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Team Captain: A Quantitative Study Examining the Relationship between Extracurricular and/or Co-Curricular Participation and Leadership Styles of Beginning Superintendents

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by

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Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree.

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Abstract

This mixed-methods study was conducted to determine if there was a significant relationship between extracurricular and/or co-curricular participation and leadership styles of beginning superintendents in the state of Missouri. First-year superintendents from 63 school districts in Missouri were invited to participate in the study, and 28 participated. The first instrumentation used in the research was a Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X Short Form, created by Bass and Avolio (2004), consisting of 45 leadership style questions and was administered on-line through Mind Garden, Ltd. In addition to the MLQ 5X-Short, participants were invited to complete a second survey created by the researcher, the Profile of Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Participation Questionnaire, was administered on-line through Survey Monkey and consisted of nine demographic and background questions. This particular survey also asked participants to identify past involvement in extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities and to answer three open-ended questions regarding their perceptions of the impact, if any, of those activities on their leadership experiences. The quantitative and qualitative data indicated many of the first-year superintendents had participated in extracurricular and co- curricular activities in high school and/or college. Many participants also reported they believed these activities had made a significant impact on their lives, including leadership skills.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter One: Background of Study

Introduction

Today's educators and administrators have encountered many difficulties daily – from increased accountability measures, demands for higher standardized test scores and decreasing budgets (Williams & Johnson, 2013). The catapulting expectations for students' academic progress also has placed more stressors on administrators (Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014). At the same time, mandates from national and state departments have increased as well as an increase in student populations diagnosed with special academic needs, according to a study performed by National Center for Learning Disabilities (Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014). Recently, all of these factors and the required state and national regulations have hit a crux as school administrators attempted to meet all students' needs, which has complicated matters even more in superintendents' public school arenas (Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014).

In addition to these concerns in public schools, Williams and Johnson (2013) asserted, the increase of children beginning school behind academic standards has multiplied the problems for educators over the past few years, during a time in which educators have been required to do more in their classrooms with less financial support. Decreased budgets and resources have made current teachers' jobs more difficult than ever, which has brought to the forefront the need for strong school leaders (Williams & Johnson, 2013). Williams and Johnson (2013) wrote for superintendents in school

districts around the country to compensate for all of these current challenges, they have found the need to exhibit more effective leadership.

Next to having effective teachers, great leaders have been the most influential factors in impacting students' academic growth (Bush, 2010). Bush (2010) and many other educational reformists have stated the need for great school leaders are at an all-time high. Leithwood and Strauss (2010) agreed, stating the "pivotal expression for success…would do well to begin with a focus on successful school turnaround leadership" (p. 26). Den Hartog and Koopman (2011) wrote the importance of having strong leaders of organizations has been recognized for centuries—and not only in educational institutions. From Rome's Julius Caesar to the American Revolutionary hero George Washington, organizational leaders have been revered as the spearheads of organizational efforts (Den Hartog & Koopman, 2011). However, although leadership strengths have been commended for quite some time, recently, a surge of information on how leaders can become more effective has been published (Den Hartog & Koopman, 2011). Although the necessity of strong leadership has been well accepted, Den Hartog and Koopman (2011) illustrated how the preparation of individuals to become a strong leaders can be rather complicated.

Historically, strong leaders have come from diverse backgrounds; some overcame major personal obstacles to become great leaders, while others appeared to have an easier road to success (Ruggieri, 2013). Many current school administrators have advanced beyond low socioeconomic upbringing to become accomplished school leaders (Ruggieri,

2013). Yet, Ruggieri (2013) insisted, effective leaders have not always fit into one mold, questioning if there were common characteristics or background experiences effective leaders have shared and that are identifiable. In this study, the researcher investigated if leaders were affected at all by a history of involvement in extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities. In this study, a survey was conducted of first-year superintendents in the state of Missouri in order to discover whether any connections existed between administrators' involvement in extracurricular activities and their leadership styles.

On-going educational leadership training has been found to make a positive impact on increased levels of student achievement in schools of attending administrators (Marzano, Walters, & McNulty, 2005). According to Marzano et al. (2005), administrators who attended quality professional development activities were more likely to implement successful changes to help improve students' learning. Despite the knowledge of the importance of continual professional development for teachers and administrators, many school districts have decreased their training budgets because of recent budget constraints in funding from national, state, and local levels (Williams & Johnson 2013). Determining how these preparations enhanced leadership styles could have helped administrators save money on professional development or in the hiring of new superintendents (Marzano et al., 2005). As many superintendents have retired in the past few years and school districts sought new leaders, it would have been valuable to know how superintendent candidates' previous experiences and skills would have transferred into qualities necessary in strong leaders (Marzano et al., 2005).

As members of school communities search for potential educational leaders, including superintendents, there have been commonalities they have identified (Maxwell, 2013). These common qualities school districts have searched for in leaders have included candidates who were proven to be fiscally responsible with district funds and candidates with success in their previous experiences in public schools, including teaching, coaching, and extracurricular activities as students, themselves (Maxwell, 2013). Thus, informally, learning individuals' experiences prior to entering classrooms as teachers, coaches, or administrators has been influential in decision-making for some time (Asher-Schapiro, 2015).

Bush (2010) wrote, understanding the impact of previous extracurricular and/or co-curricular experiences on leadership, if any, can add another layer of dimension to candidates and these findings could be beneficial to the school districts, saving money on leadership training and development for new superintendents.

Involvement in extracurricular and co-curricular activities may have benefited individuals by helping them improve their organization, self-discipline, communication, teamwork, perseverance, mental fortitude, flexibility, and adaptability, which Maxwell (2013) viewed as important qualities for leadership. Maxwell (2013) explained, "The ability to lead is really a collection of skills, nearly all of which can be learned and improved" (p. 13). Maxwell (2013) added by increasing their leadership abilities, potential supervisors increased their levels of effectiveness in leading organizations, teams, churches, or even the government.

Hawkins (2010) agreed various leadership styles have been linked to extracurricular involvement. For example, the styles of leadership, such as transformational, transactional, charismatic, situational, and intuitive, were associated with involvement in extracurricular programs (Hawkins, 2010). Therefore, in this study, this researcher sought to understand how previous leadership in other organizations impacted candidates for superintendents, and to determine whether participation in extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities enabled superintendent candidates to build strong leadership qualities.

In terms of leadership development, Maxwell (2013) added that developing effective leadership was not an overnight transformation. For leaders to be successful, these individuals have developed these skills and talents with intentional, daily routines learned in class, in personal and/or professional experiences, and in prior activities (Maxwell, 2013). Thus, participating in other activities teaching individuals the value in hard work, discipline, and commitment benefited future leaders (Bush, 2010). Maxwell (2013) elaborated, "If you continually invest in your leadership development, letting your assets compound, the inevitable result is growth over time" (p. 12). Therefore, Maxwell (2013) believed it was valuable for individuals, as well as the school districts they served, to understand what area in which leaders were involved prior to becoming school leaders.

Superintendents have been lead administrators of school districts, answering to the school district's elected school board (Maxwell, 2013). They have always worn many proverbial hats, including financial advisor, public relations expert, manager, policy

liaison, curriculum coach, and many more (Maxwell, 2013). Maxwell (2013) explained these school chiefs served their districts in many capacities, as they also sometimes struggled to collaborate with their school boards comprised of multiple interests and perspectives. Stover (2011) noted the balance of defending students' interests and school board members' desires to maintain their positions may cause conflicts for superintendents. The author wrote in regards to this specific leadership position, "In many school districts, the superintendent has been the greatest administrative authority in a school district" (Stover, 2011, p. 20). These head positions have required such responsibilities as guiding building-level administrators in decision-making and providing further leadership to teachers, parents, students, and community leaders (Stover, 2011). With these tremendous responsibilities, superintendents selected to lead constituents in their school districts have been required to be multifaceted in professional skills and abilities (Stover, 2011). The Missouri Association of School Administrators (2015) website detailed the roles of a school superintendent, which often is like a chief executive officer of a company. Depending on the school district, every superintendent holds a unique position in the school community.

Conceptual Framework

For this study, the conceptual framework chosen to guide the study was the Full Range of Leadership Theory defined by Bass and Avolio (2004). This theory was appropriate for this research because it addressed various leadership styles that all leaders, or specifically superintendents had employed at one time or another (Bass &

Avolio, 2004). Because the study focused on the impact of extracurricular activities on leadership styles, the researcher chose Full Range of Leadership Theory to provide a framework to outline leaders' characteristics, which, in this study, involved first-year school superintendents (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

First, the researcher examined leadership styles as the conceptual foundation of this study, utilizing the framework of the Full Range of Leadership Theory, which distinguished three styles of leadership: (a) transformational, (b) transactional, and (c) laissez-faire (Bass & Avolio, 2004). These primary styles of leadership provided the underpinning of the research and applied to the leaders' current roles as school district superintendents.

Transformational leadership, one form of leadership defined in the theory, involved leadership in which In a more recent examination of transformational leadership, Burns (2004) wrote in his latest book, *Transforming Leadership: A New Pursuit of Happiness*, authority was based upon "the possession of resources by those that hold power, as well as the interplay of the wants and needs, motives, values, and capacities of both would-be leaders and their potential followers" (p. 16). Burns elaborated on his earlier leadership theory by emphasizing the importance of psychology's role between leaders and followers (Burns, 2004).

Purpose of the Study

Effective leadership has been imperative to organizations, yet only limited research has been conducted on specific behaviors of effective leaders, or on the impact

of participation in activities prior to leaders' entering the workforce (Marzano et al., 2005). The purpose of this study was to collect the input of first-year superintendents and their perceptions of how past involvements in extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities guided their leadership development. Overall, another aspect of this project's purpose was to understand whether or not participating in extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities during high school and/or college impacted first-year superintendents' leadership styles.

Using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass & Avolio, 2004) and other demographic information provided by beginning superintendents, the study included participants' input on their experiences in extracurricular activities prior to assuming their superintendent roles.

Another the purpose of this research was to collect the multiple perspectives of beginning superintendents regarding this topic, particularly with respect to their own leadership styles. Open-ended questions were included at the end of the on-line survey to provide participants with spaces to describe their own experiences. Also, the study aimed to collect the participants' anecdotal data regarding extracurricular activities and how these experiences impacted how they now lead their constituents. By compiling this information from participants, the researcher hoped to demonstrate the impact of extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities on students, even in their future leadership roles.

Research Questions

In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, the researcher outlined key questions to guide. Within the context of this study, the following research questions were the following:

1. In the past, what extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities were the first-year superintendents involved in? If any?

2. Is there a relationship between the first-year superintendents' extracurricular and/or co-curricular participation and their self-reported leadership styles?

3. Are there significant differences in leadership styles between superintendents based on extracurricular and co-curricular participation?

4. How did the superintendents describe the impact extracurricular involvement had on their leadership experiences?

Significance of the Study

Superintendents have played important roles as leaders of their school districts, so their decisions, actions, and leadership philosophies influences the bigger pictures of schools (Burns & Martin, 2010). Burns and Martin (2010) stressed the high level of responsibility for leaders, especially now that expectations are much higher than ever for superintendents. In this study, the researcher attempted to determine how, if at all, school activities aided in leadership development for beginning superintendents, or for those who strived to one day become administrators. Participants were provided with the

opportunity to elaborate on their activity participation, providing an opportunity to articulate their perspectives on this topic.

Weiss and Wiese-Bjornstal (2010) asserted, “Many studies clearly indicate regular physical activity leads to important physical, social, psychological, and academic competencies and healthy outcomes among children and adolescents” (p. 5). While many positive outcomes resulted from extracurricular and co-curricular participation, few studies documented the impact on leadership styles, especially of beginning superintendents (Marzano et al., 2005). As high-stakes testing, budget cuts, and other demands of leaders have increased; the importance of understanding the preparation of superintendents and in order to improve their leadership styles has become more significant (Williams & Johnson, 2013).

The goal of this study was to isolate the kind of skills, traits, experiences, and backgrounds that are vital to leaders and, to determine how, if at all, these components might influence a superintendent’s leadership style (Bass & Riggio, 2013). Another goal was to consider how school districts faced with declining resources and tight budgets might make informed decisions regarding the potential elimination of student extracurricular and co-curricular programs (Sanford, Duncombe, & Armour, 2010).

Limitations of the Study

Sample sizes, time constraints, limited resources, and individual biases were just some of the examples that may have impacted research findings in this study (Heppner & Heppner, 2015). One limitation in this study was the sample size. The pool of first-year

superintendents in Missouri may be somewhat small in comparison to the total population of superintendents in the state. The number of this first-year superintendent pool may have affected the overall validity of the research, if there were a low number of superintendents who chose to participate by completing the surveys. Another limitation to the sample size was the sample was derived from superintendents serving only in public education.

Another limitation was related to the instrument used in the study. Because participation was voluntary and required participants to answer dozens of questions, the researcher chose to utilize the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X-Short version (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Using the longer version may have provided more data for the researcher (Bass & Avolio, 2004). The longer version of the instrument may have allowed for more in-depth analysis; however, the participants would have been required to spend more than an hour to answer all of the questions, which may have posed further limitations to the study's sample size. Since participants chose to respond on a voluntary basis, this longer version of the survey may have made it more difficult for the researcher to recruit participants.

An additional limitation related to the instrument was that the MLQ 5X-Short was a self-reporting survey. Participants were asked about how they performed as leaders. It was possible that participants answered in more glowing terms than their subordinates may have responded (Grimm, 2011). The superintendents' responses may have been biased, since they answered based on their own perceptions of their leadership

experiences (Grimm, 2011). According to Grimm (2011), in self-reporting surveys, respondents answered questions at times in a favorable light towards themselves, which was called a social desirability effect. Although administrators were able to invite followers to respond to the MLQ 5X-Short to report on the employers' leadership styles, it was not required for the administrators to do so (Bass & Avolio, 2004). If administrators chose to invite employees to complete the MLQ survey about them, another limitation was the possibility the superintendents invited only followers with whom they maintained positive relationships and whom they assumed would give them positive reviews. Thus, responses may have been deceptively similar based on shared opinions of effective leadership (Korb, 2011). However, according to research by Korb (2011) on self-reporting, participants often displayed honesty in their responses.

The final limitation the researcher disclosed was his own education and experiences. The research questions originated from the researcher's background as a participant in many extra-curricular and co-curricular activities and as a long-time coach; therefore, personal bias may have been a limitation of this study. The researcher was a first-year superintendent; the other participants in this study also were first-year superintendents around the state of Missouri. The researcher addressed this limitation by not participating in the survey and by removing biases during the data analysis process.

Assumptions

Heppner and Heppner (2015) explained "an assumption is something that is thought to be fact, but that may have limited evidence to support it" (p. 340). The

researcher's assumptions in this study involved the sample size, the participants, and the instrumentation. First, one assumption in this study was the sample size of the participants, which included first-year superintendents in Missouri. The assumption was this group was significant enough to be a fair representation of this population group. Another assumption was all possible participants received their e-mail invitations to participate in the study, and they independently volunteered to participate. With the possibility of e-mail SPAM blocking or other glitches in technology, the assumption was all willing participants received the e-mails from the researcher.

Next, while conducting the study, another assumption was that participants had access to the Internet to complete the on-line instrument, and the participants were honest in their responses. The assumption also was made all potential participants clearly understood the questions and understood the questions similarly. In terms of the involvement of technology to collect participants' input, the assumption was made that the on-line program would function correctly without disrupting the research process.

Finally, the study was conducted with the assumption because the MLQ was a well-known instrument, this choice of instrumentation was the most valid and reliable instrument available for the purpose of this study (Bass & Avolio, 2013). The MLQ 5X-Short commonly has been used to determine leadership styles of those surveyed (Bass & Avolio, 2013). In this study, the assumption was the MLQ 5X-Short was the best choice for an instrument, because it allowed participants to answer brief statements based on a Likert scale to determine their leadership styles.

Definitions of Key Terms

For the purpose of the study, the following terms were defined:

Co-Curricular activities. Co-curricular activities represented activities related to the daily curriculum in schools (Hawkins, 2010). Examples of co-curricular activities included band, choir, debate, and activities, such as Future Farmers of America (Hawkins, 2010).

Extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities represented opportunities for students outside of the regular curriculum or program of courses, including all sports and athletic events available or physically involved programs (Hawkins, 2010). Examples included baseball, basketball, football, tennis, and more (Hawkins, 2010).

First-year public school superintendents. Public school superintendents were defined as the chief executive officers to their school districts' boards, faculties, and staff (Association of School Superintendents, 2015). As a result, the superintendent served as "the professional advisor to the board, leader of reforms, manager of resources, and communicator to the public" (Stover, 2011, p. 32). The term, beginning superintendents, also was used throughout the paper and referred to first-year school superintendents in the state of Missouri (AASA, 2015).

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Form 5X. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, also known as MLQ 5X, was a survey designed for analyzing behaviors which range within three categories: a) transformational leadership, b) transactional leadership, and c) non-leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004). For this research project, the

on-line version of the MLQ 5X (Bass & Avolio, 2004) was used, as available by Mind Garden, Inc. (2013). This survey was an abbreviated version of a more extensive version the researchers first developed in 1992 (Bass & Avolio, 2013).

Passive/Avoidant Leadership. Passive or avoidant leadership was a leadership style also known as laissez-faire (Bass & Avolio, 2013). Bass and Avolio (2013) explained passive leaders allowed employees to have autonomy to make decisions and to complete their tasks without interfering. However, passive leaders often relied on their followers to do the majority of the tasks (Bass & Avolio, 2013). Sometimes, passive leaders have not provided guidance and resources, but depended on their employees to meet expectations with little involvement (Bass & Avolio, 2013).

Situational leadership. Burns (1978) wrote, there was no one best way to lead. Every situation was unique. Grimm (2011) defined situational leadership as the leadership style a person should use with individuals or groups and depended on the readiness levels of the people and on the tasks at hand.

Transactional Leadership. Transactional leadership was one of two types of leadership first described by Burns (1978) in which a leader initiated a purposeful exchange between leader and follower for something of value. Transactional leaders, further described by Burns (1978), were “leaders who approached followers with an eye toward exchanging” (p. 4).

Transformational Leadership. Transformational leadership was defined as the ability for leaders to motivate followers to perform at higher levels than the followers

thought they were capable of doing, such as transcending organizational goals (Burns, 1978). Burns (2013) explained transformational leadership often involved self-actualization rather than exchanging rewards or incentives for work performance.

Summary

In Chapter One, the researcher provided the basic premise of the study, including four research questions that will guide the direction of the study. The purpose of this study was to discover the relationship between leadership styles, first-year superintendents' leadership styles to be more specific, and these leaders' previous involvement in extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities before becoming administrators. In Chapter One, the researcher focused on a closer look at the conceptual framework and key terms applicable to the study. In Chapter Two, the researcher will examine background relevant to the main topics of this study, which were the following: a) the primary accepted leadership theories, including the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) as defined by Bass and Avolio (2004), b) the role of public school district superintendents, and c) the impact of extracurricular and co-curricular activities on students and future leaders. Also, in the next chapter, the researcher will cover any other important concepts to provide a better understanding before moving further into the specific details of this particular study.

Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

With student academic expectations becoming more increasingly rigorous and the necessity to integrate more new technology, recently, school leaders have played more important roles in public education than ever before (Starr, 2010). In addition to daily responsibilities, Dewitt (2014) wrote, school superintendents needed the abilities in order to multi-task, to effectively problem solve, and to collaborate with diverse people with varying vested interests. No doubt, the role of superintendents of school districts have become more complicated as these positions evolved over the years (Dewitt, 2014). In Chapter Two, the researcher will review literature related to the roles of school district superintendents. Before evaluating the superintendents' perceptions of extracurricular participation and their impact on current leadership styles, one must have a thorough understanding of the key concepts involved (Burns, 1978). Thus, first Chapter Two will provide research about the theoretical framework of this study in-depth, which will encompass the *Leadership Style Theory*, first proposed by Bass and Avolio (1992). This chapter also will include literature to explain different leadership styles, including transactional, transformational, and passive/avoidant leadership styles (Marzano & Water, 2010). Finally, the researcher will examine research conducted on the impact of extracurricular and co-curricular activities on students.

