

TOP LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS NEEDED BY SUPERINTENDENTS
IN RURAL SOUTHWEST MISSOURI SCHOOLS

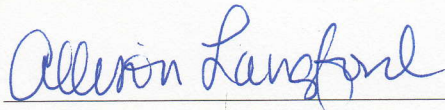
JOY FINNEY

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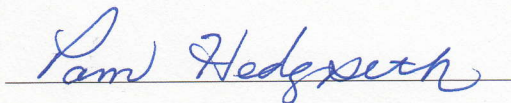
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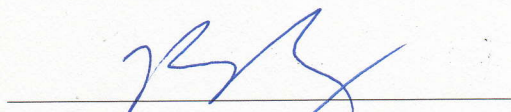
Dr. Allison Langford, Advisor/Chair

Graduate Education, Southwest Baptist University



Dr. Pam Hedgpeth, Committee Member

Graduate Education, Southwest Baptist University



Dr. Benny Fong, Committee Member

Assistant Professor of Graduate Education and Statistics, Southwest Baptist University

TOP LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS NEEDED BY SUPERINTENDENTS

IN RURAL SOUTHWEST MISSOURI SCHOOLS

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the Graduate Education Department
Southwest Baptist University

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

By

Joy Finney, B.S., M.S., Ed. Spec.

Dr. Allison Langford, Dissertation Advisor

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ABSTRACT

Effective school leadership directly and indirectly influences the school setting and teacher and student outcomes (Eliophotou-Menon & Ioannou, 2016).. The research of this study examined perceptions of active school teacher's perceptions of their rural superintendent's leadership to be effective in southwest Missouri schools. Kent's (2004) Leadership Behavior Inventory (LBI) was used as the survey instrument and contained five research based transformational leadership behaviors. The inventory was comprised of Likert-type items measuring the perceptions of the teachers and superintendents on the behaviors observed of the rural superintendent. There was a negative to moderately equal relationship between teacher's perceptions of the five behaviors compared to the superintendent's perceptions of themselves.

Findings of this study support the idea that teacher's perceptions of superintendent's behaviors does have an overall effect on superintendent efficacy, staff commitment and retention. If superintendents become knowledgeable of their transformational leadership behaviors and learn to apply them appropriately, superintendents and teachers can demonstrate a symbiotic relationship that leads to the educational organization's success.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

High quality school leaders like superintendents are crucial to the development and administration of effective schools (Bolman and Deal, 2008). The leadership abilities of the district's head administration are continually examined day to day by teachers, students, parents, community members, and school board members (Bolman and Deal, 2008). According to Goldstein (2001), "When *TIME* picked six 'Schools of the Year' in May of 2001, the one thread they had in common was dynamic, dedicated administrators who inspired teachers, parents, and students to do more than anyone thought possible" (p.4). It is hard to overestimate how important a strong leader is to the success of a school and the students' performance. Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) stated the vital 21st century skills of a strong leader should embrace deeper virtues and values like courage, compassion, service, sacrifice, long-term commitment, and perseverance. Stronge, Richard, and Catano (2008) explained the job of school administration is to make a difference in the lives of children, therefore; the work is challenging and requires significant understanding and patience for those leading and teaching. Shapiro and Gross (2013) added, as a leader in this unstable world of terrorism, violence, and environmental disasters, there is the strong need for security. Superintendents are expected to protect their citizenry. One way to keep them safe is to seek control and create control through new rules and regulations as needed.

Over the last twenty years, Kansas City, Missouri, has had 14 superintendents yielding an average tenure of 1.4 years. Washington D.C. has had nine superintendents over that time, for an average tenure of 2.2 years (Whittle, 2005). Whittle argues that with the increase of superintendent stability in schools, districts would experience greater

success assuming superintendents have the knowledge to focus on the right priorities and skillfully fulfill their responsibilities with strong leadership traits. To be successful, leaders development of relationships is a must. Relationships are built dependent upon interactions of leaders with their followers to bring desired outcomes. Educational organizations' effective leadership is dependent upon the perception of the followers (Eliophotou-Menon & Ioannou, 2016). This type of leader comes from one who inspires and strives to build up followers within the organization, and is coined a transformational leader (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). A transformational leader is one whose approach causes change in individual and social systems. A transformational leader who ideally creates valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of developing the followers into leaders. While in this process of positive change, the transformational leader enhances, motivation, morale and performance of followers through a variety of behaviors and actions. Transformational leaders can connect followers' sense of identity and self to the mission, and the collective identity of the organization. Transformational leaders are role models for their followers inspiring them to become empowered; therefore, challenging followers to take greater ownership for their work, and understanding their strengths and weaknesses, so the leader can align followers with tasks that optimize their performance. Burns and Bass were the first to coin the term transformational leadership and many theorists followed suit over the years (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). Kent's goal was to culminate past leadership theorists' findings, pooling them together to put theory into action.

Kent (2004) realized in his research there are many behaviors needed to be an effective transformational leader. Kent believed the right set of behaviors by leaders can close the gap between the supervisors and the workers, or in this research the

superintendents and the teachers. Kent's research resulted in five behavioral characteristics: *visualizing greatness, empowering the we, communicating for meaning, managing one's self, and care and recognition*. These behaviors can allow a superintendent to become highly effective. They mirror such traits as mentioned by McEwan (2003): a communicator, an educator, and a change master. These three traits, as well as the rest of McEwan's (2003) traits found through her research can enable superintendents better tools to transform schools into a community of learners, set high academic and behavioral expectations, and create a culture where children feel special and safe.

As stated by GreatSchools (2015), the superintendent must also respond to demands of all the other constituencies in the district: teachers, students, staff, parents, and the community at large. He or she must consider how to allocate the financial and human resources of the district to achieve the best results. While being mindful of all the competing demands, a great superintendent will ultimately be guided by a singular question: What is best for all students? (GreatSchools, 2015). Naturally, certain leadership characteristics are automatically expected from the superintendent to meet these demands (Davidson, 1987). Michael Fullan's (2014) research identified leadership as trait characteristics and behaviors a leader possesses and demonstrates, such as morals, purpose, understanding the change process, ability to improve relationships, knowledge creation, sharing, and making processes coherent. Pritchett (1999) suggested teamwork is probably the single most important characteristic in a good leader. He also believed that good communication is a vital trait needed by leaders and nothing can be accomplished without it. In line with this, McEwan (2003) stated to be a highly effective administrator,

one should have strong communication skills, high levels of knowledge about teaching, and the ability to provide instructional leadership.

Bennis and Nanus (2003) stated that many organizations tend to be over managed and under led. Schools need superintendents who are leaders, as well as managers (Bennis & Nanus, 2003). Rallis (1988) supported this by saying the best school leaders must also be managers. “The ‘ideal’ superintendent is most valued as the ‘managerial leader’ of the school district” (Tyron, 1991, p. 2). Others contended there is a clear distinction between managing and leading. They believed it is the distinction between getting others to do and getting others to want to do. (Kouzes & Posner, 1988). In the book, *The Fourth Way*, Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) stated the leader's role is considered being one of a “society of experts” whose task is to draw knowledge and ideas out of colleagues rather than driving initiatives through them. Hargreaves and Shirley added that if the principal or superintendent should fall sick or have a prolonged absence, teachers should say they will simply take over the school because it belongs to all of them. Davidson (1987) believed leadership should be an administrative quality evident to the staff as well as others. He added that a school district should come to expect competent leadership from the superintendent. Kouzes and Posner (1988) contended that, over a period of time, followers will determine whether a person should be, and will be, recognized as a leader.

According to Harvey, Frase, and Larick (1992) leadership is in the eyes of the followers. Sheninger stated that school improvement efforts rely heavily on quality leadership (Sheninger 2011). Ziemke and Ross (2014) also claimed that educational administrators

as lifelong-learners are given the task of establishing and initiating change to spur innovation, ensure student learning, and increase achievement.

Identifying a superintendent as a lifelong-learner is important (Duncan, 1990). Duncan (1990) believed that leaders must keep seeking the tools that will enhance their development as leaders. “Some people, we are told, are born leaders. In reality, most successful leaders emerge after years of education, training, and experience” (Hoyle, English, & Steffy, 1985 p. v). Developing the characteristics needed by superintendents is no different. Leadership development is an ongoing life process, a process that takes a constant look at in relevant research (Kent, 2004). This process is not only when one thinks beyond how one will be just informed of leadership behaviors, but also learn the behaviors needed to be useful in a real world sense. This usefulness is defined as developing the right behaviors and putting those behaviors to work in the organization, where practical training and development are relevant to the school district’s needs (Kent, 2004).

This continued love of learning spurred McEwan (2003) to ask her students, in 1984, what they observed her doing each day. Many of the students’ perceptions of her were that she spent her day with a cup of coffee and chit chatting. In reality, she was consulting, mentoring, coaching, and facilitating. McEwan (2003) saw how the students perceived her role as multifaceted, fragmented, and some even articulated characteristics needed to be an effective principal. Some of the student’s comments stated effective principals must be patient, intelligent, and flexible. Seeing how perceptions can vary between the observer and the leader, McEwan began her search for the answer to what makes a principal effective based on the perceptions of teachers, students,

superintendents, parents, principals, central office administrators, school board members, and university professors. McEwan's results yielded 37 traits of an effective principal (McEwan, 2003). Yet McEwan's research, as well as others, have little to do with the traits of superintendents or the perceived differences of traits valued by active school teachers and the superintendents themselves. McEwan's research identified the traits of an effective principal, and there is a significant amount of research regarding the importance of educational leadership traits.

However, a similar look at behavior traits for superintendents in rural schools has not been conducted, and there is little research regarding the perceived differences of leader traits valued by active school teachers and superintendents. This study was intended to address that gap in the literature, using Kent's Leadership Behavior Inventory (LBI) to put theory into practice (Kent, 2004).

Problem Statement

This study investigated the similarities and differences in the perceptions of effective leadership traits as it relates to teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri schools, with the focus on the importance of selected educational leadership behaviors for an effective superintendent. *Education Week* (2018) states, there are concrete skills that can be taught in a preparation program, such as be a good manager, be organized, and follow the policies. These values have been quantified by researchers such as Grissom and Loeb, Hess & Kelly (2018), and Master (2018). Yet there are those intangible skills that are not easily taught, such as being visionary, motivating, compassionate, a force for good, keeping students the center focus, as well as cognizant of the culture, to name a few. This list highlights where focus needs to be to help make a

modern school leader like the superintendent successful (Grissom & Loeb, Hess & Kelly, 2018).

According to Egalite and Drake (2018), data does not exist yet to answer the most pressing questions about the relationship between the administrator preparation and leadership effectiveness. When it comes to determining the most desirable leadership behaviors of an effective administrator, various stakeholders value traits differently, depending on their relationship with the administrator (McEwan, 2003). The discrepancies are often determined by variables including the size of the school, location and demographics, years of service of teachers, and superintendents. This study focuses on identifying the leadership perceptions of different constituents and comparing those perceptions between the rural teachers and rural superintendents' perceptions of leadership traits needed to be effective administrators. Kent's (2004) research resulted in five behavioral characteristics: *visualizing greatness, empowering the we, communicating for meaning, managing one's self, and care and recognition*. This research will be used to find results for a better understanding and connectedness from the top down of leaders in a rural setting. Gathering relevant terms and effective feedback for positive growth between superintendents and teachers. As stated by Kent (2004), leadership can find utility in the research and boost its value through collaboration and teamwork for better success in rural school districts.

Repeated research such as Bolman and Deal (2008) shows effective leadership is key to building, maintaining, and instilling success within an organization. Effective leadership varies for rural superintendents and superintendents of larger school districts; they can have very different expectations of them and their leadership role. One of the major challenges of rural superintendents, as mentioned by Tobin (2006) is rural

superintendents must wear numerous and varied hats to meet the demands of state and federal initiatives, manage local politics, and ensure students receive the highest quality public education. Large and urban districts typically have several administrators in charge to handle these many education tasks and responsibilities, but that is not always the case in rural districts.

Given the same research-based list of leadership behaviors to inventory, teachers and superintendents can get results of the most effective traits for rural southwest Missouri superintendents (Missouri School Directory, 2017-2018). These findings will bring out a varied list of the top perspectives of leadership behavior traits. Using Kent's (2004) LBI will allow superintendents a new awareness of the leadership traits that teachers and their peers deem the most effective leadership traits needed by a superintendent in rural southwest Missouri schools.

Rationale for the Study

The purpose of this causal comparative study is to test the theory of Kent's transformational leadership behaviors (Kent, 1999, 2004; Kent, Crotts, Aziz, 2001) using his Leadership Behaviors Inventory. The LBI compares active superintendents' and teachers' perceptions of transformational leaders in rural southwest Missouri schools. Comparing results of perceptions of each group can enlighten and impact future team growth and success in school districts. This study will also examine the perceptions of active teachers and superintendents concerning the importance of leadership behavior of rural southwest Missouri superintendents.

Many leadership theories and frameworks are driven on personality and psychological strengths (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Morrison, 2013). Theories might focus on situational leadership, transformational leadership, and political or cultural strengths.

Not surprisingly, the researchers identified the quality of leadership as one of the key factors driving transformation in school improvement (Morrison, 2013). Inevitably, definitions of effective leadership behavior vary from organizations, individuals, and society. The definition of the word “leadership” continues to be complex in its description; yet, many superintendents find themselves in a leader role facing challenging circumstances (Zegarac, 2012). Transformational leadership styles utilize traits including motivation, transformation, optimism, resilience, cognitive strengths, and social skills (Bass, 1999).

The resulting traits valued by each group were compared so the similarities and differences of the two perspectives can be better understood. Giving a list of leadership behaviors can be important for professional development, higher education, team building, and information for recruiting an effective superintendent, as well as superintendent retention. Often, leadership is offered as a solution for many of the problems organizations face (Bolman & Deal, 2008). The more frequently a superintendent engages in effective leadership practices and behaviors and understands leadership is a relationship, the more significant and successful he or she will be (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Fullan, 2011).

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed within this study:

1. What are the perceptions of active teachers concerning the importance of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri schools?
2. What are the perceptions of active superintendents concerning the importance

of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri schools?

3. What is the difference in the LBI's behavior scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

3a. What is the difference in the of LBI's "*empowering the we*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

3b. What is the difference in the LBI's "*visualizing greatness*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

3c. What is the difference in the LBI's "*communicating for meaning*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

3d. What is the difference in the LBI's "*managing one's self*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

3e. What is the difference in the LBI's "*care and recognition*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

Hypotheses

1. There is no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of active teachers concerning the importance of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri schools.

2. There is no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of active superintendents concerning the importance of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri schools.
3. There was no statistically significant difference in the LBI's scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.
 - 3a. There will be no statistically significant difference in the LBI's "*empowering the we*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.
 - 3b. There will be no statistically significant difference in the LBI's "*visualizing greatness*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.
 - 3c. There will be no statistically significant difference in the LBI's "*communicating for meaning*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.
 - 3d. There will be no statistically significant difference in the LBI's "*managing one's self*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.
 - 3e. There will be no statistically significant difference in the LBI's "*care and recognition*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.

Significance of the Study

Outstanding superintendents have a profound impact upon the effectiveness of their schools and contribute greatly to the success of students by mobilizing staff members and community members to achieve district goals (Cottrell, 1985). Researchers noted people who are working leaders, who engage in exemplary practices of transformational leadership, were often more committed and driven in their work. (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Understanding good leadership requires an examination of their leadership traits (Cottrell, 1985), although identifying the most effective leadership traits is an important yet difficult task (Johnson, 1982). McEwan's (2003) research also shows there are discrepancies among the administration's perceptions of their effectiveness compared to teachers' perceptions. For example, in a survey conducted by McEwan (2003), over 250 principals were asked if they spent time supervising teaching. Nearly half of the principals responded affirmatively, but teachers reported that only thirty percent of the principals did so. When asked if they spent time managing curriculum, nearly three-fourths of the principals answered yes. Teachers thought the percentage was less than half (McEwan, 2003). Thus, identifying effective leadership traits is a difficult task; and the results may vary depending on the group surveyed. The teachers' perceptions the leader may impact their followership and thus the success of the organization; therefore, it is significant that superintendents know how their teachers perceive them. This research may increase productivity and success in working effectively within the educational organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2012).

