

**THE SUPERINTENDENT AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER:
EXPLORING TEACHERS' VALUES AND
PERCEPTIONS OF THE ROLE**

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ABSTRACT

Superintendents play an important role in the achievement of students. Specific instructional leadership behaviors of superintendents and how they are perceived by teachers have received little attention through research on the topic until recently. The focus of this study was to explore teachers' perceptions of the instructional leadership role of the superintendent, and how their beliefs and values about instructional leadership behaviors of the superintendent affect those perceptions. This study also sought to find how teachers' perceptions of the instructional leadership practices of their superintendent may be affected by their own particular experiential factors, such as experience level, teaching discipline and school level. Data for this quantitative study was gathered using a three-part survey, which was completed by teachers from seven component school districts of an upstate Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) regional district. Instructional leadership behaviors of the superintendent were based on Smith and Andrews' (1989) model, within which four constructs of instructional leadership were used to define the superintendent as an instructional resource, resource provider, communicator, and visible presence.

Findings showed a positive correlation between teachers' belief that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent and their willingness to work constructively with a superintendent who demonstrates instructional leadership practices. Teachers' level of experience and school level may also have a relationship with the combined variables of teachers' belief in the importance of instructional leadership and their willingness to work constructively with their superintendent in that role, although no statistical significance could be demonstrated.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

While instructional leadership was once thought to be the domain of the school building principal (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982) instructional leadership practices of the superintendent have become the hallmark of an effective school system leader. Much research has defined the role of principal instructional leadership and student achievement, while considerably less is known about the link between student achievement and the instructional leadership responsibilities of the Superintendent.

Responsibilities of the superintendent have evolved throughout America's educational systems from a role of scholarly teacher to manager to system-wide leader of learning with oversight of curriculum and instruction (Bjork, 2009). Increased governmental pressures have influenced superintendents to act as instructional leaders, and leadership standards have been created by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to guide the state policy makers who are responsible for the preparation and professional development of all educational leaders. The six Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards for School Leaders provide six operational themes in which all school leaders are expected to practice. (CCSSO, 2008). Those broad themes are stated in terms of:

Setting a widely shared vision for learning; developing a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth; ensuring effective management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment; collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and

mobilizing community resources; acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner; and understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, legal, and cultural contexts (CCSSO, 2008, p. 6).

Specifically, the definition of instructional leadership continues to develop for school leaders, whether they are superintendents of large districts with multiple layers of administrative support, or superintendent-principals in small rural districts. Conclusions from a growing body of research indicate that high quality school leadership is essential, and that behind every great teacher is found great leadership (Louis, et. al., 2010).

“Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school related factors that contribute to what students learn at school” (Louis, et. al., 2010, p. 7). While the positive effects of leadership on classroom learning is second only to effective teaching , there is an undeniable correlation between student achievement and district leadership (Marzano & Waters, 2009; Louis, et al, 2010).

Smith & Andrews (1989) describe the characteristics of good instructional leadership which are the hallmark for effective school leaders in their work, *Instructional Leadership: How Principals Make a Difference*. They were early developers of a model for instructional leadership which has resonated throughout the body of research around effective instructional leadership behaviors of educational leaders system-wide (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Murphy, 1990; Weber, 1996; Bredeson, 1996; Blasé & Blasé, 1998). Furthermore, teachers' perceptions of the Superintendent's effective practices within four constructs of instructional leadership may tell us something about the evidence and importance of leadership behaviors of the principal and superintendent for purposes of this study. The four constructs define the instructional leadership practices of the

superintendent as an instructional resource, resource provider, communicator, and visible presence.

This study will include a survey that is designed to explore teachers' perceptions of their superintendent as an instructional resource, resource provider, communicator, and visible presence to learn if these qualities are perceived to be important to teachers.

Teachers provided information about how years of experience, teaching discipline, school level and even gender may affect a relationship between their belief that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent and their willingness to work with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors. This study is an outgrowth of the researcher's bias that teachers expect certain instructional leadership strengths of their principal, consequently those strengths should be present and practiced by superintendents (system leaders) as well. Inherent in both positions are the responsibilities to provide resources, assess and improve instruction, communicate goals for teaching and learning, and promote a positive learning climate (Smith & Andrews, 1989; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Murphy, 1990; Weber, 1996; Bredeson, 1996; Blasé & Blasé, 1998; NAESSP, 2001; CCSSO, 2008; Marzano & Waters, 2009). Furthermore, this study will explore how teacher's perceptions of the superintendent as instructional leader correlate with effective instructional leadership practices.

It is important to understand perceptions held by teachers of the leaders they follow (Leithwood, et. al, 2006). Such perceptions influence “followers” to accept and share a leader’s vision to pursue and accomplish goals in the interest of the school.

Perceptions, while different from concrete observations of behaviors, can provide valuable information about how leaders communicate goals and manage the curriculum

(Hallinger & Murphy, 1987). However, Leithwood and his colleagues (2006) suggest that followers base their perceptions on whatever evidence they have in their specific experience. Followers form opinions of their leaders based upon school conditions that are generally open to the influence of the leader, such as vision, culture, and decision-making processes that are implemented and monitored by the leader (Leithwood, et. al., 2006). The theory of charismatic leadership lends further support to the claim that followers' perceptions are important, and maintains that followers' perceptions of leadership are also tied to the leader's ability to lead the organization during a time of crisis (Yukl, 1998; House, 1977).

Superintendents may use their managerial role to support or influence curriculum and instruction, but effective leadership requires a synthesis of both instructional and transformational leadership to lead systems successfully. In tandem, these leadership practices and behaviors of the superintendent have been shown to build capacity in teachers (Fullan, 2008). Instructional leadership characteristics and behaviors of the superintendent, however, play prominently in the focus of this research. Instructional leadership models are identified and cited to show a common set of behaviors which have been shown to have a correlation between instructional leadership and student achievement. Specifically Smith & Andrews (1989) identify four constructs of instructional leadership important to the work of principal and superintendent alike, which may shape teachers' perceptions of their leaders' effectiveness.

There has been a focus on educational reform for more than twenty-five years since the "Nation at Risk" report was publicized, which claimed that many of our schools were not meeting the needs of the students we serve and the needs of our nation (Colvin,

2008). Researchers and authors have increasingly found that leadership of the superintendent and the principal are key to the success of school reform and the success of teachers who have the most direct impact on student learning.(Elmore, 2000; DuFour, 2002; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood, et. al., 2006; Marzano et. al., 2005; Marzano & Waters, 2009).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore the values and perceptions held by teachers of the superintendent as instructional leader (resource provider, instructional resource, communicator, and visible presence) in component school districts of the same BOCES district.

BOCES, originally designed as a means for districts to share educational services and costs, have continued to evolve in their role as intermediary agencies between New York State Education Department and regional school districts. Formal organization and guidance with regard to government educational mandates, including training and consulting around school improvement initiatives and best practices is an increasingly important role of BOCES (New York State Education Department [NYSED], 2009).

Therefore, individual BOCES component school districts and their leaders and teachers are naturally connected through a common regional culture of professional morays and expectations. As a result, there may be common instructional leadership behaviors among component school district leaders within the same BOCES.

Teachers, likewise, may hold particular common values, beliefs, and perceptions of the instructional leadership of superintendents who are associated through common

guidance by BOCES. Data were gathered through a survey of teachers' perceptions of their superintendent's instructional behaviors

Research Questions

The research questions that drove this study are the following:

- 1a. Are teachers more likely to work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors when they also believe that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent?
- 1b. Do the factors of level of experience, teaching discipline, gender and school level have an effect on teachers' beliefs that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent and about their willingness to work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors?
2. Is experience a factor in how teachers perceive their superintendent as an instructional leader?
3. Is there any difference between core, "essential", special education, and "other" support services teachers in their perception of the superintendent as instructional leader?
4. Is there any difference between teachers at different school levels in their perception of the superintendent as instructional leader?

The superintendent as the system leader must build professional capacity in teachers, who have primary and critical instructional contact with students. Teachers are charged with the important responsibility to deliver curriculum and model learning excellence through appropriately designed high quality instruction. Instructional leadership behaviors of the superintendent, however, may be operationalized differently depending

upon the physical, professional, and socio-economic demographics of a community's school district. In particular, situational factors, such as school level, teachers' level of experience and area of practice may also have an impact on teachers' perceptions of their superintendent's instructional leadership.

There may be a relationship between those perceptions and teachers' beliefs that instructional leadership is an important quality of the superintendent, as well as a stated willingness to work constructively with a superintendent to meet system goals and vision for student learning and achievement.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are used throughout this study. The researcher's intent of each term should be clear to the reader. Both common and unfamiliar words are defined as:

Communicator: This term is applied to the superintendent-leader who has clear goals for the school district and articulates them to teachers (Smith & Andrews, 1989).

Core Subjects: Subjects taught by teachers certified in common branch academic areas, such as English language arts, mathematics, and science.

Essential Subjects: Programs of study or courses taught by certified, non-core academic teachers, in the disciplines of music, art, physical education, library-media, foreign language.

Congruous: An associative word linked to teachers for the purpose of this study who believe strongly that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent and who are very likely to work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors.

Incongruous: An associative word linked to teachers for the purpose of this study who either believe strongly that instructional leader is not an important role of the superintendent or are not likely to work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors.

Instructional leader: School leader, typically the superintendent, who is responsible for, and is characterized by attributes of an instructional resource, resource provider, communicator, and visible presence.

Instructional resource: An educational leader who ensures that teachers have the materials, facilities, and monies necessary to adequately perform educational duties (Smith & Andrews, 1989).

Other Subjects: Student programs provided by teachers certified in instructional areas other than core, special education, and essential subjects, such as Academic Intervention Services (AIS).

Resource provider: An educational leader who actively supports day-to-day instructional activities and programs by modeling desired behaviors and making institutional concerns a priority (Smith & Andrews, 1989).

Special Education Subjects: Instruction delivered to students by special education teachers, providers of related services, or supplementary aids and services.

Superintendent: The school district leader. Position may also be noted as superintendent-principal in smaller districts

Visible presence: An educational leader who engages in frequent classroom and school observations, and is highly accessible to teachers (Smith & Andrews, 1989).

Significance of the Study

School leaders, especially school district superintendents, will find value in this study if they are moved to reflect upon their own instructional leadership behaviors as their teachers perceive them. Important research cited in this study has found a significant relationship between the leadership of the superintendent and student achievement. Prior research also supports that instructional leadership is a specific and important role of the superintendent leadership. This study explores the perceptions held by teachers of the instructional leadership of their superintendent, but primarily helps to define a specific understanding among educators that when teachers believe that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent they will be more likely to work constructively with a superintendent. This information will help to guide superintendents as they consider the professional development of teachers, and the critical role that they play to support and share in the organization's vision and common goals for school reform and improved student success.

Teachers' perceptions about the instructional leadership practices of the superintendent may either originate from objective, observable, and clearly defined behaviors of the superintendent, or from unseen, supposed, and false expectations of effective instructional leadership. Therefore, this study also provides an opportunity for both teachers and superintendents to reflect on specific actions they must take as they work to build effective school systems for students. The relationship between the role of the superintendent as an instructional leader and teachers' values, beliefs, and perceptions around the role is studied in this paper.

Organization of study

This research study is comprised of five chapters. Chapter one is an introduction in which the purpose of the study, behaviors of instructional leaders, and research questions that drove the study is defined and explained. Chapter two is a review of relevant literature on theories of leadership, current and historical roles of the superintendent, constructs of instructional leadership and perceptions of leadership. Chapter three is intended to be descriptive of the methodology used in this research, and is inclusive of information about the sample participants, the survey instrument and its validity, and the collection method and analysis of data.

Chapter four presents the findings of this study and the particular method for data analysis for each research question. Chapter five provides a summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future exploration and study based on the topic of instructional leadership of the superintendent and teachers' perceptions of it.

Limitations of Study

This study may be used to generate valuable discussion around the instructional leadership behaviors of the superintendent and to what extent the teachers' perceptions of those behaviors relate to the successful implementation of change initiatives within the organization. Limitations, however, must be considered with regard to the findings and conclusions of this study. Initially the survey instrument yielded some limitations through its design. For example, an evenly scaled response scale may have provided for more meaningful statistical analysis. The researcher's decision to use an odd number of response categories provided respondents the opportunity to provide neutral answers, whereas an evenly numbered scale would have eliminated opportunities for neutrality,

resulting in different data (Grover, R. & Vriens, M., 2006). The complexity of some survey questions attempted to gather too much information, thereby limiting the usefulness of responses by teachers, either due to possible confusion or response fatigue. Next, one may not make inferences about the perceptions of the general population of teachers based upon the descriptive statistics presented in this study because of limitations of sample size and narrow school district demographics. This study was limited to seven out of 15 school districts of various sizes within a 35 mile radius based upon superintendents consent to allow teachers to participate in the study. At the time of the survey, school districts participating in this study appeared to be engaged in specifically challenging school budget processes during a period of fiscal crisis in upstate New York. Both superintendents' and teachers' dispositions may have affected response rates for both initial consent for district participation and the survey itself.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to the review of relevant literature on instructional leadership and other pertinent theories of leadership, the current and historical roles of the superintendent, and teachers' perceptions of leadership. Specifically, literature around the role of the instructional leader in terms of attributes of leaders as an instructional resource, resource provider, communicator and visible presence will be presented.

Bjork (1993), through his work with effective schools and the leadership roles of the superintendent claimed that it is the superintendent's ability to lead that makes the greatest impact upon the success of the school system as a functional learning community. Numerous researchers have made meaningful arguments about the moderating affects of environmental variables, quality teachers dedicated to their profession, and effective school boards and building principals on student achievement. However, the highly interactive instructional leadership behaviors of the Superintendent and teachers' values and perceptions of them are central to the instructional dynamics of a school (Bjork, 2009).

In their work *Instructional Leadership: How Principals Make a Difference*, Smith and Andrews (1989) describe the characteristics of good instructional leadership that is the hallmark for effective school principals. However, Smith and Andrews' model for instructional leadership, which is based upon their research about instructional leadership behaviors, may be no less appropriate for application to superintendents. Much research has defined the role of Principal instructional leadership on student

achievement, while considerably less is known about the link between student achievement and the instructional leadership responsibilities of the Superintendent.

Definitive characteristics and behaviors of instructional leaders pertain to superintendents as well as principals. Furthermore, teachers' perceptions of the Superintendent's skill and engagement as an effective instructional leaders may tell us something about the evidence and importance of shared leadership between principal and superintendent for purposes of instructional improvement.

Research by Waters and McNulty (2005) (as cited in Marzano & Waters, 2009) has found that there is a moderate level of significant correlation of .25 between principal leadership and average student achievement (Marzano and Waters, 2009). Marzano and Waters (2009) reported that there is a statistically significant correlation of .24 at the .05 level in a meta-analysis through which they sought to find the relationship between district leadership and student achievement,. A central research question in their study also sought to identify specific leadership behaviors of the superintendent that correlate with student achievement. These behaviors resulted in recommendations for five specific areas important for district level engagement, which were “ensuring collaborative goal setting; establishing nonnegotiable goals for achievement and instruction; creating board alignment with and support of district goals; monitoring achievement and instruction goals; and allocating resources to support the goals for achievement and instruction” (Marzano & Waters, 2009, p. 6). Consequently, the instructional practices of teachers that have a direct impact upon student achievement are affected by effective instructional leadership decisions at the top.

Models of Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership may be defined as “anything that leaders do to improve teaching and learning in their schools and districts” (King, 2002, p. 62). Instructional leadership emerged from research on effective schools, and signifies strong, directive approaches to leadership with emphasis on curriculum and instruction, which has become the leadership model of choice among most principals (Edmonds, 1979; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Hallinger, 1992). The most used conceptualization of instructional leadership was formed through research of Hallinger (2000). His model defines three dimensions of the instructional leadership construct: Defining the schools mission; managing the instructional program; and promoting a positive school-learning climate (Hallinger, 2000).

Contemporary definitions of instructional leadership call for all administrators to be ‘learning leaders’, rather than instructional leaders (DuFour, 2002). The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP, 2001), for example, names six responsibilities for leaders of learning communities: making student and adult learning the priority; setting high expectations for performance; gearing content and instruction to standards; creating a culture of continuous learning for adults; using multiple sources of data to assess learning; and activating the community’s support for school success (NAESP, 2001)

There are over 125 studies of instructional leadership models between 1980 and 2000 which have been fashioned from generally acceptable instructional leadership traits (Hallinger, 2000). Three such models are attributed to Hallinger & Murphy (1985), Murphy (1990), and Weber (1996). Each is presented chronologically in the next portion

of this literature review in order to show the evolution of similar behaviors of instructional leaders.

Hallinger & Murphy (1985) collected information from the instructional leadership behaviors of principals, as well as perceptions of school staff and district administration of those behaviors. They created “The Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale”. Three dimensions of instructional leadership became “defines the mission” (framing school goals, communicating school goals); “manages instructional program” (supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating curriculum, monitoring students progress); and “promotes school climate” (protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers, enforcing academic standards, providing incentives for students).

Murphy (1990) frames instructional leadership through a comprehensive synthesis of effective schools studies, consisting of sixteen behaviors within four dimensions of instructional leadership, which are developing mission and goals (framing school goals, communicating school goals); managing the educational production function (promoting quality instruction, supervising and evaluating instruction, allocating and protecting instructional time, coordinating the curriculum, monitoring student progress; promoting an academic learning climate (establishing positive expectations and standards, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers and students, promoting professional development); and developing a supportive work environment (creating a safe and orderly learning environment, providing opportunities for meaningful student involvement, developing staff collaboration and cohesion, securing outside resources in support of school goals, forging a link between the home and the school).

The five dimensions of Weber's (1996) instructional leadership model are "defining the school's mission" (i.e. the instructional leader collaboratively develops a common vision and goals for the school with stakeholders); "managing curriculum and instruction" (i.e. the instructional resources and support in the use of instructional best practices – modeling and providing support in the use of data to drive instruction); "promoting a positive learning climate" (i.e. the instructional leader promotes a positive learning climate by communicating goals, establishing expectations, and an orderly environment); "observing and improving instruction" (i.e. the instructional leader observes the improves instruction through the use of classroom observation and professional development opportunities; "assessing the instructional program" (i.e. the instructional leader contributes to the planning, designing, administering, and analysis of assessments that evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum). Bredeson's (1996) model for instructional leadership is closely related with Weber's (1996), who suggested that there are four instructional leadership roles for superintendents to engage in: Instructional visionary; collaborator; supporter; and delegator.

Blasé & Blasé (1998) suggest behaviors for instructional leaders to enhance professional development for school staff: Emphasize the study of teaching and learning; support collaboration among educators; develop coaching relationships among educators; use action research to inform instructional decision making; provide resources for redesign of programs; apply the principles of adult growth, learning, and development at all phases of the staff development program (Blasé & Blasé, 1998).

The superintendent is the instructional leader of a school district, and has the primary responsibility to ensure that effective teaching and learning processes are in

place and evolving in a positive direction. Superintendents preside over county, district, city, and even state school systems. In some school districts, depending upon size, the superintendent also serves in the capacity of principal.