Leadership Styles

While exploring the position of school superintendent and how an individual assumed this leadership role, one must examine how this person matured into an

experienced leader (Maxwell, 2013). The theoretical framework imperative to this study was articulated in the *Leadership Style Theory* by Bass and Avolio (1992). According to the *Leadership Style Theory* (Bass & Avolio, 1992), leaders fall into three different leadership styles—including transactional leadership, transformational leadership, or passive/avoidant leadership, also referred to as non-leadership.

Transactional leadership. One leadership style, first defined by Burns (1978) and expanded upon by Bass and Avolio (1992), was titled transactional leadership. Transactional leaders directly or indirectly created exchanges with their followers (Burns, 1978). Bass and Bass (2008) elaborated on Burns' definition of transactional leadership, noting these exchanges created a cost-benefit analysis relationship between leaders and followers.

In the transactional leadership model, leaders established expectations, and followers chose to follow the criteria in order to receive something for return (Bass & Bass, 2008). When transactional leadership occurred, returns took many different forms—whether they were monetary payments, employee benefits, recognitions, promotions in the workplace, and/or praises and attention from the leader (Bass & Bass, 2008).

One distinct characteristic of transactional leaders throughout these exchanges has been that the control remained with the leader (Bass & Bass, 2008). Den Hartog and Koopman (2011) wrote of transactional leadership, "The general notion is that, when the job and the environment of the follower fail to provide the necessary motivation,

direction and satisfaction, the leader, through his or her behavior, will be effective by compensating for the deficiencies" (p. 20).

Although transactional leadership represented a common balance between employer and employee, it was important the two had a mutual understanding throughout the process (Burns, 1978). Miller (2011) stressed how important it was for the leader to be honest about the transaction(s) during this process, in order to ensure ethical management.

Transformational leadership. Another style of leadership observed over the years has been transformational leadership, which involves some similarities with transactional leadership, though it contrasts in other key ways (Bolman & Deal, 2014). One way in which transformational leadership differed from transactional leadership has been transformational leaders collaborated with followers to set common goals and established missions for their organizations (Bolman & Deal, 2014). According to Burns (1978), the transforming leader "recognizes an existing need or demand for a potential follower. But beyond that, the transforming leader looks for potential motives in the follower, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower" (p. 4). Thus, transformational leaders recognized the objectives at hand as their employees' gains, whether recognition was authentic or not (Burns, 1978).

Schneider and Schröder (2012) added transformational leaders still used transactional strategies at times. However, transformational leaders expressed interests in their followers' interests and motivated their followers through sharing common goals

and missions, according to Den Hartog and Koopman (2011). Ruggieri (2013) explained one way in which transformational leaders inspired leaders to share these goals or led followers to aspire in similar organizational objectives was by promoting self-awareness and personal growth for their followers. In the past, another important quality of transformational leaders has been their tendencies to lead by example (Yukl, 2012). Yukl (2012) explained transformational leaders demonstrated, on a daily basis, the leaders' expectations for their employees, which in this forum included the positions of administrators or teachers. Yukl (2012) wrote, "One way a leader can influence subordinate commitment is by setting an example of exemplary behavior in day-to-day interactions with subordinates" (p. 276). Transformational leaders, who strived to be effective in their leadership practices, embodied their expectations for principals and teachers in their daily actions, and this behavior was demonstrated consistently (Yukl, 2012).

Another characteristic, Jaipual (2013) noted, was transformational leaders often have been considered to be charismatic by nature. Martin Luther King Jr.'s charismatic character impacted understanding of leadership styles as much as it impacted United States politics at the time (Jaipaul, 2013). Burns (1978) wrote about charisma years ago, and noted transformational leaders have been those leaders who inspired others to follow them, regardless of the mission. Charismatic leaders have been capable of stirring an unexplainable desire in their followers to play roles in change (Burns, 1978). Wells (2010) agreed the primary function of leaders was to inspire followers to do things they

might not do otherwise and to encourage followers to go in directions they might not have otherwise pursued.

Laissez-faire or passive/avoidant leadership. The third leadership style in *The Leadership Theory* introduced by Bass and Avolio (2004) was referred to as laissez-faire, passive/avoidant leadership, or non-leadership. Passive leadership also has been defined as the style of leadership in which those in authority positions were less active than those who are considered in the previous leadership styles, such as transactional or transformational leadership styles (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Yukl (2012) considered laissez-faire to be the leadership style in which leaders delegated duties or tasks to organizational members with little involvement in completing these tasks. Passive leaders who engaged in the style of non-leadership, or laissez-faire leadership, encouraged followers to complete projects and to make decisions on their own with very little guidance (Yukl, 2012). Although these laissez-faire leaders were rarely visible during the process of completing projects, passive leaders sometimes provided the tools and resources needed and, at times, were available for advice or feedback (Yukl, 2012).

Like the other two leadership styles, Bass and Avolio (2013) explained, passive leadership has both its advantages and disadvantages. According to Bass and Avolio (2013), one advantage to passive leadership was it worked well when leaders were surrounded with talented, highly motivated followers (Bass & Avolio, 2013). Many organizational members who preferred to work independently without close supervision usually appreciated this form of leadership and the space to work without watchful eyes

(Bass & Avolio, 2013). Burns (1978) noted, one weakness of this leadership style was that sometimes laissez-faire leaders were viewed as disinterested in their organizations and possibly even viewed as lazy (Burns, 1978). Burns (1978) wrote many times passive leaders also did not hold members accountable for mistakes or incomplete projects. Without close supervision and direct leadership, organizations with passive leaders were found to be not as successful as organizations with more involved leaders (Bass & Avolio, 2013).

Overall, no matter what leadership style school superintendents assumed, a prominent theme found in the literature was effective superintendents needed to be aware of when making any decisions or stating objectives of the districts' building administrators and teachers (Bass & Avolio, 2013). Ruggieri (2013) agreed, explaining school superintendents should be visible and available to stakeholders to respond to needs, despite the superintendent's leadership style, if a leader want to be successful.

The Roles of School District Superintendents

The role of the superintendent has been established for nearly 200 years, and the general responsibilities of the superintendent have changed somewhat in that time (Peterson, 2014). While most school superintendents have shared commonalities, there also have been different expectations, demands, and requirements depending on positions (Peterson, 2014). According to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2016), in 2015, there were more than 500 public school superintendents in the state of Missouri responsible for leading and managing school districts. School districts

around the state of Missouri ranged in size from less than 100 students to more than 30,000 students (MoDESE, 2016).

Superintendents' relationships with school board members. Officials with the Association of School Superintendent (2016), or AASA, explained local school boards generally are comprised of seven elected members and hired superintendents to lead their school systems. School board members not only govern their local school districts, they are elected leaders who advocate for public schools in their communities as well and throughout the state. The Missouri School Board Association (MSBA) has provided forums for school board members to have opportunities to speak with united voices on policy issues impacting students (MSBA, 2016). The MSBA's advocacy staff coordinated efforts with the Missouri State General Assembly, the executive branch, the state and federal agencies, and U.S.

Congress (MSBA, 2016). School board members not only govern their local school districts; also they are elected leaders who advocate for public schools in their community and throughout the state (MSBA, 2016). Representatives with the MSBA (2016) outlined the duties of the superintendent to include: a) managing the day-to-day operations of the school district, including personnel, budget and finance, curriculum, transportation, building and grounds, b) directing construction and remodeling of facilities, c) facilitating technology integration, and d) addressing other issues that arise on a regular basis (MSBA, 2016). These areas of needs included making sure the district maintained accreditation, as well as keeping the positive and concise visions of the school

districts for community members, parents, student, staff, and board members (MSBA, 2016).

In more recent years, local school board members have overseen superintendents of school districts, operating as the governing body of the school district (MSBA, 2016). The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) explained school board members and superintendents typically meet once a month, or more often for special meetings (AASA, 2015). These board members and administrators met in their efforts to work through decisions school boards were required to make for its school district. According to the MSBA (2016), local school board members have been elected to govern districts in Missouri and to serve as leaders and champions for public education in their communities. In the past, superintendents have come from all walks of life and have been as diverse as the communities they served (AASA, 2016).

The most important responsibility of school board members has been to improve student achievement in their local public schools (AASA, 2016). School boards have served as bridges between their communities and the professional educators in the districts (AASA, 2016). School board members delivered their powers and authorities from the states' authorities (MSBA, 2016). In compliance with state and federal laws, school board members established policies and regulations by which their local schools were governed (MSBA, 2016). Among other things, school board members have been responsible for employing and evaluating superintendents, developing and adopting policies and budgets, and establishing the overall goals and direction of the school

districts (MSBA, 2016). Representatives with the MSBA (2016) wrote school board members have not been responsible for the day-to-day management of the school districts. Those jobs have been left to the professional educators, i.e. superintendents and principals, hired by the school boards (AASA, 2016). In Missouri, the vast majority of school boards have consisted of seven members who served three-year terms and were elected or re-elected every year in April (MSBA, 2016). Term limits for school board members have not been established in Missouri, and board members receive no pay for their voluntary service (MSBA, 2016).

In order to effectively lead school districts, superintendents have needed a great deal of support in their works (Demski, 2013). Demski (2013) explained these supports include working and supportive relationships between the superintendents and their school boards needed to be established, since the school boards essentially employed the school districts' superintendents. Even more essential to the relationship with the school board was the relationship between superintendents and the school board presidents, who were elected by the members of the school board on an annual basis (MSBA, 2016). The school board presidents acted as spokespeople for the school boards and encouraged school boards to act together as a whole for the benefit of the collected group (Demski, 2013). Board presidents have served as key communicators between superintendents and the school boards (DeWitt, 2014).

In 2012, the District Administration Leadership Institute (DALI) conducted a study on superintendent compensation and career consideration (Finkel, 2013). In the

DALI report, 28.5% of superintendents stated their school boards were moderately supportive or not very supportive (Finkel, 2013). When asked about the support from other interest groups, superintendents indicated 45.4% of teaching staff, 49% of local elected officials, and 49.5% of parents were either moderately supportive or not very supportive (Finkel, 2013). For those respondents who indicated an expectation of seeking a new job within the next two to three years, 30.7% of the superintendents cited the lack of support from their school boards and communities as the primary reason for the career change (Finkel, 2013). Conflict with the school board was cited as a common reason for superintendents to leave school districts (Maxwell, 2013).

When superintendents were asked about their compensation, in the DALI study, 57.8% of the superintendents indicated often they felt they had to defend the compensations they received from their school districts (Finkel, 2013). Nearly 50% of all responding superintendents admitted they were sometimes, frequently, or very frequently questioned about receiving higher compensation than they should, while 41.3% of superintendents viewed their compensation as less than equitable (Finkel, 2013). A final component of the DALI study indicated approximately 25% of those surveyed viewed their positions as somewhat secure or not very secure (Finkel, 2013). Of those surveyed, 49% of the superintendents indicated they planned to leave their current position within the next two to three years (Finkel, 2013).

Qualities of school district superintendents. Historically, school district superintendents held long careers in public education as students, teachers, principals,

and possibly even coaches in the same school districts, before reaching their helms as district superintendents (Stiles, 2015). Stiles (2015) believed all of these experiences, in addition to personal experiences, shaped the superintendents appointed to this position. Hawkins (2010) agreed, explaining one area of individuals' life experiences playing an integral role in leadership growth has been in their extracurricular and/or co-curricular participations, prior to assuming the roles as superintendents. Many would say the role of a school district's superintendent consisted of balancing budgets and representing the face of the district; however, the superintendent's role has evolved into much more multi-faceted roles (Gulcan, 2012).

To become effective superintendents, administrators have been expected to demonstrate qualities of well-rounded individuals (Gulcan, 2012). Effective leaders in superintendent positions collaborated with school boards and administrative teams to set goals for the school district (Gulcan, 2012). Recently, superintendents have been increasingly expected to focus in the area to improve students' academic performance (Gulcan, 2012). Gulcan (2012) explained the superintendents' roles in this area was not to influence daily decisions as much as to help ensure the building level administrators made decisions aligned with these learning goals. Black (2012) supported this notion and cited an analysis of 27 studies to seek a relationship, if any, between leadership of superintendents and students' academic performance in the superintendents' schools. After analyzing 2,714 districts, 4,434 superintendent evaluations, and 3.4 million student achievement scores, educational researchers found a significant correlation between

effective superintendents' leadership and students' performance results (Black, 2012). According to his findings, effective superintendents identified five main actions contributing to student performance (Black, 2012). Black (2012) outlined effective superintendents: a) set goals to improve student achievement, b) obtained school board support for these improvement goals, c) monitored progress on improvement goals, and d) used resources to regularly support their agendas.

Another component of a superintendent's role has been to maintain working relationships with the district's school board (Gulcan, 2012). Obviously, it has been imperative for effective superintendents to obtain school boards' support for academic improvement goals (Black, 2012). However, in addition to the district's academic progress, the superintendent and the school board collaborated to make other decisions, including decisions in the areas of personnel, facilities, technology, community outreach, and other decisions related to the school district business (Gulcan, 2012). Gulcan (2012) explained the relationship between superintendents and school boards is very important. In order to make progress, members of school boards must trust their lead administrators, their superintendents, and their objectives, and school board members must have strong lines of communication (Stover, 2011).

Demski (2013) stated individuals needed to be well-rounded to meet the job descriptions of superintendents, and they needed to be forward thinkers. The American Association of Superintendents (AASA, 2016) explained superintendents needed a wide range of skills from responsible fiscal management to the fortitude to make tough

decisions. Unlike many other enterprises, effective school superintendents have been expected to relate to all district stakeholders, from the youngest student in the district to the president of the school board (Black, 2012). Yukl (2012) wrote how the quality of leadership was the single most influential factor in an organization's success. Although being an effective superintendent has been difficult for many, Peterson (2014) explained somebody has to do it. So, how does a person prepare to take a position of this nature?

In addition to leading efforts in the area of curriculum and instruction and working with the school boards, superintendents built connections with their communities surrounding their school (Irish & O'Callaghan, 2013). Irish and O'Callaghan (2013) discussed the dichotomous relationship between school districts' superintendents and the members of districts' communities. Since school district board members have served the youth of the communities, it has seemed intuitive the superintendents must maintain close ties with community leaders and inhabitants (Eadie, 2013).

Irish and O'Callaghan (2013) wrote effective superintendents realized communities, as a whole, were the foundation of the school, but also that the district's success has an important impact on the surrounding community. The authors added, "Some are beginning to understand that the future of public schools is in the hands of the entire community, not just the school system" (Irish & O'Callaghan, 2013, p. 47).

Just as school districts benefitted from strong community supports, surrounding neighborhoods benefitted from successful school districts as well; many families

relocating found a successful school districts as assets, when choosing to move their children (Irish & O'Callaghan, 2013). With the rigor of this superintendent position, Irish and O'Callaghan (2013) continued, it was not surprising school districts often experienced turnover. In the recent past, on an average, superintendents remained in the same school districts for approximately three years (Black, 2012). Black (2012) added school districts in Missouri have experienced this phenomenon as well.

Also adding to the stress of the position, many superintendents have taken on new roles, including fundraising efforts for their school districts (Asher-Schapiro, 2014). In New Jersey, Miceli, a superintendent, explained how stepping into the role of a fundraiser required him to work closely with non-profit organizations and to apply for grants, in addition to his regular daily duties (Ashler-Schapiro, 2015). The superintendent predicted school district leaders around the country would be required to do the same more and more, lending their leadership to fundraising efforts as budgets fluctuate and districts roll out new assessment tests (Asher-Schapiro, 2015). He also complained school superintendents will be required to seek more on public funding for basic educational necessities (Asher-Schapiro, 2015).

One example the New Jersey superintendent provided was a recent fundraiser in his school district to raise money to buy tablets required for students to take the newly implemented standardized test results (Asher-Schapiro, 2015). In the state of Missouri's public educational institutions, many school leaders have echoed concerns similar to Miceli about funding basics, including how to fund all of the new on-line standardized

tests (Missouri Association of Rural Educators, 2016). Many superintendents also have become construction managers and general contractors as part of their jobs, as the encouraging sound of construction was heard within many schools in 2015 (Asher-Schapiro, 2015). School district officials have found funding to build new facilities and provided facelifts to aging campuses, according to a District Administration survey of K-12 leaders (*District Administration Survey*, 2014). Of surveyed superintendents, 75% of respondents admitted to having construction plans for 2015, with 40% of those plans being launched as new or renovation projects (District Administration Survey, 2014). Also, approximately 33% of the respondents reported their school districts began to repair or replace infrastructure, while athletic fields and facilities were improved by 32% of the participating school districts (District Administration Survey, 2014).

As the cutting edge of technology has moved from getting computers into the classroom to digitalizing textbooks to fully and seamlessly integrating technology into pedagogy, the role of superintendents and other district leaders has needed to shift to ensure teachers and students are reaping the benefits (Starr, 2010). But that cutting edge has been evolving ever more swiftly in recent years, and, at the same time, the roles of school district leaders have been expanding and becoming more complex, which has added to the challenges (Finkel, 2013).

Finkel (2013) explained how superintendents also needed to play significant roles in expanding technology and guiding instruction. Limperis (2013) added, to move their vision forward, administrators needed to understand, and then persuade teachers, keeping

abreast of technology was essential to the short-term goals of preparing students academically to succeed.

Yukl (2012) agreed leaders needed to influence classroom activities to ensure students were building 21st century skills, such as teamwork and communication, to succeed in college and the workplace. In the past, Conery, interim chief education officer for International Society of Technology and Education, noted, district leaders have not been required to be experts in all the latest technology and to know all the details, but they needed to understand the big picture of why technology was important and what technology has meant for teaching and learning (Starr, 2010). However, effective leaders have ensured teachers have been effectively trained and understood the goals behind the latest technological purchases (Starr, 2010). Starr (2010) added another current trend found in research was leaders of school district leaders have been embracing social media to communicate directly with parents, students, and the community (Starr, 2010). Knight, executive director of the Broad Foundation, a nonprofit specializing in school system management, acknowledged many leaders have taken to Twitter and Facebook and the trend has continued to grow (Asher-Schapiro, 2015). In the past few years, students have been tweeting directly with their superintendents (Asher-Schapiro, 2015). Social media has become a great avenue for leaders to communicate (Asher-Schapiro, 2015).

In addition to impacting their district's technology, superintendents' roles have become increasingly more active in strategizing staffing decisions, as nearly 85% of budgets are spent on staff (Asher-Schapiro, 2015). Asher-Schapiro (2015) wrote the trend

has become for administrators try to get as much as they can out of human capital, which has meant pivoting away from a traditional human resources model generally viewed as more of a low-level priority, and toward a talent-management model where the recruitment, retention and training of staff became a top district priority (Asher-Scapiro, 2015). Asher-Scapiro (2015) added superintendents were becoming increasingly more involved in discipline situations as well. As superintendents' roles continue to expand, Starr (2010) predicted finding individuals to fit the positions also will grow increasingly complicated.

Participation in Extracurricular Activities

In order to supplement curriculum and learning experiences throughout high school and college, many institutions of education have offered extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities for students (Dworkin et al., 2003). Kronholz (2012) explained, during the formative years of junior high and high school, students have a variety of activities from which to choose to participate, if they wish. Many researchers have articulated the significance of becoming involved in after-school activities (Kronholz, 2012). The Missouri State High School Activities Association (2013) explained students have dozens of activities from which they can participate, competitively or noncompetitively. One of the most influential factors of participating in these activities is that students have the opportunity to choose which activity they pursue (MSHSAA, 2013). Dworkin et al. (2003) asserted very little research has been done "on the developmental processes that occur during adolescents' participation in extracurricular

and community based activities" (p. 17). However, Dworkin et al. (2003) added, youth activities such as extracurricular and community-based activities provided a realm where adolescents were producers of their own development. Various studies by Finkel (2013) indicated participation in youth activities provided examples of greater learning opportunities, which later resulted in more meaningful and deeper levels of learning or made it easier to transfer new learning into long-term memory and permanent learning.

Leadership lessons through activities. Although many are born with intrinsic qualities that made them strong leaders, life experiences also have contributed to developing leadership skills (Bass & Avolio, 1992). Barnett and Weber (2014) wrote the more active individuals became in extracurricular activities, the more developed their minds became, leading to more well-rounded individuals and their possibilities of becoming future leaders increased. Barnett & Weber (2014) cited an enormous amount of research documenting the positive effects of extracurricular recreational involvement on pre- and adolescent functioning, as well as deterring negative effects of dropping out of school or becoming involved in self-harming practices. Administrators in one school made efforts to increase levels of extracurricular activities among students, Reeves (2014) found, and learned academic achievement levels increased, discipline levels decreased, incidents involving fights decreased, graduation rates increased to a ten-year high, students taking placement exams doubled, even as percentages of low-income students increased. As a result of data and research, Reeves (2014) claimed student engagement in extracurricular activities can lead to a potential of substantial growth.

