foster collaborative cultures, set high performance expectations, and

provide psychological and material support to staff members (Leithwood, Steinbach, & Ryan, 1997). Transformational leadership seeks to move leaders away from a bureaucratic system of managing people to a more professional system that values shared problem solving and decision making (Stewart, 2006). Leech and Fulton (2008) argued that to meet the challenges of guiding today's schools, leaders must "rely more on applying elements from research of cultural, transformational, and participatory management" (p. 632). These practices can be used to enhance outcomes for students (Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009). Transformational leaders affect the culture of schools through teaming, innovation, and increased productivity (Tucker & Russell, 2004).

Some argue that transformational leadership is a necessary but insufficient condition for instructional leadership (Marks & Printy, 2003). Marks and Printy (2003) suggest that when transformational and shared leadership coexist in an integrated form, the influence on school performance, measured by the quality of its pedagogy and the achievement of its students, is substantial. It has also been argued that a focus on instructional leadership is more appropriate than a focus on transformational leadership (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). The relevant point here is that school leaders with a lack of instructional knowledge may find it difficult to transform school culture. Transformational and instructional leadership are not mutually exclusive.

Understanding school leadership through a transformational perspective means a value is placed on leadership as an emergent process that is dynamic, inclusive, and transforming (Allen, Morton, & Li, 2003). It can also be argued that transformational leadership is contextually grounded with identifiable practices that give meaning to

teachers and students (Allen, Morton, & Li, 2003). In their study (2003), Allen, Morton, and Li examined the shared leadership practices of 578 groups and agencies in 114 communities. A three-phase mail survey was used to determine the extent to which shared leadership practices were occurring in the groups and organizations. They noted that leadership skills are "not embedded in the individual, but rather in group relations" (p. 5). The researchers also called for more research on shared leadership practices, the relationship among these practices, and the capacities of groups to solve problems (Allen, Morton, & Li, 2003).

Transformational leadership targets simplistic and traditional notions of organizational restructuring as being insufficient for meeting the needs of today's students. The new "transformational" discourse emphasizes objectives that require a radical approach to both school and system-level redesign and to leadership of change management itself (Carter, 2002). In her study, Carter (2002) analyzed contemporary forms of leadership and management within schools in urban and challenging contexts. The key themes uncovered were that networking and experimentation, partnership and stakeholder involvement, and participation and innovation highlight the "need to move away from traditional hierarchical structures toward the building of leadership density" (p. 57).

The old systems of privilege and preference, which created exclusivity in schools, are unraveling under the weight of transformational leadership (Howard, 2007). Howard (2007) noted that the movement toward transformational leadership means that school leaders will "need to face the limits of their own knowledge and skills" (p. 20). The call for transformative leaders, who are both active, reflective scholars and practitioners, has

been made (Young, Mountford, & Skrla, 2006). The question of who and how many will answer that call remains.

Communication

Shared leadership can only be accomplished through effective communication, which is the key to establishing collaborative relationships and raising the collective capacity of schools (Berkey & Dow, 2008; Nevarez & Wood, 2007; Rice, 2006; Slater, 2008). Schools are expected to be places where students and staff are nurtured and open and honest communication is encouraged (Wagner, 2006). No one principal can know all the stages of concern on a given staff (Kelehear, 2003).

While investigating school principals' assumptions about human nature and the associated implications for leadership, Sabanci (2008) notes that effective communication requires multiple layers of synergy:

> In a work environment, the size of the organization, the relationships including the number of levels in the management hierarchy, the assignments of tasks and responsibilities, the grouping of individuals into departments and departments into organization, the design of the systems to ensure effective communication and integration of efforts among departments and across levels of the organization are important factors in determining how human nature should be perceived and managed. (p. 512)

Sabanci (2008) is alluding to the relationship component of shared leadership that calls for people-oriented, employee-centered leaders who value democratic ideas and behaviors. Sabanci (2008) surveyed principals about their assumptions related to assistant principals and teachers and discussed the relationship between assumptions on human nature and leadership style. Sabanci (2008) notes that the literature related to the

emerging approaches to leadership have centered on two concepts: "people-oriented and management-centered" (p. 515). The effects of shared leadership rely on the people-oriented skills.

By closely examining school culture, Nevarez and Wood (2007) found that schools rich in respect and a sense of community promote solid relationships and communication. They argued that urban school leaders can change school conditions by developing proficient and culturally competent teachers and administrators. They also proposed that school leaders need to "affirm and use diversity to improve public schools" (p. 277). Their Leadership in Diversity Continuum Model (LDCM) helped leaders understand how their identity and views inform their leadership style (Nevarez & Wood, 2007). Their seven stages of leadership were: prohibiting, segregation, color-blind, pretext, recognition, value, and affirmation. The researchers sought to develop a tool for school leaders to reflect on their practices, communication being the key asset. Nevarez and Wood (2007) also found that the literature supports the need for leadership programs to prepare leaders to successfully work with urban schools. They felt that these programs must train them to "value diversity and respond to the changing diversity of urban communities" (p. 267). Communication can be enhanced through "positive school culture, inter-organizational confidence, and respect" (p. 274).

Effective communication allows teachers to pool their talents and change the course of events for their students (Berkey & Dow, 2008; Kelehear, 2003). Expert collaborators are often considered excellent communicators (Behl, 2003). Practices related to positive communication can have strong and direct effects on the decision-making process (Bauer & Bogotch, 2006). Advocates for democratic approaches to

leadership cite communication as the key to organizational success (Ryan & Rottman, 2009).

Slater (2008) researched the various pathways to building leadership capacity and found that four basic communication skills have been identified by those seeking to build leadership capacity:

1. Listening
2. Verbal and Non-Verbal Behavior
3. Openness
4. Empathy and Emotional Intelligence (p. 62)

In Slater's (2008) qualitative study, it was discovered that leaders can use these communication techniques to encourage shared leadership and build organizational capacity. Through interviews with participants in 14 elementary schools, she found that communication skills support collaboration and nurture empowerment. The study participants agreed that listening is the most important skill in communication. Slater (2008) also found that "principals who have strong nonverbal skills are aware of their own nonverbal cues" (p. 65). Wagner (2006) also examined leadership communication and added that "open and honest communication allows for an abundance of humor and organizational trust" (p. 41).

In a supporting study, Rice (2006) also investigated communication within the shared leadership framework. Her case study focused on an urban high school in the Midwest and used interviews and observations to gather data. Rice found that, in practice, shared leadership can take the form of book clubs or study groups focused on effective communication, the change process, and inclusive practices. She identified effective communication as essential to the success of shared leadership among diverse

participants. This finding lends credence to the use of shared leadership as a tool for equity and the improved academic performance of African American students.

Extending the research on shared leadership, Ryan and Rottman (2009) identified communication as a potential stumbling block, particularly in diverse schools. Their study explored efforts to promote democratic practice in a diverse school context, such as including teachers, parents, and students in leadership roles. This focus is consistent with the practices of shared leadership. The researchers used qualitative methods, including interviews and case studies. Their research reminds educational leaders that "members of diverse school communities, including administrators, will not always find it easy to communicate with those whose backgrounds and life experiences differ from their own" (p. 479). They are hopeful, however, that school leaders will be able to find ways to communicate across these differences and help others do the same (Ryan & Rottman, 2009).

Bauer and Bogotch (2006) chide educators to remember that while the focus of research may have shifted toward testing and accountability, "the need for shared decision making has not been erased from the expectations of school leadership" (p. 449). Their empirical study on the variables related to the practices engaged in by site-based teams provides insight into the importance of communication. The researchers tested a path model relating the resources provided to site teams and measures related to site team practices to outcomes associated with site-based decision making (SBM). They found that practices related to positive communication had strong effects on enhancing decision-making practices related to improving educational services (Bauer & Bogotch, 2006).

The leadership literature confirms that shared leadership can only be accomplished through effective communication, which is the key to establishing collaborative relationships and raising the collective capacity of schools (Berkey & Dow, 2008; Nevarez & Wood, 2007; Rice, 2006; Slater, 2008).

Collaboration and Collegiality

Collaboration and collegiality are terms that are consistently intertwined with efforts toward shared leadership. While there have been historical patterns of hierarchical control in school systems, the current trend is toward more democratic forms of school governance (Mullen, 2008; Zaretsky, 2004). Collaboration is a relatively generic term defined as an agreement to work together (Lumby, 2009). Collegiality, on the other hand, is considered to be a collaborative process that involves the devolution of power to teachers and stakeholders (Singh, 2005; Walker, 1994).

Blankstein (2004) and David (2009) caution leaders to remember that not all collaboration is good. It must occur with the overall goals of the school in mind and be "open-ended to incorporate new ideas from inside and outside the team" (Blankstein, 2004, p. 130). Behl (2003) also advises that the concept of collaboration can be complex due to the nature of human beings and relationships, which inherently can be convoluted. There also remains a tendency for teachers to work in isolation. This can be overcome by setting a precedent for collaboration and by making it a natural recourse for schools (Mai, 2004).

The nature of collaboration suggests that leadership must be a shared role with team members taking shared responsibility for what needs to be done (Behl, 2003; Graczewski et al., 2007; Mai, 2004; Saphier, King, & D'Auria, 2006;). The nature of collegiality rests in a person's willingness to share responsibilities and accountability for his or her actions (Singh, 2005). This view is important in making all people feel included and for meeting the needs of all students, especially those disproportionally identified for remediation in schools (Busch et al., 2008; Combs, Miser, & Whitaker, 1999; Komives et al., 2006).

Collegial learning opportunities for teachers can improve both teaching and student achievement (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; David, 2009; Martin & Dowson, 2009; Walker, 1994). Collegiality and professionalism are considered to be a function of implicit and explicit norms among staff members (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). School leaders stand in a unique position to mediate between external federal and state policy and their own staffs as they direct their school responses to said legislation (Murphy et al., 2006).

Williams, Tabernik, and Krivak (2009), examined the power of leadership, collaboration, and professional development and noted the following factors that are related to producing meaningful results:

> The superintendents and teacher leaders established a model of collaboration, which was unique in that it included urban, rural, and suburban school districts. Also the collaboration brought together teachers, administrators, and curriculum experts from specific grade levels and subject areas across these districts to examine what was taught, to review international standards of excellence and to examine how the subject matter should be taught. (p. 442)

In discussing the collaborative efforts of superintendents and teacher leaders, Williams, Tabernik, and Krivak (2009) reinforce the importance of school

superintendents in determining new curriculum and teaching strategies. The superintendents formed the Science and Mathematics Achievement Required for Tomorrow (SMART) Consortium in 1998 with the belief that superintendents can have a measureable effect on student learning. The goals of the consortium included improving math and science achievement, which they judged by student performance on the Ohio Proficiency Tests. Their results indicated that "collaboration, leadership, and targeted professional development can lead to improved student achievement and offset the effects of poverty" (p. 449). This finding connects well with the goals of this study relative to shared leadership and African American student achievement. Collaboration among members is important in developing effective teams (Turk et al., 2002; Youngs & King, 2002). This collaboration can be a function of groups of schools willing to form learning networks to share knowledge, creation, and innovation (Southworth & DuQuesnay, 2005).

Rafoth and Foriska (2006) further investigated the administrator's role in promoting effective problem-solving teams and found that desired administrative support comes from a combination of leading and allowing others to solve problems and share responsibilities. Collaborative teams empower members to act when solving instructional problems (Lumby, 2009; Rafoth & Foriska, 2006; Slater, 2008). Ackerman and MacKenzie (2006) support that view, adding that teacher leadership offers a variety of unseen opportunities to "force out established frames of reference and genuinely improve schools" (p. 69).

By examining collaborative approaches to school improvement, Chance and Segura (2009) found that both organizational and instructional leadership behaviors are

needed to develop successful collaborative efforts that lead to improved student achievement. They examined the events and behaviors associated with the improved and sustained achievement in a rural high school. Using case study methodology, the researchers investigated what factors were present in the school that led to improved student achievement. They discovered that the process of school improvement and change was driven through collaboration by providing teachers with the time to plan and work together, which allowed them to become involved in the decision-making process (Segura, 2009). This speaks to the idea that running a school through shared decision making is time intensive, yet worthwhile (Cameron, 2005).

Muller and Thorn (2007) also identified the provision of time for common planning among teachers as critical to the collaborative process. These collaborative sessions allow teachers to address a variety of issues that affect school climate, teacher morale, and student achievement. The teachers used school data to address grading consistency, Advanced Placement (AP) participation, and the under-representation of some student groups in AP classes. Through shared decision making, the school administrators "trust that their teachers will be better able to solve problems" (p. 48). The collaborative process requires staff members to set realistic expectations for time, scheduling, and resources (David, 2009; Graczewski et al., 2007).

Others have identified a learning team model of professional development as a means for providing deeper, ongoing, teacher-directed learning (Chappuis, Chappuis, & Stiggins, 2009; Stevens et al., 2008). Chappuis, Chappuis, and Stiggins (2009) looked at the nature of teacher learning teams and noted the following:

> Collaborative learning teams provide more than one-time exposure to new ideas. Over time, they can change day-to-day teaching by giving teachers the ongoing

> opportunity to learn together, apply learning to the classroom, and reflect on what works and why.
>
> Collaborative learning teams can transform the nature of adult interaction and learning in schools by engaging teachers in the same process of continual learning and improvement that we ask our students to strive for in their work. (p. 60)

This reinforces the need for a new view of school leadership that includes all stakeholders (Gandy, Pierce & Smith, 2009). Gandy, Pierce, and Smith (2009) developed a project that placed teacher candidates in leadership roles with community organizations to increase student learning. The projects contributed to the development of leadership skills and self-confidence (Gandy, Pierce, & Smith, 2009). This affirms the value of collaboration and the potential for shared leadership.

In seeking to support school leaders, DuFour and Marzano (2009) identified high-leverage strategies for principals and emphatically established that inclusive leaders should:

- Create schedules to ensure that teams meet at least one hour every week
- Create structures to ensure that collaborative team time focuses on issues and questions that directly affect student learning, such as "What evidence do we have that our students are acquiring the knowledge and skills we have agreed are most essential to their continued success?"
- Provide teams with the training, support, resources, tools, and templates they need to become effective in this new structure. He or she solicits staff insights regarding obstacles to collaboration and ideas for removing those obstacles (p. 64)

DuFour and Marzano (2009) share a vision for school leadership that values the collaborative team process. They encourage principals to "spend less time supervising and more time working collaboratively with teams to examine student learning and help more students achieve at higher levels" (p. 68).

Prior to Dufour and Marzano's (2009) work, Marks and Printy (2003) also viewed the principal as key in sharing leadership and promoting active collaboration. They

investigated the connection between school leadership and student performance, as well as the potential for active collaboration around instructional matters to enhance the quality of teaching and student performance. They found that active collaboration around instruction and assessment leads to school improvement. Masumoto and Brown-Welty (2009) add to this by noting that contemporary leadership practices "involve collaboration among teachers for curriculum and lesson improvements, assessment data, and data-centered decision making" (p. 11).

Using case study examples, Kassissich and Barton (2009) identified the following as critical in establishing a culture of collaboration:

- Including teacher leaders in all the instructional improvement work at the school
- Providing forums for discussion and inquiry about the instructional improvement process
- Making learning opportunities available to increase staff members' knowledge base for collaboration
- Asking staff members to read common articles and discuss implications for their work
- Keeping a relentless focus on doing the best thing for each student (p. 25)

Kassissich and Barton (2009) found that instructional and organizational leaders can influence student learning by "creating quality teacher learning experiences in systematic and meaningful ways" (p. 26). Their key point is that when collaboration is embedded in their work and supported by leadership, improved teaching follows (Kassissich & Barton, 2009). This, again, supports the use of shared leadership as a tool for improved student achievement.

Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) also note that collegiality and collaboration require the creation of thoughtful structures to be truly effective. Meaningful collaboration requires school leaders to foster a school-wide professional

community through collective and organized means (Youngs & King, 2002). Collaboration, thus, is a significant manifestation of shared leadership.

Vision

Shared leadership and vision are linked throughout the literature. Theoharis (2007, 2008) points out that school leaders who share common social justice traits also have a "fierce commitment to their vision of social justice for themselves and their staffs" (p. 13). He also notes that these educators provide "passionate visionary leadership supported by their deep caring and sincere enthusiasm" (p. 13). Shared vision is a key factor in the success of school leaders who are focused on engaging school cultures in values-oriented and democratic ideals (Perlstein, 2004; Woods, 2006).