This study not only investigated key leadership characteristics needed by superintendents, but also differentiate between the perceptions of public school teachers and superintendents. With an ongoing focus on accountability for leaders and school

reform attempts, defining the lead role remains a priority to create successful superintendents (Cunningham, 2017). Outstanding leadership has invariably emerged as a key characteristic of outstanding schools. Researchers noted people who work with leaders, who engage in exemplary practices of transformation leadership, were often more committed and driven in their work. (Bass, 1985; Fullan 2010; Kent, 2004; Kouzes & Posner 2012; Leithwood, 2005). There can no longer be doubt that those seeking quality in education must ensure its presence and the development of potential leaders must be given high priority (Beare, Caldwell, & Millikan, 2018). Therefore, identifying common perceptions will enable a better understanding of what others expect from superintendents. After determining which of the superintendent's leadership behaviors need further development, an effective improvement process targeting the areas needing improvement can be implemented. Thus, the superintendent can better meet the expectations of the school district. This could improve teacher morale by superintendents identifying their strengths and modeling those behaviors. This could create a stronger alliance between teachers and superintendents, closing various gaps in educational programming among districts.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was on experts in the field of transformational leadership. The literature review expounded on the work of James MacGregor Burns (1978), the pioneer of the concept of transforming leadership in his descriptive research on political leaders, and now the term is used in organizational psychology as well. According to Burns, transforming leadership is a process in which leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation. Burns related to the difficulty in differentiation between management and

leadership and claimed the differences are in characteristics and behaviors. He established two concepts: “transforming leadership” and “transactional leadership”. As explained by Yukl, according to Burns (1978), the transforming approach creates significant change in the life of organizations and people. It redesigns perceptions and values and changes expectations and aspirations of employees. Unlike the transactional approach, it is not from a “give and take” relationship but based on the leader’s personality, traits, ability to make a change through example, articulation of a desired vision, and challenging goals. Transforming leaders are idealized in the sense that they are a moral exemplar of working toward the benefit of the team, organization, and/or community (Yukl, 1994). Burns (1978) theorized transforming and transactional leaders usually do not strive for cultural change in the organization, but work in the existing culture while transformational leaders can try to change organizational culture. Fullan’s (2014) research also supports transformational leadership theories. Transformational leadership is the process in which the leaders and followers interact with mutual respect and motivation. Key characteristics of transformational leadership include having a shared vision, strong personal values, and purpose; being an inspiration to others; being willing to take risks; and considerations for others (Bass, 1999; Burns, 1978). The research articles over the years by the American Association of School Administrators have enlightened researchers with information on the topic of leadership theories, traits, and historical development of superintendents. The works, Bernard M. Bass, Thomas J. Sergiovanni, and Warren Bennis provided perspectives on school leadership theories and traits, as well as information on leadership theories and traits for improving effectiveness of superintendents based on research from the works of Burns, Whittle, Marzano, and Robert L. DeBruyn

In this study the transformational leadership theory will be looked at more in depth to consider the character traits a leader needs to be a more effective superintendent. Burn's (1978) study of transformational leadership creates the framework to conduct the survey on the perceptions of how teachers and superintendents value effective transformational leadership, comparing the traits used by superintendents to create a more cohesive view of the superintendents and his or her effective leadership traits.

Limitations of the Study

This study has the possibility for limitations in the following areas:

1. The population surveyed was limited to teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri schools.
2. The perspective of the respondents may be limited in experience, time constraints, and personal preferences.
3. Response rate may be impacted by the internal technological communication effectiveness of individual districts
4. Numbers of superintendents that each teacher may have worked with can vary. This study relates to using a survey as a tool to collect data, which includes the fact that respondents may not have answered with candor or may not have followed directions.

Delimitations of the Study

1. This study was limited geographically to rural southwest Missouri Schools, Region C, including K-8 and K-12, in any combination.
2. This study did not include charter or private schools, based on the idea that the culture and climate may vary from the public school setting.

3. This study did not include retired public school teachers or superintendents, based on the idea that the culture and climate may have changed since these teachers and superintendents were in active service in public schools.

Assumptions

The assumptions of this research include:

1. School teachers know what leadership characteristics they value most in a superintendent.
2. Superintendents know what leadership characteristics they value most in a superintendent.
3. Age, gender, and number of years of experience may have influence on responses in both groups. The researcher, however, will only analyze perceptions from the role that people play within the school structure.
4. It is assumed that participants who received electronic invitations chose to participate and took the survey themselves.
5. Generalizability was used to control the size of school districts to rural southwest

Missouri by keeping student population under 1,000 students in Region C. In Kent's (2004, 2005, Kent et al., 2001) leadership behavior research, leadership is a pattern of behavior, not a position. Exemplary leadership behavior is based on forward vision, honesty, competence, inspiration, and credibility. Effective leaders are willing to assess themselves and use the results to improve the success of the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Kent (2004, 2001) lists five leadership practices that create successful leaders: *visualizing greatness, empowering the we, communicating the understanding,*

managing oneself, and care and recognition. Each behavior serves as one of the five fundamental behaviors consistently characteristic of transformational leadership.

Visualizing greatness signifies the importance of leaders establishing and communicating a shared vision (Kent, 2004). Leaders who visualize greatness have a clear sense of the organization's future, communicate and discuss continuously this direction with others, and use the vision to inspire others. When *visualizing greatness*, leaders will look for the small wins that promote progression, encourage collaboration, and speak enthusiastically about the organization's future (Kent, 2004; Kouzes & Posner, 1995, 2003, 2007). Sustainable leadership thrives on the ability to envision a dream, hope, or possibility and enlist others to believe in it through shared language, thoughts, and values, to promoting human energy (Kent, 2004; Kouzes & Posner, 2012, 2013).

The second factor, *empowering the we*, involves getting people to be active in organizational decision-making. The behavior seems focused on forming a sense of togetherness in unity and encourages collaborative efforts inspired by a shared vision. Other transformational leadership research defines the *empowering of we* as enabling others to act, give individual consideration or have encouraging commitment in followers (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Kotter, 2012; Kouzes & Posner, 1995, 2007, 2012).

The third behavior, *communicating for meaning*, focuses on the leader's ability to act as an effective communicator. Communicating for meaning is associated with the quality or qualities the leader demonstrates when communicating (Kent, 2004; Kent et al, 2001). Effective leaders are able to communicate in meaningful forms that promote deep understanding and value. These leaders challenge the process, clearly communicate and identify possible obstacles, but continue to motivate others to overcome hurdles. They are

able to make changes within the organization in order to improve the performance and find better solutions of current issues and produce improved results.

Managing one's self is the fourth leadership behavior. This behavior is derived from the leader's ability to establish stability in his or her emotional being as well as building consistency, persistence, and a high-level of trust (Kent, 2004; Kent et al., 2001). "While the other four factors identified through this factor analysis seem to have some theoretical support from previous authors, this factor—*Managing One's Self*—seems unique in leadership literature" (Kent, 2004, p. 431). However, Goleman's (1995, 1998, 2005) self-awareness and self-regulation component of emotional intelligence shares similarities in theory. Self-awareness is the ability to recognize one's personal behavior or mood on one's self as well as its effects on others (Goleman, 1995, 2005). Self-regulation is the ability to control, redirect or withhold behaviors or actions to create a more trustworthy environment or willingness to change (Goleman, 1995, 2005). *Managing one's self* shares similar hallmarks of these specific emotional intelligence components.

The final behavior in Kent's research is *care and recognition*. *Care and recognition* reference a leader's ability to celebrate accomplishments, build positive relationships through a sense of fun, passion, and a recognition of others' hard work (Kent, 2004; Kouzes & Posner, 2007, 2012). Encouragement and positive communication are key drivers of this leadership practice. These five leadership practices are the foundation of Kent's research, derived from the characteristics of transformational leadership.

Kent's Leadership Behavior Inventory (LBI) is an innovative instrument developed in an attempt to identify specific behaviors involved in transformational leadership both on national and global platforms (Kent, 2001; Kent, 2004; Rudd, Kent, & Blair, 2009). Limited research utilizes the LBI and further research is needed. While the global study found specific behaviors associated with transformational leadership are strong and commonly used, the research does not measure the perception of leadership effectiveness. While researching leadership behavior in individuals acting as leaders is relevant, further research should be considered on gender differences among leaders who demonstrate transformational behaviors.

Design Control

This quantitative study utilized a descriptive research design. Descriptive research is used to summarize or describe a set of observations on current characteristics of given populations (Pelham, 2013). Many times this involves the use of survey questionnaires. Survey research can be used to gather information about a group's beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and demographic compositions. Survey data was collected by asking a pre-determined population a set of questions, which can be administered in a questionnaire that is mailed or emailed or in an interview over the phone or in person (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009).

Return of responses of the surveys can be problematic (Pelham, 2013). The research in this study was controlled by utilizing electronic responses to eliminate the problem. In addition, the researcher conducted a follow-up email one week after original request to nonresponsive participants, reminding them of the opportunity to complete the survey.

The purpose for the research was sent out along with notice of confidentiality and permissions to the superintendents of rural southwest Missouri schools, using an electronic tool, Question Pro (see Appendix A and B). A short explanation of the need for the sample will be included at the beginning of the inventory for teachers and superintendents. The explanation will include assurance of confidentiality and the explanation for the participant to opt out of the survey all together. A thank you and offer to follow up with research results will be seen at the end of each district superintendent's and teacher's survey.

The survey: The LBI (Kent, 1999, 2001, 2004) will be distributed electronically to 48 active superintendents of 48 school districts with a population of less than 1,000 students. These students was a combination of grades extending from kindergarten through eighth grade, and kindergarten through twelfth grade. These districts were located in Region C of southwest Missouri rural schools. Approval to use the survey was given to the researcher by Dr. Kent, October 18, 2018, (see Appendix D).

The same survey tool was given for completion to the 1,864 active teachers of Region C's rural southwest Missouri schools. This survey was distributed electronically by link to teachers after the superintendent's response is recorded, which the superintendents completed survey shows the district's approval to be a part of the research. Data was collected from an electronically random selection of 10 teachers per district for a sample of 186 completed surveys concerning their perceptions on superintendent leadership and traits. The problematics would have been if not all superintendents filled out the survey. Filling out the survey gave permission to use the teachers' surveys. Another problem would have been, if teachers did not take the survey or take it in a timely manner.

Both the validity and reliability will be discussed further in Chapter Three. Another control of descriptive research is the protection of all participants involved (Pelham, 2013). An email explanation will be provided, at the beginning of the questionnaire to all participants explaining the purpose of the study, its significance, and commitment to share results with participants upon request. Within the email, both anonymity and confidentiality will be addressed. “The promise of anonymity or confidentiality will increase the truthfulness of responses as well as the percentage of returns” (Gay, et al., 2009, p. 184).

Definitions of Terms

To promote understanding and unity in the study, terms were selected for definition to provide clarification.

Characteristic/Trait. A distinguishing feature or quality. Integrated patterns of personal characteristics that reflect a range of individual differences and foster consistent leader effectiveness across a variety of group and organizational situations (Zaccaro, Kemp, & Bader, 2004).

Effective Leadership. Is a function of the administrator’s style, personality, skill, and ability to articulate a vision acceptable to the population of his/her particular situation: parents, school board members, superintendents, teachers, and students (Schmieder & Cairns, 1996).

Five Practices of the Leadership Behavior Inventory. The five practices that emerged through Kent’s (1999, 2004; Kent et al., 2001) development of the Leadership Behavior Inventory and multiple years of research focused on transformational leadership behaviors. The five behaviors include: (a) *visualizing greatness*, (b) *empowering the we*,

(c) *communicating for meaning*, (d) *managing one's self*, and (e) *care and recognition* (Kent, 1999, 2004; Kent et al., 2001).

Instructional Leader. Is someone who has a significant impact, for better or worse, on student opportunities to learn in the classroom (Donmoyer & Wagstaff, 1990).

Leader. A person whose primary responsibility is to help the members of a group work together effectively for the achievement of group goals (Good and Phi Theta Kappa, 1973).

Leadership. Ability to get others involved in solving problems; ability to recognize when a group requires direction: to interact with a group effectively and guide them to the accomplishment of a task (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1989).

Leadership Skills. Proficiency, ability, or dexterity that usually requires learning or training to master (Schmieder & Cairns, 1996).

School Board Member. A citizen elected or appointed in a manner prescribed by law to serve for a number of years on the policy-making board of a school district (Good and Phi Theta Kappa, 1973).

Southwest Missouri School Districts. Southwest Missouri is the area of schools to be surveyed. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Division of School Improvement divided the state into ten regions. Region C covers the Southwest corner of the state and includes the following counties: Barry, Barton, Cedar, Christian, Dade, Dallas, Douglas, Greene, Jasper, Laclede, Lawrence, McDonald, Newton, Ozark, Polk, Stone, Taney, Vernon, Webster, and Wright (Missouri School Directory, 2017-2018).

Superintendent. The chief executive and advisory officer charged with the direction of schools in a local school administrative unit, as in a district, city, or town (Good and Phi Theta Kappa, 1973).

Teacher. A person that teaches something, especially a person whose job is to teach students about certain subjects (Webster's New World College Dictionary, 2018).

Transformational Leadership. A process in which leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation (Burns, 1978).

Organization of the Study

The remainder of the study was organized in the following manner: A review of selected literature is presented in Chapter Two. The review of literature provides a history of the public school superintendent, leadership theory and research, as well as an examination of the five selected leadership behaviors as indicated by Kent's Five (2004). The selected leadership behaviors to be compared within the study are: *The Five Ingredients of Leadership* by Kent (2004) are the following: *visualizing greatness, empowering the we, communicating for meaning, managing one's self, and care and recognition.*

The methods and procedures used to describe the population and sample, development of the survey instrument, and the collection of data and analysis procedures were reported in Chapter Three. Provided in Chapter Four is an analysis of the acquired data. Summary, conclusions, and recommendations for further research were provided in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

This chapter presents the review of literature through the evolution and history of the public school superintendent, as well as a rationale for the superintendency leadership, focusing on the superintendent in the rural setting. While reviewing leadership traits, and focusing on transformational leadership theory, one can identify with those characteristics most often recognized in literature as being necessary for transformational leadership in education. This includes Kent's (2004, 1999; Kent et al., 2001) research on leadership trait theories that developed into "Kent's Five," a study combining great leadership theories under one umbrella and into a five-behavior-focus defined through Kent's Leadership Behavior Inventory. Each section can provide insight to the skills or qualities a superintendent might practice to increase effectiveness.

History of the Superintendent

According to Konnert and Augenstein (1990), learning about the history of school superintendents helps to understand the present. The position of public school superintendent emerged just over 150 years ago. Both Buffalo, New York, and Louisville, Kentucky, initiated such a position in 1837. Their actions were only the beginning, and by 1890, most major American cities had created superintendent roles (Konnert & Augenstein, 1990).

According to the American Association of School Administrators, the evolution of the superintendent can be defined in four phases (AASA, 2015). In the first phase (1837-1910), superintendents, chosen from the ranks of teachers, focused primarily on instruction and even taught some classes (Griffiths, 1966). The American Association of

School Administration (2015) stated, “The early superintendent was a schoolmaster, a man who kept school” (p. 20).

In the second phase, after 1910, the leading influence in the United States came from the business sector (AASA, 2015). During this time, school boards sought a person with a strong business orientation rather than a scholar to serve as a superintendent (Ortiz & Marshall, 1988). These businessmen-superintendents were considered efficiency experts, particularly as the one-room schools were being replaced by larger buildings that accommodated more faculty and students (Scott & Smith, 1987).

In the third phase, according to Cook in the American Association of School Administrators, (2015), was the manager-superintendent era. “That fascination with mass production and with the organizational structure of the large corporate enterprises,” according to AASA, “led school superintendents to apply the same techniques to the educational enterprise” (Cook, p. 21).