Reeves (2014) elaborated, “In fact, we can make a strong case that the positive peer relationships, organization, discipline, expectations, and other positive influences associated with extracurricular activities are likely to improve performance” (p. 87).

Many youth athletic groups and social organizations have continued to provide leadership development opportunities for students over the years (Hawkins, 2010). Barnett and Weber (2014) wrote different organizations have offered activities ranging from sports leagues, Boys and Girl Scouts, community service programs, recreational programs, church youth groups, and other co-curricular activities. Many skills have been expected of successful leaders of schools, businesses, and organizations and leaders in these activities have been more prepared to lead in the future (Barnett & Weber, 2014). Another expectation of an organizational leader has been for individuals to be competent in working with teammates to be committed to achieve a common vision, to establish a common purpose, to set team goals, and to execute their charge (Reeves, 2014). Yukl (2012), a leading researcher of organizational leadership, wrote all of these were important components necessary for effective leadership. A natural tendency for organizational leaders is to utilize and develop those same skills learned from sports, community programs, and other co-curricular activities as a child (Stover, 2011). Stover (2011) continued that many times these leadership skills, which included multi-tasking, functioning as a team player, and following instructions, transferred into participants’ future occupations. Many of these qualities learned earlier in their lives, Walters and Marzano (2010) wrote, were beneficial to superintendent candidates in their futures.

People who participated in athletics, as well as extracurricular or co-curricular activities involving teams, likely engaged in leadership opportunities as well (Reeves, 2014). These leadership opportunities involved team building and team development experiences; these potential administrators also likely had leadership modeled for them throughout their engagement in various experiences (Reeves, 2014). Maxwell (2014) agreed and referred to such leaders as leading learners. These types of leaders have developed because they were born with leadership qualities, have seen leadership modeled for them throughout their lives, have learned these skills through training, and had self-discipline to become great leaders, indicating three of the four leaderships qualities were acquired (Maxwell, 2014). Leadership also can be improved through motivation and purposeful training during activity practices and competitions (Maxwell, 2014).

Although few leadership skills are instinctual in nature, Hawkins (2010) found numerous studies indicated youth development programs developed leadership skills through a variety of pathways including athletics, civic, multicultural, extracurricular, and other co-curricular programs or other experiential, learning opportunities (Hawkins, 2010). In addition to the physical benefits of athletic involvement, current research indicated extracurricular participation can make a lasting impact on students, especially in building leadership skills (Hawkins, 2010). Extracurricular participation opportunities listed by the Missouri State High School Athletics Association (MSHAA) were in the athletic arenas, including the fields of football, baseball, softball, track and field,

basketball, soccer, volleyball, tennis, golf, etc. (MSHAA, 2013). Other extracurricular activities included participation in band, choir, drama, chess, public speaking, and other related activities (MSHAA, 2013). Participating in both team and individual sports impacted students in many ways, including the following: building confidence, teaching the importance of discipline and hard work, improving camaraderie with teammates, and building leadership skills overall (Hawkins, 2010).

Impact on GPA and graduation rates. In *The Case for High School Activities*, the National Federation of State High School Associations (2014) emphasized that students who participate in high school sports make higher grades. The mission statement of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHSA) supported this belief by stating that it serves "students by providing leadership for the administration of education-based interscholastic activities, which support academic achievement, good citizenship and equitable opportunities" (NFHSA, 2014, para. 6).

Many parents admitted they worried the time required to participate in extracurricular activities inhibited their children's performances in school (Boone-Ginter, Gimbert, Kuhlman, & Sawyer, 2011).

Boone-Ginter et al. (2011) cited various studies have shown that students who participated in extracurricular activities excelled in academic performance more often than children who had not participated. Representatives with the National Center for Education Statistics (2011) stated, "Extracurricular activities provide a channel for reinforcing the lessons learned in the classroom, offering students the opportunity to

apply academic skills in a real-world context, and are thus considered part of a well-rounded education" (p. 30).

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2011), students who participated in extracurricular activities also exhibited 15% higher classroom attendance rates than students who were not involved. Students who participated in activities demonstrated significantly higher GPAs and significantly lower absenteeism than those who did not participate (Boone-Ginter et al., 2011). Rivers (2016) wrote coaches and club sponsors expected participants to attend all meetings and practices, limiting participation if too many schooldays were missed, which motivated students to attend. In these activities, also students learned to recognize attendance was vital to their success (Rivers, 2016). Several larger-scale studies reported academic benefits associated with participating in extracurricular activities (Boone-Ginter et al., 2011).

The results from more recent studies suggested participation in high school sports also was positively related to higher grades, higher graduation rates, and higher scores on standardized assessments for athletes when compared to non-athletes (Boone-Ginter et al., 2011). High school seniors who planned to attend college had higher participation rates in various extracurricular activities in 2010 than those who did not have college plans (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). As for the same surveyed group, 43% of the high school students who planned to attend college participated in athletics compared to 25% of students who did not plan to attend college (Boone-Ginter et al., 2011). The debate over whether participation in high school extracurricular activities,

including sports, enhances or detracts from the educational achievements has resurfaced (Lumpkin & Favor, 2012). Even as proponents of extracurricular activities and sports believed these opportunities enhance academic performance, especially when students meet specific levels of academic achievement to maintain eligibility, unfortunately, many programs have been depleted recently (Lumpkin & Favor, 2012). Unfortunately, school districts across the country have encountered major reductions in state and local funding, forcing administrators to identify areas for budget restrictions and opening the door for opponents who might target extracurricular activities as easy choices (Lumpkin & Favor, 2012).

Impact of music participation. One extracurricular activity very much popular in schools across the country is in the field of music (Hallam, 2010). Music has been a staple in society for thousands of years, and education has included music for just as long (Hallam, 2010). This form of extracurricular activity, which involves choir, band, or other musical ventures, has been shown to enhance a range of social and personal skills (Hallam, 2010). Swanwick (2011) agreed and asserted music was a universal behavior, and that every human society has had some sort of music. The researcher continued that music has been considered a human phenomenon and has been hailed as a source of personal and collective identity, a means of individual expression, and a social fact (Swanwick, 2011). Its function may be debated as a universal language, but its very presence in the lives of young people has been inarguably common to all cultures (Swanwick, 2011).

From a developmental perspective, music has appeared at every stage and age of human development, according to Hallam (2010). Rickard, Bambrick, and Gill (2012) wrote that in adolescence, as in infancy, childhood, and adulthood, music plays a valuable and valued role in the individual's social-emotional and intellectual-artistic domains. From age 12 throughout the high school years, adolescents have been known to embrace music through their active musical engagement in and often as passionate consumers (Rickard et al., 2012). In the United States, adolescent consumption of popular music, for example, has become a multi-billion dollar industry (Hallam, 2010). A number of researchers have examined why music is so important to adolescents (Rickard et al., 2012). Although the results varied from study to study, common motivations for adolescent involvement with music included the following: (a) the fulfillment of emotional needs; (b) distractions from boredom, and (c) the relief of tension and stress (Hallam, 2010). Music may be an element that supported the transformation from child to adult (Hallam, 2010).

Music also was found to provide adolescents with a medium through which to construct, to negotiate, and to modify aspects of their personal and group identities, offering students a range of strategies to better understand themselves and to connect with others (Hallam, 2010). Simon Firth acknowledged identity formation as one of the main social functions of music and elsewhere suggested adolescents wear music as a badge, projecting their inner selves to the world (Rickard et al., 2012). Hallam (2010) added some students have noted the importance of knowing music as a means of

understanding civilizations and societies, were intrigued with music's role in history, or the stories of composers, performers, contexts, and functions of music were important to know. In various ways, students have expressed their sense of music as culture, and as a means of knowing their own and other cultural histories and beliefs. Many seem to have accepted that music integral to American society, as it was also reflective of cultural identity (Hallam, 2010).

Adolescents wrote of the use of music to release or to control emotions and to negotiate ways of coping with difficult situations (Rickard et al., 2012). References were made to music's therapeutic functions, centering on coping with the pressures of study, family, and the dynamics of friendship and social life. The lyrics of songs, in particular, were seen as carrying messages acted as reassurance teens were not alone in the world and that other people have gone through struggles (Rickard et al., 2012).

Students in their teens were aware of the potential benefits of musical involvement in a broader sense: music education nurtured children's souls and enhanced many skills necessary for a successful life (Rickard et al., 2012). The most heavily reported life preparation skill was self-discipline, with respondents acknowledging hard work and dedication were integral to participation in school music groups, noting the valuable lesson that if "you stick with something and practice hard, the rewards will be great" (Skoe & Kraus, 2012, p. 115). Other students conceded the concentration required for learning music and the process of memorizing music pieces had hones those skills in other areas of schoolwork (Skoe & Kraus, 2012). Neuroscientists from Harvard,

Stanford, and the University of Oregon found numerous positive relationships between the arts and students' mastery of learning (Wandell, 2011). The scientists stressed their current research dealt with relationships, or correlations, rather than causes (Skoe & Kraus, 2012). Wandell (2011) wrote the research found the arts improved students' concentration in school due to structural brain changes created when the students engaged in practicing their art forms. When students picked up an instrument and practiced difficult passages in a solo, they were not merely improving their solo, but also they were developing a high level of concentration, which aided them at other times when they were working on high level problems, such as algebra (Wandell, 2011). Another application of this experience was found to be relevant later to administrators as they consider complicated incidents (Hallam, 2015).

The umbrella of extracurricular activities has covered any different activities, including band, choir, and other musical participation (Wandell, 2011). With the budget cuts many school administrators are facing, music programs often have been the first programs to be considered (Major, 2013). However, Major (2013) wrote, just as athletic competitions provided venues for experiences in leadership, music programs had similar implications for students. Kuntz (2011) explained what students learned leadership and teamwork skills from participating in band and/or choir; thus, music participation enhanced a range of social and personal skills, build confidence, and improve self-awareness. Kuntz (2011) wrote students said they found new self-awareness when they found how satisfying it was to make music independently and to share it with others. He

also explained that participating in these programs taught students the importance of practice and hard work to accomplish goals (Kuntz, 2011).

Additional research in Switzerland showed increasing the amount of classroom music within the curriculum did not have a detrimental effect on language and reading skills, despite a reduction in time in these lessons to accommodate for the increase in lessons associated with music (Kuntz, 2011); rather, there was an increase in social cohesion within classes, greater self-reliance, better social adjustment, and more positive attitudes in the children (Kuntz, 2011). Being in band and/or choir also helped students learn how important and useful were they to a group, while associating a strong sense of belonging (Kuntz, 2011).

Participants in the London study appreciated the opportunities afforded to develop social and teamwork skills through music (Kuntz, 2011). Particularly valued traits were learning to compromise, offering mutual support and encouragement, and learning to work effectively together as a team (Kuntz, 2011). Learning to cooperate and to exchange ideas for the achievement of a common goal was regarded highly by participants and raised self-esteem and motivation to work hard to maintain and enhance group standards (Kuntz, 2011).

Another important aspect of participating in choir, band, or other activities involving music has been students learn about collaborative efforts, according to Kelly-McHale (2012). Kelly-McHale (2012) explained, for many students playing in a group provided alternatives to individual practice; therefore, the amount of time spent playing

facilitates the automation of a wide range of skills technical and musical while providing extensive opportunities to improve listening and aural skills in real life situations (Kelly-McHale, 2012). Social benefits for students, no matter what grade levels, included making friends, learning to cooperate, and working as part of a team to accomplish common goals (Hallam, 2010). Hallam (2010) wrote students also reported that being a part of a group made them feel important and useful, particularly when they were involved in small-group activities. Specifically in music, students expressed a sense of communal achievement and mutual encouragement to do well and to achieve high standards (Hallam, 2010). All in all, the social aspects of group music seemed to have the potential for the study's participants to create a strong sense of social unity within a group and gave a rise to uplifting, exhilarating and motivating feelings (Kelly-McHale, 2012).

In addition to social benefits, Campbell, Connell, and Beegle (2007) articulated how participating in musical groups often enhanced students' feelings of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and determination. Campbell et al. (2007) wrote this resulted in considerable personal satisfaction and enhanced confidence for students who participated in band or choir. Also, students agreed, the skills and confidence developed during these experiences transferred into other areas of their lives, such as schoolwork and future endeavors (Campbell et al., 2007).

In some cases, group participation provided opportunities to develop leadership skills as well (Kelly-McHale, 2012). Furthermore, learning new skills outside of the

classroom with others helped students to meet good role models and to strive for high standards (Kelly-McHale, 2012). Students who participated in music forums also admitted they improved in their intrinsic motivation, concentration, and stamina (Campbell et al., 2007).

Characteristics of musical groups may have been particularly important, for instance, when researchers considered the need of cooperation in order to be able to produce performances in real time (Campbell et al., 2007). Working as part of a group, participants in the Campbell et al. (2007) study stated they appreciated the importance of working hard to help maintain the group standards and to maintain group expectations. Also, for students working with groups in musical performances, enhancing social aspects included developing a strong sense of belonging and a feeling of importance and usefulness as a group member (Kelly-McHale, 2012). Campbell et al. (2007) added, belonging to a musical group also helped individuals build up confidence and self-satisfaction on a personal level.

The amount of time spent playing in groups as an alternative to students' individual practice experiences facilitated a wide-range of technical and musical skills, while also the time provided extensive opportunities for participants to improve oral and auditory skills in real life situations (Premuzic & Furnham, 2007). Students mentioned various social benefits to include making friends through the groups, learning to cooperate with others, and to work as part of a team were all experiences that impacted students later in adulthood, according to Kuntz (2011). Being part of a group made

participants feel important and useful, particularly where the groups were small (Premuzic & Furnham, 2007). Kuntz (2011) added how performing in musical groups also gave a sense of communal achievement and mutual encouragement to do well and to achieve high standards (Kuntz, 2011). The social aspect of making music within groups seemed to have had the potential for the study's participants to create a strong sense of social unity within a group and gave a rise to uplifting, exhilarating and motivating feelings (Kuntz, 2011).

In addition to social benefits, Premuzic and Furnham (2007) identified a range of personal benefits, which included participating in musical groups enhanced feelings of self-esteem, self-efficacy, 'determination to push forward', and the assurances derived regarding ability and achievements. These benefits could not have been attained alone, which resulted in participants reporting considerable personal satisfaction and enhanced confidence levels and with the skills and confidence, participants developed transferred to performance as an individual (Premuzic & Furnham, 2007). In some cases, group participation provided opportunities to develop leadership skills (Swanwick, 2011). Additionally, playing with others provided role models and standards to aim for and increased motivation, concentration, and stamina (Premuzic & Furnham, 2007). Characteristics of musical groups may be particularly important to the development of these skills; for instance, the need to cooperate can be related to the ability to produce a performance in real time, as can inter-reliance, and group work (Premuzic & Furnham, 2007). Working as part of a group, participants appreciated the importance of working

hard to help maintain the group standards and keep up to group expectations regarding individual contributions (Premuzic & Furnham, 2007). Not only were social aspects enhanced, such as developing a strong sense of belonging and a feeling of importance and usefulness as a group member, but belonging to a musical group also helped to build up confidence and self-satisfaction on a personal level (Premuzic & Furnham, 2007).

Researchers have found another unexpected benefit of participating in music was the impact on students' reading abilities (Schlaug & Winner, 2010; Wandell & Winawer, 2011). Students who learned early in childhood how to read music and to play instruments improved in their reading comprehension at earlier ages as well (Wandell & Winawer, 2011). Wandell and Winawer (2011), researchers from Stanford University, reported a relationship between reading fluency and the levels of training children had in music. The three-year study, which involved 49 children, who ranged in ages from seven to 12, indicated children who read rhythms and recognized pitches on a staff fluently also demonstrated fluency when reading a book or story in class (Wandell & Winawer, 2011). Using new brain imaging technology to pinpoint the brain regions involved in reading, the researchers found the bundle of axoms, or the corpus callosum that connected the left and right hemispheres, were more diffused in participants who had musical experiences and had good reading skills (Wandell & Winawer, 2011).

Researchers, Schlaug and Winner (2010) from Harvard University, also identified a connection between instrumental music training and changes to the structures of the brains of those learning to play the instruments. Schlaug and Winner (2010) explained the

details of this longitudinal study and how it was the first to show how young children's brains changed as a result of instrumental music instruction. The study began with 50 children, ranging from five to seven years old, who were just beginning lessons in violin and/or piano, as well as 25 children of the same age as their counterparts who were not learning how to play an instrument (Schlaug & Winner, 2010).

The beginning musicians' group attended 30-minute lessons each week throughout the experiment, which spanned four years throughout the children's lessons (Schlaug & Winner, 2010). At the end of the study, Schlaug and Winner (2010) reported a 50% attrition rate with participants, which they attributed to the extended four-year length of the study and the young ages of the children who participated. Also, after several more years and after the conclusion of the second testing session, the beginning musicians' group performed better than the non-musicians' group on motor-sequencing tasks and on rhythmic and melodic discrimination tasks (Schlaug & Winner, 2010). Schlaug and Winner (2010) explained the changes in performance correlated with structural changes in the brain responsible for motor and auditory skills, such as the temporal lobe, the frontal lobe, and the cerebellum of the musicians.

There were also changes in the areas of the executive attention networks of the brain, indicating the brains of the children studying music underwent structural changes, and these changes affected other skills (Schlaug & Winner, 2010). Schlaug and Winner (2010) found the musicians also were better than the non-musicians at memorizing groups of words.

In other words, musicians developed rehearsal strategies indirectly learning to focus their attention, which in turn improved their long-term memory.

Impact on students' emotional health. Just like music, other extracurricular activities have been found to make a unique context in adolescents' lives, compared to school, work, or family, in that adolescents personally chose to be involved, which allowed for autonomy and self-directed development (Barber, Hunt, & Eccels, 2005). A substantial body of research has linked adolescents' participation in extracurricular activities to a range of positive outcomes, and youth who participate in activities appear to have a more positive sense of self, which is particularly important during this period of development (Lumpkin & Favor, 2012). Self-concept, defined as a collection of knowledge structures about self, included domains, such as academic, social, behavioral, conduct, and physical self-concept (Lumpkin & Favor, 2012). Lumpkin and Favor (2012) explained each of these domains is of particular importance during adolescence, with the development of social and academic competence considered vital tasks of this period of development (Lumpkin & Favor, 2012).

These separate components of self-concept jointly influenced self-worth and individually predict specific developmental indicators. Longitudinal research by Lumpkin and Favor (2012) found participation in extracurricular activities was associated with increased academic and social self-concept, after controlling for background variables and initial levels of self-concept. Participation in a combination of activities appeared to provide benefits above and beyond those related to participation in one type

of activity (Barber et al., 2005). Furthermore, the positive indicators associated with participation in structured extracurricular activities also extend to an adolescent's sense of identity (Barber et al., 2005). Activities were thought to provide adolescents with opportunities to try different identities, with research showing teen or pre-teens often described themselves partly on the basis of what they do, such as being a jock, nerd, or musician (Barber et al., 2005). Extracurricular activities provided adolescents with a number of personal and interpersonal development experiences (Barber et al., 2005). Barber et al. (2005) identified a variety of positive experiences that occurred during participation in activities, including those related to initiative, teamwork, interpersonal relationships, and identity work. However, the specific types of experience and the degree to which different experiences occurred, have been found to vary depending on the activity (Barber et al., 2005). For example, participation in sports and arts activities provided adolescents with greater initiative experiences (Barber et al., 2005). Whereas, participation in faith-based groups provided more identity explorations, emotional regulations, and positive relationship experiences, when compared to other activity types (Barber et al., 2005).

Improving sense of belonging. Evidence also indicated adolescents' participation in extracurricular activities was a key factor in promoting feelings of belonging at school (Broh, 2002). In a study of seventh through 12th grade students, for example, Broh (2002) found adolescents who participated in activities expressed feelings more connected to school, with perceived belonging at school as one of the main dimensions of

connectedness. Specifically, Dotterer and McHale (2013) showed African American sixth to ninth grade students enjoyed school more when they spent more time on extracurricular activities. These studies suggested participation in school-based activities helped adolescents to feel more connected to others at school (Dotterer & McHale, 2013).