Skillful leaders focus attention on the key aspects of a school's vision and work to communicate that vision clearly (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Without principal leadership, systemic school change directed at equity and critical student learning is unlikely (Kose, 2007). To illustrate the importance of vision, it is interesting to note that Kose (2007) and Blankstein (2004) both list vision first in their descriptions of core knowledge for staffs and professional learning communities, respectively:

> At least three areas established the core of what all staff should know: (a) vision, (b) school-wide program coherence, and (c) complementary professional development. (Kose, 2007, p. 36)

- Principle 1 – Common vision, mission, values and goals
- Principle 2 – Ensuring achievement for all students: creating systems for prevention and intervention
- Principle 3 – Collaborative teaming focused on teaching and learning
- Principle 4 – Using data to guide decision making and continuous improvement
- Principle 5 – Gaining active engagement from family and community

- Principle 6 – Building sustainable leadership capacity (Blankstein, 2004, p. 56)

Mosenthal, Lipson, and Torncello (2004) examined the practices of six schools that were successful with reading achievement and listed vision second on their list of factors common to successful schools:

> (1) commitment to literacy improvement strong for 8-10 years with stable administration and curricular leadership in literacy, (2) the school community was focused, working toward a shared vision of student achievement, with open communication among the faculty, (3) the k-4 teachers were knowledgeable and articulate about their work, and (4) opportunities and ample time were provided for students to read and discuss books. (p. 343)

In studying the context and practices of six Vermont schools whose students met or exceeded state performance standards, Mosenthal, Lipson, and Torncello (2004) focused specifically on reading instruction. They used observations and interviews to collect data to determine the variance in the practices of successful schools. A key finding of their study was that there was no evidence that low-socioeconomic schools cannot achieve success (Mosenthal, Lipson, & Torncello, 2004).

Using case study methodology, Barnett and McCormick (2003) investigated transformational leadership behavior and vision in schools. They interviewed principals and teachers in four high schools. Applying cross-case analysis, the researchers developed a two-dimensional matrix to compare and contrast what teachers and principals had to say about leadership in schools. They noted that vision is about "being focused on the needs of individual students, as well as on the improvement of teaching and learning" (p. 64). Teachers and principals perceive vision to be "the future direction that the school community has agreed to pursue" (p. 65). The researchers found that vision provides direction and purpose and that developing a shared vision is enhanced

through the collaborative process. This promotes the belief that a clear and simple vision can encourage buy-in from teachers (Muijis & Harris, 2007; Printy & Marks, 2006).

Transformational leaders value and use a collective vision. They emphasize new possibilities and promote a compelling vision of the future due to their own strong sense of purpose (Tucker & Russell, 2004). Tucker and Russell (2004) noted that transformational leadership "grows out of a sense of vision and energy" (p. 105). Effective leaders promote a vision in which decisional ownership and accountability is distributed among all members of the organization (Leech & Fulton, 2008).

Pedagogical vision and school leadership are linked in that pedagogical vision incorporates the processes of leading and teaching to support the construction and reconstruction of meaning (Adalbjarnardottir & Runarsdottir, 2006). Using a single case study, Adalbjarnardottir and Runarsdottir (2006) explored the perspectives and experiences of an elementary principal regarding his pedagogical vision. The researchers interviewed the principal and analyzed his responses via a model that examines teacher professional awareness. They found that vision allows schools to respond to new social situations created by the economic globalization and multicultural migration occurring in the United States and abroad. This finding supports the potential for vision, as a manifestation of shared leadership, to enhance learning for African American students.

In regard to team learning, a common language must be developed to adopt a shared vision (Morgan & Clonts, 2008; Thompson & McKelvy, 2007). The collegial nature of shared leadership is enhanced when a loyal and cohesive staff shares an inspirational vision (Leithwood, Steinbach, & Ryan, 1997; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). In schools where learning and change dominate the shared vision, people see

learning as a collaborative journey and are more willing to take risks (Combs, Miser, & Whitaker, 1999). When conflicts in vision arise, staff morale can impede and sometimes reverse school improvement (Margolis & Nagel, 2006).

Traditional views of leadership are based on an assumption of powerlessness, which diminishes the potential of vision. In organizations truly dedicated to learning, vision clarifies, expands, and simplifies the tasks at hand to create a shared mental model (Leech & Fulton, 2008; Senge, 1990). With shared leadership, no one is asked to sacrifice his or her personal interests to the team; rather "the shared vision becomes an extension of each individual's personal vision" (Senge, 1990, p. 234).

Hipp and Huffman (2000) studied 19 diverse schools committed to whole-school reform and found consistent leadership practices in high-readiness schools. The researchers completed a five-year exploration on the development of professional learning communities. Through interviews, the researchers analyzed key points, key quotes, and emerging themes. They found that when the principal and staff decide on the values and vision collaboratively, the shared vision and values guide the principal and staff to engage cooperatively in making collective and substantive decisions (Hipp & Huffman, 2000; Kassissich & Barton, 2009). The discussions within schools can then focus on teaching and learning. Shared vision that is unrelated to or diverges from improved teaching and learning is fruitless (Hipp & Huffman, 2000).

Vision also can have an impact on student performance. Gu, Sammons, and Mehta (2008) conducted a longitudinal, mixed-method study to investigate the impact of school leadership on student outcomes. They found that the achievement of a common vision plays a role in "motivating and focusing the staff's collective efforts to promote

improved student performance in low-performing schools" (p. 52). With their investigation, they were able to establish a connection between shared leadership practices, vision, and student performance.

At the core of many definitions for leadership are the functions of providing direction and exercising influence (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Both require vision. School leaders who share leadership and advocate for social justice must provide, support, and foster the necessary vision. Teachers need assistance in focusing conversations, sharing tools, and examining student work (Morgan & Clonts, 2008). The importance of vision to a successful learning organization cannot be overstated. Effective vision for equity and social justice rests within the idea that teachers can and must educate every student and that respectful and open relationships with colleagues matter (Printy & Marks, 2006). In these schools, staff members do not see learning as an arrival point, rather the schools arrange themselves so that the learning needs of all are met; people feel unthreatened; a passion for learning is fostered; communication is effective; goals are aligned; and cooperation and collaboration flourish (Combs, Miser, & Whitaker, 1999).

If students are to engage in the type of learning required in this changing world, the adults in their lives must model the process of learning for them (Thompson & McKelvy, 2007). Team learning and shared vision must become procedural expectations for the way collaborative work gets done (Thompson & McKelvy, 2007). When school leaders involve themselves in the teaching and learning process, they gain a deeper understanding of what it takes to sustain the change that is needed to improve student performance (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). Leadership with vision also provides

school leaders with the ability to respond to future challenges or opportunities (Penlington, Kington, & Day, 2008).

Trust

The concept and application of trust is central in establishing shared leadership and social justice. Trust in educational settings, while understudied, plays an important role in schools (Daly, 2009). The concept of relational trust in education focuses on the distinct role of relationships and obligations and the expectations associated with each (Blankstein, 2004; Wagner, 2006). When expectations are met, trust is enhanced, and when it is not, trust diminishes (Blankstein, 2004).

Cosner (2009) explored the cultivation of collegial trust in 11 high school principals noted for their expertise with capacity building. Cosner (2009) studied how these principals build capacity through organizational trust and outlined three leadership practices that foster and cultivate collegial trust:

> Drawing from literature on the development of knowledge-based trust between colleagues, three broad actions, enacted in varied and occasionally context specific ways, appear especially important with respect to the cultivation of collegial trust–actions that principals took (a) to increase interaction time within department meetings, staff meetings and site-based professional staff development; (b) to increase interaction time by initiating new interaction forums: and (c) that appear salient for increasing the likelihood of fostering trust between teachers in interactive contexts. (p. 279)

Using case study methodology, Cosner (2009) reinforces the need for school leaders to provide time for collegial planning and interaction. Cosner (2009) sees collegial trust as "a central feature of principals' capacity-building work" (p. 263). Cosner (2009) also found that principals interested in building organizational capacity are

motivated to engage in trust building due to their value of trust's role or to school-wide concerns. As a manifestation of shared leadership, trust stands as a key component relative to teacher capacity and student achievement.

Through their research on school improvement, Daly and Chrispeels (2005) explored trust, self- and collective efficacy, positive psychology, and positive organizational scholarship as they relate to moving schools from deficit orientations to strengths-based approaches. In discussing equity and excellence, they noted that trust "can ameliorate organizational stress" (p. 10). They added that trust alone is not enough and that "individual and collective beliefs of efficacy are also necessary strengths-based components for building school capacity" (p. 14). They identified trust, efficacy, and positive psychology as essential in developing positive organizations. Additionally, trust is increased when school leaders provide direction that is aligned with school goals and supportive in nature (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). Instructional leadership enhances trust. The degree to which principals pay attention to teaching and learning sends a message to teachers about the importance of these activities (Mitchell & Castle, 2005).

Trust has also been identified as a critical factor for schools identified for program improvement (Daly, 2009). Daly (2009) examined the trust and leadership dimensions that support empowerment by surveying and interviewing 252 teachers in eight schools. In reflecting on rigid response in an age of accountability and the potential of leadership and trust, Daly (2009) identified three key findings:

> First, teachers in Program Improvement (PI) schools perceive significantly greater levels of threat-rigid response and significantly less school- and district-level trust than do their peers in non-PI schools. Second, for teachers in PI settings, regardless of school or district view, higher perceived levels of trust predicted a lower perceived threat-rigid response. Third, for administrators in PI settings,

> regardless of school or district view, higher perceived leadership behaviors predicted less threat-rigid responses. (p. 204)

These findings have significant implications for school leaders who are seeking to meet the needs of African American students. Using a two-phase, mixed-method design, Daly (2009) found that administrators in Program Improvement schools may need to shift from focusing on the technical aspects of school leadership to building trusting relationships that effectively spread information and enhance opportunities for flexible responses. Daly (2009) reminds administrators that empowering and involving teachers to lead innovation and have ownership of decisions may involve "aligning perceptions between teachers and school leaders" (p. 209).

Tschannen-Moran (2009) examined the role of leadership orientation and trust in fostering teacher professionalism in schools. This quantitative study looked at the level of trust in the principal, teacher colleagues, and clients. The researcher surveyed 2,355 teachers in 80 middle schools that were diverse in size, racial composition, and setting. Tschannen-Moran's findings suggest that school leaders who foster teacher professionalism also inspire trust in their faculty (Blase & Blase, 1997; Tschannen-Moran, 2009). While increasing the level of trust in administrators may seem to be a soft skill, the positive effects on school climate may be an indirect way of improving classroom practice (Wagner, 2006; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). Additionally, when faculty trust in the principal is aligned with faculty trust in colleagues, "the principal consequently sets the tone for the quality of relationships among adults in the building" (Tschannen-Moran, 2009, p. 240).

Many studies focused on school leadership identify trust as an integral component of school success and student achievement (Billet et al., 2007; Blase & Blase, 1997;

Bligh & Pierce, 2006; Kassissich & Barton, 2009; Lewis & Caldwell, 2005; Muijis & Harris, 2007; Muller & Thorn, 2007; Slater, 2008; Thompson & McKelvy, 2007; Wagner, 2006; Wilhelmson, 2006; Youngs & King, 2002). These studies all cite the critical dynamic and delicate balance between the school principal and teachers.

A collective consciousness emanates from school leaders who value shared leadership, which generates an increased level of trust throughout the course of a school year (Muller & Thorn, 2007). Professional learning communities and transformative learning can only emerge from school cultures that value trust and risk-taking and that offer support (Thompson & McKelvy, 2007; Wilhelmson, 2006).

Influence involves power; therefore, "the ability to share influence necessitates some level of basic trust in other team members' motives and abilities" (Bligh, Pierce, & Kohles, 2006, p. 307). Bligh, Pierce, and Kohles (2006) developed a meso-level theoretical model that outlined the relationship between shared leadership with trust as an intermediary process. They distinguished between affective-based trust and mutual cognitive-based trust. Individuals with affective-based trust develop strong personal value links. Individuals with cognitive-based trust are likely to experience improved professional relationships and enhanced collaboration (Bligh, Pierce, & Kohles, 2006). When there are high levels of group trust, teacher leadership operates best (Muijis & Harris, 2007). Trust can be enhanced when principals connect teachers with external expertise and create internal structures by establishing trusting relations with school staff (Youngs & King, 2002).

The relationship between trust and shared leadership is reciprocal, which makes it difficult to isolate within the context of shared leadership. Slater (2008) used a

qualitative focus group study to examine how principals use communication strategies and skills to foster the empowerment of other stakeholders within the context of collaborative initiatives. The focus group included parents, principals, assistant/vice principals, and teachers. The participants, from 14 elementary schools, were interviewed over eight focus group sessions. The researcher noted that traditional hierarchical approaches to leadership are "less likely to involve shared leadership norms that promote collaboration and resultantly enhance trust" (p. 59). The ability to capture people's energy by capitalizing on their various leadership attributes is a key characteristic for future leaders. This would suggest that trust is enhanced through shared leadership, which might also increase the potential for improved student achievement.

As team members demonstrate self-leadership strategies, they send positive messages to other team members that they are trustworthy, which, in turn, enhances the team's capacity (Bligh, Pierce, & Kohles, 2006). The upward spiral of positive emotion associated with trust and shared leadership becomes contagious and can build psychological and social capital within schools (Daly & Chrispeels, 2005). Trust, therefore, is a required component of shared leadership for equity. Schools that are able to foster and grow trust within their walls offer a model of effective expectations for students. When a staff has high levels of trust, it can be expected that this correspondingly will carry over to students and increase their capacity to achieve.

Empowerment

Shared leadership focused on equity empowers teachers and schools to succeed with African American students. Empowerment is a beneficial byproduct of shared leadership. Dee, Henkin, and Duemer (2003) studied the structural antecedents and psychological correlates of teacher empowerment. Using survey methodology, the researchers derived responses from 210 teachers in eight elementary schools. They found that "empowered teachers with increased motivation, enhanced feelings of meaning, and strong organizational commitment are at the root of dynamic school progress" (p. 273). The researchers supported the use of shared leadership as a collaborative structure through which educators and schools can reach their goals. The only barrier to the positive benefits of shared leadership and its resultant empowerment is teachers' willingness to participate (Leech & Fulton, 2008).

Empowerment and shared leadership are tied together closely. With empowerment comes accountability, which is best achieved through shared leadership (Singh, 2005). Singh (2005) used the Collegial Leadership Model of Emancipation (COLME) to address the concerns of transforming traditional management practices in secondary schools. The four metaphorical pillars of the COLME model are "devolution of power, empowerment, shared decision making, and shared leadership" (p. 12). The researchers' primary purpose was to determine the relevance of the COLME as a framework to transform secondary schools. Singh (2005) reminds educators that empowerment does not imply a takeover by a specific group of stakeholders; "rather it connotes empowering stakeholders to participate fully in the decision-making process of

the school" (p. 17). The researcher was also clear in pointing out that shared leadership accommodates equity of representation and accountability. This supports the contention that shared leadership can be a vehicle for the improved performance of African American students. Functionally, sharing leadership causes teams to express more empowering behaviors that promote task development among several members, which helps to ensure that increasingly complex tasks can be completed (Wood, 2005).

Blase and Blase (1997) examined the micropolitical orientation of facilitative school principals and their effect on teachers' sense of empowerment. Their study used an open-ended inductive format to investigate the broad questions related to the principal's influence on teacher empowerment. The researchers found the following:

> Clearly, teachers' sense of empowerment as it relates to facilitative leadership includes significant changes in feelings, thinking and behavior for both school-wide and classroom involvement, and such changes occur within a few years of successfully initiating shared governance and facilitative leadership. (p.145)

Blase and Blase (1997) targeted the link between shared leadership and teacher empowerment. They identified four practices that enhanced a teacher's sense of empowerment: staff development, professional literature/information, basic resources, and assistance in problem solving (p. 153). Through their grounded theory methodology, the researchers found that facilitative leadership contributes dramatically to teacher empowerment.