Smith and Andrews' (1989) model summarizes the dimensions from other models, but in a concise way that shows that the responsibilities of the superintendent and principals have both dependent and significant similarities. Based upon a comparison of instructional leadership models, which includes suggested behaviors for both superintendents and principals, Table 1 compares leading researchers' models for instructional leadership.

Table 1

Comparison of Leading Instructional Leadership Models

Smith & Andrews (1989)	Hallinger & Murphy (1985)	Murphy (1990)	Weber (1996)	Bredeson (1996)	Blasé & Blasé (1998)	NAESSP (2001)	Marzano & Waters (2009)
Resource provider	Manages instructional program	Managing the educational production function	Managing curriculum and instruction	Supporter	Provide resources for redesign of programs	Making student and adult learning the priority;	The use of resources to support goals for achievement and instruction
Instructional resource		Developing a supportive work environment	Observing, assessing, improving instruction	Delegator	Develop coaching relationships among teachers Apply the principles of adult growth Use action research to inform	Creating a culture of continuous learning for adults’ Using multiple sources of data to assess learning; Gearing content and instruction to standards’	Monitoring goals for achievement and instruction
Communicator	Defines the mission	Developing mission and goals	Defining the School’s Mission	Instructional visionary	Support collaboration among teachers Emphasize the study of teaching and learning	Activating the community’s support for school success Setting high expectations for performance;	The goal setting process, including non-negotiable goals for achievement and instruction Advocate board alignment with goals
Visible presence	Promotes school climate	Promoting an academic learning climate	Promoting a positive learning climate	Collaborator			

The models in Table 1 present contributions by researchers to the topic of instructional leadership qualities and practices of the principal and superintendent. Descriptions of each model show connections to similar content found in the dimensions of instructional leadership by Smith and Andrews (1989). Smith and Andrews' (1989) model contains four constructs for instructional leadership that is inclusive of the dimensions of nearly all other research-based models. It addresses important behaviors, roles and expectations of the twenty-first century instructional leader. That is to say those effective instructional leaders are resource providers, instructional resources, communicators and maintain a visible presence for their faculty.

Leadership Theories

Bennis (1994) comments on reasons why leaders matter to the health of effective organizations:

First they are responsible for the effectiveness of organizations. The success or failure of all organizations...rests on the perceived quality at the top...Second...we need anchors in our lives...a guiding purpose. Leaders fill that need. Third, there is a pervasive, national concern about the integrity of our institutions (p. 15).

The roles of twenty-first century public school system leaders are defined through a wide range of leadership theories and guided principles. There has been much research connecting effective schools to the role of building principal (Edmonds, 1979; Morris, 1979; Peterson, 1981; Wolcott, 1973), but research linking the superintendent and district performance has been, until recently, more sparse and less conclusive (Crowson, 1987; Borst, 1994; Bjork, 1993). There is no single leadership theory that is appropriate for all

schools and leadership must be studied with reference to school context (Hallinger, 2003).

Leadership behavior theory supports the belief that there are identifiable leadership behaviors that distinguish leaders from non-leaders. Yukl (1998) found from over 1800 behaviors in an influential leadership behavior questionnaire instrument, the Leadership Behavior Descriptive Questionnaire (LBDQ) developed at Ohio State University, that there exists but two broad categories of leadership behaviors – “initiating structure” and “consideration” (Yukl, 1998). He explains that “initiating structure” is a leader’s effort to establish a line of separation between him and those who work under him through clearly defined protocol. “Consideration”, conversely, refers to more personable, inconclusive behavior which indicates a desire on the part of the leader for warmth, trust, and mutual respect.

Contingency theory is another attempt to explain how a leader might lead across situations or events that call on specific leadership skills to help to guide subordinates through specific crises. Path-goal theory, a classification within contingency theory, posits that a leader influences the satisfaction or motivation of subordinates (House, 1977), and demonstrates a causal relationship between subordinate and leader, which directs specific leadership behaviors for a specific outcome (Yukl, 1998).

Other leadership theories help to explain leaders’ behaviors and may affect the perceptions held by teachers of them. Four such theories include charismatic leadership, transformation leadership, transactional leadership, and distributed leadership.

Charismatic leadership theory is based upon the followers’ perception of a leader’s ability to lead and develop hope for positive change through vision during

periods of crisis. A profound allegiance is formed toward the leader (Yukl, 1998; House, 1977).

Transformational leadership is characterized by a leader's intentions to stimulate "followers' efforts to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways" (Bass & Avolio, 1994, p 3). Leaders demonstrating transformational leadership traits welcome differences of opinion, and extend support, encouragement, and even autonomy to transcend the idea of 'top-down' (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

By contrast transactional leadership focuses on a supervisor-subordinate relationship with emphasis on the personal status quo of the leader. "The object of such leadership is an agreement on a course of action that satisfies the immediate, separate purposes of both leaders and followers" (Keeley, 1998, p. 113).

First conceptualized in the 1970's and '80's, transformational leadership, in contrast to transactional leadership, was embraced in opposition to the 'top-down' characteristics of instructional leadership models from the effective schools research (Hallinger, 2003). Transformational leadership is considered to be a 'bottom-up' approach, consequently 'transformational' in the relationships between administration and staff (Hallinger, 2003; Marzano & Waters, 2009). When teachers feel that they are engaged in the educational process through transformative leadership practices of the superintendent they are likely to respond with efforts to create positive change (Fullan, 2005).

Instructional Leadership and Educational Leadership Standards

The Interstate School Leaders Licensure consortium (ISLLC), governed by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), was founded in 1994 to set guiding principles for school leadership based on the knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning. The advent of increased national attention on standards calling for schools to be measured by Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) also called for greater accountability for school leaders to improve their focus on student learning. The CCSSO called for standards which would:

acknowledge the changing role of the school leader; recognize the collaborative nature of school leadership; be high, upgrading the quality of the profession; inform performance-based systems of assessment and evaluation for school leaders; be integrated and coherent; be predicated on the concept of access, opportunity, and empowerment for all members of the school community (CCSSO, 2008, p. 8).

Consequently six ISLLC standards came from these guiding principles.

Three of these standards, especially pertinent to district level instructional leadership pose that educational leaders who are able to promote support for a shared vision of learning within the school community; manage resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment; and promote and sustain a system for student and teacher growth show strong instructional leadership (CCSSO, 2008, p. 7).

The central tenets of the ISLLC standards were developed for use as guidance by national policy-makers to measure leadership effectiveness and are applicable to all school leaders (Jackson & Kelley, 2002). They can help both school and district

leadership alike to progress to higher levels of effectiveness (Murphy, et. al., 2000). In the eyes of some academic critics, however, the standards are viewed to be without credibility because they are non-empirical in nature, nor are they research-based (English, 2000). They rest upon practices observed in successful schools and through investigations of those who lead them (Murphy, 2005).

Historical Perspectives of the Role of Superintendent

Since the inception of the role, the responsibilities of the superintendent have changed with the evolution of American public school design. Early duties included observing classes, employing teachers, conducting faculty meetings, assisting with textbook selection, disciplining children, and conducting meetings with parents and teachers. Those defined as school superintendents in early America held clerical duties at the pleasure of the board of education, were financial officers, and maintained the school's physical plant (Cuban, 1976).

Callahan (1966) defined the evolution of the position of superintendent in four stages. The four periods span post-civil war America to 1910, when the superintendent was viewed as a scholarly leader and 'teacher of teachers'; 1910-1930, a period in which the superintendent primarily operated as a business manager; 1930-1954 saw the superintendent as an instructional leader within a democratic process and institution; and 1955-1966, during which the superintendent felt obligated to apply social science principles to his administrative work (Callahan, 1966).

Since the 1960's schools and their superintendents began to experience pressure for greater accountability, and by the end of the decade the position of United States Secretary of Education had been established (A Nation At Risk, 1983). Hundreds of

research studies began the task of identifying how best to recognize and meet new levels for accountability, and *A Nation At Risk* (1983) stressed the role of the principal, and less so the superintendent, as the administrator responsible for creating a culture of school improvement and reform. However, by the early 1990's superintendents were virtually split in their belief that they should be primarily a manager or leader, responsible for school improvement. Carter et al. (1997) sought to study how superintendents view the effect of their own personal dispositions and beliefs related to their roles. It was discovered that superintendents either viewed themselves as managers or leaders, depending largely upon their age in the profession. Superintendents over the age of 45 saw themselves as managers, while those under 45 saw themselves as leaders. Leaders address change and movement. Managers seek to maintain the status quo in an orderly fashion.

Johnson (1996) conducted a three year study, from 1989-1992, in which she found that superintendents must be able to diagnose their school's educational needs. They need to have a working knowledge of curriculum and instruction that allows them to do so (Johnson, 1996). The American Association of School Administrators (AASA), in 1993 published professional standards for the superintendency, in which eight standards signify the call for competencies required of every practicing superintendent who wishes to be effective. They are leadership and district culture; policy and governance; communication and community relations; organizational management; curriculum planning and development; instructional management; human resources management; and values and ethics of leadership.

Political and governmental pressures, expectations for higher visibility, and greater instability in school finances within the decade from 1990-2000 correlated with demands on all superintendents to spend more effort as a leader of instruction (Kultgen, 2010). The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), passed by congress in 2001, called for increased measure of student achievement through testing and expectations for all schools to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Superintendents have the responsibility to lead their districts to 100% proficiency for all student sub-group populations by the year 2014 (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2001) and they have been charged to pay great attention to instructional leadership (Kultgen, 2010).

Current View of Superintendent Leadership

The current view of superintendent leadership is one that expects the superintendent to play many roles in the function of a school district – community leader, financial manager, district manager - but no role is more important than that of instructional leader (Karbula, 2009). The superintendent can be regarded as a teacher both in and out of the classroom, guiding staff to new understandings and strategies for improvement (Cuban, 1988). Superintendents may use their managerial role to support or influence curriculum and the instructional program if that is the role that they will assume, but he or she must create a culture for establishing “a shared vision, common goals and encouraging leadership throughout the organization” (Bjork, 1993, p. 257).

As change masters effective instructional leaders are able to implement and monitor change processes as a means of ensuring improved student’s achievement. They foster a sense of “buy-in” from stakeholders who are enlisted to serve the goals of the organization and work through change under the direction of the principal or

superintendent (Smith & Andrews, 1989). In order to pay consideration to the feelings of parents, teachers, and the general public the instructional leader must be able to stimulate and manage change, and present a well-prepared plan for change with conviction, and without defensive response to initial fear (Kotter, 2002; Baldrige & Deal, 1975; Norton et. al., 1996; Carter & Cunningham, 1997). It is through sensible planning and communication that the instructional leaders are able to guide followers to “hear more clearly any direction for change” (Kotter, 2002, p. 88), thus develop a continuous process for planning that includes those responsible for implementing change. Through maintaining the practice of transformational leadership principles, staff will be inspired to develop a collective sense of efficacy. They will feel empowered, having developed their own leadership skills to act together to create meaningful change (Fullan, 2005).

Practices of ‘transformational leadership’, ‘instructional leadership’, and ‘distributed leadership’ are helping superintendents and principals to meet standards for accountability (Johnstone, et. al., 2009). Effective leadership requires a synthesis of both transformational and instructional leadership, and the job of an instructional leader is to change the culture of a school or district.

Research-based innovations like ‘professional learning communities’ help to build a positive school culture that can communicate ‘this is the way we do things around here’ (Hallinger, 2003). Curriculum and instruction are referred to by Murphy, Hallinger, and Peterson (1985) as the “technology of schooling”, and are a priority of superintendents who lead instructionally effective school districts (Murphy, et. al., 1983; Murphy et. al., 1985).

Superintendent as an Instructional Leader

Instructional leadership has been defined as a blend of supervision, curriculum development and staff professional development (Smith and Andrews, 1989). While the superintendent is challenged to manage the school district, usually with little time and energy to provide instructional leadership (Wirt & Christovich, 1989; Pitner & Ogawa, 1981), he or she is expected to set the vision and mission for the school district with attention to the viewpoints of stakeholders which often conflict (Lee, 2005).

Marzano and Waters (2009), through a quantitative meta-analysis, have identified five instructional leadership behaviors of the school superintendent which have a significant correlation to student achievement:

The goal setting process; creation of non-negotiable goals for achievement and instruction; board alignment with and support for district goals; monitoring goals for achievement and instruction; and the use of resources to support goals for achievement and instruction (Marzano & Waters, 2009, p. 6).

The superintendent's responsibilities as an instructional leader can be measured, in part, through how much autonomy is provided by him or her to the building principal. Research has traditionally supported that change must be carried out in schools where actual student learning happens (Lee, 2005). Principals, therefore, are held accountable by the superintendent and the constituent members of the schools in which they serve as leaders. The leadership responsibilities of the principal and superintendent are overlapping, but exist in "accountability-driven context" (Lee, 2005, p. 3, 4) that may confine much of the innovative work to the principal and the school site. As stated earlier there are comparatively few studies which clearly guide and inform the role and

behaviors of the superintendent as instructional leader, curricula developer and provider of instructional models (Carter, et al., 1997).

Superintendent as Resource Provider

Successful school districts have superintendents who think of faculty as the “agents of change” for themselves, and hold them responsible as such (Carter and Cunningham, 1997, p. 6). Principals and superintendents are the central agents of change in a school system for improving performance, but have reduced autonomy in their instructional decision-making due to governmental controls over how funding must be allocated (Johnstone, et al, 2009). Therefore instructional leaders are required to “demonstrate effective use of time and resources” (Smith & Andrews, 1989, p. 9).

Rozenholtz (1989) found six specific district-level practices which were found to be important factors in motivating teachers to improve instruction, three of which were collectively-set learning goals, professional development opportunities and “global monitoring” of school status. Such “global monitoring” includes supervision conferences and instructional interactions on the part of the instructional leader. As the chief teacher, the superintendent must demonstrate the successful application of district personnel policies for evaluation, and must be able to articulate problems, provide suggestions, give feedback and solicit the advice and opinions of teachers (Schlechty & Joslin, 1986; Carter, et. al., 1993). These instructional leadership behaviors identified by Schlechty & Joslin (1986) and Carter, et. al. (1993) encourage a collective effort toward improvement (Smith & Andrews, 1989; Blasé & Blasé, 1998; Carter & Cunningham, 1997).

Marzano and Waters’ (2009) research agrees with prior research of Hanushek (1996) and Greenwald, Hedges, and Laine (1996) that student achievement is tied to the

district's allocation of resources, and not necessarily per pupil expenditure. A study by Miller (2002) supports this research, and specifically makes the claim that “funding programs and strategies to reduce average class size in lower grades, developing and funding public pre-kindergarten programs, and providing teachers with increased and flexible resources for teaching” are ways in which school districts should allocate financial resources for maximum impact (Miller, 2002, p. 3).

Marzano and Waters' (2009) suggest that recommendations for school reform by DuFour, Eaker, and DuFour (2005) for professional learning communities are not easily implemented because there is little time outside the classroom for teacher professional development and planning. The benefits of deep implementation of professional learning communities for school improvement are challenged by a heavy teaching load. Lightening that load may be one way in which U.S. districts could allocate resources to provide more time for teacher planning and collaboration (Marzano and Waters, 2009). Teacher's input, therefore, is important when designing staff development, and Instructional leaders need to participate in the staff development that is being provided on some level to support professional district goals. (Blasé & Blasé, 1998; Brown & Hunter, 1986).

Superintendent as Instructional Resource

Specific research about the superintendent's role as an instructional resource does not exist, and extremely limited research can be found about the principal as an instructional resource. However, the ability of instructional leaders to provide teachers with instructional strategies is essential for school improvement (Smith & Andrews, 1989). The qualities of a principal as an instructional resource intimate that he or she is a model

for the instructional behaviors that are desired, takes an active role through participation in professional development activities, and makes the instructional needs of the school a top priority (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005).

Hallinger (2000) proposed three dimensions of instructional leadership, which are “defining the school’s mission”, “Managing the curriculum”, and “promoting a positive school-learning climate”. “Managing the curriculum” contains three leadership functions that are characteristic of the role of an instructional resource: “supervising and evaluating instruction”, “coordinating the curriculum”, and “monitoring student progress”. These leadership behaviors are key responsibilities of the instructional leader, and contribute directly to improved instruction (Hallinger, 2000).

Other researchers have identified and defined important tasks of supervision, such as direct assistance, group development, staff development, curriculum development, and action research (Glickman, [1985] as cited in Blasé & Blasé, 2000). Pajak (1989) listed twelve supervision practices in order of importance: supervision, staff development, instructional program, planning and change, motivating and organizing, observation and conferencing, curriculum, problem solving and decision-making, service to teachers, personal development, community relations, and research and program evaluation.

Elmore (2000) stated that leaders must “lead by modeling the values and behavior that represent collective goods” (p. 21). It should also be expected that leaders model learning that they expect of others, and that they “should be doing and should be seen doing that which they expect of others” (Elmore, 2000, p. 21).

Effective superintendents set and monitor non-negotiable goals for achievement and instruction (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). Marzano, Waters, & McNulty

(2005) findings gain support from an earlier study by Englert, et al. (2003), which concluded through their study of how districts implement systems for data and accountability use, that administrators have “an important responsibility to teachers...in providing leadership on assessment issues” (p. 2). Measuring and interpreting students’ learning data is a critical requisite for instructional leaders, and the use of data from multiple sources inform educators in their curriculum and instructional decisions (Englert et al., 2003). Copland and Knapp (2006) remark that “In order to determine whether this is happening, leaders at all levels of the school system will need to measure what and how much students have learned” (Copland and Knapp, 2006).

Superintendents need to possess an understanding of curriculum and instruction that allows them to be critical diagnosticians of local educational needs (Boone, 2001) in order to display competence in his/her ability to set and support a well-designed curriculum (Murphy & Hallinger, 1986). They also bear a responsibility to develop conditions for individual and collective learning to take place, and foster professional accountability for principals and teachers by investing in the organizational structure that will support such accountability (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Elmore, 2000). Muller (1989) defined eleven tasks that support and extend Smiths’ & Andrews’ (1989) claim that effective instructional leaders support advantageous scheduling, take special care in teacher assignment, involve themselves in the instructional program, set expectations “for continuous improvement” and support “well-defined curricular program”. Muller (1989) also suggests that priorities are established in support of instructional goals and objectives by the school leader, and that he or she has the responsibility to ensure best practices and appropriate instructional methodologies that serve a diverse student population.

Superintendent as Communicator

Communication has been an important leadership skill of the superintendent from the beginning, but it should not be supposed that everyone in that role can communicate effectively (Kowalski, 2005; McCroskey, 1982). A limited body of research on the communication skills of the superintendent has been conducted, however, it is understood that the connection and development of effective communication between superintendents and stakeholders in organizations is critical (Kowalski, 2005).

Communication through actions and good judgment are just as important as words (Hoyle, Bjork, Collier, & Glass, 2005), according to standards for communication by the superintendent developed by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA). McCroskey (1982) warns, however, not to base perceptions and measurement of the superintendent as a communicator solely on behavior (McCroskey, 1982).