The fourth phase of the superintendency, spanning 1964 to the present, focuses more on the person himself or herself (McNulty, 2005). With the growing complexity of today’s world, a great deal more is required of superintendents (Marzano, Waters, McNulty, 2005). It is not enough to have experience in the classroom and financial management skills, much more is expected. Superintendents must not only carry out school board policies, but they must also articulate good, sound educational philosophies and practices to their staff. Superintendents must be skilled in public relations to improve a sense of public confidence and must be technologically sound. Porthan, in 1989, mentioned that as technology advances, so do the requirements of the superintendency (p. 3). Cecilia Brock built on Porthan’s idea in 2017 with her study on school

superintendents, technology and its impact on superintendent efficacy as a leader. School superintendents, as peak leaders of each school district, are placed in a position to answer the question of how to integrate and utilize technology, find substantial meaning in the presented technology, and determine the technology's usefulness as it pertains to their own efficacy, as well as staff and students. How a school superintendent utilizes technology is a component of their leadership and behavior practices, and sets an example for how technology can effect, influence, and impact a school's culture (Brock, 2017). Various expectations of a superintendent are becoming more important in the educational enterprise becomes larger, more complex, and more demanding of leadership (Whittle, 2005). The following section describes current tendencies within the rural superintendency.

The Superintendent in the Rural Setting

Leadership is a reciprocal process between those who choose to lead and those who follow (Bass 1985; Kent, 2004, 2005; Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Tobin (2006) also stated that it is not uncommon for a rural district superintendent to serve concurrently as an elementary principal, high school principal, athletic director or curriculum specialist. Rural superintendents are described by Tobin as leaders who deal “more with less.” Rural school superintendents are generally more upfront and personal with students, parents, and community members. Rural superintendents also face unique political issues/hurdles that larger districts may address quite differently or not at all. A prime example shared by Tobin was of rural superintendents dealing with and maintaining quality learning opportunities despite declining enrollment, limited resources, and inadequate per-pupil funding from state and federal sources, while operating with a central-office staff of one.

A rural superintendent is very much in the forefront of the public; everyone knows who you are as well as where you live and work. Rural superintendents fight to have a voice on educational issues, vying for the same power of voice as a large school district. Tobin (2006) explained on a positive note that all rural school leaders can and should play an important role in educating children. The rewards are well worth the challenges as a rural superintendent.

Lamkin (2006) stated rural school districts and their superintendents face specific obstacles that render services and roles less attractive than elsewhere. These obstacles include isolation, limited resources, and a community resistance to change, all of which have persisted over time (Barker, 1985; Beckner, 1990; DeYoung, 1994; Sher & Rosenfeld, 1977; Stephens & Turner, 1988). Many Americans lack value or respect in general for “ruralness” (Haas, 1991; Herzog & Pittman, 1999). Yet, Rude stated in 2016, 43% of the nation’s public schools are in rural communities.

Rural school superintendents seem to be relegated to the bottom rung of the administrative farm system (Jacobson, 1988) and rural districts endure rapid and frequent turnover among superintendents in their service (Bryant & Grady, 1989; Chance & Capps, 1992; Grady & Bryant, 1991a, 1991b; Wilson & Heim, 1985). The simple reality for rural school districts at the start of the 21st century is one of difficulty to attract, reward, and retain school leaders.

Superintendents have spoken frequently about challenges related to their lack of adequate training for specific tasks and skills (Lamkin, 2006). These superintendents spoke about challenges related specifically to the rural environment, to the lack of specialized contact and experience with that environment, and to the lack of acculturation to the setting and expectations of the rural superintendent. In Lamkin’s (2006) interviews

with rural superintendents across three states, they talked openly about the increased focus on academic and financial accountability in their work. The participants made it clear that rural superintendents felt intense personal pressure to be accountable for the financial success of their districts and the academic success of their students (Lamkin, 2006).

According to Lamkin (2006), rural superintendents raised only one issue as a recent change that had not been a challenge earlier in their service: the issue of the use of technology. They discussed technology as a tool to teach, to manage information, and to provide an accurate and rapid path to district accountability. Among these challenges, rural superintendents who were nearing the end of their careers and who had trained many years before their current service, reported that technology presented a challenge for which they had received no preparation. Technology gives rural superintendents the need for another hat. Rural superintendents have to be more knowledgeable in assessment tools and statistical processes. Lamkin (2006) shared that these rural superintendents also voiced that in the rural settings in which they served, they needed to be a “jack of all trades,” to meet the demands of the small rural community, the need to market effectively across the school district and community, and the increased level of personal accountability. Rural superintendents who participated in Lamkin’s focus group interviews discussed at length and with visible frustration their lack of specialized guided contact and experience with rural communities and school districts.

Crowson and Glass (1991) found that superintendents experience a personal conflict between their role as leader and their role as manager. All rural superintendents in this study who spoke about their central role made it clear that they wanted to lead but were forced to manage. This was true especially in rural districts where staff must assume

new roles, where students must master skills unfamiliar to their parents, and where boards may not agree with mandates from the state and federal governments. The rural setting has more challenges, and a smaller voice, which creates an asset needed for the rural superintendent in being strong in public relations to market or represent their rural schools with good public relations. On the other hand, superintendents who could not effectively market change or respond to new mandates probably could not succeed in the role of rural school superintendent (Tobin, 2006).

Grissom (2012) noted superintendents migrate away from rural districts toward larger, higher-paying districts in urban and suburban locations within three years of obtaining a job in rural schools. Grissom reasoned higher salaries is one of the most frequent reasons for leaving. Yet, in his research he has recommendations that teacher and superintendent preparation programs need to include skills specific to success in rural school settings.

There is a need for more research on the subject of rural superintendents and the training and skills needed, including an investigation of the perspectives of teachers and administrators other than superintendents (Barker & Kennedy, 1987). Instability in the superintendent's office disrupts management functions and may have a negative impact on district performance. Additionally, the loss of a superintendent can also affect staff morale and have a "trickledown" effect on principals and staff (Grissom & Andersen, 2012). The position of superintendent affects all facets of the public school, especially in reaching its goals. (Grissom, 2012; Henwood, 2016)

As such, rural school percentages reflect that "one of every six school-age child or youth attends a rural school" (Arnold, 2004, p. 4). Superintendents in small rural

school districts face particularly challenging jobs (Canales et al., 2008). Where job descriptions exist, they are frequently impossible to fulfill and at the same time, sufficiently ambiguous to allow for a variety of actions by those who control their positions. Small school superintendents confront the responsibility of the customary task of running a school, including staffing, scheduling, conducting faculty meetings, drawing up a budget, and leading curriculum development. One of the primary differences between small school superintendents and large school superintendents is that the larger can delegate many tasks, whereas the smaller is responsible for not only seeing that tasks are accomplished, but for actually performing the tasks themselves (Wylie & Clark, 1991).

There is so much research out on what is needed to be an effective superintendent or educational leader. Only a miniscule amount of research has been touched on in this review. Some researchers examined effective leadership specifically in superintendents and identified the traits and behaviors common to those leaders. Superintendents in rural settings identify with traits that vary in many instances from superintendents in larger districts as reviewed in the following section.

Superintendency and Leadership

During the past three decades, 1987-2017, “widespread concern for the quality of public education launched what is arguably the most intense, comprehensive and sustained effort to improve education in America’s history” (Willis & Ingle, 2018, pp. 78-114). This need for improvement from federal and state-level governmental agencies has limited opportunities for school-level policymaking, expanded the size and research of state and district bureaucracies, and increased the workload of superintendents, principals, and teachers (Willis & Ingle, 2018).

This push to reform our educational system upped the ante for passionate superintendents. With no concern of the salary, administrators were still finding themselves burning out, ready to retire early, and seeking a career elsewhere (Herbert, 2011). No matter the demographics of the superintendent's place of employment, research from the AASA (2018) has stated the longevity of a superintendent has become limited. Nevertheless, studies at McREL by Waters and Marzano (2006) entitled, *School District Leadership that Works: The Effect of Superintendent Leadership on Student Achievement*, have reported positive correlations between superintendent tenure and student academic achievement.

In his 2005 book, *Crash Course*, Chris Whittle contrasts CEO stability in major corporations with superintendent stability in large urban school districts (Whittle, 2005). Over the last twenty years, Kansas City, Missouri, as had fourteen superintendents, yielding an average tenure of 1.4 years. Washington, D.C., has had nine superintendents over that time for an average tenure of 2.2 years. During the same time frame, General Electric was run by two CEOs. Federal Express, Microsoft, and Dell had one chief executive each. Whittle, who founded the Edison Schools, asserts that CEO stability at a corporation accounts for a large measure of their success. He argues the instability of superintendent leadership accounts for much of the low student achievement found in too many school districts. If the stability of superintendents were approximated to the stability of CEO leadership, Whittle claims, school districts likely would experience greater success, assuming superintendents focus on the right priorities and skillfully fulfill their responsibilities (Whittle, 2005). Thus, superintendents need effective leadership skills to bring stability and effectiveness to their districts. The following

section presents the literature on educational leadership as it relates to the superintendency.

In their book, *Leaders*, Bennis and Nanus (1985), offer more than 350 definitions of leadership, because leadership by any definition includes action. Ivey (1982) believed any theory of leadership is helpful if it is used to better guide action. Rutherford, Hord, Huling, and Hall (1983) asserted that, “Theories, models and perspectives abound” (p. 5). While research on the broad topic of leadership is expansive, studies on educational leadership are less frequent.

In many ways, leadership is a catchall term for the superintendent’s daily role. The superintendent is, according to Mintzberg (1973), a figurehead, spokesman, crisis-handler, negotiator, entrepreneur, resource allocator, and a disseminator of information. Burns (1978) stated that, “leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomenon on earth” (p. 2). Murphy and Hallinger (1986) pointed out that, “research on the superintendency in general is remarkably thin, while research on the leadership role of the superintendency is sparser still” (p. 214). Yet, according to Hoyle (1989) many reformers within as well as outside of education were asking how to develop great superintendents as they approached the year 2000.

In Robert’s (1989) book, *Leadership of Attila the Hun*, he identified fairly common characteristics of leadership, but he did it in an uncommon way. The traits he creatively described were loyalty, courage, desire to lead, emotional and physical stamina, decisiveness, anticipation and timing, competitiveness, self-confidence, accountability, responsibility, credibility, tenacity, dependability, and stewardship. Roberts (1989) went on to creatively describe things that leaders must do to be effective:

delegate, provide feedback and reinforcement, negotiate, advise and counsel, practice diplomacy, have clear goals, demonstrate tolerance, be of good character, and have good training. Roberts' research focused on both traits and job activities.

Other researchers focused only on job behaviors or skills. Fleming and Eiseman (1988) focused on five skills that effective superintendents must have to improve schools: a clear vision, a clear set of values, a nurturing environment, clear expectations, and ample performance opportunities (all followed by feedback). While studying what constitutes high-performance leadership, Webster (1988) discovered the following characteristics associated with high performing superintendents: believing in people, possessing clear personal and professional values, harboring a strong sense of mission, committing themselves to working with others, having high expectations, taking risks, motivating others, and monitoring progress. Webster also felt that effective superintendents possess awareness of the social, cultural, and political aspects of the system, and professional characteristics of the staff.

Another approach to defining leadership effectiveness is through a combination of both traits and skills. Yuki (1982) studied leadership by analyzing it through traits, power, and behaviors. He felt there are nine traits that contribute to leader effectiveness: self-confidence, need for a socialized power, need for achievement, desire to compete with peers, respect for authority figures, tolerance for high stress, high energy level, interest in oral and persuasive activities, and relevant technical, conceptual, and interpersonal skills. He also noted power, both personal and positional, was important to leader effectiveness. However, the exercise of that power needed to be both tactful and understanding and could not be manipulative. This power should not be exercised for power's sake, but should be exercised in an altruistic manner. Also, after analyzing leader

behaviors, Yuki concluded that developing goals, policies, and directions, organizing the school for goal accomplishment, monitoring, programs, solving problems, maintaining order, managing resources, creating climate, and representing the school to the community were critical to the success of the leader (1982). Rather than identifying traits, some researchers describe the skill set or behaviors that educational leaders must demonstrate to be effective. Hoyle, Et al. (1985) contended the successful school superintendent needed fundamental skills in evaluation, building support of the entire school at all levels, curriculum development, managing instruction, staff evaluation and development, resource allocation, research, and planning.

Reavin (1988) studied extraordinary educators and gathered data through personal interviews, observations, and artifact collections and concluded that effective leaders give many correctives and correct any deviation from established directions quickly. He discovered these leaders were expert disciplinarians; purposeful, demanding perfectionists who stressed positive attitudes and were supportive optimists who encouraged, were moral, had vision, high expectations, and a good sense of humor. They were all collaborative, intellectual, and results oriented (Reavin, 1988).

When leaders can communicate, delegate, distribute efforts and develop trust with teachers and staff, the leader is more effective and more respected (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Some researchers organized traits and skills into groups of behaviors or “clusters” (Snyder, 1986). Snyder drew a parallel of four job task clusters to effective leadership: organizational planning, managing staff, managing programs, and assessing results. Snyder also mentioned the competencies necessary for each successful job task cluster: school-wide goal setting, work group performance, and individual performance. Creating a positive work culture was, Snyder felt, a leader’s responsibility as well.

Some researchers described job-related skills needed for an effective superintendent. For example, Manley (1972) found that top-level leadership was crucial in securing financial resources, organizing staff development to support change, and in obtaining and increasing community support. The superintendent, according to Wallace (1986), must assume the role of educational leader and “provide vigorous leadership” (p. 22). He went on to identify the practices that he believed every educational leader must do to be successful: a leader that is data driven, risk taker, and a leader who communicates respect to teachers and principals, is knowledgeable of the change process, a leader who delegates well, and has a vision for quality education.

The superintendent is to be an educational philosopher, an educational change agent, and an educational theorist. Michel (1968) stated, “The role of the superintendent in the perplexing state of educational affairs...is vague and unclear... There is little agreement within the profession as to how the superintendent should act” (p. 8). The role of a superintendent is a significant factor when it comes to instituting change in school systems because change is initiated at the system’s top level. How a leader interacts with followers can impact the accomplishments of the organization as a whole. A relationship built upon respect and conviction will overcome the greatest of obstacles and make a significant impact (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Finally, Andrews and Soder (1987) delineated leadership into activities of providing resources, acting as an instructional resource, communicating, being a visible presence, empowering people, and creating a vision or a purpose. With so many challenges facing rural school superintendents it requires them to consider a transformational style of leadership in order to be successful

in their context. A more in-depth look at transformational leadership is described in the section below.

Transformational Leadership

Researchers have often attributed their successful leadership to the possession of certain behaviors or characteristics. A persistent debate in the research is whether successful leaders have inherent traits for developed skills (Bass, 1981).

Transformational leadership is a great model or assessing leadership traits of superintendents and has been presented through discussions of leadership theory and research completed since the 1970s (Burns, 1978). Mazarella (1989) noted research around 1980 focused on both traits and behaviors, concentrating on the interaction of the two and suggested leadership is perhaps both learned and inborn. This section provides a brief, overview of effective transformational leadership and related theories.

The concept of transformational leadership was initially introduced and developed by leadership expert and presidential biographer James MacGregor Burns (1978). According to Burns, transformational leadership can be seen when, "leaders and followers make each other advance to a higher level of morality and motivation." (Burns, 1978). Through the strength of their vision and personality, transformational leaders are able to inspire followers to change expectations, perceptions, and motivations to work towards common goals. Transformational leadership is based on the leader's personality, traits and ability to make a change through example, articulation of a revitalizing vision, and challenging goals. Transforming leaders are faultless in the sense that they are an honorable example of working towards the benefit of the team, organization and/or community. Later, researcher Bernard M. Bass expanded upon Burns' original ideas to develop what is today referred to as Bass' transformational leadership theory. According

to Bass, transformational leadership can be defined based on the impact that it has on followers. Transformational leaders, Bass suggested, garner trust, respect, and admiration from their followers.