The sense of psychological empowerment motivates team members beyond the freedom to function autonomously and moves them to act upon that freedom (Wood, 2005). Teachers who are empowered feel less threatened by the demands associated with current accountability measures (Daly, 2009). Shared leadership behaviors support collaboration and nurture the empowerment and capacity of other individuals in the

school (Bezzina, 2004; Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007; Slater, 2008; Thompson & McKelvy, 2007).

In comparing directive leadership with participative leadership, Somech (2005) found that participative leaders enhance teacher performance through two motivational mechanisms: organizational commitment and teacher empowerment. Somech's study used survey methodology to investigate the opinions of 140 teams from 140 elementary schools. Data were collected from 712 teachers. The measures employed assessed the teachers' understanding of participative and directive leadership, organizational commitment, teachers' empowerment, and team effectiveness.

The results of Somech's study (2005) supported previous research that noted that to improve teachers' innovativeness, "they need to be recognized as experts in their fields, have input about what they do and how they do it, feel that they are engaged in meaningful work, and be respected by others" (p. 792). This further illustrates the dynamic nature of shared leadership and its effect on student achievement via enhancing teacher capacity. Collaborative social structures, including self-managed teams, can serve to promote empowerment and raise student achievement (Dee, Henkin, & Duemer, 2003). Shared leadership leads to greater team empowerment by heightening team members' sense of meaningfulness, autonomy, impact, and potency depending on the stage of the team's development (Bezzina, 2004; Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007).

The confident principal understands the power of developing teacher and student leaders so that empowerment translates to a successful school for everyone (Thompson & McKelvy, 2007). When schools are universally successful, the democratic aims of education can be achieved. Empowered principals create empowered teachers who create

empowered students. This has strong implications for the academic performance of African American students.

In discussing the pathways to building leadership capacity, Slater (2008) accurately describes this dynamic:

> Within the complex working of today's school, as principals share the lead and the load, the success of their performance will be determined by their ability to inspire a culture of empowerment by acting as "hero makers" rather than heroes. (p. 55)

Slater (2008) reminds leaders that principals should be shining the light of recognition upon our staffs and students in hopes of empowering their success. By sharing leadership and its "load," principals magnify the abilities of teachers and empower all stakeholders toward success. This leads to improved achievement for all students.

Literature Review Summary

This study sought to answer the following questions: Do principals who use a shared leadership approach to managing their schools promote the improved academic performance of African American students, as measured by the MSA? Is shared leadership a vehicle for promoting and improving the capacity of teachers and African American students to succeed? What role can (and does) shared leadership hold in improving the performance of African American students? Is the academic achievement of African American students higher in schools where the principal has a strong commitment to shared leadership?

The first section of the literature review focused on the general findings related to the effects of leadership on student achievement. Quantitative and qualitative evidence supports the clear connection between school leadership and student achievement. The second section of the literature review examined and defined shared leadership relative to student achievement. There is a growing body of research evidence that suggests the shared leadership practices of principals are leading to improved student performance. The third section examined the manifestations of shared leadership. The literature suggests that shared leadership is transformational, improves communication, and fosters collaboration and collegiality. Additionally, shared leadership promotes organizational vision, enhances trust, and empowers teachers to meet the needs of all students. The assumption is that if shared leadership has that effect on the adults in schools, it must also offer some promise for the students. The manifestations of shared leadership must make their way from school leaders to teachers and, ultimately, to students.

The education profession, however, has not resolved important questions related to shared leadership among various ethnic or racial groups (Washington, 2005). Additionally, if educators believe that shared leadership is a practical and ethical necessity in today's schools, then they need to engage with its dynamics in more sophisticated ways (Duignan & Bezzina, 2006). Some also question why shared leadership has struggled for acceptance in the K-12 arena (Lindahl, 2008). Others advise that conventional leaders would be well-advised to look closely at whose interests are being served by distributing leadership (Maxcy & Nguyen, 2006).

Spillane et al. (2008) lamented the lack of empirical work directed at the distributed or shared leadership framework and its relationship to student achievement.

Heck and Hallinger (2009) noted that while there has been growth in the number of empirical studies of shared forms of leadership, much of this research has been descriptive. They found that relatively few published studies have investigated the impact of shared leadership on school improvement (Heck & Hallinger, 2009). The large study conducted by the Wallace Foundation (Seashore Louis et al., 2010) provides a solid foundation for the relationship between shared leadership and student achievement; however, more research related to African American student achievement and shared leadership is needed. There also remains the question of whether these "new" theories of leadership amount to "more than enhanced delegation" (Hammersley-Fletcher & Brundrett, 2008, p. 11). Shared leadership has been considered a neglected topic of staff development for administrators and teachers (Lovely, 2005).

Thus, for the purposes of this study, an examination of shared leadership was undertaken to establish the strength of relationship between the self-reported shared leadership practices of Maryland elementary principals and the academic achievement of African American students in grades 3–5 on the MSA.

Chapter III

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

A review of literature uncovered ample studies focused on school leadership and academic achievement, as well as shared leadership and academic achievement. Conversely, the examination of literature revealed a lack of empirical studies using quantitative data to analyze the impact of shared leadership on African American student achievement. Like Heck and Hallinger (2009), who studied distributed leadership, this study examines the effects of shared leadership on student achievement using state assessment data. This study sought to identify the relationship between the shared leadership practices of principals and the corresponding achievement of their African American students on the Maryland School Assessment by using survey methodology and state assessment data. Using a survey design and comparing MSA scores for African American students provided this researcher with the opportunity to determine the strength of relationship between the variables associated with the shared leadership practices and African American student achievement. This method of investigation is consistent with

many of the studies conducted on shared leadership (Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Leech & Fulton, 2008; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Marks & Printy, 2003; Seashore Louis et al., 2010).

This chapter describes the methods and procedures proposed for this quantitative, correlational study. The chapter includes the research methodology, as well as the research design and a discussion of the methods used for data collection and analysis. Topics specifically addressed are the purpose of the study, participants, instrumentation, survey design, validity and reliability, procedures, ethical issues, research questions, subquestions, and data analysis. A summary of the methods and procedures is presented at the end of the chapter.

This quantitative, correlational study examined the relationship between the self-reported shared leadership practices of Maryland elementary principals and African American student performance on the Maryland School Assessment. Correlation is a statistical technique that is used to "measure and describe a relationship between two variables" (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2007, p. 506). A correlational design presents facts on variables as they are and the relationship of one to the other. Through quantitative methods, this study sought to identify a relationship between Maryland elementary school leaders who self-report using shared leadership practices and the performance of their African American students in grades 3–5 on the MSA. For this study, the co-variance of the self-reported shared leadership practices of elementary principals was examined in relation to the academic performance of African American students.

Purpose of the Study

Additional research on school leadership that facilitates the development of proficient and culturally competent schools capable of creating positive and productive climates is needed (Nevarez & Wood, 2007). The increasing diversity of American schools calls for leadership that promotes cultural pluralism and success for all students (McCray, Wright, & Beachum, 2004). The review of literature suggested the need for a closer look at the correlation between the shared leadership practices of principals and the academic achievement of African American students. The results of this study may additionally promote the use of shared leadership in meeting the needs of other marginalized students and their families.

Research Question

This study sought to answer the following question: Is there a significant relationship in MSA test scores for African American students whose principals self-report strong shared leadership practices (as defined by the SEDS instrument) as compared with those students whose principals self-report using fewer shared leadership practices?

Research Subquestions

Research subquestions are questions that narrow the purpose statement to specific questions that the researcher seeks to answer (Creswell, 2008). Ten specific aims in the SEDS survey were addressed in determining the relationship between the self-reported shared decision-making practices of principals and African American student performance on the Maryland School Assessment. These questions were analyzed for both reading and math scores.

The research subquestions used to guide this study were:

1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *planning* and African American student performance on the MSA?
2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *policy* and African American student performance on the MSA?
3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *curriculum/instruction* and African American student performance on the MSA?
4. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *student achievement* and African American student performance on the MSA?

5. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *pupil personnel* and African American student performance on the MSA?

6. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *staff personnel* and African American student performance on the MSA?

7. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *school/community relations* and African American student performance on the MSA?

8. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *parental involvement* and African American student performance on the MSA?

9. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *staff development* and African American student performance on the MSA?

10. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' *total* modified SEDS shared leadership score and African American student performance on the MSA?

Participants

The participants for this study were principals of Maryland elementary schools. All 24 Maryland school districts were invited to participate. Fourteen school districts provided permission for the study to be conducted (see Appendix G). The fourteen districts represent all of the demographic and geographic regions of Maryland. Small and large districts are represented, as well as urban, suburban and rural areas. School systems participating in this study are geographically located in western, central, and southern Maryland as well as the eastern shore. Six-hundred seventeen (617) principals received an invitation to participate. One hundred sixty-nine (169) surveys were completed (27%). Administrators were recruited through a series of emails directing them to a web-based survey. Participants voluntarily agreed to complete the survey; they were not required to participate. Consent language outlining the study and participants' rights was included within the survey instrument (see Appendix F).

To ensure validity regarding the correlational design of this study, only results for principals who were in their current placement two years and longer were used. This is consistent with the literature on leadership and student achievement and reduces the lack of effect short-term principals have on student achievement. Participants were asked to provide information regarding their school name, school code, and Title I status (see Table 2).

Table 2

Number of Schools by District and Title I Status

	Title1		
	Yes	No	Total
A	2	1	3
B	9	40	49
C	7	12	19
D	2	1	3
E	1	6	7
F	2	9	11
G	1	8	9
H	2	1	3
I	0	9	9
J	8	14	22
K	0	1	1
L	3	3	6
M	1	7	8
N	1	1	2
Total	39	113	152

Participants were also asked to report their ethnicity, gender, and years in their current position (see Table 3). This provided essential descriptive data of the sample for the study. The achieved sample of data for this study included responses from 169 principals (a 27% response rate). One hundred fifty-two (152) respondents met the criteria for inclusion in the study results.

Table 3

Ethnicity and Gender

	Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
AfricanAmer	4	23	27
Asian/PacificIsland	0	2	2
White NonHispanic	22	99	121
Unknown	0	2	2
Total	26	126	152

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Years in Education and Years in Current Position

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
YearsInEd	152	5	52	25.36	8.837
YearsInCurrent	152	2	30	7.17	5.419

Instrumentation

Development of TDI, SEDS, SEDS-R

The Shared Education Decisions Survey (Ferrara & Repa, 1992) evolved from the Teacher Decision-making Instrument (Ferrara, 1992a). The Teacher Decision-making Instrument (TDI) was developed to measure the extent to which teachers participated in decision making in school settings. The TDI, a 68-item questionnaire, measured decision making within eight categories: planning, policy, curriculum/instruction, pupil personnel, staff personnel, staff development, school/community, and budget/ management. The six-point categorical scale permitted responses limited to the interface between the administrator/principal and teachers, ranging from "decision is made alone by administrator/s" to "teacher/s make autonomous decision, without administrative consultation or participation."

The TDI evolved into the Shared Education Decisions Survey (1992), based on advances in theory and practice in the area of participatory school governance, as well as in initiatives being carried forward by state departments of education. The TDI was

redesigned to keep step with advances in the field, including a focus on the inclusion of parents in decision making and the inclination of schools to include not only parents, but also multiple stakeholders in decision making. Therefore, the TDI was redesigned to permit the use of the questionnaire by multiple stakeholders who had an interest in school decision making. These stakeholders included administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, community members, school board members, business representatives, and students. Through an "other" category, the questionnaire also permitted schools to add other categories of stakeholders who might be involved or interested in school-site initiatives. The scale of the TDI was also redesigned, using a six-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from "never" to "always." Likert scales are interval scales that provide "continuous" response options to questions with assumed equal distances between options (Creswell, 2008, p. 176). Stakeholder status was collected as demographic data, permitting analyses by condition of stakeholder group.

Additionally, two categories were added in the development of the SEDS: parental involvement and plant management. The latter scale was added to include decisions related to management of facilities and capital projects not previously accommodated in the TDI.

A further refinement was made to the SEDS when research and practice began to focus on student achievement as the target of shared governance. Therefore, the Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (1994) includes a Student Achievement scale. All three of these instruments have been used in various studies since 1992 (Casciano, 1993; Ferrara, 1992a; McDonald, 2000; Reynolds, 1996).

Use of SEDS for This Study

The Shared Education Decisions Survey (SEDS) (Ferrara, 1992b), designed to accommodate measuring multiple stakeholders' shared decision making beliefs, was modified and used in this research to obtain perceptions of principals concerning their practices in fostering shared decision making (see Appendix C). Surveys help describe the trends in a population, explain the relationship among variables, and compare groups (Creswell, 2008, p. 414). Surveys have been used in a number of shared leadership studies using correlational analysis relative to student achievement (Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Leech & Fulton, 2008; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Marks & Printy, 2003; Seashore Louis et al., 2010). The SEDS was selected because it has been used in similar research related to the shared educational practices of principals, teachers, and parents and has demonstrated high reliability (Casciano, 1993; Ferrara, 1992a; McDonald, 2000; Reynolds, 1996).

With permission from the original researcher, the survey was modified to target this study's examination of the practices of elementary principals in Maryland (see Appendix A). Because the survey includes the term "shared decisions," a working definition of shared decision making was included with the survey. For the purpose of this study, shared decision making is defined as school leaders who foster leadership among followers and create structures through which they may practice leadership (Leech & Fulton, 2008).

The survey instrument used in this study included nine domains. The domains were: planning, policy, curriculum and instruction, student achievement, pupil personnel,

staff personnel, school-community relations, parental involvement, and staff development. With 74 items and a six-point scale, the maximum score for any given respondent was 444, assuming all items are answered. The minimum score was 74. Higher means reflect a higher degree of involvement by teachers in shared decision making. The SEDS total score and the domain scores were compared to the MSA math and reading results (proficiency percentages) of African American students using correlations and multiple regression techniques.

The survey employed a six-point Likert scale to assess how principals self-report involving teachers in making decisions related to planning, policy, curriculum/instruction, student achievement, pupil personnel, staff personnel, school/community relations, parental involvement, and staff development. A mean score for the nine categories was used to determine an overall score for correlational analysis. The scores of other student groups were also analyzed for comparison purposes. For this study, the six-answer anchor answers for each survey question were: 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = usually, and 6 = always.

Planning – This domain sought to find the degree to which principals involved teachers in designing, developing, planning, and determining change and setting goals at the building and county level. The minimum score for this domain was 12; the maximum score was 72.

Policy – This domain looked at the level that teachers are involved in setting guidelines for homework, discipline, retention, attendance, and academic eligibility. The minimum score for this domain was eight; the maximum score was 48.

Curriculum/Instruction – This domain addressed the level of involvement of teachers in choosing, determining, and designing curriculum, and in teaching. The minimum score for this domain was eight; the maximum score was 48.

Student Achievement – This domain looked at how principals are involving teachers in determining grading, testing, and assessment practices. It addresses whether teachers are included in aligning textbooks, curriculum, and testing programs. The minimum score for this domain was eight; the maximum score was 48.

Pupil Personnel – This domain focused on how teachers are involved in determining student placement, class size, reporting student progress, assisting students having academic difficulty, and determining who receives academic recognition. The minimum score for this domain was seven**;** the maximum score was 42.

Staff Personnel – This domain addressed how principals involved teachers in issues associated with hiring, orientation, duties, tenure, assignment to committees, and employee grievances. The minimum score for this domain was 14; the maximum score was 84.

School Community Relations – This domain sought to uncover how principals involved their teachers in community, civic group, and business group activities. The minimum score for this domain was seven; the maximum score was 42.

Parental Involvement – This domain looked at how teachers are involved in selecting parents for school committees and the shared decision-making process. It also asked if teachers are involved in setting agenda items for parent meetings and in resolving parent complaints. The minimum score for this domain was five; the maximum score was 30.

Staff Development – This domain asked if principals assign staff members to lead development committees and if they seek teacher input in the evaluation of staff development programs. The minimum score for this domain was five; the maximum score was 30.

An overall score from the nine categories was calculated as well. With 74 items and a six-point scale, the maximum score for any given respondent was 444, assuming all items are answered. The minimum score was 74.