Building confidence. Participating in activities during high school also can help improve students' self-confidence (Drolet, 2013). Drolet (2013) found feelings of belonging explained the links between self-efficacy or value placed on school and academic achievement, measured as grade point average and the number of advanced courses. The effects were particularly strong amongst African-American and Latino adolescents (Drolet, 2013). The positive impact also resonated often in students who belonged to a lower socioeconomic population (Drolet, 2013). Broh (2002) found playing high school interscholastic sports benefitted students' academic performance in 10th and 12th grades, while also significantly improving students' self-esteem, locus of control, time on homework, and increased an athletes' umber of academically oriented friends. Furthermore, participating in sports in the 10th and 12th grades significantly increased social ties between students and parents, students and schools, and parents and parents (Broh, 2002).

Additionally, Drolet (2013) noted playing sports significantly increased how often students talked with their parents about school-related issues and increased students' contact with teachers outside of class. Participation also positively associated with social ties between parents and the school (Broh, 2002).

The U.S. Department of Education reported more than 50% of the country's high school sophomores participated in sports, 20% were in a school-sponsored music group, and cheerleading and drill teams, hobby, academic, and vocational clubs each involved approximately 10% of kids (Wagner, 2012). The Education Department Data indicated kids from families in the top third by income and education were 50% more likely to take part in sports and 200% as likely to participate in music as kids from the bottom third (Wagner, 2012). Almost 80% of the adults in the Walt Whitman High School area of Montgomery County, Maryland, were college graduates, and the median household income was three times the national average (Wagner, 2012). The Department of Education's data also indicated kids with the highest test scores were also the most active in after-school activities (Wagner, 2012). This begged the question: Did the kids who joined after-school activities become good students, or did good students join after school activities?

Gardner, a research scientist at Columbia University's National Center for Children and Families, was among the researchers who believed there was a cause-effect relationship between activities and academic success (Reeves, 2014). Using the 1988 National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS), and controlling for poverty, race, gender, test scores, and parental involvement, Gardner calculated the odds of attending college were 97% higher for youngsters who took part in school-sponsored activities for two years than for those who didn't do any school activities (Reeves, 2014). The odds of completing college were 179% higher, and the odds of voting eight years after high

school were 31% higher (Wagner, 2012).Gardner repeated the analysis using propensity-score matching, which is comparing kids who profiles suggested they had a similar propensity to either join or sit out after-school activities. Even within those groups of similar kids, those who participated in activities had better school success rates than those who did not (Wagner, 2012).

Angela Duckworth, a University of Pennsylvania psychologist, looked at college activities as a predictor of success (Reeves, 2014). She rated the resumes of recent graduates applying for their first teaching jobs (Reeves, 2014). She gave the highest scores to those people who had been in a college activity for several years and who had attained a level of leadership or achievement (Reeves, 2014). Those with the highest "grit" scores—that is, those with the most persistence turned out to be the best teachers, based on the academic gains of their students. The grittiest scorers also were more likely to stay in their jobs rather than quit midyear (Wagner, 2012). Duckworth attributed the difference, therefore, to perseverance rather than talent. There was not any significance difference in teacher effectiveness based on SAT scores and college GPAs (Wagner, 2012). This was not just about whether or not students' classroom teachers were new or experienced, Duckworth noted. The most important factor when it comes to teachers, it is imperative they are "people who are persistent and passionate about something, whether cross-country or spelling bees, will carry over that enthusiasm to other parts of their lives" (*Education Review*, 2012, p. 20).

Steinberg, a Temple University psychologist, whose book, *You and Your Adolescent: The Essential Guide for Ages 10-25,* suggested extracurricular activities also made school more enjoyable for kids who otherwise found it bleak or unsatisfying. Steinberg said:

> Grades improve not because of what kids are learning in the video club, but because the video club is making them enjoy school more, so they show up more often, find a circle of like-minded friends, and become more engaged in school." (*Education Review,* 2012, p. 23).

Tony Wagner (2012), co-director of the Change Leadership Group at Harvard's Graduate School of Education, engaged a focus group a decade ago with college students who graduated from a leading public high school in New England. He asked them what "important things" they remembered about high school, three to five years after leaving. They described all their experiences in extracurricular activities and sports (Wagner, 2012). According to Wagner (2012), extracurricular activities "teach a lot of the skills you need as an adult: Time management, leadership, self-discipline, and persistence for doing work that isn't extrinsically motivated" (p. 20). The analysis paralleled Wagner's work, which defined the "skills of the future: as including adaptability, leading by influence, and initiative. Wagner (2012) continued, explaining students who had significant involvement in extracurricular activities had more of a capacity for focus, self-discipline, and time management, which was lacking in kids who did not participate. The

kind of activities seemed not to matter; what mattered was the level of engagement (Wagner, 2012).

Bonfiglio, a longtime supervisor of intercollegiate athletics, addressed the question of whether athletics has had a positive or negative educational force on students by examining the relationship between participation in intercollegiate athletics and student development, especially as it pertained to developing moral reasoning (as cited in Lumpkin et al., 2011). Bonfiglio concluded:

> Moral reasoning research found it did not matter whether the athlete competed at the Division I level, Division III level, was black, white, red, male, or female all competitive athletes are negatively affected in their ability to reason about ethical questions in sport; the need to win, for whatever price, appears to adversely affect the moral development of the competitor. (as cited in Lumpkin et al., 2011, p.66)

Although many coaches and administrators stressed the importance of ethical values in playing these sports, other research found little or no concentrated moral education imbedded in sports, according to Pascerella and Terenzini (2005). Pascereall and Terenzini (2005) suggested, while a strong body of qualitative and quantitative research existed supporting the longer athletes participated in a sport, the more their moral reasoning was adversely affected by the competitive experiences. Sports, according to their research, did not hold a significant impact on modeling, challenging, supporting, or teaching the critical reasoning skills paramount to making good moral decisions (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Thus, Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) wrote, there were

other benefits of playing sports, but they did not report finding a relationship existing between intercollegiate athletic participation and the development of leadership skills. The research also matched that of Lumpkin et al. (2012) in reference to the lack of relationship between participation in sport and the development of moral reasoning.

Other research studies have documented the lack of relationship between intercollegiate athletics participation and other forms of student learning and personal development (Lumpkin et al., 2012; Rudd & Stoll, 2004). In *The Value of Educationally Purposeful Out-of-Class Experiences,* Rudd and Stoll (2004) concluded, participation in intercollegiate athletics had little impact on learning for self-understanding, preferring higher order cognitive activities and motivation for academic success. Rudd and Stoll (2004) summarized, since the early part of the 20th century, participation in American sports has been widely and strongly viewed as a vehicle for developing character. In response to this claim, researchers from a variety of disciplines empirically tested the popular notion that sport built character (Rudd & Stoll, 2004). Contrary to what many believed, results from these studies suggested sports did not build character (Rudd & Stoll, 2004).

Rudd and Stoll (2004) pointed out regarding the nature of the distinction between character development and social development: “From the character development literature, newspapers, media, and personal communications with coaches, parents, and the general populace we discovered that many individuals appear to define character from a social perspective rather than a moral perspective” (p. 10). Many defined character in

terms of social value, such as teamwork, loyalty, self-sacrifice, work ethic, and perseverance, which may be considered as social character, as opposed to moral character, which has been denoted by moral values such as honesty, fairness, and responsibility (Lumpkin & Favor, 2012). Rudd and Stoll (2004) suggested sports helped to build social character.

Sports encouraged teamwork, loyalty, and self-sacrifice as possible result of the emphasis that is placed on social character (Rudd & Stoll, 2004). Few athletic programs were intentionally designed, led, or implemented to nurture the type of moral development equated with character development (Bonfiglio, 2011). Doty and Lumpkin (2010) wrote positive character traits have been developed through sports experiences, when coaches or teachers made intentional efforts to teach students during sport or club participation. Therein laid the challenge: While there was no body of evidence to support the idea that sports contributed to moral development, the ability of sport to cultivate moral virtues depended in large part on how competitions were administered (Doty & Lumpkin, 2010). Bonfiglio (2011) concluded on the topic that "until we get it right, we may just be engaged in wishful thinking" (p. 4).

Impact on academic achievement. Participating in extracurricular activities became increasingly important during adolescence as youth explore their emerging interests and identities, made friends, and strived to fit in with their peers (Dworkin et al., 2003). In the process of exploring themselves and connecting with others, many adolescents joined multiple groups, clubs, sports, or organizations (Dworkin et al., 2003).

For instance, recent studies indicated on average, most high school students participated in two to three activities (Frederick & Eccles, 2010). Adolescents who participated in activities were better adjusted than their peers (Frederick & Eccles, 2010). Overall, high school students who were involved in one or more activities reported positive attitudes about school, higher aspirations for academic achievement, and better grades than their uninvolved peers (Frederic & Eccles, 2010). Those students who were more involved formed stronger and more supportive relationships and benefitted from learning experiences unique to different activities (Dworkin et al., 2003).

In a study of 11th grade students' extracurricular involvement, Darling, Caldwell, and Smith (2010) found adolescents who participated in a greater number of activities in 11th grade obtained higher grade point averages and had greater expectations about their educational attainment during and after high school. Greater extracurricular participation, moreover, buffered against early school dropout, particularly for students who were at high risk (Lumpkin & Favor, 2012). These studies suggested participating in a greater number of activities generally related to an increase in positive academic outcomes (Lumpkin & Favor, 2012). Adding to this research, Fredericks and Eccles (2010) documented the breadth and intensity of participation, which referred to time spent in activities, shared curvilinear relationships with achievement test scores, expectations for educational attainment, and levels of education two years after high school. In summary, these studies indicated while greater extracurricular involvement generally related to better academic outcomes, there may be a threshold at which higher levels of

involvement no longer predict more positive outcomes (Lumpkin & Favor, 2012; Darling et al., 2010; Fredericks & Eccles, 2010).

Anderman (2013) attempted to explain these findings by citing studies documenting students' sense of belonging was related to their motivation levels and academic performances. Anderman (2013) documented middle and high school students who felt a greater sense of belonging with their peers obtained a higher grade point average and experienced fewer problems at school (compared to teachers or other students), relative to those with a lower sense of belonging. Thus, having a greater sense of belonging at school promoted adolescents' levels in academic motivation, engagement, and achievement (Anderman, 2013).

Activities' impact varied. The National Collegiate Athletics Association (NFHS, 2014) reported not all sports offered the same benefits; however, interscholastic sports differed from intramural sports and other athletic activities, such as cheerleading, in many ways (NFHS, 2014). For instance, compared to intramural sports, interscholastic sports have been known to be more selective, typically required more a greater commitment by the participants, had more formalized rules for participation and behavior, and offered competition between students from different schools (The National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association, 2011). As a result, interscholastic sports typically offered greater structure and routine, much larger and more intense social networks, higher social status for student-athletes, and a stronger identity with one's school (Dworkin et al., 2003).

Participation in music groups was the only other activity to yield such consistent benefits for achievement (Broh, 2002). While participation in team sports led to stronger social ties with peers, individual sports built a stronger individual work ethic and locus of control (Broh, 2002). Dworkin et al. (2003) asserted very little research has been done on the developmental processes occurred when children participated in afterschool activities. However, Dworkin et al. (2003) stated, youth activities, such as extracurricular and community based activities, provided realms for adolescents to become producers of their own development. Various studies reported by Dworkin et al. (2003) added participation in youth activities provided examples of greater learning opportunities, which later resulted in more meaningful and deeper levels of learning or made easier to transfer new learning into long-term memory and permanent learning. Barnett and Weber (2014) also found the more active the individuals were through extracurricular preparations, the more developed their minds became, which led more well-rounded individuals and greater chances to become a present and future leaders.

Youth Athletic Opportunities

Barnett and Weber (2014) maintained an enormous amount of research documented the positive effects of extracurricular recreational involvements on pre- and adolescent functioning. They argued extracurricular involvement likewise deterred negative effects of dropping out of school or becoming involved in self-harming practices (Barnett & Weber, 2014). As administrators in one school district made efforts to increase levels of extracurricular activities among students, Reeves (2010) found

achievement levels increased, discipline levels went down, incidents involving fights went down, graduation rates increased to a 10-year high, students taking placement exams doubled, even as percentages of low-income students increased. As a result of data and research, Reeves (2010) claimed student engagement in extracurricular activities led to a potential of substantial growth. Reeves (2010) also claimed, "We can make a strong case that the positive peer relationships, organization, discipline, expectations, and other positive influences associated with extracurricular activities are likely to improve performance" (p. 87).

Youth athletic programs continued to provide many leadership development opportunities for student athletes (Reeves, 2010). Activities ranged from sports leagues, Boys Scouts, Girls Scouts, community service programs, recreational leagues and programs, church youth groups, and co-curricular activities (Barnett & Weber, 2010). Many skills needed to be successful leaders of schools, businesses, and organizations were comparable to those learned in participation of youth activities (Hawkins, 2010). Both student athletes and organizational leaders experienced working with teammates to be committed to achieve a common vision, to establish a common purpose, to set team goals, and then to execute their charge (Reeves, 2010). According to researchers of organizational leadership, these were all important components necessary for effective leadership (Yukl, 2012).

People who have participated in athletics, extracurricular, or co-curricular activities involving teams, have likely been engaged in leadership opportunities which

involved both team building and team-development experiences and have likely had leadership modeled for them throughout their engagement (Maxwell, 2013). Maxwell (2014) referred to such leaders as leading learners, which he believed were born with leadership qualities, had seen leadership modeled for them throughout their lives have learned added leadership skills through training, and had the self-discipline to become great leaders. Regarding leading learners, Maxwell (2014) indicated three of the four leadership qualities were acquired. Another type of leader Maxwell (2013) described was the latent leader, a person who aspired to become a strong leader and had the self-discipline to become a good leader. Maxwell (2013) further asserted leadership could be learned through motivation and purposeful training, but only a few leadership skills were instinctual in nature. In light of this philosophy, numerous studies have concentrated on youth development programs as they focus on developing leadership skills through a variety of pathways including athletics, civic, multicultural, extracurricular, and other co-curricular programs or other experiential, learning opportunities.

Coaches as Leaders

Coaches, athletic directors, sponsors, and youth leaders were required to develop teamwork, unity, and a sense of mission, vision, and team goals utilizing transformational characteristics in their approach (Smoll & Smith; Weiss & Wiese-Bjornstal, 2010). Smoll and Smith (2012) also asserted coaches who displayed transformational leadership styles perceived their athletes as competent individuals who made positive contributions.

Furthermore, such coaches treat the athletes with respect and encourage them to develop their own leadership styles (Smoll & Smith, 2002).

According to Weiss and Wiese-Bjornstal (2010), in the context of physical activity, significant adult role models made a difference in the quality of youths' experiences and personal skill development. Weiss and Wiese-Bjornstal (2010) asserted studies consistently showed coaches and teachers who provided greater frequency of behavior-contingent praise and informational feedback, coupled with low punitive responses, were associated with participants who reported higher self-esteem, perceived competence, enjoyment, and self-determined motivation, and continued physical activity participation. In the opinion of Yukl (2012), when discussing transformational and charismatic leadership styles one way a leader influenced subordinate commitment was by setting an example of exemplary behavior in day-to-day interactions with subordinates. Yukl (2012) also maintained the values espoused by a leader demonstrated in his or her daily behavior was done consistently, not just when convenient.

Summary

Although researchers may disagree as to what level of impact extracurricular activities have on participants, the majority of sources emphasized the positive effects. In Chapter Two, the key concepts were reviewed in detail, including previous literature related to the roles of superintendents in school districts and conceptual frameworks related to leadership styles. In this chapter, the researcher also explored extracurricular activities and the impact on students who participated. In Chapter Three, the primary

investigator will provide an outline of the study, including the participants in the study, the instrumentation used, and the design methodology. Chapter Three also will include the data collection and data analysis methods of this study.

Chapter Three: Methodology

With increasing budget cuts across the country, school administrators have been faced with difficult financial decisions (Williams & Johnson, 2013). With decreasing resources, one of the first line items cut have been extracurricular program budgets (Williams & Johnson, 2013). Understanding the value of extracurricular activities could have been influential as school officials made these types of decisions (Kniffin, Wansink, & Shmizu, 2014). In this chapter, the problem and purpose of this study will be overviewed, as well as the research design and methodology used to answer the study's guiding research questions. Also, the researcher will outline his plans to collect and to analyze the data after the research was launched.

Problem and Purpose

Many school leaders and top corporate administrators have been involved in extracurricular activities as part of their curricular or co-curricular training (Kniffin et al., 2014). It would be valuable, therefore, for school district officials to know what types of training or experiences were easily transferable into leadership skills as school districts looked for potential superintendent candidates (Kniffin et al., 2014). The researcher was interested in this phenomenon as he entered the first year of a superintendent position and repeatedly met other superintendents with previous extracurricular experiences. Hawkins (2010) wrote as school officials seek highly qualified superintendents, it has been important to understand how previous extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities enhanced leadership skills in school administrators. According to Marzano (2005),

limited research has been done on specific behaviors of effective leaders.

The purpose of this dissertation was to study extracurricular preparations and their relationships to leadership styles of beginning superintendents (Hawkins, 2010). School leaders' participation in extracurricular programs prior to assuming their leadership roles within the school has been examined. As a part of the study, the researcher wanted to distinguish specific leadership styles utilized by the selected school leaders and to study the relationships of extracurricular preparations, and the impact those extracurricular activities may have had on the superintendents' development as a leader and their overall skills.

For many years, teachers who held leadership positions in extracurricular activities, such as athletic coaches and sponsors of clubs and organizations, found themselves moving into school administration (Hawkins, 2010). Hawkins (2010) added several questions have risen when examining practices of effective school leaders and how their various backgrounds, experiences, education, training, and leadership styles contributed to their overall effectiveness as a leader. In this study of extracurricular preparations and their relationships to leadership, the mixed-methods approach was the research design recommended to conduct future studies (Hawkins, 2010). Research questions were explored using both the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X-Short (Bass & Avolio, 2004), as well as a supplemental demographical inventory and two open-ended questions answered by each of the participants in the study. Research questions, the design of the study, population and sampling selection, data collection

procedures and instrumentation, and data analysis procedures are addressed in this chapter.

Researcher Biases

Researching extracurricular and co-curricular activities and the relationship to leadership styles of beginning superintendents was selected as a research topic because of the athletic and co-curricular participation and interest of the researcher. The researcher was involved in athletics, beginning as a young child and throughout high school and college before beginning a coaching career that spanned 21 years as a head basketball, baseball, and assistant football coach. Co-curricular activities of the researcher included participation in the following organizations: Future Business Leaders of America, Future Farmers of America, Choir, National Honor Society, Student Council, Student Council/Class President, and Publications. A bias the researcher disclosed was the experience in extracurricular activities, as well as the belief that many of the skills and life lessons learned in dealing with people and leadership situations, came from involvement in extracurricular, co-curricular activities, clubs, and service organizations. Another research bias in this study was the population in this study involved a group of beginning superintendents. At the beginning of this study, the researcher also was in his first year as a superintendent in a Missouri school district.

Research Questions

In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, the researcher outlined key questions to guide the study. Within the context of this study, the following research

questions were addressed:

1. In the past, what extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities were the first-year superintendents involved in, if any?

2. Is there a relationship between the first-year superintendent's extracurricular and/or co-curricular participation and their self-reported leadership styles?

3. Are there significant differences in leadership styles between superintendents based on extracurricular and co-curricular participation?

4. How did the superintendents describe the impact extracurricular involvement had on their leadership experiences?

Research Design

This study, a mixed-method design, utilized both qualitative and quantitative approaches to answer the research questions (Creswell, 2013). Creswell (2013) wrote how quantitative approaches focused on studying relationships among variables to describe trends or relationships among data. The researcher also chose to add a qualitative element to the study by adding open-ended responses so participants were able to provide rich feedback about their extracurricular and/or co-curricular experiences (Creswell, 2013). As Leedy and Ormrod (2001) advised, in this study, the variables are known, guidelines are established, and data are context-free with a static design.

