SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
A CASE STUDY

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JASON D. ANDERSON

Dr. Barbara N. Martin, Dissertation Supervisor

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Jason D. Anderson

Dr. Barbara N. Martin, Dissertation Supervisor

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this mixed-design study was to examine a servant leader's impact on a public education (K-12) organization by identifying and articulating specific leadership behaviors, and the influence of those behaviors upon the organization in its entirety and the individuals within the school organization.

In this study, the researcher administered the Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) (Laub, 1998) to staff members in one Midwest, rural public school district. Responses were analyzed based on the sub-scales of the inventory: *Values & Develops People, Displays Authenticity, Builds Community,* and *Provides & Shares Leadership.* Data analysis revealed through rank order that the behavior of *Provides & Shares Leadership* was the highest ranking practice of the servant leader. The practices of *Builds Community* and *Displays Authenticity* were ranked second and third, respectively. The practice of *Values & Develops People* was ranked as the lowest servant leader behavior.

Interviews, observations, and document(s) collection provided the qualitative data which revealed how servant leadership is defined in a public education setting, and what servant leadership looks like. The themes of *defining the organization through process, connecting to purpose and people, power with versus power over,* and *walking the talk* emerged through amalgamation of data.

This study confirmed that a servant leader's behavior positively impacts the health of the school organization, and the extent the servant leadership behaviors influence the organization and individuals within.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Background

Acquiring and maintaining effective leadership in organizations are ongoing challenges. Specific to public schools, this task becomes increasingly important as accountability to elevating state and national standards increase, such as the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. Such expectations, coupled with serious fiscal crises, teacher turnover rate and low morale, and high stakes testing add to the overwhelming pressure placed upon school leadership (Blankstein & Noguera, 2004; Jackson, 2005). As the demands of accountability impact individuals within the school environment, organizational health may be affected. Leadership that effectively promotes and sustains a school's health and culture through the demands of public accountability is necessary.

Organizational health may be related to school culture, which Peterson (2002) defined as the set of norms, values and beliefs, rituals and ceremonies, symbols and stories that make up the persona of the school, and is often reflected upon and shaped through a shared vision, effective professional development, and collaboration (DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Peterson & Deal, 2002; Sergiovanni, 2000). Leaders who deepen their understanding of culture will be better able to shape the values and beliefs that promote a positive environment (Sergiovanni, 2000) by modeling the values and beliefs important to the organization (Stolp, 1994).

Schein (1992) believed organizational culture was one variable directly linked to leadership. In attempting to understand the relationship between leadership and culture,

researchers have sought to identify and define effective leadership practices (Schein, 1992; Yukl, 2006). The leadership behaviors of a servant-leader (Greenleaf, 1977; Hunter, 2004; Spears, 2002) as an extension of transformational leadership (Bass, 1998; Burns, 1978) have been chosen as a theoretical lens to view a leader's impact on organizational health.

Conceptual Underpinning of the Study

Through the years, various definitions of leadership have been recognized; however, recent theories of leadership have delineated the historically accepted merging of leadership and management. Effective leadership practices have been the focus of numerous research studies. According to Tichy and Devanna (1986), leaders "create new approaches and imagine new areas to explore; they relate to people in more intuitive and empathetic ways, seek risk where opportunity and reward are high, and project ideas into images to excite people" (p. ix). Kouzes and Posner (2002) identified five practices common in effective leadership: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart.

One effective leadership model is that of transformational leadership. Transformational leadership was described by Bass and Avolio (1994) as a process of influencing commitment to shared objectives and empowering followers to accomplish them. Transformational leaders expand and elevate the focus of others by helping them accept the mission and purpose of the organization and motivating others to see beyond self-interest and contribute to the greater good (Bass, 1990). The transformational leader is identified by four significant behaviors: (a) idealized influence or the arousal of strong follower emotions and identification with the leader; (b) intellectual stimulation or

behavior that increases follower awareness of problems and encourages those problems to be viewed from a new perspective; (c) individualized consideration or providing support and encouragement; and (d) inspirational motivation or communicating an appealing vision through symbols and modeled behavior (Bass, 1998; Bass & Avolio, 1994).

As an extension of transformational leadership, servant leadership appears to be receiving increased attention and recognition. Laub (1999) believed that the increased interest in servant leadership is motivated by changes taking place in the workplace and society at large. Autry (2001) wrote that the person has a greater desire and need to connect with something bigger than themselves. Servant leaders tend to practice a caring leadership style which promotes a team approach, a positive environment, and personal satisfaction (Laub, 1999).

Servant leadership is based upon moral authority (Sergiovanni, 2000). Sergiovanni (2000) continued by stating that issues of leadership role and style fade when compared to placing leadership practice in service to ideas and to others who seek to serve these ideas. Servant leadership raises others to and potentially beyond a greater purpose. Blanchard (2002) stated:

> Not only are people looking for a deeper purpose and meaning when they must meet the challenges of today's changing world; they are also looking for principles and philosophies that actually work. Servant-leadership works. Servant-leadership is about getting people to a higher level by leading people at a higher level. (p. xi)

Though servant leadership has been written about and practiced by many leaders and researchers in recent years, limited research has been conducted in a systematic, controlled manner. Direct research concerning the servant leader's impact on organizational health was not found in the literature. But some implications and generalizations may be inferred from Sergiovanni (1984):

> Leadership within the cultural perspective takes on a more qualitative image; of less concern is the leader's behavioral style, and leadership effectiveness is not viewed merely as the instrumental summation of the link between behavior and objectives. Instead, what the leader stands for and communicates to others is considered important. The object of leadership is the stirring of human consciousness, the enhancement of meanings, the articulation of key cultural strands, and the linking of members to them. (p. 8)

Statement of the Problem

In the last decade, the school leader's roles and responsibilities have increased. While working through the daily challenges and dilemmas, leaders are also responsible for providing collaboration, offering professional development and balancing budgets, all while being responsible for increased accountability (Peterson, 2001). All of these factors potentially impact the health and culture of the school. While there is no one best culture, successful and healthy school cultures have commonalities, including the professional learning community ideals of a shared sense of purpose, professional development for continuous learning, and collaboration (DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Fullan, 2001; Gruenert, 2000; Peterson, 2001).

To promote the professional learning ideals, the school leader must be committed to modeling effective behavior. "To effectively model the behavior they expect of others, leaders must first be clear about their guiding principles…Leaders must find their own voice, and then they must clearly give voice to their values" (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 14). Central to being a leader is the ability to influence culture (Fullan, 2001; Schein, 1992). Leaders can transmit and embed culture through teaching, coaching, role modeling, rewarding, inspiring, and other mechanisms. They can generate commitment by stressing core values and promoting individual and group loyalty (Jaskyte, 2004). Leaders "…foster collaboration and build trust…They engage all those who must make the project work…" (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 18).

In addition to being an effective model, the school leader must possess legitimate power. Greenleaf (1977) promoted that the leader with legitimate power is the leader who chooses first to serve others. Applied as a philosophy and working model (Spears, 2001), servant leadership is compatible to work within and alongside other leadership models (Spears, 1998) as a way to meet the needs of individuals and organizations while working toward a common purpose (Hunter, 2004). Servant leaders carry the generalized characteristics of being authentic, providing and sharing leadership, valuing and developing people, and building community (Laub, 1999).

There is an ample supply of leadership documentation (Avolio & Bass, 2002; Bass, 1998; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1998; Bennis & Nanus,1985; Covey, 1991; Kotter, 1988; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Ogawa & Bossart,1995; Tichy & Devanna, 1986; Yukl, 2006), as well as a growing amount of servant leadership documentation (Autry, 2001; Hunter, 2004; Greenleaf, 1977; Laub, 1999; Page & Wong,

1998; Spears, 1995, 1998, 2002; Taylor, 2002). There is also an ample supply of organizational health and school culture documentation (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993; Dalin, Rolff, & Kleekamp, 1993; Deal & Peterson, 1999; Gruenert, 1998; Maher, 2000; McGill, 2001; Sackman, 1991; Schein, 1992). However, no research was found that shows specific application of servant leadership within a school setting. This mixed-design study, therefore, was intended to address the problem that servant leadership has not been examined in a school setting. In addition, the researcher intended to examine the impact a servant leader has upon the stakeholders in the organization, which served as a method to measure the health, or culture, of the school.

Purpose of the Study

A mixed-design descriptive approach was selected to support the focus of this study, which was to examine how a servant leader impacts a public education (K-12) organization. Because a school organization can be defined broadly, this study was designed to identify and articulate specific servant leadership behaviors and the impact of those behaviors upon the organization in its entirety and the individuals within the school organization.

The results of this study should contribute significantly to the growing body of literature on servant leadership practices. It should also serve as a significant origin of examining servant leadership utilization within the school setting. By taking the specific variables of effective practices of servant leadership into consideration and by examining their association to school organizational health and practices, public education officials may use the research to train leaders who demonstrate and encourage excellence.

Research Questions

The preliminary review of literature found that while there tends to be an increase in the utilization of servant leadership in various arenas, servant leadership has not been examined for its application or impact within the public school setting. A synthesis of relevant literature offered a supportive platform in which to examine servant leadership as an effective leadership model that would enhance, support, and/or maintain positive organizational health. The primary research questions are as follows:

1. How is servant leadership defined in a public education setting?

2. What does servant leadership look like in a public education setting as viewed by stakeholders?

3. Does the utilization of servant leadership by a public school leader have an impact upon others working within the school organization? And if so, how? (Are servant-led organizations perceived to be effective?)

Limitations and Assumptions

The limitations to this study were relative to the geographical area and designs used by the researcher, and are indicated as follows:

1. This study was limited geographically to a district in one Midwest state during an academic school year.

2. The district was limited in size, with an estimated 50 individuals participating in this study.

3. The administrator (subject) of this study had previously been identified as a servant leader.

4. This study was limited by the degree of reliability and validity of the survey instrument.

5. It was assumed that participants were honest in their responses and interpreted the survey instrument/interview protocol as intended.

6. It was assumed that participants based their responses upon their own experiences.

7. Researcher bias was controlled through triangulation of on-going review of data by an educational researcher.

Design Controls

Descriptive research was the chosen design for this study. Descriptive research is helpful in examining educational issues that concern attitudes, opinions, demographic information, conditions and procedures. The self-report method of descriptive design, whereby surveys and interviews are conducted, was used in order to collect data (Gay, 1996). A survey was selected as a direct-data quantitative measure, the aim of which was to reveal the status of some phenomenon within an identified organization (Thomas & Brubaker, 2000). Advantages of direct-data surveys offer dominant characteristics of a group, with inferences drawn from the sampling potentially being applied to larger populations (Thomas & Brubaker). However, surveys carry the potential problems of participants not being truthful and diligent in the responses (Thomas & Brubaker). The researcher controlled for this by conducting field interviews using purposeful sampling as a strategy to gather descriptive data in the subjects' own words so that insights on perceptions may be interpreted (Bodgan & Biklen, 2003). The researcher's goal was to better understand human behavior and experience (Bogdan & Biklen). Gay (1996) promoted the use of open-ended field interview questions, which potentially developed during the course of the interview. For the purposes of this study, open-ended, semi-structured questions were utilized to support the data gathered from administering the

Organizational Leadership Assessment (Laub, 1998) survey. Field interviews were recorded and transcribed, with participants being presented with drafts of the interview transcription to review and revise to enhance credibility and reliability of the collected data. Researcher bias was controlled through the triangulation of data, with documentary evidence collected to corroborate information from other data sources.

Definition of Key Terms

The following terms were of importance to this study. A definition of each has been provided to assist the reader with better clarification in understanding this study.

Authenticity. The servant leadership behavior that includes the traits of genuineness, legitimacy, and dependability (Autry, 2001; Hunter, 2004).

Building administrator. Any administrator specifically assigned to supervise within a K-12 setting or any combination thereof (elementary, middle/junior high, and/or high school).

Community building. The enduring process of building relationships and learning to work towards a commonly accepted performance standard (Autry, 2001; Greenleaf, 1977).

Followers and servant followership. A follower would designate any person who accepts being led. Servant followers are those persons who accept being led by leaders who exhibit servant leadership characteristics (Greenleaf, 1977).

Organizational Health. The culture and working atmosphere found within an organization, including but not limited to aesthetic, organizational and affective conditions (Schein, 1992; Senge, 1990a).

Public education setting. Any non-private, not-for-profit K-12 setting or any combination there of (elementary, middle/junior high, and or high school).

School culture. "The guiding beliefs and expectations evident in the way a school operates, particularly in reference to how people relate (or fail to relate) to each other" (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996, p. 37).

Servant leader. A leader whose primary purpose for leading is to serve others by investing in their development and well being for the benefit of accomplishing tasks and goals for the common good (Page & Wong, 1998).

Servant leadership. The ability to influence others through the relationship of service to people and purpose (Hunter, 2004).

Servant leadership skills. Servant leaders have, maintain, and continuously attempt to develop the practicing skills of awareness, conceptualization, foresight, persuasion, and stewardship (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 1995, 1998, 2002).

Transformational leadership. A process of influencing commitment to shared objectives and empowering followers to accomplish them (Bass, 1998).

Summary

The ability or inability of an organization to move forward often falls upon the effectiveness of the leader. As the leader strives to influence others toward a specific objective and direct the organization in a manner that makes it cohesive and coherent, they often do so by applying their leadership attributes–their beliefs, values, character, knowledge, and skills. Although varying schools of thought exist concerning effective leadership and leadership attributes, this study was based upon the premise that public education schools may be more effectively led by administrators who practiced

transformational leadership behaviors. Specifically, this study served to identify the impact a servant leader had upon a public school setting. Laub's (1998) *Organizational Leadership Assessment* was utilized to measure the extent in which a leader utilized servant leadership behaviors and the impact of those behaviors upon the school organization.

In chapter two of this study is a review of related literature that includes three subsections: (a) effective and transformational leadership; (b) servant leadership, which highlights the four servant led themes of being authentic, providing and sharing leadership, valuing and developing others, and building community; and (c) school culture as related to organizational health. Included in Chapter three, the research design and methodology of the study, are the subsections: (a) introduction, (b) research questions (c) research hypotheses, (d) population and sample, (e) data collection and instrumentation, (f) data analysis and (g) a chapter summary. The presentation and analysis of the data are included in chapter four of this study. The summary, conclusions, and recommendations for further research are presented in chapter five.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (here after referred to as NCLB) served as a

sweeping educational reform designed to improve student achievement and improve

school culture. The act prompted Congress to reauthorize the *Elementary and Secondary*

Education Act (ESEA), which along with NCLB, supported the overhauling of federal

efforts to support elementary and secondary education in the United States (U.S. Dept. of

Education, 2001). NCLB is based upon four pillars: accountability for results; doing what

works based upon scientific research; expanded parental options; and expanded local

control and flexibility (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2001).

The NCLB act has raised the accountability level for those who serve in the

public education arena. No one may feel the demands of NCLB more than the school

administrator. Under NCLB, today's administrators are faced with accountability and

assessment, ensuring student success in core content areas, providing a safe and drug-free

school, managing special education needs, and protecting the rights and interests of the

members of the school community. In addition, school administrators are charged with

strengthening teacher quality by addressing recruitment, evaluation, teacher learning and

qualifications of personnel (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2001). Based upon these demands,

it may be fair to state that a leader with unique behaviors and characteristics is necessary

to meet the challenges.