Survey Design

This study sought to determine if a statistically significant relationship exists between the self-reported shared leadership practices of elementary principals and the performance of their African American students on the Maryland School Assessment. Data for other student groups were examined as well for comparison purposes. Sample survey techniques provided this researcher with the ability to generalize about an entire population by "drawing inferences based on the data drawn from a small portion of the population" (Rea & Parker, 2005, p. 7). A correlational research design was selected for this study to determine the "tendency or pattern for two (or more) variables to share common variance" (Creswell, 2008, p. 356). Survey methodology was employed because it has been used to conduct numerous studies on shared leadership and student achievement for correlational purposes (Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Leech & Fulton, 2008; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Marks & Printy, 2003; Seashore Louis et al., 2010). Bivariate and multivariate correlational statistics were used to look for significant

correlations between all study variables (p-value < .05). Data were analyzed to determine the strength and direction of relationships between study variables over the entire range of self-reported shared leadership practices and the academic achievement of Maryland African American students, as well as other student groups.

Validity and Reliability

Validity means that "the individual scores from an instrument make sense, are meaningful, and enable the researcher to draw good conclusions from the sample population being studied" (Creswell, 2008, p. 169). The historical use of the SEDS survey (Casciano, 1993; Ferrara, 1992a; Leech & Fulton, 2008; McDonald, 2000; Reynolds, 1996) in determining the shared leadership practices of school leaders supports the validity of the survey method used in this research design. The SEDS has been proven to effectively measure the shared decision-making practices of educational leaders (Ferrara, 1992b). Reliability of the modified version of the SEDS used in this study was addressed through analysis.

A measure is considered reliable to the extent that it produces stable and consistent measurements. That is, a reliable measurement procedure "produces the same (or nearly the same) scores when the same individuals are measured under the same conditions" (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2007, p. 510). The survey used for this study provides stable and consistent measurements. The reliability of the SEDS has been established over time (see Table 5).

Table 5a

Shared Education Decisions Survey (SEDS); Cronbach Alpha Reliabilities 1992

Shared Education Decisions Survey (SEDS)© Ferrara, 1992b
Cronbach Alpha Reliabilities

Category	# Items/ Category	Actual Scores	Desired Scores	Difference Scores
Planning	12	.95	.94	.95
Policy	11	.91	.94	.94
Curriculum/Instruction	10	.96	.97	.96
Pupil Personnel	7	.85	.92	.85
Staff Personnel	14	.93	.96	.96
School/Community	7	.86	.92	.88
Parental Involvement	5	.90	.91	.89
Staff Development	5	.95	.97	.95
Budget	12	.94	.95	.95
Plant Management	9	.86	.91	.89
Total Scale:	92	.99	.98	.99

Table 5b

Shared Education Decisions Survey (SEDS); Cronbach Alpha Reliabilities 1994

Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (SEDS-R)© Ferrara, 1994
School Improvement Profile Questionnaire© 1994
Cronbach Alpha Reliabilities

Category	# Items/ Category	Actual Scores	Desired Scores	Difference Score
Planning	12	.95	.94	.95
Curriculum/Instruction	8	.94	.96	.96
Student Achievement	8	.95	.90	.93
Staff Personnel	6	.93	.96	.96
School/Community	7	.86	.92	.88
Parental Involvement	5	.90	.91	.89
Staff Development	5	.95	.97	.95
Budget	6	.95	.97	.95
Total Scale:	57	.99	.98	.99

Procedures

Upon approval from the Notre Dame of Maryland University dissertation committee, this researcher received approval from the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct the study (see Appendix H). This study used a modified version of the *Shared Education Decisions Survey* (Ferrara, 1992b). With permission from the original researcher, the 98 items in the original survey were pared to 74 items. Principals were asked how frequently they involved teachers in making each decision outlined in the survey questions.

The data for this study were collected in two phases. First, Maryland School Assessment data in reading and math were collected from the Maryland State Department of Education website at www.mdreportcard.org. The data collected included school proficiency levels on the MSA for grades three to five in reading and math from 2008 to 2011. For the purposes of this study, a school's achievement is represented as the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the proficient level on the MSA in reading and math as a mean score over a four-year period. Reading and math scores were analyzed separately. The second phase of this study involved surveying principals using a modified version of the SEDS via a web-based survey.

Each participant (principal) was asked to complete the modified version of the *Shared Education Decisions Survey*©, which was designed to measure the degree to which principals include teachers in leadership decision making. All principal responses remain confidential. Principals were given two weeks to complete the survey and then were sent a reminder email if they had not completed it. Participants were recruited until

a percentage ensuring statistical power was reached. Schools were not identified by name in the report results. Data were reported in aggregate form to protect the rights of the participants. The data were kept in this researcher's computer, and SPSS software was used to analyze the relationship of the variables.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to ensure that the survey functioned as designed. Bradburn, Sudman, and Wansink (2004) noted that pilot studies assist the researcher in refining questionnaire and survey questions prior to conducting studies. Fifteen elementary principals in the researcher's home county were recruited to complete the online survey. Eleven principals completed the survey (a 73% return rate). The Cronbach's alpha for the pilot sample was .948 indicating a very high consistency among responses. The subscale reliabilities ranged from .602 to .871. These reliabilities indicate that the pilot participant responses were also consistent within each subscale (see Table 6).

Table 6

Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficients for the Pilot Survey Total and Each Domain

Domain	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Questions
Planning	.761	12
Policy	.857	8
Curriculum/Instruction	.832	8
Student Achievement	.871	8
Pupil Personnel	.602	7
Staff Personnel	.756	14
School/Community Relations	.821	7
Parental Involvement	.869	5
Staff Development	.880	5
Pilot Survey Total	.948	74

Cognitive interviews were conducted with four principals attending the annual Maryland Association of Elementary Principals Conference to ensure clarity in the survey directions and questions. Those interviewed indicated that the survey and its directions were clear. There was some confusion regarding the definition of shared leadership originally included with the survey. The definition was revised to provide a clear and consistent understanding of shared leadership as it relates to this study.

Data Analysis

After the collection of data and surveys was completed, the analysis phase was initiated. Data were analyzed using the SPSS statistical software package, Version 18.0. The relationship between the principals' self-report of their shared leadership practices

and the MSA scores of their African American students was examined. The scores of other student groups were examined for comparison purposes. The SEDS total score and its domains were correlated and regressed to the MSA reading and math scores. The direction of the relationship was determined to establish either a positive (+1), negative (-1), or neutral (0) relationship. According to Salkind (2011), correlations should be interpreted using the following guidelines listed in Table 7.

Table 7

Salkind's Guidelines for Interpreting Correlation Coefficients

Size of Correlation	General Interpretation
.80 to 1.0	Very Strong Relationship
.60 to .79	Strong Relationship
.40 to .59	Moderate Relationship
.20 to .39	Weak Relationship
Less than .20	Very Weak to No Relationship

Ethical Issues

As in all studies, the individuals who participate in a study have certain rights, such as knowing the purpose and aims of the study, how the results will be used, and any social consequences the study will have on their lives (Creswell, 2008). The researcher protected the anonymity of the participants in this study. Participants provided their informed consent through the online survey and were given the results of this study by

request. The researcher reflected on ethical issues throughout the study process. The data were reviewed as confidential and were not shared with other participants or individuals outside of the project. The researcher followed all guidelines provided by the IRB and the dissertation committee.

Summary

A quantitative, non-experimental, correlational design was selected for this study as it was best aligned with the research questions. The data from this study were collected via an online survey and through the Maryland State Department of Education website at www.mdreportcard.org. The data were exported to Excel and then the SPSS computer program for analysis. Analyses were conducted to assess the relationships between the self-reported shared leadership practices of elementary principals and African American student achievement on the MSA. Data for other student groups were also analyzed and are reported for comparison purposes. It is hoped that the findings of this study will make a contribution to the theory and practice of shared leadership as it relates to the academic achievement of African American students.

Chapter IV

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

This study sought to identify the relationship between the shared leadership practices of principals and the corresponding achievement of their African American students by using survey methodology and state assessment data. This study used a correlational design to investigate the relationship between the self-reported shared leadership practices of elementary principals measured by the Shared Education Decisions Survey and African American student achievement measured by the MSA. It was hypothesized that the SEDS scores would be directly correlated with the MSA scores. Pearson correlations and multiple regression methods were used to answer the stated research questions.

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the study. The first section describes the demographics of the participants. The second section presents the reliability of the survey. Section three depicts the normal distributions of the African-

American students' average proficiency percent for the MSA Reading and Math tests. The results for the ten research questions are presented by domain in section four. The research questions were written to determine if the performance of African American students on the MSA reading and math tests were related to the ten domains of the Shared Leadership survey. Section five presents the results by domain for additional student groups. Section six presents data from additional analyses that were conducted to investigate variables that may be related to school leadership and student achievement. A summary is provided to address the results for all groups.

Results of the Demographic Questions

There were 152 respondents out of the 169 who completed the entire questionnaire who met the requirement of working in their current position for two or more years. Fourteen out of a possible 24 school districts in Maryland were represented. Thirty-nine or 26% were principals of Title One schools. Approximately 83% were females. Eighty percent indicated their ethnicity to be white, non Hispanic, 18% were African American, and less than 1% were Asian/Pacific Islander or Unknown (see Table 8). The average number of years in education was 25 and the average number of years in their current position was seven (see Table 9).

Table 8

Ethnicity and Gender

	Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
African American	4	23	27
Asian/Pacific Islander	0	2	2
White, Non Hispanic	22	99	121
Unknown	0	2	2
Total	26	126	152

Table 9.

Descriptive Statistics for Years in Education and Years in Current Position

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Years In Education	152	5	52	25.36	8.837
Years In Current Position	152	2	30	7.17	5.419

Instrument Reliability

The Cronbach's alpha for this sample was .956, indicating a very high consistency among responses. The subscale reliabilities ranged from .731 to .907. These reliabilities indicate that participants' responses were also consistent within each subscale (see Table 10). Additional item statistics can be found in Appendix I.

Table 10

Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficients for the Survey Total and Each Domain

Domain	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Questions
Planning	.874	12
Policy	.767	8
Curriculum/Instruction	.897	8
Student Achievement	.847	8
Pupil Personnel	.731	7
Staff Personnel	.826	14
School/Community Relations	.831	7
Parental Involvement	.819	5
Staff Development	.907	5
Survey Total	.956	74

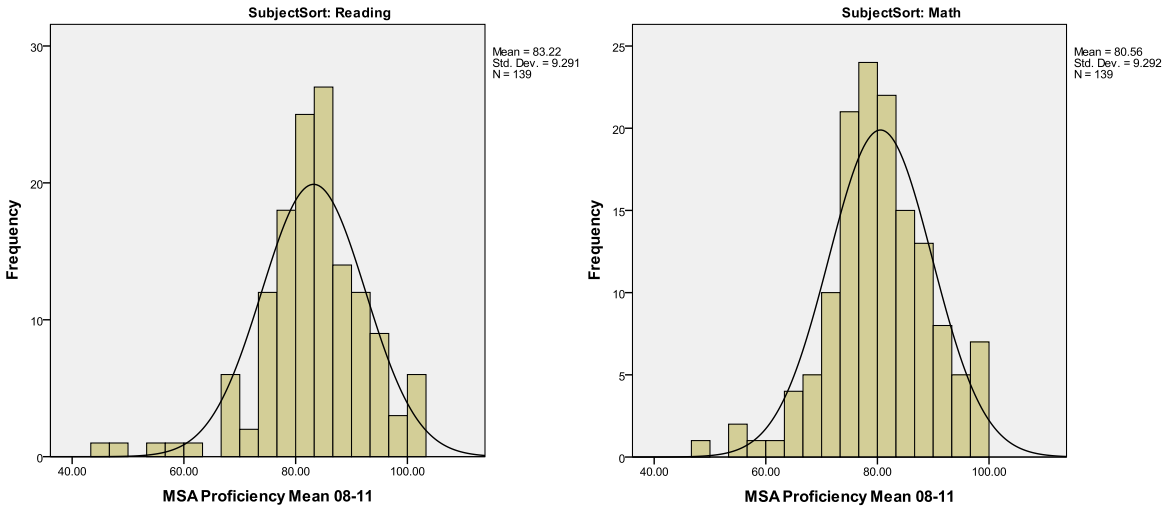
MSA Reading and Math Data

The reading and math MSA Proficiency percents were calculated by generating the mean of the 2008, 2009, 2010, and the 2011 proficiency percents. Scores for African-American students and other student groups are presented in this and the following section.

Prior to conducting the correlations of the survey data with the reading and math MSA scores, histograms were generated to determine if the MSA scores for African American students were normally distributed. Figure 3 demonstrates that data were normally distributed, therefore parametric statistics, such as the Pearson correlation coefficients could be employed.

Figure 3

Histograms of the African-American Students' Average Reading and Math MSA Proficiency Percent



Research Questions

The research questions for this study were:

1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the *planning* shared leadership practices of principals and African American student performance on MSA?

2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the shared leadership practices of principals specific to *policy* and African American student performance on MSA?

3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the shared leadership practices of principals specific to *curriculum/instruction* and African American student performance on MSA?

4. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the shared leadership practices of principals specific to *student achievement* and African American student performance on MSA?

5. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the shared leadership practices of principals specific to *pupil personnel* and African American student performance on MSA?

6. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the shared leadership practices of principals specific to *staff personnel* and African American student performance on MSA?

7. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the shared leadership practices of principals specific to *school/community relations* and African American student performance on MSA?

8. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the shared leadership practices of principals specific to *parental involvement* and African American student performance on MSA?

9. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the shared leadership practices of principals specific to *staff development* and African American student performance on MSA?

10. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the *total* modified SEDS-Revised shared leadership score of principals and African American student performance on MSA?

Results by Domain for African American Students

Planning

This domain examined the relationship between how principals involved teachers in designing, developing, planning and determining change as well as setting goals at the building and county level and African American student performance over time on the MSA. The Pearson Correlation Coefficients for this domain were .028 for reading and .046 for math.

Policy

This domain examined the relationship between how principals involved teachers in setting guidelines for homework, discipline, retention, attendance, and academic eligibility and African American student performance over time on the MSA. The Pearson Correlation Coefficients for this domain were .023 for reading and .068 for math.

Curriculum and Instruction

This domain examined the relationship between the involvement of teachers in choosing, determining, and designing curriculum and instruction and African American student performance over time on the MSA. The Pearson Correlation Coefficients for this domain were .106 for reading and .113 for math.

Student Achievement

This domain examined the relationship between how principals involved teachers in determining grading, testing, and assessment practices as well as the level at which teachers are included in aligning textbooks, curriculum, and testing programs and African American student performance over time on the MSA. The Pearson Correlation Coefficients for this domain were .116 for reading and .154 for math.

Pupil Personnel

This domain focused on the relationship between how teachers are involved in determining student placement, class size, reporting student progress, assisting students having academic difficulty, and determining who receives academic recognition and African American student performance over time on the MSA. The Pearson Correlation Coefficients for this domain were -.023 for reading and .039 for math.

Staff Personnel

This domain addressed the relationship between how principals involved teachers in hiring, orientation, duties, tenure, assignment to committees, and employee grievances and African American student performance over time on the MSA. The Pearson Correlation Coefficients for this domain were .158 for reading and .101 for math.

School/Community Relations

This domain examined the relationship between how principals involved their teachers in community, civic, and business groups and African American student performance over time on the MSA. The Pearson Correlation Coefficients for this domain were .068 for reading and -.030 for math.

Parent Involvement Relations

This domain examined the relationship between how principals involved teachers in selecting parents for school committees and the shared decision-making process and African American student performance over time on the MSA. The Pearson Correlation Coefficients for this domain were -.052 for reading and .000 for math.

Staff Development

This domain examined the relationship between how principals assign staff members to lead committees and if they sought teacher input in the evaluation of staff development programs and African American student performance over time on the MSA. The Pearson Correlation Coefficients for this domain were .099 for reading and .103 for math.

The results showed the correlations between African-American MSA test scores and the survey domains were relatively low. None were significant. Therefore, there were no significant relationships between the survey domains and the MSA test scores (see Table 11).