The connection between the superintendent's ability to communicate and change-resistant cultures is inextricably linked (Hall, 1997; Fullan, 2001). Those who can not engage stakeholders in meaningful dialogue, but employ a one-way, directive approach will not be productive (Sarason, 1996). Discussions around reform will not be productive without the skills to guide participants to believe that change or improvement is needed. Therefore, superintendents must engage all stakeholders in discussions around the issues, and master the skills of conflict resolution, mediation and issues around specific recommendations for teaching (Sarason, 1996). It is an able leader who can work effectively with faculty and staff to form the foundation for professional learning relationships that support the leader's ability to communicate a clearly held academic mission to staff (Smith and Andrews, 1989; Bennis, 1994; Hallinger, 2003).

Today schools are places of collaboration, and shared decision-making is the goal of professional learning communities in which instructional leadership is shared with teachers through coaching, reflection, and “collegial investigation” (Blasé & Blasé, 1998). Directives and criticisms are no longer a focus in administrator and teacher relations. Instead they work together as a community of learners (Blasé & Blasé, 1998).

Real benefits of building such a community of learners in which collaboration and shared decision-making among school administrators and teachers has been experienced through large-scale school reform efforts. Tony Alvarado, San Diego City School District’s chancellor of instruction during the 1998 reform efforts of superintendent Alan Bersin, set out to work among stakeholders, specifically teachers, to make improvements through professional reform, rather than hierarchical reform. Classroom teaching strategies are based upon the research upon which they rest, not from a top-down directive from the district office (Darling-Hammond, et al, 2005). Findings from the study of San Diego City School District’s reform showed that the invitation for teachers to participate in the system-wide approach to school reform resulted in measurable improvements in teaching quality, higher levels of student learning and greater efficacy in both teachers and principals (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2003). While responses to new norms and understanding of professional practice required for meaningful school reform varied, the notion of a collective approach to responsibility for reform was an appropriate communication method when working with teachers and principals (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2003).

Spoken language by leaders, in addition to system-wide designs to improve communication can offer a dialogue that has a powerful impact on instructional behaviors

(Blasé & Blasé, 1998). When the instructional leader is able to speak and write clearly and concisely, and when he/she acts as a facilitator and supportive force, instructional behaviors of staff are powerfully impacted (Blasé & Blasé, 1998). Good communicators demonstrate the “ability to use a variety of group process skills in interaction with” all stakeholders (Smith & Andrews, 1989).

Superintendent as a Visible Presence

School districts that are instructionally effective reflect the importance of the culture-building priorities of the superintendent (Hallinger & Murphy, 1982). Hentschke, Nayfack, and Wohlstetter (2010) explored how school size influenced superintendent leadership strategies, reform initiatives and personal behaviors through a case study of five effective superintendents. Each superintendent commented that having access to school sites through campus visits, paired with their own interest in responsible data-driven decision-making, brings focus to the topic of accountability (Hentschke, Nayfack, & Wohlstetter (2010). There was no difference between small and large urban school districts in the accomplishment of school reform goals and initiatives. However, smaller urban school superintendents tended to adopt a system-wide approach, while larger urban schools allowed for site-based decision-making to realize the district vision for school reform. Furthermore, the superintendent’s visible presence in schools had less to do with their desire to be visible, and more about the potential inherent challenges of school size and span of control (Hentschke, Nayfack, & Wohlstetter, 2010)

. An earlier study by Petersen (1999) reported that high visibility was cited by the participating superintendents in the study to be one of four important responsibilities of superintendent instructional leadership. High visibility was perceived by the

superintendents in the study to “demonstrate teacher support; monitor classroom instruction; and get a first hand account of what was going on...” (Petersen, 1999, p. 7). The instructional leaders who is “visible throughout the school” (Smith and Andrews, 1989) is one who is seen to be directly involved in the technical core operations of the district, regularly inspecting curriculum and instruction in operation (Murphy & Hallinger, 1986).

Teachers' Perspectives on the Superintendent's Role as Instructional Leader

Little research has been conducted to study how teachers’ perceptions of the superintendent as an instructional leader are formed. There is no research that studies how those perceptions affect teachers’ willingness to work constructively with the superintendent to accomplish district goals for student learning.

The superintendent is influenced by interests, training, and background, which ultimately impacts how a superintendent sees his/her role as an instructional leader (Norton, et. al., 1996, p. 249). Likewise, teachers’ values and beliefs are personally formed of their leaders, in general, from their own similar experiences (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997). Three teacher demographic categories have been shown to influence teachers’ initial impressions of their leadership, according to Leithwood and Jantzi (1997). They are teachers’ years of experience, age, and gender. The school level at which teachers work and school size are factors that contribute to more accurate perceptions of their leaders (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997).

Blasé and Blasé (1998) published the first in-depth, empirical report designed to address actual experiences of teachers from instructionally focused interactions. A primary research question asked for teachers’ perceptions of principals’ characteristics

that they felt influenced their instructional work the most. A second research question addressed the effects of these characteristics on teachers' instruction. In general, Blasé & Blasé found that a principal's high visibility, authentic praise, and support for teacher autonomy influences teachers and their instruction (Blasé and Blasé, 1998).

Marzano and Waters (2009) addressed the common misperception that superintendents, on average, spend only 2-3 years in any one district. A bonus finding from their study, which reported the link between superintendent tenure and student academic achievement (p. 9), established that the average tenure of a superintendent in a single district is 5-7 years. LaRocque and Coleman (1988) reported that "Superintendent leadership is the single most important factor in creating a positive district ethos". Ethos is described by Coleman and LaRocque (1990) in terms of the attitudes teachers have as they work with the organization, and the effect those attitudes have on the quality of that work (Coleman & LaRocque, 1990). Six components of a positive ethos are described as "paying attention to instructional issues; requiring school accountability; managing change or improvement; eliciting commitment; treating members and clients with consideration; and gaining community support (Coleman & LaRocque, 1990, p. 4). It is this concept of ethos that can be defined as combined multiple interactive factors and standards of the school district which influence the district's quality and level of performance (Rutter, et. al., 1979; Sergiovanni, 1982).

It should be considered that in smaller school settings a leader, whether serving in the capacity of superintendent; superintendent-principal; or principal, may be able to spend more time on curriculum and instruction than in larger schools (Schlechty & Joslin, 1986, p. 4). Through an examination of several research studies on the instructional

responsibilities of the superintendent, researchers Petersen and Barnett (2003) concluded that superintendents have an influence over “the views of school board members and others by articulating and demonstrating involvement, a sincere interest in the technical core of curriculum and instruction and viewing it as their primary responsibility” (Petersen & Barnett, 2003, as cited in Kowalski, T.J. (2006, p. 5). While instructional leadership responsibilities are similar to all superintendents, the management responsibilities in urban and rural school districts are often dissimilar (Kowalski, T.J., 2006).

Parallel Instructional Leadership Behaviors of the Principal and Superintendent

Several researchers have posed the question of whether there exist parallel leadership behaviors that apply to both principal and superintendent (Muller, 1989; Peterson et al, 1987; Carter, et al., 1997). A study by Leithwood and Steinbach (1989) sought to examine this relationship. Leithwood and Steinbach used a previously established framework for principal leadership behaviors for superintendents, much the same as this researcher does in this research project. What they found was that there are similarities as well as differences in the responsibilities of the superintendent and principal. For example, differences were marked by the scope of the problem solving resources available to superintendents as compared to principals. While the superintendent’s and principal’s work environment differ, there are common threads between leading a school and leading a district, which define expectations for setting goals, establishing standards and insuring consistency in curricula and teaching approaches (Cuban, 1988, as cited in Carter, et. al., 1993, p. 141).

While models of instructional leadership of the 1980's were considered to be principal-centered, current research expands the role of instructional leadership to include superintendents and teachers, as well (Elmore, 2000). "Instructional leadership is the glue that keeps things on track" (Lashway, 2002, pp. 4). Ever-increasing demands for educational accountability from the public for student achievement have consequently brought accountability from instructional leadership to the fore, which includes both district and building administrators (Heck, 1992). Principals must bring strong leadership to their schools, but must also understand the dependency of their actions to the district's mission. They work in collaboration with the superintendent to bring about improvement.

While instructional leadership was once thought to be the domain of the elementary principal (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982), setting goals, establishing standards, selecting and supervising staff, insuring constancy in curriculum and teaching approaches have become benchmarks of instructionally active superintendents (Cuban, 1988). The vast majority of superintendents have come to the position from the role of building administrator and teacher, and have the desire to spend a majority of time on instructional issues (McAdams, 1995). The managerial demands of the superintendency limit the time that may actually be spent in the realm of curriculum and instruction (Bredeson & Kose, 2007). However recent research suggests that the role of superintendent has expanded to include instructional leadership, and the superintendent take greater responsibility for student achievement (Marzano & Waters, 2009; Fullan, 2005). "The current climate and emphasis on the reform and restructuring of the United

States' educational system has placed an enormous amount of political pressure on schools to demonstrate effective leadership at the district level" (Petersen, 2002, p. 159).

CHAPTER III

Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology used in this research, and includes information about the sample participants, the survey instrument and its validity, and the collection method and analysis of data.

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore the values and perceptions held by teachers of the role of the Superintendent as Instructional Leader. The researcher developed the instrument used for this study, which was a survey (see Appendix E) comprised of forty-seven questions piloted by diverse panel of highly qualified teachers to establish face validity. The pilot focused on f, which is helpful in the task of operationalizing the research instrument for its intended use and provides an indication that it is an appropriate translation of the construct it intends to measure (Trochim, 2011). The survey was administered via a web-based version through Survey Monkey to teachers in seven component school districts within an upstate New York Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES).

Research Questions

Five research questions were designed to to measure teachers' perceptions based upon four key constructs of instructional leadership as suggested by Smith & Andrews (1989). These constructs pertain to the role of the superintendent as instructional leader and resource provider; instructional resource; communicator; and visible presence.

- 1a. Are teachers more likely to work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors when they also believe that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent?

- 1b. Do the factors of level of experience, teaching discipline, gender and school level have an effect on teachers' beliefs that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent and about their willingness to work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors?
2. Is experience a factor in how teachers perceive their superintendent as an instructional leader?
3. Is there any difference between core, "essential", special education, and "other" support services teachers in their perception of the superintendent as instructional leader?
4. Is there any difference between teachers at different school levels in their perception of the superintendent as instructional leader?

Design

This is a quantitative study designed to answer five specific research questions. Research questions 1a and 1b asked for the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their willingness to follow an instructional leader. Research questions two through four sought to find the associations between teachers' perceptions and particular demographics such as gender, school level, years of experience, and certification area. The researcher sought to establish statistically significant conclusions about the perceptions of teachers in component districts within a regional Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). The study included a representative sample from that population of teachers.

Population and Sample

The entire teacher population within the regional BOCES district numbers over fourteen-hundred full time and part time teachers in fifteen component school districts. Superintendents in each of the fifteen component school districts were contacted to seek permission for their teachers to participate in this study through a cover introductory letter and letter of intent designed by the researcher.

Seven superintendents representing seven school districts within the regional BOCES chose to respond favorably to the researcher's request for participation. Therefore, 848 full-time teachers, varied in their years of teaching experience, teaching discipline, gender school level, were the sample for this study.

With permission from each district superintendent an electronic survey was sent to each teacher of the seven component school districts from e-mail distribution lists provided by participating school district central offices or through the BOCES list-serve. Of the 848 e-mails sent 132 were blocked because of a variety of technical errors. One-hundred-sixty-five teachers responded to the survey from a final sample of 716 with a response rate of 23%. Responses were anonymous, and no request was made of the participants to name either their school, school district, or their superintendent. A link to the electronic survey was e-mailed to teachers via distribution lists provided by each participating school district.

Instrumentation

The survey instrument used for this study was designed by the researcher. It has three sections. The first section asked for teachers' demographical data; the second section elicited teachers' understanding and beliefs around instructional leadership; and

the third section asked teachers to indicate perceptions of their superintendent's instructional leadership behaviors. In all, the survey included six question categories with multiple components equaling 47 questions - 40 of them based on four constructs for instructional leadership as suggested by Smith & Andrews (1989). The survey employed a combination of Likert scale response and forced choice questions to collect data on teacher demographics, their values and beliefs of the superintendents' role of instructional leadership and their perceptions of their district superintendent as instructional leader.

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher contacted the BOCES assistant superintendent, asking her to approach each component school district superintendent to explain the nature of the research, and invite participation. The BOCES assistant superintendent agreed to introduce the research at a regional superintendents' meeting, and advised each school district superintendent that the researcher would contact each of them. Follow-up phone calls, a mailing and e-mails were then provided to each component school district superintendent by the researcher, inviting their district to participate in the survey. A copy of the survey was attached to each e-mail.

Once permission had been received, a professional courtesy e-mail was sent to each building principal of the seven participating component school districts, providing advance notice that teachers under their supervision would be contacted. Teachers were consequently sent an invitation by the researcher to participate in the survey by e-mail. The researcher also gave the condition of assured anonymity for all school district

employees, and the link was provided to the electronic survey instrument through Survey Monkey.

A reminder was sent the following week to non-respondents, encouraging their participation in the survey if interested. An e-mailed note of thanks was sent to each superintendent, building principal, and teacher in each district via listserv, regardless of the nature of their participation.

Validity and Reliability

The questions of this survey were based on selected school and career demographic indices, including teachers' school level, experience level, gender and area of certification. Teachers were asked to define the degree to which they believed instructional leadership was an important role of the superintendent and how likely they would be willing to work constructively with a superintendent who displayed instructional leadership behaviors. Instructional leadership behaviors were defined as instructional resource, resource provider, communicator, and visible presence. Face validity was established through a panel of experts using the initial survey instrument. Information from the panel of experts was used to improve the survey instrument. Ten highly qualified male and female teachers with different levels of professional experience represented different academic areas and school settings for this panel. Each panel member completed the survey anonymously, and made specific comments and suggestions about the construction and content of each question. Suggestions and patterns in the response data helped the researcher to improve the survey instrument.

Reliability of the survey instrument was tested using Cronbach's co-efficient alpha to measure the internal consistency of the groups of items that were intended to

measure the constructs of instructional leadership, namely, a *resource provider*; an *instructional resource*; a *communicator*; and a *visible presence*. Survey questions pertaining to instructional leadership were proven to be consistent and highly related within each of the four constructs.

Variables

Four dependent variables used in this research were teachers' perceptions of their superintendent as a resource provider; an instructional resource; a communicator; and a visible presence. These variables are constructs of instructional leadership behaviors for the purposes of this study.

Independent variables were teachers' professional demographics described as teaching discipline (area of certification); school level; gender; and years of experience (teaching tenure). Two other variables were analyzed and discussed. These variables were the teachers' degree of belief in the importance of the instructional leadership role of the superintendent and the extent to which they would be willing to work constructively with a superintendent who demonstrated instructional leadership behaviors.

Data Analysis

Spearman's rho was used with research question 1a to show dependence between variables, while chi-squared non-parametric statistical analysis technique was used in question 1b to analyze patterns of recoded responses for demographical data.

Spearman's rho was run to find the relationship between variables in research question two, and eta-squared helped to analyze the strength of association between variables for both research questions three and four. Cronbach's alpha statistical technique was

employed to determine reliability for survey questions 8-21 for the behavioral construct of “resource provider”; 22-30 for the construct of “instructional resource”; 31-41 for “communicator”; and 42-47 for “visible presence”. To better describe the findings through non-parametric tests for questions 2-4, appropriate bar graphs and box plots were used to elaborate on the data derived from SPSS. SPSS v. 19 was used throughout the analysis of this research project.

CHAPTER IV

Data Analysis

This study sought to explore teachers' perceptions, values and beliefs in the instructional leadership role of the superintendent, both in concept and through their own experience. Four constructs of instructional leadership, based upon Smith and Andrews' (1989) work defined instructional leadership for the survey administered to teachers. The constructs define the superintendent as an instructional resource, resource provider, communicator and visible presence. One hundred sixty five teachers in seven component school districts of a regional Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) in New York State participated in the electronic survey.

This chapter will report survey instrument response data, present reliability data from the survey instrument used in this study, and findings from the analysis of five research central research questions. Various statistical and descriptive analysis techniques were used to produce and report findings for each research question, which were:

- 1a. Are teachers more likely to work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors when they also believe that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent?
- 1b. Do the factors of level of experience, teaching discipline, gender and school level have an effect on teachers' beliefs that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent and about their willingness to work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors?

2. Is experience a factor in how teachers perceive their superintendent as an instructional leader?
3. Is there any difference between core, essential, special education, and other support services teachers in their perception of the superintendent as instructional leader?
4. Is there any difference between teachers at different school levels in their perception of the superintendent as instructional leader?

Table 2 presents data about different roles for each participating school district as it relates to the size of participating districts in this study. Pertinent to the interest of school size, school “A” was a single building school district with a pre-k-6 student population; school “B” had a student population comprised of pre-k-8 housed in a single building; and school “C” was a small school with a student population of pre-k-12 in one building. School districts “D” through “G” were multiple building campuses.

Three descriptions of superintendents roles include superintendent with assistant superintendent and principal(s) (S1); superintendent with principal(s) (S2); and superintendent/principal combined (S3). Table 2 also shows the role of each superintendent corresponding to number of teachers and students, which also suggests school size.

Table 2

Superintendent Role Related to School District Size.

	Role of superintendent	School district size	
		# teachers	# students
School A	S3 ³	11	70
School B	S3 ³	12	136
School C	S2 ²	51	472
School D	S2 ²	90	988
School E	S2 ²	137	1898
School F	S1 ¹	235	3054
School G	S1 ¹	312	3673
Total Population, Teachers		848	

Note. Source: New York State School and District Report Cards for School Year 2009-2010)

S1¹ = Superintendent with assistant superintendent and principal(s); S2² = Superintendent with principal(s); S3³ = Superintendent/Principal combined role

Table 3 presents data about the gender of teacher respondents of the survey.

Seven-hundred-sixteen teachers are presumed to have received the survey, resulting in 165 respondents for a return rate of 23%. One-hundred-thirty-six females and 29 males returned the survey.

Table 3

Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Demographical Data: "Gender"

Respondents' gender	Frequency of all respondents	Valid percent of all respondents
Female	136	82.4
Male	29	17.6
Total	165	100.0

Eleven percent of the respondents indicated that they had been employed as a certified teacher for 1-5 years; 26% for 6-10 years; 22% for 11-15 years; 15% for 16-20 years; and 26% for 21 years or more. Table 4 presents demographic data of the respondents' level of teaching experience in terms of years. Categories were designed to attribute teachers to particular phases along the continuum of instructional experience and to answer research questions 1b and 2.

Table 4

Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Demographical Data: "Level of experience"

Respondents' level of experience	Frequency of all respondents	Valid percent of all respondents
1-5 years	18	10.9
6-10 years	42	25.5
11-15 years	37	22.4
16-20 years	25	15.2
21+ years	43	26.1
Total	165	100.0

Table 5 presents data about respondents' teaching experience within the academic areas defined as core, essential, special education, and other. Fifty-three percent of teachers responded that they had worked as a core subject area teacher for the majority of their careers, while 20% worked as certified music, art, media, foreign language, or physical education teachers. Respondents certified "for the majority of their careers" in special education numbered 20%, while 7% of those respondents were "other support services" teachers. These data were used in the analysis of research questions 1b and 3.