First, the researcher conducted the quantitative part of the study. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) explained quantitative research differed from qualitative because it "involves either identifying the characteristics of an observed phenomenon or exploring

possible correlations among two or more phenomena" (p. 14). The quantitative aspect of the research involved collecting the self-reports from first-year superintendents, which included activities participants had previously been involved in and the participants' responses to a leadership style instrument tool known as the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by Bass and Avolio (2004) as a measure of classifying leadership styles of beginning superintendents. The first-year superintendents were invited to take an on-line survey through the web-based survey site, Survey Monkey (2014), to self-report their leadership styles. The researcher hoped to collect participants' MLQ scores to find what participants believed in regards to their leadership styles. As Frainkel et al. (2012) explained, qualitative research, on the other hand, used smaller samples while data were collected through observations and/or interviews. Words and/or pictures have been noted as important aspects of qualitative research (Creswell, 2013); hence, qualitative data often allowed researchers to observe how people interactrd with each other or how certain questions were answered (Fraenkel et al., 2012). In order to collect participants' input on their experiences in extracurricular activities, the researcher modified the survey by adding two open-ended questions.

Population and Sample

Subjects of the targeted research were first- to third-year beginning superintendents from Missouri schools, which included the 520 school districts in the state (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2014). The study's sample size consisted of 75 school superintendents, 35 of which were first-year

superintendents at the time of the study. All potential subjects were provided with e-mail letters, informing them of the purpose of the study and the guarantee of confidentiality in all survey responses and with the knowledge the results would be provided at a later time. The researcher obtained participants' e-mail addresses from a database provided by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2014).

Instrumentation

In order to achieve the purpose of this study, the researcher chose two different instruments to collect data from participants. The first instrument was the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X-Short by Bass and Avolio (2013) administered using the Mind Garden website. The other online instrument sent to first-year superintendents in Missouri was the Profile of Extracurricular and/or Co-Curricular Experiences Questionnaire through the Survey Monkey website.

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Short Form 5X. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X-Short Form (Avolio & Bass, 2013) was the primary tool used to assess participants' leadership styles. The MLQ instrument was first developed by Burns (1978), as he studied top-level business executives and determined their foundation for leadership. The initial work toward developing the MLQ was derived from the work of Burns (1978) as he interviewed business executives to develop a foundation for effective leadership skills. Bass and Avolio (2004) re-addressed Burns' original leadership style instrument, creating the current format of the MLQ and then a more concise version with the MLQ 5X-Short. The most recent MLQ 5X-Short included 45

questions that “identify and measure key leadership and effective behaviors shown in prior research to be strongly linked with both individual and organizational success” (Avolio & Bass, 2004, p. 13). Numerous studies continually have supported the connections between leadership styles and expected performance outcomes (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

The revised Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X-Short (MLQ5x) was utilized and offered a brief but comprehensive survey of the original 45 items, measuring a full range of leadership styles (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Leadership dimensions included the following: (a) Transformational Leadership, (b) Transactional Leadership, (c) Laissez-Faire or Non-Transactional Leadership styles (Passive, Avoidant), and (d) Outcomes of Leadership (such as effectiveness) (Bass & Avolio, 2004). The revised MLQ 5x was issued through the Mind Garden website and offered strong validity and reliability and had been used extensively in research and commercial applications worldwide (Bass & Avolio, 2004). It has proven to be a strong predictor of leader performance across a broad range of organizations at different organizational levels and in different national cultures (Bass & Avolio, 2004). The MLQ measured leadership styles, grouped under three broad categories differing in their outcome effects and the natures of the influencing processes involved.

The foundation of the MLQ has been based on five Full-Range Leadership Model styles, also known as the Five I’s, which encompassed the following: a) Idealized Influence---attributes which are trusted and respected, b) Idealized Influence---behaviors

demonstrate high moral standards, values, beliefs, and principles, c) Inspirational Motivation---inspires others to achieve full potential, d) Intellectual Stimulation---challenges others to achieve innovative thinking, e) Individualized Consideration--develops followers into leaders (Bass & Avolio, 1993). According to Fink (2012), "The simplest way to look at whether two variables are associated is to look at whether they co-vary" (p. 107). When discussing correlations and regressions, Fink (2012) asserted rank order correlations to be used with categorical data along with describing how "regressions use correlations as the basis for predicting the value of one variable from the other" (p. 70).

The MLQ report provided feedback for developing the group's leadership styles over time so it may have helped to improve group members' leadership outcomes. The beginning superintendents' feedback was first profiled against researched benchmarks of the optimal frequency for each style. Comparisons were provided with universal norms. However, comparisons to others may not have been an effective strategy since the comparison group may not have been 'optimal' in terms of the best frequency for effective leadership (Mind Garden, 2014).

The instrument, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X-Short, has been used in other studies as an instrument for field and laboratory research, the selection, transfer, and promotion of employees, and the development and counseling for managers and project leaders (Bass & Avolio, 2004). The design may have been more effective for training and coaching purposes (Bass & Avolio, 2004). However, Bass and Avolio

(2004) maintained the long-standing reliability and validity of the questionnaire, the fact the instrument has been used for more than 25 years to differentiate between highly effective and ineffective leaders in a variety of leadership roles in the military, government, educational, churches, hospital, and private sector fields. The self-reporting survey allowed the researcher to obtain information about the participants and their backgrounds before they became school district superintendents.

Transformation leadership was the first type of leadership style participants might have been rated (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Transactional leadership was the second leadership style including constructive, which set clear expectations and rewards achievement (Bass & Avolio, 2004). The third leadership style was Laissez-Faire, or passive-avoidant behaviors, which dealt with management by exception, or delaying correcting behaviors (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Profile of Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Experiences Questionnaire. Also included in the study was the Profile of Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Experiences Questionnaire, a self-reporting survey created by the researcher through the on-line program, Survey Monkey (2014), which allowed the researcher to obtain further information about each of the participants and their background participations prior to becoming a school superintendent. In the Profile Questionnaire, participants were asked the following demographic information: a) gender, b) educational background, c) number of years in education, and d) checklist of activities for which participants noted their individual past experiences in extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities.

The self-reporting Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and the Profile of Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Survey Questionnaire were electronically returned to the researcher upon completion by the participants. Informed consent documents (see Appendix A) to participate in surveys were issued to participants, and they explained consent was implied at time of submitting survey responses. The advantages of using the approach of a web-based survey included the ability for the researcher to design a basic survey for free (Survey Monkey, 2014). Data analysis and survey administration also were provided for a nominal fee (Survey Monkey, 2014). Other advantages of Internet-based surveys included greater conveniences for participants, faster turnaround of responses, multimedia interface, mobile administration, and reduced data entry (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). Disadvantages of multimedia surveys have included lower response rates, unintentional erroneous data entry due, to participants misunderstand questions or options, and/or technology glitches that interfere with data collection (Fraenkel et al., 2012).

The following open-ended questions concluded the Profile of Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Experiences instrument through Survey Monkey:

1) Prior to administration, did you coach any extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities? If so, please list the activities you coached.
2) How did participation in these activities impact your leadership style? If you participated in different activities, you may choose to articulate specifically the impact of each activity or sport.

3) What other information or comments would be helpful in regard to better understanding how you benefitted from your experiences in extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities prior to your superintendent role?

Data Collection

Confidentiality of all participants was maintained, and a written consent form was used (see Appendix A). Fink (2012) explained the importance of the consent form, since participants have the option of whether or not to complete the survey. The consent form described the purpose of the study and the potential use of the information derived from the study to the potential participants (Fink, 2012). All participants self-reported by completing the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X-Short through Mind Garden's website (see Appendix C). The researcher created an on-line study with these components using the Survey Monkey website, inviting participants through an e-mail from the researcher, which provided a link to both on-line surveys (see Appendix B).

The researcher sent participants a final reminder about the survey at the end of two weeks, so participants had an appropriate span of time to respond, if they chose to participate. Once the final reminder was sent, the researcher planned to close the survey and collect the data, using the surveymonkey.com data collection tools. The respondents were scored by receiving one point per check, which represented each activity and level of engagements. Based on total points, participants were placed into four groups according to their levels of engagement in extracurricular and co-curricular activities and then compared with their responses of leadership style, according to the MLQ 5X-Short.

The on-line questionnaires were secured while on-line, as the survey link was protected by a confidential username and password. Once the responses were printed, the surveys were locked in the researcher's office during the analysis process, and then destroyed at the culmination of the study to ensure confidentiality.

Data Analysis

The results of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire were collected and analyzed to determine specific leadership styles used by the participants. The data analysis consisted of "describing trends, comparing group differences, or relating variables" (Fink, 2012, p. 55). An additional instrument, the Profile of Extracurricular and Co-curricular Preparations, was the self-reported survey designed by the researcher. Through the surveys, the researcher planned to use the data to determine the extent to which the participants' involvement in extracurricular and co-curricular preparations, prior to assuming the superintendent role, may have influenced, contributed, or shaped their leadership approaches and specific leadership styles. The researcher was also able to recognize relationships of the preparation of extracurricular activities identified by participants by forming subgroups of each activity identified. According to Fink (2012), "The simplest way to look at whether two variables are associated is to look at whether they co-vary" (p. 107). When discussing correlations and regressions, Fink (2012) asserted rank order correlations to be used with categorical data along with describing how "regressions use correlations as the basis for predicting the value of one variable from the other" (p. 70). Following the guidance of Fink (2012), the researcher planned to

determine correlations by comparing varying extracurricular and co-curricular participation and participants' MLQ 5X-Short Likert scores, using the correlations and coefficients as one of the measures of the study.

Research Question Number One. The demographic information and the activity checklist at the beginning of the Profile of Extracurricular and/or Co-Curricular Participation provided data to answer Research Question Number One. The Survey Monkey website allowed the researcher to view and to analyze the data in several different variations, so organizing the participants by activity involvement was possible.

Research Question Number Two. In order to answer Research Question Two, the researcher provided a link to the Mind Garden website where participants responded to the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X-Short Form, which consisted of 45 leadership style statements (Bass & Avolio, 2013). The first-year superintendents marked Likert scale ratings based on their self-reported characteristics of transformational, transactional, or laissez-faire leadership.

Research Question Number Three. In order to answer Research Question Three, the researcher provided a link to the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X-Short Form consisting of 45 leadership style questions. The answers of the first-year superintendents were broken down by Mind Garden, Inc., to reflect the leadership styles in transformational, transactional, and passive.

Research Question Number Four. The demographic information was provided by first-year superintendents with their responses to the Extracurricular and/or Co-

Curricular Participation Profile survey through the Survey Monkey website. Respondents were asked to record their gender, educational background, and number of years in education, as well as to describe their extracurricular and co-curricular activities in which they participated, coached, and/or sponsored. Respondents also were asked the impact the activities had on their careers and leadership styles.

Summary

The methods of the study were guided by the issue of extracurricular and co-curricular preparations and the relation to leadership style of beginning superintendents. A mixed- methods design utilizing both a quantitative and qualitative research approach was planned to be in this study. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X-Short was the focal instrument used in the study, along with the researcher's independent demographic and survey questions as a secondary instrument. The researcher aimed to determine what possible ranges of leadership styles of beginning superintendents were most correlated with varying types of previous extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities. In Chapter Three, the participants were described, which included the 35 first-year superintendents in the state of Missouri. In Chapter Four, the researcher will share the results of this study from the participants' demographic data to the participants' self-reported leadership styles.

Chapter Four: Analysis of Data

Introduction

After launching both online instruments, the MLQ 5X-Short and the Profile of Extracurricular and/or Co-curricular Experiences Questionnaire, the researcher collected the participants' responses from the websites. The previous chapters described the process of this study from defining terms to the research methods. In the preceding chapters, a literature review provided detailed explanations of the different leadership styles, including transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire or passive/avoidant leadership, as well as the role of superintendents in their districts. In this chapter, the researcher will review the methods of research and will detail the participants' responses to the MLQ 5X-Short (Bass & Avolio, 2014) and the personal input through the Profile of Extracurricular and/or Co-curricular Experiences Questionnaire (Survey Monkey, 2015).

Overview of the Study

The purposes of this study was to determine whether extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities during high school and/or college impacted first-year superintendents' leadership styles. Effective leadership has been proven to be imperative to organizations, yet only limited research has been conducted on specific behaviors of effective leaders, or on the impact of participation in activities prior to leaders entering the workforce (Marzano et al., 2005).

Using an abbreviated version of the MLQ 5X-Short (Bass & Avolio, 2004) in the online survey format through Mind Garden (Bass & Avolio, 2014) and by collecting

other demographic information provided by the participating beginning superintendents, the researcher examined the superintendents' responses regarding participations in extracurricular activities prior to assuming their superintendent roles. First-year superintendents referred to superintendents who had never been a superintendent either in Missouri or any other state prior to assuming their administrative positions at the time of the survey's launch (MoDESE, 2014). Another layer of this investigation focused on collecting the multiple perspectives of the first-year superintendents on their personal experiences in extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities prior to becoming administrators, particularly with respect to their current leadership styles. Also, in this study, the researcher aimed to collect the participants' anecdotal data regarding extracurricular and co-curricular activities and how participants believed these experiences impacted how they currently led their constituents. The researcher began by reviewing literature and previous studies relevant to this topic, which also included the theoretical framework of the study, the Full Range Leadership Theory, first proposed by Bass and Avolio (1992).

In this study, the researcher examined the effects extracurricular and co-curricular participations on first-year superintendents' leadership styles. The researcher used an online survey tool administered through the Survey Monkey website (Survey Monkey, 2014). Using the survey instrument, the researcher collected basic information about the participants, which included their levels of education, gender, years of service in education, self-reports of what extracurricular and/or co-curricular they participated in

prior to their leadership roles, and comments regarding overall impact of extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities. The first-year superintendents in the state of Missouri, as identified by MoDESE (2014), also were sent the online survey through the Mind Garden website that covered the elements of the MLQ 5X-Short (Bass & Avolio, 2014). The online survey through Mind Garden's site contained Likert scale statements polling the beginning superintendents' perceptions of their leadership styles (Bass & Avolio, 2013). The survey link sent requested that participants to respond to 45 questions with a scale ranging from 0 to 4. The numerical responses represented the following: 0 = Never; 1 = Once in a While; 2 = Sometimes; 3 = Fairly Often; and 4 = Frequently, If Not Always.

After compiling a list of first-year superintendents from the MoDESE website, the researcher contacted the superintendents through electronic communication to explain specific information about the content of the study including the timeline for the project (see Appendix A). Attached to the communication also was the Informed Consent for Participation Research Activities document (see Appendix A), which explained to participants what their involvement in the study included, as well as the security measures taken to insure anonymity and confidentiality for all participants. The survey link was open to all first-year superintendents in the state of Missouri, which included the 56 superintendents who qualified based on the definition of first-year superintendents. The survey link was available for responses for two weeks. By the researcher's two-week deadline, approximately 25% (n=7) responded during the original allocated time frame. The researcher extended the allotted time for an additional two weeks to collect more

feedback from additional participants and to increase validity of the study. After the time extension, nearly 25% of the eligible beginning superintendents, or an additional 14 participants, responded.

One factor the researcher noted was that during this additional two-week time period, the researcher contacted superintendents by phone to follow up on the surveys and to explain unexpected technical difficulty on behalf of Mind Garden's website. Unexpectedly, the Mind Garden website experienced technical complications, which may have prohibited participants from answering the questions through the website in completion. As the researcher contacted the potential respondents, he explained the technical difficulties, not noting whether or not they already had participated, and requested if they had chosen to participate that they log in to the Mind Garden site again to re-take the survey. After the following two-week window of time the researcher had allotted for participants, 28 first-year superintendents in the state of Missouri completed both survey links to participate in the study.

Analysis of Data

After closing the survey time frame, first, the researcher collected quantitative data by opening the Mind Garden website and printing all of the participants' results to the MLQ 5X-Short. The results to the Profile Questionnaire also was printed from the Survey Monkey website. The researcher exported all of the data into a Microsoft Excel document to allow more accurate and timely calculations and configuration. Using the Profile Questionnaire survey instrument, the researcher collected basic information about

the level of education of the participants, gender, extracurricular and/or co-curricular participation, years of service in education, and comments regarding overall impact of extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities.

Demographics

The researcher sent the survey links with the invitation to participate to all of the first-year superintendents in the state of Missouri, which resulted in 56 invitations. Of those invited, 50% (*n*=28) first-year superintendents in the state of Missouri participated by completing both surveys. The participant pool included 23 males (82%) and five females (18%) (see Figure 1). Of the respondents, all first-year superintendents held at least a Master's Degree in Educational Administration. Only one participant held a Master's Degree as his/her highest degree. The participants' responses on the questionnaires stated 96% (*n*=27) of participants also had a Specialist's Degree in Education, and 32% (*n*=9) of first-year superintendents had a Doctorate in Education as well (see Figure 2).

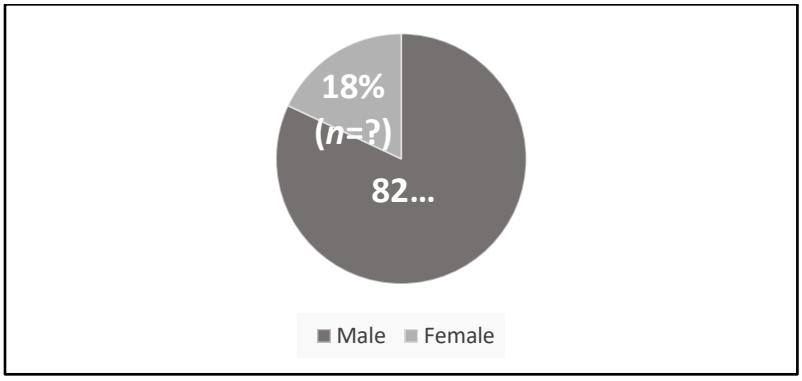


Figure 1. Gender percentages of first-year superintendents. Data obtained from Profile of Extracurricular and/or Co-Curricular Experiences Questionnaire.

The questionnaire also provided the researcher with insight into the experiences of the administrators who participated. The participants' responses to the demographic information included in the survey indicated 25% of the first-year superintendents (*n*=7) had less than 16 years of experience in education. Nearly half of the participants, or 43% (*n*=12), stated they had more than 20 years of experience in education (see Figure 3).

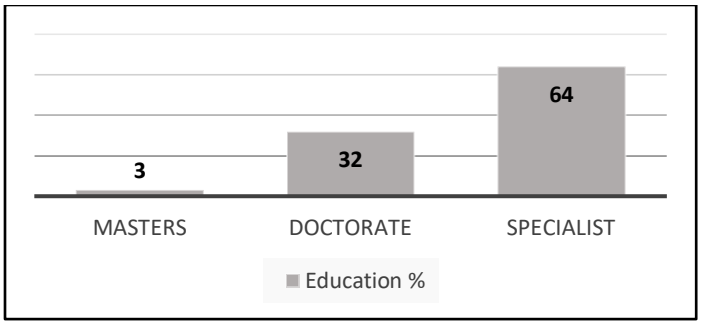


Figure 2. First-year superintendents' educational backgrounds. Data collected from the Profile of Extracurricular and/or Co-Curricular Experiences Questionnaire.

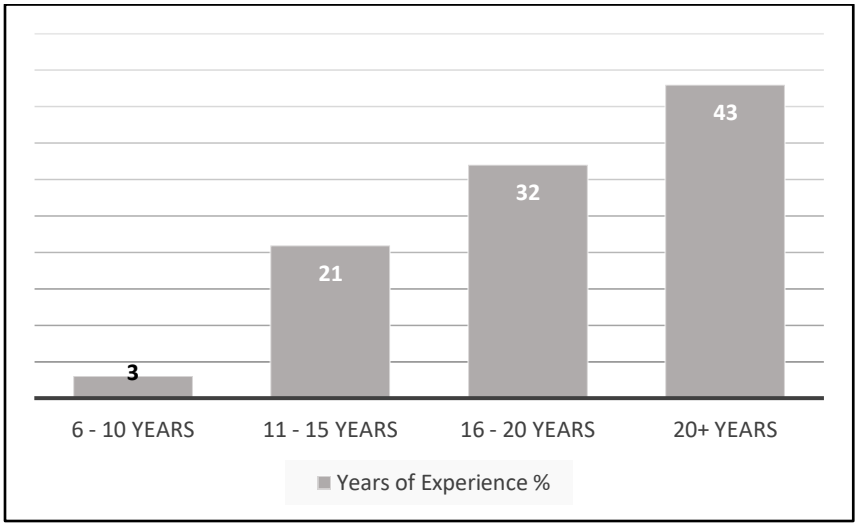


Figure 3. First-year superintendents' experience in education. Data collected from the Profile of Extracurricular and/or Co-Curricular Experiences Questionnaire.