Table 11

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for the Survey Domains and the Reading and Math MSA Proficiency Means for African American Students

	Reading MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11	Math MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11
Planning Mean	.028	.046
Policy Mean	.023	.068
Curriculum/Instruction Mean	.106	.113
Student Achievement Mean	.116	.154
Pupil Personnel Mean	-.023	.039
Staff Personnel Mean	.158	.101
School/Community Relations	.068	-.030
Parent Involvement Relations	-.052	.000
Staff Development Mean	.099	.103
Total Survey Mean	.094	.099

Research Question Ten Results

The last research question sought to determine if the total survey mean of the 9 domains were related to the math or reading MSA proficiency percents. Stepwise regression analyses were conducted using African-American math and reading MSA proficiency means and survey domains. The dependent variable was the proficiency means and the survey domains were the independent variables. No significant relationships could be generated for the total survey mean and test scores.

Results for Additional Student Populations

Results by Domain for White Students

There were 139 schools in this analysis. The results showed the correlations between White MSA test scores and the survey domains were relatively low. None were significant. Therefore, there were no significant relationships between the survey domains and the MSA test scores (see Table 12).

Table 12

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for the Survey Domains and the Reading and Math MSA Proficiency Means for White Students

	Reading MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11	Math MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11
Planning Mean	-.035	-.039
Policy Mean	-.023	-.004
Curriculum/Instruction Mean	.059	.103
Student Achievement Mean	.006	.066
Pupil Personnel Mean	-.104	-.125
Staff Personnel Mean	.146	.085
School/Community Relations	.009	-.011
Parent Involvement Relations	.030	.005
Staff Development Mean	.022	-.018
Total Survey Mean	.028	.026

Results by Domain for Hispanic Students

There were 120 schools in this analysis. The results showed the correlations between Hispanic MSA test scores and the survey domains were relatively low. None were significant. Therefore, there were no significant relationships between the survey domains and the MSA test scores (see Table 13).

Table 13

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for the Survey Domains and the Reading and Math MSA Proficiency Means for Hispanic Students

	Reading MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11	Math MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11
Planning Mean	.180	.244
Policy Mean	.054	.142
Curriculum/Instruction Mean	.183	.121
Student Achievement Mean	.159	.197
Pupil Personnel Mean	.005	.080
Staff Personnel Mean	.038	.039
School/Community Relations	.013	.027
Parent Involvement Relations	-.108	-.031
Staff Development Mean	.047	.101
Total Survey Mean	.110	.153

Results by Domain for Asian Students

There were 102 schools in this analysis. The results showed the correlations between Asian MSA test scores and the survey domains were relatively low. None were significant. Therefore, there were no significant relationships between the survey domains and the MSA test scores (see Table 14).

Table 14

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for the Survey Domains and the Reading and Math MSA Proficiency Means for Asian Students

	Reading MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11	Math MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11
Planning Mean	.142	.086
Policy Mean	.003	.020
Curriculum/Instruction Mean	.073	-.066
Student Achievement Mean	.001	.015
Pupil Personnel Mean	-.022	-.061
Staff Personnel Mean	.098	.010
School/Community Relations	-.046	.100
Parent Involvement Relations	-.078	.072
Staff Development Mean	-.020	.031
Total Survey Mean	.044	.029

Results by Domain for FARMS Students

There were 147 schools in this analysis. The results showed the correlations between Free and Reduced Meal Students (FARMS) MSA test scores and the survey domains were relatively low. None were significant. Therefore, there were no significant relationships between the survey domains and the MSA test scores (see Table 15).

Table 15

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for the Survey Domains and the Reading and Math MSA Proficiency Means for FARM Students

	Reading MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11	Math MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11
Planning Mean	.061	.094
Policy Mean	.022	.090
Curriculum/Instruction Mean	.084	.102
Student Achievement Mean	.101	.158
Pupil Personnel Mean	.057	.104
Staff Personnel Mean	.160	.092
School/Community Relations	.100	.063
Parent Involvement Relations	-.006	.023
Staff Development Mean	.125	.109
Total Survey Mean	.113	.130

Results by Domain for ELL Students

There were 88 schools in this analysis. The results showed the correlations between English Language Learners (ELL) MSA test scores and the survey domains were relatively low. None were significant. Therefore, there were no significant relationships between the survey domains and the MSA test scores (see Table 16).

Table 16

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for the Survey Domains and the Reading and Math MSA Proficiency Means for ELL Students

	Reading MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11	Math MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11
Planning Mean	.064	.094
Policy Mean	-.157	.090
Curriculum/Instruction Mean	-.008	.102
Student Achievement Mean	-.070	.159
Pupil Personnel Mean	-.012	.104
Staff Personnel Mean	.092	.092
School/Community Relations	-.095	.063
Parent Involvement Relations	-.130	.023
Staff Development Mean	.030	.109
Total Survey Mean	-.034	.130

Results by Domain for Special Education Students

There were 148 schools in this analysis. The results showed the correlations between special education student MSA test scores and the survey domains were relatively low. None were significant. Therefore, there were no significant relationships between the survey domains and the MSA test scores (see Table 17).

Table 17

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for the Survey Domains and the Reading and Math MSA Proficiency Means for SPED Students

	Reading MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11	Math MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11
Planning Mean	.067	.081
Policy Mean	.023	-.012
Curriculum/Instruction Mean	.093	.155
Student Achievement Mean	.107	.078
Pupil Personnel Mean	.044	-.011
Staff Personnel Mean	.177	.178
School/Community Relations	.095	.057
Parent Involvement Relations	.084	-.008
Staff Development Mean	.164	.107
Total Survey Mean	.134	.103

Additional Analysis

Upon completion of the initial data analysis, which was conducted to investigate the relationship between the shared leadership practices of Maryland elementary principals and African American student achievement on MSA, the researcher further analyzed the data to investigate additional variables related to leadership and African American student achievement. Years of experience is often discussed as a significant variable in the literature related to shared leadership (Crum & Sherman, 2008; Heck and Hallinger, 2009; Jacobson et al., 2005; Leithwood and Mascall, 2008; Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009; Penlington, Kington & Day, 2008; Seashore Louis et al., 2010). The underlying assumption is that shared leadership and years of experience are intricately tied together in relation to the success of schools. Data collected in this study were analyzed to address this question. Spearman correlations were conducted to explore the relationship between years of experience and African American student achievement in reading and math as measured by the Maryland School Assessment. No significant relationship was uncovered in reading or math (see Tables 18 and 19).

Table 18

Spearman Correlations between African American Reading MSA Scores and Principals' Years of Experience

Variable	Statistic	Years In Education	Years In Current	Total Survey
MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11	Correlation	0.096	0.062	0.028
Years In Education	Correlation		0.525	0.005
Years In Current	Correlation			0.031

Table 19

Spearman Correlations between African American Math MSA Scores and Principals' Years of Experience

Variable	Statistic	Years In Education	Years In Current	Total Survey
Math MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11	Correlation	0.028	0.055	0.026
Years In Education	Correlation		0.525	0.005
Years In Current	Correlation			0.031

Following analysis of the relationship between African American student achievement and principals' years of experience, the researcher resolved to examine county level results for the SEDS and MSA scores at a micro-level. This analysis was not part of the original hypothesis of this dissertation and was conducted to seek additional insight into the variables examined. Two central Maryland counties with the highest participation rates in this study were selected and analyzed. Spearman correlations were conducted on SEDS and MSA data for counties B and J. Significant results relative to shared leadership and African American student achievement were not attained from this additional analysis (see Appendix K and L for additional analyses).

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine if there were significant correlations between African American students' MSA reading and math scores and the nine domains of the Shared Education Decisions Survey. In addition, was there a combination of domains that successfully predicted the MSA scores? The results of this study suggest that there were no significant relationships among these variables for the African American students as well as other student populations. Moreover, no combination of nine survey domains revealed a significant relationship with the MSA scores for any student group. Further investigation of the relationship between shared leadership and African American student achievement is warranted by school districts, private foundations, and universities. Chapter V discusses the study's findings and their implications. Limitations, recommendations and future directions are also addressed.

Chapter V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter provides discussion and conclusions of the findings for the research outlined in Chapter Four of this study. Chapter Five also identifies study limitations and provides recommendations for practitioners as well as suggestions for further research.

Purpose of the Study

This study sought to answer the following questions: Do principals who use a shared leadership approach to managing their schools promote the improved academic performance of African American students, as measured by the MSA? Is shared leadership a vehicle for promoting and improving the capacity of teachers and African American students to succeed? Is the academic achievement of African American students higher in schools where the principal has a strong commitment to shared leadership?

Quantitative and qualitative studies conducted over the past ten years support the connection between school leadership and student achievement. A growing body of research evidence suggests that the shared leadership practices of principals are leading to improved student performance. The literature also suggests that shared leadership is transformational, improves communication, and fosters collaboration and collegiality. Shared leadership promotes organizational vision, enhances trust, and empowers teachers to meet the needs of all students. The research suggests that the manifestations of shared leadership make their way from school leaders to teachers, which inevitably benefits students.

While the number of studies focused on shared leadership and student achievement has increased, researchers continue to exhort the need for more. Spillane et al. (2008) noted the lack of empirical work directed at the distributed or shared leadership framework and its relationship to student achievement. Heck and Hallinger (2009) noted that while there has been growth in the number of empirical studies of shared forms of leadership, much of this research has been descriptive. They found that relatively few published studies have investigated the impact of shared leadership on school improvement. The large study conducted by the Wallace Foundation (Seashore Louis et al., 2010) clearly demonstrated the relationship between shared leadership and student achievement. More research specifically related to African American student achievement and shared leadership remains absent. In response to the need for further research, this study on shared leadership was undertaken to examine the strength of relationship between the self-reported shared leadership practices of Maryland

elementary principals and the academic achievement of African American students in grades three through five on the MSA.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following questions in examining shared leadership, as measured by the Shared Education Decisions Survey, and African American student achievement, as measured by the MSA:

1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *planning* and African American student performance on the MSA?

2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *policy* and African American student performance on the MSA?

3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *curriculum/instruction* and African American student performance on the MSA?

4. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *student achievement* and African American student performance on the MSA?

5. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *pupil personnel* and African American student performance on the MSA?

6. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *staff personnel* and African American student performance on the MSA?

7. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *school/community relations* and African American student performance on the MSA?

8. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *parental involvement* and African American student performance on the MSA?

9. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' shared leadership practices specific to *staff development* and African American student performance on the MSA?

10. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' *total* modified SEDS shared leadership score and African American student performance on the MSA?

Summary of Findings

This study used correlational analyses to examine the relationship between shared leadership and African American student achievement. Correlational research is conducted when "one seeks to relate two or more variables to see if they influence each other" (Creswell, 2008, p. 356). Correlational researchers are tasked with interpreting the magnitude and direction of their findings (Creswell, 2008). Ultimately, the researcher is

left to interpret the results to determine if a relationship exists between the identified variables.

Elementary principals in 14 Maryland school districts were surveyed using a modified version of the Shared Education Decisions Survey (Ferrara, 1992b). The MSA scores of their students were examined for the strength of relationship between the identified variables, which were embedded in the survey. The researcher found no significant correlation between the self-reported shared leadership practices of principals and the performance of African American students on the MSA. Additionally, no significant correlations were identified for other student groups (White, Hispanic, Asian, FARMS, ELL, Special Education). Further investigation of the relationship between shared leadership and African American student achievement is warranted by school districts, private foundations, and universities.

Implications

While the results of this study found no significant correlation between the self-reported shared leadership practices of principals and the performance of African American students on the MSA, it adds to the body of research on shared leadership and student achievement by placing a focus on the achievement of African American students as well as other student groups. To this point, there is very little research focused on identifying the school leadership practices that will lead to success for African American students. While the body of research on shared leadership and student achievement has grown, the need to examine its relationship to minority student achievement remains.

The research reviewed in this study reaffirms the need for school systems to provide clear standards for principal efficacy related to fostering high levels of academic achievement for all students (Kaplan, Owens, & Nunnery, 2005). Leadership training programs must provide informational and transformational learning to enhance the internalization of the content and embrace the knowledge as part of their professional practice (Hambright & Franco, 2008). Henze's research related to leadership and communication (2005) clearly reminds us that the discourse of educational leaders is a neglected topic in professional preparation courses. School leaders report that their school leadership programs are not preparing them for equity issues emphasized in the national standards (Barnett, 2004; Boske, 2009). There is increasing support for leadership training programs that produce administrators who will ensure equitable results for all students (Grogan, 2004; Henze, 2005; Lopez et al., 2006; Theoharis, 2007). The preparation of school leaders must become a central focus in the pursuit of equity.

While this study yielded results that indicated no significant relationship between shared leadership and African American student achievement, school leaders must look for ways to improve teaching and learning for all students. Enough studies have indicated that shared leadership has the potential to unlock the collective abilities of all staff members, which should result in the improved academic performance of all students (Crum & Sherman, 2008; Heck and Hallinger, 2009; Jacobson et al., 2005; Leithwood and Mascall, 2008; Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009; Penlington, Kington & Day, 2008; Seashore Louis et al., 2010).

The research highlighted in this study points to the advantages of shared leadership. Shared leadership increases the self-determination of its members, which

allows them to better anticipate and respond to the demands of the profession (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Singh, 2005). There is increasing evidence that shared leadership improves organizational outcomes and student learning (Harris & Spillane, 2008). The use of shared leadership has proven to contribute to improved student outcomes, increased recognition of the profession, and more effective change management (Duignan & Bezzina, 2006). Higher-achieving schools award leadership to all school members and other stakeholders at a greater level than low-performing schools (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008). Shared leadership accommodates equity and accountability by empowering stakeholders (Singh, 2005). When school leaders foster planned approaches to leadership distribution, high levels of academic optimism prevail due to the transparency of the decision-making process (Mascall et al., 2008). Shared leadership has motivational and cognitive advantages over more traditional methods using single-leader models (Solansky, 2008).

Limitations

There are limitations associated with any study utilizing quantitative analyses in examining the relationship among variables. These limitations may affect the results and require an explanation by the researcher which may be useful to other potential researchers who may choose to conduct a similar study or replicate a study (Creswell, 2008). Limitations outside of those discussed in chapter one will be discussed here.

The lack of variability in MSA scores over the past four years stands out as a potentially significant limitation and threat to the internal validity of this study. The state

of Maryland reports longitudinal MSA data for grade three through five via www.mdreportcard.org. While the Maryland School Assessment has been given to students since 2003, the results over the past four years demonstrate incremental growth in reading and math. Scores for students in grades three through five have increased only two percent (2%) in reading and two point four percent (2.4%) in math over the last four years. This flattening of scores made it difficult when comparing responses from the SEDS survey to MSA scores. The lack of variability limited the potential for significant correlations to be generated. Perhaps using a student achievement measure other than standardized state assessments designed to measure AYP would provide more variability in academic performance.

A lack of variability in responses to the SEDS survey also serves as another possible limitation for this study. The 152 principals in the study largely considered themselves strong practitioners of shared leadership. The mean score for the total survey was 3.9, on a Likert scale ranging from one to six, indicating that most of the principals utilize shared leadership strategies in managing their schools (Appendix I). In the nine domains of the survey, there were no mean scores for the total group of respondents below 3.2. This, again, suggests that the principals see themselves as advocates for shared leadership practices. When one adds the lack of variance in MSA scores with the lack of variance in survey responses one has a recipe that limits the potential for significant correlations to be generated. While this makes it challenging for the researcher, it may also be viewed in a positive light, particularly when discussing the general positive feelings principals in this study had toward the use of shared leadership practices.

An additional limitation of this study is that it utilized a self-reporting survey. Self-reports are one dimensional and may prevent the researcher from answering questions that the survey participants may have. There are also lingering doubts within the general population concerning the reliability of information derived from a few respondents purporting to represent the whole (Rea & Parker, 2005). Certain limitations are inherent with web-based surveys such as the one used in this study. Self-selection bias can lead to lower response rates and those who are not comfortable with email or web-based technology may exclude themselves from the sample (Rea & Parker, 2005).

Sample size is an additional limitation of this study. All twenty-four (24) Maryland school districts were invited to participate, yet only 14 responded in the affirmative. As the growth of graduate and doctoral programs increases across the region, it becomes more challenging to receive approval from school districts to conduct research. The districts who declined to participate in this study indicated a desire to protect their principals from the numerous requests they receive annually. One county declined strictly based on their policy of not allowing researchers who are not employed by their county to conduct research. This myopic approach to such requests presents a challenge to those seeking to enhance their profession through meaningful research. Over six hundred principals were invited to participate in this study. Having more participants may have aided this researcher in conducting a study that could have yielded significant correlations among the variables.