Table 5

Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Demographical Data: "Teaching discipline"

Respondents' teaching discipline	Frequency of all respondents	Valid percent of all respondents
Core subject (ELA, math, science, social studies)	89	53.0
"Essential" subject (music, art, PE, language)	33	20.0
Special education	34	20.0
"Other" support services (AIS)	12	7.0
Total	165	100.0

Table 6 presents data from teachers' responses by school level. The school levels at which respondents taught for the majority of their career were reduced from seven categories in the original survey to three, which became PK-12; Elementary; and Secondary. This reorganization was made to facilitate more meaningful data analysis for research questions 1b and 4.

Table 6

Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Demographical Data: "School level"

Respondents' school level	Frequency of all respondents	Valid percent of all respondents
K-12	17	9.0
Elementary (PK-5)	58	33.0
Secondary (6-12)	97	58.0
Total	164	100.0

Research question 1a asks for the statistical significance of the relationship between teachers' beliefs that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent (survey question 6) and the likelihood that they would work

constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors (survey question 7). Sixty-four percent of teachers surveyed responded to survey question 6 that they “believed strongly” that “instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent”. Twenty-nine percent stated that their belief was moderate, and 8% responded that they had little or no belief. Of teachers’ responses to survey question 7, which asked teachers to indicate the “extent to which they would “work constructively with a superintendent who effectively practices instructional leadership behavior”, 8% were “not likely”; 25% were “somewhat likely”; and 68% were “very likely”.

Data from teachers’ answers to survey questions about their perceptions of the instructional leadership behaviors of their superintendent were organized within four constructs of instructional leadership referred to in the Smith and Andrews model (1989). Using SPSS, v. 19, Cronbach’s alpha statistical technique established the interrelationship among variables (research questions) that were associated with each constructs – superintendent as an instructional resource; a resource provider; a communicator; a visible presence. Through both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis construct validity was confirmed with a Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of $\alpha=.97$ for the factor “instructional resource”; $\alpha=.98$ for the factor “resource provider”; $\alpha=.98$ for the factor “communicator”; and $\alpha=.93$ for the factor “visible presence”. Cronbach’s alpha informs the researcher of strong reliability close to $\alpha=1.00$. All 165 teachers from seven school districts were consistent in their responses that measured perceptions of their superintendent’s instructional leadership practices.

Table 7 illustrates high levels of internal consistency among survey questions within four constructs of instructional leadership, both conceptually and statistically.

Principal component factor analysis determined that the survey questions assigned to each construct of instructional leadership were shown to have high reliability.

Survey questions 8-21 were grouped together under the construct of “superintendent as a resource provider.” Questions 22-30 commonly measured perceptions of the “superintendent as an instructional resource.” Questions 31-41 loaded together and confirmed communality with “superintendent as a communicator”, while the construct of “superintendent as a visible presence” included similarly related questions 41-47.

These constructs represent specific instructional leadership skills of the superintendent, and functioned as the context in which teachers perceptions were measured. Research questions 2, 3, and 4 sought to find the relationship between these perception data and variables of teachers’ level of experience, teaching discipline, gender and school level.

Table 7

Reliability Statistics for Instructional Leadership Constructs and Survey Questions.

Instructional leadership construct	Interrelated variables (survey questions)	Cronbach’s alpha* (internal consistency)
Superintendent as a resource provider	8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21	$\alpha=.98$
Superintendent as an instructional resource	22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30	$\alpha=.97$
Superintendent as a Communicator	31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41	$\alpha=.98$
Superintendent as a Visible presence	41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47	$\alpha=.93$

Note. *Cronbach’s alpha is represented by the symbol (α)

Table 8 illustrates the percentage distributions of teachers' responses to question 8-47. A response scale of Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (7) was used to indicate degrees of teachers' perceptions of specific instructional leadership behaviors of their superintendent. "Neutral" or "undecided" responses characterized teachers' perceptions of their superintendent to be one who displayed specific instructional leadership behaviors. Highest percentages in scaled response categories were marked bold. Item 42 of the survey showed that 32% of teachers disagreed strongly that their superintendent made informal classroom visits, which was the single lowest response percentage rating among all other items in the survey.

Table 8

Superintendent as Instructional Leader Survey Results (Survey Questions 8-41)

Leadership practice Question	% Perceptual responses of teachers						
	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Resource provider							
8	9.0	6.9	18.6	17.9	33.1	4.8	9.7
9	7.0	4.2	16.1	23.8	34.3	4.2	10.5
10	6.2	4.8	16.6	22.8	35.9	4.8	9.0
11	13.6	5.7	15.0	28.6	22.9	7.1	7.1
12	16.7	4.2	18.1	19.4	24.3	5.6	11.8
13	13.2	6.3	16.7	20.8	27.1	6.3	9.7
14	9.8	7.7	18.2	25.9	25.2	7.0	6.3
15	11.8	5.6	19.4	20.8	23.6	9.0	9.7
16	7.6	6.2	13.8	23.4	33.8	6.2	9.0
17	6.3	7.0	16.8	25.2	30.1	4.9	9.8
18	10.3	6.9	21.4	23.4	21.4	6.9	9.7
19	14.7	6.3	14.0	26.6	23.1	5.6	9.8
20	15.9	4.1	20.0	23.4	21.4	5.5	9.7
21	16.7	4.9	13.2	16.7	30.6	5.6	12.5
Instructional resource							
22	5.8	2.9	9.4	22.5	38.4	8.7	12.3
23	10.4	5.2	18.5	30.4	20.0	5.9	9.6
24	6.7	5.2	11.2	31.3	28.4	7.5	9.7
25	9.7	2.2	14.9	34.3	25.4	6.0	8.2
26	8.3	1.5	11.3	33.1	32.3	6.8	8.3
27	10.4	6.7	10.4	34.8	23.0	4.4	10.4
28	9.8	5.3	15.9	32.6	25.0	3.8	7.6
29	9.6	4.4	23.0	31.1	21.5	2.2	8.1
30	9.0	4.5	14.3	28.6	29.3	4.5	9.8
Communicator							
31	18.0	9.8	11.3	18.0	19.5	7.5	15.8
32	17.4	6.8	15.9	16.7	21.2	11.4	10.6
33	14.5	5.3	22.1	21.4	16.8	7.6	12.2
34	15.2	3.8	14.4	28.0	18.2	5.3	15.2
35	14.8	3.1	15.6	17.2	28.9	8.6	11.7
36	10.6	4.5	10.6	17.4	35.6	6.8	14.4
37	8.6	3.9	17.2	15.6	29.7	10.9	14.1
38	8.6	4.7	20.3	28.9	19.5	4.7	13.3
39	11.6	5.4	17.1	21.7	29.5	5.4	9.3
40	11.2	5.6	19.2	26.4	20.8	4.8	12.0
41	9.2	6.9	16.9	30.0	23.1	6.2	7.7
Visible presence							
42	32.1	6.9	27.5	6.1	13.0	3.1	11.5
43	20.6	5.3	17.6	20.6	21.4	5.3	9.2
44	19.8	2.3	22.1	18.3	20.6	7.6	9.2
45	18.3	3.8	19.1	22.9	23.7	5.3	7.6
46	18.8	3.8	21.8	18.0	19.5	3.8	14.3
47	16.0	0.8	21.4	22.9	25.2	4.6	9.2

Note: Bold indicates highest percent of responses for each question. For specific survey questions, see Appendix "A"

Findings Related to Research Question 1a

Are teachers more likely to work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors when they also believe that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent?

Spearman's rho was employed to determine the non-parametric measure of statistical dependence between the two variables of research question 1a. The two variables studied were the independent variable of teachers' belief that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent (survey question 6) and the dependent variable, which was the extent to which teachers are likely to work constructively with a superintendent who effectively practices instructional leadership (survey question 7). The Spearman's rank correlation coefficient between the two variables was ($\rho=.199$) at the $p<0.05$ level. This relationship showed a statistically significant, but weak positive correlation. Figure 1 illustrates this statistical significance that teachers who strongly believe that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent are also likely to work constructively with a superintendent who effectively practices instructional leadership.

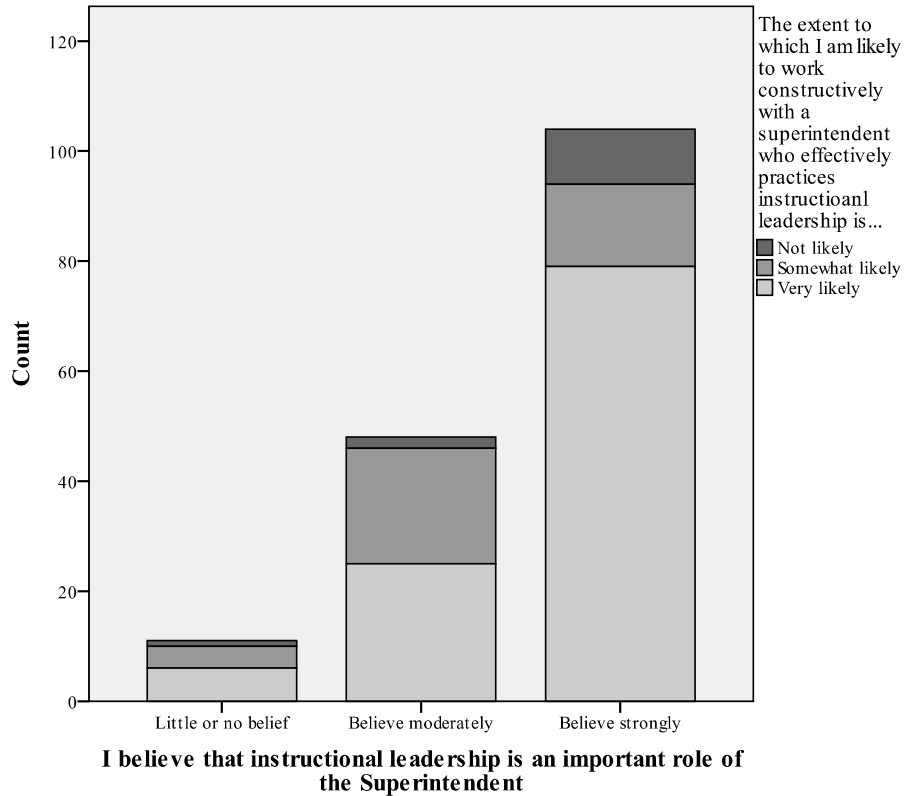


Figure 1. Belief That Instructional Leadership is Important (survey question #6) and Extent Likely to Work With the Superintendent as Instructional Leader (survey question #7). ($p=.199$) at the $p<0.05$.

Findings Related to Research Question 1b

Do the factors of level of experience, teaching discipline, gender and school level have an effect on teachers’ beliefs that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent and about their willingness to work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors?

To analyze the relationship between independent variables (level of experience, teaching discipline, gender and school level) and the dependent variables (see survey questions #6 and #7), original response scales of the dependent variables from survey questions #6 and #7 were codified “congruous or incongruous”. Therefore, three new

response categories of “congruous”, “incongruous”, and “other” were created.

“Congruous” described teachers who indicated a strong belief that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent (coded in original SPSS data as “3”) and that they were very likely to work constructively with a superintendent who effectively practices instructional leadership (coded as “3”). “Incongruous”, by contrast, described teachers who either had little belief in the importance of the superintendent’s role as instructional leader (coded as “1”) or were not likely to work constructively with a superintendent who effectively practiced instructional leadership (coded as “1”), as well as 2 or 3 in either of those categories. “Believed moderately” and “somewhat likely” were each coded as “2” for the purpose of the creation of the third category “other” to identify in the analysis those teachers who responded with any other combination of scaled response.

Chi-square analyses were conducted to analyze patterns of responses between “congruous/incongruous” recoded responses and aggregated groups by gender, years of experience, certification area, and school level. Table 9 illustrates that the percentage of teachers’ codified responses of “congruous”, “incongruous”, or “others” did not differ by gender, certification area, or school level. However, it may be expressed that the relationship between “years of experience” and the “congruous/incongruous” recode was found to approach significance at .08.

Table 9

“Congruous and Incongruous” and Teacher Demographic Aggregates (Chi-squared)

Demographic aggregate	Value	df	Asympt. sig.
Gender	.005	2	.10
Years of Experience	14.246	8	.08
Certification Area	5.173	6	.55
School Level	3.864	4	.43

* $p > .05$.

Figures 2 through 5 were created to show a distribution of percentages and illustrate the cross-tabulation percentages within each demographic aggregate group. No statistically significant data were achieved through Chi-square. Males and females responded similarly in percentage comparisons for each category of “congruous/incongruous”. Figure 2 shows that 48.5% of females and 48.3% of males responded that they both believed strongly that instructional leadership was an important role of the superintendent and that they were very likely to work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors (“congruous” – “3” on both). Figure 2 also shows that 37.3% of females and 37.9% of males responded as “others” (those teachers who responded “2” on either q6 or q7). However, only 14.2% of female and 13.8% of male respondents were classified within the category of “incongruous”, which includes a scaled response of “1” on either survey question #6 or #7.

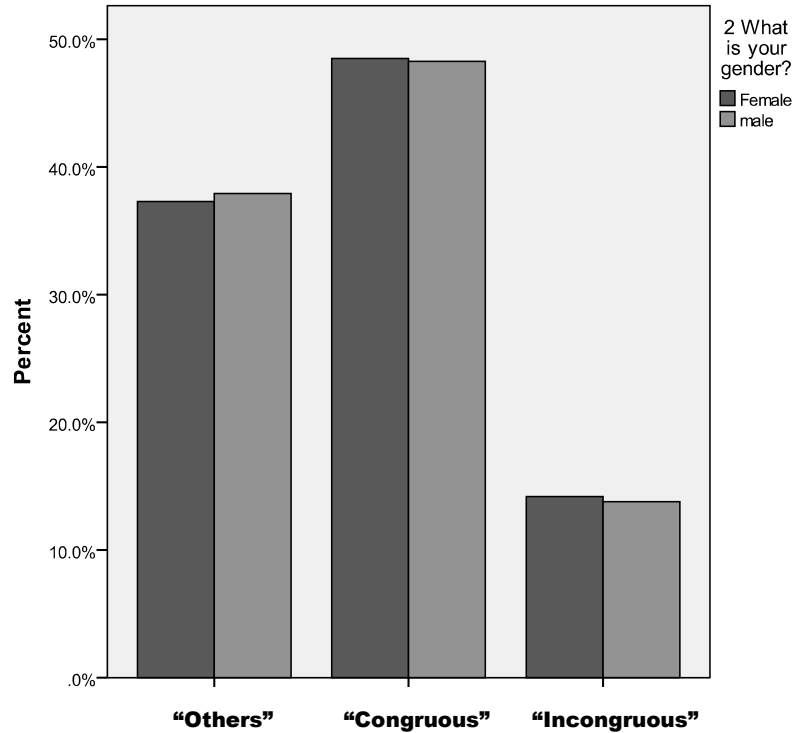


Figure 2. Percentage Distribution Graph – Gender and “Congruous/Incongruous”.

A cross-tabulation between of Years of Experience Figure 2 and “Congruous/Incongruous” shows that 77.8% of teachers with 1-5 years of experience, a greater percentage than any other category, responded that they both believed strongly that instructional leadership was an important role of the superintendent and that they were very likely to work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors (“congruous” – “3” on both). Figure 3 shows an even percentage of responses among teachers with 1-5, 6-10, and 21-plus years of experience as those who responded “1” on either q6 or q7.

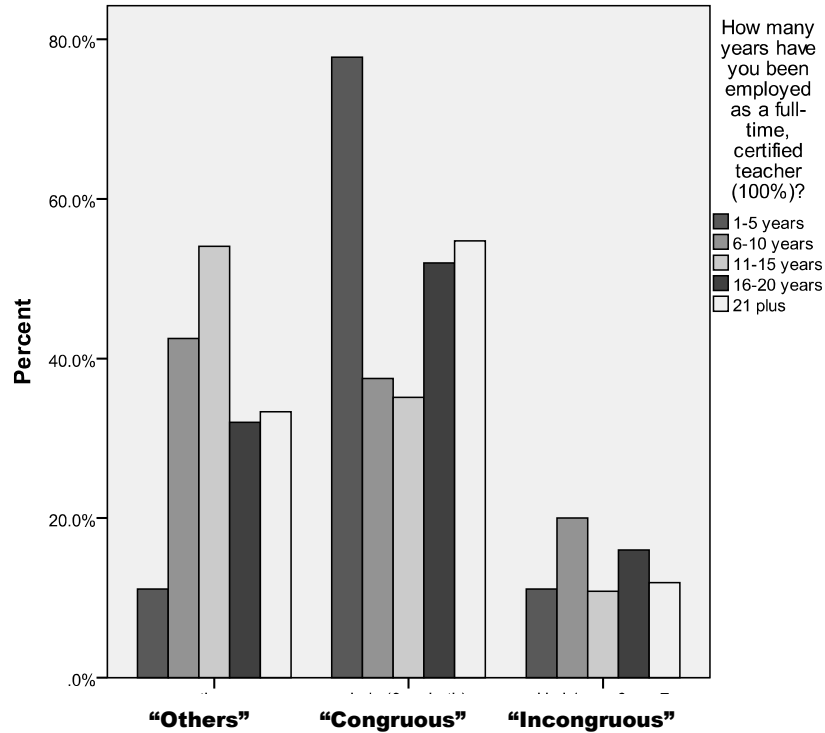


Figure 3. Percentage Distribution Graph – Years of Experience and “Congruous/Incongruous”.

Figure 4 shows the results of a cross-tabulation that measured the percentage distribution among teachers of different teaching disciplines. A majority of “core” and “other support” teachers responded with similar percentages that they both believed strongly in the instructional leadership role of the superintendent, and that they were very likely to work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors. Figure 4 also shows that “core”, “essential”, “special education” and “other support” teachers responded with a higher percentage in the category of “congruous” rather than “incongruous”. Teachers responded in similar percentages among “essential” and “special education” teachers in the categories of “congruous” and “other”.

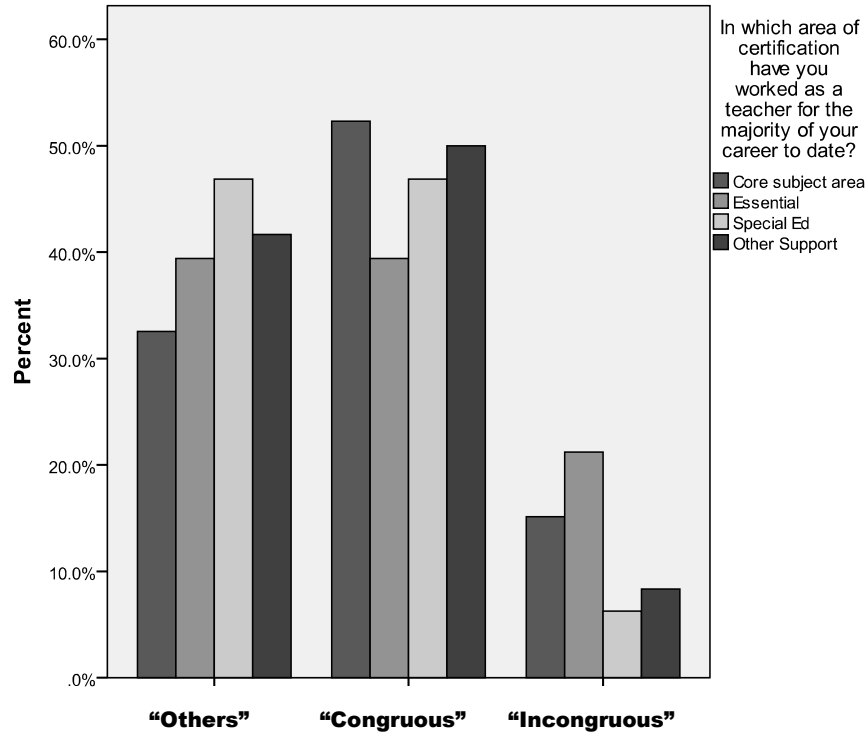


Figure 4. Percentage Distribution Graph – Teaching Area and “Congruous/Incongruous”.