Research Question Number One. The demographic information and the activity checklist at the beginning of the Profile of Extracurricular and/or Co-Curricular Participation provided data to answer Research Question Number One. The Survey Monkey website allowed the researcher to view and to analyze the data in several different variations, so organizing the participants by activity involvement was possible. Conversely, participation rates for extracurricular and co-curricular activities were extremely high (Survey Monkey, 2014). Of the responding first-year superintendents who demonstrated these ratings, 89% (*n*=25) of the participants reported coaching at least two sports, with basketball leading the way with 39% of participants (*n*=11) followed by football and track at 29% (*n*=8) (see Figure 4).

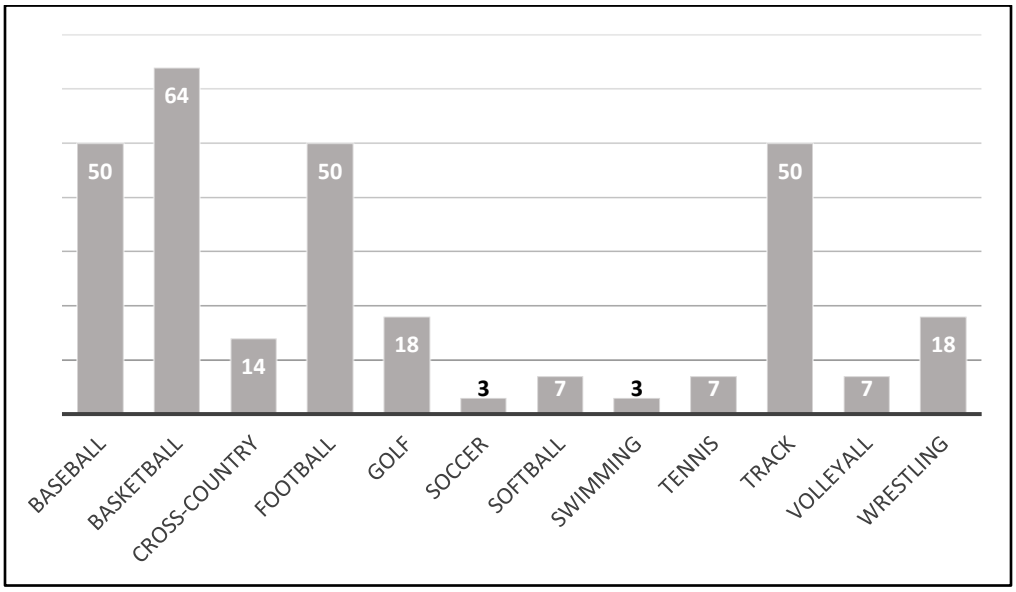


Figure 4. Percentages of first-year superintendents' participation in extracurricular activities. Survey results indicated 64% (*n*=18) of the first-year superintendents played basketball during high school and/or college.

The survey results of first-year superintendents showed an overwhelming majority, 89% (*n*=25), had coached at least one sport in their careers prior to becoming administrators (see Figure 5). Of the responding first-year superintendents who demonstrated these ratings, 89% (*n*=25) of the participants reported coaching at least two sports, with basketball leading the way with 39% of participants (*n*=11) followed by football and track at 29% (*n*=8) (see Figure 6).

In addition to extracurricular participation, whether as participants and/or coaches, participants reported being involved in a myriad of co-curricular activities. Approximately 50% of participants (*n*=14) reported they participated in choir. This activity included twice as much participation as some of the other activities, such as band, math club, and theater by 25% (*n*=7) (see Figure 7).

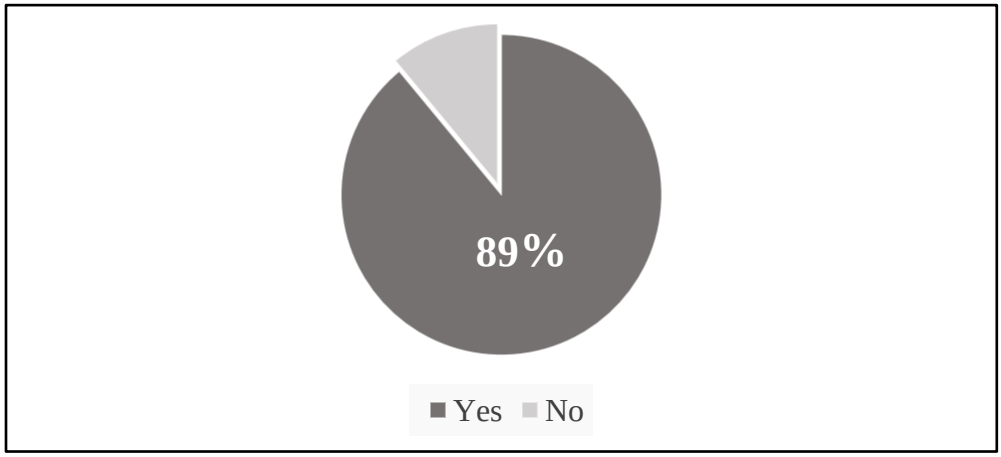


Figure 5. Percentage of first-year superintendents with coaching experience. Of the participants, 89% reported coaching activities at some point before becoming administrators.

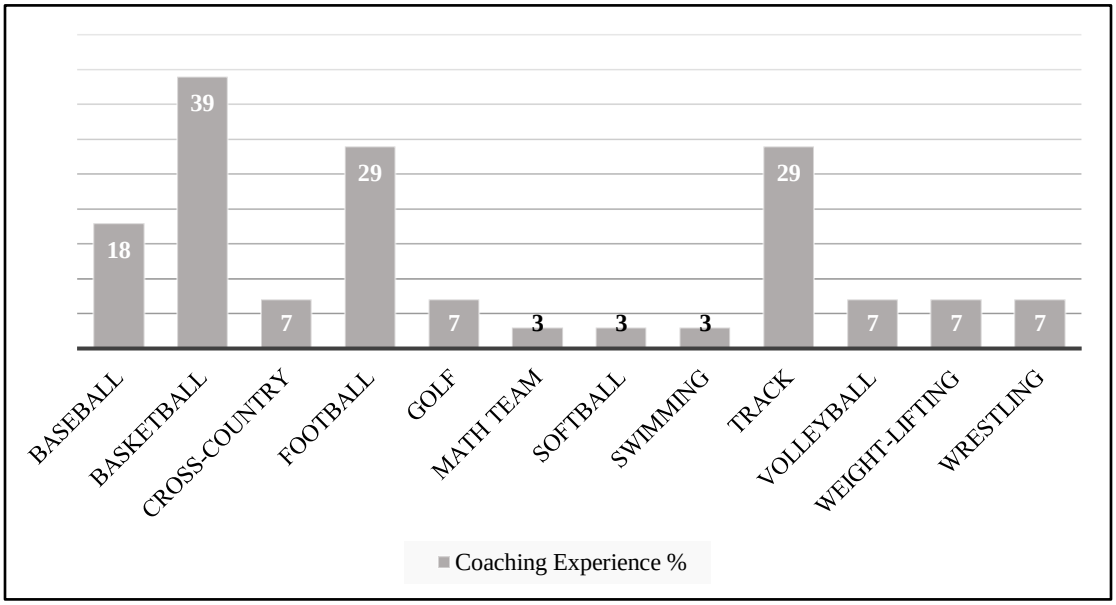


Figure 6. Percentage of first-year superintendents with coaching experience in various sports.

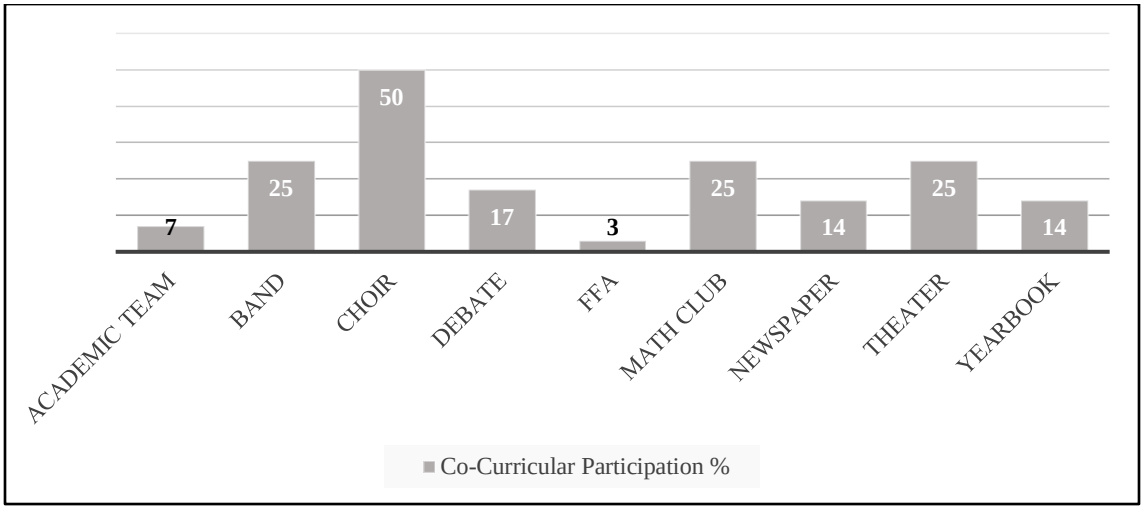


Figure 7. Percentage of first-year superintendents' participation in co-curricular activities. Half of the first-year superintendents reported experiences in choir in high school and/or college.

Research Question Number Two. In order to answer Research Question Two, the researcher provided a link to the Mind Garden website where participants responded to the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X-Short Form, which consisted of 45 leadership style statements (Bass & Avolio, 2013). The first-year superintendents marked Likert scale ratings based on their self-reported characteristics of transformational, transactional, or laissez-faire leadership.

Research Question Number Three. In order to answer Research Question Three, the researcher collected the participants' responses to the MLQ 5X-Short Form. The first-year superintendents provided insight needed for this question as well. The researcher analyzed the answers through Mind Garden, Inc. to determine participants' leadership styles—transformational, transactional, or passive. After collecting and analyzing first-year superintendents' responses, the researcher compared their MLQ results with their participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities and found the data indicated a significant correlation between them. While answering the 45-question MLQ survey, respondents scored in the ranges of "At" or "Above the Average," as suggested by validity research benchmarks for effective leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Aligned and fundamental to both the researcher's data and Bass and Avolio's (2004) Full Range Leadership Model was the observation that every participant and school leader displayed each leadership style to some degree. The relationship of these styles to effectiveness and activity (passive/active) was the more active and most

effective 5 I's of transformational leadership should be used the most. Leaders with optimal profiles infrequently displayed laissez-faire (inactive) or ineffective leadership (Mind Garden, 2014). Participants who scored with a range of 3.0 or more were identified as having transformational leadership strengths (Mind Garden, 2014). Using these restrictions, the participants' top strengths included Acting with Integrity, which involved considering the moral and ethical consequences of decisions, with an average ranking of 3.8 out of 4. The second highest categories, both ranked at 3.5 out of 4, included the two concepts of Encouraging Others and Coaching and Developing People, or considering individuals as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others in a group (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Respondents stated in their open-ended Survey Monkey questions athletics and activities played a major role in their lives. Participants noted, "Activities provided opportunities for leadership and team building. These traits helped develop my leadership profile and provided a broader understanding of organizational dynamics. Another first-year superintendent said, "Extracurricular co-curricular activities helped me be able to relate to students and parents in other areas of their lives." One respondent noted, "Athletics brings out the best and worst in people. Therefore, it was a great experience for administration and leadership in general."

Next, the participants ranked the leadership skills, Building Trust, or acting in ways that built others respect for the leader, and Acting with Integrity, specifying the importance of having a strong sense of purpose, as a tie, both with an average of 3.4 out

of 4. Acting with Integrity, or emphasizing the importance of having a collective sense of mission, scored 3.3 out of 4. The leadership scale, the Building Trust range, which focused on going beyond one's self-interest for the good of the group, also scored 3.3 out of 4 (Mind Garden, 2014).

As for the group of first-year superintendents who participated, the lowest ratings were in the areas of Building Trust and Coaching, Teaching, and Developing People. In the area of Building Trust, the participants averaged reported a self-average of 2.8, coaching that dealt with displaying a sense of power and confidence (2.7). Coaching, Teaching and Developing People (2.8), and Encouraging Innovative Thinking (2.9), or Suggesting New Ways of Looking at how to complete assignments, were ranked slightly below 3.0. Every other category was 3.0 or higher.

After collecting and analyzing first-year superintendents' responses, the researcher determined the MLQ results and participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities were closely tied together. While answering the 45-question MLQ survey respondents scored "At" or "Above the Average" range, as suggested by validity research benchmarks for effective leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Aligned and fundamental to both the researcher's data and Bass and Avolio's (2004) Full Range Leadership Model was every participant, and school leader, displayed each leadership style to some degree. The relationship of these styles to effectiveness and activity (passive/active) was the more active and most effective 5 I's of transformational leadership should be used the most. Leaders with optimal profiles infrequently displayed

laissez-faire (inactive) or ineffective leadership (Mind Garden, 2014). With a range of at least 3.0 or above, was identified as participants identified with transformational leadership strengths (Mind Garden, 2014). Using these restrictions, the participants' top strengths included Acts with Integrity, or considering the moral and ethical consequences of decisions, with an average ranking of 3.8 out of 4. The second highest categories, both ranked at 3.5 out of 4, included the two concepts of Encouraging Others and Coaching and Developing People, or considering individuals as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others in a group (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Next, the participants ranked the leadership skills, Building Trust, or acting in ways that built others respect for the leader, and Acting with Integrity, specifying the importance of having a strong sense of purpose, as a tie, both with an average of 3.4 out of 4. Acting with Integrity, or emphasizing the importance of having a collective mission, scored 3.3 out of 4. In one of the leadership scales, the Building Trust range, which focused on going beyond one's self-interest for the good of the group, participants also scored 3.3 out of 4 (Mind Garden, 2014).

As for the group of first-year superintendents who participated, the lowest ratings were in the areas of Building Trust and Coaching, Teaching, and Developing People. In the area of Building Trust, the participants averaged reported a self-average of 2.8 out of 4. The mean scores for participants in other areas were as follows: 2.8 in Coaching, Teaching and Developing People and 2.9 in Encouraging Innovative Thinking, suggesting new ways to look at how to complete assignments. In every other category,

participants' mean scores were 3.0 or above. Conversely, participation rates for extracurricular and co-curricular activities were extremely high.

The participants' responses were compared with the qualities of transformational leaders, which involved the processes of influencing in which leaders changed their associates' awareness of what was important and moved them to view themselves and the opportunities and challenges of their environments in new ways (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Transformational leaders have been recognized to be proactive (Bass & Avolio, 2004). According to the Research Validated Benchmark, the ideal frequency of all five Transformational behaviors should be 3, which represented Fairly Often. Overall, through the MLQ results, the researcher found the beginning superintendents had a mean score of 3.3 on the 5 I's of Transformational Leadership (see Table 1).

Table 1

5 I's of Transformational Leadership

	0	.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
This group									
Benchmark									

Note. Data collected through participants' MLQ survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

In the area of Idealized Influence (Attributes), participants generated a mean score of 3.2, while the self-norms, which included the data from 3,375 self-ratings, was 3.0. In

the area of Idealized Influence (Behaviors), participants had a mean score of 3.4, compared to 3.0 for the self-norms. Bass and Avolio (2004) explained how leaders with the attributes of idealized influence are admired, respected, and trusted. In this area of leadership, the leader shares the risks with followers and is consistent in conduct with underlying ethics, principles, and values (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Participants had a mean score of 3.2 in the Idealized Influence (Attributes) generated a score of 3.2, while the self-norms, the data from 3,375 self-ratings was 3.0 Idealized Influence (Behaviors) scored 3.4, compared to 3.0 for the self-norms (see Table 2). Bass and Avolio (2004) explained leaders under Idealized Influence (Attributes and Behaviors) were admired, respected, and trusted. Their followers identified with or wanted to emulate their leaders (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Also, these types of leaders were not interested in earning credit with followers; they considered their followers' needs over their own needs (Bass & Avolio, 2004). The leader shared the risks with followers and is consistent in conduct with underlying ethics, principles, and values (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Table 2

Idealized Influence (Attributes)									
	0	.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
This group									
Idealized Influence (Behaviors)									
	0	.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
This group									

Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

Inspirational Motivation (IM) were leaders who behaved in ways that motivated those around them by providing meaning and challenge to their followers' work. Individual and team spirit was aroused, while enthusiasm and optimism were displayed. The leader encouraged followers to envision attractive future states, which they ultimately envisioned for themselves. Leaders talked optimistically about the future; enthusiastically about what needed to be accomplished; articulated a compelling vision of the future; and expressed confidence that goals will be achieved (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Inspired Motivation scored 3.4 as well, while the self-norms remained constant at 3.0 (see Table 3).

Table 3

Inspirational Motivation

	0	.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
This group									

Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

Participants' responses to the Likert scale items related to Intellectual Stimulation remained constant at 3.4, above the benchmark, which was at approximately 3.0 (see Table 4). Bass and Avolio (2004) explained how Intellectual Stimulation (IS) involved challenging others to achieve innovative thinking after leaders stimulated followers' innovative efforts by questioning assumptions. With leaders who scored high in

intellectual stimulation, no one witnessed criticism of individual members' mistakes. New ideas and creative solutions to problems are solicited from followers, who were included in the process of addressing problems and finding solutions.

Table 4

Intellectual Stimulation	0	.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
This group									

Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

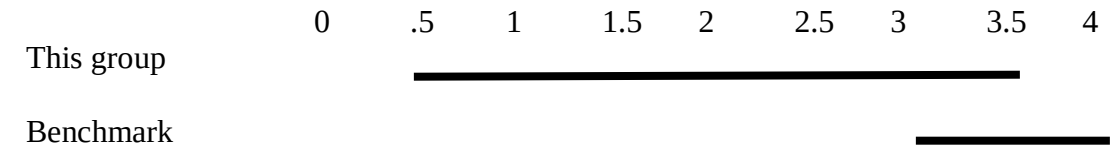
Individual Consideration (IC) is when leaders developed followers into leaders. The leaders paid attention to each individual's need for achievement and growth by acting as coach or mentor. Followers were developed to successively higher levels of potential. New learning opportunities were created along with a supportive claim in which to grow. The individual differences in terms of needs and desires were recognized. Leaders spent time teaching and coaching; treated others as individuals rather than just as a member of the group; considered each individual as having different needs, abilities, and aspiration from others; and helped others to develop their strengths (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

According to the Validated Research Benchmark, the ideal frequency of all five Transformational behaviors should have averaged around a 3, or Fairly Often, or higher

(Bass & Avolio, 2014). Participants scored lower in Individual Consideration at 3.2, but matched the self-group score of 3.2 (see Table 5).

Table 5

Individual Consideration



Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

Transactional leadership

Transactional leaders displayed behaviors associated with constructive and corrective transactions. The constructive style was labeled Contingent Reward and the corrective was labeled Management-by-Exception. Transactional leadership defines expectations and promotes performance to achieve high levels. Contingent Reward and Management-by-Exception are two core behaviors associated with 'management' functions in organizations (Mind Garden, 2014). Transactional Contingent Reward (CR) leadership clarified expectations and offered recognition when goals were achieved. The clarification of goals and objective and providing of recognition once goals were achieved should have resulted in individuals and groups achieving expected levels of performance. Leaders discussed in specific terms who is responsible for achieving performance goals; made clear what one can expect to receive when performance goals

were achieved; and expressed satisfaction when others met expectations (Mind Garden, 2014). Transactional leadership's contingent reward scored 3.1. Ideally, according to research based validated benchmark, the score should fall between 2.0 and 3.0 (Mind Garden, 2014). The self-norms were 3.0 (see Table 6).

Table 6

Contingent Reward

Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

Leaders of Management-by-Exception: Active (MBEA) specified the standards for compliance, as well as what constituted ineffective performance, and may have punished followers for being out of compliance with those standards. This style of leadership implied closely monitoring for deviances, mistakes, errors, and had corrective action as quickly as possible when they occurred (Mind Garden, 2014). Management-by-exception (active) scored 1.4 by the beginning superintendents. Research benchmarks should have been around 1 out of 4 on the Likert scale, representing Once in a While, and 2, representing Sometimes (Mind Garden, 2014). The participants' self-norms were 1.6 (see Table 7).