The timing of this survey may also be a limitation. Principals received their invitation to participate in August and September of 2011. One might question whether the responses of the participants would have varied based on the time of year they

completed the survey questionnaire. Would they have been more critical and thoughtful in the spring? That is a question that is hard to answer, but most school leaders can relate to the optimism that accompanies the start of the school year versus the lack of time and exhaustion that is associated with the end of the year.

Finally, a lingering limitation of this study is the lack of empirical studies that have been conducted to address shared leadership and African American student achievement. For that matter, there are few studies that address school leadership in the context of minority student achievement. Nevarez and Wood (2007) noted that there remains a critical need for additional research on school leadership that facilitates the development of proficient and culturally competent schools capable of creating positive and productive climates. The diversity of American schools calls for leadership that promotes cultural pluralism and success for all students (McCray, Wright, & Beachum, 2004). While this study was unable to uncover significant relationships among the variables associated with shared leadership and African American student achievement, maybe others will take up the mantle and seek to uncover how school leaders can make a difference for all of their students.

Future Directions

The theoretical framework of this study charges school leaders with the task of being at the forefront of meeting the needs of minority students. It sought to examine the relationship between the self-reported shared leadership practices of Maryland elementary principals and African American student achievement. This study is rooted in

a theoretical assumption that encourages principals to create model programs at the elementary level that promote and ensure an equitable education for all. It also assumes that improving educational practices and student learning begins with identifying the nature of successful educational leadership (Seashore Louis et al., 2010).

This study responded to the passions of John Fischer and William P. Foster. Fischer asked that educators be forward thinking and pragmatic in planning to meet the needs of minority students. Foster urged educational leaders to avoid being hemmed in by state and federal policy. He advised educators to write about and research local issues so they might develop "oppositional imaginations" (Grogan, 2004, p. 222).

Critical race theory also served as a foundational layer for this study's theoretical framework. Consistent with critical race theory, this study aimed to reveal the relationship between competent school leadership and the success of African American students. School systems, districts, and schools have an obligation to look within their organizations to identify best practices related to the academic achievement of African American students.

Future studies should continue to examine the relationship between shared leadership and African American student achievement by utilizing comprehensive, longitudinal, and varied methodologies. This study may prompt additional investigation in the following avenues:

1. Future research in Maryland should continue to seek the participation of all 24 school districts.

2. In general, future research on shared leadership and African American student achievement should seek the greatest representation of school districts reflecting urban, suburban, and rural settings.
3. Future research might consider the utilization of a survey instrument that may yield a greater variability in responses from participants such as one using a nine-point scale.
4. As the state of testing is changing across the nation, future research will need to address the selection of student performance data that will provide the best information for correlational studies.
5. Future research might consider using a mixed method approach with longitudinal aspects. Based on previous research, the collection and use of quantitative and qualitative data over time yields richer results. The inclusion of teachers, students, parents, and community members would also strengthen the validity and reliability of future research on shared leadership and African American student achievement.
6. Future studies should also consider additional sources of student achievement not directly related to summative assessment data. The manifestations of shared leadership are complex, which requires researchers to be diligent in their efforts. The additional positive effects of shared leadership should be explored as they relate to student achievement.

Summary

School leaders play a critical role in ensuring the academic achievement of all students. The influence of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Race to the Top highlight the accountability of principals in regards to the progress of all student groups. Despite this responsibility, empirical studies find mixed results regarding the principals' influence on student achievement (Ross & Gray, 2006). While proponents of school restructuring promote the participation of teachers in school decision making and argue the importance of supportive principal leadership, there remains a dearth of empirical research investigating the relationship between shared leadership and student achievement specific to minority students.

Research on leadership, student achievement, leadership qualities, and leadership training points to a need for inclusive school leadership practices. Shared leadership has been found to increase the self-determination of its members, which allows them to better anticipate and respond to the demands of the profession (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Singh, 2005). When school leaders engage in conversations about student performance, low-performing schools can improve through shared leadership and a culture that centers on professionalism (Lambert, 2006; Rasberry & Mahajan, 2008). There is increasing evidence that shared leadership improves organizational outcomes and student learning (Harris & Spillane, 2008).

Shared leadership has proven to contribute to improved student outcomes, increased recognition of the profession, and more effective change management (Duignan & Bezzina, 2006). Higher-achieving schools award leadership to all school

members and other stakeholders at a greater level than low-performing schools (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008).

Shared leadership has motivational and cognitive advantages over more traditional methods using single-leader models (Solansky, 2008). With the development of shared leadership, teachers become comfortable enough to give and receive mutual influence when confronting tasks and empowering behavior (Bligh, Pierce, & Kohles, 2006). The relationship between shared leadership and African American student achievement was examined in this study. While no strong relationships were uncovered, the potential use of shared leadership to increase the academic achievement of African American students requires further examination by those motivated to bridge the achievement gap. It is our moral obligation to promote, support, and fund their efforts.

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APPENDIX A

SEDS Author Permission Letter

3 Linda Lane
Hampton Bays, New York 11946
April 6, 2011

To the Chair and the Committee of Christopher Wooleyhand:

As the developer of the Teacher Decision-making Instrument (TDI), the Shared Education Decisions Survey (SEDS), and the Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (SEDS-R), I give permission to Christopher Wooleyhand to utilize my instrumentation for his doctoral dissertation at Notre Dame of Maryland University.

Mr. Wooleyhand and I have discussed the changes that he might make utilizing the SEDS and the SEDS-R for his dissertation. These discussions were entered into to ensure that the psychometric properties of the instrumentation were not compromised in any way that would impact his research.

The permission to utilize my instrumentation is limited to the following: Mr. Wooleyhand may utilize the instrumentation only for his doctoral dissertation and only under the conditions to which he and I have agreed.

I do not charge any fees for the use of my instrumentation by students pursuing Bachelors, Masters, or Doctoral degrees. Any use beyond the pursuit of academic degrees is subject to a fee structure, which I discuss with any clients prior to use in any school, district, county, state, national, or international investigations not related to higher or terminal education degrees. These instruments are all copyrighted materials and are subject to the normal protections of copyrighted materials.

Additionally, in return for the use of the instrumentation in pursuing a degree, I request a hard copy and an electronic copy of the thesis/dissertation once the thesis/dissertation has been completed.

I am gratified that almost 20 years after the completion of my own work (New York University, 1992) that I am still receiving requests for the use of my instrumentation. Close to 30 studies have been completed nationally and internationally using such instrumentation.

I wish Mr. Wooleyhand all good luck in the completion of his study and look forward to seeing the final product of his efforts.

If you wish to communicate with me, you may contact me at ferrara@optonline.net or 631-903-5935.

With all good wishes,

Donna L. Ferrara, Ph.D.

APPENDIX B

Shared Education Decisions Survey

Original Survey developed by Ferrara (1992b)

SHARED EDUCATION DECISIONS SURVEY

This survey is designed to obtain perceptions concerning involvement in shared decision making. For the following items, decisions common to the school setting are divided into 11 organizational areas. Using the key below, for each item please indicate by **CIRCLING** the appropriate response in each column:

1. How frequently you perceive you are involved in making each decision (**Actual** column) and
2. How frequently you would like to be involved in making each decision (**Desired** column).

For analysis purposes, it is important that you provide a response in both columns for every item. Except where indicated by the wording of a particular item, respond to each item as it applies only to a building-level decision.

KEY: 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, 5=Usually, 6=Always

		DESIRED							**ACTUAL**					
		NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	USUALLY	ALWAYS		NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	USUALLY	ALWAYS
PLANNING														
1.	Designing change initiatives at the district level.	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Designing change initiatives at the building level	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Developing a district philosophy statement.	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Developing a school philosophy statement.	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Setting district-level goals	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Setting building-level goals	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
7.	Planning long-term, district-level education improvements..	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
8.	Planning long-term, building-level educatio	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6

	improvements..													
9.	Planning short-term, district-level educatio improvements...	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
10	Planning short-term, building-level educational improvements.	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
11	Determining who will be involved in distric wide change initiatives	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
12	Determining who will be involved in school wide change initiatives	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
POLICY														
13	Setting guidelines for homework	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
14	Setting guidelines for student conduct, liscipline	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
15	Determining guidelines for student retentior	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
16	Establishing student attendance policies	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
17	Establishing academic eligibility policies fo student participation in extracurricular activities	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
18	Setting guidelines for evaluation of administrators	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
19	Setting guidelines for evaluation of teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
20	Setting guidelines for evaluation of educatic support personnel	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
CURRICULUM / INSTRUCTION														
21	Choosing content/program areas for curricu development	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
22	Choosing content for inclusion in curriculur documents	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
23	Selecting textbooks	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
24	Selecting instructional materials	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
25	Determining changes in course offerings	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
26	Determining teaching methodologies	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
27	Determining new programs for inclusion in curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
28	Designing new academic programs	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT														
29	Determining district standards of excellence	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
30	Specifying grade-level or course-level stude outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
31	Determining student grading practices	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
32	Determining strategies for optimizing time c task	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
33	Setting guidelines for student testing and assessment	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
34	Determining specific standardized tests and	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6

	other forms of student assessments													
35	Evaluating the alignment between textbooks curriculum, and testing programs	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
36	Evaluating the alignment between teaching, testing, and staff development	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
PUPIL PERSONNEL														
37	Determining student placement for instructional programs	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
38	Determining recommended student class siz	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
39	Determining methods of reporting student progress to parents	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
40	Helping to solve a student's academic proble	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
41	Helping to solve a student's personal proble	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
42	Choosing student support services administered by guidance	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
43	Determining pupils who are given commendations, awards, and scholarships	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
Staff Personnel														
44	Hiring district administrators	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
45	Hiring building administrators	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
46	Hiring instructional personnel	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
47	Hiring educational support personnel	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
48	Selecting department heads	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
49	Orientating new personnel	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
50	Assigning teaching duties	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
51	Determining duty assignments	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
52	Granting tenure to administrators	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
53	Granting tenure to teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
54	Reducing staff	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
55	Assigning staff to committees	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
56	Planning agendas for staff meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
57	Resolving employee grievances	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
SCHOOL/COMMUNITY RELATIONS														
58	Involving community/civic groups in schoo activities	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
59	Involving business groups in school activiti	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
60	Selecting community or business representatives for involvement in school committees	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
61	Determining content of school news release the media	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
62	Determining the extent of influence citizen committees have over school decisions	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
63	Distributing outside resources within the school	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6

64	Resolving difficulties with community/business groups	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT														
65	Selecting parents for involvement in school committees	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
66	Selecting parents for involvement in shared decision-making committees or councils	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
67	Determining the amount of influence the PT will have on school functioning	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
68	Setting agenda items for parent meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
69	Resolving parental complaints	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
STAFF DEVELOPMENT														
70	Assigning staff to staff development committees	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
71	Carrying out staff development needs assessments	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
72	Designing staff development activities	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
73	Implementing staff development activities	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
74	Specifying staff development evaluation activities	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
BUDGET														
75	Formulating the district-level budget	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
76	Formulating building-level budgets	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
77	Formulating department/grade-level budgets	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
78	Allocating monies for textbooks	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
79	Allocating monies for curriculum developm	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
80	Allocating monies for plant decisions	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
81	Managing the district-level budget	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
82	Managing the building-level budget	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
83	Managing department/grade-level budgets	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
84	Cutting monies from the district-level budge	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
85	Cutting monies from the building-level budg	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
86	Cutting monies from department/grade-leve budgets	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
PLANT MANAGEMENT														
87	Determining priority use of school facilities	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
88	Determining the choice of capital projects	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
89	Determining the scheduling of capital proje	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
90	Determining priorities for facilities planning	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
91	Determining priorities for facilities maintenance	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
92	Determining busing schedules	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
93	Determining bus routes	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
94	Determining the number of buses used for	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6

	student transportation													
95	Determining the hours of the school schedu	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
	What is your role in relation to the school													
	Administrator													
	Teacher													
	Support Staff													
	Parent													
	Community Member													
	School Board Member													
	Business Representative													
	Student													
	For which level of the school are you completing this survey													
	Pre-K													
	Intermediate													
	Middle													
	Junior High													
	High													
	Junior-Senior													
	K-12													
	Other: _____													

APPENDIX C

SEDS Modified for this Study

Modified-SHARED EDUCATION DECISIONS SURVEY

(Ferrara, 1992b)

School name: _____

County: _____

School code: _____

Title I school? yes___ no____

Race of principal completing this survey: _____

Gender of principal completing this survey: _____

Years in current position: _____

Years in education: _____

This survey is designed to obtain principal perceptions concerning teacher involvement in shared decision making. For the following items, decisions common to the school setting are divided into nine organizational areas.

Please consider the following definition as you respond to each item:

Shared leadership is broadly defined to denote teachers' influence over, and their participation in, school-wide decisions with principals (Seashore Louis et al., 2010).

Using the key below, for each item please indicate by **CIRCLING** the appropriate response in each column:

How frequently do you involve <u>teachers</u> in making each decision?

For analysis purposes, it is important that you provide a response for <u>every</u> item. Except where
indicated by the wording of a particular item, respond to each item as it applies only to a <u>building-level decision</u>.

		ACTUAL					
		NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	USUALLY	ALWAYS
Planning							
1.	Designing change initiatives at the county level	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Designing change initiatives at the building level	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Developing a county philosophy statement	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Developing a school philosophy statement	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Setting county-level goals	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Setting building-level goals	1	2	3	4	5	6
7.	Planning long-term, county-level education improvements	1	2	3	4	5	6
8.	Planning long-term, building-level educational improvements	1	2	3	4	5	6
9.	Planning short-term, county-level educatio improvements	1	2	3	4	5	6

10.	Planning short-term, building-level educational improvements	1 2 3 4 5 6
11.	Determining who will be involved in count wide change initiatives	1 2 3 4 5 6
12.	Determining who will be involved in schoc wide change initiatives	1 2 3 4 5 6

Policy

13	Setting guidelines for homework	1 2 3 4 5 6
14	Setting guidelines for student conduct, discipl	1 2 3 4 5 6
15	Determining guidelines for student retentior	1 2 3 4 5 6
16	Establishing student attendance policies	1 2 3 4 5 6
17	Establishing academic eligibility policies fo student participation in extracurricular activities	1 2 3 4 5 6
18	Setting guidelines for evaluation of administrators	1 2 3 4 5 6
19	Setting guidelines for evaluation of teachers	1 2 3 4 5 6
20	Setting guidelines for evaluation of educatic support personnel	1 2 3 4 5 6

Curriculum/Instruction

21	Choosing content/program areas for curricu development	1 2 3 4 5 6
22	Choosing content for inclusion in curriculur documents	1 2 3 4 5 6
23	Selecting textbooks	1 2 3 4 5 6
24	Selecting instructional materials	1 2 3 4 5 6
25	Determining changes in course offerings	1 2 3 4 5 6
26	Determining teaching methodologies	1 2 3 4 5 6
27	Determining new programs for inclusion in curriculum	1 2 3 4 5 6
28	Designing new academic programs	1 2 3 4 5 6

Student Achievement

29	Determining district standards of excellence	1 2 3 4 5 6
30	Specifying grade-level or course-level stude outcomes	1 2 3 4 5 6
31	Determining student grading practices	1 2 3 4 5 6
32	Determining strategies for optimizing time (task	1 2 3 4 5 6
33	Setting guidelines for student testing and assessment	1 2 3 4 5 6
34	Determining specific standardized tests and other forms of student assessments	1 2 3 4 5 6
35	Evaluating the alignment between textbooks curriculum, and testing programs	1 2 3 4 5 6
36	Evaluating the alignment between teaching,	1 2 3 4 5 6

	testing, and staff development	
Pupil Personnel		
37	Determining student placement for instructional programs	1 2 3 4 5 6
38	Determining recommended student class siz	1 2 3 4 5 6
39	Determining methods of reporting student progress to parents	1 2 3 4 5 6
40	Helping to solve a student's academic problems	1 2 3 4 5 6
41	Helping to solve a student's personal proble	1 2 3 4 5 6
42	Choosing student support services administered by guidance	1 2 3 4 5 6
43	Determining pupils who are given commendations, awards, and scholarships	1 2 3 4 5 6
Staff Personnel		
44	Hiring district administrators	1 2 3 4 5 6
45	Hiring building administrators	1 2 3 4 5 6
46	Hiring instructional personnel	1 2 3 4 5 6
47	Hiring educational support personnel	1 2 3 4 5 6
48	Selecting department heads	1 2 3 4 5 6
49	Orientating new personnel	1 2 3 4 5 6
50	Assigning teaching duties	1 2 3 4 5 6
51	Determining duty assignments	1 2 3 4 5 6
52	Granting tenure to administrators	1 2 3 4 5 6
53	Granting tenure to teachers	1 2 3 4 5 6
54	Reducing staff	1 2 3 4 5 6
55	Assigning staff to committees	1 2 3 4 5 6
56	Planning agendas for staff meetings	1 2 3 4 5 6
57	Resolving employee grievances	1 2 3 4 5 6
School/Community Relations		
58	Involving community/civic groups in schoo activities	1 2 3 4 5 6
59	Involving business groups in school activiti	1 2 3 4 5 6
60	Selecting community or business representatives for involvement in school committees	1 2 3 4 5 6
61	Determining content of school news release the media	1 2 3 4 5 6
62	Determining the extent of influence citizen committees have over school decisions	1 2 3 4 5 6
63	Distributing outside resources within the school	1 2 3 4 5 6
64	Resolving difficulties with community/business groups	1 2 3 4 5 6

Parental Involvement

65	Selecting parents for involvement in school committees	1 2 3 4 5 6
66	Selecting parents for involvement in shared decision making committees or councils	1 2 3 4 5 6
67	Determining the amount of influence the PT will have on school functioning	1 2 3 4 5 6
68	Setting agenda items for parent meetings	1 2 3 4 5 6
69	Resolving parental complaints	1 2 3 4 5 6

Staff Development

70	Assigning staff to staff development committees	1 2 3 4 5 6
71	Carrying out staff development needs assessments	1 2 3 4 5 6
72	Designing staff development activities	1 2 3 4 5 6
73	Implementing staff development activities	1 2 3 4 5 6
74	Specifying staff development evaluation activities	1 2 3 4 5 6

APPENDIX D

Pilot Study E-mail

To: XXXX
Subject: Pilot Study

Dear Colleague,

I need a favor. I am working on my doctoral dissertation at Notre Dame of Maryland and I need to conduct a pilot study. I have selected you because I am sure that, if you agree to participate, you will complete the survey thoughtfully. I know it is a lot to ask at this time of year, but it would help me greatly. You will receive an email invitation to complete the survey tomorrow. It should take 15-25 minutes to complete. If you have any questions, please call or email me.