Bernard M. Bass (1985) extended the work of Burns (1978) by introducing the term "transformational" in place of "transforming." Bass added to the initial concepts of Burns (1978) to help explain how transformational leadership could be measured, and how it impacts follower motivation and performance. The transformational leader is first measured in terms of his or her influence on the followers. The followers of such a leader feels trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect for the leader, and because of these qualities the transformational leader is willing to work harder than expected. Outcomes occur because the transformational leader offers followers something more than just working for self-gain; they provide followers with an inspiring mission, and vision, and give them an identity. The leader transforms and motivates followers through his or her idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. In addition, this leader encourages followers to come up with new and unique ways to challenge the status quo and to alter the environment to support being successful. Transformational leadership creates interplay among the leader and his or her staff.

According to Bass (1985), transformational leaders are described to hold positive expectations for followers, believing that they can do their best. As a result, they inspire, empower, and stimulate followers to exceed normal levels of performance.

Transformational leaders also focus on and care about followers and their personal needs and development. Riggio (2008) added, transformational leaders fit well in leading and working with complex work groups and organizations, who seek an inspirational leader to help guide them through an uncertain environment, or change process where followers

are challenged and are made to feel empowered by their leaders, this nurtures them into becoming loyal, high performers. There are four components to transformational leadership, sometimes referred to as the 4 I's:

Idealized Influence (II) - the leader serves as an ideal role model for followers; the leader "walks the talk," and is admired for this (Riggio, 2008). A transformational leader embodies the qualities she or he wants in his or her team.

Inspirational Motivation (IM) - Transformational leaders have the ability to inspire and motivate followers through having a vision and presenting that vision (Riggio, 2008). Combined, these first two I's are what constitute the transformational leader's charisma.

Individualized Consideration (IC) - Transformational leaders demonstrate genuine concern for the needs, and feelings of followers, and help them self-actualize (Riggio, 2008). This personal attention to each follower assists in developing trust among the organization's members and their authority figure(s). This is an important element because teams are able to rely on and work together so decisions can be made more quickly, the transformational leader increases their buy-in.

Intellectual Stimulation (IS) - the leader challenges followers to be innovative and creative, they encourage their followers to challenge the status quo (Riggio, 2008). A common misunderstanding is that transformational leaders are "soft," but the truth is that they constantly challenge followers to higher levels of performance. Transformational leadership is said to have occurred when engagement in a group results in leaders and followers raising one another to increased levels of motivation and morality. It is not enough to make the correct choice, but to make the moral choice (Riggio, 2008).

“Transformational leadership is the process through which an individual commits

himself or herself to the well-being of the organization and creates connections that increase the level of motives and morale of subordinates” (Eliophotou-Menon & Ioannou, 2016, p. 13). Michael and Dolores Giammatteo (1981) recommended leadership be put into two categories--functions and skills. Leadership functions included building and maintaining groups, creating group comfort, setting, and defining objectives, cooperatively working toward objectives, and getting the job done. Leadership skills included personal behavior, communication, and commitment to equality, organization, and self-examination.

Duke (1986) researched transformational leadership and approached his categories in different way, than Bass’ and Burns’ Four I’s, by believing that leadership needed to be considered as a set of behaviors or activities. This set included: “a sense of purpose; the involvement of workers and followers; the relationship and interaction between a leader and subordinate; creativity and imagination; the realm of ritual, ceremony, and performance; the ability to make vision come to life, and facilitating cohesion to accomplish tasks” (Duke, 1986, pp. 31-32).

Sergiovanni (1990) described four approaches to leadership that each entailed broader skills and traits associated with Bass and Burns four descriptors of transformational leadership. Of the four approaches to effective leadership--bartering, building, bonding, and banking—Sergiovanni believed, “leadership by bonding is the cornerstone of an effective, long term leadership strategy for schools because it has the power to help schools transcend competence for excellence by inspiring extraordinary commitment and performance” (p. 23).

Kouzes and Posner’s 1995 work focused on the personal traits or characteristics

individuals look for and appreciate in a leader (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Over the years, four characteristics remained consistent with most people who willingly followed a leader, believed the leader was honest, forward-looking, competent, and inspiring (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). As a leader engages in these exemplary leadership practices, the more likely it is they will have a positive, lasting influence on others within the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2012).

Sergiovanni (1990) also believed “transformational leadership is first concerned with high order psychological needs for esteem, autonomy, and self-actualization, and then, with moral questions of goodness, righteousness, duty, and obligation” (p. 23). “Transformational leadership occurs when one or more people engage with others in a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality” (p. 20). According to Leithwood and Sun (2012), transformational leaders rely upon core values and motivation, unlike the transactional leader who operates only upon structure, short-term thinking, and managerial leadership, and operates upon a reciprocal relationship in some aspects. The transactional leader, however, views the relationship as a give-and-take relationship instead of a partnership.

Pink’s (2009) dimension though, also encompasses the idea of not just communicating goals to obtain the vision, but seeks commitment from individuals, building teams and coalitions to create a positive sustainable organization (Pink, 2012). This researcher mimics the transformational leadership of Kouzes and Posner’s (2012) enabling others to act, so all constituents have a meaningful place in the organization. Thus, the concept of transformational leadership portrays a process that drives followers to attain organizational and personal goals to their greatest potential through inspiration,

communication, and integrity. Research also signifies the secret human need to direct lives and give purpose to why people do the things they do (Pink, 2012). Fowler (2014) felt superintendents must possess purpose, and an abundance of scholarship, judgment, alertness, initiative, cooperation, drive, self-confidence, communication, flexibility, stability, and reliability.

Since transformational leadership changed the way people think about leadership and how leadership is defined, Kent (1999) created a model that attempts to differentiate between leading and managing. Based on that model, he gathered statements of proposed leadership behaviors— not managing behaviors—according to the model, and from scholarly writings such as, (Bass, 1985; Bass and Avolio, 1994; Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Conger, 1989; Kotter, 1990; and Kouzes and Kosner, 1995). Using these behavioral statements Kent (2004) created a measure, the Leadership Behavior Inventory (LBI), to assess leaders' transformational leadership behaviors as described by these various leading authors. The LBI is a 5-factor measure of behaviors purported to reflect transformational leadership.

In the past few decades some researchers identified effectiveness in traits; others identified job behaviors, groups of behaviors, or a combination of traits and skills. Superintendents must know when and how to adjust control or guidance to approach the situation accordingly (Bolman & Deal, 2008). In other words, superintendents should be aware of external and internal structures that may impede the outcomes of the learning organization and find ways to utilize or redesign structures for clarity and stability, including environment, current trends, and technology (Bolman & Deal, 2008). In the same instance, a transformational leadership goes beyond managing day-to-day operations and crafts strategies for taking his or her team to the next level of performance

and success. Transformational leadership styles focus on teambuilding. Motivation and collaboration. Transformational leaders set goals and incentives to push their subordinates to higher performance levels, while providing opportunities for personal and professional growth for each employee (Ingram, 2018). McNulty (2011) added, superintendents must know when challenges are occurring, who needs support, what additional resources are needed, and how the current ones are being allocated.

There appears to be no consensus among the researchers whether a particular dimension of effective leadership should be considered a trait (characteristic), a behavior, or skill (Kent, 2004). Effective leadership traits might be in the eye of the beholder, or in this case, the researcher who has come to agree the behavior dimensions Kent (2004) identified can make leaders, especially superintendents, stand out in their profession. The LBI can aggregate the behaviors that comprise what leading authors describe as transformational leadership. The balance of this chapter will show how the research supports Kent's transformational Leadership Behavior Inventory.

Kent's Leadership Behavior Inventory

With an abundance of research, the specific behaviors that define transformational leadership vary between researchers (Kent, 2001). Various researchers have compiled consistent behaviors and organized them into a model or dimension of similarity. Thomas Kent's (1999, 2004; Kent et al., 2001) Leadership Behavior Inventory helps specifically identify behaviors that are related to transformational leadership and has been implemented internationally to help achieve an international model for leader behavior (Gioconda, Gourdin, and Hartley, 2008). Although, Kent's core belief resides in that the ultimate challenge to develop complete leaders/managers. Kent implies it is imperative that researchers investigate the two functions of leading and managing, how those

functions are interrelated, and how they are utilized in various situations (Kent, 2005). Additionally, preparing those leader/managers for any situation, and to apply those behaviors appropriately would be the ideal addition to any leadership research. In order to do so, a description of leadership behaviors was developed.

Behavioral descriptions were derived from distinguished leadership authors and researchers to create a questionnaire that would identify behaviors of leaders as described by their subordinates. Kent's research focused mainly on transformational leadership, specifically by the works of, (Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Conger, 1989; Kotter, 1990; and Kouzes and Posner, 1995, Kent, 2004). The purpose of developing these leadership behaviors was to attempt to measure leader behavior using structural equation modeling and achieve a global measure for leader behavior. Kent et al. (2001), using SPSS, factor analyzed behavioral descriptions of leaders' performance and developed four factors. A reanalysis of the data using LISREL, a research company, confirmed the original four factors plus a fifth factor (Kent, 2005). The five leadership behaviors associated are: *visualizing greatness*, *empowering the we*, *communicating for meaning*, *managing one's self*, *care* and *recognition*. Each behavior is described in detail in the following sections.

Visualizing greatness. *Visualizing greatness* refers to having a sense of direction and a clear sense of the future, while effectively communicating the vision to others (Kent, 2004). Simply having a vision is not enough to be an effective leader, but the leader must be able to motivate, inspire, and build enthusiasm within the organization (Kent, 2004). Similarly, this behavior resembles, Kotter's *Establishing Direction* (1990), Kouzes' and Posner's *Inspiring a Vision* (2012), and Bennis' and Nanus' (2003)

Attention Through Vision. Each researcher speak directly about the importance of goal setting: communication; gathering and maintaining inspired, motivated followers, as well as obtaining sustainable, positive results.

Leaders who inspire a vision communicate excitement about the part other people are playing in making the organization's mission a reality; leaders who speak openly and positively and often about the bright future for the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2013). Effective leaders who practice *visualizing greatness*, find ways to build relationships through creating a sense of anticipation and promising stance toward the organization's future. Bennis and Nanus (1985) reiterate vision as the driving force of an organization. The vision allows all constituents, leaders and followers, to find their roles within the organization and, at the same time, meet the goals of the organization, as well as receive personal attainment. In other words, vision puts purpose into action. Bolman and Deal (2008) shared similar views within the core assumptions of the human resource frame. When organizations provide meaning to work, they will often get the talent and energy needed to be successful. Bass and Avolio's (1994) transformational research also articulates *visualizing greatness* as an effective leadership behavior. Their coined term *inspirational motivation* primarily articulates effective leaders will hold high standards, challenge constituents to invest in the organization's vision concurrently, while empowering them to reach their own individual potential.

Other researchers share similar frames of thinking. Daniel Pink (2012) extends visionary thinking through a lens of working for the "why," not the "how." People, by nature, seek purpose and want to be part of causes greater than themselves. Peter Senge's (2006) research also identifies the importance of shared vision as a key element to

leadership effectiveness. McEwan (2003) summed it up nicely, to become a visionary you must figure out what your one “big thing” is. You must have vision. Without vision you cannot be an effective superintendent, but you could be an average superintendent, one who keeps the budgets, buses, and the boilers running smoothly. A good superintendent is a warm and caring person. Great superintendents “do” and “are” all they are expected to be, as mentioned above. Plus, they have focus, purpose, vision, and mission. Shared visions are collaborative visions that encourage genuine commitment and are reflective of their own personal vision. A shared vision, especially one that is genuine and apparent, inspires people to reach higher and strive for individual and group goals. Work becomes purposeful and brings life and personalization in the organization (Senge, 2006).

“Nothing bonds a team like a shared mission. The more that people share a common cause— whether it’s creating something insanely great, outperforming an outside competitor, or even changing the world—the more your group will do deeply satisfying and outstanding work” (Pink, 2009, p. 174).

Empowering the we. *Empowering the we* is the ability to create a sense of unity, team, and engaged commitment from constituents within the organization (Kent, 1999; 2004). Although many functions or actions within *empowering the we* overlap into *visualizing greatness*; *empowering the we* is dedicated to the people of the organization and celebrates their personal meaning and success, as well as a cohesive unit that values team. In this respect, the role of a leader is to promote cohesiveness among the organization, promote a sense of well-being, develop an understanding of purpose, and

develop a shared vision, as well as create opportunities for others to grow as leaders (Marzano et. al, 2005). Harvey, Et al. (1992) felt, “the superintendents of the ‘90’s must recognize the emergence of a new set of work values and the opportunity to restructure the profession” (p. 11). *Empowering the we* is a culture-building concept that cultivates each individual, including the leader, making each person valuable and part of something bigger than himself. Leaders who foster *empowering the we* also strengthen others by increasing their own self-determination and develop competence. McEwan (2003) also believed leaders recognize the power they have to mold character into the shaping of young people, encouraging and empowering teachers, respecting and affirming parents. Leaders treat these responsibilities as a sacred trust and use a strong work ethic to implement them fully. In the end, the superintendent or teacher will not be remembered for the improvements made on a curriculum or balanced budget, but he/she will be remembered for his/her work ethic and character, including deeds of kindness and respect.

Pink (2009) focused his research on the need for human beings to direct their own lives, hypothesizing that each person is motivated by innovation and autonomy. Researchers at Cornell University studied 320 small businesses, half granted autonomy, the other half relying on top-down initiatives. The businesses that offered autonomy grew at four times the rate of the top down firms and had one-third the turnover rates (Pink, 2009). All individuals have personal goals and views. Allowing workers to explore and make decisions toward a shared vision builds a sense of identity and encourages a commitment to the organization.

Supporting transformational leadership research also endorses the importance of

empowering the we through categories or behaviors such as individual consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1994), enabling others to act (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, 2003, 2007, 2012), aligning people (Kotter, 1990), and in the education organization, developing people (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). In each model, effective leaders enable others through promotion of learning, creation of choice and demonstration of confidence to attain the organization's vision successfully while celebrating individuality and encouraging personal growth. In addition, individuals are each still viewed as learners. Members of the organization hold a sanction of personal mastery, the desire to continually build and develop in his or her own personal vision. Personal mastery can be viewed as the "cornerstone of the learning organization" (Senge, 2006, p. 7). Organizations often do not spend the time encouraging the growth of the people, but encourage people to grow to meet the organization's needs. Barriers of motivation are then created and lack of commitment prevails (Senge, 2006).

In addition to personal mastery, Senge's team-learning discipline also mirrors *empowering the we*. Team learning is an opportunity for members of the organization to brainstorm and create meaningful discussions and dialogues to bring forth individual experiences, mental models, and leadership to the organization's vision (Senge, 2006). Leaders often struggle with the ability to relinquish power, but research signifies that power is a unit of exchange and when used in reciprocity, leaders are seen as more effective (Kotter, 2003). *Empowering the we* is the ability to foster collaboration, get people involved in decision-making, exhibit genuine care about the people within the organization, and hold positive positions on the organization as a valuable asset to the greater good (Kent, 1999; 2004).

In a report of the National Leadership Network study group on restructuring schools, the U.S. Department of Education reported, “leaders....negotiate win-win outcomes” (1992, p. 28, 30). Covey (1990) agreed with the U.S. Department of Education with regard to leaders seeking “win-win” solutions and outcomes by saying that a habit of effective leadership is the ability to think in terms of “win-win.” He added that, “win/win means agreements or solutions are mutually beneficial, mutually satisfying. With a win/win solution, all parties feel good about the decision, and feel committed to the action plan. Win/win sees life as a cooperative, not a competitive, arena” (p. 207). “Win/win is a belief in a third alternative. It’s not your way or my way, it is a” better way added Covey (1990, p. 207).

Empowerment often comes in the form of significance, enjoyment, a sense of family, and competence (Kotter, 2003). Kouzes and Posner (2012) affirmed effective leaders are those who foster collaboration through creating a climate of trust, facilitating relationships, and strengthening others while developing confidence and enhancing self-determination. Transformational leaders, who empower the we, focus careful attention on the recognition of strengths in each individual within the organization and embrace the opportunity to communicate growth and success as a team.