Servant leaders may have the unique behaviors and characteristics necessary to

implement the changes required of such mandates of NCLB. A servant leader is one who

consciously chooses to lead through service to others (Autry, 2001; Greenleaf, 1977; Hunter, 2004). Servant leadership is applied as both a philosophy and working model (Spears, 2001). It is a detour from commonly accepted and historical practices, where the focuses tended to be based upon rationale processes. As described by Greenleaf (1977), "the servant-leader is servant first…It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (p. 13). While addressing rigors of federal and state directives, the greater value may be the impact the servant leader has upon the school's culture: the guiding beliefs, assumptions, and expectations evident in the way a school operates (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996).

In order to fully investigate the purpose of this study, how a servant leader impacts the culture of a public education (K-12) setting, the literature review included three areas of research: effective and transformational leadership, servant leadership, and organization health. Effective and transformational leadership were reviewed to establish a theoretical framework for servant leadership. As an extension of transformational leadership, servant leadership was investigated for the significance of the authentic individual, providing and sharing leadership, the value and development of followers, and community building. Servant leadership was then investigated to determine its association to organizational health.

<center>*Effective and Transformational Leadership*</center>

Researchers have defined effective leadership based upon particular frames or metaphors specifically relating to theoretical perspectives. Yukl (2006) found that most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption of a process whereby intentional influence is exerted to guide, structure, and facilitate activities and relationships within an

organization. "Leadership has been defined in terms of traits, behaviors, influence, interaction patterns, role relationships, and occupation of an administrative position" (Yukl, 2006, p. 2). Leithwood and Duke (1999) concluded that leadership is "a more or less complex set of relationships cohering around core common intentions" (p. 65).

Because effective leadership is often determined by the complexities of the organization, it is critical that the leader who desires to influence change within an organization is equipped with the ability to understand the culture and priority issues of the organization (Schein, 1992). The effectiveness of leadership has often been determined by the organizational culture, organizational performance, cohesiveness, goal attainment, and follower satisfaction (Yukl, 2006), all of which share a likeness to the standards established in NCLB. Because there is a need for school leaders to appeal to followers and mobilize followers beliefs, energy and resources towards improvement (Yukl), transformational leadership has been chosen as a theoretical lens to view effective leadership.

The term transformational leadership was constructed by Burns (1978) when he separated *extraordinary* leadership (visionary relationship based on morals and values) from *ordinary* leadership (an exchange relationship based on awards). Bass (1998) described transformational leadership as a process of influencing commitment to shared objectives and empowering followers to accomplish them. The transformational leader "engages followers in such a way as to raise them to new levels of morality and motivation" (Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989, p. 10). The transformational leader is capable of (a) articulating a vision that is attractive and clear, (b) explaining the way the vision will be attained, (c) acting optimistically and with confidence, (d)

expressing confidence in followers, (e) using symbolism to emphasize critical values, (f) setting the example for others to follow, and (g) empowering the people to achieve the vision (Bass, 1998). Transformational leaders motivate others to do more than they originally intended and often even more than they thought possible (Bass, 1998). The goal of transformational leadership is to transform people and organizations in a literal sense – to change them in mind and heart; enlarge vision, insights, and understanding; clarify purposes; make behavior congruent with beliefs, principles, or values; and bring about changes that are permanent, self-perpetuating, and momentum building (Covey, 1991, p. 187).

Kouzes and Posner (2002) recommended that leadership should be viewed as a relationship of service to purpose and service to people. Covey (1991) emphasized the principle of service in that service is one way of giving of oneself. Bolman and Deal (2001) asserted that leading is giving. "Leadership is an ethic, a gift of oneself to a common cause, a higher calling" (Bolman & Deal, 2001, p. 106).

The ability to develop culture is the essence and ultimate challenge of leadership (Schein, 1992). Schein (1992) stated that leadership and culture are two sides of the same coin. Leadership is often determined by the complexities of the organization. It is critical that the leader who desires to influence change within an organization is equipped with the ability to understand the culture and priority issues of the organization (Schein, 1992). Organizational culture is used to describe the shared values and beliefs of members about the activities of the organization and interpersonal relationships (Yukl, 2006).

Transformational Leadership and Servant Leadership

Transformational leadership theories predict followers' emotional attachment to the leader and emotional and motivational arousal of followers as a consequence of the leader's behavior (House, Woycke, & Fodor, 1988). Transformational leaders broaden and elevate the interests of followers, generate awareness and acceptance among the followers of the purposes and mission of the group, and motivate followers to go beyond their self-interests for the good of the group (Burns, 1978; Yammarino & Bass, 1990). Yammarino and Bass (1990) also noted the transformational leader articulates a realistic vision of the future that can be shared, stimulates subordinates intellectually, and pays attention to the differences among subordinates. Tichy and Devanna (1990) highlighted the transforming effect these leaders can have on organizations as well as on individuals. By defining the need for change, creating new visions, and mobilizing commitment to these visions, leaders can ultimately transform the organization. Bass (1985) believed transformation of followers could be achieved by raising the awareness of the importance and value of designed outcomes, getting followers to transcend their own self-interests and altering or expanding followers' needs.

Servant leadership may be viewed as an extension of transformational leadership. A number of noted leadership authors, including Spears (1995, 1998, 2002) have claimed that servant leadership is a concept compatible with and enhances other leadership models such as total quality management and learning communities/organizations. Senge (1995) suggested that servant leadership opened up a new caring paradigm of leadership because it builds on relationships and focuses on service to others. By emphasizing service to others, personal and professional development, and working towards a greater

good, servant leaders help meet the needs of everyone in the organization which in turn impacts the culture of the organization.

<center>*Servant Leadership*</center>

After a 38-year career, Robert Greenleaf retired from AT&T to begin a second career in teaching and consulting, and came upon Hermann Hesse's novel *Journey to the East,* which contained the parable of Leo, a simple servant who provided song, wit, support and guidance to a band of travelers. When Leo disappeared, the group realized it was this servant who had provided the true leadership for the group. Compelled by the story, Greenleaf was moved to the point that he penned the essay *The Servant Leader.* Greenleaf (1977) characterized what a servant leader is by stating "the servant leader is servant first…It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (p. 13). Bordas (1995) continued with his definition of a servant leader's purpose:

> Servant-leaders serve something greater than themselves, something that nourishes the common good, something greater than their causes or deeds. They serve the inspiration that guides their life: the essence of what they were born to do. Servant-leaders serve their life's purpose. (p. 181)

Authenticity of a Servant Leader

"Leadership is not about holding on to territory; it's about letting go of ego, bringing your spirit to work, being your best and most authentic self" (Autry, 2001, p. 21). Being authentic and displaying authenticity may require the leader to open oneself to being vulnerable. Tarr (1995) affirmed that to be empathetic and mutually collaborative required the sharing of oneself, which involves risk and vulnerability. This may attribute

to the belief of Bennis (2003), who alleged that authentic leaders are an endangered species.

Believing in and following correct principles is associated with being authentic. Kouzes and Posner (2002) stated "…you can only be authentic when leading others according to the principles that matter most" (p. 52). Authentic people, according to Autry (2001), accept others without judgment, just as they want to be accepted, without the need for approval.

Being authentic requires a level of openness, which includes dealing with emotions. Openness goes beyond a personal quality – it is a relationship you have with others (Senge, 1990a). Bocialetti (1988) described organizations as emotiogenic–one's presence and participation creates and promotes emotional experience. Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2004) emphasized the leadership competencies of emotional intelligence: how leaders handle themselves and their relationships. Autry (2001) supported the idea of being yourself: "Be the same person in every circumstance" (p. 10). Being one's self may expose vulnerability. DePree (1992) defined vulnerability as the opposite of self-expression, and that vulnerable leaders allow people who follow them to do their best. Batten (1998) listed openness and emotional vulnerability as two of the 37 values a servant leader believes in and practices everyday. He further noted, "Servant-leaders let other people in as they follow the belief that the absence of defensiveness is an indication of strength and management maturity" (p. 47). Jaworski (1996) stated:

> When we are in touch with our "open nature," our emptiness, we exert an
> enormous attraction to other human beings. There is great magnetism in that state
> of being which has been called by Tungpa "authentic presence." …And if others

are in that same space or entering it, they resonate with us and immediately doors

are open to us. It is not strange or mystical, it is part of the natural order…All we

have to do is to see the oneness that we are. (pp. 179-80)

To do this, the leader must be present. Being present, claimed Autry (2001), is having

your whole self available at all times--available to yourself as you try to bring all your

values to the work at hand, and available to others as you respond to problems, issues,

and challenges of others.

In addition to being present, servant leaders learn by being aware. The servant

leader has a general awareness and self-awareness (Spears, 1995, 1998, 2002). Autry

(2001) stated "Leadership, like life, is largely a matter of paying attention" (p. 21).

Greenleaf (1977) articulated the importance of awareness and how it strengthens one's

effectiveness as a leader by writing how awareness shares both the conscious and

unconscious mind, builds values and clarifies values: "Awareness is not a giver of solace

– … it is a disturber and an awakener, since able leaders are usually sharply awake and

reasonably disturbed" (p. 28).

The best experiential training is working in organizations where one must

function as a servant leader (Peck, 1995). Kouzes and Posner (2002) felt that critical

incidents offer significant moments of learning for leaders and followers by presenting

opportunities for important lessons about appropriate norms of behavior. Greenleaf

(1977) advocated the leader utilized a second level of consciousness: detached, riding

above the real world, projecting into the future which allowed assumptions to be

examined. Argyris, Putnam, and Smith (1985) defined this as double-loop learning, the

process of examining and possibly changing the basic assumptions of our cognitive

structure. Greenleaf (1995) articulated his experience learning when he stated "…I made a point of remembering significant events, and I am continually reflecting on my experience and extracting new meaning from it" (p. 24).

The servant leader displays authenticity through exhibiting values. Kouzes and Posner (2002) described values as guides that supply followers with a moral compass and influence every aspect of their lives. Resonant leadership is being able to speak authentically from values that are attuned to people's feelings (Goleman et al., 2004). Batten (1998) understood that servant-leaders live integrity because it is realistic and workable. Covey (1991) expanded on the value of integrity and how it truly influences others:

> Power is created when individuals perceive that their leaders are honorable, so they trust them, are inspired by them, believe deeply in the goals communicated by them, and desire to be led. Because of their sense of purpose and vision, their character, their essential nature, and what they represent, leaders can build principle-centered power in their relationships with their followers. (p. 104-105)

Kouzes and Posner (2002) acknowledged the relationship between personal and organizational values and commitment to the organization. "People cannot fully commit to an organization or a movement that does not fit with their own beliefs. Leaders must pay as much attention to personal values as they do to organizational values if they want dedicated constituents" (p. 51).

Providing and Sharing Leadership

As leaders pay attention, day-to-day experiences trigger thoughts and images that might take followers somewhere important if they allow themselves to be led (Bolman &

Deal, 2001). Servant leaders, explained Spears (1995, 1998, 2002), have the characteristic of viewing organizations and/or problems encountered from a conceptualizing perspective while balancing the day-to-day. Leaders almost intuitively focus less on the day-to-day events and more on the underlying trends and forces of change (Senge, 1990a).

Although the leader is required to be in the present day-to-day, looking back and learning from the past is the first step to envisioning and conceptualizing the future. Kouzes and Posner (2002) stated that sense of the world is made retrospectively–that understanding comes from reflection. The future may be constructed by looking into the past. "Without history, the present makes no sense. Without a historical base, a vision is rootless and doomed" (Bolman & Deal, 2001, p. 151). Greenleaf (1995) described the practicing servant leader as a historian, contemporary analyst, and prophet at every moment of every day. DePree (1992) complimented the thought:

> The future requires our humility in the face of all we cannot control. The present requires attention to all the people to whom we are accountable. The past gives us the opportunity to build on the work of our elders. (p. 223)

Many organizations have referenced the importance of having a vision. Autry (2001) contended that most vision statements are irrelevant; not because of the intention to do good, rather, due to the misunderstanding about the nature of the statements and what they are supposed to mean for the overall organization and for its people. A leader must be able to communicate the vision in ways that encourage others to sign on for the duration (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Senge (1990a) believed in leading through creative

tension, which is generated by understanding the gap between the vision and the current reality.

Identifying the differences between vision and purpose may provide clarity. Bordas (1995) concluded that many people may and can have a vision, but that purpose was unique. Purpose is something an individual alone can operate and implement. Autry (2001) articulated without an understanding of purpose, an organization will become dysfunctional. It is an understanding and a sense of purpose that provides the beacon that illuminates the potential for finding meaning in every single job. Bridging purpose and vision is intuition (Bordas, 1995), which Greenleaf (1977) defined as judgment from the unconscious process.

Leaders share the characteristic of being forward-looking, concerned for not only today's challenges but also for tomorrow's possibilities–they are able to envision the future (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). The servant leader's characteristic of foresight, explained Spears (1995, 1998, 2002), is the ability to foresee the likely outcome of a situation that is hard to define, but easy to identify. Servant leaders use lessons of the past and realities of the present to develop a likely consequence of a decision for the future (Spears, 1995, 1998, 2002). Failure or refusal of a leader to foresee may be considered an ethical failure (Greenleaf, 1977).

Envisioning the future requires taking initiative, and in the context of servant leadership, is related to the willingness to increase risk-taking. Greenleaf (1977) stated leadership provides the encouragement and shelter for venturing and risking the unpopular; risk taking supports for ethical behavior and creative ways of doing things better. Bethel (1995) felt that leaders who make a difference develop the ability to

evaluate ideas and have courage to seize the opportunities associated with them. This requires leaders that must learn for themselves the contribution that is theirs to make (Bolman & Deal, 2001): "Leaders must be more creative than most; creativity is largely discovery into the uncharted and unknown" (p. 23).

A leader with an understanding of the vision, claimed Autry (2001), must also realize the relation and alignment between personal and organizational values. Kouzes and Posner (2002) listed why shared values make a difference: shared values foster feelings of personal effectiveness, promote high levels of loyalty, facilitate consensus about goals, encourage ethical behavior, promote work and caring norms, and reduce levels of stress and tension. Values also foster pride in the organization and workplace, facilitate understanding about job expectations, and foster teamwork (Autry, 2001; Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

The leader provides the substance that holds the team together to a common purpose. Greenleaf (1977) felt this was best accomplished not through making the right statements, but through asking the right questions. "The questions leaders ask send messages about the focus of the organization, and they're indicators of what's of most concern to the leader" (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 91).

Providing leadership insinuates followership of others, while sharing leadership implies a collaborative effort. Lopez (1995) stated servant leaders do not control; rather, they share their wisdom. Servant leaders share their power, or empower others. "The path to power and empowerment requires deep understanding that each of us is finite and needs to seek and welcome help from beyond ourselves" (Bolman & Deal, 2001, p. 231). True power comes from the people through gaining trust and giving support to those who

give you power (Autry, 2001). Autry continued by comparing love and power-the more

you give it to others, the more it just seems to flow to you naturally. Greenleaf (1977)

used the term *primus inter pares*, which translated means first among equals, to describe

a leader among peers.

Sharing power serves many interrelated purposes. People's capacity to achieve is

determined by their leader's ability to empower (Maxwell, 1998). Empowerment makes

the customer everyone's job, and will ensure the organization's survival (Bethel, 1995).

Power abuse is diminished if the holder of power is surrounded by strong equals and

oversight is given by a monitoring group not involved in the day-to-day operations

(Greenleaf, 1977). This may not come easily, however. "From a servant leadership

perspective, an interesting insight is how difficult it can be to trust others and give them

room to exercise what they believe in and share the leadership and responsibility"

(McGee-Cooper & Trammell, 1995, p. 118). Greenleaf's (1977) belief that some power is

essential, but caring is most important of all may make the difficulty of sharing power

acceptable as a standard versus being tolerated. Although power and influence can be

regarded as separate constructs, Yukl (2006) and Greenleaf (1977) recognized the

interrelation; both power and influence work in the capacity to impact the attitudes and

behavior of people in a desired direction.