Thanks!

Christopher Wooleyhand
Principal
Richard Henry Lee Elementary
410-222-6435/ FAX 410-222-6437

APPENDIX E

Survey Invitation Email

To: xxx

From: cwooleyhand@aacps.org

Subject: Shared Leadership Survey

Body: Dear Colleague:

As a fellow Maryland principal, I realize that you often receive requests to complete surveys. Nonetheless, I am appealing to you to please take a moment to consider participating in this brief survey. I am conducting a survey on Shared Educational Leadership for my doctoral dissertation and would greatly appreciate your assistance. While helping me reach a long-term professional goal, you will also be adding to the body of knowledge related to effective leadership practices. Here is a link to the survey:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address. Please do not forward this message.

Thanks for your participation!
Christopher Wooleyhand
cwooleyhand@aacps.org

Please note: If you do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx

APPENDIX F

Consent Form

Project Title	An Analysis of the Shared Leadership Practices of Principals and African American Student Achievement in Maryland Elementary Schools
Why is this research being done?	The purpose of this study is to examine the shared leadership practices of Maryland elementary principals.
What will I be asked to do?	You will complete a survey, which will take 15-25 minutes to complete. The survey includes questions about your shared leadership practices. You will also be asked for some demographic information (e.g., age, race, gender, years in education, years in current position) so that we can accurately describe the general traits of the group of the principals who participate in the study.
What about confidentiality?	Your responses will be kept completely confidential. The researcher will NOT know your IP address when you respond to the Internet survey. Only the researcher will see your individual survey responses. The list of e-mail addresses of participants will be stored electronically in a password protected folder; a hard copy will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. After I have finished data collection I will destroy the list of participants' and e-mail addresses.
What are the benefits of this research?	The benefits to you include the opportunity to reflect on your shared leadership practices and contribute to the body of knowledge related to school leadership. The results of this study may inform and benefit educational leaders and universities as they develop effective training for aspiring leaders. The results of the study will be used for scholarly purposes only. The results from the study will be presented in educational settings and at professional conferences, and the results might be published in a professional journal in the field of education.
Do I have to be in this research? May I stop participating at any time?	Your participation is voluntary; you are free to withdraw your participation from this study at anytime. If you do not want to continue, you can simply leave this website. If you do not click on the "submit" button at the end of the survey, your answers and participation will not be recorded. You also may choose to skip any questions that you do not wish to answer.

Project Title	An Analysis of the Shared Leadership Practices of Principals and African American Student Achievement in Maryland Elementary Schools	
Statement of Age of Subject and Consent	Your signature indicates that: you are at least 18 years of age; the research has been explained to you; your questions have been fully answered; and you freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this research project.	
What if I have questions?	If you have concerns or questions about this study, please contact Christopher Wooleyhand at cwooleyhand@aacps.org or Dr. Gary Thrift, my research advisor, at gthrift@ndm.edu. If you have any questions about the confidentiality of the research, please contact the Chair of the IRB, Sister Bridget Connor, College of Notre Dame, 4701 North Charles Street, Baltimore, MD, 21210, by phone at 410-532-3157, or by e-mail at bconnor@ndm.edu.	
Signature and Date	Name of Subject	
	Signature of Subject	
	Date	

APPENDIX G

District Approval Letters

From: Wilson, Janet [janet.wilson@acps.k12.md.us]
Sent: Tuesday, July 26, 2011 3:38 PM
To: Wooleyhand, Christopher D
Subject: Permission

Mr. Wooleyhand,

You have permission to conduct your research in Allegany County as outlined in your Abstract. Elementary principals will be notified that they will be receiving an invitation to participation and that their participation is voluntary.

Best wishes to you as you continue the journey toward completion of the Ph.D. program at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland. I enjoyed speaking with you today.

Janet Wilson
Chief Academic Officer
Allegany County Public Schools
301-759-2053

From: Milam, Adam C
Sent: Monday, August 01, 2011 3:32 PM
To: Wooleyhand, Christopher D
Subject: Status of Your Recent Application to Conduct Research in the Anne Arundel County Public Schools

Monday, August 1, 2011

Christopher Wooleyhand, Principal
Richard Henry Lee Elementary School
400 A Street SW
Glen Burnie, Maryland 21061

Dear Mr. Wooleyhand,

I want to first thank you for forwarding to me the documentation that I have now reviewed regarding your request to conduct research in the Anne Arundel County Public Schools. Your research problem addresses a very critical component of good educational leadership. *Do schools with principals who utilize a shared leadership approach to managing their schools also reflect higher academic performance among their students?* I also understand from your proposal that your study will also address the question *"Is the academic achievement of students higher in schools where the principals have a strong commitment to shared leadership?"* These two questions are quite in line with the Anne Arundel County Board of Education's research policy regarding all requests to conduct research involving students, teachers, or parents of students attending the Anne Arundel County Public Schools.

I am therefore pleased to inform you that your request has been approved by the AACPS Research Office. Please consider this email as formal approval of your request to administer the *Shared Education Decisions Survey* our elementary school principals. It is important to mention that our Board of Education's research policy also allows our building principals to make the final decision regarding their participation, or their staff's participation in all research studies.

On behalf of the Research Office staff, I would like to congratulate you on having received official approval to conduct your study in the Anne Arundel County Public Schools. Please feel free to contact us at your earliest convenience if we can be of further assistance in the conduct of your study.

Sincerely,
Adam C. Milam, Ph.D.
Coordinator of Research
Division of Assessment, Accountability & Research
Anne Arundel County Public Schools

August 3, 2011

Christopher Wooleyhand
College of Notre Dame of Maryland
4701 N. Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21210

Re: BCPS Research Project #2256

Dear Christopher:

We have received your request to conduct a research study in the Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS). The proposal, *An Analysis of Shared Leadership Practices of Principals and Student Achievement,* is approved as submitted. In order to gain access to your desired population, certain conditions must be met.

While we have informed the personnel of your study, it is your responsibility to contact the appropriate staff and make arrangements to gain access to your subjects. The District will not provide any information or resources for this study. **Participation in this study is strictly voluntary and informed consent must be signed by each participant.**

Upon completion of the study, you agree to share any written results, videos or dissertation summaries with the Baltimore County Public Schools through the Department of Research, Accountability, and Assessment, 9611 Pulaski Park Drive, Suite 305, Baltimore, Maryland 21220.

Sincerely,

Dr. Tamela H. Hawley
Director of Research
Department of Research, Accountability, and Assessment

cc: Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent
Renee Foose, Deputy Superintendent
Michele Prumo, Chief of Staff
Karen Blannard, Assistant Superintendent, Elementary, Zone 1
Pat Lawton, Assistant Superintendent, Elementary, Zone 2
Verletta White, Assistant Superintendent, Elementary, Zone 3
Executive Director of Research, Accountability, and Assessment
Renard Adams, Coordinator of Research
Gary Brager, Supervisor of Research
File

Calvert County Public Schools

Jack R. Smith, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools

1305 Dares Beach Road
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
Telephone: (410) 535-1700
(301) 855-1834
FAX: (410) 535-7298
TDD: (410) 535-6852
http://www.calvertnet.k12.md.us

September 2, 2011

Mr. Christopher Wooleyhand
c/o Richard Henry Lee Elementary School
400 A Street SW
Glen Burnie, MD 21061

Dear Mr. Wooleyhand,

Thank you for submitting a request to do research in Calvert County Public Schools. Your request has been approved with the following stipulations:

- As stated in your proposal, any and all information related to Calvert County or administrators is to be kept confidential.
- As stated in your proposal, the survey should be presented as strictly voluntary to Calvert County administrators.
- A summary of your results should be sent to me, Jonathan McClellan, upon completion of your research.
- Any changes to your research design or survey must be communicated to me for review and consideration of approval.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jonathan McClellan
Director of Instructional and Informational Technology
Calvert County Public Schools
1305 Dares Beach Road
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
410-535-7296

From: Caples, Robert [rkcaple@carrollk12.org]
Sent: Friday, July 22, 2011 10:34 AM
To: Wooleyhand, Christopher D
Subject: Doctoral Research Approval

Good morning Christopher—

This has been forwarded to me by Gregg Bricca for action.

This email is to recognize that your research Proposal to survey elementary school principals has been approved by Carroll County Public Schools.

I will notify the elementary principals that you will be in touch with them in the near future and copy you on that email.

Good luck with your study. As a former doctoral student, I certainly understand the challenges and effort required to complete this long journey.

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions or need more information.

Best wishes,

Rob

Robert K. Caples, Ph.D.
Supervisor of Research and Program Evaluation

Carroll County Public Schools
125 North Court Street
Westminster, MD 21157

410-386-4423
410-751-3277 (FAX)
rkcaple@carrollk12.org
www.carrollk12.org

From: Perakis, Steven J. (CCPS) [sperakis@ccboe.com]
Sent: Tuesday, August 02, 2011 9:08 AM
To: Wooleyhand, Christopher D
Subject: RE: Question

Mr. Wooleyhand,

We have reviewed your proposal and are pleased to inform you that your research proposal has been accepted with stipulations.

Please do not contact principals until we've had a chance to inform them that you will be contacting them. Once we inform you that we have contacted our principals, then you may begin contacting them. We expect to communicate with them by middle to late next week (i.e. by 8/10-8/12).

Thank you for working with us.
Steve Perakis
Charles County Public Schools

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT
AND ACCOUNTABILITY
191 South East Street
Frederick, MD 21701-5918
301-696-6919 phone
301-696-6956 fax

Frederick County Public Schools
Reach. Challenge. Prepare.

Resha M. Kreischer-Anderson
Data Analyst & Research Specialist
resha.kreischer@fcps.org

August 9, 2011

Mr. Christopher Wooleyhand
400 A Street, SW
Glen Burnie, MD 21061

Re: Research Application: *An Analysis of the Shared Leadership Practices of Principals and Student Achievement in MD Elementary Schools*

Dear Mr. Wooleyhand:

I am pleased to inform you that your request for independent research has been approved by all parties. In your communication to principals, please reiterate that survey participation is voluntary.

Good luck, and do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely yours,

Resha M. Kreischer-Anderson

Resha M. Kreischer-Anderson

pc: Steve Hess
Keith Harris
Mark Pritts

From: Jim Morris [jkmorris@GA.K12.MD.US]
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2011 1:34 PM
To: Wooleyhand, Christopher D
Subject: Doctoral Research

Christopher,

Garrett County Public Schools gives permission for you to survey principals in Garrett County schools for your doctoral research. However, we ask that you do not include the following principals in your survey because they are brand new principals with very limited experiences:

XXXXX, XXXXX Elementary School
XXXXX, XXXXX Elementary School
XXXXX, XXXXX Elementary School
XXXXX, XXXXX Elementary School
XXXXX, XXXXX School
XXXXX, XXXXX School

If there are any questions, please contact me.

James K. Morris
Garrett County Board of Education
Coordinator of Research, Evaluation, and Information
40 S. Second Street
Oakland, MD 21550
301-334-8931
jkmorris@ga.k12.md.us

From: XXXXXX
Sent: Monday, September 19, 2011 1:49 PM
To: Wooleyhand, Christopher D
Subject: request to conduct research

Hello Mr. Wooleyhand:

We are happy to inform you that your request to conduct research in XXXXX County Public Schools has been approved. I will mail a copy of the approval memorandum to you. Please do not contact any principals until Mr. XXXXX has received a copy of the approval memorandum as well. Mr. XXXXX has agreed to help facilitate your contact with elementary school principals.

Thank you.

XXXXXXX
Office of Shared Accountability

From: Helen Frost [helen.frost@pgcps.org]
Sent: Thursday, August 11, 2011 11:52 AM
To: Wooleyhand, Christopher D
Subject: Research Application

Sent on Behalf of Kola K. Sunmonu, Ph.D., Director, Department of Research and Evaluation

Good Morning Mr. Wooleyhand,

I am pleased to inform you that your research application for research titled "An Analysis of the Shared Leadership Practices of Principals and Student Achievement in Maryland Elementary Schools" has been approved. An approval letter has been mailed to your home address.

We would like to request that you state in your Principal's introductory letter that email addresses were obtained from your dissertation chair, Dr. Gary Thrift, as you indicated in your email of August 9, 2011.

Please don't hesitate to call our office on 301-780-6807 if you have any questions. Thank you and wishing you success in your study.

Helen M. Frost
Department of Research & Evaluation
helen.frost@pgcps.org
Phone: 301-780-6807
Fax: 301-952-6147

From: Anne Thomas [thomas@fastol.com]
Sent: Thursday, July 28, 2011 9:43 PM
To: Wooleyhand, Christopher D
Cc: Elizabeth.Andrews@qacps.org
Subject: research request

Good evening,

Your research sounds very interesting. It is approved with one concern, August is very hectic and you may not get very good response during that month. We will advise principals that your request to conduct research is approved for their participation if they so desire.

Anne

August 4, 2011

Mr. Christopher Wooleyhand
400 A Street, S.W.
Glen Burnie, Maryland 21061

Dear Mr. Wooleyhand:

Your request to conduct independent research in St. Mary's County Public Schools has been approved as submitted. Any changes to the research proposal must be resubmitted for approval. A copy of this letter is being sent to the principal(s) and appropriate director(s) indicating approval of the project. Please contact the principal(s) for further instructions and to make appropriate arrangements for completing the research project.

Thank you for your interest in our schools.