Table 7

Management-by-Exception

	0	.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
Active									
This group									
Benchmark									

Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

Passive/ Avoidant Leadership

Another form of Management-by-Exception leadership was more passive and reactive. Passive leaders did not respond to situations and problems systematically, and avoided specifying agreements, clarifying expectations, and provided goals and standards to be achieved by followers. The first-year superintendents scored 0.9 on the Management-by-Exception (passive) category. Ideal benchmarks according to research should be between 0, or Not at All, and 1, Once in a While (Mind Garden, 2014). The self-norms reported a score of 1.1 (see Table 8). This style had a negative effect on desired outcomes, which is opposite of what was intended by the leader-manager. Laissez-faire style, or "no leadership," was a similar style. Both types of behavior had negative impacts on followers and associates. Accordingly, both styles can be grouped together as Passive/Avoidant Leadership (Ming Garden, 2014).

Table 8

Management-by-Exception

	0	.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
Passive									
This group		▬▬▬	▬▬▬	▬▬▬					

Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

Laissez-faire style or "no leadership" was a similar style. Both types of behavior had negative impacts on followers and associates. Accordingly, both styles can be grouped together as Passive/Avoidant Leadership (Ming Garden, 2014). Laissez-Faire (LF) leadership avoided getting involved when important issues arose; was absent when needed; avoided making decisions; and delayed responding to urgent questions (Mind Garden, 2014). Laissez-Faire leadership behaviors scored 0.3 by the group (n=28), while self-norms reported 0.6. According to the Research Validate Benchmark, the ideal frequency of Passive/Avoidant behaviors should be between Not at All, which was represented by 0, and Once in a While, which was represented by 1 (see Table 9).

Table 9

Laissez-Faire

	0	.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
This group		▬▬							
Benchmark		▬▬▬	▬▬▬	▬▬▬					

Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

Transformational and transactional leadership were both related to the success of the group (Bass & Avolio, 2014). Success was measured with this MLQ by how often the leaders perceived themselves to be motivating, how effective leaders perceived themselves to be at interacting at different levels of the organization, and how satisfied leaders believed their followers were with their methods of working with others. In the context of this self-only report, the leaders' self-perceptions may or may not have matched the perceptions of faculty and staff members who they led (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Overall, the satisfaction with leadership by beginning superintendents rated 3.5, while the self-norms were lower at 3.1.

Outcomes of Leadership

Transformational and transactional leadership are both related and essential for effective leaders (Bass & Avolio, 2004). The beginning superintendents scored themselves 3.2 on extra effort, or getting others to do what they want, increase desires to succeed, and try harder, while the self-norms were 2.8. The ability to get others to do more than they were expected to do; heightened others' desire to succeed; and increased others' willingness to try harder (Mind Garden, 2014). Validated research benchmark, the most successful leaders rated frequencies at 3.0 or higher (see Table 10).

Table 10

Extra Effort	0	.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
This group									

Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

Leaders who were effective met others' job-related needs, represented their group to a higher authority, met organizational requirements, and led a group that was effective, while using methods of leadership that were satisfying (Mind Garden, 2014). The group of first-year superintendent received a mean score of 3.4 in effectiveness, while the self-norm reported 3.1. Validated research benchmarks suggested 3.0 or higher for successful leaders (see Table 11).

Table 11

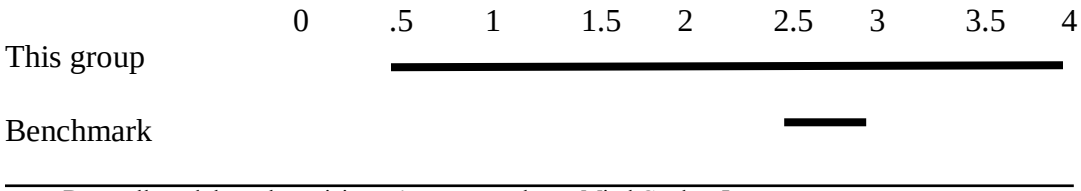
Effectiveness	0	.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
This group									

Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

Overall, the satisfaction with leadership by beginning superintendents rated 3.5, while the self-norms were lower at 3.1. According to the research validated benchmark, the strongest leaders achieved rated frequencies for the above outcomes of 3.5 or higher (see Table 12).

Table 12

Satisfaction with Leadership



Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

The MLQ report provided feedback for developing the group's leadership styles over time, so that, if they so desired, participants could improve their leadership outcomes. The beginning superintendents' feedback was first profiled against researched benchmarks of the optimal frequency for each style (Mind Garden, 2014). Comparisons were provided with universal norms. Next, the MLQ report provided items measured in each of the full-range of leadership styles and items of the three outcome scaled contained in the MLQ. Eight of the styles measured behaviors which could be practiced; the ninth style (Idealized Influence (Attributes) measured important concepts the group perceived were attributed to them by their followers (i.e. they instilled pride in others for being associated with them). Each style was measured by four questions in the MLQ (Mind Garden, 2014).

Group Agreement

The variation in response to the MLQ measured the group standard deviations of the frequency ratings for the leadership scales and outcomes. The smaller the standard

deviation, the higher the agreement among group self-ratings. A value of 0.0 represented complete agreement among ratings. The variation in response to the MLQ measured the group standard deviations of the frequency ratings for the leadership scales and outcomes. The smaller the standard deviation, the higher the agreement among group self-ratings. A value of 0.0 would mean complete agreement among ratings (see Table 13). The variation in response to the MLQ measured the group standard deviations of the frequency ratings for the leadership scales and outcomes. The smaller the standard deviation, the higher the agreement among group self-ratings. A value of 0.0 would mean complete agreement among ratings (see Table 13).

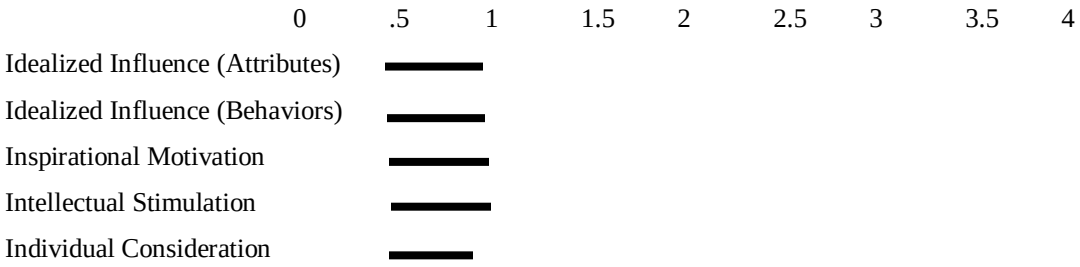
Participants' Self-Perceptions of Leadership Styles

First-year superintendents perceived the frequency of their own behaviors for each leadership style and organizational outcomes compared to various norms for the MLQ. One norm is always provided-'Self Norms'. Self-norms represents data from 3,375 self-ratings who previously completed the MLQ (Mind Garden, 2014). Respondents ranked themselves higher than self-norms on the 5 I's. Idealized Influence (Attributes) and Idealized Influence (Behaviors) were 3.2 and 3.4 respectively. Inspirational Motivation scored 3.4 while Intellectual Stimulation and Individual Consideration was 3.2. All 5 I's were above 3.0, the norm considered for effective leadership (see Table 14).

Table 13

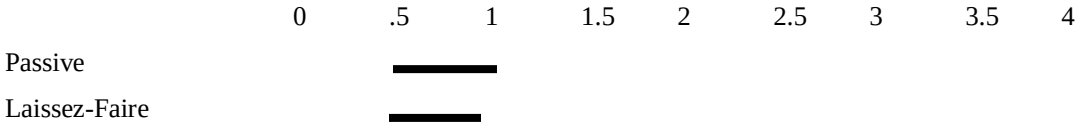
Standard Deviation Figures for Each Leadership Style

Transformational Leadership Standard Deviation

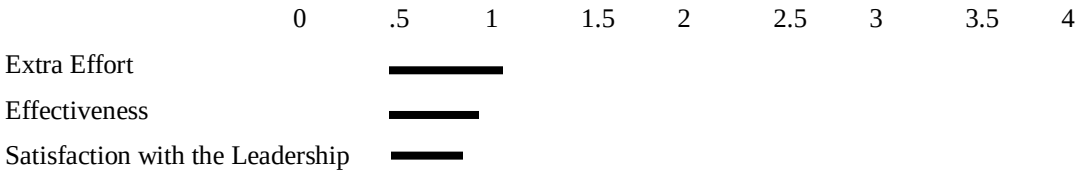


Transactional Leadership Standard Deviation

Passive/Avoidant Behaviors Standard Deviation



Outcomes of Leadership Standard Deviation

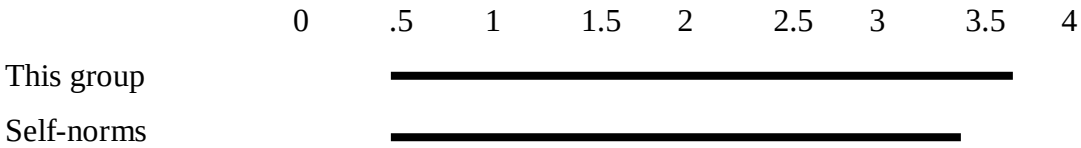


Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

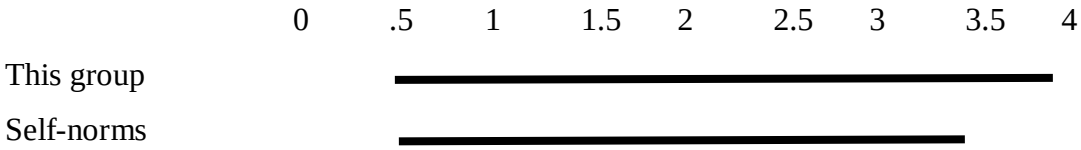
Table 14

Participants Scores on the 5 I's

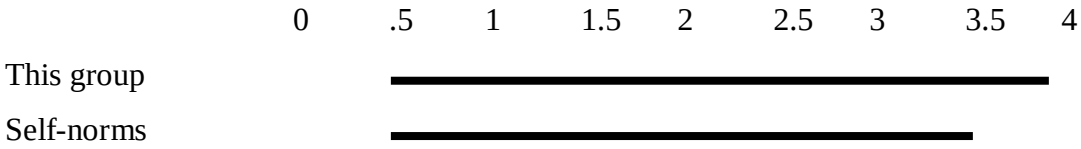
Idealized Influence—Attributes



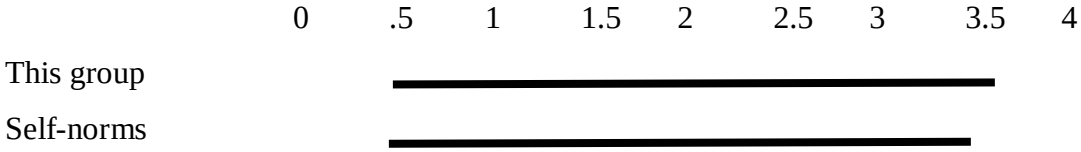
Idealized Influence—Behaviors



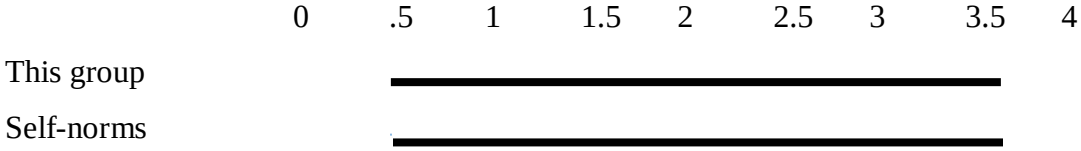
Inspirational Motivation



Intellectual Stimulation



Individual Consideration



Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

Comparison with Self-Norms: Transactional Leadership

Contingent awards provides others with assistance in exchange for their efforts. Expressing satisfaction toward employees when they meet expectations is a trait of contingent awards. Participants ranked themselves higher than the self-norms. Management-by-exception, however, was ranked lower than self-norms, which indicated first-year superintendents saw themselves focusing less on irregularities, mistakes, and failures to meet standards (see Table 15).

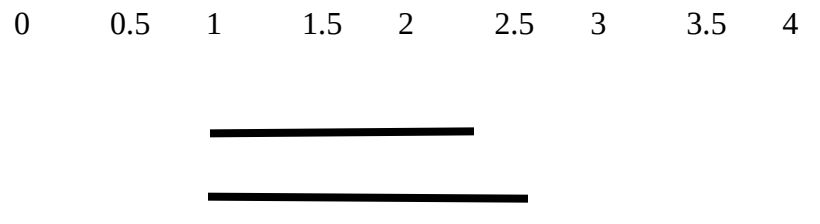
Comparison with Self-Norms: Passive/Avoidant Behaviors

First-year superintendents scored themselves below the self-norms when it came to passive management style. They did not wait for things to go wrong before acting or interfering until the problems became too serious (see Table 16).

Table 15

Contingent Award

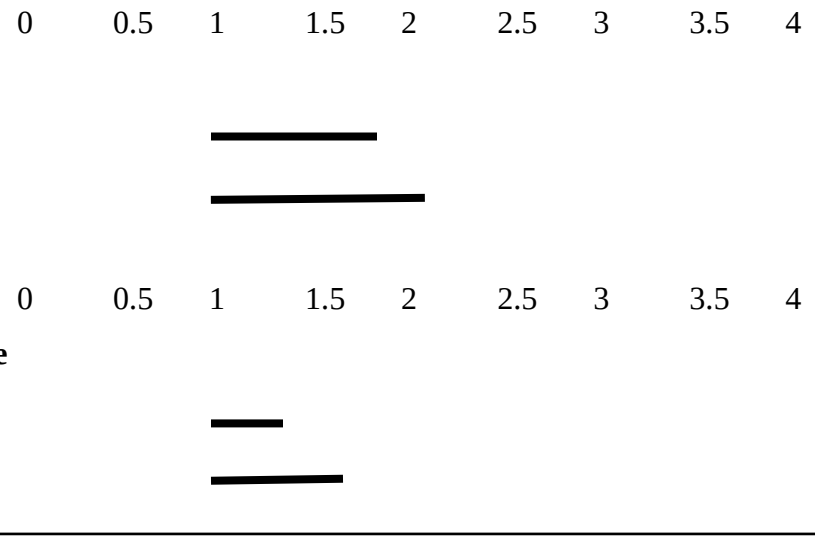
Management-by-Exception



Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

Table 16

Management-by-Exception



Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

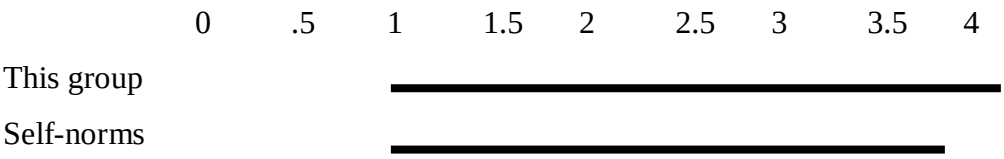
Comparison with Self-Norms: Outcomes of Leadership

Transformational and transactional leadership are both related and essential for effective leaders (Bass & Avolio, 2004). The beginning superintendents scored themselves 3.2 on extra-effort, or getting others to do what they want, increase desires to succeed, and try harder, while the self-norms were 2.8. The group's effectiveness score was 3.4, while the self-norm reported 3.1. Effective leaders meet the job related needs of others, are effective in representing their group to higher authority, meet organizational requirements, and have led groups that are effective (Mind Garden, 2014). Overall, the satisfaction with leadership by beginning superintendents rated 3.5, while the self-norms were lower at 3.1.Effective leaders used methods of leadership that were satisfying and

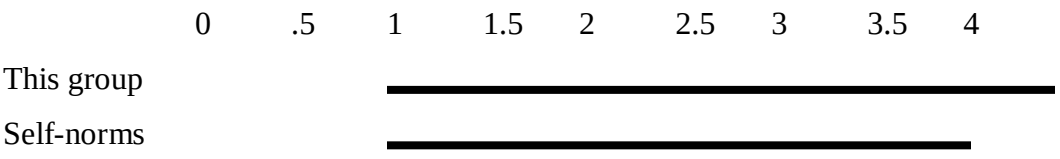
worked with others in a satisfactory way (Mind Garden, 2014; see Table 17).

Table 17

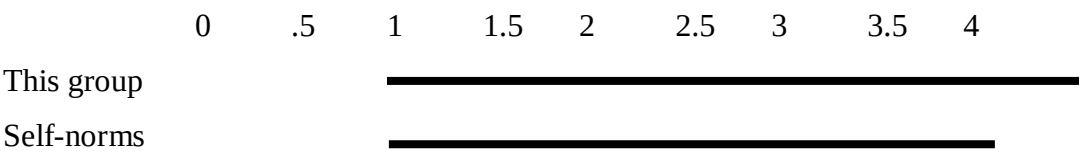
Extra Effort



Effectiveness



Satisfaction with the Leadership



Note. Data collected through participants' survey results on Mind Garden, Inc.

Research Question Number Four. In addition to checking off the activities in which they participated, respondents expressed how extracurricular and co-curricular activities affected their leadership styles, if at all. Overall, every participant stated extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities had a profound impact on their lives. After reading and analyzing the participants' responses, two common themes were learning the value of teamwork and learning how to be a strong leader.

Learning the value of teamwork. The first common theme found in the participants' responses was in regards to teamwork. Several first-year superintendents wrote that in being on teams, athletic and/or academic, as well as coaching groups helped them learn the importance of functioning as a team. Some of the key terms used by respondents in the open-ended answered were "teamwork" and "leadership," which were both the most common terms noted as attributes gained from extracurricular and co-curricular participation. Some of the other qualities participants expressed were gained from extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities included skills necessary to becoming effective administrators, such as time management and organization. One first-year superintendent said, "Athletics simply made me more comfortable dealing with and interacting with other people."

Another superintendent agreed. He noted, "Extracurricular and co-curricular activities helped me improve communication, increased flexibility, worked with a variety of experiences and expertise."

According to the participants' feedback on the questionnaire, team sports gave the future leaders opportunities to develop their skills in collaboration, working effectively as teams, understanding group dynamics, visualizing how varied talents can come together for a common purpose, and learning how to develop their own leadership styles. Another skill several participants noted regarding what they learned from coaching that they benefited from in administrator was being able to deal at another level with students and, at times, their difficult parents.

"Coaching especially helped me to learn how to deal with kids, especially outside the classroom and parents and sometimes their unrealistic expectations," one first-year superintendent wrote.

Other traits noted by administrators as to what they learned from extracurricular activities involved budgets and being flexible. In addition to checking off the activities in which they participated, respondents expressed how extracurricular and co-curricular activities had a profound effect on their leadership styles. Some of the key terms used by respondents in the open-ended answered were "teamwork" and "leadership," which were both the most common terms noted as attributes gained from extracurricular and co-curricular participation. Some of the other qualities participants expressed were gained from extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities included skills necessary to becoming effective administrators, such as time management and organization. One first-year superintendent explained, "Many of the same issues I dealt with in athletics, especially as a head coach, are the ones I deal with as a superintendent."

Another skill several participants noted regarding what they learned from coaching that they benefited from in administrator was being able to deal at another level with students and, at times, their difficult parents.

One first-year superintendent wrote, "Coaching especially helped me to learn how to deal with kids, especially outside the classroom and parents and sometimes their unrealistic expectations."

Other traits noted by administrators as to what they learned from extracurricular

activities involved budgets and being flexible.

"The activities helped me develop a sense of teamwork, sacrifice, time management, and dedication," noted another superintendent.

Teamwork, communication skills, helping others, time management, and leadership skills were all mentioned as valuable traits acquired through extracurricular activities (see Figure 8).

Figure 8

Common Terms and Themes from Participants' Responses

Recurring Terms and Themes	No. of Occurrence(s)
Teamwork	11
Leadership skills	10
Interpersonal skills	7
Goal-setting	5
Communication skills	4
Time management	4
Conflict resolution	2
Making decisions under pressure	2
Dedication	2
Multi-tasking	1
Delegation	1
Cooperation	1
Commitment	1
Taught how to take criticism	1
Motivate students	1
Perseverance	1

Note. Data collected from participants' responses to the Profile of Extracurricular and/or Co-curricular Participation Questionnaire administered through the Survey Monkey website.

*Learning how to become a strong leader***.** At the end of the survey, participants were asked what impact extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities had on their leadership styles, and the first-year superintendents responded unanimously the influence was great on preparing them for their leadership roles in other positions. Overwhelmingly, beginning superintendents expressed feeling a huge impact after these experiences and claimed these experiences changed the way they currently lead their organizations and analyze situations they encounter today. Some of the comments regarding the impact extracurricular and co-curricular activities on their administrative experiences included the impact on their lives in the following areas: a) being able to relate to parents and students in other areas of their lives, b) decision-making, c) time and budget management, d) overall organization, and e) the importance of delegation. Improved communication, increased flexibility, and working with a variety of experiences/expertise were also noted. Three participants articulated that through coaching, they learned how to build positive relationships with parents and community members, which was extremely useful as building and district leaders.

Many respondents felt coaching and administration were very similar and the experiences as a coach helped prepare them for their roles as superintendents. However, participants admitted, not all coaching experiences were enjoyable. Some of the respondents wrote that they found how difficult parents could be in regards to their children, especially in athletics. One beginning superintendent noted parents and community members were, “at times, unrealistic and unreasonable, especially regarding

their children. Athletics brought out the best and the worst in people." The participant continued that he/she learned how to address these sorts of issues. Therefore, coaching was educational to prepare the superintendents for administration and leadership, in general.

Summary

After collecting and analyzing first-year superintendents' responses, the researcher determined the MLQ results and participants' descriptions of experiences in extracurricular and co-curricular activities were closely tied together. While answering the 45-question MLQ survey, respondents scored at or above the range suggested by validity research benchmarks for effective leadership. Fundamental to the Full Range Leadership Model was every leader displayed each style to some degree. The relationship of these styles to effectiveness and activity (passive/active) were the more active and which of the 5 I's of transformational leadership should be used the most. The leader with an optimal profile infrequently displayed laissez-faire (inactive) or ineffective leadership (Mind Garden, 2014). In Chapter Five, the findings of this study will be discussed further, as well as recommendations for practitioners and for future research.

Chapter Five: Findings, Limitations, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to discover predictive relationships, if they existed, in first-year superintendents' leadership styles and their previous experience in extracurricular activities. The researcher collected data by providing the MLQ Survey, available on-line by Mind Garden, Inc., to allow participants to determine their leadership styles. In addition to the MLQ survey, participants completed a survey on Survey Monkey that allowed them to report their background information and involvement in extracurricular activities in high school, college, and their professional careers. In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, the researcher outlined key questions.

The first research question addressed the first-year superintendents' involvement in extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities. The participants answered by checking off activities listed on the Profile of Extracurricular and/or Co-Curricular Involvement Questionnaire. Football, basketball, track, baseball, and choir were the highest ranked activities among first-year superintendents. Of the participants, 89% participated in some sort of athletic event. Also, every respondent participated in at least one co-curricular activity. The participating first-year superintendents stated they were extremely active and proud of their involvement in extracurricular and co-curricular activities. According to their reflections, high participation rates helped to shape the effectiveness and impact of their leadership abilities.

The second research question involved exploring whether or not there was a relationship between the first-year superintendents' extracurricular and/or co-curricular

participation and their self-reported leadership style. Nearly all of the first-year superintendents stated they had coached at least one sport prior to becoming administrators. Most of the first-year superintendents also said they participated in multiple extracurricular and co-curricular activities in high school and/or college and rated themselves higher than validated research benchmarks for qualities in transformational and transactional leadership styles. In the passive or avoidant leadership style, beginning superintendents ranked themselves lower than the norms, which was very positive overall.

A third research question asked if there were any significant differences in leadership styles between the first-year superintendents based on extracurricular and co-curricular participation. Results indicated participants' leadership styles remained consistent throughout the MLQ surveys for the respondents. In fact, the responses were at the benchmark or above the benchmark surveys of 3,375 former leaders. The high rates of participation throughout each participant who was surveyed was very consistent, and the responses indicated high level leadership skills.

The final question asked how the superintendents described the impact extracurricular involvement had on their leadership experience. All the first-year superintendents stated extracurricular and co-curricular activities had a profound effect on their leadership experience. Teamwork, helping others, organization, communicating with parents and kids, flexibility, and developing leadership skills were some of the experiences garnered from their participation. The comments indicated extracurricular

and co-curricular activities had an effect one way or the other on leadership styles.

Summary of the Findings

After collecting and analyzing first-year superintendents' responses the researcher determined the MLQ results and participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities were closely tied together. While answering the 45-question MLQ survey respondents scored at or above the range suggested by validity research benchmarks for effective leadership. Fundamental to the Full Range Leadership Model (Bass & Avolio, 2004) was every leader displayed each style to some degree. The relationship of these styles to effectiveness and activity (passive/active) leadership styles was the more active and most effective 5 I's of transformational leadership should be used the most. Leaders with optimal profile infrequently displayed laissez-faire (inactive) or ineffective leadership behaviors (Mind Garden, 2014). Participants scoring with a range of 3.0 or above were targeted as displaying transformational leadership strengths (Mind Garden, 2014). The participants' top strengths included the qualities of Acting with Integrity with a score of 3.8 out of 4. Acting with Integrity referred to leaders who considered the moral and ethical consequences of decisions. First-year superintendents displayed a remarkably high score for integrity, matching their high levels of extracurricular and co-curricular participation and coaching backgrounds.

The second highest categories included Encouraging Others, or expressing confidence goals will be achieved, Coaching and Developing People, or Treating People as Individuals. In all three of those categories, participants scored an average of 3.5 out of

4. The category of Encouraging Others addressed the principal that leaders talked optimistically about the future (Mind Garden, 2014). First-year superintendents also rated themselves higher than the norm for integrity, purpose, and recognizing different abilities within people, which related to research for effective leaders (Lumpkin & Favor, 2012).

The lowest ratings the first-year superintendents gave themselves were in the category of Building Trust, which may have indicated a lack of confidence since they were new administrators in superintendent positions. In this category, which dealt with displaying a sense of power and confidence, the participants scored 2.7 out of 4. Thus, slightly lower rankings were likely due to being new in the superintendent position (Lumpkin & Favor, 2012). Conversely, participation rates for extracurricular and co-curricular activities were extremely high (Survey Monkey, 2014). An overwhelming majority, 89%, of first-year superintendents coached at least two sports, with basketball leading the way at 39%, followed by football and track at 29%. There were a myriad of co-curricular activities, led by choir at 50%, or more than twice as much as band, math club, and theater (25%). However, the sports and activities which were popular could have been due to regional interests. Not one participant chose hockey, lacrosse, or any type of political club which are more relevant on the east coast, northeast, and/or upper Midwest.

Participants noted extracurricular and co-curricular activities had a profound effect on their leadership styles. Teamwork and leadership skills were noted the most among the attributes gained from extracurricular and co-curricular participation. Time

management, helping others, organization, dealing with kids, especially outside the classroom, unrealistic parents and expectations, budgets, and being flexible were noted as some of the most important skills garnered from coaching and/or sponsoring a group.

Research in Chapter Two indicated participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities provided a realm where adolescents were producers of their own development (Dworkin et al., 2003). Another expectation of an organizational leader was individuals were competent in working with teammates to be committed to achieve a common vision, to establish a common purpose, to set team goals, and to execute their charge (Reeves, 2014).

People who participated in athletics, as well as extracurricular and co-curricular activities involving teams, likely engaged in leadership opportunities as well (Reeves, 2014). Potential administrators also likely had leadership modeled for them throughout their engagement in various experiences (Maxwell, 2014). First-year superintendents not only echoed these same feelings in their open-ended answers, but scored very high in the MLQ leadership benchmark scores for leadership development, visionary, planning, and organizational skills (Mind Garden, 2014). Every first-year superintendent surveyed responded they had participated in more than one activity, which appeared to provide benefits such as increased academic competence, self-concept, interpersonal relationships, and teamwork (Barber et al., 2005). All of which they scored above the norm and rated high on the effective leadership scale (Mind Garden, 2014). Reeves (2014) noted one psychologist's study examining college activities as predictors of

success and rated the resumes of recent graduates applying for their first teaching jobs (Reeves, 2014). The highest scores went to those who had been involved a college activity for several years and who had attained levels of leadership or achievement (Reeves, 2014).

Those with the highest grit scores, or those with the most persistence, turned out to be the best teachers, based on the academic gains of their students (Reeves, 2014). Every respondent,100%, claimed they were involved in many extracurricular and co-curricular activities prior to entering education and scored themselves higher than the norm for leadership skills, teamwork, ability to create a vision, and sense of unity (Mind Garden, 2014).

Gender Findings. An unintended finding in this study was in the demographic inquiry. The researcher sent the survey links with the invitation to participate to all 56 first-year superintendents in the state of Missouri, and approximately 50% (*n*=28) of all first-year superintendents in the state of Missouri participated by completing both surveys. Of those 28 participants, only five, or 18%, were females. This finding was a significant difference when compared to the male population in the same position. According to the U.S. Department of Education, last year only approximately 15% of nation's 13,728 superintendents were women (Glass, 2016). Glass (2016) added that, on the other hand, 72% of the educators in the country were women. Thus, the finding of few females in superintendent roles reflected a national trend that has not subsided despite equal opportunity efforts for women in leadership. The number of women in

leadership roles was disproportionate in comparison to the population of women in teaching positions.

Limitations of the Findings

The limitations involved in this study were the following:

1. The participation pool was limited to first-year superintendents. Originally, 63 superintendents were emailed a survey. However, not all qualified, because they were superintendents in another state prior to moving to Missouri.
2. Another limitation was that this study was that the researcher received feedback from approximately 50% of the pool of first-year superintendents. Overall, at the time of the study, there were approximately 520 public school superintendents in the state of Missouri, thus creating a narrow focus group.
3. The self-reporting survey was a third limitation in this study. The collection of data was self-reported data by the MLQ, and the data did not include the employees' perspectives of the leadership styles of their leaders. The employees' insight would have provided a more thorough perspective on the superintendents' leadership styles.

Recommendations for Action

The study's findings indicated skills learned from extracurricular and co-curricular participation were very influential on first-year superintendents' leadership styles. Participants scored above the self-norm on validated research benchmarks which measured effective leaders. Based on the participants' responses, school districts should

do everything they can to enhance a students' opportunities to participate in extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities due to the lifelong benefits not only noted by the respondents (Lumpkin & Favor, 2012). Current research has also noted overall benefits academically and socially were in some ways tied to extracurricular and co-curricular participation (Smoll & Smith, 2012).

Another recommendation would be for school board members to examine the background of administrative applicants and whether or not they participated in extracurricular activities and/or coached for a period of time. The surveys' respondents had extensive experience in coaching and participation, and 75% had more than 16 years of experience before obtaining a superintendent position. The MLQ scores of the group ranked above the national average of self-norms (3,375 participants) for effective leadership.

Recommendations for Future Research

Although the findings of this study were valuable, they also open the door of curiosity on several other related topics. Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations for further research were offered to researchers interested in similar topics:

1. Broaden the research pool to include all superintendents, not just first-year superintendents, and possibly even other administrators in school districts.
2. Further study the leaders' perspectives on the impact of extracurricular involvement to collect in-depth qualitative data related to their activities

participation.

3. Provide the leadership style survey to the faculties and staffs of the superintendents to determine if the first-year superintendents were accurate in their self-reports.
4. Examine more closely the phenomenon discovered in the demographic section of this study. Another research topic to pursue would be why are there so few women in superintendent roles?

Summary

In this study, the researcher set out to explore the relationship between the leadership styles of first-year superintendents and their involvement in extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities. After collecting and analyzing the data from the participants' surveys, the researcher found the participants scored extremely high in effective leadership styles, or a combination of transformational and transactional styles. First-year superintendents also scored low, which was a positive trait, in passive/avoidant leadership. These same first-year superintendents also responded about their previous experiences with extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities, which indicated these opportunities impacted their leadership styles. In their answers, respondents expressed they were very involved in athletics (coaching and participating) and co-curricular activities.

The administrators added that many of the skills acquired included teamwork, flexibility, organization, creating a vision, leadership, working with students, parents, and

community members, which they wrote impacted their current leadership skills. When considering the high leadership skills from the MLQ, survey comments, the high levels of participation, coaching, and sponsoring in extracurricular and co-curricular activities it was quite obvious there is a connection to leadership styles and extracurricular and co-curricular activities.

Appendix A

LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY

School of Education, 209 S. Kingshighway, St. Charles, Missouri 63301

Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activity: "Examining the relationship between extracurricular and/or co-curricular participation with leadership styles of beginning superintendents"

Principal Investigator: Shawn M. Poyser

E-mail Address: poysers@linn.k12.mo.us

1. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Shawn Poyser under the guidance of Dr. Jodi Elder. The purpose of the study will be to research how participation in extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities prior to administration impacts a superintendent's leadership style. This study will focus on leading administrators and educators in the direction of addressing the area of extracurricular involvement in high school and college.

a) Your participation will involve completing a modified on-line survey, Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) 5X-Short.

b) The amount of time involved in your participation will be approximately 15 minutes. Approximately 63 first-year superintendents will be invited to participate in the research.

2. There are no anticipated risks associated with this research.

3. There are no direct benefits for you participating in this study. However, your participation will contribute to the knowledge about extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities' impact on leadership styles.

4. Your participation is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate in this research study or to withdraw your consent at any time. You may choose not to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. You will NOT be penalized in any way should you choose not to participate or to withdraw.

5. I will do everything I can to protect your privacy. As part of this effort, your identity will not be revealed in any publication or presentation that may result from this study. The on-line survey does not track the participants' e-mail addresses, so there is no way I will even know who chose to participate.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, would like a copy of the research findings, or if any problems arise, you may call the researcher, Shawn Poyser, at (573) 418-6152 or the Lindenwood University Supervising Faculty, Dr. Jodi Elder at (573) 201-3868. You may also ask questions of or state concerns regarding your participation to the Lindenwood Institutional Review Board (IRB) by contacting Dr. Jann Weitzel, Vice President for Academic Affairs at (636) 949-4846.

In lieu of signing and returning a Letter of Consent, if you agree to participate in this research, you will simply click on the survey link and begin the survey. Your consent is implied through entering the survey.

Thank You,

Shawn Poyser

Appendix B

Participant Demographic Information and Profile of Extracurricular and/or Co-Curricular Experiences Questionnaire

Participant Demographic Information:

_____ Male _____ Female

Educational Background: Please check all of the following that apply, as well as adding what subject area your degree is in.

_____ Bachelor's Degree in _____

_____ Master's Degree in_____

_____ Specialist's Degree in_____

_____ Doctorate Degree in_____

Teaching Experience:

_____ 1-5 Years _____ 16-20 Years

_____ 6-10 Years _____ More than 20 Years

_____ 11-15 Years

Administrative Experience:

_____ 1-5 Years _____ 16-20 Years

_____ 6-10 Years _____ More than 20 Years

_____ 11-15 Years

Please select the following extracurricular activities that you were involved in prior to becoming superintendent, as well as check all of the columns that apply to you.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Activity	Did Not Participate	High School	College	Post-College Participated / Coached	
Basketball					
Football					
Baseball					
Softball					
Track & Field					
Wrestling					
Volleyball					
Rugby					
Soccer					
Band					
Choir					
Field Hockey					
Ice Hockey					
Color Guard					
Golf					
Swimming					
Tennis					
Other:					

Please select the following co-curricular activities in which you participated in during high school and/or college, as well as the category during which you participated.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Activity	Did Not Participate	High School	College	Post-College Participated / Coached	
Speech/Debate					
Drama/Theater					
Chess Club					
ScholarBowl/ Academic Team					
Math Club					
Journalism					
Yearbook					
Foreign Lang.					
Future Farmers of America					
Future Business Leaders of America					
Other:					

Do you believe participation in these activities impacted your leadership style? If so, how did participation in these activities impact your leadership style? If you participated in different activities, you may choose to articulate specifically about the impact of each activity or sport or as a generalization.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What other information or comments would be helpful in regards to better understanding how you benefited (if you believe you did benefit) from your experiences in extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities prior to your superintendent role?

_____

_____

_____

_____

After completing the demographic information above, please complete the following survey, which is the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 5X-Short Form, by clicking on the hyperlink. The MLQ is a 45-statement instrument in an electronic version that allows you to respond on a Likert scale ranking system.

Appendix C

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Form

My Name:_____ Date: _____

Organization ID#: _____ Leader ID# _____

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

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

Use the following scale:

Not at All	Once in a While	Sometimes	Fairly Often	Frequently, if not always
0	1	2	3	4

1. I provide others with assistance in exchange for their efforts.	0 1 2 3 4
2. I re-examine critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate.	0 1 2 3 4
3. I fail to interfere until problems become serious.	0 1 2 3 4
4. I focus attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from stds.	0 1 2 3 4
5. I avoid getting involved when important issues arise.	0 1 2 3 4
6. I talk about my most important values and beliefs.	0 1 2 3 4
7. I am absent when needed.	0 1 2 3 4
8. I seek differing perspectives when solving problems.	0 1 2 3 4
9. I talk optimistically about the future.	0 1 2 3 4
10. I instill pride in others for being associated with me.	0 1 2 3 4
11. I discuss specific terms who is responsible for achieving performance targets	0 1 2 3 4
12. I wait for things to go wrong before taking action.	0 1 2 3 4
13. I talk enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished.	0 1 2 3 4

14. I specify the importance of having a strong sense of purpose . 0 1 2 3 4

15. I spend time teaching and coaching. 0 1 2 3 4

16. I make clear what one can expect to receive when performance goals are achieved. 0 1 2 3 4

17. I show that I am a firm believer in “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” 0 1 2 3 4

18. I go beyond self-interest for the good of the group. 0 1 2 3 4

19. I treat others as individuals rather than just as a member of the group. 0 1 2 3 4

20. I demonstrate that problems must become chronic before I take action. 0 1 2 3 4

21. I act in ways that build others’ respect for me. 0 1 2 3 4

22. I concentrate my full attention on dealing with mistakes, complaints, and failures. 0 1 2 3 4

23. I consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions. 0 1 2 3 4

24. I keep track of all mistakes. 0 1 2 3 4

25. I display a sense of power and confidence. 0 1 2 3 4

26. I articulate a compelling vision of the future. 0 1 2 3 4

27. I direct my attention toward failure to meet standards. 0 1 2 3 4

28. I avoid making decisions. 0 1 2 3 4

29. I consider an individual as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations. 0 1 2 3 4

30. I get others to look at problems from many different angles. 0 1 2 3 4

31. I help others to develop their strengths. 0 1 2 3 4

32. I suggest new ways of looking at how to complete assignments. 0 1 2 3 4

33. I delay responding to urgent questions. 0 1 2 3 4

34. I emphasize the importance of having a collective sense of mission. 0 1 2 3 4

35. I express satisfaction when others meet expectations. 0 1 2 3 4

36. I express confidence that goals will be achieved. 0 1 2 3 4

37. I am effective in meeting others’ job-related needs. 0 1 2 3 4

38. I use methods of leadership that are satisfying. 0 1 2 3 4

39. I get others to do more than they expected to do. 0 1 2 3 4

40. I am effective in representing others to higher authority.	0 1 2 3 4
41. I work with others in a satisfactory way.	0 1 2 3 4
42. I heighten others' desire to succeed.	0 1 2 3 4
43. I am effective in meeting organizational requirements.	0 1 2 3 4
44. I increase others' willingness to try harder.	0 1 2 3 4
45. I lead a group that is effective.	0 1 2 3 4

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Vita

Shawn Poyser

Shawn Poyser has been a public school educator for the past 24 years. He has taught high school business, social studies, and sponsored many clubs and activities including freshmen though senior class, Future Business Leaders of America, National Honor Society, Yearbook, A+ Coordinator, and Athletic Director. He has been a head basketball coach for 14 years and is the all-time winning basketball coach in Sparta history. He has also been an assistant football coach and head baseball coach, leading Sparta to the state championship in 2003.

The first 13 years of his career were spent in the classroom, followed by eight years as a building principal, five of which were as the middle school principal. Currently, he serves as the superintendent of Osage County R-II School District, a position he has held for the past three years.

He earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Finance from Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri; a Master of Science Degree in Educational Administration from Missouri State, a Specialist Degree in Educational Administration from Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Missouri. This dissertation was the final phase of a leadership program for Dr. Poyser, as he completed his Doctorate in Educational Administration from Lindenwood University in 2016. Dr. Poyser currently resides in Linn, Missouri.