Figure 5 shows that pre-k-12 teachers responded with the greatest percentage (66.7%) in comparison with elementary and secondary level teachers, that they were most likely to be congruous with the efforts of the superintendent. Figure 5 displays that the same teacher group responded with a small percentage (6.7%) with little or no belief that instructional leadership was an important role of the superintendent and were not likely to work constructively with a superintendent who displayed instructional leadership behaviors.

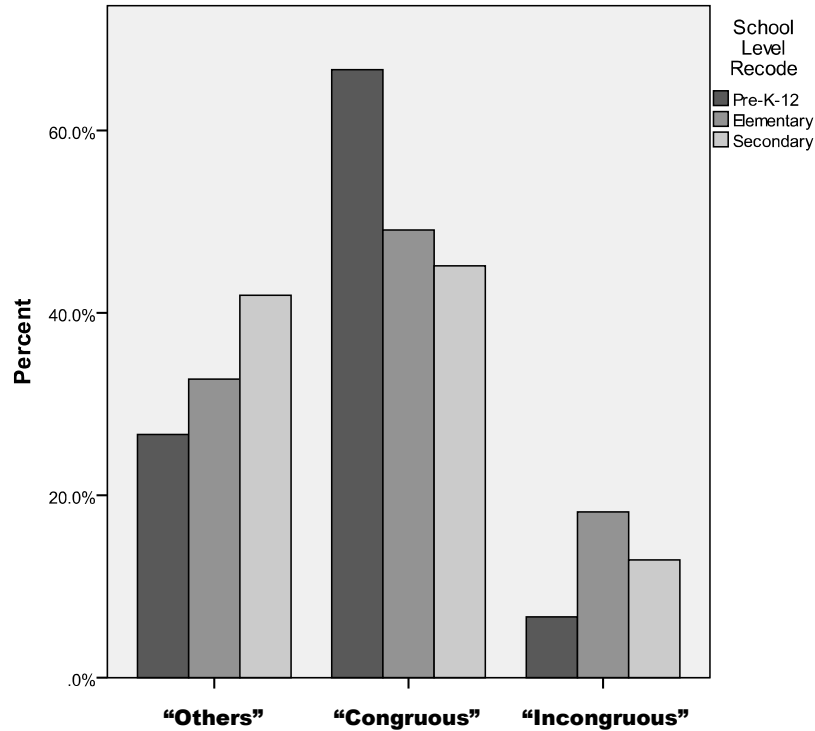


Figure 5. Percentage Distribution Graph – School Level and “Congruous/Incongruous”.

Findings Related to Research Question 2

Is experience a factor in how teachers perceive their superintendent as an instructional leader?

All four constructs by which teachers’ perceptions of superintendent instructional leadership behaviors were measured yielded no real association with teachers’ experience. These constructs and statistical results are “superintendent as an instructional resource” ($p = .813$) “superintendent as a resource provider” ($p = .910$); “superintendent as communicator” ($p = .771$); and “superintendent as a visible presence” ($p = .785$).

Spearman’s rho non-parametric statistical analysis technique (Choudury, 2009) was used to determine the relationship between the demographic independent variable “how many years have you been employed as a full-time, certified teacher” and the coded dependent

variables, which intended to measure teachers' perceptions of their superintendent as an instructional resource, resource provider, communicator, and visible presence.

Table 10 indicates the percentage and number of valid and missing respondents for the analysis of the second research question. The table shows the numbers and distribution of respondents within each category of level of experience from survey question #3.

Corresponding box plot graphs illustrate the location and spread of the relationship of each dependent variable to the independent variable. Box plots show changes in location and variation in the data sets that follow. Each box plot identifies where 50% of the data lie, and are named the *inner quartiles*. The point of median response is the *median line*, and the extreme quartiles on either side of the inner quartiles are called *whiskers* (Chambers, et. al., 1983). Any indication of symmetry or skewness of the data, and *outliers*, which show respondents' data that are 1.5 times lower or higher than the inter quartile range, are visible in figures 6 through 9.

Figure 6 displays the inter-quartile range presented consistently among teachers with different years of experience when based upon the rating scale where the dependent variables were set between "strongly disagree" (1) and "strongly agree" (7). Perceptions of teachers with 1-5 years of experience showed slightly more positive response characteristics than the other categories, and were skewed to the 75th percentile. Several negative and positive outliers representing teachers' perceptions of their superintendent as an instructional resource were found in the responses by full-time, certified teachers with 6-10, 16-20, and 21+ years of experience.

Table 10

Percentage and Number of Respondents (N = Teachers) For Figures 6-9 - “Teachers’ Perceptions of Instructional Leadership and “How Many Years Have You Been Employed As a Full-Time, Certified Teacher.”

How many years have you been employed as a full-time, certified teacher (100%)?	Valid		Cases Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
	1-5 years	15	83.3%	3	16.7%	18
6-10 years	34	82.9%	7	17.1%	41	100.0%
11-15 years	30	81.1%	7	18.9%	37	100.0%
16-20 years	22	88.0%	3	12.0%	25	100.0%
21 plus	36	83.7%	7	16.3%	43	100.0%

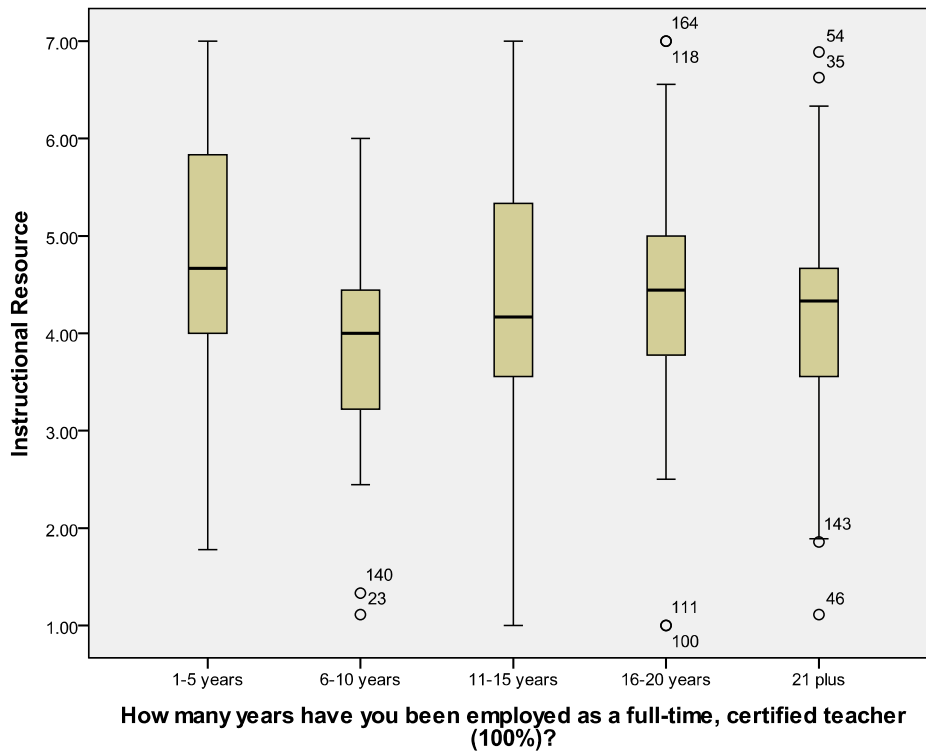


Figure 6. Teachers’ “Years of Experience” and Their Perceptions of “Superintendent as Instructional Resource.” Response Spread.

Perceptions of teachers with 1-5 years of experience showed slightly more positive response characteristics than the other categories, illustrated by the median value (represented by the median line). Inter-quartile ranges for scaled responses on “superintendent as resource provider” in Figure 7 were similar in comparison among teachers with different years of experience when based upon the rating scale where the dependent variables were set between “strongly disagree” (1) and “strongly agree” (7).

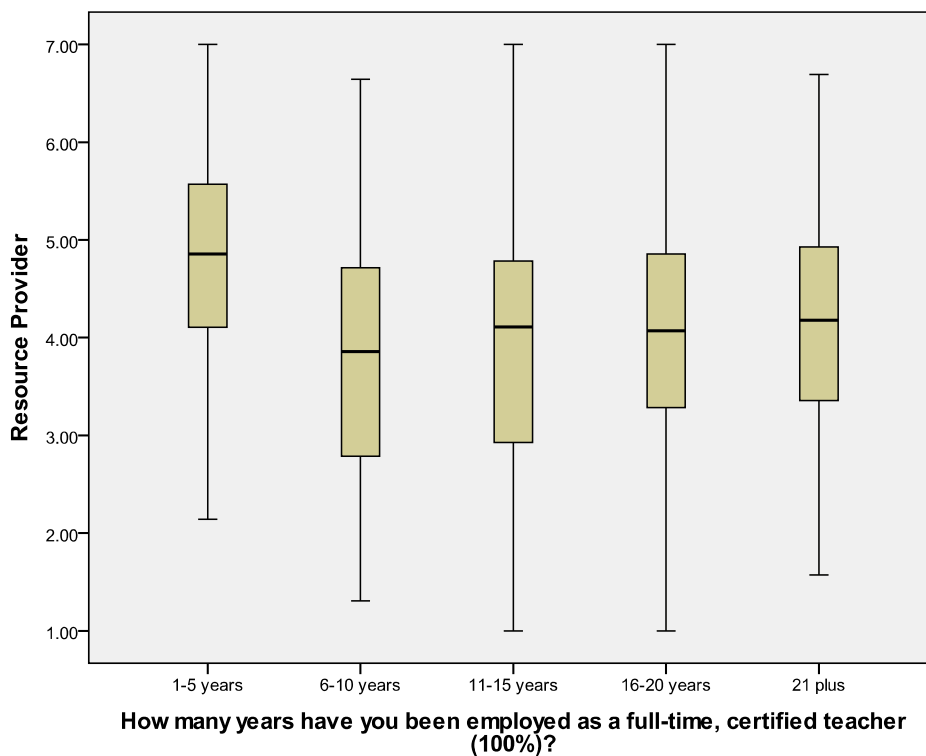


Figure 7. Teachers’ “Years of Experience” and Their Perceptions of “Superintendent as Resource Provider” Response Spread.

Responses to questions within the construct of “superintendent as communicator” were consistent among teachers with different years of experience. However, perceptions of teachers with 1-5 years of experience, again, showed slightly more positive response characteristics than those belonging to respondents in other categories, although skewed significantly to the right (25th percentile). Figure 8 displays extreme

maximum and minimum values, evident by the *whiskers* of the box plot, for all teachers except those with 1-5 years of experience. Two negative outliers shown in Figure 8 represent two respondents in the study with 1-5 years of experience who hold extreme negative perceptions of their superintendent as a communicator.

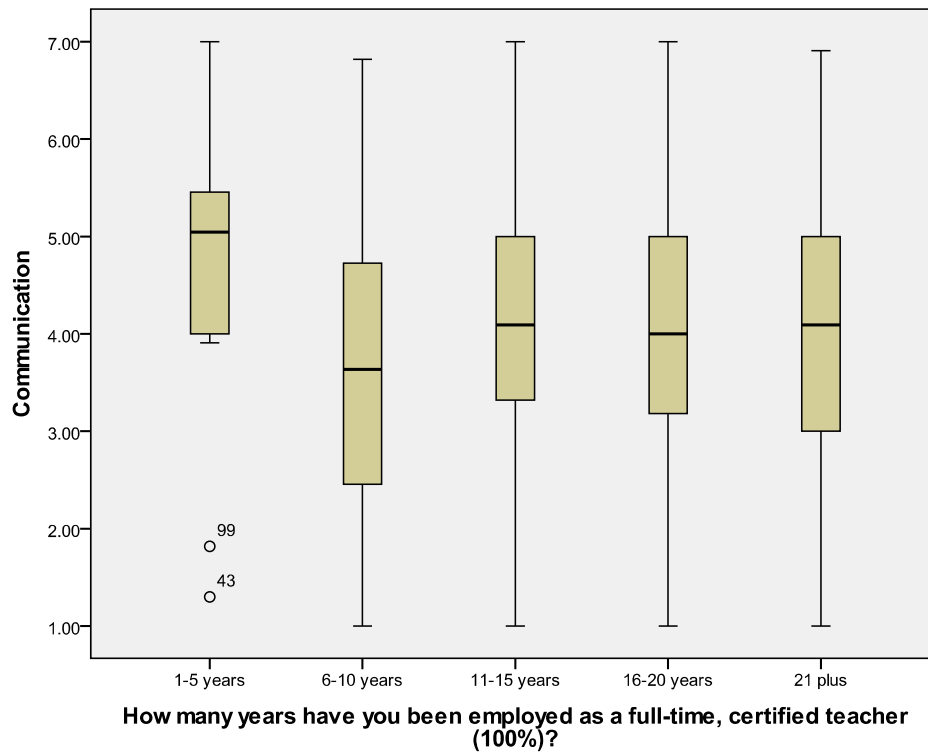


Figure 8. Teachers’ “Years of Experience” and Their Perceptions of “Superintendent as Resource Provider” Response Spread.

Median data for the perceptions of teachers with 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, and 21-plus years of experience were lower for the construct of “visible presence” than any other construct, as shown in Figure 9. Inter-quartile range data representing perceptions by teachers with 1-5 years of experience of their superintendent as a visible presence showed a more moderately positive level of response than did the responses by teachers having more experience.

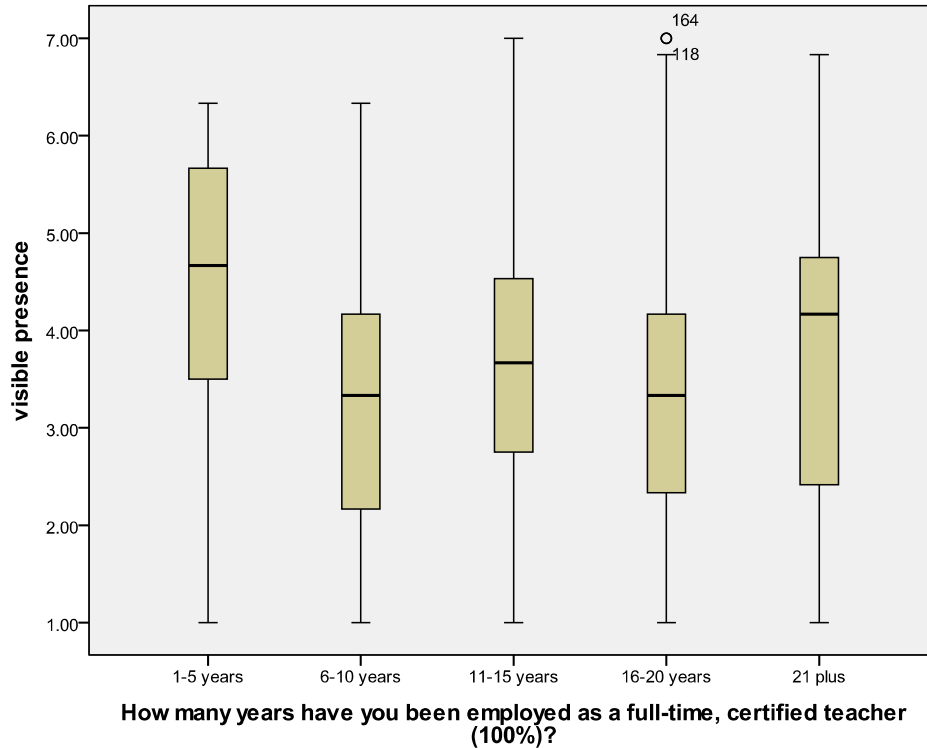


Figure 9. Teachers’ “Years of Experience” and Their Perceptions of “Superintendent as a Visible Presence” Response Spread.

Findings Related to Research Question 3

Is there any difference between core, “essential”, special education, and “other” support services teachers in their perception of the superintendent as instructional leader?

Groups of teachers were defined according to area of certification. Core subject teachers, for the purpose of this study, were those who teach English language arts, math, social studies and science. Essential subjects included music, art, media, foreign language, physical education, etc. Special education (speech, resource, consultant, etc.) and other certification area teachers, described as providers of Academic Intervention Services (AIS), were the respondents for each certification group. Over half of the respondents were classified as core subject area teachers (53.9%), while 20 percent of the

respondents indicated that they were teachers of essential areas. Special education teachers made up 20.6% of the respondents to the survey.

A non-parametric statistical test, eta-square (η^2), was used to measure the strength of the association between the dependent variables (instructional resource, resource provider, communicator, and visible presence) and the independent variable of teacher certification area. This analysis yielded a minimal association between variables where teachers' perception of their superintendent as an instructional resource was $\eta^2 = .017$; superintendent as a resource provider was $\eta^2 = .013$; superintendent as communicator was $\eta^2 = .011$; and superintendent as a visible presence was $\eta^2 = .009$. Accordingly, no generalization can be made about the impact of certification.

The lack of significance between the dependent variables and teacher area of certification needed illustration of the response data in a more descriptive way. Table 11 shows the rate of teacher response for each certification area, which is explained graphically in more detail by figures 10-13.

Table 11

Percentage and Number of Respondents (N = Teachers) For Figures 10-13 - “Teachers’ Perceptions of Instructional Leadership and “In Which Area of Certification Have You Worked as a Teacher for the Majority of Your Career to Date?”

In which area of certification have you worked as a teacher for the majority of your career to date?	Valid		Cases Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
	Core subject area	74	86.0%	12	14.0%	86
Essential	29	87.9%	4	12.1%	33	100.0%
Special Ed	23	67.6%	11	32.4%	34	100.0%
Other Support	12	100.0%	0	.0%	12	100.0%

The middle 50% of the respondents’ data showing the influence of area of certification on teachers’ perceptions on superintendent instructional leadership can be explained through the box plots in Figure 10. The median line in each category of “area of certification” suggests that there is general consistency among teachers in their perception of their superintendent as an instructional resource, as indicated by scaled responses to survey questions 8-21 in that construct. Data do show wide discrepancies, however, in scaled responses among eight core area teacher outliers, who agreed strongly that their superintendent was an instructional resource in their district, while five outlier teachers disagreed strongly. Nine percent of “core” area teachers were outliers from the confines of minimum and maximum data values.