Sincerely,
Linda Dudderar, M.Ed.
Chief Academic Officer

LD/dsa/15

cc: Mr. Maher
Elementary Principals

WASHINGTON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
P.O. Box 730 | 820 Commonwealth Avenue | Hagerstown, Maryland 21741-0730
www.wcboe.k12.md.us

Jeremy E. Jakoby
Supervisor for Testing & Accountability

Christopher Wooleyhand
Doctoral Student at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland
7692 Early Spring Way
Severn, MD

RE: Research Request

Dear Christopher Wooleyhand,

Your research study titled, "An Analysis of the Shared Leadership Practices of Principals and Student Achievement in Maryland Elementary Schools," has been approved by Washington County Public Schools with the following conditions:

1) Employee demographic data must remain strictly confidential,
2) principals are provided two (2) weeks to complete the survey,
3) Principals receive no more than one (1) reminder email from the researcher if they had not completed the survey,
4) The researcher agrees to provide Washington County Public Schools Office of Testing and Accountability the results of the study, unsolicited, by September 1, 2012, and
5) The researcher modifies his email to principals to include a statement that conveys that this study has been approved by Washington County Public Schools.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jeremy E. Jakoby
Washington County Public Schools

The Board of Education of Worcester County

Accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
6270 Worcester Highway
Newark, Maryland 21841-9746
www.worcesterk12.com

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Superintendent of Schools

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July 21, 2011

Mr. Christopher Wooleyhand
Richard Henry Lee Elementary School
400 A Street SW
Glen Burnie, MD 21061

Dear Mr. Wooleyhand:

I am responding to your letter received in my office on July 19, 2011. In your letter, as a requirement for your doctoral degree from the College of Notre Dame of Maryland, you are requesting permission to conduct research in our school system. You are requesting permission to contact each elementary school principal in our school system and seek their participation in an on-line survey on the topic of Shared Leadership and the impact on student achievement.

Based on the documentation that you provided, under the provision that all information collected will remain anonymous and the names of schools, principals, and the school system are not reported, I am approving your request. Participation by a principal is voluntary. It should be noted that we have five elementary schools in our school system. You will need to contact each principal to seek their voluntary participation on the on-line survey. At the bottom of this letter, I have listed the names of our five elementary schools and the name of the principal.

If you have any additional questions, you may contact me.

Sincerely yours,

Jon M. Andes
Superintendent of Schools

pc: Dr. John Gaddis
Mr. Todd Hall, Principal, Pocomoke Elementary School
Ms. Dee Shorts, Principal, Snow Hill Elementary School
Mr. Roger Pacella, Principal, Buckingham Elementary School
Ms. Irene Kordick, Principal, Ocean City Elementary School
Ms. Diane Shorts, Principal, Showell Elementary School

APPENDIX H

NDMU IRB Approval Letter

College of Notre Dame
OF MARYLAND

Learn for Life®

June 5, 2011
Christopher Wooleyhand
7692 Early Spring Way
Severn MD 2114

RE: IRB-11-05-111162

Dear Christopher Wooley hand,

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the College of Notre Dame of Maryland has reviewed your proposal. Approval of your study is pending on school district/s research office/s' permission that allow you to send emails to principals in particular school district/s and hard copy of permission/s submitted to IRB chair. As district/s provide permission and a hard copy is received by IRB chair the study may commence in respective school district.
The IRB does not approve the abbreviated consent form by email as proposed. The email sent to principals shall be changed to the full information on the Consent Form with the exclusion of the signature boxes and inclusion of a statement, such as, following the survey link is your consent to participate. The abbreviated form of consent shall not be used.

Your chair has received additional suggestions and considerations. Please review those with your chair.

Your approval to conduct research will expire one year after official school districts permissions have been received by the IRB. You are required to submit a renewal application within 60 days of your expiration date in order to continue your research beyond the one-year period.

During the course of carrying out your research you are responsible to promptly report to the IRB any unanticipated problems involving risks to participants, investigators, or staff during the course of carrying out research. In addition, any changes in research activity during this approval period may not be conducted without IRB review and approval. Please refer to your unique IRB proposal number on all responses to the Board.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at bconnor@ndm.edu.

Sincerely,

S. Bridget Connor

Sister Bridget Connor, Acting Chair,
Institutional Review Board
College of Notre Dame of Maryland

APPENDIX I

Survey Question and Domain Descriptive Statistics

Table 22.

Survey Question and Domain Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1	152	1	6	3.44	1.513
Q2	152	3	6	5.11	.751
Q3	152	1	6	2.81	1.626
Q4	152	1	6	5.63	.843
Q5	152	1	6	2.76	1.599
Q6	152	3	6	5.70	.620
Q7	152	1	6	3.13	1.638
Q8	152	2	6	5.53	.788
Q9	152	1	6	3.17	1.610
Q10	152	3	6	5.55	.689
Q11	152	1	6	3.42	1.576
Q12	152	1	6	5.22	1.031
Planning_Mean	152	2.08	6.00	4.2895	.81610
Q13	152	1	6	5.15	1.389
Q14	152	1	6	5.34	1.010
Q15	152	1	6	4.71	1.547
Q16	152	1	6	3.34	1.870
Q17	152	1	6	3.41	1.978
Q18	152	1	6	1.76	1.312
Q19	152	1	6	2.95	1.823
Q20	152	1	6	2.87	1.748
Policy_Mean	152	1.25	6.00	3.6891	.99554
Q21	152	1	6	3.59	1.621
Q22	152	1	6	3.63	1.560
Q23	152	1	6	3.24	1.733
Q24	152	1	6	4.69	1.318
Q25	152	1	6	2.41	1.625
Q26	152	1	6	4.82	1.235
Q27	152	1	6	3.67	1.569
Q28	152	1	6	3.71	1.614
CurricInstruct_Mean	152	1.00	6.00	3.7212	1.17643
Q29	152	1	6	2.63	1.530

Q30	152	1	6	3.96	1.627
Q31	152	1	6	4.30	1.577
Q32	152	1	6	5.30	1.042
Q33	152	1	6	3.76	1.652
Q34	152	1	6	3.03	1.607
Q35	152	1	6	3.67	1.639
Q36	152	1	6	4.33	1.486
StdntAchvt_Mean	152	1.00	6.00	3.8717	1.06436
Q37	152	1	6	5.45	.890
Q38	152	1	6	2.86	1.705
Q39	152	1	6	4.81	1.280
Q40	152	1	6	5.80	.602
Q41	152	3	6	5.15	.933
Q42	152	1	6	4.58	1.232
Q43	152	1	6	5.50	.891
PupilPrsnnl_Mean	152	1.57	6.00	4.8778	.69664
Q44	152	1	6	1.64	1.165
Q45	152	1	6	1.89	1.525
Q46	152	1	6	3.75	1.665
Q47	152	1	6	3.75	1.579
Q48	152	1	6	4.07	1.746
Q49	152	1	6	5.27	1.048
Q50	152	1	6	4.03	1.474
Q51	152	1	6	4.12	1.423
Q52	152	1	5	1.14	.515
Q53	152	1	6	1.41	.909
Q54	152	1	6	1.92	1.310
Q55	152	1	6	5.13	1.293
Q56	152	1	6	4.59	.993
Q57	152	1	6	3.24	1.749
StafflPrsnnl_Mean	152	1.21	5.29	3.2810	.75188
Q58	152	1	6	4.53	1.229
Q59	152	1	6	4.38	1.239
Q60	152	1	6	4.22	1.246
Q61	152	1	6	3.34	1.452
Q62	152	1	6	2.77	1.435
Q63	152	1	6	3.41	1.507
Q64	152	1	6	2.61	1.410
SchlCommRelat_Mean	152	1.00	6.00	3.6090	.96102

Q65	152	1	6	4.22	1.256
Q66	152	1	6	4.20	1.287
Q67	152	1	6	3.80	1.309
Q68	152	1	6	3.65	1.377
Q69	152	1	6	4.55	1.361
ParentInvl_Mean	152	1.00	6.00	4.0842	1.00503
Q70	152	1	6	4.48	1.487
Q71	152	1	6	4.92	1.148
Q72	152	1	6	4.95	1.025
Q73	152	1	6	5.04	1.029
Q74	152	1	6	4.66	1.180
StaffDevel_Mean	152	1.00	6.00	4.8105	1.01166
SurveyTotall_Mean	152	1.35	5.80	3.9398	.67224

APPENDIX J

Survey Question and MSA Proficiency Percent Correlations

Table 23
Survey Domain and MSA Proficiency Percent Correlations

Correlations

Reading		MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11	Planning Mean	Policy Mean	Curriculum/ Instruction Mean	Student Achievement Mean	Pupil Personnel Mean	Staff Personnel Mean	School/ Community Relations	Parent Involvement Relations	Staff Development Mean
MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11	Pearson Correlation	1	.028	.023	.106	.116	-.023	.158	.068	-.052	.099
	Sig		.743	.785	.216	.174	.787	.063	.428	.540	.246
	N	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139
Planning Mean	Pearson Correlation	.028	1	.590**	.630**	.637**	.522**	.402**	.393**	.365**	.455**
	Sig.	.743		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
Policy Mean	Pearson Correlation	.023	.590**	1	.589**	.627**	.561**	.470**	.425**	.355**	.372**
	Sig.	.785	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
Curriculum/Instruction Mean	Pearson Correlation	.106	.630**	.589**	1	.729**	.494**	.369**	.408**	.240**	.374**
	Sig.	.216	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.004	.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
Student Achievement Mean	Pearson Correlation	.116	.637**	.627**	.729**	1	.543**	.280**	.370**	.278**	.351**
	Sig.	.174	.000	.000	.000		.000	.001	.000	.001	.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
Pupil Personnel Mean	Pearson Correlation	-.023	.522**	.561**	.494**	.543**	1	.392**	.486**	.534**	.472**
	Sig.	.787	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
Staff Personnel Mean	Pearson Correlation	.158	.402**	.470**	.369**	.280**	.392**	1	.618**	.490**	.585**

	Sig.	.063	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
School/Community Relations	Pearson Correlation	.068	.393**	.425**	.408**	.370**	.486**	.618**	1	.587**	.608**
	Sig.	.428	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
Parent Involvement Relations	Pearson Correlation	-.052	.365**	.355**	.240**	.278**	.534**	.490**	.587**	1	.593**
	Sig.	.540	.000	.000	.004	.001	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
Staff Development Mean	Pearson Correlation	.099	.455**	.372**	.374**	.351**	.472**	.585**	.608**	.593**	1
	Sig.	.246	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141

Math		MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11	Planning Mean	Policy Mean	Curriculum/ Instruction Mean	Student Achievement Mean	Pupil Personnel Mean	Staff Personnel Mean	School/ Community Relations	Parent Involvement Relations	Staff Development Mean
MSA Proficiency Mean 08-11	Pearson Correlation	1	.046	.068	.113	.154	.039	.101	-.030	.000	.103
	Sig.		.593	.425	.187	.071	.651	.236	.728	.999	.229
	N	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139
Planning Mean	Pearson Correlation	.046	1	.590**	.630**	.637**	.522**	.402**	.393**	.365**	.455**
	Sig.	.593		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
Policy Mean	Pearson Correlation	.068	.590**	1	.589**	.627**	.561**	.470**	.425**	.355**	.372**
	Sig.	.425	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
Curriculum/Instruction Mean	Pearson Correlation	.113	.630**	.589**	1	.729**	.494**	.369**	.408**	.240**	.374**
	Sig.	.187	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.004	.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
Student Achievement Mean	Pearson Correlation	.154	.637**	.627**	.729**	1	.543**	.280**	.370**	.278**	.351**
	Sig.	.071	.000	.000	.000		.000	.001	.000	.001	.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
Pupil Personnel Mean	Pearson Correlation	.039	.522**	.561**	.494**	.543**	1	.392**	.486**	.534**	.472**

	Sig.	.651	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
Staff Personnel Mean	Pearson Correlation	.101	.402**	.470**	.369**	.280**	.392**	1	.618**	.490**	.585**
	Sig.	.236	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
School/Community Relations	Pearson Correlation	-.030	.393**	.425**	.408**	.370**	.486**	.618**	1	.587**	.608**
	Sig.	.728	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
Parent Involvement Relations	Pearson Correlation	.000	.365**	.355**	.240**	.278**	.534**	.490**	.587**	1	.593**
	Sig.	.999	.000	.000	.004	.001	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
Staff Development Mean	Pearson Correlation	.103	.455**	.372**	.374**	.351**	.472**	.585**	.608**	.593**	1
	Sig.	.229	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	139	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

APPENDIX K

Additional Analyses Conducted for Two Counties (Reading)

Table 22

Spearman Correlations between African American MSA Reading Scores and Survey Scores for Two Counties

Survey Score	Statistic	County B	County J
Planning Mean	Correlation Coefficient	.008	-.001
	N	48	20
Policy Mean	Correlation Coefficient	.050	**.229**
	N	48	20
Curriculum/Instruction	Correlation Coefficient	.045	.241
Mean	N	48	20
Student Achievement	Correlation Coefficient	.125	**.268**
Mean	N	48	20
Pupil Personnel	Correlation Coefficient	-.078	**.211**
Mean	N	48	20
Staff Personnel	Correlation Coefficient	.181	.181
Mean	N	48	20
School/Community	Correlation Coefficient	.055	.152
Relations Mean	N	48	20
Parent Involvement/	Correlation Coefficient	-.022	.008
Relations Mean	N	48	20
Staff Development	Correlation Coefficient	.199	.101
Mean	N	48	20
Total Survey	Correlation Coefficient	.052	**.205**
Mean	N	48	20

APPENDIX L

Additional Analyses Conducted for Two Counties (Math)

Table 23

Spearman Correlations between African American MSA Math Scores and Survey Scores for Two Counties

Survey Score	Statistic	County B	County J
Planning Mean	Correlation Coefficient	-.094	.012
	N	48	20
Policy Mean	Correlation Coefficient	**.209**	.105
	N	48	20
Curriculum/Instruction	Correlation Coefficient	.011	.032
Mean	N	48	20
Student Achievement	Correlation Coefficient	.091	.184
Mean	N	48	20
Pupil Personnel	Correlation Coefficient	.010	**.226**
Mean	N	48	20
Staff Personnel	Correlation Coefficient	**.258**	.186
Mean	N	48	20
School/Community	Correlation Coefficient	-.052	**.261**
Relations Mean	N	48	20
Parent Involvement/	Correlation Coefficient	.057	.060
Relations Mean	N	48	20
Staff Development	Correlation Coefficient	**.234**	**.213**
Mean	N	48	20
Total Survey	Correlation Coefficient	.092	.097
Mean	N	48	20

APPENDIX M

Table 24

Principal leadership responsibilities: Average r and 95% confidence intervals (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003)

Responsibilities	The extent to which the principal…	Average r	N schools	N studies	95% CI
Culture	fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation	.29	709	13	.23-.37
Order	establishes a set of standard operating procedures and routines	.26	456	17	.17-.35
Discipline	protects teachers from issues and influences that would detract from their teaching time or focus	.24	397	10	.14-.33
Resources	provides teachers with materials and professional development necessary for the successful execution of their jobs	.26	570	17	.18-.34
Curriculum, instruction, assessment	is directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices	.16	636	19	.08-.24
Focus	establishes clear goals and keeps those goals in the forefront of the school's attention	.24	1109	30	.18-.29

Knowledge of curriculum, instruction assessment	fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation	.24	327	8	.13-.35
Visibility	Has quality contact and interactions with teachers and students	.16	432	11	.06-.25
Contingent rewards	recognizes and rewards individual accomplishments	.15	420	7	.05-.24
Communication	establishes strong lines of communication with teachers and students	.23	245	10	.10-.35
Outreach	is an advocate and spokesperson for the school to all stakeholders	.28	478	14	.19-.35
Input	involves teachers in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies	.30	504	13	.21-.38
Affirmation	recognizes and celebrates school accomplishments and acknowledges failures	.25	345	7	.14-.35
Relationship	Demonstrates an awareness of the personal aspects of teachers and staff	.19	497	12	.10-.24
Change agent	is willing to and actively challenges the *status quo*	.30	479	7	.22-.38
Optimizer	inspires and leads new and challenging innovations	.20	444	9	.11-.29
Ideals/beliefs	communicates and operates from strong ideals	.25	526	8	.17-.33

	and beliefs about schooling				
Monitors/evaluates	monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning	.28	1071	30	.23-.34
Flexibility	adapts leadership behavior to the needs of the current situation and is comfortable with dissent	.22	151	2	.05-.37
Situational awareness	is aware of the details and undercurrents in the running of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems	.33	91	5	.11-.37
Intellectual stimulation	Ensures that the faculty and staff are aware of the most current theories and practices and makes the discussion of these a regular aspect of the school's culture	.32	321	5	.22-.42