Bethel (1995) admitted empowerment is risky for leaders as they swap personal

and position power for increased power of the group. However, Greenleaf (1977) insisted

institutions are brought to a distinguished level of performance when the administration

and leadership are designed as a group versus a single individual.

Creating an organization that exercises accountability and centers on service rather than control, stewardship is a means to impact the degree of ownership and responsibility each person feels for the success of the organization (Block, 1996). Stewardship (Senge, 1990b; Spears, 1995, 1998, 2002) refers to a leader's commitment to serve the needs of others and holding their institutions in trust for the greater good of society.

Valuing and Developing People

"Regardless of structure, of environment, or of leadership style, organizations remain fundamentally human organizations, which means they will reflect both the strengths and the frailties of the human condition" (Autry, 2001, p. 100). Because organizations depend on people, Greenleaf (1977) advocated that the servant as leader always empathizes with and accepts the person. "People grow taller when those who lead them empathize and when they are accepted for what they are, even though their performance may be judged critically in terms of what they are capable of doing" (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 21). Autry (2001) concurred by stating acceptance is more important than approval. The art of acceptance does not imply acceptance of ideas without critical analysis, discussion, or judgment – only that the ideas are valid for discussion. It also means that disagreement is accepted and embraced as part of the human process. Bass (1998) insisted that leadership must address the follower's sense of self-worth.

Trust and respect may be viewed as linked values, and although generally earned, the servant leader practices them openly. Leadership excellence is caring about people and leaders respect their people (Fairholm, 2000). Respect demands that we first recognize each other's gifts, strengths, and interests, while trust begins with the

individual commitment to respect others (DePree, 2003). Trust requires one to be trustworthy (Covey, 1991), which must be generated and sustained while demonstrating competence and constancy (Bennis, 2002). Trust can be improved in gradual stages by solving one problem/incident at a time (Britton & Stallings, 1986).

The value of caring is a central theme of successful organizations. Caring communicates how people are to be treated (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). For the leader, Covey (1991) stated that if the intent is to serve and bless others with concern for self, a psychological, emotional, spiritual reward comes from internal security and peace. Bethel (1995) believed followers also earn their reward:

> The rewards that most people want are priceless: the pleasure of an honest compliment, the excitement of taking a risk, the feelings of self-fulfillment, self-esteem, and true team spirit, the electrifying sense of being part of something greater than themselves. Most of all, they want someone to be aware of what they are accomplishing, to really notice and really care. (p. 145)

It is not encouragement that people want, but rather positive affirmation – appreciation, acknowledgment and praise that recognizes people for who they are and what they do (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Lewin and Regine (2000) affirmed that the soul needs affiliation and connection with others that cannot be met with pecuniary benefits, but can be met with acknowledgment. Maxwell, (1998) stated: "The greatest things happen only when you give others the credit" (p. 128).

Effective communicating abilities are a hallmark of servant leaders, especially the ability to listen. Greenleaf (1977) felt a true natural servant leader automatically responded to any problem by listening first. "True listening builds strength in other

people" (p. 17). Noting listening as a critical characteristic, Spears (1995, 1998, 2002) acknowledged the servant leader seeks to identify and clarify the will of the group by practicing a deep commitment to listening intently to others. Covey (1991) trusted that to relate effectively we must learn to listen, which involves patience, openness, and the desire to understand. As people learn to listen with respect for feelings, insight, and perspectives of others, strength and momentum from shared ownership is realized (McGee-Cooper & Trammell, 1995). One of the reasons servant leadership requires a level of toughness is that it is easier to walk away from a problem. It takes an exceedingly tough person to be a true listener and empathize with another (Tarr, 1995). Covey (1991) believed that when one truly listens, the whole relationship is transformed.

"To affirm a person's worth or potential, you may have to look at him with an eye of faith and treat him in terms of his potential, not his behavior" (Covey, 1991, p. 59). Covey (1991) continued that believing in the unseen potential creates a climate for growth and opportunity. Servant leaders have the characteristic of believing in the intrinsic value beyond the person's tangible contribution, and attempts to nurture the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of others (Spears, 1995, 1998, 2002). The most significant contribution leaders make, according to Kouzes and Posner (2002) is to the long-term development of people and institutions to promote adaptation, change, and prosperity. Beyond the leaders, Greenleaf (1977) felt the institution's contribution was proportional to its opportunity, toward building a more just and loving society, and one that offers creative opportunities to people.

A first step in developing people is to train and empower them to new information, experiences, and techniques. "Training people, giving them new experiences

and ideas means sharing power because knowledge is true power" (Bethel, 1995, p. 144).

Providing training may also lay the foundation for interdependence and creativity. Autry

(2001) stated an employee will rarely innovate without being exposed to what others are

doing, but when people have a sense of worth and the ability to influence their world,

they seek to be productive (Bolman & Deal, 2001).

People work hardest when they know what they are doing makes a difference and

when they know that the leader knows what they are doing makes a difference (Bethel,

1995). Because the highest level of human motivation is a sense of personal contribution,

Covey (1991) stated, "people are the most valuable organizational assets as steward of

resources. Stewardship is viewed as the key to discovering, developing and managing all

other assets" (p. 70).

Bethel (1995) pointed out the clichéd phrase of what gets rewarded gets done, and

proposed three levels of recognition through rewards intangible or tangible: 1) recognize

accomplishments, 2) recognize effort as well as results, and 3) recognize individuals and

teams. Bethel (1995) also warned of insincerity, which is worse than indifference. As

success is met, small multiple victories build confidence toward superior challenges and

strengthen commitment to the long-term future (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

Servant leaders promote risk-taking and expanding an individual's comfort level.

Empowering others to act does require the leader to relent some power of their own

(Greenleaf, 1977); however, high control creates low risk (Block, 1996). Bolman and

Deal (2001) felt risk needs to be balanced against stories of courage and integrity that

have produced huge dividends in the long run. Bennis (2003) advocated the importance

of being curious and daring. A self-powering cycle of risk taking occurs when risk takers

increase their skills and their accomplishments, which fuel greater enthusiasm and expansion (Bethel, 1995). Risk-taking is often associated with failure. Servant leaders make it clear that it is acceptable to fail. Bethel (1995) stated, "Failure sends us in a new direction, gives us new information, new ideas, and new experiences" (p. 147). And while risk taking builds skills for success, failure is no excuse for expected growth of the individual. "The servant leader has too much respect for herself or himself and cares too much for others to let them perform at less than their best" (Rieser, 1995, p. 59).

Besides providing for risk-taking by the followers, servant leaders need to model risk taking and failure themselves. Many leaders naturally inspire other people and help them identify who they can become through risk; however, Bethel (1995), noted that learning to encourage their failure takes practice. "Go ahead and fail enthusiastically. When you can tolerate failure as an essential part of advancement, a valuable stepping stone to success, a prerequisite for what is to come, then your passion will communicate itself to your colleagues" (Bethel, 1995, p. 148). Bethel (1995) promoted five steps the servant leader ought to analyze and evaluate the risk: 1) identify the risk, 2) identify the benefits and liabilities, 3) describe a worst-case scenario, 4) choose role models, and 5) write personal definitions. Finally, Bethel (1995) emphasized the servant leader must point out the risks of not taking risk. Risk is essential to staying healthy and competitive; the ultimate risk being dying, literally or figuratively in the context of being productive in a thriving organization.

Greenleaf (1977) postulated, "Leadership by persuasion has virtue of change by convincement rather than coercion" (p. 30). Bolman and Deal (1997) wrote concerning the knowledge a leader has that influence begins with an understanding of others'

concerns and interests, and that a leader should utilize persuasion first, negotiation second, and coercion only if necessary. Part of encouraging is making the rewards alluring. "A servant-leader who convinces others to challenge their limits is one who makes the goals irresistible and the consequences as painless as possible" (Bethel, 1995, p. 148). Bolman and Deal (2001) recommended that encouragement comes about not through giving answers, but rather having the guide raise questions, suggest directions, and offer support.

The servant leader can help individuals and teams get to the highest level of performance through Stack's (1994) "ultimate higher law," which occurs when the leader appeals to the highest level of thinking. Bolman and Deal (2001) endorsed exhibiting a modest dose of caring and compassion which can make a surprising difference. Giving authorship – assigning one's unique contribution to their work – provides space within boundaries and transforms people into engaged workers (Bolman & Deal, 2001). Part of the challenge is to abandon any dualistic notion of winners and losers. Being participants together, all can win and no one has to lose (Autry, 2001). Covey (1987) discussed the concept of thinking win/win, which emphasized an abundance mentality through a feeling of intrinsic self-worth and a desire for mutual benefit.

To promote bringing out the best of a person, Autry (2001) stated the servant leader must place a high premium on language because words are the basic tools of leadership; and it is important for the servant leader to help people realize that communication results from human contact and that communication is not necessarily about words. Nonverbal communication is a skill that must be exercised and refined. And while technology has brought convenience and productivity to the workplace, it has also

brought a preoccupation with technology to the extent that personal relationships have been neglected or ignored (Autry, 2001). Technology's basic purpose is to help people work together by freeing us to bring our full energy to fulfill the people's and the organization's purpose (Autry, 2001; Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Bolman and Deal (2001) proclaimed "technology, for all its wonders, makes it easier than ever for us to disconnect from ourselves and others" (p. 40).

Builds Community

One of the greatest and most rewarding challenges of servant leadership is the enduring building of the community. McLaughlin and Davidson (1994) described community:

> Community means different things to different people. To some it is a safe haven where survival is assured through mutual cooperation. To others, it is a place of emotional support, with deep sharing and bonding with close friends. Some see community as an intense crucible for personal growth. For others, it is simply a place to pioneer their dreams. (p. 471)

Servant leaders believe true community can be created although they recognize the loss of community as society has shifted from local communities to large institutions (Spears, 1995, 1998, 2002). Success in leadership, articulated Kouzes and Posner (2002), is similar to success in life that may be measured by how well people work and play together. Bolman and Deal (2001) averred that leadership is a relationship rooted in community due to the leader's embodiment of the group's most precious values and beliefs. Because of this, the servant leader must use his/her power to create opportunities and alternatives so individuals may choose and build autonomy (Greenleaf, 1977).

Lee and Zemke (1995) articulated "most workers have lost the sense of security and identification with the company that gave meaning to their work lives, thus they are searching for a connection" (p. 106). This connection may be part of a healing process, which Spears (1995, 1998, 2002) defined as helping make whole, as servant leaders recognize that many people have broken spirits and have suffered a variety of emotional hurts. Developing and enhancing relationships is an exercise in building community. Peck (1995) commented, "community building teaches people how to empty themselves, how to really listen. It teaches individuals how to change and how to give up expectations through an increased consciousness" (p. 94). Autry (2001) wrote it is within the confluence of the human connection that the workplace is made habitable for the human spirit and that the work itself becomes a source of meaning in people's lives.

How does a leader build community? Greenleaf testified genuine care must be exhibited. "Human service that requires love cannot be satisfactorily dispensed by specialized institutions that exist apart from community" (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 38). In the servant leadership workplace, the process of designing performance standards between the employee and the leader establishes what is to be done. Autry (2001) believed the performance standards ought to be dynamic and subject to renegotiation in response to changing circumstance. Furthermore, the agreement Autry (2001) defined is considered more of a covenant or moral agreement.

Covey (1991) declared that when team members regard each other with mutual respect, differences are utilized to become collective strengths. The goal of the servant leader workplace is that people care about one another in the context of what they do together, because in that context they are mutually interdependent. Their connection as

participants in the community of work must transcend their personal differences (Autry, 2001). The impact goes on beyond the individual. "The gathering of different community environments may adequately show the differences that exist between disjointed groups and connected teams; that is what individually is noticed versus what mutually is experienced" (Chamberlain, 1995).

Conflict may be considered healthy and welcomed appropriately in the servant leadership community. According to Kouzes and Posner (2002), leaders have to learn to thrive on the tensions between their own calling and the voice of the people. The basic role of the leader is to foster mutual respect and build a team where strength is made productive and weakness made irrelevant (Covey, 1991). It is here that the servant leader has the opportunity to practice empathy. Spears (1995, 1998, 2002) defined that the servant leader accepts and recognizes the uniqueness of the spirit, assumes good intentions, but does not condone inappropriate behaviors and/or performances.

Servant Leadership and Organizational Health

In relationship to the public school setting, organizational health has been viewed by the researcher in terms of culture. Schein (1992) stated that culture and leadership are two sides of the same coin. Ogawa and Bossert (1995) suggested that leadership is a form of social influence, and that leaders influence organizational structures and individuals. As they postulated:

The context of leadership from an institutional perspective is largely cultural. Administrators are instrumental in adopting structures to mirror cultural rules in the environment. They then engage other members of their organizations in symbolic activities that focus on these structures. These activities, in turn, shape

and reinforce shared values and beliefs, which can produce commitment, or

solidarity, leading to coordinated activity. (p. 239)

Schein (1992) further stated the leader must have the ability to understand the

culture and issues of the organization. Yukl (2006) promoted that an organization's

culture is one dimension that determines leadership effectiveness. Because the servant

leader carries the skill of "influencing people to enthusiastically work toward goals

identifies as being for the common good, with character that inspires confidence"

(Hunter, 2004, p. 32), the school culture should encourage learning and progress while

building "a community spirit valuing purposeful change" (Deal & Peterson, 1999, p. 8).

Laub (1999) defined the servant organization as one where characteristics of servant

leadership are displayed through the organizational culture and are valued and practiced

by its leadership and workforce.

DuFour and Eaker (1998) endorsed the utilization of professional learning

communities and promoted three practices of leaders: lead through shared vision and

values; involve others in the school's decision-making process and empower individuals

to act; and provide staff with information, training and parameters necessary to make

good decisions. As the staff learns and works together, culture could be positively

impacted. Laub (1999) concluded servant leadership should become characteristic of the

organizational culture in order to produce the most benefit. Deal & Peterson (1999)

stated:

Culture fosters school effectiveness and productivity. Teachers can succeed in a

culture focused on productivity (rather than on maintenance and ease of work),

performance (hard work, dedication, and perseverance), and improvement

(continuous fine-tuning and refinement of teaching). Such a culture helps teachers

overcome the uncertainty of their work by providing focus and collegiality. (p. 7)

School Culture

The culture of the school organization must be considered when discussing how it

may be impacted by the influence of servant leadership. Schein (1992) defined

organizational culture as:

A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its

problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well

enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the

correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (p. 12)

Shultz (1994) declared that an organizational culture focused on the beliefs, values and

meanings of its members help them understand the organization's origin, evolution, and

operation, as well as its uniqueness.

Any organizational culture will consist of long-standing traditions, a special

language, a mindset that helps members' interpretation of reality, shared standards,

models for behavior, and customs and rituals. Schein (1992) discussed ten commonly

used words or phrases to describe culture. They are 1) observed behavioral regularities

when people interact, 2) group norms, 3) espoused values, 4) formal philosophy, 5) the

"rules of the game", 6) climate, 7) embedded skills of group members, 8) habits of

thinking/shared cognitive frames that guide the thinking processes of the group, 9) shared

meanings, and 10) root metaphors. Schein further explained that while none of these

elements are culture, they are used to explain its meaning.

Schein (1992) also identified three levels of organizational culture, which are not mutually exclusive; instead, there is continuous movement between the stages of the different aspects of culture. Artifacts, which represent the visible organizational structures and processes, is the first level. Deal and Peterson (1999) stated these symbols are the outward manifestations of more intrinsic, invisible beliefs seen throughout the organization. In a school, artifacts may include the physical appearance of the building and classrooms and in the way people overtly treat others.

Values would be the second level. Values are the strategies, goals, and philosophies. Schein (1992) indicated values are testable in the physical environment and testable only by social consensus. Schein went on to clarify that many values remain conscious and are explicitly articulated because they serve as a normative function for group members. Argyris and Schon (1978) referred to espoused values – when what is said and what is done do not reach congruency.

The final level is basic underlying assumptions, which are the unconscious beliefs, perceptions, and feelings (Schein, 1992). These are often taken for granted and invisible. These are the beliefs that have become so ingrained within the organization that questioning whether one could act in any other manner would be ludicrous. Within a school, assumptions may be viewed in how people express or do not express themselves when challenged to new thinking.

For the purpose of investigating the culture of a school, Gruenert (1998) defined culture as "the guiding beliefs, assumptions, and expectations evident in the way a school operates," (p. 5). Peterson (2002) stated school culture was the set of norms, values and beliefs, rituals and ceremonies, symbols and stories that make up the "persona" of the

school. Although there is no one best school culture, successful schools value learning, collaboration, professional development, and shared vision and values (Deal & Peterson, 1999; DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Fullan, 2001). Elements of a positive and professional culture include significant staff development, effective curriculum implementation and reform, and data-driven decision making (Peterson, 2002).

In researching leadership responsibilities which significantly correlated with student achievement, Waters, Marzano and NcNulty (2003) synthesized years of research and constructed 21 specific responsibilities. Responsibilities that may be linked to culture included *Input* (the involvement of teachers in important decisions), *Relationship* (the demonstrated awareness of personal aspects), *Change Agent* (the will to and actively challenge the status quo), and *Optimizer* (inspires and leads innovation) shared common ground with the beliefs and practices of the servant leader who listen, empathize, and promote risk taking. Also, *Situational Awareness* (the awareness of details and undercurrents in running the school), and *Intellectual Stimulation* (ensuring faculty are aware of current practices) are responsibilities the servant leader practice by being aware and developing followers. School leaders who fostered *Culture*, defined as the fostering of shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation (Waters et al, 2003), experienced an average increase of .29 in student achievement scores. The practices associated with fostering culture are familiar with the practices of the servant leader: 1) cooperation and cohesion is promoted among staff/ followers, 2) a sense of well-being is encouraged, 3) an understanding of purpose is developed, and 4) a shared vision of what could be is developed (Autry 2001; Greenleaf, 1977; Waters et al., 2003).

Research by Barth (1990), Leithwood and Jantzi (1990), and Fullan (1992) concluded administrators exercise a key role in positively and negatively impacting school cultures, although less recognition of the administrator's contribution is given due to the headline agendas of raising school standards and student achievement (Day, Harris, & Hadfield, 2001). The demands of *No Child Left Behind* and individual state initiatives certainly carry the potential to be focused upon more by communities-at-large. But just as the demands of involuntary programs/agendas ripple through an organization, it is culture that leaders create, nurture, and sustain that will affect their people (Melrose, 1998). Culture frames people how to do what they do, and it determines how well they do it (Melrose).

Thus the administrator as servant leader may have the potential to positively impact the school culture in a unique manner. Kouzes (1998) stated the importance of formalizing a culture as a shared responsibility between the individual and the organization. An administrator who acts with care and concern for others is more likely to develop a school culture with similar values (Stolp, 1994). Because servant leaders choose to apply empathy (Spears, 1995, 1998, 2002), they may be more likely to identify and meet the legitimate needs of others (Hunter, 1998, 2004). Furthermore, the administrator as servant leader may potentially excel in comparison to non-servant leaders as they influence through persuasion, and inspire others to contribute to the greater good through hearts and minds collectively working together (Hunter, 1998).

Fullan (1992) warned that administrators are often blinded by their own vision and must manipulate people and the school culture to conform to it. Administrators as servant leaders would utilize a collaborative process for creating a desired school culture

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because of their practicing the *first among equals* mindset (Greenleaf, 1977), where the

school culture would be impacted by the shared vision and practices developed as a

community. Just as the intents/goals of *No Child Left Behind* were developed to create

continuous positive growth, the development and need of positive school culture ought to

be mirrored. Spears (2002) summarized:

> It is important to stress that servant-leadership is not a "quick fix" approach. Nor
>
> is it something that can be quickly instilled within an institution. At its core,
>
> servant-leadership is a long term, transformational approach to life and work – in
>
> essence, a way of being – that has the potential for creating positive change
>
> throughout our society. (p. 4)

Summary

The literature reviewed research on leadership, which has been defined as the

process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done

effectively, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish

the shared objectives (Yukl, 2006). Schein (1992) expanded the definition to include the

ability to step outside the culture to start evolutionary change processes that are adaptive.

Much of the leadership literature includes as an implicit assumption the belief that

specific characteristics can, and should, be encouraged and practiced by leaders. Positive

characteristics that appeal to the moral values of followers are associated with

transformational leadership (Bass, 1998; Yukl, 2006).

As a continued and specific leadership branch of transformational leadership,

servant leadership is applied as both a philosophy and as a working model (Spears, 2001).

It is a detour from commonly accepted and historical hierarchical practices, where the

focuses tended to be based upon rationale processes. As described by Greenleaf (1977), "the servant-leader is servant first…It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. The conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (p. 13). By researching the practices and characteristics of an identified servant leader, this study helped determine the impact such a leader had upon a public education (K-12) setting. Described in chapter three is a description of research methodology and the district and leader description. Revealed in chapter four are the analysis and research findings. The conclusion, inferences, and recommendations for further research are found in chapter five.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The challenges of leadership in the public education arena may be exacerbated by

the demands of federal and state mandates. To reach and maintain such high standards,

today's school leader may need to develop and nurture the effective leadership behaviors

and practices of transformational leadership, which is underscored by a healthy school

organization that generally includes a clear vision, professional development, and

collaboration within the school organization. As a natural extension of transformational

leadership, servant leadership may be the essence of leadership (Covey, 2004). Servant-

leaders are those who cultivate the personal growth of others (Spears, 2002). Servant-

leadership is characterized by (a) thorough listening skills; (b) the ability to empathize

and identify with others; (c) a willingness to accept new ideas and change; (d) the ability

to reflect and self-explore; and (e) an understanding of collaboration and consensus

(Beazley & Beggs, 2002). According to Greenleaf (1977), the truly great servant-leader

was marked by a constant demonstration of genuine interest and affection for his or her

followers.

Problem and Purpose Overview

The ability or inability of a school organization to move forward often falls upon

the effectiveness of the administrator. As the leader strives to influence others toward a

specific objective and direct the organization in a manner that makes it cohesive and

coherent, they often do so by applying their leadership attributes–their beliefs, values,

character, knowledge, and skills. Although varying schools of thought exist concerning

effective leadership and leadership attributes, this study was based upon the premise that public education schools may be more effectively led by administrators who practiced transformational leadership behaviors. Specifically, this study served to identify and examine the practices of a servant leader, and the impact a servant leader had upon the organizational health of the school.

This descriptive study served to identify and examine the practices of a servant leader in public education. Furthermore, this study was intended to assess the impact a servant leader had in relation to the organizational health of the school. Servant leadership was viewed through the lens of transformational leadership (Bass, 1998; Burns, 1978). The level of servant leadership practices was determined by utilizing Laub's (1998) *Organizational Leadership Assessment* to measure the authenticity of a leader, the leadership shared and provided, the valuing and development of people, and the ability to build community.

Research Questions

The primary research questions were as follows:

1. How is servant leadership defined in a public education setting?

2. What does servant leadership look like in a public education setting as viewed by stakeholders?

3. Does the utilization of servant leadership by a public school leader have an impact upon others working within the school organization? And if so, how? (Are servant-led organizations perceived to be effective?)

Population and Sample

When identifying a population and sample for a descriptive study, the researcher selects participants who are able to contribute additional knowledge to further inform the study (Creswell, 2003; Yin, 2004). Merriam (1998) determined that "purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned" (p. 61). Bodgan and Biklen (2003) discussed the value of a case study, in which the researcher chooses an organization and then becomes focused upon a specific aspect of it. The population and sample for the study consisted of top leadership (the superintendent), middle leadership (principals and other central office administrators), and varied representatives of the workforce (faculty and staff members). The survey and interview questions were used to indicate the level at which the superintendent functioned as a servant leader who had been identified as a school administrator with servant-leader qualities by outside sources. The sources included a university professor who has researched and presented nationally on servant leadership who was asked to identify two servant leaders. The state's regional staff development center was also contacted and given a brief overview of servant-leader characteristics, then asked to identify up to three possible individuals. Finally, an outside researcher who previously examined the practices of servant leaders was contacted. All three sources specifically named two matching servant leaders. To make the final determination, the researcher added the criterion that the individual had to be in the district for more than 10 years in the same capacity so that the impact of the organization is related to the longevity of leader.

Following the determination of the servant leader, the researcher contacted and gained permission to conduct research within the organization. The researcher learned that the district was comprised of one superintendent (identified as the servant leader), three building-level principals, each the administrator of one elementary, one middle school, and one high school. Other administrators included a curriculum director, instructional technology director, and central office personnel. The certificated staff in the district numbered 130. Five individuals were specifically approached to participate in the study: five administrators (building and other), the superintendent, and a board member. Of the remaining staff members, 45 (15 each from the elementary, middle, and high school, respectively) participants were sought to volunteer in the study, making a total count of 50 participants in the study.

The researcher also selected to implement the snowball sampling technique (Bogdan & Biklin, 2003) as a method to interview a sample of the organization's population. The researcher asked the servant-leader interviewed to recommend others. The researcher interviewed the second in like, open-ended manner, and asked for another to serve as a third interview. As the theory developed, the process continued until the interviews no longer offered new insight on the phenomena.

Rationale for Case Study

Qualitative research questions are typically open and indicate the direction the study will proceed (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003), with specific questions evolving during the process of conducting research (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Yin, 2004). Therefore, questions and assumptions may alter based upon the iterative process of collecting and

reviewing the data. A case study design is recommended when the researcher is interested in obtaining greater insight and discovery rather than hypothesis testing (Merriam, 1998)

The challenge of the qualitative researcher is to subjectively analyze the data without bias (Gay, 1996; Patton, 1997). Patton continued that validity is tied directly to the competency and integrity of the researcher, and may affect the credibility of the study. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) recognized that researchers can never obtain a perfect connection between what they wish to study and what they actually study. Thus findings from this study may lack generalizability; however, the reliability of the interview questions is not subject to the same scrutiny as in quantitative research (Bogdan & Biklen). The findings would, nevertheless, assist in providing insight to current assumptions and provide a framework for future research, specifically in the body of knowledge regarding servant leadership and organizational culture.

Data Collection and Instrumentation

Three instruments were used in this study to collect data. The *Organizational Leadership Assessment* (Laub, 1998) was used to measure the extent in which a leader utilized servant leadership behaviors and the impact of those behaviors upon the school organization. To further validate the research, a semi-structured open-ended questions interview was conducted with surveyed respondents in order to triangulate the survey results. The researcher selected to implement the snowball sampling technique (Bogdan & Biklin, 2003) for these interviews. The researcher asked the servant-leader to recommend others. The researcher interviewed the second in a like, open-ended manner, and asked for another participant to serve as a third interview. The process continued until at the conclusion of the study, the researcher had a theory about the servant led

organization. Thus, the individuals selected for interviewing were identified by both

purposeful and also snowballing techniques. The third data source included observations.

Organizational Leadership Assessment

The extent to which servant leadership was utilized as a leadership behavior was

measured by the *Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA)* (Laub, 1998) (Appendix

A). The survey was chosen because it allowed organizations to discover how leadership

practices and beliefs impacted the different ways people function within the organization.

The survey contained 66 items related to leadership impact that required participants to

respond to a Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Laub (1999) developed the *OLA* instrument through a three-round Delphi process.

A panel of experts received a series of three questionnaires. The first questionnaire

included a request for participants to list at least ten characteristics of the servant leader.

The second questionnaire included a presentation of the compiled list from the first

questionnaire, with the request that the experts rate the 67 items with one of the four

values: essential, necessary, desirable, and unnecessary. The experts added three more

characteristics, making a cumulative total of seventy servant leader characteristics. The

third questionnaire presented the data from the previous round using a semantic scale

with the median, twenty-fifth percentile, and seventy-fifth percentile of each

characteristic rating marked. The experts were asked to rate each item once again, with

the stipulation to provide reasoning for any response that fell outside the middle 50

percentile of the group response. The median and interquartile range of total response for

each item were computed to determine which characteristics were rated as *Necessary* or

Essential for describing the servant leader. These characteristics then formed the basic constructs for the development of the *OLA* instrument items.

Results from the Delphi study were then used by Laub (1999) as the constructs from which the instrument items were written. Likert-style items were written for each construct, with more items written for those that received higher ratings in the Delphi study. The items were placed into six potential sub-score clusters: *values people, develops people, builds community, displays authenticity, provides leadership, and shares leadership*. The items were also written from three different perspectives producing three different sections of the instrument: *assessing the entire organization, assessing the leadership of the organization, and assessing from the perspective of the respondent's individual experience.*

Pre-field and field tests were run, with data from the completed instruments. Reliability estimates and correlations were computed. All of the six sub-scores revealed high reliability scores along with high correlations between scales. Listed in Table 1 are the means, standard deviations and reliability estimates for each potential sub-score (Laub, 1999).

Table 1

Reliability Scores on Six Potential OLA Sub-scores

Potential Sub-scores	N	*M*	Total Possible	*SD*
Values People	828	53.84	70	8.88
Develops People	828	37.37	50	7.78
Builds Community	828	45.20	60	7.87
Displays Authenticity	828	51.79	70	10.29
Provides Leadership	828	45.59	60	8.49
Shares Leadership	828	44.99	60	9.24

The *OLA* instrument items were reduced from 74 to 66 in order to increase the interest and decrease the time to complete the instrument. The items eliminated had a lower item-to-test correlation and overall the deletion of the items did not affect instrument validity. The revised 66 item instrument had a mean of 223.79 on a total potential score of 300 and the standard deviation was 41.08. The alpha coefficient was .98. The lowest and highest item-test correlation was .41 and .79, respectively (Laub, 1999).

Interview Protocol

The researcher's goal is to better understand human behavior and experience (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). The goal of this researcher was to add to the growing body of servant leadership literature. Subsequently, the researcher conducted field interviews as a strategy to gather descriptive data in the subjects' own words so that insights on perceptions may be interpreted (Bodgan & Biklen, 2003). As Gay (1996) promoted the use of open-ended field interview questions, and to further answer the research questions

and triangulate the data gathered from the *Organizational Leadership Assessment* (Laub, 1998), semi-structured, open-ended interviews were conducted by the researcher to allow for elaboration and affective data. Research in the areas of servant leadership (Autry, 2001; Hunter, 2004; Greenleaf, 1977; Laub, 1999; Page & Wong, 1998; Spears, 1995, 1998, 2002; Taylor, 2002) and organizational health were used to develop the interview protocol (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993; Dalin, et al., 1993; Deal & Peterson, 1999; Gruenert, 1998; Maher, 2000; McGill, 2001; Sackman, 1991; Schein, 1992). Since the focus of the study was to examine the impact that servant leaders had on organizational health, the questions centered on how servant leader behaviors identified in the *OLA* (Laub, 1998) intersected with a healthy school culture. Field interviews were recorded and transcribed, with participants being presented with drafts of the interview transcription to review and revise to enhance credibility and reliability of the collected data. Researcher bias was controlled through the triangulation of data, with documentary evidence collected to corroborate information from other data sources and through observations conducted by the researcher.

Bogdan and Biklen (2003) stated that while documents have been useful auxiliaries, they are becoming a primary source of data for qualitative research. Thus, documentary evidence was collected from the district. During the course of the on-site visit, time was also devoted to direct observation of interactions in the school environment. Direct observation allowed this researcher to observe if there was congruency between the administrator's insights and perceptions espoused during the interview and the followers' behaviors and practices.

Data Analysis

First, the data retrieved through the administration of the *OLA,* were entered into a SPSS 11.0 program and analyzed using descriptive statistics and a table of means for the six subscales. This analysis was used as the process for seeking to understand the overall perceptions of the participants and then interpreting the data to gain insight into the phenomenon under study.

The *Organizational Leadership Assessment* (Laub, 1998) also proved useful in assisting the researcher during the second aspect of the research, framing the interview. Using the six themes identified by Laub (1999), individuals who participated in the interview were asked to articulate how the school administrator, as the focal point of the case study, demonstrated behaviors of a servant leader. As postulated by Bogdan and Biklen (2003), data analysis must involve working with, organizing, and breaking data into manageable units. Thomas and Brubaker (2000) termed this as the first step in organizing information as *classifying.* Therefore, coding, or identifying categories, classifications, and themes derived from the participants was helpful in organizing the data. For the purposes of this study, open coding was used initially to identify themes. Next axial coding aided in making comparisons and connections between and among the themes. The final step identified by Thomas and Brubaker (2000) was *summarizing*, the reverse of classifying as it promotes synthesis, identification of patterns, and being able to discover what was important and what could be learned and shared with others. Finally, the researcher used a qualitative approach to analyze the data collected through document analysis and the observation procedure.

In summation, the data was analyzed in a multi-step process to ensure triangulation. First, the results of the *Organizational Leadership Assessment* (Laub, 1998) were computed to determine and identify the level of servant-leader practices within the school organization. These results buttressed the data retrieved from interview questions, which allowed for articulation not allowed for in the survey. Finally, artifacts through documents were collected and analyzed according to the themes identified, along with the observation data to further bolster the findings and implications of the data.

Summary

The research design and methodology were presented in chapter three. An overview of the research problem and purpose preceded the research questions. The population selection and survey and interview protocols were discussed. A rationale for using a descriptive study was presented and the study design was identified. Specifically, the use of an exclusive survey was identified, and the process for field interviews, documentation analysis and observation data collection was established. A discussion of the process used in the analysis of data and the evolving themes connected to the study problem, purpose, and research questions are addressed. Within chapter four the data analysis and research findings are presented. A discussion of research findings, conclusions framed within the study's limitations, and implications for further research are included in chapter five.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine how a servant leader impacted a public

education (K-12) organization. A single, mixed designed case study was employed to

understand the perceptions of specific leadership behaviors of an identified servant

leader. Servant leadership, as an extension of transformational leadership, provided a

theoretical lens which assisted during analysis of data to identify underlying

relationships. The following research questions guided the study and were considered

throughout the data analysis process:

1. How is servant leadership defined in a public education setting?

2. What does servant leadership look like in a public education setting as viewed by

    stakeholders?

3. Does the utilization of servant leadership by a public school leader have an impact

    upon others working within the school organization? And if so, how? (Are

    servant-led organizations perceived to be effective?)

The data was analyzed in a multi-step process to ensure triangulation. First, the

results of the *Organizational Leadership Assessment* (Laub, 1998) were computed to

determine and identify the level of servant-leader practices within the school

organization. These results were used iteratively with the data retrieved from interview

questions, which allowed for articulation not allowed for in the survey. Finally, artifacts

via documents were collected and analyzed according to the themes identified, along with

the observation data to further bolster the findings and implications of the data.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the OLA were compiled and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 11.0. Descriptive statistics provided a comparison of means. A critical value of .05 determined the level of significance in all statistical procedures.

Population and Sample

The population and sample for the study consisted of top leadership (the superintendent), middle leadership (principals, human resource, and curriculum personnel), and varied representatives of the workforce (faculty and staff members) from one rural, Midwestern public school district. The survey and interview questions were used to indicated the level at which the superintendent, who had previously been identified as a school administrator with servant-leader qualities by outside sources, functioned as a servant leaders. Those sources included a university professor who has researched and presented nationally on servant leadership, the state's regional staff development center, and an outside researcher who previously examined the practices of servant leaders. All three sources specifically named two matching servant leaders. To make the final determination, the researcher added the criterion that the individual had to be in the district for more than 10 years in the same capacity so that the impact of the organization is related to the longevity of leader.

Following the determination of the servant leader, the researcher contacted and gained permission to conduct research within the organization. The researcher distributed 85 OLA surveys to the 130 certified district staff, with 25 surveys randomly given to each of the three building levels (25 elementary, 25 middle, and 25 high school),

with an additional 10 surveys for leadership positions. Of the 85 surveys disseminated,

53 individuals chose to participate, accounting for a 62% return rate. The researcher's

intention was to have a minimum of 50 participants.

Data Collection Instruments

Organizational Leadership Assessment

The extent to which servant leadership was utilized as leadership behaviors was

measured by the *Organizational Leadership Assessment* (OLA) (Laub, 1998, Appendix

A). The survey was chosen because it allowed organizations to discover how leadership

practices and beliefs impacted the different ways people function within the organization.

Specifically, the survey gave direct attention in measuring the extent to which a servant

leader (a) *values people;* (b) *develops people;* (c) *builds community;* (d) *displays*

authenticity; (e) *provides leadership;* and (f) *shares leadership* (Laub, 1998). The OLA

survey items were also written from three different perspectives producing three different

sections of the instrument: *assessing the entire organization, assessing the leadership of*

the organization, and *assessing from the perspective of the respondent's individual*

experience. The survey contained 66 items related to leadership impact that required

participants to respond to a Likert-type scale. Each item used a five-point frequency scale

ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. All of the six sub-scores

revealed high reliability scores along with high correlations between scales.

Interview Protocol

To further answer the research questions and triangulate the data gathered from

the OLA (Laub, 1998), field interviews were conducted as a strategy to gather descriptive

data in the subjects' own words so that insights on perceptions may be interpreted

(Bodgan & Biklen, 2003). As Gay (1996) promoted the use of open-ended field interview questions, and to further answer the research questions, six semi-structured, open-ended interviews were conducted by the researcher to allow for elaboration and affective data (see Appendix). Research in the areas of servant leadership (Autry, 2001; Hunter, 2004; Greenleaf, 1977; Laub, 1999; Page & Wong, 1998; Spears, 1995, 1998, 2002; Taylor, 2002) and organizational health were used to develop the interview protocol (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993; Dalin, et al., 1993; Deal & Peterson, 1999; Gruenert, 1998; Maher, 2000; McGill, 2001; Sackman, 1991; Schein, 1992). Since the focus of the study was to examine the impact that servant leaders had on organizational health, the questions centered on how servant leader behaviors identified in the OLA (Laub, 1998) intersected with a healthy school culture. Field interviews were recorded and transcribed, with participants being presented with drafts of the interview transcription to review and revise to enhance credibility and reliability of the collected data. Researcher bias was controlled through the triangulation of data, with documentary evidence collected to corroborate information from other data sources and through observations conducted by the researcher.

Observation

To reinforce the study, documentary evidence was collected from the district. A variety of documents were collected, including school and local newspapers, an organizational chart (Document A) including the districts mission and guiding questions, the district's improvement plan (Document B), personal communications from the superintendent to the staff and community (Documents C-E), and copies of the district newspaper (Documents F-H). During the course of the on-site visit, time was also

devoted to direct observation of interactions in the school environment (see Appendix F). Direct observation allowed the researcher to observe congruency between the administrator's insights and perceptions espoused during the interview and the followers' behaviors and practices.

<div align="center">*Research Questions*</div>

This study is centered on three research questions. Responses to each of the questions are reported independently in order to clearly present the results; however, the responses to each question intersect and coincide with one another. Qualitative data was used to answer research questions one and two. Qualitative and quantitative data were used to answer the third research question.

Research question 1: How is servant leadership defined in a public education setting?

To address the above research question, three definitions deserved review. A *Servant leader* was defined as a leader whose primary purpose for leading is to serve others by investing in their development and well being for the benefit of accomplishing tasks and goals for the common good (Page & Wong, 1998). *Servant leadership* was defined as the ability to influence others through the relationship of service to people and purpose (Hunter, 2004). The researcher defined a *public education setting* as any non-private, not-for-profit, K-12 setting or any combination thereof (elementary, middle/junior high, and or high school). Based upon the combination of stated definitions, the reader may correctly assume that a servant leader in a school setting serves with others toward the common purpose of providing an education. The data defined how this definition is valid through examining the servant leadership practices of

building community (Autry, 2001; Laub, 1998) and *providing and sharing leadership* (Laub, 1998, Greenleaf, 1977).

Bolman and Deal (2001) asserted that leadership is a relationship rooted in community due to the leader's embodiment of the group's most precious values and beliefs. In examining the WS school district, this relationship with the community was the driving force in developing, clarifying and implementing the organization design, mission, and belief statements. The Superintendent stated the need to pull together people behind a common mission:

> I put together a school improvement team of about 25 people and tried to get a cross section of the representative areas of our district and the different levels of our organization…We established a mission that we thought was powerful; we identified some beliefs which are still true today. We bring those back…and they're guideposts for us. (Supt., 17)

This was accomplished at a retreat, which has become a regular occurrence for members of the WS school district. "Even though at first there was not a lot of support toward doing the retreat thing, they have come to be a real valuable part of our coming together and goal setting and looking at how we want to improve our future" (SMB, 40).

The development of leadership at multiple levels is part of the WS school district organization. It is the stated expectation of the WS school district that every individual in the organization is responsible for the inner level of leadership which calls for individuals to lead themselves, or show evidence of *personal leadership*, where "each is required to exhibit trustworthiness which is the summation of character and competence" (Document A, p. 3). The personal leadership includes the qualities expected of everyone, known as

Principles at WS, or PAWS. The PAWS communicate that every individual in the district

is to be trustworthy, responsible, cooperative, compassionate, flexible, respectful, and

mission driven. One WS member stated concerning PAWS:

> We think those are the underlying philosophies that we feel have to be to be
>
> effective. If we have those things underneath our decision making, anything we
>
> do as far as dealing with students, parents, peer-to-peer, administrator-to-
>
> administrator, we think if we follow those things…we've developed as a district,
>
> not just as an administrative team but through the school improvement team made
>
> up of us and community and parents, we've identified those things and worked
>
> them in as principles. (SMA, 17)

The next level of leadership is the Interpersonal level (Document A), which

transitions from the *me* responsibility to the *we* partnership. Trust is described as crucial

for the advancement to the third level of *team leadership* which focuses on

empowerment. According to the Organizational Design, empowerment is defined as "a

task + trust = empowerment." Empowering others requires the servant leader to provide

and share leadership by envisioning the future, clarifying goals, and encourage risk-

taking (Laub, 1998).

> With empowerment, two or more trustworthy people are given the information
>
> and resources necessary to make decisions at their level in the operation. They do
>
> not need to run to a boss or supervisor with every decision. They recognize and
>
> embrace their role within the organization. (Document A, p. 3)

One staff member stated they all get together for professional development "to look at

where we're going. [Supt.] brings up our common purpose" (SMF, 21). One other staff member stated it this way:

> [Supt]…set the goal of what could be the perfect world. [Supt.]'s shown us a glimpse of what could be and sparked our interest and that's what we want to become. You can't drag us, you can't make someone do those things, but you can show them what's there and help them find that way. That's what [Supt.] 's done…shown us the vision it could be. [Supt.] has taken the dreams and visions we have individually and told us "I think that's possible," and then given us the opportunity and freedom to find solutions to that. (SMC, 125)

Bringing the community together for a common purpose requires that the right questions be asked (Greenleaf, 1977). "The questions leaders ask send messages about the focus of the organization, and they're indicators of what's of most concern to the leader" (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 91). One staff member stated "[Supt.] has a way of leading us through different kinds of activities…through posing questions" (SMD, 31). It was at a retreat with the School Improvement Team that the Superintendent asked the right questions that helped the vertical team (made up of administrators, school board members, teachers, community members and two students) define the organization's mission, purpose, and belief statements of WS (Document B):

> I threw some questions out around we want to be a world class school. Let's talk about the idea of world class. World class is that we can provide students with as good as an education as they can get anywhere. The first reaction was we're a poor, rural district, we could never do that. But we went through the processes of everybody flashback to your powerful learning – things where you learned and

you never forgot it, and what were the qualities of that learning environment. We

defined those. We had a good list, and you know what, not a one of those cost

money. Not a one of them demands resources. And to me, that was just a mind-

boggling thing. But every one of those were personal qualities of that person, of

that time, of that learning environment; none of those cost money. Passion was a

big one. If I have a teacher that was passionate about what they're teaching, I

catch the passion. Some said that's why I'm here today, that's what gave it to me.

They set a high expectation for me, they expected me learn, they saw something

in me I never saw in myself. All of those kind of things. So we took from that and

said lets define what a world class learning environment looks. First of all, so

we'll know how to develop one and second, so we'll know when we have it.

(Supt, 25)

The process has resulted in what is referred to as a "high trust culture" (Document

A, p. 3), which is a continual cycle that is constantly evaluated at the *Organizational*

Leadership level, the final and encompassing level of leadership. This is the level of

leadership where the WS Board of Education and Superintendent operate. "The

organization must be structured through policies, systems, procedures, and daily practices

that align to promote empowerment, interpersonal leadership, and personal leadership"

(Document A, p. 3). This has required experience and training for the superintendent,

which has been shared and passed on to the staff for quality, continuous improvement.

How do you go about bring a group to consensus? See, we've never had that

training. We throw people on a committee, and we've never trained them to work

on a committee. And if we don't, we have collective stupidity; we don't have

synergy. We want synergy…we want something great, but you've got to have the organizational training for that…Now it's a part of our culture. (Supt., 374)

It is at the organizational level that the superintendent is able to define his/her role in the organization. All levels of leadership – personal, interpersonal, and team – must be preceded by organizational leadership, which makes the other levels possible. (Document A). The superintendent summarized:

I feel the main responsibility of the superintendent is to work on the system. Organizational development and alignment is the major task of the superintendent…and where is that in the training? Deming said "people don't fail, systems fail"…you got the wrong system, and we blame people (Supt., 436).

One of the overarching products developed through the organizational process was the mission of the WS School District, which is to improve the quality of life for everyone through quality education. The mission statement in and of itself may not completely recapitulate how servant leadership is defined in public education setting, but the process that the organization experienced at varied levels and subsequently embraced by the entire organization aided in the clarification for this specific district, and established a potential framework to model servant leadership for others. As one staff member commented, "Our mission statement was developed by the community through [Supt.]'s leadership to provide a quality of life through a quality education" (SMA, 52).

Research question 2: What does servant leadership look like in a public education setting as viewed by stakeholders?

In order to address Research question 2, staff members, including administrators and teachers, were interviewed and observed in their respective settings. The interviews

70

were transcribed and the transcriptions, as well as the observation notes, were coded according to the following headings: *connecting, power with,* and *walking the talk.* The headings were chosen because of the illuminated parallels between servant leadership practices and the selected public school organization.

Connecting. Lewin and Regine (2000) stated that the soul needs affiliation and connection with others that cannot be met with pecuniary benefits, but can be met with acknowledgment. Laub (1998) listed showing appreciation to others as part of valuing people, and the Superintendent of WB exhibited this trait continuously. "[Supt.] will mention it in a specific e-mail, that [s/he] appreciates your hard work" (SME, 4). When another staff member was asked the superintendent demonstrated appreciation and respect, the response was "usually it's a verbal comment. [S/he] might send an e-mail; but usually, it's in person" (SMD, 3). An additional staff member confirmed that the appreciation is verbalized, but also added, "Whenever [s/he] feels it's valid, [s/he] will express it. It's pretty regular. I don't think we ever have to wonder if we're appreciated" (SMB, 7). As a stakeholder in their own organization, the Superintendent expressed this view on connecting to others:

> …there is nothing like a personal contact. If you just stop by and say "Hey, I
> found out what you did the other day, and we really appreciate that." That right
> there seems to be more valuable than saying you got the premier parking place for
> the month or even if you gave them a $50 bonus. Just somebody coming around
> saying "I appreciate what you're doing." (Supt., 86)

Servant leaders generally have the common behavior of connecting to people and purpose (Hunter, 2004). Besides the demonstrating of specific appreciation for

individuals, the Superintendent shares daily reflections e-mail to the entire faculty and staff. "It's positive. District wide, everybody gets one that serves as a daily motivator" (SMF, 40). The message, generally, is linked to the greater purpose of reminding individuals district-wide of their important role in the organization, and assisting them at their personal level of leadership to identify and work toward their goals. Covey (1991) stated that to truly discover a person's worth or potential, you may have to look at him with an eye of faith and treat him in terms of his potential versus behavior. "I think [s/he] sees potential in people because, there have been some other people hired for positions when I think 'what in the world are we doing here,' and then after a while you see" (SMD, 49). The same staff member continued, "[Supt.] makes you feel like you're capable of doing things that you really didn't think you were" (44).

Expanding an individual's personal comfort level may be an ironic but effective way to connect with people. The Superintendent demonstrated this by asking team members to set individual goals that would be shared with other team members. One staff member shared their experience:

> I set personal goals and then we sit down and talk about it. And [Supt.] provides input, and [s/he]'s very honest with us, which is good. There are times [Supt.] will say "this is a good one," and then [Supt.] will say "what can I do to help? How can I help you obtain these?" When we first started doing this, this was the hardest part, when we first started doing personal goals we shared in administrators meeting. So everybody had a copy of my goals, I had a copy of everybody else's goals. So if I ran across something that would help or that might be supportive of – help them move closer, I could send them something or I could

tell them. We could support one another. And [Supt.] cultivates that culture of helping and supporting. It's not just one person, we're all in here together. And in our system, we're better when we work together than we are when we all try to do it alone. (SMC, 35)

The same staff member articulated their feelings in sharing personal goals:

…it wasn't comfortable, but it wasn't threatening. I mean, we were putting it out there. Now we knew before we wrote those goals that we would be sharing, because we had talked about what would help us. And we decided the more of us working together, the easier it would be to accomplish the goals…And then [Supt.] said, "Are you comfortable sharing?" Well, no, we're not comfortable, because you're stretching. But in the same light, we were comfortable in saying that….It was really ironic that after we shared, we probably had common thread throughout. (SMC, 47)

One expectation that has turned into a requirement for every new member of the WS district is to participate in Stephen Covey's 7 Habits training. A staff member recognized that "Covey is a huge part of our whole system. [Supt.] is responsible for bringing in Covey" (SMC, 13). Another member contributed:

…we're very involved in the Covey training, we ([Supt.] and I) even went to Utah and sat down at a table just like this with Stephen Covey and picked his brain with some things. That's pretty fortunate for us to be able to do that and have that opportunity for us to be able to do that. We're in the business of developing teachers and educators are what we feel our role is… (SMA, 31)

The Superintendent feels the Covey training is a significant part of connecting people and purpose within the organization. "We heard people say this is something we want to keep going. So, it just wasn't a 'me' thing. I think they've seen this as a critical thing" (Supt., 204).

Power with. True power, Autry (2001) stated, comes from the people through gaining trust and giving support to those who give you power. This iterative relationship was apparent in the WS organization. SMD stated "[Supt.]'s a very trusting person. [Supt.] trusts all of us to do our jobs. I feel respect in that because he respects us as professionals to know what we need to do and get it done" (5). Another staff member concurred, "[Supt.] gives you the control, the ability, the trust to do what needs to be done. [Supt.] gives you the resources that you need to be sure you can do that" (SMA, 3).

Covey (1991) established that trust requires one to be trustworthy, which the Superintendent clarified as a basis for empowering others:

> What we hope for is everybody will be more self regulated, and then somebody might say, "Hey, that's not who we are or that's not what were about." Early on, when people came up with the idea of empowerment, they just thought we were going to turn it over and let them run it. Well, no, no, that's stupidity. And of course, the Covey stuff helps us with that. Empowerment comes after personal leadership, and after we've established trust. All those things. The essentials of trustworthiness are character and competence. You just don't turn people loose until they've established trustworthiness. (Supt., 422)

Once trustworthiness and empowerment are earned, the related concepts of power and influence work in the capacity to impact the attitudes and behavior of people in a

desired direction (Greenleaf, 1977; Yukl, 2006). In granting freedoms and sharing power to achieve, the Superintendent reminds others of the desired vision and purpose:

> …The team needs to know what the organization stands for and align with those principles. Then you can be empowered. Then you have people having conversations that you didn't have to facilitate. (Supt. 431)

As smaller teams understand their purpose, they realize they have been given the power to potentially impact the entire organization:

> In my specific building, I'm the one responsible, and [Supt.] just trusts us to do that. We are expected to work as a team. We're also allowed…when we look at district things, we all look at district things. It's not just one person. (SMC, 121)
>
> The Superintendent realizes that empowerment makes the customer everyone's

job (Bethel, 1995), and that with empowerment comes the ability for people within the organization to expand, extend, or improve the system or their part of the system. One staff member commented, "…it seems like we're all working for the good of the students instead of just for the students in our own class" (SMG, 19). Another staff member recognized the same by stating:

> We're constantly encouraged to develop new programs. I have a lot of freedom if I want to change something – we're given a lot of freedom with that responsibility. This is what I want to do, this is what I want to improve, this is what I think will be the outcome – and then [Supt.] will say, "what do you need me to do so you can get that done? What can I do to help you facilitate that?" We do a lot of brainstorming and coming up with ideas to help each other. If I read something that will be beneficial to the elementary, I'll shoot it off to [elementary

principal]. We try to help each other. Constant encouragement to not only do things right but to do the right things. (SMA, 136)

In publishing the Organizational Design (Document A) of the WS School District, the Superintendent shared a picture of a five-tier pole, with one bird on the top, a couple birds underneath, and an increasing amount of birds on each level as the tiers continued. The Superintendent labeled the picture *Sea Gull Management*, which was described as "fly through occasionally, crap all over everyone, then fly away," and a style that is not welcomed in the WS School District. As the Superintendent wrote about the organization's history of developing a high-trust culture, one statement made clear that the organization did not have power over any person or cause:

> The WS School system has no right to exist. We only exist to meet a need. And, we can only meet a need we understand. We are not an end in ourselves and must therefore continually remind ourselves of why we exist and who we serve. (Document A, p. 4)

Walking the talk. A servant leader displays authenticity (Autry, 2001; Bennis, 2003; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Laub, 1998) by leading others according to correct principles (Covey, 1987). However, the Superintendent had learned through experience that one could not influence others unless their personal life was influenced by personal leadership:

> …It all hinges on that personal leadership. If I can't lead myself, how can I lead you or anyone else? I think it's critical. We know this, and I think the 7 habits helped us with this, and I think the principals will tell you this, that if my personal life stinks right now, my professional life probably does. If my personal life is not

squared away, it's going to bleed over into my professional life. We know that,

you can walk into your building right now and look them in the eye and you know

if things are not going well. And through this Covey training, they got to know

me better…My life's an open book and we're here because we're here for the

greater good kind of thing. (Supt., 305)

During a goal sharing session, the Superintendent participated in what was being asked of

the team. "In fact, [Supt.] did it first. Because he said, 'I can't expect you to share if I'm

not going to.' And he said, 'I need help with these'" (SMC, 45). SMB shared, "…[Supt.]

encourages us to take part in and set the example, and provides a way in which to do it"

(15).

Early on, the Superintendent recognized the ability to influence others came from

living and practicing values and principles:

Power is created when individuals perceive that their leaders are honorable, so

they trust them, are inspired by them, believe deeply in the goals communicated

by them, and desire to be led. Because of their sense of purpose and vision, their

character, their essential nature, and what they represent, leaders can build

principle-centered power in their relationships with their followers (Covey, 1991,

p. 104-105).

The desire to help others develop personal leadership was a driving force in the

creation of the PAWS, the principles used to guide the behavior all in the WS district:

We developed seven things that we all should exhibit. I need to exhibit, the Board

needs to exhibit, and we expect parents to exhibit. We expect students to exhibit.

We occasionally send things out to service providers and say, "if you ever find us not doing these things, you let us know." (Supt., 49)

One staff member discussed the impact of the principles:

I've been brought up in the system and developed my leadership skills to follow our PAWS and our principle-centered leadership, and we spend a lot of time administratively talking about that and reinforcing that and studying that and doing that. So when you talk about [Supt.] and [Supt.]'s leadership, that's a majority of what we talk about: how [Supt.] operates and how [Supt.] just doesn't talk but walks the walk, too. (SMA, 6)

The Superintendent's ability to *walk the talk* has been noticed by members within the WS organization. One staff member discussed their impression of what the Superintendent's exhibits as "…always encouraging…always professional. I would say a majority of the time [Supt.]'s positive, and is comfortable agreeing to disagree" (SMD, 38). Another person concurred, "I would say very positive. [Supt.]'s not upset very often. Even in discipline, [Supt.] has shown it can be done in a positive way. [Supt.] can take a negative and say, 'Hey, we need to do this" (SMF, 27). Beyond the *talk*, a staff member commented on the Superintendent's actions:

[Supt.]'s not afraid to do anything that needs to be done. Anything from digging a ditch if there's a sewer leak to the paperwork, [Supt.]'s right there doing everything. One day [Supt.] was putting rock in the slide by the elementary. [S/he] is pretty well seen, out there being seen by others doing the work. (SMG, 26)

One staff members' summarization of the Superintendent's demeanor paralleled Autry's

(2001) belief that the servant leader be the same person in every circumstance:

> [Supt.]'s pretty much the same no matter where [s/he]'s at or what [s/he]'s doing.
>
> [Supt.] is what you see. [S/he] doesn't put on a facade for any group. [Supt.] likes
>
> to walk the talk…[Supt.] concern for people drives everything [s/he] does. (SMB,
>
> 47)

> *Research question 3: Does the utilization of servant leadership by a public school*
>
> *leader have an impact upon others working within the school organization? And if so,*
>
> *how? (Are servant-led organizations perceived to be effective?)*

To address the above research question, OLA scores for WS organization

members were combined to calculate the means and standard deviations for each of the

six leadership practices: *values people, develops people, displays authenticity, builds*

community, provides leadership, and *shares leadership.* The 66 item instrument had a

division of unequal items applying to each of the six practices. Scores from each item

were based on a 5 point Liker-type scale. The OLA scores were entered into SPSS 11.0.

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results of the OLA as complete by

WS staff are found in Table 2.

Table 2

Sub-scores of Servant Leader Practices

Sub Scale	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Values People	53	2.89	5.00	4.18	.45093
Develops People	52	2.43	5.00	4.19	.51588
Displays Authenticity	52	2.77	5.00	4.20	.47293
Builds Community	51	3.00	5.00	4.24	.43547
Provides Leadership	52	2.38	5.00	4.34	.49726
Shares Leadership	52	2.33	5.00	4.42	.51631

A review of the descriptive data reveals that the practice of *Sharing Leadership* was ranked to be the highest subscale (*M*=4.42, *SD*=.52) with *Providing Leadership* as the next highest subscale (*M*=4.34, *SD*=.50). *Building Community* and *Displaying Authenticity* were ranked third and fourth in the calculated responses. *Developing People* was the second lowest ranking of servant leadership practices (*M*=4.19, *SD*=.52). The lowest ranked subscale was *Values People* (*M*=4.18, *SD*=.45). The range in mean scores was .23.

To be consistent with the researcher's original framework of the study and to be consistent in analyzing the data, the six subscales were decreased to four subscales by combining *Values People* and *Develops People,* and also combining *Provides Leadership* and *Shares Leadership*. The subscales were arranged to reflect the order in which they were addressed within Chapter Two, Review of Related Literature. The data were then recalculated to reflect the combinations. It was determined that the combination of

subscales did not adversely or significantly alter the integrity of the data. Results are

reported in Table 3.

Table 3

Researcher Combined Sub-scores of Servant Leader Practices

Sub Scale	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Displays Authenticity	52	2.77	5.00	4.20	.47293
Provides & Shares Leadership	51	2.88	5.00	4.40	.46557
Values & Develops People	52	2.75	5.00	4.17	.45733
Builds Community	51	3.00	5.00	4.24	.43547

A review of the descriptive data reveals that the practice of *Providing & Sharing*

Leadership was ranked to be the highest subscale (*M=*4.40, *SD=*.47) *Building*

Community (*M=*4.24, *SD=*.44) was the second highest subscale. *Displaying Authenticity*

was ranked third (*M=*4.20, *SD=*.47). The lowest ranking subscale was *Values &*

Develops People (*M=*4.17, *SD=*.46). The range in mean scores for the combined

subscales was .23.

A comparison of data between the subgroups was also conducted. Because the

superintendent's leadership style was being examined, the responses from the

superintendent were omitted. The report data from the subgroups of *administrator* (any

level), *high school staff, middle school staff,* and *elementary school staff* is displayed in

Table 4.

Table 4

Comparison of Servant Leader Sub-scores by Service Level

District Level Subgroup		DA	PSL	VDP	BC
Administrator	M	4.11	4.46	4.09	4.25
	N	7	6	7	7
	SD	.41	.22	.33	.40
High School Staff	M	4.18	4.34	4.14	4.17
	N	17	17	17	16
	SD	.55	.53	.51	.47
Middle School Staff	M	4.20	4.38	4.16	4.25
	N	15	14	15	15
	SD	.53	.56	.54	.49
Elementary Staff	M	4.24	4.43	4.23	4.26
	N	12	13	12	12
	SD	.33	.39	.33	.32

Note. N=52.. DA=*Displays Authenticity*; PSL=*Provides & Shares Leadership*; VDP=*Values & Develops People*; and BC=*Builds Community*

An investigation of the data reveals that *Provides & Shares Leadership* was ranked the highest by all subgroups. There was a difference in the rankings of *Displays Authenticity* and *Builds Community* between the subgroups. The subgroups of *Administrators, Middle School Staff,* and *Elementary Staff* ranked the practice of *Builds Community* as the second highest sub-score over *Displays Authenticity,* while *High School Staff* determined *Displays Authenticity* as the second highest ranked practice. All subgroups ranked *Values & Develops People* as the lowest sub-scores.

The OLA survey items were also written from three different perspectives producing three different sections of the instrument: *assessing the entire organization, assessing the leadership of the organization,* and *assessing from the perspective of the respondent's individual experience.* The first two sections, *assessing the entire*

organization, and *assessing the leadership of the organization,* were vital in determining

the overall leadership culture of the school and the confidence level in the leadership. The

third section, *assessing from the perspective of the respondent's individual experience,*

gave the researcher an indication of how servant leader behaviors impacted others

working within the school organization.

An investigation of the data reveals how members of the WS School District were

impacted by assessing their view of their own role in the organization. The findings are

reported in Table 5 according to ascending means.

Table 5

Assessment from Participant in Viewing Their Own Role in the Organization

Sub Scale	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
I receive encouragement/ affirmation from above	2.00	5.00	4.26	.83553
I am listened to by those above me	1.00	5.00	4.34	.87582
I am working at high level of productivity	2.00	5.00	4.36	.59142
I feel appreciated by my superintendent	1.00	5.00	4.42	.82477
I am respected by those above me	2.00	5.00	4.51	.72384
My job is important to success of school	1.00	5.00	4.53	.69625
I feel good about my contribution to the school	4.00	5.00	4.55	.50253
I trust the leadership	2.00	5.00	4.59	.72110
A person's work is more valued than their title	2.00	5.00	4.60	.63062
I am able to use my best gifts and abilities in my job	3.00	5.00	4.66	.51677
I am able to be creative	3.00	5.00	4.75	.47659
I enjoy working in this school	3.00	5.00	4.83	.42679

Note. N=53.

A review of the data reveals that the members of the WS School District ranked items associated with how they view their personal role in the organization. The range in mean scores was limited to .57., with *I enjoy working here* (*M*=4.83, *SD*=.43), ranked as

highest score. The lowest ranked score was *I receive encouragement/affirmation from above* (*M*=4.26, *SD*=.86).

Although ranked the lowest, *I receive encouragement/affirmation from above* (M=4.26, *SD*=.86), was especially noted by one staff member as he/she discussed the importance of individual worth. While at a retreat, the district's School Improvement Team developed the mission, beliefs, parameters, values and principles (Document B). Following the WS School District value of *Individual Worth* were these words: "Our greatest value is our people. We believe in demonstrating respect for the uniqueness of every individual" (Document B). SMB stated:

> I wouldn't be the person I am had [Supt.] not been around. Just personally, [Supt.] has continued to put people first and that has definitely encouraged me because I feel the same way, that people should come before programs or test scores or the bureaucracy of the things we have to do. We've got to take care of people first, whether it be our faculty or our kids. Support in those issues, not feeling like I always have somebody to criticize me or judge me, but somebody there to support me and also help through problems. (SMB, 68)

The development of the WS staff has impacted the way the members view their contribution to the school. In viewing *I feel good about my contribution to the school* (*M*=4.55, *SD*=.50), a staff member reflected upon the training (Covey's seven habits and PAWS implementation) and how that impacted in the school setting and beyond:

> Until I really understood and continued to see where that fits in and see how I could apply that here, and how I apply that in the classroom, and how I operate not only here but as an individual, even with my family and those principles we

started-the bells started going off every time that I looked further into it and study

what we're doing; it all makes more sense. As far as a categorical change, that

was the biggest thing that changed how I operated, how I looked at things, how I

made decisions. (SMA, 93)

The Superintendent's behavior has encouraged others to contribute in other ways,

including input through terminology. The staff members new their contributions were

wanted and asked for. As SMC stated:

We might be in a discussion and [Supt.] would say "that would be a good win-

win." We're not thinking that necessarily, we have to come up with a win-win

situation, but just that constant bringing it out. And [Supt.] has also said to us,

"Hey, we have to have a win here." So, the terminology is used on a regular basis-

holding us to that and holding himself to that. And then [Supt.] will say, "How are

we going to do this? How are we going to put this out and get parents to buy into

this? How are we going to get the community to buy into this? (24)

Summary

Included in chapter four were a description and analysis of the data collected to

address three research questions that examined the impact an identified servant leader had

upon a public education (K-12) setting. The Organizational Leadership Assessment

survey was chosen because it allowed organizations to discover how leadership practices

and beliefs impacted the different ways people function within the organization.

Specifically, the survey gave direct attention in measuring the extent to which a servant

leader (a) values people; (b) develops people; (c) builds community; (d) displays

authenticity; (e) provides leadership; and (f) shares leadership (Laub, 1998). A total of 53

staff members for the selected district participated in the survey. Qualitative data obtained through follow-up interviews and observations of 15% of the respondents supported the conclusions found in the quantitative data as well as provided insight concerning the specific impact the identified servant leader, or in this study, the superintendent, had upon the organization and its members.

In the final chapter, the researcher will present an overview of the study including the purpose of the study, the design and procedures chosen, the research questions, and a review of the research findings. Additionally, the chapter will include a discussion of the findings, the recommendations for future research, and a conclusion.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Providing effective leadership in organizations are ongoing challenges. Specific to public schools, this task is gradually increasing as accountability and standards increase. Organization health must be monitored, as it has been linked to leadership (Schein, 1992). Kouzes and Posner (2002) recommended that leadership be viewed as a relationship of service to purpose and service to people. As an extension of transformational leadership, the behaviors of a servant leader and practice of servant leadership may provide guideposts in leading public schools. An introduction to the study and review of related literature were shared in the first two chapters. Next, the methodology of the study was outlined. The presentation and analysis of the data preceded this chapter. In this final chapter, the researcher will present an overview of the study including reviewing the purpose of the study, the research questions, the design and procedures chosen, and findings of the study. Additionally the chapter included a review of limitations, recommendations for future research, and a conclusion.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine how a servant leader impacted a public education (K-12) organization. A single, mixed designed case study was employed to understand the perceptions of specific leadership behaviors of an identified servant leader. Servant leadership provided a theoretical lens which assisted during analysis of data to identify underlying relationships. The following research questions guided the study and were considered throughout the data analysis process:

1. How is servant leadership defined in a public education setting?

2. What does servant leadership look like in a public education setting as viewed by stakeholders?

3. Does the utilization of servant leadership by a public school leader have an impact upon others working within the school organization? And if so, how? (Are servant-led organizations perceived to be effective?)

Design and Procedures

This study was conducted within one rural Midwestern public school district whose superintendent had been identified as a servant leader and met the constraints imposed by the researcher to study the phenomena. The survey and interview questions were used to indicate the level at which the superintendent functioned as a servant leader who had been identified as a school administrator with servant-leader qualities by outside sources. Those sources included a university professor who has researched and presented nationally on servant leadership, the Midwestern state's regional staff development center, and an outside researcher who previously examined the practices of servant leaders. All three sources specifically named two matching servant leaders. To make the final determination, the researcher added the criterion that the individual had to be in the district for more than 10 years in the same capacity so that the impact of the organization is related to the longevity of the leader.

Following the determination of the servant leader, the researcher contacted and gained permission to conduct research within the organization. The study included assessing top leadership (the superintendent), middle leadership (principals and other central office personnel), and varied representatives of the workforce (faculty and staff

members). The researcher distributed 85 OLA surveys to the 130 certified district staff, with 25 surveys randomly given to each of the three building levels (25 elementary, 25 middle, and 25 high school), with an additional 10 surveys for leadership positions. Of the 85 surveys disseminated, 53 individuals chose to participate, accounting for a 62% return rate. The researcher's intention was to have a minimum of 50 participants.

The data was analyzed in a multi-step process to ensure triangulation. First, the results of the *Organizational Leadership Assessment* (Laub, 1998) were computed to determine and identify the level of servant-leader practices within the school organization. The servant leader practices were divided into the sub-scores of: *values people, develops people, builds community, displays authenticity, provides leadership, and shares leadership*. The items were also written from three different perspectives producing three different sections of the instrument: *assessing the entire organization, assessing the leadership of the organization, and assessing from the perspective of the respondent's individual experience.* The data obtained from the OLA were compiled and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 11.0. Descriptive statistics provided a comparison of means. A critical value of .05 determined the level of significance in all statistical procedures. The survey contained 66 items related to leadership impact that required participants to respond to a Likert-type scale. Each item used a five-point frequency scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. All of the six sub-scores revealed high reliability scores along with high correlations between scales.

To buttress the data gathered from the OLA (Laub, 1998), field interviews were conducted as a strategy to gather descriptive data in the subjects' own words so that

insights on perceptions could be interpreted (Bodgan & Biklen, 2003). Six semi-structured, open-ended interviews were conducted by the researcher to allow for elaboration and affective data (see Appendix D, E). Research in the areas of servant leadership (Autry, 2001; Hunter, 2004; Greenleaf, 1977; Laub, 1999; Page & Wong, 1998; Spears, 1995, 1998, 2002; Taylor, 2002) and organizational health were used to develop the interview protocol (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993; Dalin, et al., 1993; Deal & Peterson, 1999; Gruenert, 1998; Maher, 2000; McGill, 2001; Sackman, 1991; Schein, 1992). Field interviews were recorded and transcribed, with interview participants being presented with drafts of the interview transcription to review and revise to enhance credibility and reliability of the collected data. Upon completion of the interviews, it was calculated that 15% of the participants participated in an interview. Researcher bias was controlled through the triangulation of data, with documentary evidence collected to corroborate information from other data sources (Documents) and through observations (See Appendix F) conducted by the researcher.

Findings of the Study

Research questions one and two were answered from the data generated from the field interview questions. Eight WS School District staff members, made up of the superintendent, four administrators, and three staff members/teachers, participated in the interview. The participants represented the staff at various levels (administration, high school, middle school, and elementary school) through implementation of snowball sampling technique (Bogdan & Biklin, 2003). The focus of linked questions one and two respectively, were: *How is servant leadership defined in a public setting?* And, *What does it look like?* The researcher found that though the questions were distinct and

separate, the findings were coupled. In general, servant leaders are guided by a personal

commitment to serve first, and inspire others by building and strengthening relationships

through a shared vision and common values. As a natural extension of transformational

leadership, the following themes were evident from the data: *defining the organization*

through process, connecting to purpose and people, power with versus power over, and

walking the talk.

      Defining the organization through process. The first question, *How is servant*

leadership defined in a public education setting?, may be answered upon the premise of a

way to meet the needs of individuals and organizations while working toward a common

purpose (Hunter, 2004). It became evident during the interview sessions that the

development of the district's guiding principles (the PAWS) and the implementation of

the PAWS were significant in this way. "[Supt.] just tries to have us working toward a

common goal and to try to improve ourselves" (SMG, 39). Stated in the Improvement

Plan Overview (Document B) is the need for each constituent to be mission driven: make

decisions based on a defined purpose. Through retreats, school improvement teams,

vertical and horizontal teams, the Superintendent asked the overarching question of how

the WS School District could and would provide and world-class education. Upon

defining what a world class education was and developing the mission: to improve the

quality of life for everyone through quality education, the Superintendent committed his

service to the mission by identifying and clarifying his role: being responsible for

developing systems, policies, and procedures to accomplish the mission and goals we

have established (Document A). "…it's about the organization, about the PAWS, it's

about beginning with the end in mind and trustworthy type things. So we communicate that" (Supt., 193).

To do this, the Superintendent began to demonstrate *what servant leadership looks like in a public education setting,* or the second question posed by the researcher. The researcher found three common themes within *defining the organization through process.*

Connecting to purpose and people. Servant leaders must place a high premium on language because words are the basic tools of leadership (Autry, 2001); and it is important for the servant leader to help people realize that communication results from human contact and that communication is not necessarily about words. "There is nothing like a personal contact" (Supt., 86). As the contact and communication was made, it was apparent that people had made the connection between themselves and others, and a connection to their purpose. The affective data from the interviews demonstrated the members of the WS School District were aligned to the PAWS because they were invited, it was their purpose for being there, and it was their personal responsibility:

> For change to occur or for change to be real, it's got to come from inside of people and from the desire to change. If it's forced from the outside, it's going to be superficial and temporary. And the long term, where these kids are at, where people are at-10 years from now, 20 years from now, and what kind of citizen they are, what kind of family member they are; those things are what are most important, and that if we do the things to help them become the people they can be: to believe in themselves, to have a positive feeling about themselves and about the school and about the community. (SMB, 80)

Communication of principles and ideals is a common and regular feature. Staff

members discussed the daily affirmations the come from the Superintendent's office via

e-mail. *The Navigator* (Documents C-E) is a monthly communication addressed to the

entire community that conveys the mission, principles, and ideals of the WS organization.

The Superintendent shared an experience that illustrated connecting people and mission

during a budget crunch that was having a negative impact on the morale of the district

members. Through the process of identifying the problem and solutions through the lens

of WS mission and vision, the Superintendent shared the power and its impact:

> …that only comes through communication. That only comes through letting other
>
> people know. At one time I know people said, "I know [Supt.] has a vision for the
>
> district, and I know [Supt.] know where we are going. But we don't know." See,
>
> and what's that say to me? I need to communicate the vision. We're sitting at a
>
> big banquet at [institution] one night, PhD's and sophisticated, and I don't mean
>
> to put them down. A guy says, "What's your biggest challenge?" I said,
>
> "Communicating the vision." He shared he'd never heard that answer, that
>
> everybody says fighting the budget. To me, it's communicating the vision. See, to
>
> me, the best testimonial was three years ago during a budget crunch. They did the
>
> job for me. Those people made me look good. (409)

Power with versus power over. Effective communication also promotes

empowerment, versus the typical hierarchical approach. The Superintendent stated, "In a

high-trust culture, one thing you have to do is share the information so they can be as

well informed as they can be" (165), and that sharing the information also meant

preparing people how to act with that information, or providing training. Bethel (1995)

felt that in training people, giving them new ideas and allowing for experiences meant sharing power as knowledge is true power. *Power with versus power over* emerged as a theme due to the great amount of training, collaborating, and sharing within the organization. As SMC (108) stated:

> …looking at it through other angles, listening to people, trying to see their perspectives, enjoying them as is, looking at the differences and how we can celebrate those differences but at the same time move toward a common goal.

SMA (129) concurred:

> We talk about those things, we may argue about those things, we may violently disagree about some things; but it's always a team decision, even for minute things. But it's big to the people. We try to include the staff and faculty with that. Definitely not authoritarian.

The statements lead the researcher to promote the ideal situation of *power over* by reviewing Greenleaf's (1977) insistence that institutions are brought to a distinguished level of performance when the administration and leadership are designed as a group versus a single individual.

> *Walking the Talk.* Being present may not be enough. Autry (2001) claimed that a servant leader meant having your whole self available, while being aware of self and others. Leaders who know this also know that they must exemplify their expectations to others. This requires them to be the same person at all times, in every circumstance (Autry, 2001; Spears, 2002), which has been interpreted by the WS School District as *Personal Leadership*.

Every individual in the organization is responsible for leading themselves. We

have expanded on this with our definition of the qualities we expect of everyone-

the PAWS (Principles at WS). The PAWS communicate what we expect every

individual to be: trustworthy, responsible, cooperative, compassionate, flexible,

respectful, and mission driven. (Document A)

The Superintendent explained how personal leadership fit in to his role:

…this is first going to help me as a person. I get myself squared away, then I can

get into the interpersonal level and have an influence on other people. I'm not

going to have a very good influence if I have all these personal problems. I think

through all the writing, the Navigator, your personal sides going to show through.

Plus, I just don't stay in the office, I'm out there. Some of those people came in

from other districts when we ask what's, "What's different?" They'll say, "Well,

we see you out there shoveling snow, or I see you out there working on the slide.

That's the superintendent out there, you know." I got criticized for that in the

Marine Corp because they said I was supposed to be giving people orders, but

that's not the way I was raised. I like to lead in front, a little blue collar in that.

But because the comments like that have come back to me that way. I feel they

know me better. And you just have to be there. You can't just say I'm too

important and I've got too many things going on. That's a trap of leadership.