Essential area teachers responded within a greater range of perception about their superintendent as an instructional resource than those teachers in any other certification area. The chart shows the least variable range of inner quartile responses by other support teachers in comparison with any other teacher area of certification. The extreme

outliers, both positive and negative, in the certification area of other support are far removed by a distance of more than 1.5 times from the mass of data.

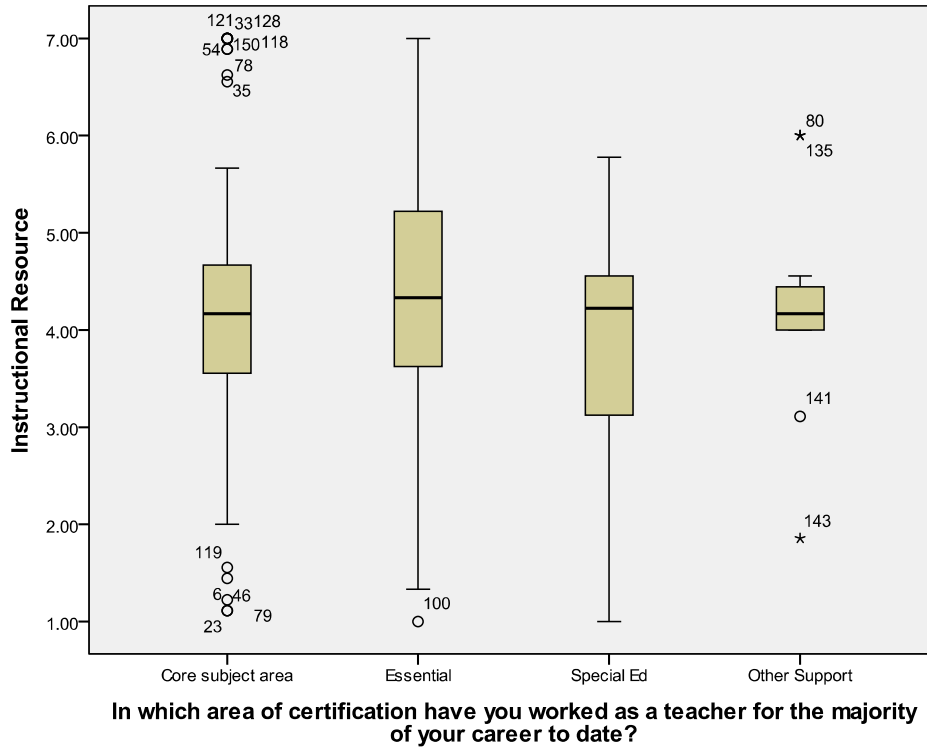


Figure 10. Teachers’ “Area of Certification” and Their Perceptions of “Superintendent as an Instructional Resource” Response Spread.

The median line of each box plot in Figure 11 implies that teachers do not generally agree, nor do they disagree in their perception of their superintendent as a resource provider. Data in Figure 11 illustrate fair symmetry between the upper and lower quartiles, generally showing skewness to the left (lower 25th percentile) with respect to scaled responses to survey questions 22-30 measuring teachers’ perceptions of their superintendent as a resource provider.



Figure 11. Teachers’ “Area of Certification” and Their Perceptions of “Superintendent as a Resource Provider” Response Spread.

Figure 12 shows the data points for teachers’ perception of their superintendent as a communicator in relation to their area of teaching certification, and are clustered around a central value of between 3 (disagree) and 5 (agree). These data were consistent with the eta-squared analysis that earlier confirmed non-significance.

There is little or no difference between core, essential, special education, and other support service teachers in their perception of the superintendent as instructional leader in the construct of resource provider. Data show that teachers’ responses, which measured their perceptions of their superintendent as a resource provider (survey questions 8-21), were similar, even in skewness, in the upper and lower quartiles and central median lines.

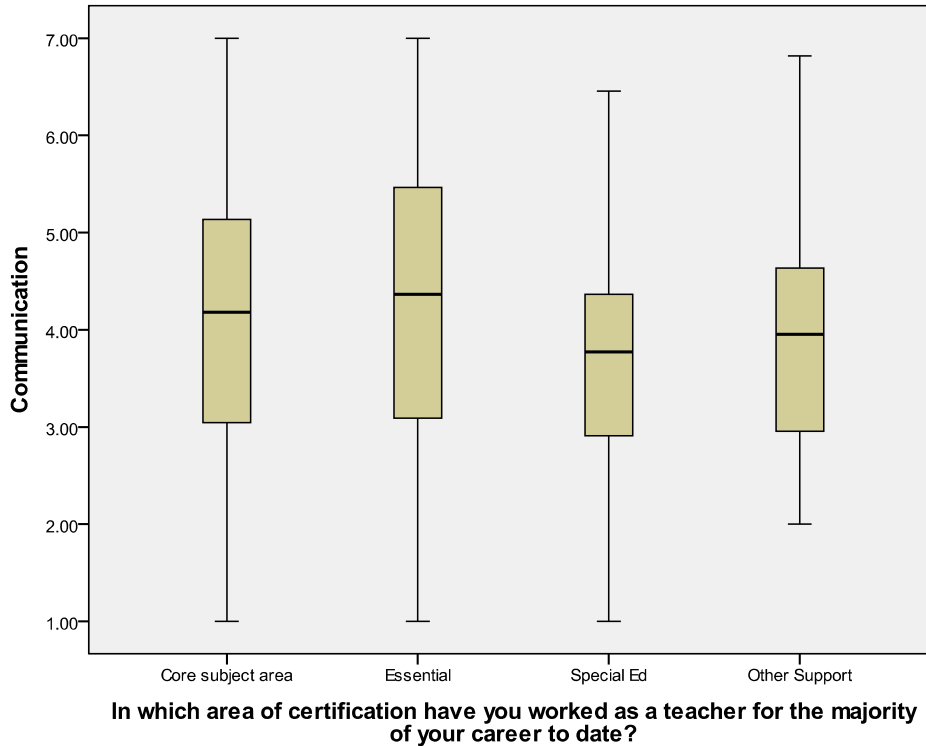


Figure 12. Teachers’ “Area of Certification” and Their Perceptions of “Superintendent as a Communicator” Response Spread.

Figure 13 shows that no statistical significance was established through eta-squared analysis, which measured the relationship between areas of teaching certification and teachers’ perceptions around their superintendent as a visible presence. The box plot representation of the response data reveals a negatively skewed response at the 25th quartile for core, essential and special education teachers. The collected data from 100% of other support teachers (n = 12) illustrates that their range of response was limited to between 4 (neutral) and 2 (disagree somewhat), with 50% of the data contained within the inter-quartile range between 4 (neutral) and 3 (disagree). Other support teachers’ perceptions offered the least variable responses, with a single low outlier and two extreme high outlier responses.

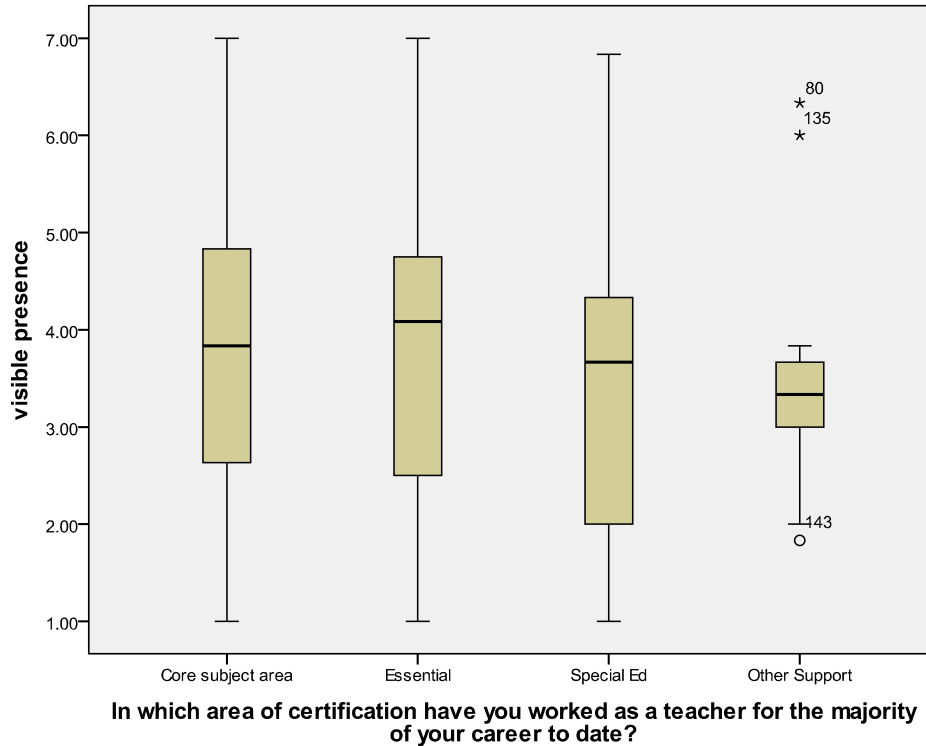


Figure 13. Teachers’ “Area of Certification” and Their Perceptions of “Superintendent as a Visible Presence” Response Spread.

Findings Related to Research Question 4

Is there any difference between teachers at different school levels in their perception of the superintendent as instructional leader?

Survey question #5, “which category best describes the school level at which you taught for the majority of your career?” was created by the researcher to explore the degree of correlation between a teachers’ school level experience and perceptions of their superintendent as an “instructional resource”, “resource provider”, “communicator”, and “visible presence.”

Eight categories of school level were included in the original design of the survey instrument, which were pre-K-12; pre-K-5; pre-K-2; 3-5; 6-12; 6-8; 9-12; and NA. These school level categories were descriptive of the sample component school districts (NYS

Report Card, 2009-2010). These eight categories were recoded in SPSS into three categories - pre-k-12; elementary; and secondary in order to facilitate more meaningful use of the categories of data for purposes of statistical analyses. Table 12 shows the original survey response percentages for ($N=165$) which were 10% (Pre-K-12); 24% (Pre-K-5); 5% (Pre-K-2); 6% (3-5); 21% (6-12); 13% (6-8); 25% (9-12); 0% (NA) and the recoded categories, pre-k-12 (10%); elementary (34%); and secondary (56%).

Table 12

Original Survey Response Categories Data Reduction to School Level Recode (Demographic Data From Survey Question #5).

Original Survey Response Categories		School Level Recode	
Grade Level	% of Respondents	Grade Level Recode	% of Respondents
Pre-K-12	9.0	Pre-K-12	9.0
Pre-K-5	23.0	Elementary	33.0
Pre-K-2	4.0		
3 – 5	6.0		
6 – 12	20.0	Secondary	58.0
6 – 8	13.0		
9 – 12	25.0		
NA	0.0	NA	0.0
Total	100.0		100.0

The eta-square (η^2) non-parametric test was used to measure the strength of the association between the dependent variables (instructional resource, resource provider, communicator, and visible presence) and the independent variable of “school recode” in SPSS. Instructional leadership behaviors of the superintendent were not attributable to the school level at which teachers taught. Teachers’ perceptions of their superintendent

as an instructional resource was $\eta^2 = .034$; superintendent as a resource provider was $\eta^2 = .042$; superintendent as communicator was $\eta^2 = .063$; and superintendent as a visible presence was $\eta^2 = .066$.

Figures 14 and 17 illustrate a comparison of data from teachers' school level recode responses related to their perceptions of their superintendent as an instructional resource and a visible presence. Two other box plot charts showing the distribution of school recode responses for the constructs of superintendent as a resource provider and communicator are also provided. The sample variability is equal between Figures 15 and 16, and the sample is centered similarly on the response scale. However, the data showing the relationship of school level recode with the construct of superintendent as a communicator are skewed heavily to the right (agreeable) for respondents in the category of pre-k-12.

Figure 14 shows box plot analyses of teachers' perception of their superintendent as an instructional resource according to school level. Respondents to survey questions based upon the construct of "instructional resource" (questions 8-21) were 9% pre-k-12 teachers; 33% elementary teachers; and 58% secondary teachers. Generally, pre-k-12 teachers' perceptions of their superintendent's instructional resource behaviors ranged from agreeable to somewhat agreeable in the 75th percentile level, while scaled responses from elementary and secondary teachers were largely neutral. The median value of for teachers in each category of school level showed scaled responses between four (undecided) and five (agree). The inter-quartile ranges were between three (disagree) and five (agree).

Extreme positive and negative outliers were plotted in Figure 14 in the secondary teacher category. Nine percent of secondary respondents responded that they disagreed somewhat or strongly that their superintendent was an instructional resource, while 8% agreed strongly in their perception that their superintendent was an instructional resource. Table 13, as a reference, defines the percentage and number of respondents for figures 14-17 that follow.

Table 13

Percentage and Number of Respondents (N = Teachers) For Figures 14-17 - “Teachers’ Perceptions of Instructional Leadership and “Which category best describes the school level at which you taught for the majority of your career? (School Level Recode)”

School Level Recode	Valid		Cases Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Pre-K-12	12	75.0%	4	25.0%	16	100.0%
Elementary	46	82.1%	10	17.9%	56	100.0%
Secondary	80	86.0%	13	14.0%	93	100.0%

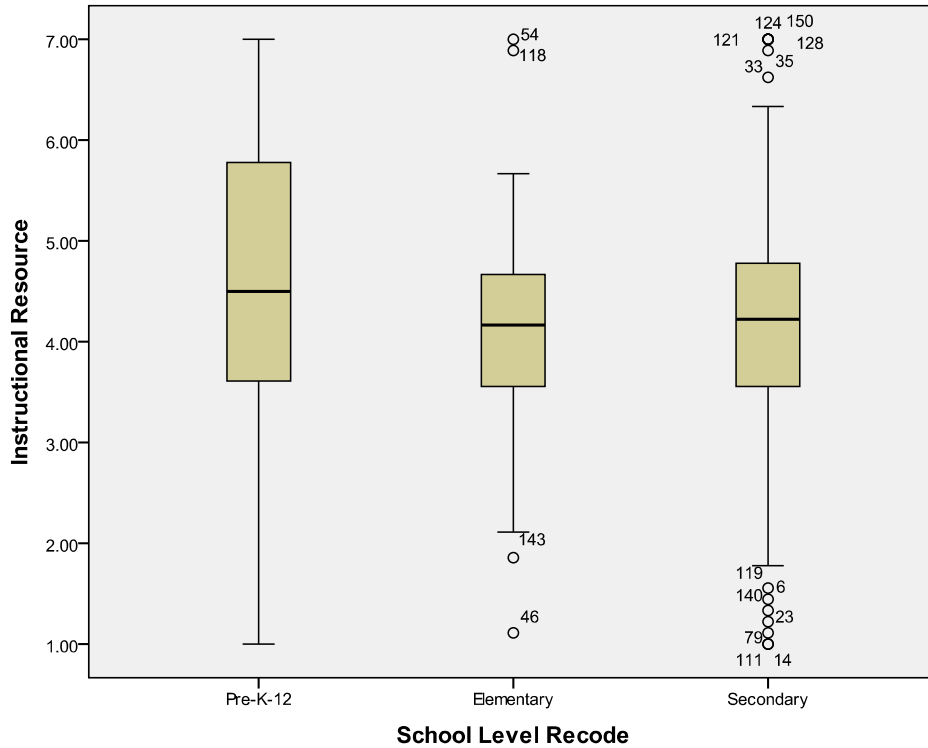


Figure 14. Teachers’ “School Level” and Their Perceptions of “Superintendent as an Instructional Resource” Response Spread.

Figure 15 confirms the results of the eta-squared analysis which was used to measure the influence of the school level at which teachers teach with their perception of their superintendent as a resource provider. The median of responses by pre-kindergarten-12, elementary, and secondary school teachers were identical in the response scale. Pre-k-12 teachers’ responses varied more widely, with an inter-quartile range of between 2 (moderately disagree) and 6 (moderately agree). Each teacher category of school level recode showed wide variability (1-7) in overall teacher response for each of the four constructs of instructional leadership. The ranges of responses shown by Figure 15 also presented in a similar way with other figures illustrating other teacher group perceptions for resource provider (see figures 7 and 11).

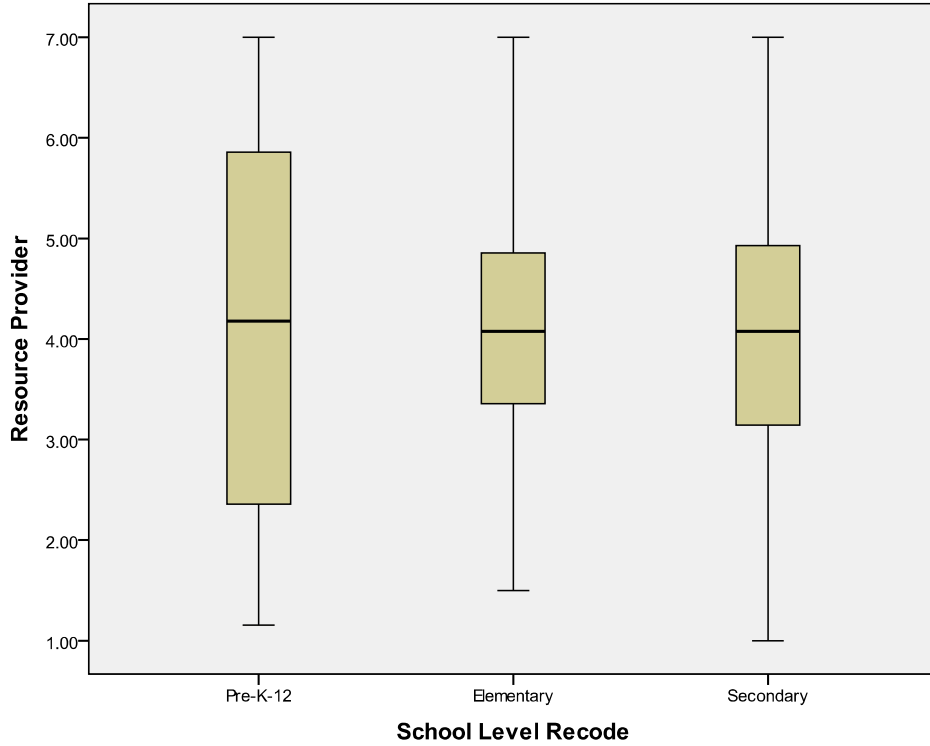


Figure 15. Teachers’ “School Level” and Their Perceptions of “Superintendent as a “Resource Provider” Response Spread.

The median response appears to be similar in each box plot used to compare the factors of pre-k-12 school level for each of the four instructional leadership constructs. Figures 14-17 also show an appreciable response by pre-k-12 teachers in the upper quartile of the box plot.

