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A Case Study of the Impact of Secondary Administrators' Leadership Styles, Management of Instructional Programs, and Professional Development in Maintaining High Performing Schools

Teresa D. Dixon
Concordia University - Portland, teresadixon1@yahoo.com

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Greg Thomas, Ph.D., Content Reader

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Provost, Concordia University–Portland

Sheryl Reinisch, Ed.D.
Dean, College of Education, Concordia University–Portland

Marty A. Bullis, Ph.D.
Director of Doctoral Studies, Concordia University–Portland

A Case Study of the Impact of Secondary Administrators' Leadership Styles,

Management of Instructional Programs, and Professional Development

in Maintaining High Performing Schools

Teresa Denise Dixon

Concordia University–Portland

College of Education

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the College of Education

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Chris, Jenkins, Ph.D., Faculty Chair Dissertation Committee

Amanda, Sailors, Ph.D., Content Specialist

Greg, Thomas, Ph.D., Content Reader

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high performing schools. A total of 11 participants (principals and assistant principals) were selected from three high performing school districts. The conceptual framework for this study was based on the three dimensions and 10 instructional functions that Hallinger and Murphy (1985) utilized in their research study. Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) research study revealed that student academic performance improved because the role of the principal as a leader helped influence their staff to work toward a clear, measurable, and attainable goal. Therefore, Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) conceptual framework effectively addressed the research questions for this study. The methodological triangulation was through the different data sources; interviews and full-day observations were used for data analysis. This study sought to gain a deeper understanding of authentic experiences from secondary administrators' points of view of how they maintained high performing schools for two consecutive years. Three central themes emerged from this study as well as sub-themes (a) transformational leadership, with subthemes: building educational leaders, and creating and communicating the school mission, vision, and goals (b) using data strategically with fidelity to make decisions, with subthemes: research-based instructional resources for students, and best practices instructional resources for teachers, and (c) professional learning opportunities, with subthemes: attending high-quality and relevant professional learning and facilitating a culture of collective responsibility for professional learning. Other subthemes emerged from the study that demonstrated how principals utilized their teachers, protected instructional time, maintained high visibility, modeled lessons, and provided incentives for learning and teachers. The essential findings from

the study could be shared with K-12 principals to help them reflect on their practice. The findings from the study will help administrators improve their low performing schools and districts.

Keywords: secondary administrators, high performing schools, practice

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to God. I want to thank God for allowing me the opportunity to write this dissertation. Also, I want to dedicate this dissertation to my praying and loving family, my amazing husband, seven wonderful children, six beautiful and intelligent grandchildren, two audacious sisters, three smart nieces, five awesome nephews, and my aunts and uncles. Also, I dedicate this dissertation to all my praying friends. Thank you and I love you very much!

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Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up (Galatians 6:9 NIV)

First, I would like to acknowledge God. I was able to write this dissertation because of the unmerited favor I received from Him. Then, I would like to acknowledge my wonderful husband, Morris, for his encouragement, love and patience over the past 21 years. It is because of him that I had the chance to complete this task. I want to thank my seven children Morris, Timothy, Arella, Rico, Gianina, Valescia, and Gitone for believing, encouraging and loving me too. I want to thank my sisters Stephanie and Victoria for being there for me while I was writing this dissertation. I want to thank my mother and father Maggie and Terry Bell for their love and support. In addition, I want to thank my nieces LaShunda, Danielle, and Marquisha for encouraging me throughout this process, too. I want to thank my nephews Charles, Deshun, Terrell, Martrez, and Demarcus for their love and support. Also, I want to thank my friends Denise Lambert, Mrs. Mays, and Angie Powell for helping and praying for me daily. I want to thank my friends in Natchez for encouraging me to complete my goals. I want to thank my committee, Dr. Jenkins, Dr. Sailors, and Dr. Thomas for giving me great advice and guiding me throughout the entire process. Finally, I want to thank all my colleagues, family, and friends for proofreading and editing my paper. Thank you all!

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction to the Problem

  Education is the foundation for providing students with the opportunity to become productive citizens in the world. Therefore, it is imperative for schools to provide every student the opportunity to learn. Even though students are affected by non-school factors, the schools are still under pressure to ensure all students are college and career ready when they exit high school. According to Wright, Chau and Aratani (2011), poverty, hunger and inadequate health care are non-school factors that impede student success. Wright et al. (2011) reported that 12% white, 36% black, 15% Asian, 34% American Indian, 33% Hispanic, and 24% other race children live in poor families. In addition, 16% of poor children lack health insurance, and 21% of children experience hunger daily. If children attend school inadequately nourished, they may appear more apathetic and have impaired cognitive capacity. It was not surprising that lower-income students do not perform at the same level academically as middle-class students in school (Wright, Chau & Aratani, 2011). However, some students overcome their living conditions by changing their mindset, which motivates them to become resilient in school (Yeager & Dweck, 2012).

  Based on the federal guidelines, the superintendent of Mississippi schools worked to help students overcome some of the identified non-school factors that may cause students to underachieve in school. For instance, every school in Mississippi was required to provide two-well balanced meals each day and ensure safe learning environments for all students. In addition to these requirements, every school was led by a highly qualified principal based on current licensure requirements (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.). The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) created an accountability system to help evaluate and monitor principals and teachers' performance twice a year. The Mississippi Educator System and Administrator

Professional Growth System was designed to improve student achievement by providing teachers and administrators with adequate and actionable feedback to inform continuous improvement. A well designed and well-implemented educator effectiveness system provides critical information to the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), local districts, and schools to inform professional learning and improve student outcomes (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.). After the principal's evaluation documents were created, the state superintendent recognized that every school needed a highly qualified administrator who would oversee the day-to-day operation as well as the curriculum (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d). Once the state superintendent placed a highly qualified principal in every school, some schools in Mississippi have improved drastically, whereas some schools are still struggling according to the schools' performance level ratings of the 2015-2016 school year (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d).

According to the superintendent, some schools were struggling because administrators had one year or less of experience and lacked the knowledge necessary to implement the curriculum or evaluate those who were responsible for implementation (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d). At the same time, other initiatives were introduced to help improve schools, such as providing more instructional programs, adding literacy coaches, using different assessments, and providing professional development for principals and teachers (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d). This qualitative study explored the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high performing schools. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the study, background, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, conceptual framework, definitions, rationale, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations.

Background, Context, History, and Conceptual Framework for the Problem

For the past several decades, public schools in Mississippi have experienced highs and lows in student achievement. The state superintendent stated, "the Mississippi Department of Education will do whatever it takes to ensure all students are successful" (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d). Unfortunately, Mississippi public schools continue to fall behind according to the standards established by The No Child Left Behind Act which has been replaced by Every Student Succeeds Act (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.). This legislation was designed to help administrators of low performing schools ensure students obtained proficiency in English Language Arts and Math (Davis, 2015).

In December 2015, President Barak Obama signed Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) that shifted power from the federal government to the states on issues of school performance and accountability. The ESSA Law required that all teachers use high academic standards to prepare all students in America to succeed in college and careers and every school administrator ensured equity by upholding critical protections for America's disadvantaged and high-need students (Davis, 2015). Additionally, school administrators used annual statewide assessments to provide vital information to educators, families, students, and communities. The United States Department of Education sought to encourage and support local innovations, included evidence-based interventions, sustained and expand the administration's historic investments in increasing access to high-quality preschool, and maintained an expectation that schools would be accountable to effect positive change in our lowest-performing schools (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.).

The department of education asked each state to apply for the funds that consisted of four specific areas through an initiative called The Race to the Top Federal Grant Program (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). There were four primary purposes of The Race to the Top

Federal Grant Program: 1) to ensure all students are college and career ready and allow students to move from state to state without being behind academically, 2) build data systems that measure student growth and success, 3) recruit, develop, reward, and retain effective principals and teachers, and 4) turn around the low performing schools. Even though the grant was made available to every state, each state had a choice to accept or decline the grant. Mississippi decided to accept the grant. The requirements of The Race to the Top drastically impacted Mississippi because teachers were not knowledgeable or prepared to effectively teach or assess the College and Career Readiness Standards within their classrooms (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.). Therefore, the Mississippi Department of Education had to provide professional development to help encourage, prepare, and support teachers and principals with the implementation of the College and Career Readiness Standards. As a result, the state devised a long-term plan to ensure all students were college and career ready. The state plan included: (a) student progress with interim benchmarks, (b) goals for all students based on assessment proficiency and graduation rate, (c) English proficiency for English learners, and (d) decrease the achievement gap of all students (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.).

The state pledged to ensure every school was held accountable for student success by implementing annual statewide assessments in reading and math in grades three through eight. Also, students are required by the state to take the science assessments in elementary, middle, and high school. Once students enter high school, they are required to achieve proficiency in English II, Algebra 1, Biology 1 and U.S. History to be eligible for graduation (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d). According to the Mississippi Department Education, Mississippi schools were ranked 49th among 50 states, and the overall grade was a C. The letter grade "C" was determined by looking at several factors such as student achievement, individual student growth, and growth and participation rate of 2016. Each school must have an effective, highly-qualified principal in

each building to help Mississippi improve its rating (Mississippi Department of Education, 2016). The principals were charged with using effective leadership styles, managing effective instructional programs, and engaging in frequent professional development to help improve students learning and the performance level of the school. Enhancing Mississippi schools is a tedious task, but not impossible (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d).

Conceptual Framework

Since the principal role has shifted from managerial to an instructional leader, it is appropriate to use Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) conceptual framework that consists of three dimensions: Defining the School Mission, Manages the Instructional Program, and Develops School Learning Climate Program. The three dimensions have 10 instructional leadership functions such as: (a) frames the school's goals, (b) communicates the school's goals, (c) coordinates the curriculum, (d) supervises and evaluates instruction (e) monitors student progress, (f) protects instructional time, (g) provides incentives for teachers, (h) provides incentive for learning, (i) promotes professional development, and (j) maintains high visibility (Hallinger & Murphy 1985, p. 57).

The first dimension, Defining the School Mission includes two instructional leadership functions. The functions describe how principals are charged with defining the purpose of the school as well as working with the teachers and staff on attainable and measurable goal that focus on the academic progress of students (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). The second dimension, Manages the Instructional Program includes three instructional functions. The functions explain how the principal became an expert in teaching and learning to improve the school. To help with school improvement, the principal uses three different types of leadership or management functions such as coordinate the curriculum, supervise and evaluate instruction, and monitor student progress (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). The third dimension, Developing the School

Learning Climate Program has five instructional functions. The five functions described in detail how the principal develops high standards and expectations for students and teachers to encourage continuous school improvement (Hallinger & Murphy 1985).

Hallinger and Murphy (1985) conducted a study that has proven "The three-dimensions model and 10 instructional functions influenced the improvement of students' academics." Hallinger and Murphy (1985) revealed that the principal played an important role in improving student achievement by working with the teachers and staff to ensure the school met clear, measurable, and attainable goals. This conceptual framework helped provide a clear definition of effective administrators' authentic working practices such as leadership styles, managing instructional programs, and professional development. Many researchers such as Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008), Mulford and Silins (2003), and Leithwood, Patten, and Jantzi (2010) agreed that Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) conceptual framework could be tested to further one's understanding of how administrators contributed to school improvement and student learning. For the purpose of this study, Hallinger and Murphy's framework (1985) served as the conceptual framework for the research questions.

Statement of Problem

The state of Mississippi has 54 Districts and 332 schools that were labeled either unsuccessful or failing at the end of the 2016 school year. Although the overall school rating of Mississippi was a C for the 2015-2016 school year, Mississippi schools still have a high drop-out rate, and the state ranked next to last in the national survey of educational performance poll. Every school in Mississippi has one common variable that ensures teachers teach and students learn and that is the principal. According to Fullan (2010), there was a correlation between leadership styles, instructional programs, and professional development that affects the success of schools.

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Therefore, there was a need for additional research to explore the impact of administrators' daily practices that may affect the performance level of today's schools (Danielson, 2006).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and the effectiveness of professional development in maintaining high performing schools to help improve the low performing schools in Mississippi. Since administrators were charged to ensure schools are successful, it was imperative to learn how these factors contribute to student achievement (Cotton, 2003). Therefore, for principals to ensure their school was rated successful or high performing every year, they assured teachers teach, and students learn every day (Stewart, 2006).

Research Questions

Hallinger (2003) found that principals' leadership styles and management techniques worked simultaneously to improve school performance. Since leaders were in constant contact with the students whether directly or indirectly, Hallinger (2003) suggested that leaders needed to attend several professional developments to stay abreast of the latest policies, instructional programs, and academic and behavior strategies. Dufour and Marzano (2011) stated effective leaders knew their actions and leadership styles would affect students and teachers whether it is directly or indirectly.

This case study used the research questions to explore the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high performing schools. The study addressed each research question below.

RQ1 What types of administrator leadership styles impact high performing schools?

RQ2 How do administrators manage instructional programs to impact high performing

schools?

RQ3 What types of administrator professional development impact high performing

schools?

Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Study

Across the world, education is very important. Since education is the critical component to

help produce productive citizens that will one day give back to society, it is essential for all

schools to provide every child an opportunity to receive a quality education (Hoy & Miskel, 2001).

Mississippi is often ranked at the bottom of most national survey educational polls. Also,

Mississippi has 144 districts, and 30% are rated unsuccessful. Since leadership practices are

contingent upon student achievement, there is a sense of urgency to improve all low performing

schools. Thus, it was imperative that this study was conducted to explore the impact of secondary

administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional

development in maintaining high performing schools. The findings of the study will be shared

with all K-12 administrators and to help decrease the overwhelming number of low performing

schools in Mississippi.

Nature of the Study

The focus of this qualitative single case study was to explore the impact of successful

secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and

professional development in maintaining high performing schools in Mississippi. The participants

were purposely selected for this study. Eleven secondary administrators were interviewed; eight

face to face and three administrators for a focus group of high performing schools identified by

MDE. Methodological triangulation of data sources was used to gather data. The data was coded

for themes to determine if leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development impacts the performance level of schools.

The administrators were provided different opportunities to share their experiences, as data was collected from three sources: (a) face to face interviews, (b) focus group interview, and (c) full-day observations. Guion, Diehl, and McDonald (2013) suggested the use of mixed data sources allowed for triangulation analysis and strengthened the validity of a study. The face to face interviews and focus group interview took place in a private office. The full-day observations took place at each administrator's school site during the time specified by each administrator. The full-day observations allowed the researcher to see three administrators in action using their daily practices at their school.

Definition of Terms

Achievement Gap. Reflects the differences in standardized test scoring among students from different ethnic groups (Mississippi Department of Education, 2013).

Adequate Yearly Progress. Mississippi determines the incremental progress toward meeting the academic goal of all students attaining proficiency in reading and mathematics. (Mississippi Department of Education, 2013).

Common Core Standards. The Standards reflect the real-world expectations of what is necessary for students to succeed in higher education and the workforce, including critical-thinking, problem- solving, and effective communication skills, regardless of their pathway after high school (Mississippi Department of Education, 2015).

High Performing Schools. Schools that have made progress (growth or proficiency) within one calendar year and rated A or B (Mississippi Department of Education, 2013).

Instructional Program. Every instructional program combines a curriculum component (what we teach), and a teaching procedure (how we teach) (Mississippi Department of Education, 2015).

Laissez-Faire Leadership. Refers to a leadership style where a leader engages in minimal influence over others (Northouse, 2015).

Leadership Styles. Different approaches on how to lead an organization or individuals (Nir & Hameriri, 2014).

Low-Performing Schools. Schools that have not made any progress (growth or proficiency) within one calendar year and rated a D or F (Mississippi Department of Education, 2013).

Mississippi Assessment Program (MAP). Is designed to measure student achievement on the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards (MS-CCRS) for English Language Arts and Mathematics and to provide valid and reliable results to guide instruction through data-driven instruction. The Map will assess students in grades 3-8 in English Language Arts and Mathematics, Algebra I, and English II (Mississippi Department of Education, 2013).

Mississippi College Career Readiness Standards. The Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards (MS CCRS) for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects ("the Standard") are the culmination of an extended, broad-based effort to fulfill the charge to create next-generation K-12 standards in order to help ensure that all students are college and career ready in literacy no later than the end of high school (Mississippi Department of Education, 2014).

Principals Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS). Is an instructional framework with three dimensions and 10 instructional functions. Another name of the frame is the ten-framework model (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

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Professional Development. Training provided to individuals based on the needs of the individual or school (Mississippi Department of Education, 2011).

Subject Area Testing Program Second Edition (SATP2). Is an assessment administered to students in Biology I and U.S. History (Mississippi Department of Education, 2011).

Transactional Leadership. Is a leadership style that a leader works with groups and individuals in setting up standards to achieve a specific goal (Epitropaki & Martin, 2013).

Transformational Leadership. Is a leadership style that a leader inspires others to improve the organization (Valentine & Prater, 2011).

Assumptions, Delimitations, and Limitations

The assumptions were that all licensed leaders were knowledgeable of the curriculum, state policies, improvement techniques, and leadership strategies. This yields the assumption that the administrator responses were genuine and truthful based on their experiences of 10 years or more.

The delimitations of the study included only the secondary administrators' perception of high performing secondary schools of two consecutive years. Therefore, if the administrator's school was high-performing for only one-year, sufficient data would not exist to explore the impact their leadership had on student achievement.

The sample was small due to the limited number of high performing schools within Mississippi. Also, responses may be potentially biased due to the small number of secondary high-performing schools within each district.

Chapter 1 Summary

Chapter 1 provided information about the purpose and significance of this study to the field of leadership. This study explored the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles,

management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high performing schools. Chapter 2 provides a thorough review of literature that focuses on four sections. The first section focuses on leadership role and responsibilities of secondary administrators. The second section focuses on research findings of leadership studies that demonstrate how the principal's leadership influences student achievement and the performance level of the school. The third section focuses on different leadership styles (laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational), and professional development (Furtner, Baldegger & Rauthmann, 2013). Lastly, the fourth section discusses the conceptual framework, review of the methodological literature, synthesis of research findings, and critique of previous research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction to the Literature Review

Many Americans believe a good education leads to a better future. However, United States schools are struggling with equipping students with the necessary skills for today's new occupation (United States Department of Education, n.d.). Three-quarters of the fastest -growing occupations that require science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) are not being filled by students in the United States because the schools are not preparing them (Department of Education, n.d.). In fact, the United States had one of the highest high schools dropout rates in the world (Department of Education, n.d.). It is proven that when students graduated from high school more than half of them took remedial classes and often, they did not graduate from college (Department of Education, n.d). The United States was ranked 12th in college attainment because most of the students did not complete college (United States Census Bureau, 2015). Therefore, it is difficult for students to compete globally (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d). Since Mississippi schools were contributing to the high drop-out rate in the United States, it was evident that Mississippi schools needed help with turning around their ineffective schools (Johnson, 2013). The state education agency (SEA) was charged to implement improvements on the state-level. Therefore, the Department of Education had to investigate the state education agencies (SEA) and their efforts in turning around their schools (Birman, Aladjem, & Orland, 2010). Peck and Reitzug (2014) reported that even though school turnaround is an issue in K–12 public education, there is limited peer-reviewed research that gave specific details on strategies and resources that state education agencies used to turn around their schools.

Every state education agency had to put in place a plan to turn around their schools because it was required by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2002 to turn around their lowest-performing schools and support the schools that needed their assistance (Hoxby, 2005). There

were specific criteria that the state education agency followed to classify schools as low performing or priority schools. If the schools were ranked as the bottom 5 percent within each state, each school was considered a priority school (Hoxby, 2005). State education agencies used the School Improvement Grants (SIG) program that was funded 3.5 billion dollars in 2007 to help priority schools (Department of Education, n.d.). The state education agency (SEA) did not mind using the SIG money because it did not decrease funds from their state (Emma, 2015). However, Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA) eliminated the SIG program, and the state's Title I fund was increased to help with improving priority schools (Emma, 2015). Thus, Title I money could be used to contract consultants and vendors to help improve the performance level of schools (Kowal & Arkin, 2005). Since Mississippi has low performing schools, Mississippi utilized the SIG program.

Mississippi had many low performing schools that needed assistance from the SEA. The student achievement in Mississippi was low with about 30% students scoring proficient and advanced on state tests (Department of Education, 2016). Even though Mississippi decided to test all 11th graders on the American College Test (ACT) and the composite score improved from 17.6 to 18.3, it was still below the national composite average of 20.8 on a scale of one to 36. The high school graduation rate was not as expected by Mississippi Department of Education; however, it was climbing from 73.7% in 2012 to 82.3% in 2016. Even though Mississippi schools were not performing well as a whole, Mississippi was ranked number two because of an increase in the 4th grade National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reading scale score. Also, Mississippi was ranked number eight because of an increase in 4th grade (NAEP) math scale score. The 8th graders were ranked number seven because of an increase in (NAEP) math (Mississippi Department of Education, 2015). That was a significant accomplishment considering Mississippi has 144 school districts, 902 schools, 406 elementary schools, 110 secondary schools, and 386

combined schools (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.). Currently, Mississippi has 88

schools rated "A," 239 rated "B," 223 rated "C," 210 rated "D," and 122 rated "F." (Mississippi

Department Education 2016.). If the school only served kindergartens through second grade, the

school did not receive a rating because the students did not have to take a state-wide assessment

test. To improve the "F" rated schools, the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) decided

to revisit the district and school accountability, model.

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) is charged to ensure all academic

standards prepare students for college and careers. All statewide online assessments are aligned to

the English Language Arts and Math college and career readiness standards for grades 3-8 and

high schools. Mississippi uses an A- F accountability system that considers student growth and

achievement. For high school, the A-F accountability system considers student growth and

achievement, graduation rates, and advanced coursework participation and outcomes. The

Mississippi Department of Education follows the state board policy 3803 that outline the

assessments and graduation requirements. To ensure that students pass the subject area test

(SATP2) requirements, MDE provides several alternative opportunities to help students meet the

criteria. The alternate assessments in Algebra 1, English II, United States History and Biology 1

are as follows: students obtain a score 17 or higher in math, science, reading, and English on the

ACT, earn a C or higher in an entry-level, credit-bearing dual enrollment/dual credit courses, and

obtain an ASVAB AFQT score of 36 plus on career planning and assessment system that met the

federal guidelines (CPASS).

Mississippi uses two accountability models. According to MDE, an accountability model

is a system used to inform the public of how schools and districts are performing. The school

grading system considers how well students perform on state tests and whether students are

showing improvement on tests from year-to-year, especially the progress of the lowest achieving

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students. Elementary and middle schools use the 700-points model, whereas high schools use the 1000-points, model. The 700-points model consists of three subjects: reading, math, and science. The reading and mathematics categories are worth 300 points each. One hundred points are for proficiency; 100 points are for growth of all students, and 100 points are for growth for the lowest performing students. In the science category, 100 points earn for proficiency only. In the future, the model will include a plus or minus indicator for English Language Learners. The high school model has the same points and indicators in reading and math which are like the elementary and middle school model. However, it has several other indicators such as 50 points each for science and the United States History for students scoring proficiency only, 200 points for graduation, 50% each in Reading, Algebra, and English on the American College Test (ACT), and 70% for participation and 30% performance in Acceleration (IB, AP, Industry Certification, Dual Credit). In Table 1, *Component of High School Grades (up to 1,000 points) t*he Mississippi Department of Education assigns grades to schools' base on points earned (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.).

Table 1

Component of High School Grades (up to 1,000 points)

Reading	Math	Other Subjects	Graduation 4 years	Beginning 2016 Acceleration (Includes AP, IB, Dual Credit)	Beginning 2016 College Readiness ACT
Proficiency (100pts.)	Proficiency (100pts.)	Science Proficiency (50pts.)	All Students Rated (200pts.)	Participation/ Proficiency (50pts.)	Rate (50pts.)
Growth All Students (100pts.)	Growth All Students (100pts.)	U.S. History Proficiency (50pts.)		70 % participation 30% participation Year 1 60/40 year2 50/50 year 3	ACT Math 22 and Reading 22 or English 18
Growth Lowest 25% (100pts.)	Growth Lowest 25% (100pts.)			Phase-In: Y1: 15/16 Y2: 16/17 Y3: 17/18	Math: 50% R/E:50%

The MDE uses the accountability model with fidelity to help identify and support all the low-performing schools within each district. The MDE is making a concerted effort to implement their initiatives to improve low performing schools. Listed below are the six initiatives implement by MDE: (a) All students proficient and showing growth in all assessed areas, (b) Every student graduates from high school and is ready for college and career, (c) Every child has access to high-quality early childhood program, (d) Every school has effective teachers and leaders, (e) Every community effectively using a world-class data system to improve student outcomes, and (f) Every school and district is rated "C" or higher. Although, all the identified initiatives are important, for this study the fourth one is most important. The MDE allocated one million dollars for professional development to assist principals and teachers with effectively implementing the

Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards. The professional development consists of job-embedded training for personnel such as literacy coaches and teachers (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.). The Mississippi Department of Education (2017) reported, "that they should look closely at potential professional development workshops for school leaders to ensure that current principals have appropriate professional growth opportunities and that future principals are prepared to serve as instructional leaders going forward" (p. 6). The professional development helps leaders improve their knowledge about the curriculum, instructional programs, and leadership strategies to ensure teaching and learning were occurring in their building daily. Additionally, the MDE has implemented other initiatives that could improve low-performing schools (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.). For instance, the Mississippi Department of Education provides support for struggling learners, provides support for general and special education teachers, and focuses more on students' attendance, behavior, and course performance (ABCs). The MDE initiatives help the SEA identify students who need academic or behavioral interventions and ensure students have access to versatile educational opportunities. In the future, all schools rated "D" and "F" (low performing schools) will have priority access to the following supports: literacy coaches, leadership webinars, and at least two to three certified curriculum specialists helping and supporting their staff per school (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.).

The MDE uses research-based interventions for all target schools. The priority schools have access to competitive grants, training on data to build capacity, and improve instruction. If any school districts have been rated an "F" (low performing) for at least two or three years, established by state law, they will qualify for the achievement school district (ASD). MDE reported that all the initiatives are critical, yet, the initiatives would not be sufficient if each school does not have a competent and highly qualified administrator to ensure the initiatives are carried

out (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d). The MDE realized the importance of supporting

all their school leaders by improving their personal and professional growth. The MDE spent

countless hours reviewing hundreds of articles, books, and renown educators on the characteristics

and behaviors competent administrators should possess (Mississippi Department of Education,

n.d). Furthermore, MDE spent countless hours interviewing and seeking out the best and most

qualified administrators to lead their schools.

Since the focus was on school leadership in Mississippi, it was imperative to explore the

impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and

professional development in maintaining high performing schools. The review of literature

consists of four sections. The first section focuses on leadership role and responsibilities of

secondary administrators. The second section focuses on research findings of leadership studies

that demonstrate how the principal's leadership influences student achievement and the

performance level of the school. The third section focuses on different leadership styles (laissez-

faire, transactional, and transformational), and professional development (Furtner, Baldegger &

Rauthmann, 2013). Lastly, the fourth section discusses the conceptual framework, review of

research literature and methodological literature, review of the methodological issues, synthesis of

research findings, and critique of previous research.

Leadership

Leadership styles influenced great leaders by the leadership theories that have been

analyzed or evaluated over time (Antonakis, Ciaciolo & Sternberg, 2004). Therefore, leadership

theories have evolved based on the character traits of leaders (Antonakis et al.,2004). Antonakis et

al. described eight character traits that were established during the 1900's to 2004. Many leaders

used several of the eight character traits throughout history such as behavior, skeptic, contingency,

relational, contextual, new leadership, and information processing. However, Bass and Stogdill

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(2008) believed the great man theory that stated, "Great leaders are born and not made" (p. 180).

Whether leaders were born to lead or groomed to lead, eventually they had to possess several or all

the character traits. In fact, in the early 1970s, many leaders were easily distinguished from others

based on the character traits. As a result, some schools were successful because every school

provided a sufficient leader based on the great man theory (Bass & Stogdill, 2008). In contrast,

Manning and Curtis (2012) found that the great man theory did not influence leadership. They

believed leadership heavily was influenced by the trait theory. In contrast, Rickards and Clark

(2006) opposed the relationship between individual character traits and the effectiveness of

leadership.

At the beginning of the late 1940s, researchers shifted from the perspective of looking at an

individual's leadership traits to their behavioral leadership styles. Effective leaders needed to

know how to change their behaviors depending on the situation and the people they are leading

(Wienclaw, 2008). Behavioral leadership style impacted the climate of the school and whether the

school was successful or unsuccessful (Marzano, Waters & McNulty, 2005). Researchers found a

significant relationship between the school culture and principal's leadership style (MacNeil,

Prater, & Busch, 2009). The findings from the study revealed that the principal's leadership

influenced teachers, students, and school climate whether directly or indirectly (MacNeil et al.,

2009).

In the mid-1970's, the perception of leadership moved from character and behavioral traits

to people and task-oriented leadership style. It was essential that effective leaders understand how

to develop a balance between task and people-oriented leadership style. Leaders who focused only

on building relationships and supporting their staff were leaders who posed people-oriented

leadership style. However, leaders who focused mainly on employees completing the job with

little or no regard to relationship building that was called task-oriented leadership style. Bass and

Stogdill (2008) agreed that effective leadership should utilize several character traits.

Leadership has many definitions. In fact, the meaning and role of leadership could be

dated all the way back to the Bible (Bass & Stogdill, 1990). Bass and Stogdill explained how

leaders were role models for their staff. In the past, most research focused more on practical

leadership in big corporations and military; yet, the focused of leadership has shifted to the

educational setting. Therefore, the single most influential factor of a school was the effectiveness

of principals' role and responsibilities (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2000).

Leader roles and responsibilities. DiPaola and Tschannen-Moran (2003); White-Smith

and White (2009) stated the role of the administrator has changed throughout the years. The

administrator's position has become more challenging because of the increase of job

responsibilities. Therefore, the administrator's role has shifted from managerial to instructional

leadership (Goodwin, Cunningham, & Childress, 2003). Since the duties of the principal have

increased, longevity was limited to secondary (middle and high) school administrators partially

because of low interest in the position (Gajda & Militello, 2008). The reason for the low interest

was because of the high demand for responsibilities from all stakeholders while leading schools in

today's world. In the past, administrators were known only as student disciplinarians and

managers. Kafka (2009) stated good administrators were managers before the era of reform.

Administrators were hired to create schedules, manage budgets, discipline students, and to

collaborate with the community. However, today's administrators should focus on building

capacity and working directly with teachers and other staff members to improve students learning

(Kafka, 2009). As a result of the change, administrators pursued more training to help ensure they

accomplished the tasks mentioned above. Therefore, administrators were no longer managing

schools but becoming instructional leaders. Since administrators were working in both capacities, they struggled with efficiently fulfilling both roles or experienced burnout.

Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) researched the effect of leadership practices that proved the behavior of administrators can influence students' achievement. Additionally, Crum and Sherman (2008) conducted an exegetical study which demonstrates that if administrators develop leadership among the teachers, this empowered them to become problem solvers. Effective administrators understood how to facilitate teachers to become leaders within the building. Another responsibility of secondary administrators was making sure all staff members, and students were safe before, during, and after school. To ensure that all students, teachers, and support personnel were safe, the principal made sure the facilities and equipment were working properly, the discipline policy was carried out effectively to minimize fights, teachers used high quality, and rigorous instruction to minimize classroom disruptions, and attended all sporting and fine arts events to reduce student misbehaving. Administrators were responsible for keeping an open line of communication with all stakeholders about academic and behavior expectations (Northfield, 2014).

A study conducted by Leithwood and Mascall (2008) found that not just the administrator, but all school members were recognized for helping the school become a high performing school. In fact, it was the administrators' responsibility to nurture the teachers, students, and other staff members to ensure all students are academically successful. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) stated, "The administrator appeared to have a great influence primarily as the school's instructional manager or leader" (p. 217). Administrators needed to feel confident and competent while during their job. Therefore, job satisfaction could have a positive or negative effect on the role of administrators (Murphy, 1985).

Researchers have conducted several studies that have observed the attitudes and work performance of administrators (Brief & Weiss, 2002; Harrison Newman & Roth, 2006; Judge, Thoresen, Bona, & Patton, 2001). Brief and Weiss (2002) conducted a study of the impact of job satisfaction in the workplace. Job satisfaction was a crucial variable in the workplace. Therefore, when people were satisfied with their place of work, production increased. Harrison, Newman, and Roth (2006) found that if people have a positive attitude about their job it influenced them to contribute more to their job rather than procrastinate or not complete their job tasks. Harrison et al. (2006) found that if administrators enjoyed being at work, then work would feel more like a career, rather than a job. Even though job satisfaction contributed to the competent level of administrators, administrators' years of experiences also had a significant impact on their competent level as well as the performance level of the school (Brief & Weiss, 2002).

Boris-Schacter and Merrifield (2000) found that some administrators performed well after 10 years because they saw themselves as life-long learners. The administrators attended many workshops that allowed them to stay abreast of the latest strategies and skills needed to become effective. Hargreaves, Moore, Fink, Brayman, and White (2003) stated that administrators working for at least five years or more would achieve rewarding results due to their years of experience. Also, administrators were not effective leaders just based on their years of experience, but they also needed the proper professional development workshops to become an effective leader (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). To further understand the role and responsibilities of administrators, it was imperative to review recent studies of leadership.

Research Findings of Leadership Studies

Several leadership studies have demonstrated that administrators could have a direct or indirect impact on student achievement (Nettles & Petscher, 2006; Sebasstian & Allensworth 2013; Silva, White, & Yoshida, 2011). Silva et al. (2011) conducted a study with 66 eighth-grade

participants in a suburban middle school. The results demonstrated that the experimental group showed more significant gains than the control group.

Sebastian and Allensworth (2012) conducted a study on the influence of administrators' leadership with student achievement. The multilevel structural equation model was used to measure the relationships among administrators' leadership, classroom instruction, school organizational structures, student grades, and test gains on the ACT. Surveys administered to all high school teachers in Chicago Public Schools during the 2006-2007 school year. The results yielded that administrators' leadership via learning climate made a difference in classroom instruction and student achievement (Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012).

According to Phillips, Renihan, and Raham (2003), there were several factors that influenced administrator efficacy that must be addressed or overcome for schools to support school leadership. One such factor was administrators spend a tremendous amount of time attending to parent issues, discipline, facilities management, and community-related tasks which allowed minimal to no time to spend on teachers' instruction or learning. Taking care of discipline issues and excessive managerial demands were today's greatest obstacles to becoming an instructional or transformational leader. Moreover, according to Nettles and Herrington (2007), there was still much to research regarding the impact of administrators' leadership style on student achievement. The problem was because much of the research was focused more on the peripheral results of administrators' practice rather than student outcomes (Nettles & Herrington, 2007). Peripheral results ranged from decreasing discipline referrals, accreditation standards, adhering to the mission standards, and other demanding tasks.

On the contrary, Witziers, Bosker, and Kruger (2003) stated it was still unclear of how administrator leadership style affects student achievement. Many educational leadership studies investigated the leadership relationship between the school performance level and student

achievement fail to pinpoint the specific behaviors of the administrator within the study. Examples of such studies focused more on school culture (Macneil, Prater & Busch, 2009), school mission (Kadji-Beltran, Zachariou & Stevenson, 2013), school size (Lee & Loeb, 2000), and highly-qualified teachers placed in every classroom (Marzano, 2003). Thus, Hallinger and Heck (2010) suggested that future research designs may strengthen if they include reliable data instrumentation, sample sizes, and sophisticated data analysis tools because the previous educational research classified as weak. Nonetheless, some studies have been conducted to prove that there was no relationship between administrative leadership and student achievement.

In fact, Grissom, Loeb, and Master (2013) collected data from approximately 100 urban administrators over three years. The results from the full-day observations yielded that administrators did not have any impact on student achievement. However, Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008) believed that there should be more research on the relationship between students' achievement and administrator leadership. Another study conducted by Jacob, Goddard, Kim, Miller, and Goddard (2014) evaluated the impact of leadership on staff turnover and student achievement. The results revealed no impact on administrators' leadership, staff turnover, and student achievement. Besides, Grissom, Kalogrides, and Loeb (2015) conducted a study and found no impact of administrator leadership styles on staff turnover, student achievement, and students' test scores. Although some studies suggested that there was no impact between administrators' leadership styles and students' achievement, thus, research was needed to learn more about the characteristics of administrators and school performance (Bastian & Henry, 2015).

In summary, Valentine and Prater (2011) investigated the relationship between administrators' managerial duties, transformational leadership style, and student achievement in public high schools. The researcher used the Audit of Principal Effectiveness and the Principal Leadership Questionnaire to measure the principal's behavior. The study found that principal's

leadership played a significant role in promoting curriculum and instruction that linked to student achievement. In addition, principals who used transformational leadership identified the vision of a school to help develop a better relationship to student achievement. Therefore, leaders needed to use an effective leadership style and attend training to ensure schools were successful.

Different Leadership Styles

Per Kolluru (2015) leadership was a process that involves influencing or inspiring others to do a task. Additionally, leadership is defined as an individual that affected a group of individuals to help accomplish a goal (Northouse, 2015). Leaders needed to help provide strategies for the teachers and organization. They must be productive by using the organizational strengths and weaknesses. A school leader was responsible for the actions of every individual and the operation of the school. According to Grissom, Loeb, and Master (2013) some educators have agreed that the administration was the key to the foundation of a thriving learning environment. Principals used different types of leadership styles such as laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational to help ensure the success of the students.

Laissez-faire. Laissez-faire leadership style focused on the ability to make decisions. Chaudry and Javed, (2012) suggested that this type of leader allows their followers to make decisions instead of the leader making important choices. Laissez-faire leaders did not want to be responsible for anything; therefore, that was why they avoided making decisions to avoid being blamed when something went wrong (Skogstad, Hetland, Glaso, & Einarsen, 2014). Laissez-faire leaders relinquished their responsibilities to others without hesitation. Furtner, Baldegger, and Rauthmann, (2013); Skogstad et al. (2014) believed there were two reasons why the school leader gave their responsibilities to other employees. First, the leader thought the employees were more capable and knowledgeable about making their own decisions. Secondly, to keep from being dismissed from their position, the leader wanted to please the employees as much as possible

(Furtner et al., 2013; Skogstad et al., 2014). This type of leader only knew how to provide necessary information and resources to the school. Therefore, Boateng (2012) stated that laissez-faire was not an effective leadership style for a principal to produce a successful school.

      Transactional. Transactional leadership is a social exchange process whereas the leader clarifies what the followers needed to do as part of their transaction (successfully complete the task) to receive a reward or avoidance of punishment (satisfaction of the follower's needs) that was contingent on the fulfillment of the transactional (satisfying the leader's needs) (Horowitz & Van Eeden, 2015). This leadership style required the leader and the follower to make an agreement that the goal fulfilled. However, the leaders' primary concern was to make sure that the task was completed, while the follower wanted to get something in return for the completed task (Antonakis & House, 2014; Bono, Hooper, & Yoon, 2012; Epitropaki & Martin, 2013). Transactional leadership style required leaders to praise or punish the follower which was a negative and positive reinforcement. The follower efficiently completed the work unless the leader found fault in work. For example, the school leader monitored the school performance to determine if the performance deserved a reward or punishment (Antonakis & House, 2014). Several studies were conducted to see how effective transactional leadership style was with principals. Le Clear (2005) led a study that investigated transactional leadership style of principals and how it affected the school culture and student performance. Le Clear (2005) examined three hundred twenty elementary classrooms that consisted of 44 teachers within schools in Central Florida. Le Clear's (2005) findings revealed,

> The result was transactional leadership significantly affected student achievement and three school culture components: parent/student satisfaction, personal teaching efficacy, and professional community. That is, "higher levels of transactional leadership were associated with higher levels of student achievement and school culture. (p. 62).

Transformational. This leadership style allowed leaders to interact with their followers by developing meaningful and quality relationships. The vision of a school was easily carried out by a transformational leader (Antonakis & House, 2014; Bohm, Dwetmann, Bruch, & Shamir, 2015). Transformational leaders inspired their followers to help implement the vision of the school. A new research study by Abu-Hussain, (2014) reported,

> Transformational leadership is expressed in the behaviors of the followers that bring leaders to a higher level of awareness of the importance of their mission and increase their level of motivation, maturity, and aspiration, as well as their reference to the need for achievement, self-realization, social welfare, the success of the organization and concern for its social environment. (p. 1270).

According to Bass and Riggio (2006) a transformational leader was proactive, inspiring, motivating, and intellectually stimulating. Also, the leader was open to suggestions and encourages others to take a risk and to think outside of the box. Transformational leaders utilized each's strengths and weaknesses accurately. This type of leader encouraged everyone to work together because it took every stakeholder to complete the job. Leaders made sure the followers' potential was utilized for the common good of the organization or school (Chen, 2014).

Transformational leaders operated under three goals; to encourage and help all teachers to improve, collaborate with one another, and solve problems effectively (Vermeulen, Acker, Kreijins, & Buuren, 2014). Transformational leadership styles allowed the leader to encourage teachers to utilize technology such as digital learning materials to help enhance the learning of students (Vermeulen et al., 2014). There were several studies that provided evidence or support for the effectiveness of transformational leadership style for principals (Alsaeedi & Male, 2013; Yang, 2013; Nir & Hameiri, 2014). Hauserman and Stick (2013) conducted a study of 135 public school teachers in Canada. The results confirmed two categories: high and low levels of

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transformational leadership qualities. The data retrieved from in-depth teacher surveys. The findings from the study demonstrated that teachers gave many positive reports about their transformational principals. However, the teachers who had low or non-transformational principals had difficulty with providing examples or comments about any events that happened at the school. This study which determined that teachers respond well to transformational leaders. In fact, the findings from this study demonstrated that principals utilized transformational leadership styles to influence teachers, they shaped the school by ensuring the implementation of the vision and goals of the school, and thus created a positive learning environment (Hauserman & Stick, 2013). Administrators' leadership style is important; however, the administrator must attend professional development to understand how to use current policies and procedures effectively to operate the school.

Professional development. It was imperative that principals were continuously trained to be an effective instructional leader for their students and school. To ensure principals stayed abreast of current curriculum and researched based strategies, principals attended many various types of professional development. Bottoms and Fry (2009) stated that today's school leaders need to have a comprehensive understanding of school and classroom practices such as working with teachers and providing continuous student improvement. In addition, principals should know how to provide support for staff to correctly implement the curriculum and strategies for instructional practices. Even though many researchers believed in professional development, they did not believe in one-day workshops of quick fix topics that guarantee the strategies and resources introduced in the seminar will improve students' achievement. In fact, many leaders believed in job-embedded learning opportunities (Joyner, 2000).

Therefore, professional development must be on-going with a plan in place to monitor, support, and provide constructive feedback as needed. Professional development should be

mandatory monthly, for principals to stay abreast of the current issues and strategies for teaching and learning (Joyner, 2000). Professional development can provide leadership training in several areas such as analyzing data, determining the school performance level, implementing the curriculum, building capacity within the building, building relationships with all stakeholders, providing a clear vision and mission for the school and using retired teachers as mentors. Professional development would provide administrators with the knowledge, tools and accountability model to help them improve their low performing schools or maintain their high performing schools.

To improve or maintain the performance level of a school, the administrators had to know how Mississippi determines the performance level of each school. Several factors were taken into consideration to determine if a school in Mississippi was a low or high performing school. Mississippi's school grading system considered several indicators, included how well students perform on state tests, whether students were showing improvement on those tests from year to year, and whether students were graduating within four years (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.).

In addition, the system factors in how well schools were helping their lowest achieving students make progress toward proficiency (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.). The Mississippi Legislature passed a law in 2013 that required the state to implement a letter "A-F" grading scale for schools. The State Department of Education established five performance categories (A, B, C, D, and F) for the accountability system based on the following criteria: a) student achievement was the percent of students proficient and advanced on the current state assessments, b) individual student growth was the percent of students making one year's progress in one years' time on the state assessment, and c) with an emphasis on the progress of the lowest 25% of students in the school or district.

The goal of the grading scale was to provide the public a better understanding of how well a school was performing and to begin conversations about continually improving education. Grades assigned to schools based on points earned. Schools earned points in several categories, such as performance, growth, and graduation rate (for high schools) (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d). Therefore, high performing schools were rated "A" or "B," successful school "C," and low performing school was rated a "D" or "F." Based on the accountability model, administrators had several concerns about their current role as a leader.

Today's demands of leadership required a school leader to be an instructional leader who was strictly related to transformational leadership per Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005). Stewart (2006) suggested that transformational leadership was the best principal model found in current research. School administrators were not only responsible for budgeting, managing, organizing, and dealing with day-to-day discipline referrals, they were able to coach, encourage, motivate, teach, and develop teachers and students in their schools.

The instructional leader ensured the provision of a quality education afforded to every student. For this to happen, the leaders and teachers worked together (Hoy & Hoy, 2003). Instructional leaders monitored teachers' progress and students' learning. Knapp and Feldman (2012) explained that there were many ways to understand school leadership and how leaders directly impacted students' learning. A study by Rice (2010) stated that effective principals influenced the outcome of schools, such as articulated the school mission and vision, hired highly qualified teachers, allocated funds for resources, and student achievement. Linn and Gronlound (2000) realized that student assessment determined the performance of the school; therefore, it was imperative for administrators to used different procedures and strategies to ensure teachers helped students to be successful.

Conceptual Framework

The success of a school determined how administrators viewed their job, worked well with others, evaluated and monitored instructional programs, and attended and promoted professional development (Creswell & Plano, 2011). Many schools were rated high or low based on student test scores. However, the administrators' actions helped determine the success of the school. From an empirical standpoint, Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) conceptual framework consisted of three dimensions to enhance the leadership role such as (a) defining the school's mission, (b) managing the instructional program and, (c) promoting a positive school learning climate (Hallinger, 2003; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). In addition, Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) conceptual framework has 10 instructional functions to help identify the roles of administrators. In fact, Leithwood and Mascall (2008) called Hallinger and Murphy's conceptual framework a three-pronged approach to school leadership. Hallinger and Murphy's conceptual framework is intertwined with essential functions for administrators in a practical framework that mirrors work between all educators. Hallinger and Murphy's conceptual framework is a valid model that has proven to be useful in leadership study.

The conceptual framework played an essential role for the administrator because each frame tied into principals' leadership styles such as transformational or instructional that they would need to ensure the school was successful. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) conceptual framework assessed the administrators' leadership behaviors, how they coordinated the curriculum, supervised and evaluated instruction, monitored student progress and promoted professional development to improve students learning. Since the goal of this study was to explore the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high performing schools, Hallinger and Murphy (1985) conceptual framework was beneficial for this study.

Review of Research Literature and Methodological Literature

Transformational leadership style. In reviewing and analyzing scholarly definitions of transformational leadership style, it was found that transformational leadership style is directly correlated with a change in an organization. In fact, transformational leadership style broadens and elevate the interest of their employees, generate awareness and acceptance of the purpose, mission, and vision of the organization, and stir employees to look beyond their own self-interest and work for the organization (Hay, 2003). Therefore, transformational leadership style approach creates a "win-win situation" for leaders (Hay, 2003, p. 3).

A qualitative study was conducted by Finnigan (2012) to analyze administrators' transformational leadership behaviors. The study explored the indirect impact on teacher motivation and student achievement. Finnigan (2012) interviewed 52 teachers and used administrators as a secondary data source. Results of the study supported the assertion that an administrator's leadership was imperative to help turn around low performing schools. Griffith (2004) examined the direct effect of administrator transformational leadership on staff turnover and school performance. Data such as school-aggregated student achievement test scores and survey data were obtained from elementary school staff and students. Results showed that administrator behaviors could be explained by three components of transformational leadership: charisma or inspiration, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. The study showed an indirect effect through job satisfaction on school staff turnover and school aggregated student achievement progress from administrators' transformational leadership.

Management of instructional programs. Datnow and Park (2009) reported that principals serve as role models in the leadership and decision-making process. Therefore, for principals to know how to manage instructional programs within their building, they must be knowledgeable

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about instructional programs. For administrators to effectively manage instructional programs,

they need to stay abreast on three areas of education.

Datnow (2009) reported,

The first area is the curriculum. Principals need to know about educational beliefs and

philosophies, changing conceptions of curriculum, curriculum sources, and curriculum

evaluation and improvement. The second area is instruction. Principals need to know

about different curriculum programs, models of teaching, and underlying theories of

technology to influence the learning environment. The third area is an assessment.

Principals need to know about the assessment procedures, principles of student

assessment, and an assessment that helps improve student learning (p. 350).

According to Newstead (2008), "effective instructional leaders find the time required to

improve the instruction." Principals use curriculum resources such as test and instructional

materials to help improve instruction and student achievement. In fact, data from the assessments

helped schools and teachers to develop goals for student performance (Newstead, 2008p. 38).

Pearson (2014) conducted a quantitative study to determine the effect specific researched based

instructional methods, assessments and student learning methods had on student academic

achievement as measured by school accountability rankings. The study included seven high

performing and 15 successful secondary schools in south Mississippi that was in districts that had a

minimum of 70% of its student body ate free lunch. Data were collected from surveys. The

findings were that teachers noted the positive results in student achievement that resulted from

being under the supervision of a visible, effective principal.

Professional development. Per Zepeda (2008) professional development was part of a

support system to help principals and teachers to provide opportunities to encourage student

learning. Williams (2008) conducted a study that examines principals' perception of district

professional development activities and how the activities assist principals to influence and promote student achievement. Two methods used were a survey and case study. The data from the two principals in this study, who were part of the case study, revealed a desire for more informal professional development and individual-level professional development activities, such as visitation and observation, to find strategies to implement in their schools. The survey data results revealed that principals in the Florida Panhandle mostly participated in a group or cohort, or a formal professional development with 149 activities, such as conferences and single workshops (Williams, 2008). Even though there is not a lot of research studies conducted on how principals 'professional development affects student achievement, professional development is still a component that administrators need to ensure teaching and learning occur in their school daily.

Review of Methodological Issues

Quantitative and qualitative approaches were utilized by researchers to gather data and ask research questions to explore the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high performing schools. However, for the purpose of this study, a qualitative case study method was most prevalent. Wilkey (2013) conducted a qualitative exploratory case study to examine the key leadership characteristics of principals at two different high schools. The findings supported the statement that a visible principal who is highly involved in the development of the curriculum and the instructional environment and who stays current with the instructional ideas of the day will have a positive impact on student learning. Preyar (2015) conducted a qualitative multi-site case study that explored the impact of principals' leadership styles on student academic achievement in a high-poverty low-performing school district in Louisiana. A total of 17 participants, principals, and teachers, from this school district were used in this study. Data source triangulation of interviews, questionnaires, and archival data were used for the analysis. The findings of this multi-

site case study offered insight into factors other than principal leadership styles, which influences student academic achievement.

In the review of methodologies, no qualitative study within the last decade has explored the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high performing schools. Studies reviewed used a qualitative method that allowed them to use interviews and questionnaires to determine the effects of principal leadership styles on student achievement. Whether schools were successful or failing, there was still a need for further research, such as analysis of the principals' leadership styles and how it affected student learning and the performance level of schools.

Synthesis of Research Findings

Several studies have reviewed principals' leadership styles or practices that contribute to student learning and performance level (successful or failing) of the school. In Gehrke's (2010) study on leadership within high poverty and high performing schools, the findings indicated that there was a positive relationship between the school culture and leadership style as factors which affected students' performance. Additionally, findings from Fech's (2009) qualitative study revealed that if principals commit to professional development growth frequently, then students' test scores increased. Jacobson (2011) reported that transformational leadership style was needed to improve or transform low performing schools into high performing schools. Moreover, Heck and Hallinger (2010), conducted a study on the effects of leadership practices on student outcomes. Over a four-year period the study collected data from students and teachers from 195 elementary schools in the western part of the United States. Heck and Hallinger (2010) found that leadership style impacted student achievement substantially; however, they were not sure which leadership style affected it the most (transformational and transactional).

Over the past 30 years, there were many studies conducted on how leadership practices affect student outcomes. In contrast, Leapley-Portscheller (2008), reported no significant correlation between leadership styles and student achievement, but they still recommended that transformational leaders were needed to help improve a school. However, there were not any studies conducted on how leadership practices, management of instructional programs, and professional development combine to affect student outcomes.

Critique of Previous Research

Based on this review of the literature, there were many research studies that focused on principal training, years of experience, and job satisfaction which impacted teaching, learning, and the performance level of the school. However, there was limited research that supported the findings that principals did not have any direct effect on school performance level. Per Chen (2014), principals did not have any impact on students' achievement or performance of the school. In contrast, Spaulding (2016) stated leadership was the key to high performing schools because the leaders could encourage, lead, and motivate all stakeholders, such as students, teachers, parents, and the community. Hagel (2014) concurred that if principals use their training to equip teachers with resources that they need to help students be successful, then the school will be rated as a high performing school. Fullan (2001) spoke less about principals' training, but more about their leadership styles and their ability to solve complex problems, such as raising students' test scores; therefore, there was a significant correlation between principals' leadership styles and the performance level of the school.

Leaders, whether they have the training or not were charged to ensure schools become successful (Lencioni, 2002). Futhermore, DuFour and Marzano (2011) concurred that no one individual could bring change or help a school become a high-performing school without the collaborative efforts of the school stakeholders. Cervero and Wilson (2006) agreed that all

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stakeholders within the educational organization play an important role in making sure the school was high performing. However, DuFour and Marzano (2011) agreed that the more experienced and knowledgeable the principal becomes with how teachers teach the curriculum then it would be easier for the principals to promote teaching and learning throughout their building. It was proven statistically that principals' development and years of experience play an important role in determining if schools were low or high performing.

Chapter 2 Summary

It can be challenging being a high school principal with all the different demands that must be carried out in today's education especially encouraging students to score high on the test to ensure a high performing school. Therefore, it was imperative for the researcher to conduct a qualitative case study to explore the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high performing schools within three high performing districts in Mississippi. Principals must enjoy their job, be willing to invest years on the job, use an effective leadership style, manage instructional programs, and continue to attend workshops to help all stakeholders be successful in school and to ensure student learning. There were many underperforming schools in Mississippi; therefore, it was important for the researcher to conduct this case study to help other administrators improve their school performance level.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

Significant changes have occurred in public schools especially the role of school leadership. Administrators no longer have job security due to the end of the year assessments that are used to rate the performance level of their school. In fact, if the administrators' school did not show academic growth within a year, they may be demoted to another position or non-renewed. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the impact of the secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development to maintain high performing schools in Mississippi. A single qualitative case study was used to explore best practices that help administrators maintain high performing schools. The primary instruments for this study included, personal interviews, a focus group interview, and full-day observations. This chapter provides an overview of the research questions, purpose and design of the study, research design and sampling method, instrumentation, data collection, data analyses and procedures, limitation of research design, validation, expected findings, and ethical issues. The study addressed each research question below.

Research Questions

> RQ1 What types of administrator leadership styles impact high performing schools?
>
> RQ2 How do administrators manage instructional programs to impact high performing schools?
>
> RQ3 What types of administrator professional development impact high performing schools?

Purpose and Design of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional

development in maintaining high performing schools within their districts. For many years,

educators have allocated funds to buy software programs, books, and resource materials to

improve student achievement in English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies (Heck

& Hallinger, 2010). Although many factors contribute to the success of students, findings from

several studies suggested principals should utilize their leadership style to build teacher capacity

(more knowledgeable about their practices) within the school (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008).

Principals have also inspired others to become leaders. Hoy and Hoy (2003) stated that if

principals used instructional leadership skills effectively, then the school performance level might

improve. Also, principals must have high expectations for all staff members. As a result,

principals should lead their school with the expectancy of meeting the academic needs of every

student.

There are several types of qualitative research such as phenomenology, case study,

narrative, grounded theory, and ethnography. A case study is the design chosen for this study. Yin

(2003) stated that a case study considered when the focus of the research is to answer "how,"

"what," "when," "where," and "why" questions, uncovering conditions relevant to the

phenomenon within a study. Merriam and Tisdell (2015) reported that if there is an interest in

improving practice, then qualitative research design was the best approach.

According to Maxwell (2014), to gain an understanding of the actions of the participants,

then qualitative research method was appropriate. Merriam (1998) stated, "a case is a unit around

which there are boundaries, and it can be a person, a program, a group, a specific policy and so on"

(p. 27). A qualitative case study is an intensive, holistic description that analyzes the phenomenon

such as program, institution, a person, a process, or social unit (Merriam, 1998). Case study was

appropriate for this study because a particular situation was investigated such as successful

secondary administrators' authentic practices in maintaining high performing schools (Merriam,

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1998). For this study, the information was used from the literature review to contribute to the design of the case study as well as interviewing successful secondary administrators of high performing schools to gather data. Also, member checking was utilized to enhance internal validity (Merriam, 1998). To ensure reliability, the purpose of the study was explained thoroughly. Additionally, a case study was appropriate because it helps understand the actions through the administrators' perspective (Creswell, 2007). The strength of the case study was its ability to examine a particular situation within its context (Merriam, 1998). To help collect data for this study, methodological triangulation was utilized. The methodological triangulation was conducted via interviews, a focus group, and observations (Guion, Diehl, & McDonald, 2011). The use of mixed data sources allowed for triangulation analysis. Guion, Diehl, and McDonald (2013) suggested using data triangulation to strengthen the validity of a study. The case study presented research or evaluation of data in a way that the public could access it (Creswell & Plano 2011).

Grounded theory was not appropriate for this study because it did not offer an opportunity for an in-depth interview for addressing the research questions (Yin, 2009). Qualitative phenomenological research could have been used for this study because it described a "lived experience" of a phenomenon (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003, p. 1); however, this study was not focused only on the experiences of the participants, but rather the impact of the participants' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development had on the performance level of the school. Ethnographic design did not fit this study either because it required an observational period of at least a year through classroom or school observations during daily activities (Fetterman, 2010). Since the length of time for this design was not feasible, this design was not appropriate for this study (Fetterman, 2010). A narrative study was rejected

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because it encompassed the experiences of a single individual embracing stories of the life of those individual experiences (Creswell, 2007).

Given that when large amounts of contextually sensitive data are needed to collect concerning individual perceptions, then a case study methodology was most appropriate (Jacobson, Brooks, Giles, Johnson, & Ylimaki, 2007). Additionally, case studies subscribed to the interpretive paradigm and helped the researcher see the situation through the eyes of his/her participants. A case study design was used to explore the educational process and structure of leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development of secondary administrators.

Research Population and Sampling Method

Creswell (2007) defined a population as a group of people who share common characteristics. All secondary principals in Mississippi who held a valid certification in administration were candidates for this study. This qualitative case study used purposeful sampling to select specific participants. The first step in the selection process was to gather information from the Mississippi Department of Education website to see how many districts were rated an "A or B" within two consecutive years. Three districts were then selected that were adjacent to one another with several middle and high schools. Next, schools were identified according to how many middle and high schools were rated an "A or B" based on their performance level. After reviewing the information, 33 administrators (principals and assistant principals) of high performing secondary schools were identified. Finally, how long each administrator (principal and assistant principal) had worked at the school and district was ascertained.

The population included male and female administrators (principals and assistant principals) of diverse ethnicities that had been employed 2 consecutive years at the same school

within the same district. Thirty-three administrators who had worked at least 2 consecutive years at the same school were contacted to participate in the study. Only 11 administrators were recruited because they were the only ones who volunteered to participate in the study. Therefore, eight administrators (principals and assistant principals) were interviewed, and one focus group was conducted with two different principals and one assistant principal of a high performing school. Also, a full-day observation of three administrators (two principals and one assistant principal) was conducted at one of their school sites. The 11 administrators were leaders of high performing middle or high schools within their district. The demographic information of each administrator is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Participants Demographic Information

District A, B, C	Position	Ethnicity and Gender	Years in Education Master's Degrees or Higher
Three Districts	Administrators of Middle and High Schools 11 Participants 6(P's) 5(AP's)	African American (A) Caucasian (C) Male (M) Female (F)	School-Experiences Years of Experiences in Education
A	Principal (PH1)	CM	2 (at the school) 18
A	Principal (PH2)	CF	5 (at the school) 18
A	Assistant Principal (APM1)	AM	3 (at the school) 19
A	Assistant Principal (APM2)	CM	3 (at the school) 16
A	Assistant Principal (APH3)	CF	2 (at the school) 22
A	Assistant Principal (APH4)	AF	5 (at the school) 12
B	Principal (PH1)	CM	2 (at the school) 14
B	Principal (PH2)	AF	8 (at the school) 17
C	Focus Group-Principal (PH1)	CM	3 (at the school) 18
C	Focus Group-Principal (PM2)	CF	5 (at the school) 17
C	Focus Group-Assistant Principal (APM1)	CM	5 (at the school) 11

The three chosen districts have been rated an "A" or "B" (high performing school) at least two years or beyond. In fact, the three districts have been rated an "A" or "B" (high performing school) over the last five years. The districts were chosen because they were in the northeastern part of Mississippi and adjacent from one another and provided service to students that lived in the city, country, and rural areas of the district. The first high performing school was District A. District A is a fast growing, top-rated district in the state. District A serviced nearly 13,000 full-time students. At least 40% of the children in District's A school received free or reduced-price lunch. District A is one of the largest school district in the state of Mississippi (Mississippi

Department of Education n.d.). District A has 11 elementary schools, four middle schools, five

high schools, and a District Career Center. District A County Schools was the highest scoring

county school district in Mississippi to achieve an "A" rating based on the statewide accountability

model (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.). The District A schools were a perfect example

of what good leaders can do for the community by ensuring quality education for every student

(Mississippi Department of Education, n.d).

The second high performing school district was District B. District B services 5,183

students and recognized throughout Mississippi and the Southeast for its tradition of excellence.

District B has eight schools. District B recognized that educating children was one of the greatest

challenges the community faces. While this task may seem overwhelming at times, District B has

made a strong commitment to providing the best educational system possible for its students. The

teachers and administrators have committed to honoring the value and trust of the community

stakeholders (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.). The faculty and staff are highly

qualified, dedicated professionals, and the parents and community members are essential partners

in the success of the educational process. District B is committed to working closely with the

community to give every child the opportunity to succeed beyond the classroom (Mississippi

Department of Education, n.d).

The third high performing district was District C. District C has a staff of approximately

500 personnel. District C provide a superior level of education to a diverse population of roughly

4,200 students. District C has received numerous accolades for their academics and extracurricular

programs. District C won the Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts. Two of Districts C's

schools were recognized as National Blue-Ribbon Schools by the United States Department of

Education. Approximately 20% of the certified staff is National Board Certified. The community

of District C has supported bond issues to continually upgrade facilities with new buildings and

appropriate renovations. District C has five schools serving K–12 to meet the needs of all children in the community. Also, District C included an ancillary site, funded by Title I funds, for four-year-old, pr–K students meeting program criteria. The program focused its effort to serve future students by providing foundational skills to improve kindergarten readiness.

Instrumentation

An interview protocol, a focus group, and a full-day observation were used as the data collection instruments to explore the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high performing schools within high performing districts. Stake (1994), stated, "the interview is the main road to multiple realities" (p. 64). For instance, a focus group interview with three administrators allowed the administrators to share their experiences with one another. The interview protocol began by asking open-ended questions about secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development (see Appendix A and B). The questions focused on Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) conceptual framework of three dimensions and 10 instructional functions on leadership to help gain data through structured inquiry. The 10 questions were open-ended which allowed administrators to respond by using examples and scenarios to help provide a more in-depth understanding. However, the questions for the focus group were different and the participants used as much time as needed to respond thoroughly and allow everyone to engage in the conversation to gain further insight (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The focus group, interviews, and a full-day observation protocol (see Appendix C) allowed the participants to offer first-hand experiences about their leadership strategies. The full-day observations and individuals and focus group interviews were utilized to collect authentic and rich descriptive data (Creswell, 2007).

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Data Collection

The methodological triangulation was conducted via interviews, a focus group, and observations (Guion, Diehl, & McDonald, 2011). The collection of the data came from the interviews from each of the eight administrators (principals and assistant principals), a focus group of two principals and one assistant principal, and full-day observations of three administrators (two principals and an assistant principal) who volunteered to participate. To gain a better understanding of the administrator responses, clarifying questions were used. At each school site, the interviews took place in a private room. However, the focus group interview took place at one of the three administrator school sites. The full-day observations took place at each administrator's school site on separate days after each one was interviewed. The focus group administrators respected one another and did not share any information that they wanted to be private. In addition, while conducting focus group interview, the administrators did not use any specific names to protect the privacy of others. All interviews were conducted at the administrators' school site according to their scheduled time.

The administrator responses were recorded and transcribed. The recordings were deleted after the recordings were transcribed. The transcription was reviewed so that any information that identified any individual was removed. Pseudonyms were assigned for each secondary administrator, district, and school (e.g. District A-Blue Berry District, middle school-M, assistant principal 1, AP1). A member check was conducted by providing a copy of the transcript to all administrators and asking them to check the responses for accuracy. Member checking allowed every administrator to receive and review the material for accuracy and palatability (Stake, 1995). Every administrator was reminded that their responses would be recorded and deleted after the recordings were transcribed for data analysis.

Data Analysis Procedures

Open coding was used to analyze the participant responses (Seidel, 1998). Open coding was conducted with a highlighter to analyze the responses line by line, then paragraph by paragraph, and lastly by grouping the conversations to decide which existing concepts to use. Then, the responses were broken down into distinct ideas by cutting and pasting quotes from the questions on a separate document to help code the information correctly. The information that was identified with the same code were placed together. Next, co-occurrences codes were identified by collecting all text segments that were tagged by the same two codes or three codes. Then, the data was reorganized by selective coding such as identifying core categories and finding relations between codes (Seidel, 1998).

Once the similarities, contrast, and trends were identified among the data, the information was placed in NVivo and given a code. Once the responses were coded in NVivo, then it was easier to identify the conceptual categories and themes. The themes, contrasts, and similarities were placed in tables to visually represent the information in an organized manner as well in the form of a narrative. Tables afforded the opportunity for the researcher to explore the representation of conceptual findings, unexpected findings, and any preconceived expectations (Creswell, 2007). The administrator responses were used to convey detailed descriptions of their experiences in the findings of the study (Creswell & Plano, 2011).

Limitations of the Research Design

The goal of this single case study design was to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2007). Merriam and Tisdell (2015) stated that a single case study tends to exaggerate a situation. The limited number of participants hindered the findings from being generalized to a larger population. In addition, subjectivity could be a limitation of the case study design because it resulted in reliability and validity issues. Conflict of

interest was not a limitation of the research design because the researcher did not work in any school districts in Mississippi; thus, no ethical issues existed between the administrators and researcher. However, the only possible issue was administrators being reluctant in being honest in their responses.

Validation

      Credibility. The researcher was confident in the truth of the findings by using member checking (Creswell & Plano, 2011). Internal validity means there are no internal errors in the design of the study; fewer errors, the higher internal validity according to Creswell (2014). A member check allowed the administrators to review their interview transcript to ensure the responses were correct. Also, member checking minimized researcher bias and increased the validity of the study (Creswell, 2014). If the study is generalizable to other populations, then external validity may occur. The use of the qualitative case study design may produce non-generalizable results (Creswell, 2007). Also, the limited sample size of 11 administrators does not lend the results to be generalizable to a larger population (Creswell, 2007).

      Dependability. The dependability of this study was directly related to the consistency of the interview questions and how they were structured. The interview questions must be structured in a specific manner that aligned with the conceptual framework to acquire responses that met the intent of the study. In addition, if questions are too general and vague, they may produce inconsistent and unreliable responses from the administrators (Creswell, 2007). An audit trail was used to help record the field notes and responses to the interview. Everything the administrators said was recorded (Merriam & Tisdell 2015).

Expected Findings

      The expected findings of this study are that principals will need to know how to effectively use leadership styles and specific instructional programs that help diagnosis student weaknesses

and strengths. In addition, principals will need to know how to use professional development with fidelity in maintaining high performing schools on a yearly basis. In addition, the expected findings of this study are that principals will state how too effectively manage instructional programs and use professional development to encourage and inspire participation from their staff, students, and teachers in maintaining high performing schools. The anticipated results will allow K–12 administrators to reflect on their practice or improve their low performing school. The results will consist of new knowledge to add to the literature.

Ethical Issues

Conflict of interest assessment. There was not a conflict of interest in this study because I am not currently employed as an assistant principal of a high school in Mississippi.

Researcher's position. As a former assistant principal of a low performing high school in Mississippi, my search for finding in-depth information on how administrators could improve the performance level of their school was what led me to develop an interest in this case study. Since I aspire to become a principal, it was imperative for me to learn how successful secondary administrators use leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high performing schools. Even though I was familiar with Mississippi curriculum, the role and responsibilities of administrators, my experiences and knowledge were not a potential bias to the study because the strategies that my administrator team utilized over the past several years were not effective. For the past three years, my former high school and district had been rated a "D" or "F' as a low performing high school. To avoid any potential bias, I kept an open mind and did not rely on my own experiences, knowledge, or understanding about administration during the interviews. I considered myself as a student seeking important information from successful secondary administrators that have maintained high performing schools for two consecutive years. Therefore, my intention in this study was to explore the impact

of successful administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high performing school and share this information with K–12 education administrators to help them improve their low performing schools within Mississippi.

Ethical issues in the study. here were not any foreseen ethical issues in the study. No identified information was used to ensure confidentiality throughout the data process. The name of the district, school, and administrator was not disclosed. Data from administrator responses were coded in non-identifying methods to ensure confidentiality. I omitted, changed, and masked specific details or situations that led to identification through deductive disclosure. All other documents of the study will be held for three years, in a locked protected location. After three years, all documents related to this study will be destroyed.

Chapter 3 Summary

The purpose of this single case study was to explore the impact of secondary administrator who were effective in using leadership styles, managing instructional programs, and professional development to maintain high performing schools. The information from the administrators was expected to yield contributing details to the area of education in Mississippi. Using in-depth interviews, a focus group interview, full day observations, and member checking contributed to a successful study. The study had minimal ethical concerns and limitations.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Introduction

This single case study explored the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high performing schools within their districts. Since the end of the year assessments are used to rate the performance level of schools in Mississippi, administrator jobs are affected in many ways. For instance, if the administrators' school does not make any academic growth within a year, the administrator may be demoted, transferred to another school, or non-renewed. Thus, it was essential to conduct this qualitative case study. Three research questions guided this study:

RQ1 What types of administrator leadership styles impact high performing schools?

RQ2 How do administrators manage instructional programs to impact high performing schools?

RQ3 What types of administrator professional development impact high performing schools?

As a former assistant principal of a low performing high school in Mississippi, the search for finding in-depth information on how administrators could improve the performance level of their school led me to develop an interest in this case study. Since I aspire to become a principal, it was imperative to explore the impact of secondary administrators using leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development to maintain high performing schools. Chapter 4 expands upon the description of the sample, research methodology and analysis, summary of the findings, and the presentation of the data and results.

Description of the Sample

The setting for this study was in three districts adjacent to one another in Mississippi. Three districts were identified based on the performance level from Mississippi Department of

Education (MDE). The districts had to have a high performing rating such as an "A" or "B" for two consecutive years. In addition, the 11 secondary administrators had to work for two consecutive years at a high performing middle or high school. The superintendents of each district were contacted and given a permission letter and a consent form, which provided a brief description of the study. Each superintendent signed the consent form which permitted their administrators to participate in the study. Once the consent forms were received from the superintendents, 33 administrators within the three high performing districts were contacted.

The population included male and female administrators (principals and assistant principals) of diverse ethnicities that have been employed two consecutive years at the same school. For District A, six administrators participated: two principals and four assistant principals. For District B, two administrators participated: (principals). For District C, three administrators participated: two principals and one assistant principal. All the administrators have at least 11 years or higher of education experience and educational degree at least a masters or higher. Interviewed were five Caucasian men, three Caucasian women, one African American man, and two African American women.

Research Methodology and Analysis

To ensure the interview questions were precise and would yield dependable results, the interview questions were well-structured in a specific manner that directly aligns with the conceptual framework (Creswell, 2007). There were two sets of interview questions created. One set was for individual participants, and the other set was for the focus group. The two sets of interview questions allowed the participant responses to be analyzed for similarities and contrast. The in-person interviews were conducted at the participants' school sites to provide them with a sense of comfort in a quiet area of their choice and to acquire complete honesty and ensure an accurate account about their daily practices. Administrators were aware that their responses were

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recorded with a digital recorder during the interview process. The voice recordings were deleted after they were transcribed on the computer. Administrators received a copy of their transcript to review their responses. Once administrators confirmed their responses were accurate, the data analysis process began. The data was analyzed, and common patterns and themes were identified, using the conceptual attributes outlined in Chapter 3. The data was coded by hand and then coded in NVivo. The themes were identified.

Summary of the Findings

The goal of this study was to uncover themes related to the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high performing schools. The findings of the data from the three high performing schools identified three central themes which included additional subthemes that emerged from data. The themes are presented in Table 3. These themes will be further discussed in the presentations of data results in the next following section.

Table 3

Central Themes & Subthemes

Central Themes	Subthemes
Transformational Leadership	Building Educational Leaders
	Creating and Communicating the Mission, Vision, and Goals
Using Data Strategically with Fidelity to Make Decisions	Research-Based Instructional Resources for Students
	Best-Practice Instructional Resources for Teachers
Professional Learning Opportunities	Attending High-Quality and Relevant Professional Learning
	Facilitating a Culture of Collective Responsibility for Professional Learning

Presentations of the Data and Results

The structured interviews (individual and focus group) were conducted to explore the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high performing schools. The findings of the data from the three high performing schools identified three central themes which included additional subthemes that emerged from data.

1. Central Theme 1: The leadership style that is most preferred is transformational leadership. The two subthemes are building educational leaders and creating and communicating the school mission, vision, and goals.

2. Central Theme 2: How administrators manage instructional programs that are most preferred effective is by using data strategically with fidelity to make decisions. The two subthemes are research-based instructional resources for students and best practices instructional resources for teachers.

3. Central Theme 3: The professional development that is most preferred to foster a culture of continuous learning effectively is through relevant professional learning opportunities. The two subthemes are attending high-quality and relevant professional learning and facilitating a culture of collective responsibility for professional learning.

The results from the full-day observations data supported the three central themes listed above. What follows are the views from the successful administrators (principals and assistant principals) related to transformational leadership, using data with strategically with fidelity to make decisions, and professional learning opportunities in maintaining high performing schools. All pronouns used are gender neutral, and the district names are pseudonyms to maintain anonymity. The first theme is transformational leadership.

Transformational leadership. The purpose of this case study was to explore the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles in maintaining high performing schools. It was essential to gather a more in-depth understanding of the different and unique perspectives of each administrator dominant leadership style at their school site. The majority of the administrator responses revealed their dominant leadership style was transformational leadership although other leadership styles were mentioned. Transformational leaders encourage, inspire, and support teachers to perform exceeding beyond expectations (Chen, 2014). All 11 administrators agreed that they should find ways to surprise, delight, and recognize their students and teachers to celebrate their achievement and create a happy environment. For instance, in District A, PH2 stated, "I have a transformational leadership style, I chose my words carefully and offered incentives to help encourage and inspire my teachers to continue to do an excellent job." In District A, APH3 stated, "I provide positive feedback and give my teachers a pat on the back when they accomplish or reach the school goals. Verbal recognition helps build teacher morale." Even though all 11 administrators exhibited characteristics of transformational leadership styles, in District A, a principal and three assistant principals stated that they used other leadership styles. For example, APH3 stated, "I am a servant leader because I like to serve others and if my teachers see me serving others, they would follow my example."

PH1 stated:

I have a delegating style. I hired people and allow them to do their job. I create a positive working environment where the staff is motivated to their job. I inspire, motivate, and support all my teachers by sending words of encouragement through weekly memos. I make sure my teachers have the resources they need to do their job effectively.

APM1 stated:

I have an informal leadership style. Even though I treat my teachers like my peers, I do encourage and support my teachers based on the situation at that time. I think administrators should use several types of leadership styles to ensure teaching and learning occurs daily. Therefore, I make sure my teachers have the necessary materials such as books and other resources to help our students learn.

APM2 stated:

I lean more toward cooperative leadership style which involves everyone's ideas and input when making decisions. I believe if I involve everyone input, then we could find a solution to the problem quicker. However, sometimes it is effective and sometimes is not.

Also, transformational leaders are change agents who encourage followers to explore new ways of doing things and new opportunities to learn (Chen, 2014). For example, in District B,

PH1stated,

I encourage my teachers to get out of their comfort zone and implement new ideas or strategies within their classroom. One way I encourage them to try new ideas or strategies is encouraging them to complete two peer observations a week. The purpose of the peer observations is not to criticize or judge their peers, but to find something that their peer is doing well and implement it in their class. The teachers have to fill out a one page report and turn it in. In addition, the teachers have to share one idea or strategy with everyone at the next staff meeting.

In addition, Transformational leaders provide an open line of communication, foster creative thinking, and give teachers guidance to help solve complex problems (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In District A, APH4 stated, "My open door policy allows me to make sure every teacher knows their role and responsibility within the school and to make sure they honor and respect the roles of

their peers." In addition, in District B, PH2 stated:

> I have an open-door policy for parents, staff, and students. The open-door policy allows
>
> me the opportunity to get to know my staff, and they get to know me. Open door policy
>
> helps me solve challenges by pin point experiences that show old patterns do not fit or
>
> work anymore. Open door policy allows me to see how and what my teachers can
>
> contribute to the school and leave their mark. Also, the open-door policy allows me to build
>
> teachers to become leaders.

The findings from the study revealed that all 11 administrators use transformational leadership

style daily. All 11 administrators used transformational leadership style to build and encourage

teachers to become productive educational leaders.

Building educational leaders. The first subtheme is building educational leaders. The

findings revealed that all 11 administrators took time building and encouraging their teachers

to become caring and effective leaders either with their grade level, subject, or school activities.

For instance, in District A, PH2 stated, "I help my teachers solve many difficult problems by

asking the right questions to help guide them to the answer and help them become effective

leaders." In District A, PH1 stated, "I use charisma and enthusiasm to inspire and motivate my

teachers to become effective leaders." Also, in District A, APH3 and APH4 agreed they

inspire and motivate their teachers to become leaders by allowing them to lead staff meetings

and professional training as much as possible. In District B, PH2 stated:

> I empower my teachers to lead by enriching their jobs through cross utilization and by
>
> giving them consistent, timely, and specific feedback about their efforts. The positive and
>
> negative feedback will motivate them to keep up the good work or help them improve.

In addition, in District C, PH1 expressed, "I inspire my teachers to become leaders by trusting them with several tasks and asking for their input on many difficult situations concerning issues of the school." All the administrators from the focus group agreed with the statement mentioned above. For instance, the focus group administrators allowed their teachers to lead and conduct school events and PLC's meetings weekly. In District C, APM1 stated, "We encourage our teachers to become team leaders in areas of their strengths. For example, one teacher has a major in theater arts. We allow her to lead all school programs or plays." The majority of the administrators believed in sharing their leadership responsibilities with teachers to help build and encourage teachers to lead and work collaboratively.

The full-day observations of all three administrators agreed that transformational leadership style was effective and efficient. The three administrators were observed encouraging, inspiring, and supporting their teachers and students during one on one conferences. During the conferences, the administrators were using kind words, providing quotes to uplift students and staff spirits, and expressing the significance of creating and communicating the school mission, vision, and goals.

***Creating and communicating the school mission, vision, and goals*.** The second subtheme is creating and communicating the school mission, vision, and goals. The vision of a school was easily carried out by a transformational leader (Antonakis & House, 2014; Bohm, Dwetmann, Bruch, & Shamir, 2015). Transformational leaders are good at balancing short and long-term goals. Since the mission statement is a functional statement of basic requirements and comes from the central office, the administrators only had to focus on creating a vision and goals for their school. The question about creating a goal and vision of the school was not directly addressed with the eight administrators; however, while they were providing examples to support their responses, they all mentioned the significance of having a goal and vision for their school indirectly. All of the administrators agreed that their leadership style and strategic planning help

them carry out the vision of the school. The focus group administrators PH1, PM2, and APM1 C were asked how do leadership styles help to create, implement, and maintain the goal, mission, and vision of the school. All the administrator responses from the focus group demonstrated the importance of using the teachers input to help create the school vision and goal. For instance,

APM1 stated:

I think it is important that all teachers have input in creating a goal and vision for the school. I solict help from teachers to help develop a vision of the future and strategies for producing the changes needed to achieve that vison. It is very important to create a road map to show us where we are and where we want to go. In fact, it is imperative to allow teachers to provide us input on the vision and goals because they are the ones who will help us meet our goals. Also, allowing teachers to have input in school decisions will model integrity and fairness. In addition, it would stir up their emotions and inspire them to think beyond their self.

PM2 concurred:

Leadership in each of our building levels is something that happens every single day. And when I speak to this question one of the things I think that principal one has done so greatly or very effective in their building is to wait for everyone's input to establish the goal, vision, and norms of the school because all our teachers are leaders. The school norm is going to be able to ultimately say every action that we take as an administrator staff, teacher, and educator in our building. I think that's filtered other departments, too. Thus, it is very important to create a vision and goals to make sure we meet and reach our goals. Therefore, we have implemented the same strategy in our building.

To confirmed with APM1 and PM2, PH1 stated:

Well, I think again it's about buy-in to effectively create and carry out the goal and vision of the school. In the end, you must have input from top to bottom. What P2 was talking about was spreading out the power. Having true power is to give it away. This means all our teachers have leadership power whether it is with students or their peers. So being able to spread your power as the administrator of the school to other people that is how the school transforms and become something that you want it to be. And, also again being very reflective in that process that is my style. And I probably go overboard when I tend to go over things with parents and teachers. Being reflective and being ok with feedback from other people are super important. And that's what helps me maintain the school mission, vision, and goals. Again, that buy-in from everyone is important when creating a vision and goals for your school.

AP1M of the focus group supported the assertion that their administrative team does a great job working together to create, implement and maintain a goal and vision for their school. AP1M added, "As a team, we encourage our teachers and students to help create the vision for the school. To implement the vision effectively, everyone must buy in." During the full day observations, all three administrators used their leadership styles to create short and long term goals and implement and maintain the mission and vision of the school. For instance, the administrators PH2 in District B, and PH1 and APH3 in District A, the mission and vision of the school were observed posted on the walls in each classroom, hallways, and offices. The administrators from the full day observations expressed that the goals and vision were created with help from the teachers. In District C, PH1 stated, "The vision of the school tells where you want your school to be over a certain time. Therefore, in order to accomplish the vision, one must create goals (short and long

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term)." All 11 administrators agreed that teachers and students must have some ownership in order to effectively carry out the goal and vision of the school. However, in District B, PH2 stated,

> It is not just enough to know a goal and vision of the school, but leaders should know how to communicate a goal and vision with all stakeholders. In fact, we should use every vehicle possible to communicate the mission, vision and goals.

The findings from the three full-day observations demonstrated that principals must know how to communicate a goal and vision to all stakeholders whether via emails, newsletters, schools website, post on the walls in the halls, and read over the school intercom daily. In addition, the findings from the eight administrators revealed an array views of how they communicate a school goal and vision to all the stakeholders. For instance, similar perspectives from administrators in District A, APM1 stated, "I send out the vision and goal in several ways such as a newsletter, flyer, posters, and email." Evidence from the administrator perspectives above demonstrated that the administrators had the same similarities about communicating the school goal and vision of the school. However, administrators in District A, APM2 responded with a different perspective. APM2 stated, "We have an honor code that explains the expectations of the goal and vision of the school. Every stakeholder gets a copy of the honor code." In district A, APH4 stated:

> To effectively carry out the goal and vision of the school, everyone must be in one accord. Therefore, I remind stakeholders of the goal and vision at every event such as Parent and Teacher Conferences, Parent and Teacher Association, Title I meetings, Back to School Night, Pep Rallies, and Awards Night, etc.

PH2 from District B agreed with APH4 from District A that "everyone must be on board with the vision."

> In District B, PH2 stated:
>
> I think that to communicate the goal and vision of the school; everyone must

know what they are and have a copy of it. This means I do not come up with all the

school goals on my own. We do that collectively, which means all stakeholders such as

the teacher and students must come together to create the vision and goal. We must come

together and design a goal and vision that represents what we are passionate about.

PH1 in District A stated, "I communicate the goal and mission mostly through faculty

meetings, written communication, personal communication, and professional development."

However, PH1 in District B stated, "The main message I communicate to teachers revolves around

my efforts to help them to achieve our school goal and vision." The findings of the full-day

observations were similar to several administrator statements about how effective communication

would help everyone buy into the goal and vision. The results from the personal interviews

highlighted the second central theme which was how administrators use data strategically with

fidelity to make decisions. The two subthemes are researched based instructional resources for

students and best practices instructional resources for teachers.

Using data strategically with fidelity to make decisions. This section is an overview of

secondary administrator views about how they use data strategically with fidelity to make

decisions on how to meet the needs of their students and teachers. Since data is the most important

and powerful tool that drives every decision in the school, all 11 administrators expressed that they

intelligently use data as the key to meet the challenges of improving student learning. In fact, in

District C, APM1 stated:

The real purpose for collecting data is to provide direction for improvement in instruction

and student learning. Therefore, everyone needs a strategic plan. A strategic plan helps me

to prioritize, orchestrate, and use available resources and capabilities to achieve identified

goals.

In District C, PH1 stated, "administrators need to really do a lot of strategic thinking to come up with strategies because strategies bridge the gap from where you are to where you want to be." The findings revealed that all 11 administrators collect and aggregate several types of data (achievement, demographic, perceptual, and process). For example, in District B, PH2 stated,

> I analyze the demographic of students because that woud help me paint a picture of how
> many students are in the school, which students have special needs, and ethnicities of the
> students. Also, I revisited the school procedures and methods. I observe what teachers do
> instructionally in their classroom. I spend time trying to understand the perceptions of my
> students and teachers. I definitely spend countless hours with my leadership team analyzing
> data from assessments (formative and summative). Analyzing assessment data allows us to
> see if students are retaining the information that are taught by our teachers, what strategies
> are working and if they are not working how to improve instructional strategies.
>
> PH1 stated:
>
> We found this past year that we have a big gap with our children that live in poverty.
> Actually, over 70% of our children live in poverty at the high school level. So, in the end,
> we got some good research and over the first nine weeks we've been rolling out that
> research to the teachers to try to address those children in poverty.

In District A, agreed with PM1 and PH1, APM2 stated:

> We pay close attention to achievement data such as formative and summative
> assessments. However, formative assessments are critical throughout the process as my
> leadership team make corrections to ensure we use the right courses of actions because our
> teachers give formative assessments very often.

In District A, PH1 concurred:

It is important to aggegate all data, however, in order to check what students know we must

look at the achievement data. The achievement data will help us classify students into

instructional groups to provide different strategies or interventions for them.

Therefore, the findings revealed that the administrators had many unique perspectives on how they

used data strategically with fidelity to make decisions to continue using or buying additional

research-based instructional resources for students within their building.

Researh-based instructional resources for students. The first subtheme is research-based

instructional resources for students. The findings revealed that all administrators with the help of

their leadership team have fostered a data-driven culture in their school. For example, in District C,

PM1 stated, "I created a culture in which my leadership team and teachers are comfortable with

and knowledgeable about the data that are used to determine our school strengths and

weaknesses." In District B, PH2 stated, " I fostered a data-driven culture by creating an

environment where authentic relationship, trust, and collaboration occurs while aggregating data."

In District A, APH4, stated, " We empowered our teachers to use data in their classroom to help

improve student learning." All 11 administrators agreed that to maintain high performing schools;

they had to use data strategically with fidelity from research-based instructional resources to make

decisions daily. Therefore, the findings revealed that all 11 administrators used the same three

research-based instructional resources Case 21 (benchmark assessments), Canvas (blackboard),

and American College Test (ACT Prep) material to help improve student learning. The research-

based instructional resources provided an adequate and specific feedback on student progress on

formative and summative assessments. The first research-based instructional resource for students

is Case 21. Case 21 is a web-based benchmark assessment that is designed to gauge the academic

progress of students and to provide timely feedback that can be used by teachers to guide

instruction. All administrators mentioned that Case 21 benchmark assessments provide valuable data regarding student knowledge of the standards to help them make intelligent decisions about instruction and student learning. Since Case 21 provides detail description of students strengths and weaknesses quickly, teachers preferred to use it for their formative assessments. Case 21 test items are aligned to College and Career Ready Standards (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.). After the administrators analyze the data from Case 21 formative and summative assessments, they use the data strategically with fidelity to make decisions on how to provide additional support for all students.

For instance, in District C, focus group, PH1 stated, "They used Case 21 three times a year to help place students in the correct intervention class." In addition, most of the administrators used data from instructional resources to provide remediation classes for students who were performing below grade level and provide enrichment classes for students performing on grade level or above. In fact, focus group APM1 reported, "We use data from many research-based instructional resources to confirm if the students are grasping the skills taught in class." In addition, they use data from instructional resources to modify the schedule that would allow students more time to grasp the concepts and skills. In District A, APM1 and APM2 use the data strategically with fidelity to predict how well the students would perform on district and state assessments. If students did not perform well on the assessments, then administrators must create a strategic plan that demonstrates how they will provide additional academic support for them.

The second instructional resource for students is Canvas. Canvas allowed students, teachers, and parents to track and manage class assignments, student schedules, student grades, and teacher feedback. It is a portal that teachers can communicate with students and parents about their assignments, quizzes, and other instructional tasks (Mississippi Department of Education, n.d.). Canvas is an instructional tool that helps keep students abreast of their progress. The third

instructional resource for students is ACT prep material. Since ACT is an indicator on the high

school accountability model and is used to find the performance level of the school, the

administrators thought it would be beneficial to create ACT Prep classes for students during

regular school hours. All administrators believed that providing ACT Prep classes for students

would increase their chances to score higher on the ACT.

Even though administrators knew that Case 21, Canvas, and ACT Prep material were not

the reason why their students were achieving well, the research-based instructional resources were

still a great tool that provided them with adequate and sufficient data to help their students improve

academically. Administrators use additional research-based instructional resources to help provide

them with student data. For instance, administrators in District A and B were using a web-based

program called Reading Plus to help with literacy. The data from Reading Plus provided teachers

with a print out of their student strengths and weaknesses in reading. The web-based assessment

called MAP was only used with district A administrators. The NWEA is a research-based, not-for-

profit organization that supports students and educators worldwide by creating assessments

solutions that precisely measure growth and proficiency and provide insights to help tailor

instruction. The MAP assessment monitors what struggling students are missing and what

advanced students are ready to take. In fact, District A has used data from the MAP assessment

for the past seven years with consistency and fidelity with their students because MAP assessment

provided the school administrators with student data as far back as third grade. Therefore, District

A has found MAP assessments very valuable because the data allow them to make decisions about

student achievement. However, District A administrators used additional research-based

instructional resources. APM1 and APM2 stated:

The new initiatives will provide us with data on several subjects to help us better serve our

students. In addition, Khan Academy is a great resource for students because it covers

every subject and provide a step by step video to help students grasp the concepts. The program is web based which means students could access it at home.

Also, District B, PH1 stated, "I use Star Reading to help with improving the reading levels of their student. Data from Star Reading would support teacher decisions about remediating struggling readers." From the past seven years, the administrator in District B has found that tutorial and MacBook computers (one to one) have been a strategy and an effective tool to help improve students academically. For example, in District B, PH2 stated,

Homeroom tutorial for state test subjects (biology and algebra 1) tutoring before and after school. We are one to one (MacBook). The MacBook takes the place of books and allow teachers and students access to primary and secondary sources, games, and resources of content material. We use IXL (math program). IXL allow students to work on areas of improvement. Students must do work on their skill level and they receive points based on tier skill level. We use Aims Webs and Star Reading. Aim Webs and Star Reading are diagnostic test that tells us the reading and math level of the students.

After interviewing and observing the 11 administrators, all of them use data strategically with fidelity to make decisions from the same research-based instructional resources; Case 21, Canvas, and ACT Prep. In addition, administrators used data strategically with fidelity to make decisions on which best practices instructional resources to use to help their teachers improve their instruction.

Best-practices instructional resources for teachers. The second subtheme recognized under theme two is best practices instructional resources for teachers. The findings revealed that all 11 administrators persistently worked with their teachers to identify best practices and ensured formative assessments were applied to differientiate student instruction. For instance, in District A, APH4 stated, "They analyze data to help improve classroom instruction, build coherence, and

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connectivity and alignment across all grades in the school." Therefore, the administrators used many different sources to provide them with data about the effectiveness of their teacher instruction. For example, APM1 stated, "We check lesson plans and maintain visiblity by observing the teachers and students during instruction time. Check report card grades, progress reports, and benchmark assessments weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, and every nine weeks." In addition, during the full-day observations, administrators were checking lesson plans to make sure the teacher activities and instructions were aligned with the curriculum standards that were mentioned on the Mississippi Department of Education site. The reason why they were thoroughly checking lesson plans was because the English and Math scores had decreased since the first nine-week exam. Administrators allow and encourage teachers to meet once a week to plan and write lessons together based on the previous data.

One administrator used data from weekly quizzes and other web-based best practices instructional resources to help figure out what areas their teachers need help. In District B,

PH2 stated:

I have one on one conferences with teachers if they have an alarming number of students failing. I encourage them to create a strategy plan and I ask and listen to them to see what type of resources I could provide to them to help them improve their instruction.

The majority of the administrators agreed that in order to monitor teacher instruction one must take time to analyze every piece of data. For instance, all 11 administrators used data from teacher observation. In fact, the administrators must conduct several teacher observations during the year because it is mandated by the Mississippi Department of Education and their district. In District B, PH1 stated, "Teacher observations help me supervise and evaluate instruction. If I see the students engage and working diligently, then instruction is going well."

The results from the full-day observation were similar to the findings of the other adminstrators. After analyzing different sources to monitor teacher instruction, the administrators focus on best practices instructional resources and take calculated risks to assist teachers with improving student achievement. For instance, administrators modified the schedule to allow teachers to reteach skills.

In District C, PM2 stated:

We found that there was not enough time to allow us to apply the standards that they we're learning. And because of that. We weren't getting very much out of our children. There level of knowledge was DOK one and two. Unfortunately, state level was much higher than that. So, we changed our schedule to be a modified block that allows us to have a split block of mathematics every single day so that our children doesn't go to science or social studies for a 90-minute block every other day like they do at our high school. But you know being creative with that you now allowed more time for our children to apply what they learned.

In District C, one of the focus group administrators used a different approach within the high school which was aligning the test with the curriculum standards. PH1 stated:

So, we are using several instructional program. The district is making sure that we're doing backward by design making sure that our test level is where it needs to be and making sure that our instruction matches the level of questions that we're going to see for mastery on our test and those to me are the biggest structural programs that we use, and I don't necessarily want to call it this or call it that.

Concurred with PH1, PM2 stated:

Our student outcomes dictate the evaluation piece. We do not do a lot of surveys about how you feel; we want to see a solid outcome. Therefore, checking teacher made test or

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Case 21 benchmark test is essential. If what we are doing is effective, we should be able to see it in our data. We should be able to see in terms of increased success with implementation of best practices in teaching classrooms and we should be able to see as an ultimate result increase in achievement.

After analyzing data strategically with fidelity to make decisions, a couple of administrators in district A used a consultant as a best practice instructional resource to help their English and Social Studies teachers with literacy skills.

AP1M stated:

Last year I use a consultant to help with the English Language Arts (ELA) department and the ELA department scores were very high that I asked that person to come back and work with our Social Studies Department on literacy skills.

Evidently, based on the ELA test scores, the consultant was very effective. Other administrators used a different best practice instructional resource for their teachers. In fact, the administrators in district A used a literacy coach. Literacy coaches were used as instructional coaches to enhance teachers instruction and provide support to teachers as needed. For example,

AP3 stated,

We have literacy coaches to help group similar standards together and provide reading strategies. Literary coaches work closely with our teachers and provide support to them. Literacy coaches provide teachers with interventions and strategies for students and model lessons for teachers as needed. Literacy coaches job is to help teachers with reading skills and help teachers improve their instruction and student learning.

The administrators provide teachers the opportunity to meet and discuss their data with their peers and them to ensure the best practices instructional resources are effective. During the data team meetings, teacher are to analyze the data, plot it on a document or data wall, and then

devised a strategic plan on how to improve or enhance student achievement. For instance, in District C, PH1 stated,

> It's our data meeting that we have at the high school level every three weeks. We actually have an entire room dedicated to that with painted walls and they move children faces from to red to green. You know I don't get into numbers or names, I move faces because I want teachers to see when I move a child to red that is a child's life. This is a child a real person. Sometimes we get caught up in numbers and forget these are children were talking about. I will go and test everything. I am a little bit of a stat nerd. So, so I check everything from male to female. I decided to disaggregated data every way in the world that you could possible do.

To concur with PH1, in district A, APM3 stated:

We have data meetings every two weeks, and our teachers lead the meetings. The administrators sit in on the meetings, but only for support. The teachers must leave the meeting with a working plan on how to improve the below grade level students and move the average and above grade level students. Our teachers keep a data chart in their folder of each class and student. The data chart is easy to create because the data information comes from Case 21 and other research-based resources.

After attending data meetings and analyzing the data results, several administrators stated that from time to time they had to have accountability talks with their teachers, students and staff. If the data demonstrates low student achievement, then all 11 administrators agreed that it was time to have accountability talks with the teachers, students, and staff. Data will be discussed during the accountability talks. In fact, administrators will use the data to tell teachers what they were doing well and areas for improvement.

In District C, PH1 stated:

The accountability talks held the students and teachers accountable. So, there is

accountability there. The data will show if we are moving more children in the right

direction or the wrong direction so that's every few weeks our teacher will get through it.

Again I don't want it to be an uncomfortable conversation, but sometimes it is

uncomfortable.

Findings from the full day observations revealed how administrators kept a data report on their

office wall of the percentage of students passing and not passing and each teacher strategic plan on

how to address the deficits. Lastly, the administrators use other best practices instructional

resources for teachers; staff meetings and professional learning communities (PLC's). All

administrators stated that during their staff meeting, data is shared with the entire staff. In District,

A, APM4 stated, "During their staff meeting, everyone provide input toward a strategic plan on

how to rectify the problem. If the data is good, then we take time and celebrate the small win."

The majority of administrators agreed if they celebrate the small wins as well as the big wins, then

they would produce movement and create change toward improving student achievement. All 11

administrators encouraged their teachers to attend professional learning communities (PLC's)

meetings weekly or bi-weekly. The PLC's meetings allow teachers to discuss strategies with one

another to improve their data. All administrators agreed using data stragically with fidelity to

make decisions about instructional resources for students and teachers help them maintain their

high performing schools. In addition, using data stragically with fidelity help the administrators

make decisions about professional learning opportunities.

      Professional learning opportunities. The third central theme disclosed how secondary

administrators used their professional learning opportunities to improve the performance level of

their school. The findings from the data revealed the significance of how administrators'

professional learning opportunities kept them abreast of the latest curriculum and policies of education. For instance, AP1M stated, "It is refreshing to have to opportunity to attend conferences that provides materials and strategies on current issues that we face daily. Those are the conferences I like to attend." Joyner (2000) stated many leaders believed in job-embedded professional learning opportunities. In District C of the focus group, PH1 stated, "I do not like to sit in a conference that does not give me information that I could benefit from." Therefore, all 11 administrators spoke about the importance of attending high-quality and relevant professional learning and facilitating a culture of collective responsibility of professional learning in their building.

Attending high-quality and relevant professional learning. The similarity that was found between all the administrators was the high-quality and relevant professional learning the administrators had already had or were currently attending that was beneficial for them and their school. Five administrators in district A attended the National Institute for School Leaders (NISL); three administrators (principals and assistant principals) in Districts A and C are currently attending the (NISL) program, and two administrators in District B and one administrator in District C have not attended the (NISL) program. The NISL program provides administrators with a deep understanding of best practices, significant research findings and applications, value of professional community, and the commitment to improve the capacity of all learner through research-based knowledge of both craft and the content. In addition, over half of the administrators have attended the Millsap Principal Institute. The Millsap Principal Institute was a week-long conference that allowed administrators to learn and share current issues with other administrators in Mississippi. The NISL and Millsap Principal Institute training provided current strategies and materials that administrators could implement with their staff and teachers within their building. The administrators were able to use information from the two professional learning

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opportunities mentioned above to help maintain their high performing schools. All eight

administrators that were interviewed individually had similar perspectives about professional

learning opportunities. The adminstrators agreed that they attended high-quality and relevant

professional learning opportunities based on interests, strengths, and areas for improvement. Of

course, the administrators had to participate in professional learning opportunities that was

mandated by the district. However, most professional learning opportunities that was mandated by

the district focused on ways to improve teacher instruction, student academic, and behavioral

performance. APM1 of the focus group in District C agreed with the other administrators and

stated, "Everything we do pertains to how we can best serve our students and to improve the

school performance level. Therefore, it is important for us to attend professional learning that are

relevant to our practice."

One professional learning opportunity that one of the administrators attended this year was

the Mississippi Association for Secondary Administrators. In District B, PH2 stated, "The

information from the conference was very relevant. It helped me because I could network with

other administrators in Mississippi about current issues." Since all administrators agreed that they

attended high-quality and relevant professional learning based on strengths and areas for

improvement, they have the autonomy to attend different conferences. For example, APM2 in

District A like to attend technology conference because she has a degree and passion for

technology. Most of the administrators' responded that professional learning was assigned based

on the needs of the students and school. All 11 administrators agreed in order to help improve the

performance level of the school it is important to facilitate a culture of collective responsibility for

professional learning with staff and teachers.

Facilitating a culture of collective responsibility for professional learning. The findings

revealed the second subtheme is facilitating a culture of collective responsibility for professional

learning. Administrators provide professional learning opportunities to help their staff and

teachers improve professionally. Also, administrators can use professional learning to ensure the

quality of teaching and learning through the study of classroom practices and a sharp focus on

disseminating and applying effective ways to increase student achievement. The administrators

allowed teachers to hold professional learning conferences for one another. In addition, some of

the administrators would send an appointed person to attend professional learning conference and

have that person report back to the school and disseminate the information to the other teachers.

The focus group administrators' responses were similar to the other administrators about their

professional learning opportunities. One administrated stated that using your own teachers is a

positive way to use professional learning opportunities. For example, District C, PH1 stated, "So

actually, using teachers that are knocking the top out of it. That's the best way to keep buy-in in

your school."

> In District C, PM2 stated:

> I just had professional development to allow my teachers to learn from one another and

> they got together and shared their best practices across the district. There again we try to

> grow our own teachers and learn from another as well. If we are going to have someone

> share, we will send a teacher to a conference and he or she will come back and share it with

> the other teachers.

 The findings from this study revealed that the administrator responses indicated that

transformational leadership style, using data strategically with fidelity to make decisions, and

professional learning opportunities help maintain high performing schools. There were three

questions posed and data were collected from the methodology triangulation such as interviews,

focus group, and full-day observations that addressed the research questions. Administrators are

responsible for ensuring that the day to day operation of the school is carried out effectively. In

fact, Chen (2014) reported, "Leaders made sure the followers potential is used for the common good of the organization or school." Next, the first research question will be discussed.

Research question 1. What types of administrator leadership styles impact high performing schools? Administrator leadership styles were observed within three high performing districts. Evidence from the data collected demonstrated that all the administrators used the transformational leadership style. Transformational leaders develop high expectations for teachers and students to encourage and motivate continuous school improvement. In fact, transformational leaders work with their teachers and staff on attainable and measurable goals that focus primarily on academic progress of students (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). In addition, transformational leaders provide meaning for every task and communicate optimism about future goals. In District B, PH2 stated, "Since I know my teachers need to have a sense of purpose, I spend a lot of time motivating them. That is why I have high expectations." PH2 in District A stated, "I use my transformational leadership style to encourage and aspire my teachers. I give my teachers autonomy over specific jobs as well as make decisions. I help my teachers become good at conflict resolution." In District B, PH2 stated:

> I give an interest inventory to learn my staff. Once I realized that my teachers enjoy dressing down by wearing jeans on game day, I use that to inspire and motivate them to continue to work harder in the classroom. It is important to understand the values of my teachers and their capabilities. I make sure all my teachers know their role and responsibilities and how I will measure their performance.

 One of the administrators expressed sentiments that the purpose of the administrator's job is not to see themselves as the boss but get in the trenches and help support the teachers and students. For instance, in District A, APH4 stated,

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I do not think of myself as a "boss." I see myself as a support for teachers so that they can educate our students. I feel like I am in the trenches with them, working just as hard. This build a trust-based relationship with my teachers. I do not ask them to do anything that I would not do, and I think they know that I will do whatever to support them.

In District A, APH3 stated:

The transformational leadership style allows me the opportunity to create and reinforce the goals, mission, and vision of the school with all stakeholders. I have an open-door policy to get to know my staff and vice versa. Every chance I get; I try to share my knowledge with my teachers to help inspire them to become leaders. I build a great rapport with my staff by encouraging them to go over and beyond the call of duty to help improve student achievement and the performance level of the school.

In District C, PH1 stated:

I encouraged everyone to work together. I model integrity and set high expectations for teachers. I use the transformational leadership style to help use teacher's strengths and weakness effectively and help them solve problems daily. I lead by examples by modeling lessons and I help teachers disaggregate data. In addition, I have high expectations for my staff as well as my students. I lead by example by modeling those expectations.

Even though in District C, PM2 responses included characteristics of transformational leadership style, PM2 stated, "I believe that having a distributed leadership style is important."

In addition, all 11 administrators used their leadership style to help build teachers into educational leaders. For example, in District C, APM1 stated, "I encourage, inspire, and motivate teachers to become leaders by empowering them and providing them the opportunity for autonomy and participation." In fact, the administrators stated several ways that they use to build their teachers into educational leaders. One way that administrators build their teacher to

become educational leaders was to energize their teachers to overcome major political and resource barrier to change by satisfying their basis needs. In District B, PH1 stated, " I help build my teachers into leaders by moving all obstacles that might be hindering them." All the administrators encourage their teachers to lead school activities and clubs which help them become educational leaders. In addition, all 11 administrators believed in celebrating small wins. Celebrating small wins allow administrators to encourage and inspire their students and teachers to continue to perform well every day especially on assessments. In District A, APH3 stated, "that small wins should be celebrated and can be achieved cheaply." For example, one administrator gave free tickets to the football game to students and teachers of the week. Another administrator gave shout-outs to students who performed well on district benchmark test. Another administrator provided teachers and staff with refreshments during break time to encourage then to keep working hard teaching and learning.

One administrator allowed the teachers and students to come up with ways to celebrate small wins. The teachers and students wanted to have an academic pep rally. The consensus among the administrators indicated that all of them use the transformational leadership style the most, but depending on certain situations, they incorporated other leadership styles such as servant leader, cooperative, reflective, informal, and distributed. However, based on interviews, focus group, and full day observations, the data confirmed that every administrator had the attributes of transformational leadership style and it has produce promising results for them every year. Based on the findings of the data and the literature review, the similarities among the administrators about leadership styles are listed below in Table 4. Next, research question two will be discussed.

Table 4

Leadership Styles Similarities & Contrast

Similarities of Transformational Leadership Style from administrators from all three districts	Interviews	Focus Group	Full-Day Observation
Encourage, inspire, and motivate teachers	*	*	*
Change Agents/ Support teachers/role model	*	*	*
Subtheme-Building Educational Leaders	*	*	*
Encourage teachers to become leaders	*	*	*
Allow teachers to lead meetings	*	*	*
Guide teachers to solve complex problems	*	*	*
Subtheme-Creating and Communication the Schools mission, vision, and goals	*	*	*
Solicit input from teachers and students to help communicate and implement school goal and vision	*	*	*
Contrast Leadership Styles			
Distributed	*		
Reflective		*	*
Cooperative	*		
Informal /Servant Leader	*		

Research question 2. How do administrators manage instructional programs to impact high performing schools? The results from the data collected revealed that using data strategically with fidelity to make decisions help administrators manage instructional programs. All 11 administrators agreed that data and its implication are at the heart of the matter as they drives change through a deliberative process that concentrates on research-based proven strategies that will improve instruction. In order to use data strategically, administrators must create a strategic

plan. All 11 administrators expressed the importance of having a strategic plan. However, in order the administrators to create a strategic plan, the administrators had to do some strategic thinking with their staff. In District A, one administrator defined strategic thinking. For instance, APH3 stated,

> Strategic thinking is a cognitive and analytical process in which a leader focuses on available assests and capabilities and decides how they can marshaled in integrative ways and prioritized to achieve objectives or goals.

In District B, PH1 concurred:

Strategically thinking helps us to be creative. In fact, creative thinking about strategies is the linchpin to getting all students to attain the same high standards. Creating strategies will help us match what goal we want to achieve, how we are going to achieve it, and prioritize the resources to accomplish it.

All 11 administrators agreed that they spearhead the improvements needed in their school to bring all students to high levels of achievement; therefore, it is important that the leadership team analyze, strategize, drive, and implement improvement in instruction and learning. All 11 administrators agreed that they check data from different types of resources. For example, in District C, PM2 stated, "It is very important to check documents that produces student grades." Even though all 11 administrators agreed that checking benchmark tests, progress reports, and grades are essential, the administrators of the three districts reported that "the real people behind using data strategically with fidelity to make decisions were their excellent teachers." That is why all administrators use data from research-based instructional resources for students and best practices instructional resources for teachers to maintain high performing schools. The findings revealed that all 11 administrators were using the same researched based instructional resources to help improve student learning. They used Case 21

assessements (formative and summative) to provide them with a comprehensive report of students weakness and strengths. For instance, in District B, PH1 stated, " We use data from Case 21 faithfully whether it is made by teacher or district." In District B, PH2 stated:

> I used Case 21 and Canvas with fidelity. The Case 21 assessment bank allows teachers to create assessments and share them with their colleagues. In addition, the administrators can go into the system and compare teachers' data."

Administrators used other researched based instructional resources to aid them in improving student learning. For example, in District B, PH2 stated, "They use data from Khan Academy, IXL, and Aim webs to help teachers address student weaknesses in several content areas to help improve the student academics." In District A, APM1 stated:

> What make analyzing the data easier is the way the web curriculum organizes the data. The data we receive from Map, Khan Academy and Reading Plus, Case 21, and ACT Prep, Map (NWEA) and Consultant-Fabulous are used together to help us figure out how to improve student achievement and maintain high performing schools.

In the focus group, the administrators' used data strategically from Case 21 and other strategies listed on the Mississippi Department of Education site. The results from the full-day observations of three administrators in District A and B responses were similar to the rest of the administrators. Data from Case 21 and ACT Prep can help teachers figure out what the students know and do not know. Once Case 21 provide administrators and teachers with that data, then it is time to use it with fidelity to make decisions about instruction. The administrators use Canvas to keep students and parents updated with assignment and grades. The majority of the administrators use ACT Prep to help improve student test scores and the school performance level. After the administrators and the leadership team analyze the data, they did some strategically thinking by examining issues

from different perspectives, generate new ideas and approaches, and break out of paridigns that are not providing the level of success that is possible given the level of resources.

For instance, all 11 administrators modified the schedule for students to receive interventions and teachers tutored before and after school. In addition, administrators protected instructional time by using the intercom only during break time. All 11 administrators maintain visibility at all times within in the building. Once the administrators analyze the research-based instructional resources for the students, the administrators use the data strategically with fidelity to make decisions on best practices for teachers to help improve student achievement. In District A, APM1 and APM2 hired a consultant to help teachers improve their instruction. In Districts A and B, the admininistrators use literacy coaches to provide teachers with activities, interventions, and strategies to help with student learning. In addition, the literacy coaches made sure the instruction and assessment were aligned with the curriculum standards and model lessons for teachers too. From time to time, administratros model lessons too. In fact, an administrator was required to become an instructional leader which strictly related to transformationl leadership to meet today's demands of a school leader (Marzano, Waters & McNulty, 2005).

Administrators encourage teachers to have data meetings that allow the teachers the opportunity to analyze data with their peers. In the data meetings, the teachers had to produce a strategic plan and create a data wall whether it was physical or virtual. Data walls allow everyone one to see where the students and school are and where the students and school need to go. The findings revealed that all 11 administrators using data strategically with fidelity from different types of best practices and research-based instructional resources to make decisions on how they manage instructional programs daily to ensure students were learning. Other subthemes emerged from the study demonstrating how principals use their great teachers, protected instructional time, maintained high visibility, modeled lessons, and provided incentives for learning and teachers. The

other subthemes will be further discussed in Chapter five. Based on the findings of the data and the literature review, the similarities of how each administrator managed instructional programs are listed below in Table 5. Next, research question three will be discussed.

Table 5

Similarities Management of Instructional Programs

Using Datta Strategically with Fidelity to Make Decisions	Interviews	Focus Group	Full -Day Observations
Subtheme-Research-based Instructional Resources for Students			
Case 21 (assessments), Canvas (blackboard), and ACT Prep	*	*	*
Reading Plus/Star Reading	*		*
MacBook (One on one Students)	*		*
Web-base-IXL/ Tutorial	*		
Subtheme- Best Practices Instructional Resources for Teachers			
Aligning instruction with Standards	*	*	*
Consultants	*		*
Literacy Coaches	*		*
Data Meetings/ Data Walls	*	*	*
Other Themes			
Great Teachers	*	*	*
Model lessons	*	*	*
Protect instructional time	*	*	*
Maintain Visibility	*	*	*
Provide incentives for teaching and learning	*	*	*

Research question 3. What types of administrator professional development impact high

performing schools? The findings revealed that administrator attended several high quality and

relevant professional learning conferences and facilitated a culture of collective responsibility for

professional learning with their staff. In fact, all 11 administrators agreed that professional

learning engage and motivate teachers to continue to enhance their craft. Professional learning

help the staff and teachers reach their goals, respect their input, and encourage them to take risks.

All 11 administrators agreed that the success in leading a school is directly related to such

professionalism, focus, and dedication. Therefore, most of the administrator responses were similar

based on their professional learning opportunities. All 11 agreed that they attend professional

learning based on strengths, weakness, and interests. Sometimes it is mandated by the district for

all 11 administrators to attend certain professional learning. According to Joyner (2000),

professional development should be mandatory monthly for principals to stay abreast of the current

issues and strategies for teaching and learning. However, every professional learing opportunity is

based on how we can better serve our students and to improve the school performance level. All

11 administrators believed in attending high-quality and relevant professional learning. The

majority of the administrators had attended the National Institute for School Leaders (NISL) and

Millsap Principal Institute. For instance, in District A, PH1 stated, " I have had NISL training and

I have attended the Millsap Principal Institute. Both professional training were very beneficial." In

addition, in District B, PH1 stated, " I attend NISL and Millsap Principal Institute both enhance my

professional growth as a school leader. In addition, the administrator in District B, PH2 stated:

>This past Monday and Tuesday I attended the Mississippi Association for Secondary
>
>Administrators and that helped me because we could network with other administrators
>
>within the state. It is nice to network with other administrators in Mississippi. On the local
>
>level, I attended the Millsap Principal Institute which I think was very good and it lasted a

week long in the summer and it had different speakers to come in and speak to us. It

allows administrators to work together to learn from another.

In District A, APM2 stated, "I have been to the Millsap Principal Institute. We are allowed to

attend professional development based on our strengths and weakness." In District A, AP1 stated:

I have had NISL training. I have been to the Millsap Principal Institute. Personally, I am

great with technology. In the past, I used to attend the MECCA in Jackson to stay abreast

of the latest technology.

Based on the data collected from the successful secondary administrators within three high

performing districts eight administrators attended or currently attending National Institute for

School Leaders (NISL) and over half of the 11 administrators have attended the Millsap Principal

Institute. The administrators were able to apply what they learn from the NISL and Millsaps

Principal Institute conferences with their daily practices to maintain high performing schools.

Therefore, the NISL and Millsap Institute were beneficial for their school. The results from the

data collected from the full-day observations agreed with the other administrators perspective that

to improve the performance level of the school, the administrators had to facilitate a culture of

collective responsibility for professional learning among their staff and it must be relevant and job-

embedded. For instance, PH1 in the focus group stated that they do not hire outside people to

conduct professional development for their staff. In fact, PH1 stated:

We do a really good job of using our own people. We have tons of people with masters and

Ph.D. degrees in our schools and they been to a lot of schools. So, they can conduct

professional development. I have model lessons in math, science, and history believe it or

not. So, it's ongoing and its embedded in everything we do when I go on visits any teachers

who are off, I would grab them to go with me to observe other teachers. W use our teachers

that are knocking the top out of it. That's the best way to keep buy in your school. When

we have other consultants come in to educate our teachers our teachers do not want to sit

and hear other people. I feel the same way; I am just going to be honest with you.

Confirmed with PH1 in District C, PM2 stated:

We try not to do that drive by professional development that we never see again. Yeah

We need our math specialist because we identified a need in the sixth grade based on our

test scores last year and so we have a monthly standing meeting where she comes in and

meets with those children as soon as the basis for that kind of happened even the entire

day. I know how hard it looks I think so it's ongoing. Vertical alignment across our

district here. I just had a professional development on how our teachers are learning from

one another and they got together and shared their best practices across the district. We

try to grow our own and learn from another as well. If we are going to have someone

share, we will send a teacher to a conference and he or she will come back and share it

with other teachers.

Then, in District C, PH1 added:

And want to add to that as well and it's not just professional development for teachers, it is

professional development on what they want to do. Like we have two teachers working on

becoming an administrator and they are working on their internship hours. We've done

that. Our leadership team is open to anybody in the school. We use the train the trainer

method to help provide and promote professional development within our school and

district. This method allows an administrator to appoint one or two people to attend

conferences then come back to the school or district and train other teachers on what they

have learned.

Based on the findings of the data, the majority of the administrators improve professionally after attending NISL and the Millsap Institute. Listed below in table 6 are the similarities of interviews, focus group, and full-day observations of professional learning opportunities among the administrators that have helped them make a difference in their school.

Table 6

Similarities of Professional Learning Opportunities

Professional Learning Opportunities	Interviews	Focus Group	Full-Day Observation
Based on Interest, Strengths, Areas of Improvement	*	*	*
Mandated by the District	*	*	*
Subtheme-Attending High-Quality and Relevant Professional Learning	*	*	*
National Institute of School Leadership (NISL) (8)	*	*	*
Millsap Principal Institute (over half)	*	*	*
Mississippi Association of Secondary Administrations	*	*	*
Subtheme-Facilitating a culture of collective responsibility for professional Learning	*	*	*
Train the Trainer (Grow your own Teachers)	*	*	*
Peer Observations	*	*	*

Chapter 4 Summary

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high performing schools. The findings yielded three themes and several subthemes. Data from the 11 administrators were coded using NVivo. Results from the data findings demonstrated similarities and differences among the 11 administrators in leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high

performing schools. Chapter 5 will present the introduction, summary and discussion of the

results, analysis about the results in relation to the literature, limitations, implications, and

recommendations for further research.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

Introduction

The findings from the data collected and analyzed in this study were unveiled in Chapter 4. The interviews focus group, and observations were used to explore the impact of successful secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development used daily with consistency and fidelity in maintaining high-performing schools. Even though several administrators mentioned other leadership styles such as cooperative, reflective, distributed, and informal, the results revealed that all administrators exhibit transformational leadership behaviors in their daily interactions such as inspiring, motivating, and building and encouraging teachers to become educational leaders. In addition, all administrators used transformational leadership style to help create and communicate the school mission, vision, and goals.

All administrators use data strategically with fidelity to make decisions about research-based instructional resources for students and best practices instructional resources for teachers to help maintain high-performing schools. Findings from the study revealed that all administrators used data strategically from the same resources (Canvas-blackboard, Case 21 benchmark assessments, and ACT Prep) to help enhance or improve student achievement. All 11 administrators believed in professional learning opportunities because they had attended or were currently attending the National Institute for School Leaders (NISL) and the Millsap Principal Institute, which are high-quality and relevant professional learning. The professional learning opportunities were very beneficial for them and their schools. Also, all 11 administrators were facilitating a culture of collective responsibility for professional learning for their entire staff. The conceptual framework for this study was based on the leadership model by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) and the recommendation found in a 2010 study by Eric Minus. Findings from Minus's

(2010) study suggested that principals' leadership style was related to student achievement. Also, Heck and Hallinger's (2010) findings stated leadership style impacted student achievement substantially; however, they were not sure which leadership style affected the most (transformational or transactional). Fech (2009) conducted a qualitative study and the findings from his study stated if principals committed to professional development growth frequently then student test scores increased. Therefore, all the studies recommended that there was still a need for further research, such as analysis of the principal leadership styles and professional development and how they affect students' learning and the performance level of schools.

The purpose of conducting this single qualitative case study was to explore the impact of secondary administrator leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development from high-performing schools and to share the findings with K–12 educational administrators to help improve their low-performing schools. This chapter provides a summary and discussion of the results and their relationship to literature. Limitations of the study and implications for practice are also discussed, with recommendations for further research and conclusions following.

Summary of the Results

Educators believe that a quality education can help people find a distinguished career. Therefore, it is imperative for all children to receive a quality education from every school. The school must be led by an effective leader to ensure teachers teach and students learn. Effective leaders invest their knowledge and time with staff and students. Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) conceptual framework played an essential role for the administrator because each frame tied into principals' transformational or instructional leadership styles, which would be needed to ensure their schools' success. The administrators exhibited several leadership behaviors such as building educational leaders (communicate school goals), using data strategically with fidelity to make

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decisions (coordinate the curriculum and supervise and evaluating instruction), and attending and providing professional learning opportunities for staff and teachers to improve students' learning based on Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) conceptual framework. This qualitative case study explored the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high-performing schools. The conceptual framework helped to answer the three research questions that pertain to administrators maintaining high-performing schools. Administrators must know which leadership styles and professional development are effective and know how to manage instructional programs. Therefore, the district and administrators were purposefully selected. The three districts used in the study were ranked high-performing for at least two consecutive years. The 11 administrators who participated were from middle or high schools that had been marked as high-performing for two consecutive years. The methodological triangulation of data sources such as interviews, a focus group, and full-day observations was used in this study to collect data. Findings from the data collected revealed three central themes and six subthemes.

The three central themes indicate how successful secondary administrators used transformational leadership, used data strategically to make decisions, attended high quality and relevant professional learning, and facilitated a culture of collective responsibility for professional learning with consistency and fidelity in maintaining high-performing schools. The commonalities of all 11 administrators were building educational leaders and creating and communicating the school mission, vision, and goal correctly through the characteristics and traits of the transformational leadership style which is the first central theme. Transformational leadership styles helped administrators establish and change norms as necessary.

In fact, Simsek Hasan, (2013) stated:

The appropriate leadership style for a school setting is transformational leadership because the leadership style helps administrators focus on preparing employees to learn new things, building and fortifying new organizational norms, establishing new meaning and ways of thinking, and its efficiency as a tool in helping leaders break and establish norms to transform school culture. (p. 4)

The second theme from the interviews and full day observations indicated how administrators use data strategically with fidelity to make decisions about research-based instructional resources for students and best practices instructional resources for teachers to help improve their school performance.   For example, the administrators used data from Case 21 (formative and summative benchmark assessments) to help determine student academic strengths and weaknesses. Also, Canvas (blackboard) was put in place to help students and parents stay abreast of past and current grades from their teachers. In addition, ACT Prep materials were distributed and reviewed with every student to help them score high on the ACT exam. Other strategies that were indicated by the administrators to help them use data strategically with fidelity were how they use great teachers, literacy coaches, modeled lessons, facilitated professional learning communities (PLC's), and hired curriculum consultants. The subthemes of using data strategically with fidelity to make decisions were research-based instructional resources for students and best practices instructional resources for teachers. The third theme was professional learning opportunities. Many of the administrators believed in ongoing professional learning opportunities that would enhance their skills. The professional learning opportunities theme had two subthemes, which were attending high-quality and relevant professional learning and facilitating a culture of collective responsibility for professional learning with teachers and staff members. All 11 administrators attended professional learning based on their interests, strengths,

areas of improvement, districts, and student needs. Also, the administrators attended two high quality and relevant professional learning such as National Institute of School Leaders (NISL) and Millsap Principal Institute. The 11 administrators stated that NISL and Millsap Principal Institute were job-embedded and that the training helped them stay abreast of current policies, curriculum, and leadership strategies. The second subtheme of professional learning was how administrators facilitate a culture of collective responsibility for professional learning with their staff. In the next section, the results will be discussed.

Discussion of the Results

The results from the data were consistent among all 11 administrators within three high-performing districts. The first central theme demonstrated that all 11 administrators used the transformational leadership style to build educational leaders and create and communicate the school mission, vision, and goals. In fact, all administrators inspired, supported, and motivated their teachers throughout the year. All administrators explained the importance of building educational leaders in their building. The administrators built teacher leaders by encouraging teachers to try new innovative ideas to help improve the school. Another way administrators built educational leaders was by encouraging their teachers to lead and facilitate data, professional learning communities, and staff meetings weekly. All 11 administrators used that strategy to effectively build their teachers into competent educational leaders. Even though several leadership styles were mentioned such as informal, cooperative, and distributed, the most prevalent was transformational leadership. Additionally, the full-day observations confirmed that transformational leadership style was effective. The findings demonstrated that all the administrators used transformational leadership styles to create and communicate the mission, vision, and goals of the school. During the school observations with administrators PH1 and APH3 in District A and PH2 in District B, the mission and vision statements were observed on the

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walls in each classroom, hallway, and office, which confirmed what the administrators in District C stated. Although the teachers and students did not have any input creating the mission statement, they believe and follow it faithfully. The teachers followed the mission statement because their administrators lead by example by following the mission statement. However, the teachers and students did give input on the goals and vision of the school. All administrators believed that to ensure all teachers and students know the mission, vision, and goal statements, they must communicate it effectively. The findings of the three full-day observations demonstrated how the principals communicate the goal and vision to all stakeholders. For example, the administrators communicate the goal and vision with all stakeholders by placing it on the school website, flyers, newsletters, emails, and with daily announcements on the intercom.

The second central theme was how administrators use data strategically with fidelity to make decisions on which research-based instructional resources to use for students and best practices instructional resources teachers to improve instruction and learning within their building. Administrators analyzed data from Case 21 (formative and summative assessments), monitored grades on Canvas and teacher-made assessments from ACT Prep materials daily to effectively make instructional decisions for the school. The two subthemes were researched-based instructional resources for students and best practices instructional resources for teachers. The findings from the study using data strategically with fidelity to make decisions and how it answered research question two. Using data strategically with fidelity allowed the administrators the opportunity to manage all research-based instructional programs effectively within all three districts. Since the research study investigated successful secondary administrators managing instructional programs, the ACT Prep was very valuable because all 11th graders were given the opportunity to take the ACT to help prepare them for college. In addition, the ACT was part of Mississippi's accountability model for high school which helps the Mississippi Department of

Education determine the performance rating for the district and school. One principal in district C

of the focus group PH1 stated:

> So again, that's a loaded question about instructional programs. There are literally a ton of
>
> instructional programs too. I will tell you for us, it's reading and writing I'm a firm believer
>
> that if a student can write they can read and comprehend so we are really pushing writing
>
> across the board. Obviously, we have an ACT prep class we're pushing with 11th and 12th
>
> graders. We use case 21 and that's not necessarily a universal screener but it gives us data
>
> on students three times a year to help improve academics.

 After analyzing the data results from assessments, a couple of administrators in District A

hired a consultant to help the English Language Arts and History teachers with content, strategies,

and activities to improve instruction and test scores. In District A, AP3 reported, "Literacy

coaches were used to help teachers coordinate the curriculum." What all administrators had in

common was providing teachers with best practices instructional resources and the opportunity to

meet and plan lessons, analyze data, and learn from one another in professional learning

communities (PLC's). All the administrators analyzed several documents such as student progress

(grades), teacher lesson plans, and classroom (work samples) and teacher (instructional

observations) to supervise and evaluate instruction within their schools. Based on all the

administrators' responses, data is the driving force of instruction and student achievement.

Therefore, it is important for administrators to supervise and evaluate instruction every week -- and

sometimes daily, if necessary. After they analyzed and evaluated data from different instructional

resources and the data revealed low student achievement, they then took time to have

accountability talks with staff and students.

The accountability talks with staff and students were always based on data and what is best

for students and teachers. Based on the full-day observations, the administrators were seen

supervising and evaluating instruction by observing classrooms and reviewing lesson plans based on student data. The central themes that emerged from the data such as research-based instructional resources for students and best practices instructional resources for teachers were found under management of instructional programs in Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) three dimensions and 10 instructional functions framework.

The findings revealed the third central theme was professional learning opportunities and subthemes were attending high-quality and relevant professional learning and facilitating a culture of collective responsibility for professional learning. The first subtheme was administrators attending high-quality and relevant professional learning. The effective, high-quality, and relevant professional learning that most of the administrators had in common was the National Institute of School Leaders (NISL) and the Millsap Principal Institute. Most of the secondary administrators have already attended NISL or are currently attending NISL workshop the information from the previously-mentioned professional learning enhanced the administrators' knowledge and skill on a personal and professional level. The administrators were able to use the information they learned from the NISL and Millsap Principal Institute to maintain a high-performing school every year. It was important that administrators continued to participate in professional development to stay abreast of state policies and procedures of the school.

The literature review revealed that if principals attended professional learning frequently and shared their knowledge with teachers, then student test scores would increase (Fech, 2009). In addition, every administrator attended professional learning based on their interest, strengths, areas for improvement, and mandates by the district. The second subtheme of professional learning opportunities was administrators facilitating a culture of collective responsibility for professional learning by allowing their teachers to conduct professional learning for their peers. The administrators used a technique called "train the trainer." Train the trainer allows the

administrators to appoint one person to attend a conference and have that person come back to school and share the information with their peers. Also, administrators allowed other teachers from other schools to share effective strategies with their teachers.

Three central themes emerged from the data as well as subthemes that answered the research questions; however, there were other themes which emerged from the data that were related to using data strategically with fidelity to make decisions. The other themes that administrators indicated along with the second theme were modeled lessons by administrators, maintained visibility in the school building, provided incentives for learning and teachers, and protected instructional time. All administrators maintained visibility by walking the halls before and after the tardy bell, standing on duty and observing learning and instruction in teacher classrooms. In addition, all the administrators made morning announcements during break time to protect instructional time. All 11 administrators celebrated small wins of accomplishment by providing incentives for learning and for teachers. Most of the administrators modeled lessons for teachers as needed or requested by teachers. Every administrator expressed that the reason why their schools are successful is because of their great teachers. All the administrators agreed that their teachers were caring, loving, and willing to go the extra mile to help their students learn. For example, in District A, AP1 reported, "We have great teachers who really want to teach our students not just because it is required of them." Even though many of the administrators modified the schedule to allow teachers to remediate students, some of their teachers gave up their time before and after school to provide interventions for low-performing students. The administrators are constantly providing their great teachers with research-based articles, instructional resources, and professional learning opportunities to attend workshops to enhance their professional growth. It was evident that the administrators within the three high-performing districts exhibited the same type of leadership behaviors, used data strategically with fidelity to make decisions, and attended

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and facilitated high-quality and relevant professional learning to help maintain high-performing schools.

The findings confirmed what the literature review reported about the significance of transformational leadership styles, managing instructional programs, and professional development. The results of the findings will be shared with K-12 administrators to help them reflect on their practice and improve their low-performing schools. Listed below in Figure 2 is the finding of the data from the three high-performing districts and the other themes.

Central Themes, Subthemes & Other Themes

Central Theme 1 Transformational Leadership	Central Theme 2 Using Data Strategically with Fidelity to Make Decisions	Central Theme 3 Professional Learning Opportunities	Other Themes Model Lessons
Subthemes	Subthemes	Subthemes	Maintain Visibility
Building Educational Leaders	Research-based Instructional Resources for Students	Attending High-Quality and Relevant Professional Learning	Provide Incentives for Learning and Teachers
Creating and Communicating the School Mission, Vision, and Goals	Best Practice Instructional Resources for Teachers	Facilitating a Culture of Collective Responsibility for Professional Learning	Protect Instructional Time Great Teachers

Figure 1. Data from three high-performing districts revealed three central themes, subthemes, and other themes.

Discussion of the Results in Relation to the Literature

It is evident that every school system faced local, state, and federal accountability to determine the performance level of the district and school. Therefore, all schools must have strong leaders to help manage the school's day-to-day operations. Thus, according to the literature review the most important element of a school was the effectiveness of the role and principals responsibilities (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2000). In addition, leaders were role models

for their staff (Bass & Stogdill). The results confirmed that Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) conceptual framework helped provide a precise definition of effective administrators and authentic working practices such as leadership styles, managing instructional programs, and professional development.

In addition, Hallinger and Murphy (1985) revealed that the principal played an essential role in improving students' academics by working with the teachers and staff to ensure the school met clear, measurable, and attainable goals. The results also revealed that if all Mississippi low-performing schools improved, then the schools would produce more productive citizens that would one day give back to the society (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). Administrators were responsible for keeping an open line of communication with all stakeholders about academic and behavioral expectations (Northfield, 2014). The open line of communication allowed the administrators to share how the students were performing throughout the year.

The results revealed that all administrators use the transformational leadership style to help maintain high-performing schools. Transformational leadership style allowed administrators to be change agents and help build teachers to become educational leaders within the school. The transformational leadership style allowed the administrators to create and implement the goals, visions, and missions effectively to improve or maintain instruction and student achievement. Several studies confirmed that transformational leadership style helps administrators improve student achievement (Crum and Sherman, 2008; Waters, Marzano, and Nulty, 2003). Based on the literature review, several studies provided evidence and support of the effectiveness of transformational leadership style for a principal (Alsaeedi & Male, 2013; Nir & Hameiri, 2014; Yang, 2013). In fact, Hauserman and Stick (2013) conducted a study of 135 public school teachers in Canada. The findings from the study demonstrated that teachers gave many positive reports about their transformational principals. In addition, a qualitative study was conducted by Finnigan

(2012) to analyze administrators' transformational leadership behaviors. Results of the study supported the assertion that an administrator's leadership was important to help turn around low-performing schools. To confirm the findings, Valentine and Prater (2011) investigated the relationship between administrators' managerial duties, transformational leadership style, and student achievement in public high schools. The study found that principals' leadership played a significant role in promoting curriculum and instruction that linked to student achievement. Nash (2010) conducted a case study in North Carolina at a sizeable Metropolitan school with 15 elementary school principals. The findings from the study strongly suggested that there was a correlation between student achievement and leadership style.

The results of the study also revealed how the administrators use data strategically with fidelity to make decisions about research-based instructional resources for students and best practices instructional resources teachers to help them maintain high-performing schools. Since principals serve as a role model and instructional leader, then it is important for them to be knowledgeable in using data to improve the instruction (Datnow and Park, 2009). Therefore, administrators must find the time to analyze and use the data effectively to improve instruction (Newstead, 2008). When teachers and students witness administrators making a concerted effort to learn and understand what is being taught in the classroom, it should produce positive results for student achievement (Pearson, 2014). The results from another study confirmed student achievement improves when administrators are actively involved with school organization, testing, and classroom instruction (Sebastian and Allensworth, 2012).

Lastly, the results also revealed how administrators facilitate a culture of collective responsibility for professional learning to help maintain high-performing schools. In fact, today, administrators are required to have a comprehensive understanding of the school and classroom practices to help provide support to teachers (Bottoms and Fry, 2009). Therefore, for

administrators to achieve that task mentioned above, they must commit to attending high-quality and relevant professional learning (Zepeda, 2008). When administrators are trained well, then they can disseminate the information to equip teachers with resources that they need to help students become successful (Hagel, 2014). The achievement level of the school might improve when students score higher on assessments.

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study. The small sample size may be scrutinized for its reliability. The principals were very knowledgeable about allocating funding for instructional programs, yet the assistant principals were not knowledgeable about the funding for managing instructional programs because that was not part of their job responsibilities. It was very challenging to meet with the administrators, due to their busy schedules. If this study were to be replicated, one should consider other options for gathering the information -- such as via telephone conferences or by sending the administrators a survey to complete, since time was a constraint for them.

Implications of the Results for Practice, Policy, and Theory

In this case study, the researcher explored the impact of successful secondary administrator leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development as they related to maintaining high-performing schools, which added confirmation to Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) conceptual framework theory. Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) conceptual framework revealed that if leaders practice the leadership behaviors found in the three dimensions and 11 instructional functions frame, then they would be able to improve student achievement. The findings revealed that all 11 administrators daily exhibit all the leadership behaviors found in Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) conceptual framework. The findings from the study had the potential to inform policy and practice by having administrators modify schedules, model lessons,

and facilitate a culture of collective responsibility for professional learning with their teachers to help improve student learning and enhance teacher instruction. Administrators are also called instructional leaders according to the Mississippi Department of Education. Administrators are required to ensure curriculum is aligned to standards and assessments, to collect, analyze, and report student performance data throughout the year, to monitor instruction to ensure teaching is in line with student abilities, and to encourage faculty to refine their practice by constantly searching for ways to improve instruction. In addition, they are required to model lessons or find someone to model lessons for teachers who are struggling with classroom instruction. Administrators have the autonomy to modify schedules based on data to allow teachers to re-teach skills and give students the opportunity to learn the skill differently. Also, administrators are required to facilitate a culture of collective responsibility for professional learning to ensure teachers are perfecting their skills and staying abreast of current classroom strategies.

Since teachers feel overwhelmed and stressed, an alarming number of them are retiring or quitting early due to excessive paperwork, excessive testing, and difficult students. If administrators do not know how to inspire, encourage, and motivate their teachers to fulfill their teaching responsibilities, then student achievement will be extremely low. Therefore, the study added new knowledge because it is extremely rare to hear 11 administrators from multiple districts speak highly of all their teachers. In fact, all 11 administrators stated that they know they have great teachers who were willing to go the extra mile to educate their students. Therefore, the administrators took time out of their busy schedules to acknowledge the teachers and students when data demonstrated evidence of student progress. The administrators used verbal recognition, rewards, and other incentives to acknowledge their teachers and their students who performed well in school and on assessments.

Recommendations for Further Research

  Since the findings of the study were limited to three high-performing schools adjacent to one another, the study should be explored on a larger scale. The theme saturation was limited due to the small sample size of the study even though the study provided valuable insight for administrators of low-performing schools.   If additional high-performing districts and schools could be examined on a larger scale, then the one might determine if the results from this study were consistent. The qualitative single case study was limited because it focused only on the administrators' perspective. However, conducting a study that expanded the number of participants to include the teachers might help to validate the views of the administrators.

  Further research is recommended to fully see if the administrators' actions align with their perspectives. Then, one should observe the administrators over several days instead of just one day. Another recommendation is to observe elementary administrators as well as secondary administrators within high-performing districts to identify a consistent pattern among administrators within the same district. Since Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) conceptual framework was a great asset to this study, a researcher should continue to use it on a larger scale. The three dimensions and 10 instructional functions described how principals were charged with defining the purpose of the school as well as working with the teachers and staff on attainable and measurable goals that focused on the academic progress of students (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). The researcher should provide an incentive to help motivate the participants to participate. The recommendation is to replicate this study on a larger scale by investigating administrators and teachers of several high-performing districts through interviews, whether they are face-to-face or via phone conference, and by conducting several full-day observations to see how administrators maintain high-performing schools.

Conclusion

This case study explored the impact of secondary administrators' leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and professional development in maintaining high-performing schools. Despite a small sample size, the findings of the study reinforced that the Hallinger and Murphy (1985) study has revealed that the three-dimensions model and 10 instructional functions influenced the improvement of students' academics. In fact, Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) conceptual framework played an essential role for the administrator because each frame -- whether transformational or instructional -- tied into a principal's leadership style, which was needed to ensure the school was successful.

All 11 administrators had many things in common. The first research question addressed the types of administrator leadership styles that impact high-performing schools. The transformational leadership style was what all the administrators had in common. In fact, Stewart (2006) suggested that transformational leadership was the best principal model found in current research. The second research question addressed how administrators manage instructional programs to impact high-performing schools. The 11 administrators used data to make decisions about research-based instructional resources for students (Case 21, ACT Prep, and Canvas) and best practices instructional resources for teachers (modified schedules, literacy coaches, consultants, and data and PLC's meetings) strategically with fidelity to improve student achievement.

In addition, Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) framework indicated the effectiveness of administrators' leadership behaviors such as using data strategically with fidelity to make decisions (coordinating the curriculum and supervising and evaluating instruction) and facilitating a culture of collective responsibility for professional learning to help improve students learning. The third research question addressed the types of administrators' professional

development that impact high-performing schools. The majority of the 11 administrators attended or were currently attending the National Institute of School Leaders (NISL) as well as Millsap Principal Institute which has helped ensure teachers teach and students learn every day. The administrators believed in attending professional learning o stay abreast of policies, strategies and curriculum of the school. Every professional learning opportunity was always based on the needs of students and teachers. In addition, all 11 administrators facilitated a culture of collective responsibility for professional learning with their staff and teachers. Also, the administrators encouraged their teachers to attend conferences outside the district and to come back and disseminate the information to their peers.

The results of this case study would help school administrators meet the challenges found in their school by addressing student achievement and improving the performance level of their school. The findings from this study suggested that themes in addition to transformational leadership style, using data strategically with fidelity to make decisions, and professional learning opportunities influenced school performance. The other themes that emerged from the study were protecting instructional time, maintaining visibility, providing incentives for learning and teaching, modeling lessons, and supporting great teachers. The administrators used the themes to encourage and develop a culture of teaching and learning in their building daily. Administrators were always looking for ways to help improve their practice as well as their school. Therefore, the findings from this study might give administrators of low-performing schools in Mississippi the opportunity to reflect on their practice, improve student achievement, and improve their school. It was refreshing to see just how much the administrators cared about their students and teachers despite the many challenges they faced while trying to do their job effectively.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Pseudonym Name_____   District   A   B   C

Leadership Styles

1. Describe your dominant leadership style you use on a day- to- day basis?

2. How do you utilize your leadership style to communicate the goal and vision of the school?

3. How effective is your leadership style with all stakeholders such as students, parents, teachers, and the community?

4. In what ways or situations do you think your leadership style has not been effective?

5. How could you improve your leadership style?

Instructional Program

6. What instructional programs are your teachers utilizing that are showing promising results?

7. How often and what tool (instrument) do you utilize to evaluate and supervise the instructional program?

8. How do you manage student learning daily, weekly, or monthly?

9. How do you allocate funds to continue using the effective instructional programs?

Professional Development

10. What type of professional development training do you attend and is the training based on the school or your personal interests, strengths, or areas of improvement?

11. How often do you utilize the information from the professional development trainings?

Appendix B: Questions for Focus Group

Pseudonym Name_____ District A   B   C
Pseudonym Name_____ District A   B   C
Pseudonym Name_____ District A   B   C

Leadership Styles

1. What kind of leadership style should a principal utilize daily in order to maintain a high performing school?

2. How does your leadership style help you implement and maintain the school mission and vision?

Instructional Programs

3. What instructional programs are you utilizing to help improve the performance level of the school?

4. How much input did you have in selecting the instructional programs?

5. How did you gather teachers' input before selecting and buying the instructional programs?

6. How do you evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of the instructional programs?

7. How do you maintain funding for the instructional programs?

Professional Development Trainings

8. Are your professional development trainings job embedded and on-going?

9. Are the professional development trainings you receive beneficial?

10. How does your professional development training impact the school performing level?

Appendix C: Full Day Observation

Pseudonym Name_____   District A   B   C

Time	Observation	Notes

<p align="center">**Appendix D:** Consent Form</p>

Research Study Title: Successful School: A Case Study of Secondary Administrators' Leadership Styles, Management of Instructional Programs, and the Impact of Their Own Professional Development Training to Maintain High Performing Schools

Principal Investigator: Teresa D Dixon

Research Institution: Concordia University – Portland

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Chris Jenkins

Purpose and what you will be doing:

The purpose of this interview is to investigate successful administrators' (principals and assistant principals) leadership styles, management of instructional programs, and the impact of their impact own professional development training to maintain high performing schools. We expect approximately 50 volunteers. No one will be paid to be in the study. We will begin enrollment on September 11th, 2017 and end enrollment on November 1, 2017. To be in the study, you will participate in a face-to-face interview by answering at least 10 questions. The interview should not take longer than 60 minutes.

Risks:

There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this study other than providing your information. In the focus group, we want to remind you that we are in a group setting. We ask that everyone in the group respect each other's privacy and speak in general terms rather than in specific, person-identifying, terms. The recordings will be deleted after the recordings are transcribed. The transcription will be reviewed so that any information that identifies the individual will be removed. This coding will be done to protect the information and keep it confidential. After the recording is no longer needed, the recording will be destroyed. All other study documents will be kept for 3 years, in a locked protected location. After 3 years, all documents will be destroyed.

Benefits:

Information you provide will help by allowing the researcher to gain an understanding of your daily practices to maintain high performing schools. You could benefit from this by providing information to unsuccessful administrators in surrounding districts to help their schools become high performing schools too.

Confidentiality:

This information will not be distributed to any other agency and will be kept private and confidential. The name of the district, school, and participants will not be disclosed. To ensure the confidentiality of the district, school, and participants, pseudonyms will be assigned. For example, Blue Berry district, (District A) middle school (M) assistant principal 1 (AP1) or Strawberry District (District B), high school (H) principal 2 (P2), Blackberry District (District C), middle school (M) principal 1(P1). To ensure confidentiality of the participants and their responses, I will omit, change, or mask specific or rare details or situations that could to identification through deductive disclosure. The only exception to this is if you tell us abuse or neglect that makes us seriously concerned for your immediate health and safety.

Right to Withdraw:

Your participation is greatly appreciated, but we acknowledge that the questions we are asking are personal in nature. You are free at any point to choose not to engage with or stop the study. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. This study is not required and there is no penalty for not participating. If at any time you experience a negative emotion from answering the questions, we will stop asking you questions.

Contact Information:

You will receive a copy of this consent form. If you have questions, you can talk to or write the principal investigator, Teresa D. Dixon. If you want to talk with a participant advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the director of our institutional review board, Dr. OraLee Branch (email obranch@cu-portland.edu or call 503-493-6390).

Your Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I asked questions if I had them, and my questions were answered. I volunteer my consent for this study.

_____   _____

Participant Name   Date

_____   _____

Participant Signature   Date

_____   _____

Investigator Name   Date

_____   _____

Investigator Signature   Date

Investigator: Teresa D. Dixon;c/o:

Professor Dr. Chris Jenkins; Concordia University – Portland

2811 NE Holman Street

Portland, Oregon 97221

Appendix E: Statement of Original Work

The Concordia University Doctorate of Education Program is a collaborative community of scholar-practitioners, who seek to transform society by pursuing ethically-informed, rigorously-researched, inquiry-based projects that benefit professional, institutional, and local educational contexts. Each member of the community affirms throughout their program of study, adherence to the principles and standards outlined in the Concordia University Academic Integrity Policy. This policy states the following:

Statement of academic integrity.

As a member of the Concordia University community, I will neither engage in fraudulent or unauthorized behaviors in the presentation and completion of my work, nor will I provide unauthorized assistance to others.

Explanations:

What does "fraudulent" mean?

"Fraudulent" work is any material submitted for evaluation that is falsely or improperly presented as one's own. This includes, but is not limited to texts, graphics and other multi-media files appropriated from any source, including another individual, that are intentionally presented as all or part of a candidate's final work without full and complete documentation.

What is "unauthorized" assistance?

"Unauthorized assistance" refers to any support candidates solicit in the completion of their work, that has not been either explicitly specified as appropriate by the instructor, or any assistance that is understood in the class context as inappropriate. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Use of unauthorized notes or another's work during an online test
- Use of unauthorized notes or personal assistance in an online exam setting
- Inappropriate collaboration in preparation and/or completion of a project
- Unauthorized solicitation of professional resources for the completion of the work.

Statement of Original Work (Continued)

I attest that:

1. I have read, understood, and complied with all aspects of the Concordia University- Portland Academic Integrity Policy during the development and writing of this dissertation.
2. Where information and/or materials from outside sources has been used in the production of this dissertation, all information and/or materials from outside sources has been properly referenced and all permissions required for use of the information and/or materials have been obtained, in accordance with research standards outlined in the *Publication Manual of The American Psychological Association*

Teresa Denise Dixon

Digital Signature

Teresa Denise Dixon

Name (Typed)

May 30, 2018

Date