Care and recognition. Kent (1999; 2004) states exemplary leaders bring others to life by providing *care and recognition* for all individual and group interests within the organization. When leaders take the time to recognize contributions, show appreciation for individual excellence, and celebrate the changes and successes of the organization, people feel valued and are more apt to see the leader as effective and put forth optimal efforts as individuals (Kent, 2004; Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Consistently, Pink (2009) suggests that people are intrinsically motivated and employees do not need extrinsic

rewards to feel valued. “Humans, by their nature, seek purpose – to make a contribution and to be part of a cause greater and more enduring than themselves” (Pink, 2009, p. 223). This research suggests that leaders who communicate the importance of individual contribution, encourage employee autonomy, and inspire creativity and personal growth are more effective. When individuals feel important, valued, or celebrated, each is more apt to put forth more effort, trust, and energy into situations. For these reasons, many organizations advocate a commitment to fostering personal growth among constituents because they believe it will make the organization more successful (Senge, 2006).

Care and recognition encompasses the notion that exemplary leaders create an environment that makes it comfortable to receive and give feedback, while maintaining high expectations about what groups and individuals can accomplish (Kent, 1999; 2004; Kouzes & Posner, 2012). McEwan (2003) states that one really needs to master how to be a true contributor in the areas of *care and recognition* to make a strong difference in education: Superintendents who care can recognize and know it is all about the teachers, students, and the parents. McEwan continues to state that to be a contributor one must understand the paradox: “You are essential to the life of a school only insofar as you make a contribution to the effectiveness of others” (p.161). If you are unable to contribute, this effectiveness will escape a leader forever (McEwan, 2003).

Blokker (1990) believed in *care and recognition* when, “school leadership implies working effectively with people, building on their strengths and encouraging the development of their full potential, as you work together to accomplish the common vision” (p. 107). He goes on to say the only way to successfully challenge students to become all they can be is when the staff and administration, “work as a team in a trusting

environment” (p. 122). Bolman and Deal (2009) concur with *care and recognition* through positive and open communication. In the Human Resource Frame, Bolman and Deal stress the importance of emphasizing common goals and mutual influence, combining advocacy with inquiry, and communicating openly and honestly to test assumptions and beliefs. Effective leaders love what they do, model their passions, and demonstrate care consistently by making their employees feel loved, empowered, and celebrated for their achievements.

Managing one self. To effectively drive success in the organization, a leader must first be clear about his or her own driving values and morale. A leader must portray his or her values visibly and identify his or her own voice (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kent, 1999, 2004; Kouzes & Posner, 2012). *Managing one’s self* pertains to the leader’s own self-control, confidence, and awareness. Effective leaders are self-confident, morally sound, but also have an empathetic understanding of other’s values so that values are similarly shared within the group. The first step a leader must take along the path to becoming an exemplary leader is inward. It is step toward discovering personal values and beliefs. Leaders must find their voice. They must discover a set of principles that guide decisions and actions. They must find a way to express leadership philosophy in their own words and not in the words of someone else. Yet, leaders do not just speak for themselves. They also speak for their team and their organization. Setting an example and living by that example in daily actions and decisions demonstrates commitment of core values and follow-through (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Leaders are people who are willing to step out into the unknown. They are willing to take risks to find better ways of doing things, remaining positive and determined while doing so. *Managing one’s self* means a

leader must be a model of persistence and perseverance for his or her followers (Giocanda et al., 2008).

McEwan (2003) stated educators are always thinking, planning and developing--seeking cooperatively with their teachers' ways to improve instruction and engage more students. Educators'/superintendents' work is never done, but then learning is the passion of a highly effective leader. Keeping one's self on top of the latest research, policies, and instruction is key to being the role model for future educational trends and change for school district success. Porthan (1989) believed leaders demonstrating the characteristic of lifelong learning, "have a sense of curiosity and wonderment about them...They tend to ask many questions--both of themselves and others" (p. 1). This is supported by DeBruyn (1988) who stated, "Exceptional leaders continually question themselves" (p. 2).

According to DeBruyn (1988), leaders do this in a hope of learning from their mistakes, so they can perform better in the future. Cottrell (1985) also endorsed this concept when he stated, "an excellent superintendent exhibits keen insight into self, others, and the broader society" (p. 1).

The history of emotional intelligence also backs the idea that *managing one's self* can assist leaders in more effective leadership. A significant body of research suggests that a person's ability to perceive, identify, and manage emotion can lay a solid foundation for success in any position (Fullan, 1998; Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Sosik and Mergerian, 1999). Without the ability to self-regulate and self-manage, individuals who are in a leadership role may encounter difficulty controlling emotions, portraying empathy, and building relationships. *Managing one's self* is also the ability to identify emotions experienced and determining the meaning behind those emotions so

one can act appropriately, setting the example and tone for the situation. This awareness is identical to the emotional intelligence theory where a person is aware of one's goals, intentions, responses, emotions, and behaviors, as well as the ability to comprehend and respond to how others are feeling (Goleman, 1995). Such behavior is consistent with other leadership research such as Michael Fullan's (2011) key insight, "Be Resolute." Leaders who use impressive empathy, or putting one's self in others' shoes, are more effective than leaders who tell the way (Fullan, 2011). Pink's (2012) research also signifies that the secret to leadership in lives and organizations is the human need to direct each life and give purpose to *why* people do the things people do.

Communicating for meaning. Kent's *communicating for meaning* is the behavioral category that seems to stand out from other models. Other transformational leadership behaviors incorporate communication spun throughout each behavior category. Kent keeps communication for meaning separate to signify the importance of specialized communication focused on meaning and purpose. Kent's communicating for meaning focuses specifically on the leader having the ability to effectively explain why he/she is taking certain action or making decisions, with emphasis on the principles or values behind it (Kent, 1999, 2004; Kent et al., 2001). A leader who is able to *communicate for meaning* not only says what he or she means, but lives what is said. In other words, the follow through is a delicate behavior that creates a positive, trusting culture.

According to McEwan (2003), a communicator can engage in a nonstop circle of conversations, interactions, communications, connections, exchanges, and contacts with people. Remembering the ongoing and life changing communications and other verbal

exchanges are quickly forgotten. Effective leaders handle all communications with courtesy, skill, diplomacy, and tactfulness. Porthan (1989) stated, “Leaders know the value and importance of clear, open communications” (p. 1). DeBruyn (1987) also supported this idea by saying, “If one expects to be highly effective and influential, then being a skilled communicator is mandatory” (p. 1). “As a communicator, the superintendent must be able to write clearly and well, listen effectively, and speak articulately” (Langlois, 1989, p. 24) Also, according to Langlois (1989), one of the leadership skills people feel is important is the ability to keep the community informed about the school system’s goals. Cottrell (1985) stated, “Excellent superintendents have a high level of interaction with others and communicate with people in a manner which prizes them and builds positive, harmonious relations” (p. 1).

Communicating for meaning is a critical behavior of transformational leadership because, by definition, transformational leadership’s sole existence is based upon leader/follower (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1993; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Burns, 1978). Therefore, perception is essential when a leader is communicating meaning or purpose, especially in turbulent or stressful situations. Leaders will make communication the purpose and meaning of the situation, will create a sense of commitment, influence others, and utilize the opportunity as a time of learning (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Practitioners who are *communicating for meaning* will often take the opportunity to listen, teach, and guide constituents through a process, celebrate small wins, and do so proactively and consistently. According to the AASA (1991), “Effective schools have at least one trait in common: sound leadership” (p. 1).

Summary

The position of superintendent evolved out of necessity (AASA, 2015). Committees were used to govern the schools in America until the growing number of schools increased and enrollment of students made it too difficult. Through the years, the position has grown more important as society has become more complex and technology more advanced. Superintendents' responsibilities have changed considerably. They not only are required to have had some experience in the classroom and be adept at managing the school district's finances, but they are expected to articulate sound educational philosophies and practices to their staff and establish and maintain good relations with the community as well.

There appears to be considerable controversy over whether the leadership traits required by a superintendent are inherent in an individual or developed over time through education and experience (Konnert & Augenstein, 1990). The theories of leadership at both ends of the spectrum were reviewed in the literature. There is a great deal of research studies of what is expected of an effective superintendent.

How a leader interacts with followers can impact the accomplishments of the organization as a whole (Hoyle, et al., 1985). A relationship built upon mutual respect and conviction will overcome the greatest of obstacles and make a significant impact (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Kent's five leadership behaviors also provide insight on how a leader's behavior may impact how others view the leader's effectiveness within the organization. *Empowering the we, visualizing greatness, communicating for meaning, managing one's self, and care and recognition* are the five categories that attempt to summarize the key behaviors of transformational leadership (Kent 1999; 2004; Kent et al., 2001).

Transformational leadership has been positively linked to organizational success (Bass 1999; Bass & Avolio, Yukl, 2005; Burns, 1978; Bono & Judge, 2004; Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Leithwood & Jantzi 1999, 2000, 2005). The literature review found many studies in the field of leadership but not a sufficient number regarding educational leadership, specifically regarding rural superintendent behaviors, including the perceptions of teachers and rural superintendents themselves in identifying behaviors that are beneficial. This study will help identify if and how the leader's self-perception of leadership impacts their followers' perceptions of their leadership effectiveness. Chapter Three provides a description of research methodology, sampling procedures, and data analysis methods. Chapter Four includes research findings based upon data. In Chapter Five, the results of the study are clarified and implications for further research provided.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine teachers' and superintendents' perceptions of the most effective transformational leadership traits needed for superintendents to effectively have an impact on student achievement, staff collaboration, and superintendent retention in Southwest Missouri rural schools. Key leadership in a superintendent can make an educational organization successful. The effectiveness of applying transformational leadership within successful leaders was done through Kent's Leadership Behavior Inventory (Kent, 1999; 2004; Kent et al., 2001). Superintendents preferred leadership behaviors guide actions and decision-making, and may set the tone for a school district's progress and success. How these decisions are made and acted upon may be perceived as effective or ineffective by the teachers.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed within this study:

1. What were the perceptions of active teachers concerning the importance of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri schools?
2. What were the perceptions of active superintendents concerning the importance of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri school?
3. What were the difference in the LBI's behavior scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

3a. What was the difference in the LBI's "*empowering the we*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

3b. What was the difference in the LBI's "*visualizing greatness*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

3c. What was the difference in the LBI's "*communicating for meaning*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

3d. What was the difference in the LBI's "*managing one's self*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

3e. What was the difference in the LBI's "*care and recognition*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

Null Hypotheses

1. There were no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of active teachers concerning the importance of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri schools.
2. There were no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of active superintendents concerning the importance of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri schools.

3. There were no statistically significant difference in the LBI's five behavior scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.

3a. There was no statistically significant difference in the LBI's "*empowering the we*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.

3b. There was no statistically significant difference in the LBI's "*visualizing greatness*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.

3c. There was no statistically significant difference in the LBI's "*communicating for meaning*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.

3d. There was no statistically significant difference in the LBI's "*managing one self*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.

3e. There was no statistically significant difference in the LBI's "*care and recognition*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this causal comparative study is to utilize the theory of Kent's transformational leadership behaviors (Kent, 1999; 2004; Kent et al., 2001) by using his LBI. The LBI will yield data to compare active superintendents' and teachers' perceptions of transformational leaders in rural southwest

Missouri schools. Comparing the results of the perceptions of each group can enlighten and impact future team growth and success in rural school districts and rural superintendents. Most research points to a direct relationship between highly regarded leadership behavior and the success of the educational organization in the general areas of student achievement and teaching and learning (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). Much of what is known about school leadership is based on teacher perceptions of leadership practices (Leithwood & Janzi, 1999; 2006). This study also examined the perceptions of active teachers and superintendents concerning the importance of leadership behavior of rural southwest Missouri superintendents. In this chapter, details of the participants, procedures, research setting, and design will be given.

Description of the Participants and Sampling Procedures

The population for this study was comprised of active public school teachers and superintendents of rural southwest Missouri school systems. A purposeful sample has been found in school teachers and superintendents, a deliberate choice of participants by the researcher due to the qualities these participants possess. The idea behind purposeful sampling is to concentrate on people with particular characteristics who will be better able to assist with the relevant research (Etikan, Abubakar, Sunusi, 2016). In this study, the superintendent's responsibilities do not change with the size and make-up of the school. Large districts may have a superintendent and a varied number of assistants. Each superintendent has a set of responsibilities and duties to handle. The smaller schools typically have only a superintendent with no assistants. These persons have the responsibility for all aspects of their role as superintendent. The teachers in this group represent key positions within the framework of a rural public school district. In

addition, teachers are in positions to identify leadership characteristics necessary for a successful superintendent. During the study, ethical considerations, confidentiality, and precautions were made to ensure there will not be any risks for participants from whom the research data will be collected. No compensation will be given to participants, and participation in this study will be voluntary.

A numerical coding method will not be necessary in this study to verify that the schools' teachers and superintendents participated as email addresses are automatically collected through Question Pro when they agree to participate in and take the questionnaire. Only superintendent surveys with corresponding teacher surveys will be utilized in the data analysis. Question Pro is a password protected and secure system that keeps the data from this study safe and confidential. In the initial email (see Appendix A) to teachers and superintendents, this need for validity of responses from both the superintendents and the teachers is explained.

Administration Procedures

In accordance with the guidelines of Southwest Baptist University regarding the protection of human participants, a request for review was submitted to the Research Review Board (RRB), for approval to survey a sample of approximately one thousand to fifteen- hundred participants for this study. After receiving RRB approval, participant recruitment and data collection began. The informed consent documents for teachers and superintendents to conduct research can be found in Appendices A and B. Before beginning the online survey, superintendents and teachers will be provided with information about the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, and the anonymity and confidentiality of information gained through the survey. To begin, teachers and

superintendents completing the survey online must answer question two as agreement to taking the questionnaire.

Each participating schools' superintendent and teachers will each receive a URL, or specific online web address, to the online survey placed and activated through Question Pro. Consent to participate in the study will be received at the time of opening the email link (see Appendix A) and taking the survey (see Appendix B) in November 2018. Participants had a two-week window to complete the online survey. If surveys were not returned after the first week, there was an automatically generated email (see Appendix C) from Question Pro sent to remind participants. Midway of the second week completion window, an automatic follow-up reminder from Question Pro was also sent. After the closing date, the survey was locked and unable to accept any more participant responses.

Research Setting

The research setting will include a participation sample made up of 28 active superintendents and 1,864 teachers, in K-12 public schools in Southwest Missouri with a student population of up to 1,000. This will ensure that the survey pool is kept within the constraints of rural schools. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Division of School Improvement divides the State of Missouri into ten regions. Region C covers the southwest corner of the state and includes the following counties: Barry, Barton, Cedar, Christian, Dade, Dallas, Douglas, Greene, Jasper, Laclede, Lawrence, McDonald, Newton, Ozark, Stone, Polk, Taney, and Wright, (Missouri School Directory, 2017-2018). There are 48 schools in this region that match the population requirement of fewer than 1,000 students. All 48 eligible schools were asked to participate in the study.

Question Pro was chosen by the researcher to input the questionnaire online. Question Pro allowed for automaticity and quick dissemination of surveys to the superintendent and teachers. Question Pro will generate a unique web address, embedded in an email that will be sent to the participants' school email address with the survey attached. Inside the email will be the purpose of the study, the directions, confidentiality information, as well as the opportunity to participate or decline before going further into the survey. These email addresses will be obtained through the Missouri School Board Association Directory or each school district's website. All teacher surveys will go to rural southwest Missouri active public school teachers and superintendents in Region C. When participants begin answering questions past question one the surveys will be validated. Having responses from both the teachers and the superintendent will validate the use of the data in the final results. When the participants complete the survey, the last page will be a "Thank You" page of the survey. This will include a reminder of anonymity and confidentiality and an opportunity to request a copy of the research findings when completed.

Research Design

A quantitative descriptive research method will be utilized for this study. Quantitative research refers to the collection and analysis of numerical data used to describe, explain or predict occurrences that can be measured and generalized across similar populations (Gay, Et al. 2009). Most quantitative research falls into two areas: studies that describe events and studies aimed at discovering inferences or causal relationships.

Descriptive studies are aimed at finding out "what is," so observational and survey methods are frequently used to collect descriptive data (Borg & Gall, 1989).

Utilizing descriptive methods for research questions one and two, the researcher will be able to quantify the behaviors and preferences about superintendent behaviors. This will identify the top leadership behaviors based on the perceptions/observations of the two samples used for questions one and two as related to overall leadership effectiveness. The LBI was used to gather data to measure the perceptions of the capacity at which a superintendent engages in the five types of leadership behavior. The perceptions were from two different constituents: teachers and superintendents. SPSS was used to analyze the responses in this survey in calculating the mean, median and mode, and standard deviations for superintendents' observations in research question one and teachers' observations in research question two.

Research question three will utilize the causal-comparative method, as described by Lee (2017), from SAGE Research Methods, to determine the cause or consequences of differences that already exist between or among groups of individual. The researcher used the sample size calculation to establish the effect size needed to find statistically significant results. This level is commonly referred to as the alpha level, which is the acceptable probability value for rejecting the null hypothesis (Pelham, 2013). This study will conduct two sample *t*-tests with a level of significance of .05. Upon receipt of the numbers with in the survey from 1,922 possible participants a sample *t*-test with alpha = .05 for each leadership behavior.

Instrumentation

The electronic distribution of the questionnaires was sent via Question Pro in a link attached to each sample district emails. Based on this pre-existing instrument, the LBI, the study's sample of perceptions between teachers and superintendents leadership

behaviors will use the psychometrics of the multiple Likert scale in the *Leadership Behavior Inventory* (see Appendix B). The results will measure the internal consistency based on the two sample *t*-tests and construct validity for each of the five behaviors. By creating a variable view the data is set up for each item to analyze the values of each question. The construct validity of the two-sample *t*-tests will be used to verify the instruments reliability analysis by moving in and out of certain variables of interest across the samples giving us descriptive statistics on correlations of the behaviors in the study.

Data will be analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS-21) (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA) software and explained through descriptive statistics indices including mean and standard deviation. The SPSS will be used to run the two sample *t*-tests to answer RQ3.

The leadership behavior inventory (LBI) will be used to answer the research questions of the study. The survey will include a total of 29 items, (6 items), *visualizing greatness, care and recognition* (8 items), *empowering the we* (6 items), *communicating for meaning* (5 items), *managing one self* (4 items), *care and recognition*, and utilizing the eight-point Likert scale, as such: 1-2 is rarely, 3-4 is sometimes, 5-6 is often, and 7-8 is very often. The survey included three housekeeping questions: one for permissions and two for basic demographics of the participants, for a total of 32 questions. Survey time should be between five and ten minutes for participants.

The Leadership Behavior Inventory (LBI) was developed to collect data in the capacity to which a leader engages in the five types of leadership behavior (Kent, 1999; Rudd, Et al. 2009). This instrument has been used to measure leadership behaviors among various

cultures and genders (Kent et al., 2004; Kent & Blair, 2008; Quesada, 2008; Rudd et al., 2009). Kent used different transformational leadership behavior descriptions of past prominent leaders in the field to create the questionnaire (Bass, 1985; Bennis & Nanus, 1985a; Conger 1989; Kotler, 1990; Kouzes & Posner, 1995). Survey reliability and validity are extensively documented by the author (Kent, 2004).

Data Analysis

The researcher will use the LBI to fully analyze the research questions with the SPSS statistics tool for questions one and two. The SPSS can quantify the data for the Likert scale questionnaire looking for relationships between questions (Holcomb, 2009) one and two after quantifying each question's findings of the teachers' and superintendents' perceptions concerning the importance of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri schools. Assumptions that need to be met before the *t*-tests can be run are one dependent variable, one continuous variable and one normality of variable, and the assumptions will be met in chapter four. Five Independent samples *t*-tests will be used to analyze research question three by identifying the significance of the mean for the five behaviors as perceived between the teachers and superintendents based on Kent's (2004) LBI.

Summary

Chapter Three focused on the methodology of the study, including details of the method, participants, sampling procedure, research setting, research design, and procedure for data analysis. The desired sample size for this study was 100 based on a significance level of .05, statistical power of .7 and medium effect size. It is desirable for a 50% split (Olejnik, 1984). In Chapter Four, the findings from the analysis of the study was reported for each research question. A summary of the entire study was given in

Chapter Five with implications for future uses of the study's results. Chapter Five also reviews recommendations for future study in the area of rural superintendent leadership behaviors.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of Chapter Four is to report the data results from chapter three concerning the research questions and null hypothesis on the top leadership skills of an effective rural superintendent. First in the chapter are the research questions and hypothesis, then the areas covered are: samples, demographics, data cleaning, presentation of the findings, whether failing to reject or rejecting, for each null hypothesis. After findings are presented in Chapter Four, Chapter Five will discuss the meaning of the results and form conclusions. The following research questions were addressed in this study.

Research Questions

1. What were the perceptions of active teachers concerning the importance of specific leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri schools?
2. What were the perceptions of active superintendents concerning the importance of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri Schools?
3. What was the difference in the Leadership Behaviors Inventory's (LBI's) scores on the behavior inventory between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?
 - 3a. What was the difference in the LBI's "empowering the "we" between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

3b. What was the difference in the score of LBI's "visualizing greatness" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

3c. What was the difference in the LBI's "communicate for meaning" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

3d. What was the difference in the LBI's "managing one's self" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

3e. What was the difference in the LBI's "care and recognition" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

Null Hypotheses

3a. There were no statistically significant difference in the LBI's "empowering the we" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.

3b. There were no statistically significant difference in the LBI's "visualizing greatness" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.

3c. There were no statistically significant difference in the LBI's "communicate for meaning" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.

3d. There were no statistically significant difference in the LBI's "managing one's self" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.

3e. There were no statistically significant difference in the LBI's "care and recognition" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts.

Most research points to a direct relationship between highly regarded leadership behaviors and the success of the educational organization in the general areas of student achievement, teaching, and learning (Leithwood, Et al. 2004). Much of what is known about school leadership is based on teacher perceptions of leadership practices (Leithwood & Janzi, 1999; 2006). Comparing the results of the perceptions of each sample group can enlighten and impact future team growth and success in rural school districts and in rural superintendents.

In this chapter, the data analysis will be reported on three research questions while presenting the findings for each null hypothesis. Any predicted problems, along with the findings will be examined and all assumptions will be explored. Data presented in this chapter will give insight into the results and conclusions of Chapter Five.

Data Analysis and Findings

The researcher distributed the LBI to two subject groups: rural Missouri public school teachers and superintendents of Region C. Surveys were distributed through the use of Question Pro. Question Pro is an electronic based survey system, allowing the researcher to distribute surveys electronically and collect teacher data corresponding to superintendent's data with automaticity.

Kent's Leadership Behavior Inventory (see Appendix B) was shared with the two sample groups for a two week span of time. The survey included a total of 29 items, utilizing an eight-point Likert scale, (6 items), *visualizing greatness* (8 items), *empowering the we* (6 items), *communicating for meaning* (5 items), *managing oneself* (4 items), *care and recognition*. The eight-point Likert scale, was utilized, as such: 1-2 is rarely, 3-4 is sometimes, 5-6 is often, and 7-8 is very often. The survey included three additional housekeeping questions: one for permissions and two for basic demographics of the participants, for a total of 32 questions. Survey time was an average of two to four minutes for participants.

Each participating schools' superintendent and teachers received a URL, or specific online web address to the online survey placed and activated through Question Pro. Consent to participate in the study was received at the time of opening the email link (see Appendix A) and taking the survey (see Appendix B). Participants were given a two-week window to complete the online survey, November 5-19, 2018. If surveys were not returned after the first week, there was an automatically generated email (see Appendix C) from Question Pro to send a reminder to participants. Midway of the second week completion window, an automatic follow-up reminder from Question Pro was sent as well. After the closing date, the survey was locked and unable to accept any more participant responses.

Upon completion of the surveys, all responses to the survey instruments were downloaded, combined for overall scores, and uploaded to the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences Statistics (SPSS) program for complete analysis. The final survey participation results are indicated in Table 1.

Table 1
Final Survey Results: Return Rates

	Invited Sample	Respondents	Return Rate
Superintendents	48	20	41%
Teachers	1270	230	18%
Overall Response Rate			19%

As the study was causal comparative in nature, a quantitative analysis was done using independent samples *t*-tests to compare the behaviors and preferences of rural superintendents' leadership behaviors. Group statistics from this survey were shared to show the researcher the means and standard deviations among the two samples for comparison. For Research Questions One and Two, this data was collected finding the top leadership behaviors based on the perceptions/observations of the two samples; teachers and superintendents.

Research question three asked the question; what was the difference in the scores of LBI's behavior inventory between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts? To answer the question of the null hypothesis, the researcher conducted independent samples *t*-tests with a significance level of .05, these results are found in the following narrative. This narrative will also address results performed to determine significant group similarities and differences for each of the five leadership behaviors.

Presentation of the Findings

Kent's research states that when leaders know which behaviors they operate from: visualizing greatness, empowering the we, care and recognition, managing oneself, communicate for meaning, that these leadership behaviors can increase superintendents and teachers knowledge base and team effectiveness (2003). The

researcher was able to utilize the lower number of responses by using Levene's Test for Equality of Variances for those with a *p value* less than $p > .05$, to adjust for the wide distribution (variance) of the sample size. In statistics, correlation of teacher data corresponding with superintendent response data were done using the SPSS Group Statistics and independent samples *t*-tests to determine what the perceptions of active teachers and superintendents were concerning what effective leadership behaviors of superintendents that are being utilized within rural southwest Missouri schools.

Descriptive statistics were utilized to present quantitative data in a simple and manageable way. The means, ranges, and standard deviations for the survey responses to research question one and two are shown in Tables 2 and 3. The mean is the average of responses according to each question of the Leadership Behaviors Inventory (Kent 2003; Gay; et al., 2009). The standard deviation is the square root of the variance of a set of scores and is considered the most stable measure of variability (Gay; et al., 2009). Larger standard deviations indicate a wide variety of responses, while smaller standard deviations indicate responses closer to the average. The range is the set of lowest and highest possible score recorded for each gifted education practice (Gay; et al., 2009). In this study the lower number indicates a lower occurrence of the perceived behavior practices, while a higher number indicates a more frequent use of the practice.

Research Question One:

What were the perceptions of active teachers concerning the importance of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri schools?

The SPSS group statistics were completed and the researcher was able to rank the variability of the five behaviors from largest to smallest on leadership behaviors of rural superintendents as observed by their teachers.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of Teacher's Perception on Superintendent's Leadership Behaviors

Behaviors	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>S</i>
Visualizing Greatness	230	19.69	3.861	.255
Empowering The We	230	22.65	5.229	.345
Communicating For Meaning	230	19.21	4.413	.291
Managing Oneself	230	17.01	3.540	.233
Care and Recognition	230	13.23	2.829	.187

The largest to smallest standard deviations in behaviors in comparison from teachers to superintendents, in consecutive order are: empowering the we, with a *SD* of 5.229; *M* of 22.65; communicating for meaning, with a *SD* of 4.413; *M* of 19.21; visualizing greatness with a *SD* of 3.861; *M* of 19.69; managing oneself, *SD* of 3.540; *M* 17.01 and, care and recognitions' *SD* of 2.289. *M* of 13.23. In Table 3 we will review the statistics of the leadership behaviors as perceived by rural superintendents.

Research Question Two:

What were the perceptions of active superintendents concerning the importance of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri Schools?

Analysis of the group statistics indicated the standard deviations in perceptions of rural superintendent's leadership behaviors. Table 3 shares these results.

Table 3
Statistics of Superintendent's Perceived Leadership Behaviors

Behaviors	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>
Visualizing Greatness	20	20.50	3.120	.698
Empowering The We	20	28.80	3.473	.777
Communicating For Meaning	20	20.70	2.638	.590
Managing Oneself	20	17.60	2.210	.494
Care and Recognition	20	14.05	1.528	.344

In this study the lower number of the *SD*, indicated less variability from the mean of the behavior practices, while higher *SD* number indicated a more scattered or varied perception of the behaviors. The mean or average per behavior was also determined: empowering the we, with a *SD* of 3.473; *M* of 28.80; visualizing greatness with a *SD* of 3.120; *M* of 20.50; communicating for meaning, with a *SD* of 2.638; *M* of 20.70; managing oneself with a *SD* of 2.210; *M* of 17.60: care and recognition with a *SD* of 1.538; *M* of 14.05.

Research Question Three: What was the difference in the scores of LBI's behavior inventory between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

Data were analyzed to compare school teachers and superintendents' perceptions on standard deviations in each of the five transformational research-based Leadership Behaviors of the LBI inventory (Kent, 2004). The independent samples *t*-test were test chosen to analyze the data. The independent samples *t*-test is used to determine if a significant difference exists between the means of the two independent samples (Gay Et al., 2009).

A statistical difference confirmed the likelihood the difference was caused by something other than random chance. When testing for a significant difference, the

researcher looked for “*p*-values” representing the probability that random chance could explain the result. When the *p*-value was 5% or lower, it was considered statistically significant. When the *p*-value was 1% or lower, it was considered very statistically significant (Gay et al., 2009). Table 4 below summarizes the significant differences regarding each of Kent’s Leadership Behavior Inventories’ five categories of behaviors (2003). As seen in Table 4, are the results of the independent samples *t*-tests challenging the null hypothesis of each behavior within research question three using the Leadership Behavior Inventory.

Table 4
SPSS-Independent Samples *t*-Test: *Comparisons Between Perceptions by Teacher’s and Superintendent’s on the Leadership Behavior Inventory*

	<i>df</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Visualizing Greatness	248	.888	1.232	.268
Empowering the We	27.141	.850	3.868	.050
Communicating for Meaning	29.233	.658	5.540	.019
Managing one self	248	.806	2.911	.089
Care and Recognition	31.600	.391	7.830	.006

Research Question 3a: What was the difference in the score of LBI’s “*empowering the we*” between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri schools?

In Table 5 below, we will begin the examination of the behavior; *empowering the we*.

Table 5
Research Question 3a - Empowering the We

Behavior	<i>df</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
EMP	27.14	.850	3.87	.000

3a. An independent samples *t*-test was performed to compare the perceptions of superintendents' leadership behavior', '*empowering the we*' scores between teachers and rural superintendents. The outcome variable was found to be not of equal variances as assumed based upon the results of Levene's test ($F(27.1) = 3.87, p = .050$). There was significant differences in scores for teachers ($M = 22.7, SD = 5.23$) and superintendents ($M = 28.8, SD = 3.47$), $t(27.1) = 7.24, p < .001$, (two-tailed), the magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = 6.15, 95% CI: -7.90, -4.40) and the effect size was very large (Cohen's $d = 1.38$), based on the statistical data analysis the null hypothesis was rejected. Table 6 looks at research question three-b's findings.

Research Question 3b: What was the difference in the score of LBI's "*visualizing greatness*" between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

In Table 6 below, we will begin the examination of the behavior; *visualizing greatness*.

Table 6
Research Question 3b - Visualizing Greatness

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
VIZ	248	.888	1.23	.361

3b. An independent samples *t*-test was performed to compare the perceptions of superintendents' leadership behavior', '*visualizing greatness*' scores between teachers and rural superintendents. The distribution of the two groups' outcome variable was found to be equal in variances as assumed based upon the results of Levene's test ($F(248) = 1.23, p = .268$). There was no statistically significant difference in scores for teachers ($M = 19.7, SD = 3.86$) and superintendents ($M = 20.5, SD = 3.12$), $t(248) = -.92, p = .361$, (two tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = .813, 95% CI: -2.56, .936) and the effect size was small (Cohen's $d .23$). Data analysis

fails to reject the null hypothesis. In Table 7 Research Question Three C, *communicate for meaning*, will be reviewed

Research Question 3c: What was the difference in the score of LBI’s “communicate for meaning” between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

Table 7
Research Question 3c - Communicating for Meaning

Behavior	<i>df</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
COM	29.23	.658	5.54	.031

3c. An independent samples *t*-test was performed to compare the perceptions of superintendents’ leadership behavior’, “communicating for meaning” scores between teachers and rural superintendents. The outcome variable was found to be normally distributed and equal variances are assumed based upon the results of Levene’s test ($F(29.2) = 5.54, p = .019$). There was significant differences in scores for teachers ($M = 19.2, SD = 4.41$) and superintendents ($M = 20.7, SD = 2.64$), $t(29.2) = -2.26, p = .031$, two-tailed), the magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = -1.49, 95% CI: -2.83, -.142) and the effect size was medium (Cohen’s $d = 0.41$), researcher rejected the null hypothesis. In Table 8 the researcher will look for significant differences in the behavior, “*managing one self*”.

Research Question 3d: What was the difference in the score of LBI’s “managing one’s self” between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

Table 8
Research Question 3d -Managing One Self

<i>Behaviors</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
MOS	248	.806	2.91	.467

3d. An independent samples *t*-test was performed to compare the perceptions of superintendents' leadership behavior', '*managing one self*' scores between teachers and rural superintendents. The outcome variable was found to be normally distributed and equal variances are assumed based upon the results of Levene's test ($F(248) = 2.91, p = .089$). There was no significant difference in scores for teachers ($M = 17.0, SD = 3.54$) and superintendents ($M = 17.6, SD = 2.21$), $t(248) = -.73, p = .467$). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = $-.587$, 95% CI: $-2.17, 1.00$) and the effect size was very small (Cohen $d = .19$) researcher fails to reject the null hypothesis. In table 9, the researcher will review the last of the five behaviors; *care and recognition*.

Research Question 3e: What was the difference in the score of LBI's "*care and recognition*" between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

Table 9
Research Question 3e- Care and Recognition

Behaviors	<i>df</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
CAR	31.6	.391	7.83	.045

3e. An independent samples *t*-test was performed to compare the perceptions of superintendents' leadership behavior', "*care and recognition*", scores between teachers and rural superintendents. The outcome variable was found to be normally distributed and equal variances are assumed based upon the results of Levene's test ($F(31.6) = 7.83, p = .006$). There was significant differences in scores for teachers ($M = 13.2, SD = 2.83$) and superintendents ($M = 14.1, SD = 1.54$), $t(31.6) = -2.08, p = .045$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = -1.49 , 95% CI: $-1.61, -.018$)

and the effect size was lower medium (Cohen's $d = .395$), researcher rejects the null hypothesis. Next, the researcher will wrap up the statistical findings in the summary and Table 10 of Chapter Four.

Table 10

<i>Summary of the Findings for Research Questions' Null Hypothesis</i>		
Null Hypothesis	Fails to Reject	Rejected
<i>H₀3a. Empowering the We</i>		X
<i>H₀3b. Visualizing Greatness</i>	X	
<i>H₀3c. Communicate Meaning</i>		X
<i>H₀3d. Managing One Self</i>	X	
<i>H₀3e. Care & Recognition</i>		X

Summary

In this chapter the findings of this study were provided. The survey results of the 20 superintendent and 230 corresponding teacher respondents were quantitatively analyzed to investigate the three research questions. Chapter Five will provide a summary, conclusions and recommendations of the research study in its entirety.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of significance between rural superintendents' preferred leadership behaviors and behaviors that impact the teacher's perception of the superintendent's transformational leader behaviors. Leadership is measured by the perception or attitudes of followers toward the leader's effectiveness (Yukl, 2005). A superintendent makes decisions daily which affect the teachers' perception of his or her leadership effectiveness, aiding or impeding the success of the educational organization.

Research reveals transformational leadership is connected with leadership effectiveness (Bass, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 2005; Bono & Judge, 2004; Burns, 1978; Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Leithwood & Jantzi 1999, 2000, 2005; Yukl, 2005). 'Kent's (2004) Five' consists of the many works of the great pioneer researchers on transformational leadership. Bolman and Deal's (2008), leadership models suggested that when leaders view situations from more than one viewpoint, they are more successful. Therefore, this study's results will give the view point of the teachers and the superintendents can use the teacher's viewpoints to help them better their leadership behaviors. The superintendent's preferred behaviors guides decision making, sets the tone for collaboration and may set the tone for organizational progress and success. How these decisions are made and acted upon may also be perceived as effective or ineffective by the teachers (Kouzes & Posner, 2012).

Summary of Methods

Upon receiving approval from the Research Review Board (RRB) in November of 2018, the researcher used one pre-existing instrument in this study. The researcher utilized transformational leadership data that was collected through the *Leadership Behavior Inventory* survey (Kent, 2003) (see Appendix B). As the study was causal comparative in nature, a quantitative analysis was done using independent sample *t*-tests comparing the leadership behaviors of rural southwest Missouri superintendents based on the perceptions of teachers and superintendents. Group statistics from this survey provided the researcher the means and standard deviations among the comparative two samples. These results were used for data collection for Research Questions One and Two. The researcher then followed up with independent samples *t*-test analysis for research question three to determine statistical significance and accept or reject the null hypothesis for each behavior being compared between teachers and superintendents.

Statistics were calculated from the data, and then analyzed and used to answer the following research questions:

1. What were the perceptions of active teachers concerning the importance of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri schools?
2. What were the perceptions of active superintendents concerning the importance of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri School?
3. What were the differences in the LBI's behavior inventory scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

- a. What was the difference in the LBI's "*empowering the we*" score between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?
- b. What was the difference in the LBI's "*visualizing greatness*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?
- c. What was the difference in the LBI's "*communicate for meaning*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?
- d. What was the difference in the LBI's "*managing one's self*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?
- e. What was the difference in the LBI's "*care and recognition*" scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

Summary of Findings

Research points to a direct relationship between highly regarded leadership behaviors and the success of the educational organization in the general areas of student achievement and teaching and learning (Leithwood, Et al. 2004). Much of what is known about school leadership is based on teacher perceptions of leadership practices (Leithwood & Janzi, 1999; 2006). In the position of superintendent, current and aspiring superintendents can benefit from focused attention on transformational behaviors valued by teachers. Both individual and group reflection on purposes and practices and how

each may improve the organization are encouraged by the leader, including reinforcement to periodically identify and assess the merits (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990).

Research Question One: What were the perceptions of active teachers concerning the importance of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural southwest Missouri schools?

The first research question reveals the mean of the teacher's perceptions on the behaviors of their superintendents. The results provided the mean for each individual behavior observed of a rural superintendent. The teachers variances from the mean according to each standard deviation were scattered more than the superintendents variances from the mean. In descending order are the lists of the variances between teachers and superintendents respectively: *empowering the we*, *SD* of 5.229 to 3.473; *visualizing greatness*, *SD* of 3.861 to 3.120; *communicating for meaning*, *SD* of 2.638 to 4.413; *managing one self*, *SD* of 3.540 to 2.210; *care and recognition*, *SD* of 2.289 to 1.538. These standard deviation scores indicated teachers' perceptions of superintendents like behaviors were scattered more in variance as compared to the superintendents perceived standard deviation score of themselves.

Research Question Two: What were the perceptions of active rural superintendents concerning the importance of leadership behaviors of superintendents within rural Southwest Missouri schools?

The second research question reveals the mean of the superintendent's perceptions on their own behaviors. The results gave us the mean for each individual behavior observed by the rural superintendent. The superintendents' variances from the mean according to each standard deviation score were closer to the mean and less scattered than the teacher's variances from the means of the same behaviors, as shown

above. Superintendents perceived that they were using each of the five behaviors at a higher rate than the teachers perceived them, as seen in Table 11.

Table 11
Research Question One and Two's Means and Standard Deviations

Behaviors	Teachers	Superintendents	Teachers	Superintendents
	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SD</i>
Empowering The We	22.65	28.80	5.229	3.473
Visualizing Greatness	19.69	20.50	3.861	3.120
Communicating for Meaning	19.21	20.70	4.413	2.638
Managing One Self	17.01	17.60	3.540	2.210
Care and Recognition	13.23	14.05	2.289	1.538

Bolman and Deal (2008) found similar results about staff and leadership perceptions in a 1991 study with college presidents. “Only half of the presidents who saw themselves as symbolic leaders were perceived by others that way.” (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 326). Thus, the result of this study supports the findings of previous researchers.

These perceptions as observed by teachers and superintendents once surfaced and acknowledged, can be addressed by superintendents to become more effective in their role of rural superintendent. Knowing their reactions and behaviors in day-to-day decisions as well as long-term team goals, and learning the behaviors to use to work toward meeting them, will be observed and instilled into the staff. The role of a transformational leader will allow the superintendent to be transparent in their actions and behaviors while sharing opportunities and skills with teachers as a collaborative unit.

This promotes positive staff perceptions that will help staff members decide that they feel a part of the team in the process of education rather than a pawn in the game of education. Drawing attention to the superintendents' lesser behaviors can help them to grow in areas of weakness. Data suggests this will also improve the organization's effectiveness (Kent, 2004).

Leadership is not a position, but a process in which mutual influence, action and cooperative effort with purpose is comprised of both leader and led (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Kent, 2004; Kent & Blair, 2008; Kouzes & Posner, 2012; Strong, Et al 2008). The researcher brought attention to the idea that the ability to lead is not a set of inborn skills, but rather the ability to learn leadership behaviors as well as manage, utilizing them to influence others' perceptions of their leadership. By focusing on superintendent's leadership effectiveness, the ultimate goal is to improve educational experiences and success (Stronge, Et al. 2008). Kent's (2004) transformational leadership behaviors provide a window for others to perceive action as effective or ineffective leadership.

Therefore, the findings of research question one and two of the study are consistent with the literature on transformational leadership and Kent's behaviors. After determining in research question three which of the superintendent's leadership behaviors need further development, an effective improvement process targeting the areas needing improvement can be implemented. Thus, the superintendent can better meet the expectations of his or herself, staff and the school district.

Research Question Three: What were the difference in the LBI's behavior scores between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

Research question three detailed out survey results on the perceptions for each individual behavior surveyed between, active school teachers and superintendents, on superintendents' behaviors in rural southwest Missouri school districts: **RQ3a-empowering the we, RQ3b-visualizing greatness, RQ3c-communicating for meaning, RQ3d-managing one self, RQ3e-care and recognition.**

Results indicated there were significant differences found in three specific areas: *empowering the we, communicate for meaning, and care and recognition.* This led the researcher to reject the null hypothesis on H_{03a} , H_{03c} , H_{03e} , and to conclude, rural superintendents in southwest Missouri can focus on these three weak areas to improve their leadership abilities. This also led the researcher to conclude that those who embrace transformational leadership and learn to utilize all five of Kent's leadership behaviors will have a more significant impact on teachers' overall perception of their superintendent's leadership effectiveness. It is unknown to what degree or impact a well-rounded superintendent, practicing all five behaviors might have on an organization. It is recommended further research be conducted on leadership behaviors' in superintendents. However, past research can provide some insight on what this significance may imply.

Hallinger and Heck (1998) noted that while the superintendent plays an important role in effective schools, this role must be understood within the context of the school and should be viewed as a complex interaction between self-reflection as a leader and how teachers perceive their effectiveness as a leader. In an effort to positively impact the

school organization, superintendents must know their own leadership behaviors while also be aware of their teachers' perceptions of their leadership behaviors. As aspiring superintendents learn to utilize behavioral leadership mentality or habits, hiring possibilities may increase, especially when considering various demographics of public school buildings such as rural, urban, and suburban.

3a. What was the difference in the score of LBI's "*empowering the we*" between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

The scores for '*empowering the we*' weren't much different in perceptions of leader effectiveness for this behavior. *Empowering the we* runs a close second to the biggest gap in perception with the teacher mean of 22.65 and the superintendents 28.80. This might be explained by gender and generational differences. Research suggests that transformational leadership when trained on, and applied will create an empowerment in the leader and the staff as needed. According to Lappe (2010) the power each of us holds, when combined, can change the world. As times have changed over the years we know the empowerment of men and woman have been kept to different levels over the years. Prior research has been conducted on leadership and gender by Kent (2010) who developed the leadership categorization theory (Lord, Foti, & Vader, 1984). The leadership categorization theory suggested that constituents hold personal ideals about how their leader behaves and they hold different ideals for men and women. If the prior research resulted in female leaders being viewed, or seeing themselves as more transformational, then Kent thought it may be necessary to study the specific behaviors that define transformational leadership versus the generic leadership style (2010).

Another possible explanation for the varied perceptions for *empowering the we* could be generational differences. Gen X versus Gen Y may have played a role in the different perceptions on how to be empowered. According to Veazey (2017), Baby Boomers were born from the 1940s through the 1960s, while Generation X was born in the 1960s and 1970s, and Generation Y was born in the 1980s and 1990s. He described differences in how each generation functions in the workplace. For example, Gen Xers tend to be independent and individualistic, placing more value on their own careers over loyalty to organizations. Gen Xers, many of whom grew up as 'latchkey' kids, are independent, resilient and adaptable. Gen Xers often exhibit resourcefulness and self-sufficiency, preferring to do things on their own. Gen Y's wants coaching and development, collaboration and team efforts, and they expect more feedback than previous generations. They can be a challenge for Generation X, who value autonomy and independence. Gen Y's want constant feedback – at least monthly, if not more frequently.

With further research we could see if the behavior *empowering the we* based on the views of Gen X to Gen Y creates these variances in perceptions. A better understanding by superintendents and teachers of each generation will help the leader better understand his staff's behaviors and well as their own behaviors based on a generational basis (Veazey, 2017). Bass's (1985) one of four transformational leadership contains one of which is intellectual stimulation is defined as having a leader who encourages innovation and creativity, as well as critical thinking and problem-solving. Superintendents who are trained in Intellectual stimulation, which involves arousing followers' thoughts and imagination, as well as stimulating their ability to identify and solve problems creatively. This type of learning to empower both genders, and

generations through Kent's transformational behaviors will empower teachers as well as the superintendents for the betterment of all stakeholders.

3b. What was the difference in the score of LBI's "*visualizing greatness*" between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

When examining each behavior individually, it is clear that 'visualizing greatness' was the closest in perceptions between the teacher and the superintendent, almost equal in the mean: teachers 19.69 and superintendents 20.50, therefore the null hypothesis was accepted. This might be explained because vision is one that was perceived more equally through past research and showing it has been taught for many years now. Transformational leadership and vision training in the educational system goes back to the early 1970's with Bass (1999). The push for vision continued in 1994 when Bass and Avolio (1994) reiterated past and present research stating characteristics and qualities of an organization's culture are taught by its leadership to the extreme where everyone is likely to be constantly talking about vision, and fulfillment. Bass and Avolio (1994) stating, that an organization is chaotic without clear purposes, visions, and values. Vision for schools has continued to be treated as a very important if not number one expectation of districts and their leaders. Kent's Five (2004) looks at the various layers involved in vision behaviors needed by organizations not just to create a vision, but to see it through to the end. Superintendents can learn how to apply the various layers and depths of vision helping school district success.

3c. What was the difference in the score of LBI's "*communicating for meaning*" between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

The largest gap in perceptions of the behaviors was *'communicating for meaning'* with the teacher's mean of 19.21 compared to superintendents self-perceptions of 20.70. This might be explained by looking at Kent's description of how to communicate. There are many facets to the behavior that need to be applied for better effectiveness, such as; how we listen, why we communicate, what we communicate and how we communicate. From all of these components we can learn as a leader to make this behavior more beneficial for all stakeholders. Yet Employers are facing new challenges as a result of the diverse and rapidly changing methods of communicating in the workplace (Sawyer, 2017).

Superintendents need to meet the needs of both the Gen X and Gen Y, baby boomers, and more; further research is needed on how to bridge the gap in communication styles to create better communication with all stakeholders. According to Sawyer (2017) there are four different generations working side beside in the workplace. Each generation has its own style of communicating ranging from high-tech on one end of the spectrum to the old-fashioned face-to-face on the other end. The generational differences in communication approaches may explain the perception gap between the teachers and superintendents. With Kent's (2004) transformational leadership behaviors and further research, the communication gap can be lessened and superintendent's leadership strengthened.

3d. What was the difference in the score of LBI's "*managing one self*" between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

Another behavior without much of a significant difference in means was ‘*managing one’s self*’ with a teacher mean of 17.01 and superintendent mean of 17.60. Therefore the null hypothesis was accepted. This was not as large an average score as the other behaviors, yet the perceptions of both samples were close to equal. *Managing one self* is an educational training that has been incorporated into leadership curriculum for many years and the term is tied to how to be organized, and on time as a leader (Kent, 2004).

These close perceptions might be explained with reference to these behaviors taught early within the curriculum for all stake holders, leaders and teachers a like. Therefore *managing one self* was easily relatable to both samples in this survey. According to Kent (2004) *managing one self* is much more than being organized, and emotional intelligence is key. How leaders react to a situation is a layer of *managing one self* and has begun to be an expected behavior for one to be trained to use. According to Stephen Covey, when reviewing research involving emotional intelligence in the book, *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* by Bradberry and Greaves (2009) that emotional intelligence can give abundant, practical findings and insights with emphasis on how to develop EQ. Bradberry and Greaves research shows convincingly that EQ is more important than IQ. *Managing one self* has more layers than just; IQ versus EQ, organization and being on time. Digging further into Kent’s behaviors can help leaders to grow in the various traits of this behavior *managing one self*.

Both research sub-question 3b and 3d were very close in perceptions between the teachers and superintendents. Bolman and Deal (2008) elude to the idea that leadership is not tangible and only exists in the relationships and perceptions of followers. With no significant difference found in these two behaviors, this may imply teachers can perceive

their superintendent as using some transformational leadership behaviors. Research shows trainings over the years for these two behaviors for current and aspiring superintendents' in place for several layers of vision and managing. As stated by Lamm, Carter and Lamm (2012), numerous researchers have sought to establish taxonomy, a theory, or a model-based approach within which to classify leader behaviors, competencies, or outcomes (Bass, 2008). "Lacking a taxonomy of this sort, it seems unlikely that substantial progress can be made in the construction of leadership development programs and the generation of more effective models for understanding leader performance" (Fleishman et al., 1991, p. 246). Further growth can be obtained from these two behaviors' various layers using further research under Kent's (2004) Five behavior umbrella. Without digging in-depth into the behaviors deeper meanings, learning them, and applying them in the leadership role, this research and past research has little to no growth or purpose.

The following three behaviors *empowering the we, communicating for meaning* and, *care and recognition* were perceived by teachers as an area of growth for superintendents. The mean and standard deviations of these three behaviors, as perceived by rural superintendent's survey numbers perceived the need for personal growth in leadership, as well. Further research and training are needed to learn the various traits within each of the deficient behaviors and create that leadership growth needed to be a more effective leader.

3e. What was the difference in the score of LBI's "*care and recognition*" between active school teachers and superintendents in rural southwest Missouri school districts?

The final behavior '*care and recognition*' had a significant difference of leader effectiveness for this behavior as found in the sample with a mean of 13.23 for teachers and 14.05 for superintendents. *Care and recognition* had the smallest behavior variance of all perceived to be use by both teachers and superintendents. The researcher surmised that superintendents as managers were not seen or taught to care and recognize others. Managers were not seen or taught to celebrate the small things or even the larger accomplishments. Yet, when trained as a leader, Bass, (1985) stated the superintendent should show care, should recognize others, and should encourage others, going beyond self-interest.

The philosophy of the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) model ties in with this transformational behavior *care and recognition*, and has been incorporated into schools (DuFour & Eaker, 1999). PLC shares in the idea of celebrations and how important a component celebrations are, they are critical to effective change. Celebrations bring people together at important times during the life of changes within the school and reinforce the social fabric of all stakeholders. Kotter (2012) stated, celebrations build a sense of purpose. Short-term wins must be both visible and unambiguous to ensure success. Such wins provide evidence that the sacrifices that people are making are paying off. Recognition increases the sense of urgency and the optimism of those who are making the effort to change. Thus the differences in perception of how effective superintendents are related to *care and recognition*, could be addressed by implementing the best practices supported by PLC philosophy.

The difference in perceptions may also be explained by the differences in generational perspective on how *care and recognition* is demonstrated. According to

Rampton (2017), this is the first time in modern history that there are five generations working side-by-side; traditionalist, baby boomers, Gen X, Gen Y and Gen Z. He also stated no matter what generation we are from it is too easy to keep doing what we are doing now and acting like each generation is motivated by the same things we are. However, it is still the responsibility of the leader to make every employee, regardless of their generation, feel engaged. Integrating them into your company's culture and making them feel valued. As the leader it must be encouraged to balance work-life, and provide rewards that *your* employees would care about (Rampton, 2017). Another inquiry to ponder is whether these lower perceptions on the behavior of *care and recognition* relate in research to Gen X and Y, as well as or based on gender of the leader.

Further research could be done to see what would help managers become better leaders using *care and recognition* within the program frame of PLC while learning to use the layers of this trait within the leadership behavior of Kent's (2004). Consideration to the generational differences when deciding upon what care and recognition is needed to fit the moment and the person or persons involved.

Conclusions

Overall the five leadership behaviors as perceived by the teachers on their superintendents were lower than the superintendent's perceptions of themselves. The behavior perceived to be observed the most by the teachers were '*empowering the we*' and then in descending order: *communicate for understanding*, *visualizing greatness*, *managing one self*, and lastly, *care and recognition*. In the same respect, teachers may observe superintendents' transformational behaviors as corresponding with the superintendent's leadership abilities, and how superintendents perceive themselves as leaders. Barnett, McCormick, and Connors (2001) stated there is a significant relationship

between an educational leader's success and a teachers' perceptions of how the leader's behavior will ultimately influence the overall mission of fluent teaching and learning. Transformational leadership behaviors as described by Kent's *Leadership Behavior Inventory* (Kent 1999, Rudd, Et al., Kent & Blair, 2009) are recommended by this researcher based on the above results. Rural superintendents can continue to grow in effectiveness by exploring and learning Kent's behaviors and, applying them within their day-to-day practices.

The researcher concludes that superintendents who embrace transformational leadership through the behaviors of Kent will impact themselves and their teacher's perceptions of their leadership abilities. Further research would need to be done to verify the amount or types of impact following the use of these behaviors within the role of transformational leader. This study supports the research on educational leadership that portrays culture building, communication and vision as important characteristics of effective leadership (Bolman & Deal, 2008, Kent, 2004, Kent & Blair, 2005, Kotter, 2012, Pink, 2009, Senge 2006).

Recommendations for Future Research

There are several recommendations for future research that resulted from this study. They are as follows: The researcher recommends replicating the study to include all of the various regions in the state of Missouri expanding the level of comparability to advocate for the demographics that could play a large part into the behaviors needed by leaders in various schools throughout the state of Missouri.

The researcher recommends a similar study could also be given state by state or nationally to see the comparatives of student's behaviors in a variety of ways.

The researcher recommends doing a comparative study using demographics, questioning whether the location of each school plays into the superintendent's choice of behaviors.

The researcher recommends a comparative study using schools sizes, whether large schools vs small schools across the states, or nationally, questioning whether the size of the district affects the behavior choices of superintendents, either nationally or state to state.

The researcher recommends a comparative study on leadership behaviors, looking at Gen X to Gen Y; based on the age and era of the leader.

The researcher recommends research on the various needs for leadership training of rural superintendents versus metropolitan superintendents.

The researcher recommends a longitudinal study comparing teachers and superintendents behaviors before and after training on the five behaviors, comparing to check for better leadership and staff collaboration, and better climate.

The researcher recommends a longitudinal study on rural superintendents that have been trained for the challenges for a rural school leader, seeing if retention improved.

The researcher recommends that as superintendents continue to set the tone for the success of their school, that further research be conducted on teacher perception of leadership effectiveness as measured by transformational behaviors.

This study focused on the rural setting, however further research should be extended into the urban and metropolitan school districts.

Recommendations for Practice

The purpose of this study was to examine superintendent's and teacher's perceptions of transformational leadership behaviors in rural superintendents. This study supported previous research findings on the significant impact on teachers' perception of overall leadership effectiveness. The ability to use more than one behavior can be an effective leadership skill as it allows the superintendent the ability to act flexibly and see organizations from multiple perspectives (Kent, 2004). This would suggest aspiring and current superintendents can explore their leadership behaviors and familiarize themselves with their strengths and weaknesses as a leader, in order to focus on the areas needed to make the greatest impact in their own organizations. Using this survey annually or bi-annually between teachers and superintendents would allow the superintendent to acknowledge his or her behaviors as seen by the teachers, a compass to gauge the results of their goals for behavioral growth.

This type of transformational research put into practice in rural schools will open the door for better collaboration and team buy-in to meet the districts' needs and expectations. Barnett Et al., (2001) stated there is a significant relationship between an educational leader's success and a teachers' perceptions of how the leader's behavior will ultimately influence the overall mission of fluent teaching and learning. Hallinger and Heck (1998) noted that while the superintendent plays the role of leader, an important role in effective schools, this role must be understood within the context of the school and should be viewed as a complex interaction between self-reflection as a leader and how teachers perceive their effectiveness as a leader. With buy-in like this for both the teacher and superintendent will aid in the retention of both their services to aid in student success.

Search committees and Boards of Education could also use the information from this study on leadership behaviors to help hire and evaluate superintendents respectively. Boards of education and the superintendent can also use Kent's Five (2004) behaviors as part of a growth process/goal assessment of the superintendent, allowing the superintendent to set goals to build behaviors as needed. Boards of education could also use professional development, to assess perceptions of the superintendent by various stakeholders.

Summary

This study was performed to determine top behaviors needed for an effective transformational leader in southwest Missouri schools' rural superintendents. Researcher achieved this purpose through a survey called the Leadership Behavior Inventory (Kent, 2004). Results can empower superintendents to grow as a leader in the rural schools of southwest Missouri, leading to improve success for all stakeholders. The survey results indicated that the difference in perceptions existed for some behaviors - while there was no significant difference for other behaviors.

In general, the findings support existing literature. A leader's ability to understand his or her leadership behaviors can help them adjust in any situation and behave in an effective manner. These behaviors may guide the leader of the organization in the right direction, but how the follower perceives the particular behavior in a current situation will often determine the depth of leader efficacy (Bass 1999, Bass & Avolio, Yukl, 2005. Bolman & Deal, 2009, Burns, 1978, Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001, Kent, 2004, Kouzes & Posner, 2007, Leithwood & Jantzi 1999, 2000, 2005). The researcher provided possible explanations as evidenced by the literature for the significant

differences that did occur. There are many recommendations and implications for practice that result from this study.

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Appendix A

Survey Instrument Cover Letter

Superintendent's and Teacher's Survey

Nov. 12, 2018

Dear Superintendent and Teachers,

The leadership traits needed by the public school superintendent has been a topic of interest for a number of years. As a Southwest Baptist University doctoral candidate, under the supervision of my advisor, Dr. Allison Langford, I am conducting research on the leadership behaviors needed by superintendents as perceived by active teachers and superintendents located in rural southwest Missouri.

You and your teachers are invited to participate by completing the survey attached to this email as part of our survey sample. Please respond to all items on the attached survey according to instructions. It should only take 5 to 10 minutes of your time.

The prompt response of your survey is important to the outcome of the study, I am asking that you take *just a few minutes* of your time to complete this form and provide me with valuable information that may aid school boards and superintendents, as well as educator teams such as administrators and teachers to find a common bond to make the schools districts in rural southwest Missouri more successful. When you are finished with the survey and hit submit. Please know a thank you is already on my lips. Also there will be an option to request the results of the survey upon completion of my dissertation.

Your participation in the study is voluntary. Be assured that your answers will be kept confidential and anonymous, and the encrypted URL with your email is for the purpose of

follow-up only. Your consent to participate is implied by the answer of question two and so on to finish the survey. (Superintendents, your perception is needed for validity of the research, creating the comparison with the teachers' perception. The return of the survey will act as your permission to use the surveys from you and your teachers in your district). Confidentiality and anonymity will be kept within this electronic survey instrument, Question Pro. After the survey is completed only the data will be kept and the rest will be locked by the instrument and discontinued.

The SBU Research Review has reviewed this study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in the research, please feel free to contact the Research Review Board, Dr. Duke Jones at rrb@sbuniv.edu.

Your response is important as the result of the study will be made available to the School Administrators of rural southwest Missouri, and Southwest Baptist State University Educational Administration. Thank You very much for your time and assistance with this research study.

Sincerely,

Joy Finney

SBU Doctoral Candidate

Appendix B

Survey Instrument Superintendent's and Teacher's Survey

You are given this leadership trait survey at the request of the researcher in partial fulfillment of the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership at Southwest Baptist University. This Questionnaire; The Leadership Behavior Inventory (LBI) by Dr. Thomas Kent, Ph.D. will be used and related to the theoretical framework of transformational leadership. Dr. Kent gave permission to use his LBI as the survey instrument in this study on October 12, 2018.

To complete the questionnaire, as superintendent, think of your role as leader and your behavior in the role as leader. As the teacher, think of your leader (superintendent) and his/her behavior in his/her role as a leader. Then, using each of the items below, describe that behavior by circling the choice that, in your experience, most nearly describes how often your leadership successfully displays that particular behavior.

For example, suppose the item is "Uses examples that others can relate to." If you think the Leader does this often, you would mark a "5" or a "6". You would mark a 5 if you feel it that the situation is closer to 'sometimes' than to 'very often.' You would mark a "6" if you think that the situation is closer to "very often."

Please note that the accuracy and usefulness of this assessment is largely dependent upon your candor. All responses will remain confidential.

1. Do you give consent to participate in this survey? If yes, move on to question 2. If no, stop the survey. For reliability and validity, teacher surveys from said district will not be added into the data pool, if superintendent survey is not completed and in

15.Explains why she/he is doing what she/he is doing . 1-----2-----3-----4---
---5-----6-----7-----8

16.Knows his/her audience when speaking to them. 1-----2-----3-----4-----
5-----6-----7-----8

17.Talks about the principles or values behind decisions that are made. 1-----2-----3-----
4-----5-----6-----7-----8

18.Communicates in ways that inspire and motivate others. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----
6-----7-----8

19.Takes the time needed to explain fully what he/she is thinking. 1-----2-----3-----4-----
5-----6-----7---8

20.Sets the example by behaving in ways that are consistent with his/her stated values.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8

CommMean _____

21.Has a sense of self-determination and self-confidence. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6---
---7-----8

22.Keeps his/her own level of energy up high. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8

23.Believes anything can be done; has a "can do" attitude. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----
-6-----7-----8

24.Is a model of persistence and perseverance? 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8

25.Maintains focus and constancy of purpose. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8

MOS _____

26.Publicizes peoples' successes to all employees. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8

27.Celebrates team accomplishments regularly. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8

28.Genuinely cares about others. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8

29.Celebrates victories. 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8

CarNRec _____

12. What is your age? 20-30; 31-40; 41-50; 51-60; 61-70

20-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

61-70

How many years have you been in education? 1-10; 11-20; 21-30; 31-40; 41-50

1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50
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Please realize how thankful I am for your participation in my research.

Your responses will remain confidential.

Please check the box if you would like a follow up of the results of this research.

Appendix C

Reminder to Take the Survey

November 19, 2018

Reminder E-Mail

If you have not already returned the survey on the Leadership Behaviors Inventory sent out a week ago, won't you please take a few minutes now to fill it out? It's not too late and your response is very important.

Thank You!

If you have returned the survey, I want to thank you again for your cooperation.

Joy Finney

Doctoral Candidate

Southwest Baptist University

Appendix D

Permission to use the Learning Behavior Inventory



Kent, Thomas Walter

Thu, Oct 18, 1:21 PM (12 days ago)

to me

Joy: Yes you have permission. I have attached a more recent version of the LBI. It includes a 6th factor called Humility & Will. I have not published any of the research on it and may never since I've retired. I wish you well with your doctorate program. Your study looks very interesting.

Tom Kent