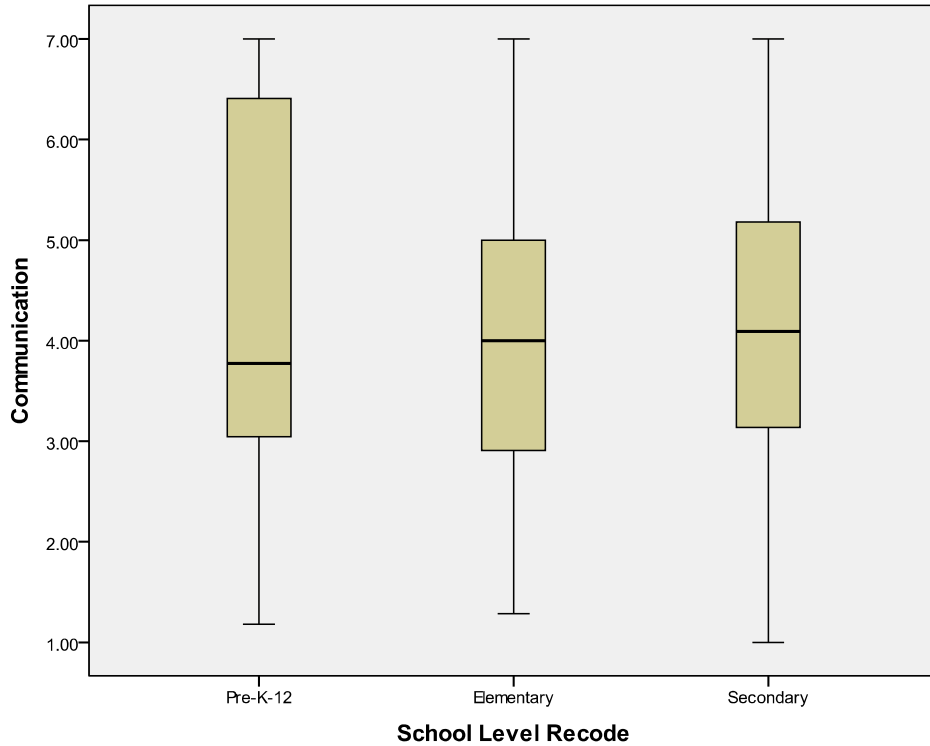


Figure 16. Teachers’ “School Level” and Their Perceptions of “Superintendent as a “Communicator” Response Spread.

Median line data for teachers’ perceptions of their superintendent as a visible presence, especially for elementary and secondary teachers, are shown in Figure 17 to be neutral or disagreeable. Median and inter-quartile data, especially for pre-k-12 teachers indicate their perceptions are generally higher.

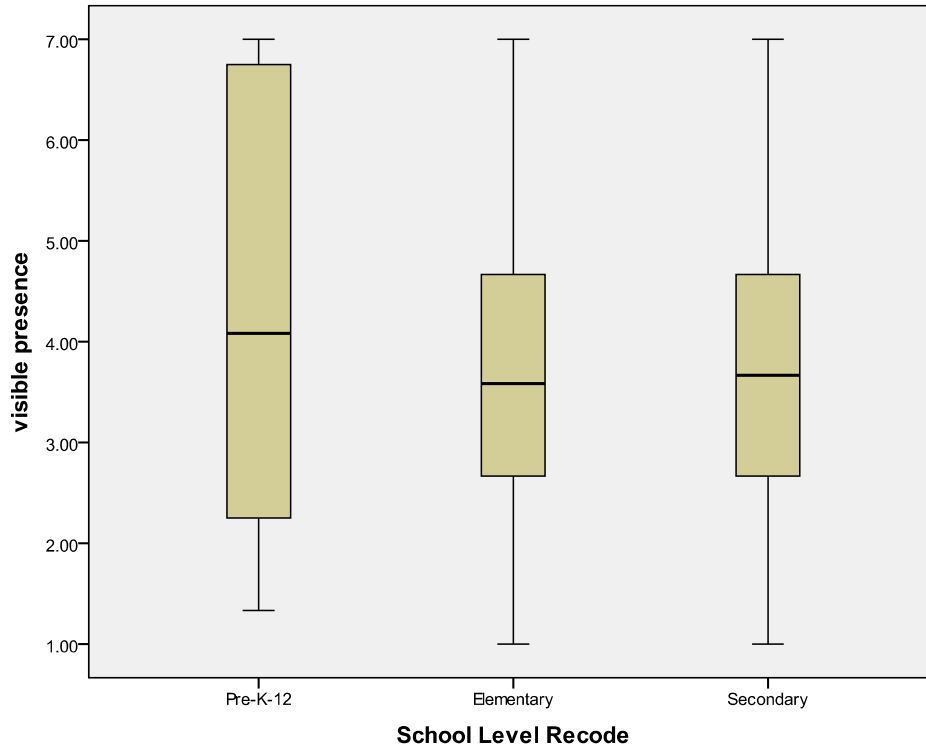


Figure 17. Teachers’ “School Level” and Their Perceptions of “Superintendent as a Visible Presence” Response Spread.

This chapter explained the findings that were related to each research question, and presented them both statistically and descriptively for meaningful interpretation. Analysis of the data produced statistically significant results only for research questions 1a and 1b. Therefore, box plots were used to explain the data from research questions 2-4, and helped to provide some important information that will be addressed in chapter five. Chapter five will present analyses and both conclusions and recommendations that relate to them.

CHAPTER V

Summary of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This chapter includes the summary of findings from the analysis of five research questions that were central to this study. Each finding is followed by specific conclusions. Recommendations for the field and for future studies are suggested, based upon the conclusions.

Teachers' beliefs and values about the importance of the superintendent's role as instructional leader and specific demographical factors that may influence their perceptions of their superintendents' instructional leadership were the primary focus of this research. Independent variables in this study were teachers' years of experience, school level, gender and certification area. Relationships between these independent variables and the dependent variables, which were teachers' perceptions of their superintendent as an instructional resource, resource provider, communicator and visible presence were explored through five research questions that guided the study.

Only recently have researchers begun to claim that specific leadership behaviors of the superintendent correlate with student achievement (Marzano & Waters, 2009; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). Little research has been conducted on teachers' perceptions of the superintendent's performance in the role of instructional leader, and how those perceptions may affect teacher attitudes, values, efficacy and effectiveness (Fullan, 2005; Blasé & Blasé, 1998).

Ultimately teachers have the most direct impact upon what students learn (Louis, et. al., 2010), and the instructional leadership of the principal wields significant influence upon teacher attitudes and effectiveness in the classroom (Smith and Andrews, 1989;

Louis, et. al., 2010; Marzano & Waters, 2009). The superintendent has the chief responsibility, however, to use his or her role as instructional leader to support or influence curriculum and instruction. Therefore, this study sought to explore how the superintendent's role of instructional leader was perceived by teachers, and if those perceptions were different among teachers of particular school-related demographics. The superintendent's role as instructional leader was defined in this study by the work of Wilma Smith and Richard Andrews (1989), which, according to Marzano, Waters & McNulty (2005) model of instructional leadership "has attained the highest level of visibility over the years" (Marzano, Waters & McNulty, 2005, p. 18). Smith and Andrews (1989) identified constructs of the instructional leadership role to be that of instructional resource, resource provider, communicator, and visible presence.

Research questions for this study were designed to explore relationships or associations between the variables of perceptions of instructional leadership behaviors, beliefs and values in the superintendent's role as an instructional leader, and the degree to which teachers were likely to work constructively with a superintendent who displayed behaviors identified by Smith and Andrews (1989). Specifically, the aforementioned variables were also tested for their degree of association with teachers' school level, years of experience, and area of certification.

Research question 1a tested a correlation between the extent that teachers were likely to work constructively with a superintendent who displayed instructional leadership behaviors and the degree to which they believed that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent. Research question 1b sought to deepen the exploration of those correlation data in relationship with years of teaching experience,

area of certification, gender, and school level. Codified variables of “congruous”, “incongruous”, and “other” were created by the researcher for more meaningful analysis of research question 1b.

The relationship between five categories of teaching experience and the perceptions of those groups of teachers of their superintendent’s instructional leadership role were explored in research question 2. The definition of instructional leadership for the purposes of this research was framed by the work of Smith and Andrews’ (1989) model of instructional leadership.

Research question 3 asked teachers to give their perceptions of their superintendent through questions within each instructional leadership construct, and measured the responses in relationship to teachers’ experience in specific teaching disciplines. Finally, research question 4 was analyzed to find the degree of correlation between teachers’ school level experience and their perceptions of their superintendent as an instructional leader. Seven original categories of school level were reduced to three, which were pre-k-12, elementary, and secondary.

The survey and its questions, administered to teachers, was designed in three sections. Section one intended to measure the degree that teachers believed in the importance of the instructional leadership role of the superintendent with the extent to which teachers would work constructively with a superintendent who displayed instructional leadership behaviors. Section 2 called for teachers’ demographic data. In section three, teachers were asked, through scaled response questions, to provide their own perceptions about their superintendent as an instructional leader based upon Smith and Andrews’ (1989) four constructs of instructional leadership.

Summary of Findings

The findings from this study are the results from analysis of data related to five research questions about instructional leadership behaviors of the superintendent. Findings from research question 1a and 1b will show how teachers' beliefs, values and experiences influence their perceptions and willingness to work constructively with a superintendent who is recognized as an instructional leader. Findings based on research questions two, three and four show how teachers' perceptions of their superintendent as an instructional resource, resource provider, communicator and visible presence may be influenced by their own particular experiential factors. Conclusions related to research findings and subsequent recommendations for the field and further research are presented in this chapter.

Research question 1a was designed to test the relationship between the degree that teachers were likely to work constructively with a superintendent who practiced and displayed instructional leadership behaviors and the degree to which they believed that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent. Teachers were asked to read the researcher's introductory definition of instructional leadership provided in the introduction of the survey. A statistically significant relationship was established between the variables of teachers' belief that instructional leadership was an important role of the superintendent and their willingness to work constructively with a superintendent who practices instructional leadership, resulting in a correlation of $\rho = .199$ at the $p < 0.05$ level. Figure 1 in chapter four supported these statistical results.

The degree to which teachers believed that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent was measured with their expressed value of working

constructively with a superintendent who effectively practices instructional leadership. A matrix containing descriptions of plausible teacher dispositions is offered by the researcher, and is based on the combinations of teachers' response data from survey questions #6 and #7 (see Appendix A).

Research 1b asked if factors of level of experience, teaching discipline, gender and school level had an effect on teachers' beliefs that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent and their willingness to work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors.

Non-parametric statistical test results based on the variables in research question 1a were coded to indicate whether teachers, through their perceptions, were "congruous" or "incongruous" with the instructional leadership efforts of the superintendent. A category of "others" intimated that there are teachers who responded in a more neutral way to the survey questions pertaining to research question 1b. The factors of years of experience, teaching discipline, gender, and school level in relation to the these congruous or incongruous coded data were then analyzed through a chi-squared statistical test for research question 1b. This cross-tabulation revealed that the relationship between teachers' years of experience and congruous/incongruous approached, but did not indicate statistical significance.

Nearly 80% of teachers with 1-5 years of experience were shown to be "congruous", and over 50% of those with 21+ years of experience were also "congruous". Less than 40% of teachers with 11-15 years were "congruous". Twenty percent of teachers with between 6-10 years of experience were considered to be "incongruous", as were nearly 15% of those teachers with 16-20 years of experience.

Over 50% of core teachers were considered to be “congruous”. A number of essentials teachers responded that they were “incongruous”. Over 66% of pre-k-12 teachers responded that they were “congruous”, and may speak to the size or configuration of the school district and the presumably comprehensive instructional leadership responsibilities of its superintendent. In summary, there was less statistical significance between the beliefs and values of teachers’ and their experience and background. Teachers at the pre-k-12 setting and those with 1-5 years of experience showed more congruity than teachers at any other school level or level of experience. Teachers’ area of certification showed the least statistical significance through analysis of research question 1b.

Research Question 2 was analyzed using Spearman’s rho statistical analysis to determine the relationship between the independent variable of teachers’ years of experience and the dependent variable, which was teachers’ perceptions of their superintendent as an instructional leader. Specifically, years of experience and perceptions of the superintendent as an instructional resource presented no statistical significance. However, teachers categorized as having between 1-5 and 11-15 years of experience indicated a higher level of agreement in their perceptions than other categories of years of experience. Teachers with 1-5 years of experience indicated the highest perception levels of agreeability within each of the four constructs of instructional leadership. Teachers with 6-10 years of experience indicated the lowest perception levels of agreeability in all four constructs of instructional leadership.

Research Question 3 was posed to find the differences among core, essential, special education, and other support services teachers in their perceptions of the

superintendent as instructional leader. Less than two percent of the variability in the perceptions by teachers of their superintendent's instructional leadership behaviors could be attributable to the area of teacher certification area. However, a box plot analysis showed that nearly 18% of core subject area teachers responded as extreme negative and positive outliers from middle range of response distribution in their perceptions of their superintendent as an instructional resource. The same box plot analyses showed that perceptions of other support teachers were characterized by an important percentage of both positive and negative extreme outliers in the areas of instructional resource and visibility.

Research Question 4 asked if there was any difference among teachers at different school levels in their perceptions of the superintendent as instructional leader. The researcher used the eta-square test for research question 4 showed that there was no strength in the association between teachers' perceptions of their superintendent's instructional leadership behaviors and the school level at which they taught. Although there was generally shown similar median and inter-quartile distribution of responses by teachers in all constructs of instructional leadership, only teachers' perceptions of their superintendent as an instructional resource showed the greatest outlier responses. Sixteen percent of secondary teachers and nearly nine percent of elementary teachers' perceptions were shown to be equally extreme positive or negative outliers for the construct of instructional resource. The percentage of pre-k-12 teachers' perceptions of their superintendents' instructional leadership behaviors were higher in the 75th quartile range than other school level responder groups for all four constructs. Box plots generated in

SPSS v. 19 also showed that perceptions by pre-k-12 teachers were skewed positively, most notably in the areas of communications and visible presence.

Conclusions

The statistical significance of this study was limited to findings from analyses of research questions 1a and 1b. However, there were meaningful findings from research questions two, three and four.

Teachers who believe that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent are more likely to work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors. There was a specific attempt by the researcher to define the instructional leadership role of the superintendent. The definition was based upon researched and acknowledged models of instructional leadership. However, teachers' accurate understanding of instructional leadership can not be confirmed in each case because the respondents in the study operate from different references of knowledge and read with dissimilar levels of scrutiny.

There is literature to support the theory that the superintendent leads teachers and principals within the system as the *chief teacher*. He or she must be able to articulate problems, create solutions, provide feedback and keep teachers informed about current instructional practices (Blasé & Blasé, 1998; Carter & Cunningham, 1997; Smith & Andrews, 1989). Other outwardly visible evidence of instructional leadership comes from a superintendent's ability to set and support a well-designed curriculum (Murphy & Hallinger, 1986). Superintendents can demonstrate support for curriculum and instruction through decisions made collectively through transformational leadership

practices that are in concert with those associated with instructional leadership (Hallinger, 2003; Marzano & Waters, 2009).

It was found in this study that a teacher's level of experience has some effect on his or her reported willingness to work constructively with his or her superintendent when they also hold the belief that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent. Specifically, teachers categorized as having 1-5 and 21+ years of teaching experience are considered to be congruous. In other words, teachers in those categories showed a high relationship between their level of experience and their positive disposition in consideration of a superintendent's instructional leadership efforts. Teachers of all other experience levels could not be considered, either statistically or descriptively, to be congruous with the superintendent in the role of instructional leader. More teachers who work in a pre-k-12 setting responded that they were congruous with the efforts of their superintendent when compared to those teachers who were exclusively either elementary or secondary teachers. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude, for this study, that teachers who teach in pre-k-12 school settings schools may have more communication with their superintendent. They may hold more value and understand better a broader view of the school instructional and organizational culture because pre-k-12 school settings are usually small districts unto themselves. Pre-k-12 teachers were also the group least likely to be incongruous. Schlechty & Joslin (1986), through their study of the capacity of superintendents of districts variant in size, support the finding that teachers from small school districts may be more likely to believe in and value their superintendent as the principal teacher in the school system.

This study found no statistical significance to the association between particular teacher demographical data and teachers' perceptions of their superintendent as an instructional resource, resource provider, communicator or visible presence. There were, however, data presented through illustrations which highlighted items of descriptive note and importance.

There is no relationship between teachers' level of experience, in terms of years, and their perceptions of their superintendent as an instructional leader. However, teachers with 1-5 and 21+ years of experience held the highest perceptions of their superintendent as an instructional leader within all four constructs. Teachers with 6-10 years of experience held the lowest perceptions within each construct.

Considering this descriptive approach to the data, it may be apparent that teachers with less experience have a more optimistic outlook on the instructional leadership behaviors of the superintendent. "Newer teachers" are, perhaps, more likely to be in agreement with the district-level behaviors that affect them. This outlook may be the result of fresh, idealistic acceptance or even current knowledge and understanding of best instructional leadership practices. Teachers with many years of experience, often referred to as "veteran teachers" may be the mentors to teachers with less experience in the field, and may seek to encourage newer teachers, rather than discourage them. They may have evolved in their professional outlooks, having had experiences from particular phases of their career in which their perceptions and congruity have either wrested or come to rest to the position of helper and mentor to the district's instructional leader, as well.

The professional subject area in which teachers practice does not affect their perceptions of their superintendent as an instructional leader. Teachers in this study did not perceive their superintendents' instructional leadership behaviors differently, despite their experiences from different pedagogical lenses. Core and other support teachers' perceptions of the superintendent as an instructional resource yielded the most extreme variations (positive and negative extreme outliers) in this study.

Teachers across subject areas of particular academic focus hold similar perceptions of their superintendent in the role of instructional leader, irrespective of teachers' background knowledge of the subjects they teach. Palardy and Rumberger (2008) (as cited by Marzano and Waters, 2009, p. 56) concluded that teachers' "background qualifications have less robust association with achievement gains...education policy needs to be directed toward improving aspects of...instructional practices and teacher attitudes." It would be appropriate to conclude that it is the teachers' pedagogical abilities, as well as their desire to improve their own instructional practices, that may impact their values and perceptions of their superintendent as instructional leader rather than the subjects that they teach.

This study concludes that the school level at which teachers work does not affect their perceptions of the instructional leadership role of their superintendent differently. Exceptional data should be noted, however, about the responses of pre-k-12 teachers in their perceptions of their superintendent as an instructional resource, communicator, and visible presence, as well as secondary-level teachers' responses in the area of "instructional resource". Data suggested that teachers who have taught for the majority of their career in pre-k-12 level settings have high perceptions of their superintendent in

the instructional leadership areas of instructional resource, communication, and visible presence. It may be concluded that the typically small pre-k-12 school level setting promotes functionality and presents opportunities for communication that the superintendent needs in order to be seen as an effective organizer of instruction through evaluation and correct prioritization. When an instructional leader is also an effective instructional resource he or she delivers on the commitment to develop conditions for individual and collective learning to take place.

This study's data also suggest that secondary level teachers are strong in both agreement and disagreement about their superintendents' leadership as an instructional resource. It may be that superintendents may exert less control in the formation of teachers' perceptions at the secondary level. Teachers who practice within specific content areas have the opportunity to develop deep, and sometimes guarded, opinions of their expertise. This phenomenon may only fortify their perceptions of their superintendents' competence as an instructional resource specific to their academic discipline. It may also be possible that larger districts in this study have secondary department chairs, which is another layer of instructional leadership that may affect perceptions. Additionally superintendents of smaller pre-k-12 schools enjoy greater communication and visibility among their school community. Therefore teachers may generally perceive these areas of instructional leadership to be a strength of their superintendent.