Early on I had that problem. (Supt., 321)

Being true to correct principles is associated with being authentic (Kouzes &

Posner, 2002), and may involve risk and vulnerability, including being open to criticism.

One staff member indicated, "[Supt.] has a tremendous amount of support and respect

from the community, but not everybody likes [Supt.]" (SMA, 118). Members of the staff

and community recognize the end result may not be something they personally wanted,

but recognize that they did have input into how the decision was made, "our opinions are

asked for, and I think they do what they can to please within their realms" (SMG, 47).

Another staff member commented:

> …you might hear a little grumbling out in the parking lot or in the teacher lounge;
>
> but generally speaking, the people that do that, there's enough support that it
>
> usually, just kind of goes away, and those people are in the minority. But, as a
>
> fact, if they truly have a concern, are able to go to him to express it. That's good.
>
> But, I think anytime you are an open person you're going to open yourself up to
>
> that kind of stuff, to criticism. Sometimes we tend to…I know myself, sometimes
>
> I've caught myself. Once I've received some of that criticism or things I didn't
>
> want to hear, I might think twice the next time before I speak up on the criticizing
>
> end of things. But [Supt.] hasn't wavered on that. He continues to ask for input.
>
> (SMB, 53).

The third research question asked, *does the utilization of servant leadership by a*

public school leader have an impact upon others working within the school organization?

And if so, how? (Are servant-led organizations perceived to be effective?). To address

and answer question three, descriptive statistics were computed to determine the results

of the OLA. A rank order of means determined the practices of the identified servant

leader. The OLA scores for WS organization members were combined to calculate the

means and standard deviations for each of the six leadership practices: *Values People,*

Develops People, Displays Authenticity, Builds Community, Provides Leadership, and

Shares Leadership. To be consistent with the researcher's original framework of the study and to be consistent in analyzing the data, the six subscales were decreased to four subscales by combining *Values People* and *Develops People,* and also combining *Provides Leadership* and *Shares Leadership*. Therefore the four subscales being measured were *Values & Develops People, Displays Authenticity, Builds Community,* and *Provides & Shares Leadership.*

Results of the survey indicated the members of the WS school organization were impacted by the behavior of the leader, ranking *Providing & Sharing Leadership* as the highest practice. The second and third ranked practices, respectively, were *Building Community* and *Displaying Authenticity.* The practice of *Values & Develops People* was ranked the lowest. The rankings, based upon a five point Likert-type scale, had a range of .23, indicating the identified leader was essentially balanced in the practices determined by the subscales. Overall, all subscales had a high calculated response, leading the researcher to believe that the identified leader in the study, based upon the respondents, was considered to be a practicing servant leader as determined by the subscales.

Analyzing the participant's perception of their own role in the organization gave clear indication how they were impacted by the leadership of the district. Twelve of the sixty-six questions on the survey asked the participants to view their role in terms of feeling appreciated, being encouraged, trusting leadership, bringing creativity and gifts to work, being listened to and respected, and enjoy working within the organization. Based upon a five point Likert-type scale, the mean score for the twelve items was 4.53. The highest ranked statement was *I enjoy working in this school,* with a mean of 4.83. The lowest ranked statement was *I receive encouragement and affirmation from those above*

me, with a mean of 4.26. Again, the responses to the items, each with a high calculated response, led the researcher to believe that the identified leader in the study was considered to be a practicing servant leader who created and maintains a healthy organization.

The research through interviews and observations corroborate the statistical research. From the development and focus on the organizational design, "There's been a definite change. It's positive. The school system, everything is more positive" (SME, 15); to the entrusting and empowerment of staff, "[Supt.]'s given me a lot of responsibility… [Supt.] led me to a couple resources, then it was up to me to develop the position and the curriculum…" (SMD, 10). The Superintendent encouraged staff members to develop. SMA shared his/her experience of sitting down and discussing what their personal goals and aspirations were, followed by the encouragement to be involved in the leadership academy and principle-centered leadership training.

The impact on the staff was and continues to be a process for the Superintendent, who regularly referenced principle-centered leadership, the subsequent PAWS, and the value of work in the continual creation of a world class education:

> …PAWS has helped us more than anything else. At first, people were hesitant, like…this has got to be a manipulation. It takes many years to establish the fact, no it's not, we treat people that way. That's something you can't do overnight. Of course the business people will tell you that organization change will take 7 to 8 years. Well, in a public entity like a school, 12 to 15. Takes a long time, because people by nature are suspicious. It takes a long time, but even our maintenance people feel respected. Because once we create a culture where there is respect,

people open their eyes to that. The culture works so much better than that… well,

you're an employee of mine, and you get the parking space of the month. All of

those things become mundane and cliché. I say let's be creative. I mean the mug

is great – everybody's got the compass mug, that's an awesome mug, but nobody

needs another mug. (110)

The research indicated that the Superintendent practiced leadership behaviors that

were aligned with the practices of a servant leader. While the Superintendent indicated

there may be servant leader tendencies, the Superintendent preferred to use the term *blue-

collar:*

What I've been complimented on more than anything else, they say, and it's just

my nature, is I'm a blue-collared superintendent. I'll get stressed with that

computer, the budget, things like that and I'll go over and do some landscaping

around the long slide on the playground. It gives me a chance to answer the

question, "What are you doing?" People tell me when they see me doing things

like that they see that I wouldn't ask them to do anything that I wouldn't

do…rather that being aloof and separated and authoritarian and you got to respect

me but I don't necessarily have to respect you. (Supt, 171)

Limitations

As in the vast majority of research, this study included multiple limitations;

despite the limitations, the study was completed with the assistance of others more

experienced in the research field. The limitations to this study were relative to the

geographical area and designs used by the researcher and are indicated as follows:

1. This study was limited geographically to a district in one Midwest state during an academic school year.

2. The district was limited in size, with a total of 53 individuals participating in this study.

3. The administrator (subject) of this study had previously been identified as a servant leader.

4. This study was limited by the degree of reliability and validity of the survey instrument.

5. It was assumed that participants were honest in their responses and interpreted the survey instrument/interview protocol as intended.

6. It was assumed that participants based their responses upon their own experiences.

7. Researcher bias was controlled through triangulation of on-going review of data by an educational researcher.

Recommendations for Future Research

The results of this study did not reveal that servant leadership was more effective than any other leadership style; nor at any time was servant leadership compared to other leadership styles. The purpose of this mixed design study was to examine how a servant leader impacts a public education (K-12) organization. Additionally, this study identified and articulated specific behaviors of an identified servant leader and the impact of those behaviors upon the organization in its entirety and the individuals within the school organization.

Noted limitations included sample size. Therefore, it is recommended that further research involve an expansion of the sample. Expanding the research to a multi-case

study versus a single case study, or conducting the research in a large district, may potentially strengthen the value and contribute to the knowledge base. A related extension may be to examine the impact of servant leadership in suburban and urban school settings.

One of the implications of this study was the impact on organizational health (Schein, 1992). Research should be considered in comparing organizational health of a school setting with an identified servant leader in contrast to the organizational health of a school setting with a non-servant leader to determine if there is any significance.

The identified servant leader in this study happened to be a top administrator figure for the entire district. It is plausible that servant leaders may be serving in other roles within a school setting: principals, teachers, janitors, and aides. The impact of these additional servant leaders may be worthy of research.

Finally, because of the increasing need for accountability, performance, and achievement by students in public schools, according to state and national standards, research is recommended in assessing the impact that servant leadership has upon student learning and achievement. Data found in such a study may or may not promote that student achievement, short and/or long term, is impacted by servant leader behaviors in the school setting.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine how a servant leader impacted a public education (K-12) organization. A single, mixed-design case study was employed to understand the perceptions of specific leadership behaviors of an identified servant leader. Servant leadership, as it applied to a public school setting, was defined and

articulated through qualitative procedures. Through the utilization of the *Organizational*

Leadership Assessment, the sub-scale of *Providing & Sharing Leadership* was ranked as

the highest servant leadership practice that impacted the school organization. The study

confirmed that the selected leader for the study had characteristics of a servant leader in

all areas as measured quantitatively by the survey, and the extent the servant leadership

behaviors impacted the organization and individuals within. Considering the impact on

the organization and the individual members within, it may be necessary to consider

servant leadership as a chosen model and framework within the high stakes

accountability climate faced in education. Indeed, servant leaders may walk the talk,

demonstrate shared leadership, and create the high-trust culture necessary to meet the

increasing demands of *No Child Left Behind*.

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Appendix A

<Date>

<Title> <First Name> <Last Name>
<Position>
<District>
<Address>

Dear <Title> <Last Name>:

I am writing to ask your permission to contact you and members of the faculty and staff of your district regarding participation in my doctoral dissertation research project at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Your district has been selected as the focus of this research because of your leadership behaviors which have been identified to be within a specific leadership style. I believe the information gathered through this study will positively contribute to the body of knowledge regarding effective leadership behaviors and attitudes in public education settings.

Both qualitative and quantitative data will be gathered. Initially, the Organizational Leadership Assessment developed by Dr. James Laub will be given to participants. The assessment will be used to gain insight into leadership behaviors and characteristics of the superintendent from the perception of both the superintendent and faculty members who work in the district. In addition, I will be visiting the district schools and gathering additional data through interviews and observations.

I would really appreciate the faculty and staff members participating in my study. The individual identity of participants and the identity of the participating institutions will not be revealed at any time in my study or in any other future publications. In addition, participants may withdraw at any time without penalty. Upon request, I will provide the results of the study, including OLA scores and associated reports. At all times, confidentiality of individual responses will be protected.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact me via e-mail at janderson@spsmail.org or by phone at (417) 523-5100. Dr. Barbara Martin, my dissertation advisor for this research project may be contacted by e-mail at bnm919f@MissouriState.edu or by phone at 417-836-5212.

If you grant permission for me to contact faculty members of your institution, please fax the form to (417) 523-5195 or grant permission to contact via e-mail.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jason D. Anderson
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia
Principal-Truman Elementary
Springfield Public Schools

I, _____ agree to allow district faculty and staff
to participate in the study of effective leadership practices conducted by Jason D.
Anderson. I understand that:
- Their answers will be used for dissertation research.
- Their participation is voluntary.
- They may stop participation at any point without penalty.
- They need not answer all of the questions.
- Their answers and identity will be kept confidential.

I have read the material above, and any questions I asked have been answered to my
satisfaction. I agree to allow participation of students and teaching professors in this
activity, realizing that they may withdraw without prejudice at any time.

Signed: _____   Date: _____

Appendix B

<Date>

<Title> <First Name> <Last Name>
<Position>
<University>
<Address>

Dear <Title> <Last Name>,

Thank you for considering participation in the study of effective leadership practices demonstrated by your superintendent and the impact that leadership upon a public education setting. This study is being conducted to complete a doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis through the University of Missouri-Columbia.

I am requesting your participation in my study as a faculty and staff member. Your district has been selected as the focus of this research because of your leadership behaviors which have been identified to be within a specific leadership style. Your participation will provide valuable assistance as I examine factors of specific leadership behaviors. Permission to contact you was granted by <superintendent> this fall. I had not contacted you earlier because I was waiting for approval by my dissertation committee and Institutional Review Boards.

Multiple data collection components will be used, including on-campus interviews, administration of the Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) that has been developed by Dr. James Laub, and administered during the on-site visit. The OLA should take approximately ten to fifteen minutes to complete and the interview, if selected, should take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

At this point, I am asking that you complete the informed consent. I would be indebted to you if you would complete the OLA by <date>. Since the population involved in this study is relatively small, a high return rate is important. I realize you are extremely busy, but I would really appreciate your assistance.

Before you make a final decision about participation, please read the following about how your input will be used and how your rights as a participant will be protected:
- There are no foreseeable risks associated with the study.
- You should feel no greater degree of discomfort than is normally experienced in your work.
- Your participation is completely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time without penalty.
- Your individual responses to the survey, as well as the interview, will remain confidential.

- Only aggregate data from the OLA will be shared and reported in the study results.
- At your request, I will provide you results from this study.
- Data will be stored in a locked cabinet in my office for a period of three years after completion of my dissertation. Only my advisor and I will have access to the data.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Internal Review Boards of the University of Missouri and Southwest Missouri State University. The committees believe that the research procedures adequately safeguard the participant's privacy, welfare, civil liberties and rights. The project is being supervised by Dr. Barbara Martin, Doctoral Supervisor, Educational Administration, Missouri State University. If you need further answers regarding research participant's rights, please contact University of Missouri Institutional Review Board at (573) 882-9585 or by e-mail at http://www.research.missouri.edu/web_research/compliance/campus_irb/campusirbpage.html.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact me via e-mail at janderson@spsmail.org or by phone at (417) 523-5100. Dr. Barbara Martin, my advisor's phone number is 417-836-5212 and her e-mail address is bnm919f@MissouriState.edu. Thank you in advance for your assistance with this project.

Sincerely,

Jason D. Anderson
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri – Missouri State University Cohort
Principal, Truman Elementary
Springfield Public Schools

    I, _____ agree to participate in the study of effective leadership practices conducted by Jason D. Anderson. I understand that:
- My answers will be used for dissertation research.
- My participation is voluntary.
- I may stop participation at any point without penalty.
- I need not answer all of the questions.
- My answers and identity will be kept confidential.

I have read the material above, and any questions I asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, realizing that I may withdraw without prejudice at any time.

Signed: _____   Date: _____

Appendix D

Superintendent Interview

1. How do you ensure others are appreciated and respected in this district?

2. What is your responsibility in nurturing the people working in this district?

3. How do you bring others together to identify and work toward common goals?

4. How and why do you exhibit your personal character to others?

5. In what manner do you model the direction you are moving the district?

6. How do you empower others to be leaders in and of themselves within the

   district?

Appendix E

Faculty/Staff and Other's Interview

1. How does the superintendent demonstrate appreciation and respect for you?

2. How are you nurtured and encouraged to develop by the superintendent?

3. In what ways does your superintendent bring people together towards a common goal?

4. What is your impression of the superintendent's demeanor, attitude, and relationship with you?

5. How are you impacted by the example and direction provided by the superintendent's leadership?

6. How are you encouraged to contribute to the leadership of the school?

Appendix F

Leadership Assessment Observation Form

Date:_____   **Time**:_____
Setting:_____
_____

Displays Authenticity (characterized by openness, exhibiting values)
Provides Leadership (characterized by vision, clarifying common purpose)
Shares Leadership (characterized by collaboration, empowerment)
Values People (characterized by trust and respect, care of people)
Develops People (characterized by promoting risk-taking, encouragement)
Builds Community (characterized by building autonomy, utilizing differences)

Appendix G

Appendix H

Documents Collected

Document A   Organizational Design

Document B   District Improvement Plan Overview

Documents C-E   WS <u>Navigator</u> (September, October, November)

Documents F-H   WS <u>Educator</u> (Volume 10, Issues 20-22)

VITA

Jason D. Anderson was born July 26, 1969 in Rexburg, Idaho, the first child of Darold and Luana Anderson. He attended public schools in Michigan, Idaho, and Wyoming before graduating from Westwood High School in Mesa, Arizona. He earned a B.S in Elementary Education from Missouri State University (1994), a M.Ed. in Educational Leadership from Northern Arizona University (1997), and an Ed.S. in Educational Leadership from Missouri State University (2000). As part of the University of Missouri-Columbia statewide cohort program, he completed the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis (2006). He and his wife, Rachelle, have four daughters. He has worked for Springfield Public Schools in Springfield, MO since 1998, serving as a principal since 2000.