The system-level leadership of the superintendent may be very different depending upon school district demographics. The perception of the instructional role of superintendents may vary, depending upon the organizational structure of the district and

its ability to employ supporting administrative layers. There are resources which are available to larger schools that are not available to schools that are smaller in size. These resources may be those financial in nature or evident by curriculum offerings, but also in the form of secondary departmental curriculum leadership and district-level instructional supports. Nevertheless, instructional leadership is an important role of the system leader, and “district leadership has a measurable effect on student achievement” (Marzano and Waters, 2009, p. 12).

Recommendations for System Leaders

Teachers will work constructively with a superintendent who displays instructional leadership behaviors when they also believe that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent. Superintendents must demonstrate consistent engagement with their faculty and staff as both instructional leader and through actions that promote a culture rooted in transformational leadership.

Teachers are educated learners who also possess the abilities to lead when they are provided with sustained support for their own efficacy as leaders. Teachers prefer leadership that is exclusively neither top-down nor bottom-up. They are likely to want to work constructively with a superintendent who has the courage, interest, and knowledge to be recognized as an effective instructional leader and transformative leader.

It is recommended that superintendents clarify their importance as an instructional leader among their faculty. Superintendents should articulate this importance, but need to be unwavering advocates for the teachers they influence by demonstrating that they are committed to serve as an instructional resource, resource provider, communicator, and visible presence.

It is recommended, too, that district-level leaders communicate the function of their role as an instructional leader among faculty and principals at every opportunity through frequent communication and high visibility. Superintendents should also demonstrate their own belief in the importance of their instructional leadership role. They must make concerted efforts to communicate both formally and incidentally, verbally and visually; they must “walk the talk”. If teachers believe that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent, it will be because the superintendent, as the district leader, has managed to create that role as they, themselves, wish it to be perceived.

It will be imperative, given the current environment of increased accountability for student achievement and heightened evaluation standards for effective instructional leadership and instruction, that superintendents continue to find ways to achieve buy-in from teachers across the demographic professional lines. Increased efforts must be made to bring a brand of authenticity in instructional leadership that serves the perceived and true needs of all teachers. Superintendents can make great strides to encourage buy-in from teachers by communicating a vision for change with clarity. They must be attentive to their professional needs, personal anxieties, and fears around change. For leaders to be effective they must also win the trust of those they lead. “Authority is a trust” (Heifetz, 1994, p. 4), and each time teachers endure a change in leadership, trust in authority must be re-established between them and the superintendent.

Findings for research question 1b suggest that it may be easier for a superintendent to be valued in the role of instructional leader by veteran teachers and teachers with fewer years of experience, especially within smaller school systems. It is

the work of the superintendent, however, to face the task of meeting the varied needs of all faculties – regardless of experience level, organizational size, or certification area. Effective superintendents may possibly improve teachers’ perceptions of their instructional leadership efforts by being more visible and practicing effective communication among them.

A recommendation for the system leader is to enlist the potential support from teacher groups at both ends of the experience continuum to assist the superintendent in his or her role as instructional leader. It is recommended that superintendents recognize that those groups are also more likely, perhaps, to work constructively within second order change and realize district level goals for improved instruction and student achievement. Superintendents are also admonished to build the type of community in their district that strives to apply to its own condition the positive attributes in effective smaller-sized district cultures. Instructional leaders have a responsibility to improve the effectiveness of teachers, and not simply to meet a standard set of professional needs and wants. The superintendent as instructional leader should realize the value of his or her responsibilities to the teachers in the organization, and should always work to engage teachers of all experience levels.

The average tenure of a superintendent in any one district is 5-7 years (Marzano & Waters, 2009), which is different from the perception held by school boards and school system constituents that superintendents stay in one position for only 2-3 years. Superintendents and boards of education must make a commitment in light of the research around the length of superintendent longevity, which says that leadership of the superintendent may be felt as early as the second year (Marzano & Waters, 2009).

Superintendents need not, perhaps, concern themselves with becoming a master of all subject matter as a means of affecting the perceptions by teachers of their instructional leadership competence. It is more likely the superintendent's commitment to effective instructional leadership behaviors that garner critical teacher support for creating professional learning communities that can sustain district-led initiatives for student achievement. Meaningful staff development that addresses the needs of teachers with practical application to instructional improvement is an important role of the superintendent as instructional leader. The ability of the superintendent to demonstrate beliefs about the importance of his or her function as an instructional resource is an important indication of effective instructional leadership. Through the management of the district's mission, the quality of the system-wide curriculum, and attention to the educational needs of the district, the superintendent will demonstrate competence as an effective instructional leader in the eyes of teachers.

All four constructs of instructional leadership used within this study are important to the effectiveness of the superintendent. Specifically, while the importance of providing resources to teachers at all levels is a commonly-accepted practice of district-level instructional leadership, it is the superintendent's ability to model competence as an instructional resource that supports and sustains the implementation of those resources for student learning (Petersen, 1999, p.8). The instructional leadership constructs of communication and visible presence were perceived well by teachers of pre-k-12 settings in this study. However, the behaviors of the superintendent that are characteristic of those instructional leadership constructs may influence perceptions of teachers at other school levels. Therefore, superintendents must work diligently to communicate directly

with teachers, not exclusively during periods of contract negotiations or formally through principals and assistants, but personally and throughout the instructional year. The choice to be visible at every level of school, regardless of the organization's size and structure belongs to the superintendent.

Superintendents may consider the extent to which teachers' perceptions matter overall, despite the absence of statistically significant data in this study. When the system leader understands how teachers perceive his or her leadership as a resource provider, instructional resource, communicator, and visible presence, he or she may also know how those perceptions might work to either build or diminish teacher efficacy in support of school improvement and system-wide reform.

All stakeholders in the system, including teachers and principals, need to come to understand the instructional leadership responsibilities of the superintendent. The superintendent needs to understand best practices within the realm of instructional leadership that can be applied with consideration to the needs of his or her specific district. There are overarching, elemental links between each of the constructs for district-level instructional leadership discussed in this study. Once there is understanding, there must be articulation of expectations. Expectations must then be realized, and the following questions raised: What specific decisions about the way systems are organized, including consideration of school size, will facilitate the very best use of the superintendent's influence through instructional leadership? How do all stakeholders come to understand the role of instructional leadership particular to the superintendent, and how are articulated expectations of that role of leadership realized?

Recommendations for Future Research

The sample for this study was intentionally limited to include teachers within component school districts of a particular BOCES district. Consequently the study was limited to a regional sample of teachers with similar expectations for instructional leadership behaviors from their superintendents. In this time of great change in expectations for accountability for student achievement, further study of the instructional leadership responsibilities of school superintendents from districts similar in size and regional demographics would be timely. How methods are used to communicate the responsibilities and expectations for the superintendent's role as instructional leader are understood, conveyed and measured - both subjectively and objectively - are important.

There are inherent limitations to quantitative research, especially when wanting to learn and codify true feelings of human subjects in a richer way. Therefore, a large-scale qualitative study should be conducted on the perceptions of New York State teachers, including principals and self-reporting superintendents, of district-level instructional leadership behaviors that promote efficacy in teachers in their work to sustain student success and achievement and support system-wide reform. Such a qualitative study might also include input from the organizational leaders of New York State Union of Teachers (NYSUT), New York State Council of School Superintendents (NYSCOSS), School Administrator's Association of New York State (SAANYS), New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA), and regional Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES).

Lastly, research on perceptions related to the instructional leadership of superintendents should somehow be considered within the context of recent state and

federal mandates related to objective measurement of performance for principals and teachers. Perceptions matter, especially as they may relate to objective measures based on data. Understanding and accepting this relationship has the promise to objectify truer performance for all educators in the work of the school district.

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Appendix A

Possible Explanations of Teachers' Dispositions Based On Respondents' Data From Survey Questions #6 and #7).

q6. I believe that instructional leadership is an important role of the superintendent				
		Little or no belief	Believe moderately	Believe strongly
q7. The extent to which I am likely to work constructively with a superintendent who effectively practices instructional leadership is:	Not likely	Jaded, disagreeable or unsatisfied with the profession; unsatisfied with superintendent, in general.	Little commitment to profession, unsatisfied with superintendent, in general.	May be generally unhappy with his or her superintendent, excluding the superintendent's effectiveness as an instructional leader.
	Somewhat likely	Possibly lacking trust or knowledge about the role of instructional leadership of the superintendent	May indicate lack of knowledge or indifference to the instructional leadership role of the superintendent.	May indicate little trust in the superintendent, excluding his or her effectiveness as an instructional leader.
	Very likely	No explanation. Outlier.	May indicate an excellent attitude toward the superintendent in general, but lack knowledge or feel indifference to the role of instructional leadership.	May have a good understanding of instructional leadership and excellent attitude toward superintendent in the role.

Appendix B

Introduction to Superintendent

WILLIAM CRANKSHAW

55 East State Street. • Gloversville, New York 12078
(518) 844-8125 crankw@sage.edu

INTRODUCTION TO SUPERINTENDENT

Superintendent
School District
Address 1
Address 2

Dear (Name of Superintendent):

I am a doctoral student at the Sage Graduate School completing a research project in the Educational Leadership program. I am also a practicing principal at Northville Elementary School, Northville, New York. This is my 22nd year as an educator with the last five in administration.

The purpose of my study is to explore the beliefs and perceptions held by teachers of the Superintendent's role as instructional leader. In particular this study seeks to ask teachers for their beliefs and perceptions of the of the instructional leadership behaviors of Superintendents in the context of Smith & Andrews (1989) descriptive model of instructional leadership, which includes: the instructional leader as a resource provider; instructional resource; communicator; and visible presence.

A survey will be sent to teachers through e-mail with a link to Survey Monkey. **NO identities (including the superintendent, teacher, and school district) and responses will be able to be tracked in any way.** Enclosed you will find the "Intent to Participate" form. This form provides approval for your District to participate in this study. In agreeing to participate this form also gives consent to contact the teachers of your district, through e-mail, for participation in the survey.

Also enclosed is the "Informed Consent" form, which will be attached to the e-mail with the survey link. By reading this form, and then participating in the survey to completion, it indicates that the teachers of your district have been informed of the purpose and nature of the study and subsequently agree to participate. **You, your district and the teachers in your district can be assured of complete anonymity.**

Thank you for considering this valuable research. If you have questions about this particular request or the research project please contact me at 518-844-8125 or at crankw@sage.edu. If you prefer, you may contact my advisor, Dr. Daniel Alemu, at alemud@sage.edu or 518-292-1720. I appreciate your willingness to consider your district's participation in this survey. **Please return the enclosed "DISTRICT INTENT TO PARTICIPATE" form.** If you wish, I would be happy to discuss my research project with you either in person or by phone. I'm looking forward to your correspondence.

Sincerely,

William Crankshaw
Doctoral Candidate

Daniel Alemu, Ph.D.,
Advisor

Enclosures: [3]

Appendix C

District Intent to Participate

WILLIAM CRANKSHAW

55 East State Street. • Gloversville, New York 12078
(518) 844-8125 crankw@sage.edu

DISTRICT INTENT TO PARTICIPATE

I have been fully informed of the research project, entitled - *The Superintendent as instructional leader: Exploring teachers' values and perceptions of the role*, being conducted by Sage Graduate School, Educational Leadership Doctoral candidate William Crankshaw, under the direction Dr. Daniel Alemu.

_____ My District **will** participate in the research project.

_____ My District **will not** participate in the research project.

_____ School
(District Name)

_____ Superintendent
(Superintendent's Printed Name and Title)

Superintendent's Signature

Thank You FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION AND ASSISTANCE

Please return a signed copy of this letter of intent to...

William Crankshaw

...in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided for you.

Appendix D

Informed Consent

WILLIAM CRANKSHAW

55 East State Street. • Gloversville, New York 12078
(518) 844-8125 crankw@sage.edu

INFORMED CONSENT

Study Title:

**The Superintendent as instructional leader:
Exploring teachers' values and perceptions of the role.**

Dear Teacher,

I am inviting you participate in a research project to *explore the values and perceptions held by teachers of the school Superintendent as Instructional Leader*. Along with this letter is a short questionnaire that asks a variety of questions about the research topic. I am asking you to look over the questionnaire and, if you choose to do so, complete it. It should take you about 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

The results of this project will be published in my dissertation, a requirement for completion of the Ed. D. in Educational Leadership at Sage College at Albany. Through your participation I hope to understand better teachers' perceptions of the instructional leadership role of Superintendent. Furthermore, results of the survey will help to improve the understanding of essential instructional leadership responsibilities and practices, thereby making a contribution to the existing body of research.

I do not know of any risks to you if you decide to participate in this survey, and I guarantee that your responses will be guarded through anonymity. Due to the nature of the online survey instrument the research does not have access to the identity of the respondents.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any point if you wish. Participants will not receive re-numeration for participation. Participants will be provided with a copy of the study results *upon request*. To receive a summary, please contact me at crankw@sage.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire or about participation in this study, you may contact me at crankw@sage.edu or 518-844-8125.

You may also contact my research advisor, Dr. Daniel Alemu, at alemud@sage.edu or 518-292-1720

This research has received the approval of The Sage Colleges Institutional Review Board, which functions to insure the protection of the rights of human participants. If you, as a participant, have any complaints about this study, please contact:

Dr. Esther Haskvitz, Interim Dean
Sage Graduate Schools
School of Health Sciences
65 First Street
Troy, New York 12180
518-244-2264
haskve@sage.edu

You must be at least 21 years old in order to participate. If you agree to participate, you may keep this form and complete the survey.

Sincerely.

William Crankshaw, Graduate Student – Sage College of Albany

Appendix E

Instructional Leadership Survey

Instructions:

Thank you for participating in this research project to *explore perceptions held by teachers of the superintendent's responsibilities as an instructional leader.*

Instructional Leadership, for the purpose of this survey, is defined as “Superintendent as an Instructional Resource, Resource Provider, Communicator, and Visible Presence”.

Following these instructions is a survey questionnaire that asks a variety of questions about the research topic. Section I contains demographic questions. Section II relates to your understanding and values about “instructional leadership”, and in Section III there are questions that measure your perceptions and values of particular instructional leadership skills and responsibilities that may be related to the role of Superintendent.

These questions are, in no way, meant to illicit right and wrong answers, nor are they designed to reflect your personal perceptions and values of *any particular superintendent.* Your answers should reflect your relative values and interpretation of instructional leadership responsibilities, skills, and qualities that may related to *the role* of superintendent in your personal experiences.

Your cooperation and participation in this survey is very much appreciated.

Section I: *Please indicate your choice answer by placing a check-mark next to it.*

Demographics

1. How would you classify your main assignment at your present school?

- Full-time, certified teacher
- Part-time, certified teacher
- Long-term substitute teacher

2. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male

3. How many years have you been employed as a full-time, certified teacher (100%)?

- _____ 1-5 years
- _____ 6-10 years
- _____ 11-15 years
- _____ 16-20 years
- _____ 21+ years

4. In which area of certification have you worked as a teacher for the majority of your career to date (50% or more)?

- _____ Core subject area (ELA, Math, Social Studies, Science)
- _____ “Essential” area (Music, Art, Media, Foreign Language Physical Education)
- _____ Special Education (Speech, Resource, Consultant, etc.)
- _____ Other support services (AIS)

5. Which category best describes the school level at which you taught for the majority of your career?

- _____ K-12
- _____ Elementary (K-5)
- _____ Primary (K-2)
- _____ Intermediate (3-5)
- _____ Secondary (6-12)
- _____ Middle/Jr. (6-8)
- _____ High (9-12)

Section II:

Instructional Leadership Definition – Understanding & Beliefs

6. I believe that *instructional leadership is an important role of the Superintendent?*

Little or no belief			Believe moderately			Believe strongly
1_____	2_____	3_____	4_____	5_____	6_____	7_____

7. The extent to which I am likely to work constructively with a superintendent who effectively practices instructional leadership:

Not Likely			Somewhat Likely			Very Likely
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

Section III

Perceptions of the ROLE of Superintendent as INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER

The Superintendent as an Instructional Leader - *Resource Provider*

8. *My Superintendent makes effective use of time and resources*

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

9. *My Superintendent plans, organizes, schedules, prioritizes work to be done*

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

10. *My Superintendent delegates work appropriately*

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

11. *My Superintendent assigns staff members according to individual strengths*

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

12. My Superintendent promotes a climate for change that is positive, encouraging creativity in the change process

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

13. My Superintendent possesses the skills to facilitate change (Kotter, 2002)

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

14. My Superintendent is able to assess the effectiveness of change

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

15. My Superintendent communicates reasonable, consistent, clearly articulated, expectations

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

16. My Superintendent provides clear and timely feedback

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

17. My Superintendent encourages risk-taking and innovation in the effort to improve instruction

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

18. My Superintendent provides opportunities for staff development according to staffs' strengths and weaknesses.

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

19. My Superintendent is knowledgeable about high quality professional development for enhanced instruction

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

20. My Superintendent is able to mobilize district support and financial resources to achieve instructional improvement

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

21. My Superintendent conveys to staff the importance of their role as influential instructional resources

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

Instructional Leadership Role - Instructional Resource

22. My Superintendent encourages staff to try current effective instructional strategies

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

23. My Superintendent demonstrates understanding of effective instructional strategies for students in different developmental groups

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

24. My Superintendent values purposefully documentation of teachers' instructional performance

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

25. My Superintendent values post-evaluation/observation discussions that focus on ideas for improved instruction

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

26. My Superintendent consults and uses formative data on student performance

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

27. My Superintendent knows and values effective intervention procedures to identify strengths and remediate weaknesses

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

28. My Superintendent designs an appropriate evaluation cycle and process for staff

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

29. My Superintendent values high quality post-evaluation discussions centered on instruction

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

30. My Superintendent demonstrates knowledge of the importance of student learning objectives to staff

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

Instructional Leadership Role - Communicator

31. My Superintendent is a reliable and sensitive communicator in two-way dialogue

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

32. My Superintendent promotes mutual conflict resolution, problem solving, cooperation, and sharing

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

33. My Superintendent helps others to reach mutually acceptable resolution to conflict

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

34. My Superintendent gathers pertinent and truthful information regarding conflict

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

35. My Superintendent possesses the savvy to communicate only appropriate information

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

36. My Superintendent promotes organized, easily understood communication of message

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

37. My Superintendent interfaces appropriately with various audiences in the educational community.

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

38. My Superintendent develops solutions to complex problems.

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

39. My Superintendent knows strengths and weakness of team members

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

40. My Superintendent demonstrates strong skills in group process skills

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

41. My Superintendent focuses personal goals into group goals

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

Instructional Leadership Role - Visible Presence

42. My Superintendent makes informal classroom visits

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

43. My Superintendent leads by example

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

44. My Superintendent participates in staff professional development

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

45. My Superintendent protects instruction in the face of external pressures

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

46. My Superintendent is visible during school hours

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

47. My Superintendent regularly communicates staff members' responsibilities for student learning

Disagree strongly		Disagree		Agree		Agree strongly
1____	2____	3____	4____	5____	6____	7____

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey!