

**An Analysis of Self-Assessed Leadership Styles and Interpersonal Communication
Competencies of Kansas Public School Superintendents**

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Abstract

Superintendent of schools is a leadership role that requires a strong ability to communicate competently with a broad range of stakeholders. Therefore, there is a need to determine the relationship between specific leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies in order to inform aspiring and practicing superintendents and to ensure the development of effective training in communication competence within educational leadership programs for district-level leaders and current superintendents. The purpose of this study was to identify the leadership styles and interpersonal competencies currently employed by Kansas public school superintendents, to examine the relationship between the two, and to inform potential improvements in school leadership training.

A non-experimental quantitative research design addressed these research questions: (1) What are the self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self)?; (2) To what extent are the self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) affected by any of the following variables: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership?; (3) What are the self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS (Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Composure, Expressiveness, or Coordination/Interaction Management)?; (4) To what extent are self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents affected by any of the following

variables: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership?; (5) To what extent is there a relationship between the self-perceived leadership styles, initiating structure and consideration, and self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents?; and (6) To what extent are the relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents different between the groups in the following variables: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, and size of district as defined by student enrollment?

The population of interest was all public school superintendents in Kansas. The sample for this study consisted of 88 Kansas public school superintendents serving districts during the 2012-2013 school year. Hypotheses were tested using chi-square tests, Pearson product-moment correlations, and Fisher's z tests. The results indicated statistical significance regarding the number of respondents who identified a preference for consideration style of leadership. Statistically significant differences were found among the responses related to interpersonal communication competencies, with most superintendents indicating strong alignment with expressiveness and composure. Weak to moderate positive correlations were found between interpersonal communication competencies and leadership styles indicating that relationships do exist between the two that cannot be simply attributed to chance. The research supports the important connection between communication and effective leadership for educational leaders along with the critical need for more effective professional development.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my loving family who encouraged me to complete a program of study I never could have pursued if it were not for their support. For my husband, Bill, your love, patience, and never-ending encouragement mean so much. I will never be able to adequately express to you my love and gratitude. For my parents, Don and Barbara Wilson, your abiding love and enduring support have been constant throughout my life. Dad, you remain my most trusted and respected mentor, and I am proud to follow in your footsteps as an educator. The memories of traveling to Lawrence as a young child and spending time with Mom at the natural history museum while you completed your dissertation served to inspire my own doctoral pursuits. Words—spoken or written—will never be able to convey the love I have for you both.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Leadership has been studied extensively in various contexts and through a variety of theoretical lenses. It is generally thought to be defined by the traits, qualities, and behavior of the leader (Horner, 1997). During the past forty years, the impact of an individual's leadership style on organizational performance has been a topic of expanding interest among theorists, researchers, and practitioners working in the area of leadership (Avolio, 1999; Cannella & Rowe, 1995; Giambatista, 2004; Rowe, Cannella, Rankin, & Gorman, 2005). Organizational theorists assert that leaders of organizations adopt specific, classifiable styles of leadership in their efforts to carry out the responsibilities of their positions. Style of leadership is considered by some researchers (e.g., Awamleh & Gardner, 1999; Conger, 1999; Dubinsky, Yammarino, Jolson, & Spangler, 1995; Yammarino, Spangler, & Bass, 1993) to be particularly important in achieving organizational goals, and specifically to improving performance among subordinates (Barling, Weber, & Kelloway, 1996; Berson, Shamir, Avolio, & Popper, 2001; Zacharatos, Barling, & Kelloway, 2000).

School superintendents, like their counterparts leading other organizations, have been found to employ identifiable leadership styles. The most esteemed studies have focused on leader behaviors and leadership styles in a variety of professional settings including education at various levels of administration. The interaction between leaders' behavior and the environment in which they lead has advanced the importance of leader behavior that responds to the situation (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Horner, 1997). Landmark studies of leadership completed at Ohio State University and the University of Michigan

in the 1950s and 1960s resulted in the identification of two distinct constructs that describe how leaders carry out their roles: initiating structure and consideration. The early Ohio State leadership studies first offered evidence that task and relations behavior are distinct dimensions (Fleishman, 1953). Since that time, most theoretical frameworks of leadership have been built upon or incorporate these two factors of leadership action: high concern for people (consideration) and high concern for organizational production (initiating structure). According to Halpin (1966), "Effective leadership behavior tends most often to be associated with high performance on both dimensions" (p. 97).

The Ohio State University studies observed the effect of various leadership styles on group performance and job satisfaction (Stogdill, 1974b). Initiating structure, sometimes called task-oriented behavior, is the extent to which a leader conceptualizes the roles of both the leader and the subordinates in relationship to goal achievement. It relates to organizational structure, communication channels, and evaluation of group output and involves planning, organizing, and coordinating the work of subordinates. Consideration is the degree to which job relationships are associated with mutual trust, respect, friendship, and support from subordinates and informal communication. The hallmarks of consideration include showing concern for subordinates and offering support, recognizing the accomplishments of subordinates, and providing for their welfare. Based on these dimensions, four leadership styles were identified: (a) low structure - low consideration; (b) low structure - high consideration; (c) high structure - high consideration; and (d) high structure - low consideration. Stogdill (1974b) reported that the high structure - high consideration style of leadership had been found to be most effective.

Effective communication has been proposed as one of the most powerful components of a leader's style. Decades of research into the behaviors of leaders across a broad range of organizational settings confirm the importance of employing effective communication strategies and techniques if leaders are to be successful in achieving the desired organizational goals and objectives (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Clutterbuck & Hirst, 2002). Communication has been viewed by some as more than a just a component, strategy, or technique embedded in a leader's style – it is the essence of leadership (Barge, 1994; Hackman & Johnson, 1991; Vickrey, 1995). Leadership is the process that emerges from the application of interpersonal communication competence (Barge, 1994).

Communication competence is especially important in educational leadership roles. Wentz (1998) reported that research into the factors that foster leader effectiveness confirms the importance of communication skills to the effectiveness of educational administrators in all manner of assignments. According to Rowicki (1999), “The need for educators to effectively communicate to stakeholders cannot be overstated. Communication is at the very heart of education” (p. 2). Communication competence is essential if a leader is to energize and mobilize followers in the pursuit of a goal. According to Geddes (1993), “Effective communication is obviously central for the administrator who wishes to empower and involve various constituencies – school staff, students, parents, and community members” (p. 79). Collectively, these communication strategies and techniques make up what has been termed the interpersonal communication competency of a leader incorporating identifiable communication skills (Spitzberg, 1993).

Style of leadership and the accompanying strategies and techniques that characterize communication with board of education members, teachers, parents, students, and other school stakeholders are important determinants of a school superintendent's success (Clutterbuck & Hirst, 2002; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Although sweeping assertions about the importance of communication to effective leadership are frequently made by contemporary leadership theorists, there is a need for additional investigation into the significance of communication competency in the application of classic leadership styles and to determine what, if any, relationships exist between various leadership styles and the leader's communication competency (Doebert, 2004).

Background

Throughout the domain of leadership research (e.g., schools, businesses, government agencies, military services), the ways a leader communicates and the impact of that communication on followers is deemed critical to a leader's success (Wren, 1995). According to Salacuse (2006), "Communication takes many forms, both verbal and nonverbal. Communication is fundamental to building relationships and therefore to the ability to lead. Indeed, leadership could not exist without communication" (p. 23). Communication can be defined as a collaborative enterprise requiring an exchange of ideas and information, which results in understanding, action, and organizational success (Gallagher, Bagin, & Kindred, 1997). Meek (1999) emphasized the importance of leaders communicating effectively with their constituents as essential to leader success. Research conducted by the School Superintendency Institute highlighted communication as one of three major determinants of school district leadership effectiveness (Meek,

1999). Furthermore, effective communication was posited as the key factor in building and maintaining the other two key requirements for leader success—a positive and trusting relationship between the superintendent and board of education and a shared focus on the essential goals and objectives of the district (Sprunger, 2004).

Drucker (1974) observed that, irrespective of the nature or purpose of the organization, some styles of leadership are more effective than others in fostering the communication process between leaders and followers. The Policy Forum on Educational Leadership asserted that an increasingly essential dimension of leadership is the ability to communicate and collaborate with people inside and outside schools (Meek, 1999). Communication is a complex, multi-faceted construct that takes many forms, both verbal and nonverbal. Effective interpersonal communication skills have been suggested as the centerpiece of productive relationships and a vital contributor to effective leadership (Barge & Hirokawa, 1989; Clutterbuck & Hirst, 2002). Competency in communicating, a valued asset for any leader, results from adequate training, practice in the art of conversation, and a sense of timing.

Kansas offers a wide-ranging opportunity to study leadership behavior in demographically and geographically diverse environments. During the 2012-2013 school year, 482,798 students attended 1,338 public schools in the state of Kansas. These schools were organized into 286 unified school districts containing 348 high schools, 213 middle/junior high schools, and 777 elementary schools (Kansas State Department of Education [KSDE], 2012c). Each school district was led by a superintendent appointed and supervised by a local board of education. Every school district throughout the state was organized and administered under the direction of the Kansas State Department of

Education (KSDE) in accordance with the rules, regulations and statutes adopted by the Kansas legislature (Kan. Stat. Ann. §72-8202, 2009). Because of the state's distinct geography, Kansas school districts vary greatly in size and demographic composition. Small schools, large schools, rural, suburban, and urban schools can be found within the approximately 81,759 square miles comprising the state (KSDE, 2012b). Socioeconomic conditions differ from district to district. School districts with the lowest percentage of students living in poverty (7.88%) and with the highest percentage of poverty (87.95%) are both located in the geographic northeast quadrant of Kansas (KSDE, 2012b). The most recent data regarding the racial and ethnic makeup of the population of Kansas indicated 83.8% White, 5.9% Black, 1.0% American Indian/Alaska Native, 2.4% Asian, 0.1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 3.0% reporting two or more races (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Additional data indicated that 10.5% of Kansans report being of Hispanic or Latino origin (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

Within the public schools of Kansas, there is diversity among the achievement levels and abilities of students. The instructional programs delivered within the public schools of Kansas offer a broad range of services to meet these individual needs (KSDE, 2013). The most recent data available regarding special education statistics in Kansas is from the 2011-2012 school year. According to this report, 13.58% of students statewide were identified as needing special education services to address a variety of learning issues, emotional disorders, speech and language problems, and other special needs (KSDE, 2012b).

Kansas schools also reflect a wide range of diversity in student enrollment. The smallest school district in Kansas, Healy Public Schools located in Lane County, had an

enrollment of 69 students in 2012-2013. The largest school district in Kansas, Wichita Public Schools located in Sedgwick County, had an enrollment of 49,888 students for the same year (KSDE, 2012c). During the 2012-2013 school year, of the 286 school districts in Kansas, 241 were led by male superintendents and 45 were led by female superintendents (KSDE, 2012a).

Statement of the Problem

Much has been written about the existence of leadership styles, describing and labeling leader behaviors so they can be discussed, analyzed, researched, and applied (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2011). Leadership style is thought to incorporate important behavioral components including interpersonal communication competency. Effective interpersonal communication competency has been posited by Bennis (1989) as the centerpiece of productive leader-follower relationships and as one of the most important components of leadership style. A leader's success is dependent upon the possession of a specific communication skill set or competencies (Barge & Hirokawa, 1989). It is imperative that administrators are aware of communication channels within schools and different methods of communicating. Every organization has both formal and informal lines of communication, and schools are no different. Good administrators will engage with stakeholders and use the most effective and efficient line of communication depending on the situation at hand (Mourshed, Chijioke, & Barber, 2010; Wentz, 1998). However, school superintendents can only use the strategies, techniques, and skills with which they are familiar. A 2005 survey conducted by the National School Public Relations Association identified lack of communication expertise as a primary reason superintendents lose their jobs (National School Public Relations Association [NSPRA],

2008). According to the 2010 Decennial Study of the American School Superintendency, 33% of school superintendents reported a need for professional development and training in communication and public relations, and 25% identified needs related to interpersonal relations and group dynamics (Kowalski, McCord, Petersen, Young, & Ellerson, 2010).

A limited body of research has been published specifically investigating the relationship between leadership style and interpersonal communication competency in school administration. The current study was undertaken in the belief that identifiable leadership styles do exist and are evidenced in educational settings as in other venues and that the leadership effectiveness of Kansas school superintendents can be improved through awareness and training in leadership style and interpersonal communication skills.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to determine the leadership styles used by Kansas superintendents, identify the interpersonal communication skills used by Kansas superintendents, and determine what relationships exist between leadership style and interpersonal communication competencies. Additionally, data were collected and analyzed for the purpose of determining what, if any, impact the following demographic variables have on the leadership styles and the interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership.

Significance of the Study

Administrators, according to Laud (1998), spend the vast majority of their days communicating. School district leadership is people-intensive. Communication is essential to building effective relationships and foundational to a productive organizational climate. The current study has the potential to inform the development of training for both aspiring and practicing superintendents in the areas of leadership style and interpersonal communication competence. By defining leadership styles and the interpersonal communication competencies that support those styles, professional training can be developed to support aspiring leaders and practicing superintendents and enhance their effectiveness as leaders of school districts. The results of this study can provide the means for the self-assessment by school superintendents of their leadership skills and communication competencies. An additional contribution of this study is the potential for creating new processes and strategies to be used in the search for school leaders by matching leadership styles and communication skills with the perceived needs of the community.

Delimitations

To intensify the focus of research, Roberts (2004) recommended that researchers set self-imposed boundaries (delimitations) to “narrow the purpose and scope of the study” (p. 128). With that goal, delimitations were placed on this study of Kansas school superintendents. The researcher limited the study to public school superintendents in the state of Kansas and purposefully excluded a broader sample of educational leadership positions. The variables selected for inclusion in the study—gender, age, ethnicity, race, educational background, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a

superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined by student enrollment, pathways to leadership, and geographic location of the district—were limited and did not extend to the entire spectrum of geographic, cultural, or social variables in the school leader’s environment. Data was limited to a one-time collection of the self-reported leadership styles and communication skills of Kansas public school superintendents during the 2012-2013 school year. The study was further delimited by the choice of specific instruments, the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) – Form XII (Self) and the Conversational Skills Rating Scale (CSRS).

Assumptions

Lunenburg and Irby (2008) defined assumptions as the “postulates, premises, and propositions that are accepted as operational for purposes of the research” (p. 135). The first assumption of this study was that the leadership style of school superintendents is subject to measurement and description. The second and third assumptions were that all leaders, including school superintendents, participate in interpersonal communications with followers and that the content, skills, and processes with which they communicate can be identified, analyzed, and described. It was assumed that superintendents who chose to participate in this study answered the self-report surveys authentically and honestly regarding their leadership styles and communication skills. A final assumption was that the instruments used in this study have been researched and found to be reliable and valid.

Research Questions

This study sought to investigate the nature of the relationship between leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of school superintendents in Kansas. The following research questions were used to guide this study:

1. What are the self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self)?
2. To what extent are the self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) affected by any of the following variables: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership?
3. What are the self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS (Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Composure, Expressiveness, or Coordination/Interaction Management)?
4. To what extent are self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents affected by any of the following variables: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership?
5. To what extent is there a relationship between the self-perceived leadership styles, initiating structure and consideration, and self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents?

6. To what extent are the relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents different between the groups in the following variables: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, and size of district as defined by student enrollment?

Definition of Terms

Terms specific to this research have been identified and defined to assist the reader in an accurate interpretation of the intent and findings of this study. For these purposes, the following definitions are provided:

Altercentrism. Altercentrism refers to “the degree to which a person focuses on a partner during an interaction” (Manusov, 2009, p. 213).

Attentiveness. Attentiveness is “a tendency to be concerned with, interested in, and attentive to a conversational partner” (Spitzberg, 1993, p. 2).

Behavior. Behavior is “an individual’s exhibited or observed reaction(s) to the environment or the events occurring in that environment” (“Behavior,” *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 2012, p. 103).

Communication. Communication is the collaborative enterprise of exchanging ideas and information with the purpose of creating a shared understanding or action (Gallagher et al., 1997). Communication is “the production and exchange of verbal and nonverbal symbols and messages” (Barge & Hirokawa, 1989, p. 172).

Communication competency. The concept of “communication competency” refers to the knowledge of effective communication behaviors an individual possesses

and that individual's accompanying skill in choosing those behaviors or actions best suited to the situation (Spitzberg, 1993).

Communication strategy. A communication strategy is a planned series of actions aimed at achieving strategic objectives through the use of selected communication methods, techniques, and approaches. Communication strategies are born from clear objectives designed to achieve a successful solution to a perceived problem (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera, 2004).

Communication style. Communication style refers to the leader's intentional or unintentional strategies, methods, or manners of conversing, directing, or otherwise sharing information with others for the purpose of securing and enhancing their support, involvement, commitment, and good will for the accomplishment of identified goals and objectives (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera, 2004). Communication style is described as "the way one verbally and paraverbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered, or understood" (Norton, 1978, p. 99).

Competence. "Competence is a social standard, open to the prevailing subjective conceptions of propriety and efficacy" (Spitzberg, 1993, p. 4).

Competency. A competency is an embodiment of knowledge, understanding, and skills that are causally related to effective and/or superior performance in a job (Boyatzis, 1982, p. 23).

Composure. Composure reflects "avoidance of anxiety cues and an assertive or confident manner" (Spitzberg, 1993, p. 2).

Coordination. Coordination, for purposes of this research, refers to the entrance and exit from conversations so as not to disrupt the flow of the conversation (Spitzberg, 1993).

Embed. Embed means “to make someone or something an integral part of another entity, to place within another substance or body” (“Embed,” *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 2012, p. 376).

Expressiveness. Expressiveness is defined as “gestural and facial animation and topical verbosity” (Spitzberg, 1993, p. 2).

External publics. Curtis (2011) defined external publics as “people and organizations that are clients doing business with a firm or agency” (para. 5). As used in this study of educational issues, individuals comprising external publics include parents, patrons living in the district without children, business leaders, community leaders, parent-teacher associations, neighborhood or homes associations, citizen’s advisory groups, labor unions, religious leaders, civic groups, media representatives, political groups, professional groups, and others who have a stakeholder interest in the affairs of a school district.

Internal publics. According to Curtis (2011), internal publics are “people employed by a firm or an organization” (para. 5). For the purpose of this study of educational issues, the term internal publics describes board of education members, students, administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, education aides, administrative support staff, custodial/maintenance staff, food service workers, bus drivers, and others having authorization to attend or to participate in the programs and services of a school district.

Interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication is the “face-to-face communication that takes place any time messages are transmitted between two or more people” (McCutcheon, Schaffer, & Wycoff, 1994, p. G-5).

Leader. A leader is one who may legitimately or rightfully structure group behavior toward the completion of a task (Gouldner, 1959). Any individual who for a specific incident in time has the formal authority, expertise, or power of influence to direct the action of a group can be appropriately called a leader (McGregor, 1967).

Leadership. Leadership is the term used to describe the functioning relationships between leaders and followers in the pursuit and performance of a common task or goal (Leavitt, 1973).

Leadership style. Leadership style is a construct used to describe a leader’s personal orientation and esteem for co-workers revealed during the act of leading. Leadership style can be further defined as a leader’s preferred intentional or unintentional selection of methods and practices to be used to direct or assist others in the accomplishment of tasks or goals (Fiedler, 1967).

Stakeholder(s). A stakeholder is any person or group of persons, business, or corporate entity having interest, concern, or ownership in something. Stakeholders include students, society, and government participating in or benefiting from the provision of education (Campbell & Rozsnyai, 2002, p. 134).

Superintendent. For the purposes of this study, the superintendent of schools is defined as the chief administrator of a specified school district having responsibility for directing the educational programs and services within that district. In addition to the comprehensive responsibilities of maintaining, facilitating, and enhancing the educational

and academic opportunities for students in the school district, this individual is responsible for additional functions related to the operation of district programs and services including decision-making, influencing, budgeting, coordinating, communicating, and evaluating (Kan. Stat. Ann. §72-8202b, 2009).

Technique. A technique is “a specific action initiated to accomplish a limited or targeted goal.” A technique may also be described as “a specific method of accomplishing a desired aim” (“Technique,” *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 2012, p. 1,210).

Overview of the Methodology

A non-experimental quantitative research design was employed to investigate the extent to which leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies are related. Three instruments were used in the study. The first instrument was the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) – Form XII (Self) developed and tested by researchers at The Ohio State University. This instrument purported to measure the self-perceived styles of leaders in organizations. A second instrument, the Conversational Skills Rating Scale (CSRS) developed by Spitzberg (1993), was selected to measure interpersonal communication skills or competencies. The third instrument, a personal demographic data questionnaire, was designed by the researcher and consisted of 11 items utilizing multiple-choice, multiple-mark, and open-ended response formats. These instruments were combined into a single self-report instrument consisting of 61 items. Respondents were assured of confidentiality as a result of reporting data in aggregate form. The survey was administered using SurveyMonkey, an online data collection service resource.

The data gathered from the LBDQ – Form XII (Self), the CSRS, and the demographic questionnaire were analyzed to compare self-reported leadership behaviors and communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents and to identify any relationships that existed between their preferred leadership styles and the interpersonal communication skills employed by the superintendents to carry out their leadership responsibilities. Additional analyses were conducted to determine what impact the selected demographic variables of gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, pathways to leadership, and size of district had on the leadership styles and communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents. Chi-square tests, Pearson product-moment correlations, and Fisher's z tests were used to analyze the data in this study.

Organization of the Study

This chapter provided introductory and background information regarding the leadership styles and communication strategies of organization leaders. The focus of this research was the examination of leadership styles and interpersonal communication skills of Kansas public school superintendents along with the possible influence of selected demographic factors on school leader behavior. Chapter two presents a review of literature on organizational leadership, including the history of leader behavior theory, the construct of leadership style, the interpersonal communication skills of leaders, and the impact of selected demographic variables on leader behavior. Chapter three describes the methodology of this study and presents the research design, population and sample, instrumentation, measurement, data collection, and hypothesis testing procedures.

Chapter four reports the results of the study, including the influence of demographic variables, testing of the hypotheses, and results of the data analysis. Chapter five provides a summary of the study, interpretation of the results of data analysis, a statement of conclusions drawn, and recommendations for further study.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

The purpose of this study was to determine the leadership styles used by Kansas public school superintendents, identify their interpersonal communication competencies, and analyze the relationship between leadership style and communication competency. In preparation for the study, a thorough review of the literature surrounding organizational leadership was conducted to understand the historic and contemporary perspectives of leadership behavior and the nature and characteristics of the interpersonal communication competencies of leaders. This review should be understood as a comprehensive effort to investigate the phenomenon of leadership in the context of all types of organizations, exploring the role of interpersonal communication in the leadership process and identifying how the two constructs interact.

In this review of literature, special attention was given to the strategies and techniques of superintendents in their role as school district leaders. The actions of leaders that constitute leadership style were identified and described using a variety of literary sources. The strategies, techniques, and skills that constitute the interpersonal communication competencies of leaders were also examined in an effort to identify the potential impacts that these competencies have on leader effectiveness. Investigative attention was given to the theoretical construct of leadership style, the components of interpersonal communication competence, and the instruments that have been used to identify leadership styles and communication competency. The results of research into the mediating impact of leadership style and interpersonal communication competency on leader effectiveness are also reported in this review. The full range of leadership theory

from its earliest characterization of leaders as autocrats to the more contemporary characterization of leader behavior as charismatic, participatory, or transformational is presented.

Historical Perspectives of Leadership

The study of leaders and the concept of leadership have been extensive and varied. The desire to understand leadership has figured prominently in the quest for knowledge about how humans live and relate. Most theorists in the field of organizational behavior agree that “leadership is one of the world’s oldest pre-occupations of humankind” (Bass, 1990a, p. 49). Perhaps the most important social role in collective living is that of the leader (Wilds & Lottich, 1970). Early descriptions of a leader are found in the writings of the Greek philosopher Plato (circa 428 BC to 347 BC). Plato believed that leaders should demonstrate bravery, nobility, keenness of intellect, a capacity for memorization, even temperament, a magnanimous presence, and soundness of mind and body. It could be said that Plato originated the discussion of the role, purpose, and training of leaders (Jowett, 1892). Another historical student of leadership that is still studied today is Machiavelli (1513) who originated a set of principles for the would-be ruler. His text of leadership methods, *The Prince*, remains one of the first and most complete treatises on leadership style written for instructional purposes (Machiavelli, trans. 1952).

Prior to written commentary and conjecture about leadership, and long before any attempt to formally research the phenomenon of leadership, stories were handed down orally from group to group and generation to generation detailing the feats of great leaders who stepped forward to lead. These oral conversations traced the traits,

competencies, ambitions, strengths, and shortcomings of those who lead and described in fundamental ways the rights, privileges, duties, and obligations of leaders (Bass, 1990a).

Among the earliest commonly-held notions of how and why individuals among a social group rose to lead and govern has been labeled by leadership theorists as the Great Man Theory (Bass, 1990a; Bennis, 1989; Burns, 1978). This view of leadership was based on the notion that some individuals in a society are simply born to be leaders, by the unusual capabilities they reveal, by the bravery they exhibit, or by the cultural acknowledgement of the birthright to rule (Bass, 1990a). In the twentieth century, the Great Man Theory of leadership transformed into what became known as the Trait Theory of leadership (Allport & Odbert, 1936; Cattell, 1965), which held that some individuals possess personality features and extraordinary ways of dealing with others that result in their being chosen to lead by their peers. Over time, both the Great Man Theory and the Trait Theory fell into disfavor. Although both proclaimed the importance of personal attributes, unique personalities, or other inborn qualities, they were repudiated because they failed to take into consideration the mediating effect of the situation, environment, and actions of followers on leader effectiveness (Stogdill, 1948).

Historians note that leadership behavior has been important in shaping civilizations from ancient to modern times. Egyptian, Chinese, Greek, Roman, and Middle Eastern histories are in essence the oral and written story records of the leaders of these societies and their actions. The study of leadership reveals the impact of civilizations upon those who lead. The society in which the leader emerges shapes the leader as much as the leader shapes society. Ancient cultures culled their common

virtues from the heroes who emerged from their cultures to lead them: justice, judgment, wisdom, shrewdness, and valor—to name a few (Stogdill, 1989).

For thousands of years, the prevailing explanation was that persons who rose to positions of power and influence possessed traits, strategies, and techniques that they were either born with or had acquired through experience or by mimicking others. In modern times, the scientific, psychometric measurement of leadership began with the work of Binet (1903). Binet developed a measurement instrument that sought to separate children into groups of leaders and followers. His efforts to identify leaders and followers led to the development of the first instruments for testing human intelligence. Enamored by Binet's successes, other educators continued to expand and refine his work from the 1920s through the 1940s. Interest in intelligence testing in the education domain led to the application of psychometric measurement of leadership in other fields of human endeavor, e.g., business, sociology, military services, and other areas.

Organizational Leadership Theory

According to Clutterbuck and Hirst (2002), there are more books, articles, and dissertations on organizational leadership than any other topic of organizational theory. Kowalski (1999) noted that theories of leadership have proliferated and changed dramatically over time. Leadership theory evolved in three global phases: (1) Scientific Theory Phase, (2) Human Relations Phase, and (3) Leader Behavior Phase. One of the earliest modern efforts to describe the concept of leadership can be found in Taylor's (1911) Theory of Scientific Management, which described the roles of leaders as promoting "efficiency," "control," and "legitimate power" in organizational development (Kowalski, 1999, p. 72). The Human Relations Phase focused on the analysis of human

behavior and its impact on organizations. This phase emphasized democratic decision-making and the development of organizational culture. The Leader Behavior phase, which promoted the notion that leadership could best be understood by analyzing the actions and motives of leaders, was based on the assertion that “leadership focuses on determining organizational objectives and strategies, building consensus for meeting those objectives, and influencing others to work toward the objectives” of the organization (Kowalski, 1999, p. 73).

Yukl (2012) suggests that one of the most useful ways of classifying leadership theory and research is by the type of variable emphasized most by the author. He proposes three clusters of variables that are relevant for understanding leadership: (1) characteristics of leaders (e.g., traits, values, degrees of confidence, levels of optimism, skills, expertise, personal attributes, and leadership behaviors); (2) characteristics of followers (e.g., traits, values, self-concepts, confidence, skills, expertise, attributions, task commitment, job satisfaction, and cooperation); and (3) characteristics of the situation (e.g., type and size of the organization; position power/authority of the leader, task structure/complexity, organizational culture, environmental circumstances, and social-cultural values). Yukl (2012) contends that most leadership theorists emphasize one category more than the others as the primary basis for explaining effective leadership. Leader characteristics have been emphasized more than the other two perspectives over the past half-century.

Organizational Leadership Research

Another way of understanding the historical progression of leadership theory and research is to consider the approach taken in investigating leadership. Yukl (2012)

identified five approaches to leadership: (1) the trait approach, (2) the behavior approach, (3) the power-influence approach (also called the participatory approach), (4) the situational approach, and (5) the integrative approach (also called the charismatic or transformative approach). The first two approaches focus on the characteristics of the leader; the third and fourth approaches take a dual perspective focusing on both the characteristics of the leader and the characteristics of the followers; and the fifth approach considers all three—the characteristics of the leader, the characteristics of the followers, and the characteristics of the situation. Over time, leadership experts have come to view the phenomenon of leadership as a multi-faceted, complex, interrelated process influenced by a constellation of variables.

Although leadership has been a source of interest and speculation for centuries, the research-informed study of leadership has evolved as a major organizational discipline since the 1940s. For much of that time, the exploration of leadership has focused on the dyadic, one-on-one relationship between the leader and the follower. Much of the recent research has sought to establish the determinants of leader effectiveness, unmask the mysteries of how leaders influence followers to accomplish task objectives, and what traits, abilities, behaviors, sources of power, or aspects of the situation combine to determine leader effectiveness. Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) were among the first to study the mediating effects of the situation upon the leader's behavior. Their situational approach focused on the examination of the group and the situation in which the leader functioned. Lewin et al. (1939) conceptualized leader behavior in the format of leadership style and provided the nomenclature for discussing various styles of leading: authoritative, democratic, and laissez-faire. These early

observations of the leadership phenomenon spawned an abiding interest in understanding leadership as a shared process in teams, organizations, or social groups, as well as the effectiveness of collaboration as an approach to leadership.

Scientific management. Following the onset of the industrial revolution in the mid-1800s, interest in harnessing the benefits of effective leadership and its associated construct management, ballooned. Social commentary accelerated as the benefits and detriments of the application of artificial labor devices such as steam power, internal-combustion engines, and other scientific applications proliferated. Beginning in the late 1800s and for more than 40 years, organization theorists sought to apply the processes of science to understanding and influencing both leaders and followers in organizations. The systematic study of leader behavior began because of the need for better managers in industry and in the military services. Taylor (1911) formulated the theory of efficient organization leadership termed scientific management. Taylor's management theories were characterized by management planning, division of labor, training of workers for specific tasks, and rigid control of worker actions. The model strove to apply scientifically-designed efficiency movements, actions, and surroundings to the industrial workplace and to the military services in order to enhance productivity, increase owner profits, improve workers' salaries, and enhance military efficiency and effectiveness. A bevy of scientific theories of management followed in the years leading up to World War II, all designed to increase the influence and power of organizational leaders and to force increased efficiency and productivity from followers. There follows a list of scientific management approaches discussed in the literature of leadership in the scientific management phase:

- Gilbreth (1912) initiated efficiency studies that investigated the use of observers, specialists in efficient movement, structuring of time, and physical actions.
- Mayo's (1933/2003) Hawthorne studies of work conditions (i.e., impact of physical comfort conditions, impact of better lighting at worksites, importance of human issues in productivity) provided early focus on sociology of management and organizations.
- Maslow's (1943) "needs satisfaction" theories of increased productivity were based on the idea that workers will produce more if they feel they are achieving self-actualization.
- Weber's (1947) Bureaucratic Management Theory required leaders to be informed about the most effective and efficient ways of interacting with followers. It created, explained, and enforced through chain of command efficiency for the organization.
- Herzberg's (1959) Dual Factor Theory argued the need to satisfy both the intrinsic (e.g., feelings of self-regard, personal satisfaction, comfort, etc.) and extrinsic (e.g., salary, health conditions, family) needs of workers.

These experimental applications of scientific theory to organizational management introduced a new approach to describing and understanding leadership behavior, and provided the earliest rationale for considering the impact of the situation, circumstance, and environment of the followers' world on leadership. The foray into scientific evaluation and manipulation of organizations contributed substantially to

subsequent theorization and interpretation of leader behavior that followed in the 1960s and beyond.

Empirical studies of leadership. As the result of the attention given to the investigation of leadership and leader behavior, definitions of leadership have continued to flourish. Originally, the term leadership was plucked from the common vocabulary of conversation and incorporated into the technical jargon of the scientific community without the benefit of having been precisely defined. This has provided researchers with the opportunity to concoct their own definitions. Bennis (1959) noted the difficulty of creating a universal definition of leadership: “The concept of leadership eludes us or returns in another form to taunt us again with its slipperiness and complexity” (p. 260). Yukl (2012) observed that researchers usually define leadership in ways that suit their particular perspective on leadership. Among those definitions that have provided guidance to those who study leadership are the following:

- Stogdill (1950) defined leadership as the “process (act) of influencing the activities of an organized group in efforts toward goal setting and goal achievement” (p. 4).
- Several theorists have defined leadership as a relationship between leaders and followers with leaders influencing the group toward achievement of a common purpose or goal (Hemphill & Coons, 1957; House et al., 1999; Jacobs & Jacques, 1990; Leavitt, 1973; Rauch & Behling, 1984; Salacuse, 2006; Yukl, 2012).
- Leadership is the influential increment over and above mechanical compliance with the routine directives of the organization (Katz & Kahn, 1978).

- Leadership is the work of the heart, the head, and the hands and cannot be separated (Sergiovanni, 1992).
- Leadership is an interaction between the leader and the leadership situation (Fiedler, 1996).
- Leadership is the ability to step outside the culture (of the organization or group) and to start evolutionary change processes that are more adaptive (Schein, 2004).

Over the past six decades, intensive research efforts have been devoted to describing the behaviors of leaders and the reactions of followers. The redirection of attention from leadership traits and leader attribution to a more holistic attention to the situations in which leadership occurs has produced more sophisticated discussions of the practice of organizational leadership. Early studies in leadership, referred to as the Great Man and Trait theories, championed the notion that certain personal qualities or attributes were requisite for leadership. This explanation of the degree of effectiveness of leader behavior focused on personality explanations for leader actions. Early inquiries into leader behavior ignored the mediating effect of the situational variables embedded in the organization setting or in the surrounding environment in which leadership was occurring.

One of the first modern theorists to speculate on the interrelationship of the leader and the group was Freud, the celebrated father of psychoanalysis (Messick & Kramer, 2005). Freud (as cited in Messick & Kramer, 2005) reasoned that a leader was a person around whom the group formative process crystallized, a process he termed transference. He argued that group members transfer the attitudes and behavior patterns learned in the

primary family unit to the groups they join in later life. Groups, therefore, take on many of the characteristics of a family, transferring the father image to the leader. From Freud's reasoning, the success of a leader might therefore depend on his ability to sense the needs of the group and form an appropriate behavior response to those needs. However, until the mid-1920s, most discussion of leadership, including Freud's, was speculative with little documented research on the subject. In the 1920s, theorists expanded their interest in leadership using Freud's hypotheses as the backdrop. A major contributor to this interest in the leader-group interrelatedness was Barnard (1938/1968) who proposed leadership as a combination of technical proficiency and moral complexity. He emphasized the need for selecting and developing leaders with a balance of these two factors. Griffiths (1959) credits the advancement of leadership theory to Barnard noting "most, if not all, of the present theories of administration in the marketplace have their genesis in Chester Barnard" (p. 63).

As the study of leadership grew in scope and intensity, instruments were created in order to identify characteristics of leaders and ultimately to identify the style of behavior discernible in leaders. The attention given to the actions of leaders eventually superseded the notion of traits or personalities of leaders as the basis for leadership success. In the last 50 years, most leadership theorists have taken the advice of Halpin (1966) to abandon the notion of leadership as a trait or as a function of the leader's personality, and concentrate more globally on the behaviors of leaders in the context of the organizational situation. In the ensuing decades, Halpin and other contemporaries turned away from personality-oriented explanations of leader behavior to a more comprehensive examination of the totality of the process of leadership. Stogdill (1974a)

conducted an exhaustive review of literature on leadership and proposed six major behavioral factors associated with the exercise of organizational leadership:

- Capacity includes such attributes as intelligence, alertness, verbosity, originality, and judgment.
- Achievement is defined as scholarship, breadth of knowledge, position, economic success, athletic prowess.
- Responsibility is exemplified by dependability, initiative, persistence, aggressiveness, self-confidence, and a drive to excel.
- Participation includes involvement, sociability, cooperativeness, and adaptability of the leader.
- Status is defined as social position, economic level, or popularity.
- Situation refers to the mentality, skill level, needs, and interests of followers and the objectives or goals to be achieved.

Although efforts to introduce a behavioral explanation of leadership kept alive the interest in the innate traits and personality orientations of the “born leader” theories of the past, Halpin and others eventually found themselves moving toward a more comprehensive, integrated theorization of how leadership transpires in organizations. Salacuse (2006) synthesized existing theories of leadership in this way: For some students of leadership, leadership is a skill honed through practice and study. For others, leadership is a rare, natural, innate talent. Still others equate it with a particular position and the authority that goes with it. For yet others, leadership is a unique quality that a few gifted individuals possess but most others lack. Still, a different school of thought

holds that leadership does not arise from personal characteristics at all, but from situations.

Situational leadership theory. Stogdill (1948) was a pioneer in proposing leadership as a relationship phenomenon between persons, leaders, and followers (i.e., executives of corporations and employees) in a specific social setting and not one that would necessarily transfer to another situation. In a review of 124 leadership studies, Stogdill found that the trait approach to leadership yielded negligible results, contributing little of substance to the understanding of leadership. About the same time, Jenkins (1947) conducted studies of leadership in military settings and reasoned similarly that leadership success or failure was not explained by human traits, but by the situation in which leadership transpired. Both concluded that characteristics of leadership are more a function of a situation than of innate traits or qualities of the one who leads.

Since the 1960s, much attention has been drawn to the investigation and description of leadership traits, styles, behaviors, relationship with followers, and the situations encompassing leader actions. As trait theories of leadership lost favor with theorists, the stylistic approach to leadership sought to turn attention to the interactive behaviors characterizing a leader's relationship with followers. Adding complexity to the attempt to identify and characterize the act of leadership, Hollander (1971) and others sought to introduce the notion of situational impact, observing that the effectiveness of leadership is a function of the situation in which the leader and follower find themselves interacting. Earlier, Hemphill (1949), in a study of more than 500 groups, demonstrated empirically that variation in leader behavior is significantly impacted by situational variance. Hemphill (1949) concluded there were no absolute leadership behaviors, since

effective leadership must always take into account the specific requirements imposed by the nature of the groups being lead. Salacuse (2006) proposed:

The notion of leadership arising from qualities in the leader (should) be abandoned in favor of a focus on the relationship between a leader and the persons being led. The dynamics of leadership arise from a perceived 'connection' between the leaders and the led. (p. 23)

Hollander and Julian (1969) maintained that while the explanations of the influence of situation on leader behavior broadened the perspective of leadership, it was not a complete explanation of leader behavior. Individuals are not literally interchangeable in leader roles, and leaders and situations are not necessarily disparate, independent entities. Although leadership theorists, including Hollander and Julian (1969), expressed skepticism regarding the power of situational factors to determine leadership behavior, the impact of situation on leader success gained increased attention during the last quarter of the twentieth century.

Initiating structure and consideration. As researchers turned their attention to new and more complex environmental impacts on leadership, Halpin (1966) cautioned that the situational emphasis could be carried to excess, noting that to assert that leader behavior is determined exclusively by situational factors would be to deny the individual power the leader has to make determinations based on factors other than the current situation in which he/she is operating, and to dismiss the influence that other factors like personality and personal experience often have on relations between leaders and followers. In the decade that followed, Halpin and other students studying leadership moved away from an over-reliance on the situational approach to explain leader behavior,

anticipating the true hypotheses regarding leadership behavior to be a combination of factors and influences.

The concept of leadership has evolved from one exclusively associated with traits or personality factors of the leader in isolation from followers to a concept of leaders in the context of their followers. Halpin (1966) observed that early research into leadership was one seeking the “traits” of leadership that could discriminate between leaders and non-leaders, or successful leaders and unsuccessful leaders. Later, researchers turned almost exclusively to the interactive situation to discriminate leader effectiveness. Halpin (1966) argued the truth “lies in an area of middle ground” (p. 84). The middle ground to which Halpin referred is the behavioral approach to understanding leadership and it forms the platform for the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ). Halpin (1966) extolled two major methodological advantages of a behavior approach to understanding leadership:

In the first place, we can deal directly with observable phenomena and need make no a priori assumptions about the identity or structure of whatever capacities may or may not undergird these phenomena. Secondly, this formulation keeps at the forefront of our thinking the importance of differentiating between the description of how leaders behave and the evaluation of the effectiveness of their behavior in respect to specified performance criteria. (p. 86)

The behavioral approach was viewed as one concentrating on observed, rather than inferred, phenomena, greatly reducing the subjectivity of efforts to determine leader effectiveness. In 1945, a landmark shift to the study of leader behavior as a determinant of leader effectiveness began in earnest with the initiation of the Ohio State leadership

studies under the leadership of Shartle (Shartle & Stogdill, 1955). The first task for the Ohio State research group was one of formulating a definition of leadership that could serve as a departure point for the study of leadership effectiveness. Stogdill's definition accepted for these studies was "Leadership may be defined as the process (action) of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts toward goal setting and goal achievement" (as cited in Bass & Bass, 2008, p. 18). Hemphill (1949) designed the original measure of leader behavior, which was dubbed the Leader Behavior Description questionnaire (LBDQ). Factorial analysis was used to isolate two fundamental dimensions of leader behavior measured by the original 150-item instrument (Hemphill & Coons, 1957). These factors, initiating structure and consideration, have, over time, become the gold standard for measuring leader behavior in a host of leadership arenas. Halpin (1957) defined the two dimensions, initiating structure and consideration:

Initiating structure refers to the leader's behavior in delineating the relationship between himself/herself and members of the work-group, and in endeavoring to establish well-defined patterns of organization, channels of communication, and methods of procedure. Consideration refers to behavior indicative of friendship, mutual trust, respect and warmth in the relationship between the leader and the members of his/her staff. (p. 4)

There is much evidence that the dimensions of initiating structure and consideration characterize two very distinct functions of the process of leading others. Bowers and Seashore (1966) concluded that leadership concepts cluster around two categories of behavior, one concerned with people and one concerned with "getting the job done" (p. 238). Other researchers have described the same dichotomy: Getzels and

Guba's (1954) nomothetic and ideographic dimensions, Blake and Mouton's (1964) instrumental dimension versus the socio-emotional dimension, Cartwright and Zander's (1968) group achievement and group maintenance, and Barnard's (1938/1968) effectiveness and efficiency dimensions. For greater specificity in research, the two dimensions of the LBDQ can be further refined by creating a quadrant format for interpretation yielding four dimensions of leader style: (a) low structure - low consideration; (b) low structure - high consideration; (c) high structure - high consideration; and (d) high structure - low consideration. (Bass, 1990a).

From this series of studies, several methods of measurement were developed, not only those appropriate to leader behavior, but measures of organizational structure, personal interaction, work performance, responsibility, authority, delegation, and effectiveness. The studies conducted in the 1950s and 1960s at Ohio State University by Halpin (1966), Stogdill (1963), and others, and at the University of Michigan by Likert (1961) and his associates in the same general time frame, led to the development of multiple instruments for the measurement of leadership variables—including the self-report version, Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) XII (Self), used to gather data in the current study. In the Michigan studies conducted by Likert (1961), three types of leadership behavior were identified: production-(task) oriented behavior, employee-(relationship) oriented behavior, and participative leadership. Task-oriented behaviors were closely aligned with the initiating structure construct of the Ohio State studies; relationship-oriented behaviors were considered similar to the construct of consideration. The two studies differed in the Michigan studies suggested a third factor, participative leadership, in which subordinates were encouraged to participate in the

leadership process, especially when group supervision was emphasized rather than individualized supervision (Likert, 1961; Yukl, 1989).

Although many other theories and suppositions have been proposed in the past 50 years, the two general constructs of consideration and initiation of structure are still widely accepted and studied today. Horner (1997) contends that “justification seems to exist for giving continued attention to both task-related and people-related leadership behaviors because (by themselves) neither one has been shown to be the primary determinant of leader success” (p. 285). These constructs as they relate specifically to education have been investigated by researchers and scholars over time (Canales, Tejada-Delgado, & Slate, 2008; Richard, 2006; Toth & Farmer, 1999). Wolf (1974) articulated the impact of school leader behavior on followers:

School leaders' behavior affects far more than the simple content of their day-to-day decisions. Their consideration and initiating structure behaviors generate a "ripple effect" throughout the entire organization, reaching even into the community. It behooves all those who find themselves in leadership positions to become more aware of the power they wield through the ways in which they interact with subordinates. (p. 60)

The literature on leadership research demonstrates that inquiry research into leader behavior is still dominated by the questionnaire instruments originated in the Ohio State studies of leadership. The LBDQ scales remain a significant data collection instrument in conducting research nearly 50 years after their initiation (Richard, 2006). In recent decades, other researchers have sought to extend the findings from the Ohio State and Michigan University studies by determining whether the two dimensions lead

to success in leadership roles. Blake and McCauley (1991) and Bolman and Deal (2008) conceptualized leader behavior in dual dimensions as well, labeling the concepts as “concern for people” and “concern for production.”

Cacioppe (1997) championed the concepts originating from the Ohio State studies stating, “While it sounds simple, it is an extraordinary ability of a leader to know the mind of his/her followers and to act precisely and wisely at the time—for the good of both the task and the follower” (p. 339). Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2004) observed that transformational leadership and servant leadership orientations are little more than extensions of the leader behaviors identified by Halpin and others as initiation of structure and consideration for co-workers. Transformational leadership and servant leadership emphasize high concern for both people and production.

Transactional and transformational theories of leadership. In recent decades, the discussion of leadership style has focused on transactional and transformational models of leadership (Yukl, 2012). These discussions have been more about observed leader actions and the interactions between leaders and followers than the hypothesizing and empirically researching the nuances of leadership. Special attention has been given to describing the nature, intent, and outcomes of these two models of leadership behavior. Transactional leadership is characterized by an exchange between leaders and their followers for the “purpose of one or more goals the two parties deem to be individually or mutually important” (Kowalski, 1999, p. 77). This model of leadership appeals to the basic emotions such as fear, greed, and jealousy. Transformational leadership, a term originated by Burns (1978), is described as a style of leadership that seeks to influence others to make a commitment to a common goal, to pursue higher levels of morality, and

to address the higher-order needs of the individual and the organization. Burns (1978) described transformational leadership as the process of helping members of the organization (leaders and followers) to self-actualize and to achieve their personal best. Benefits of this style of leadership accrue to all parties in the interaction—individual followers, the leader(s), and the organization. Burns characterized transactional leadership as a phenomenon grounded in such psychological constructs as personal motives, interest, and needs.

According to Yukl (2012), Bass is the primary authority on the dichotomous transactional and transformational theories of leadership. Yukl (2012) provides the following paraphrase of Bass' notion of the two models of leadership:

To Bass, transactional and transformational leadership are distinct, but not necessarily mutually-exclusive concepts. Transformational leadership increases follower motivation and performance more than transactional leadership behavior, but effective leaders must include elements of both. (p. 302)

Bass (1990b) described transformational leaders as those who inspire employees to look beyond their own self-interests for the good of the organization. He hypothesized the function of leadership to be one of engaging followers in moral and ethical aspects of their work and lives, in self-fulfillment, and personal benefit, rather than simply activating their involvement in the pursuit of group or organizational goals.

Yukl (2012) provides his own description of transactional and transformational leadership:

With transformational leadership, the followers feel trust, admiration, and respect toward the leader, and they are motivated to do more than they originally

expected to do...In contrast, transactional leadership involves an exchange process that may result in follower compliance with leader requests, but is not likely to generate enthusiasm and commitment to task objectives. (p. 322)

Bennis (1994), following a multiple-year study of top-level leaders, isolated four essential ingredients of transformational leadership: (1) commitment to a vision for the group or organization, (2) integrity—self-knowledge, candor, and maturity, (3) curiosity—the desire to learn as much as possible, and (4) risk taking—the willingness to embrace errors as an opportunity to learn.

Charismatic and servant theories of leadership. In the 1980s, leadership researchers sought to understand how leaders influence followers to sacrifice their own self-interests and put the interests and goals of the organization first. The research findings led to the characterization of a set of leader behaviors as “charismatic leadership.” Charisma, a Greek concept meaning “divinely inspired gift,” was coined to characterize a model of leadership that put the welfare of followers before all other concerns in organizational management. The term was first used by Weber (1947) to describe followers’ perceptions of leaders who demonstrated this extraordinary perspective. Weber (1947) described this concept of leader charisma as the ability of a leader to offer a solution to a problem or situation in a way that attracts followers to believe unequivocally in the proposed vision. When the followers see that the vision is attainable, the view of the leader is reinforced, and followers view the leader as having extraordinary vision. Weber (1947) labeled this trait of extraordinary vision charisma.

In the last three decades, social scientists have resurrected Weber’s original conceptualizations of charisma in leaders, elevating it to a theory called “charismatic

leadership” (Conger & Kanungo, 1987; House, 1977; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). Conger and Kanungo (1987) first theorized charismatic leadership as an attribution phenomenon, something created for, bestowed upon, and belonging uniquely to an individual—a concept reminiscent of the Great Man theory of leadership and the trait explanation of leadership. Later, Conger and Kanungo (1998) refined their theory to include not only the followers’ attribution of charismatic qualities, but also the leader’s expertise and the conditions of the leadership situation.

Yukl (2012) synthesizes existing theories of charismatic leadership as having the following characteristics:

1. The leader has distinctive behavior that is observable or emotionally felt by followers (e.g., innovative and appealing vision, an appeal to higher values, unconventional behavior that energizes and inspires, willingness to model self-sacrifice, and exudes self-confidence and optimism).
2. The follower experiences personal satisfaction with the leader that translates into a desire to please and imitate. The leader’s approval of the follower becomes a follower’s component of self-worth creating an inner sense of obligation. The leader’s vision and values are internalized and promulgated by the follower.
3. Situational factors in the context of the leadership environment are especially important. Variables weighing on leader success include, but are not limited to, (1) level of fear and anxiety of followers, (2) urgency of the situation, (3) level of satisfaction with the status quo, and (4) degree of dissatisfaction of

followers with conventional solutions for organizational problems. (pp. 310-312)

Evidence of the existence of charismatic leadership in organizations can best be observed in the nature of the leader-follower relationship. Charismatic leadership has profound and unusually strong impacts on followers. When charismatic leadership is employed, followers perceive that the leader's beliefs are correct and they obey the leader, feel strong affection for the leader, are emotionally involved in the mission of the organization or group, have high performance goals, and express enthusiasm about their own abilities to contribute to the welfare of the organization or group (House, 1977; Shamir et al., 1993; Yukl, 2012).

Charismatic leadership theory proposes a way of leading others, but is not a style that leaders adopt intentionally since it is in actuality the reaction of followers to a leader's attributional behavior. It is essentially a subjective interpretation of the traits or attributes that a leader is displaying filtered through the emotional experiences of followers. Much has been written about charismatic leader behaviors in recent decades, but empirical research into the nature, characteristics, impacts, and effectiveness of this model of leadership is limited. The pages of history are replete with charismatic leader episodes that have had disastrous impacts on organizations and groups, i.e., Adolph Hitler, Saddam Hussein, and Osama Bin Laden. Available research suggests that charismatic leadership has a limited, transitory impact on organization effectiveness and is not a beneficial leader style for most organizations (Yukl, 2012).

Servant leadership is a recent leadership construct that has created a great deal of discussion in recent decades. Its origins can be attributed to Greenleaf (1977), who

proposed that service to followers is the primary responsibility of leaders and the true essence of ethical leadership. Servant leadership is about helping others accomplish shared objectives by building capacity through personal development, empowering followers by sharing authority, and by organizing work in ways that promote the health and long-term welfare of followers (Yukl, 2012).

Research into the efficacy of servant leadership is limited, but ongoing (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Dennis & Bocarnea, 2005; Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008). Research available on the servant leadership model indicates that followers and the organization are positively impacted by leaders following servant leadership models, i.e., there is an increased commitment to the goals of the organization, followers experience enhanced self-efficacy, and there is an indication of greater loyalty to the organization and leadership. Some negative impacts have been noted, i.e., when economic issues require reductions in staff or staff services follower morale suffers, it is more difficult to discipline followers in a climate of empathic acceptance of personal inadequacies, and salary cuts made necessary by economic downturns meet with greater resistance in a climate of heightened empathy for the welfare of each follower (Anderson, 2009; Graham, 1991).

Interpersonal Communication Competencies of Leaders

Leadership is inherently communicative. There is frequent discussion in the literature regarding the element of communication as the essential ingredient for effective leadership. Since Barnard (1938/1968), in his treatise on leadership, concluded that communication was the main task of managers and executives, leadership theorists have placed an emphasis on communication as the key to organizational success. In

contemporary organizational theory, communication is viewed as more than a technique or component of leadership; it is the essence of leadership (Barge, 1994; Hackman & Johnson, 1991; Macik-Frey, 2007; Vickrey, 1995). Communication is viewed as fundamental to building relationships and therefore to the ability to lead. Indeed, leadership could not exist without communication (Salacuse, 2006).

Whatever the style of the leader, the importance of the interpersonal communication competency of the leader is demonstrated daily in organizations. Bennis (1989) conducted a landmark 2-year interview-driven study of 90 leaders, which included 60 chief executive officers of leading corporations and 30 standout leaders in the public sector, for the purpose of isolating the basic competencies of successful leaders. Bennis (1989) factor-analyzed the information from the study and found four recurring management competencies consistent with leadership success:

1. Management of Attention is the leader's ability to develop and communicate vision.
2. Management of Meaning is the leader's ability to communicate clearly and successfully.
3. Management of Trust relies on the leader's ability to be consistent in communication and action.
4. Management of Self is the development of credibility with followers.

Bennis (1989) concluded that communication is central to all of these competencies.

Spinks and Wells (1992) reported in a follow-up study that used Bennis' four essential competencies of highly successful leaders. The research conducted by Spinks and Wells (1992) sought to determine what relationship, if any, could be found between

the perception of business students regarding the competencies identified by Bennis and the perceptions of these competencies by business professors. While business students prioritized the competencies differently, both students and professors agreed on the importance of these competencies to leadership success. Spinks and Wells (1992) summarized their study with the statement: “Effective leadership can be exercised only through effective communication at all levels of an organization” (p. 27).

In a study of corporate leaders, Rosen and Brown (1996) identified seven daily tasks of effective leadership, all of which require communication in many different forms:

1. Direction: Negotiating the organizational vision;
2. Integration: Making individuals a team;
3. Mediation: Settling leadership conflicts;
4. Education: Teaching the educated;
5. Motivation: Moving other leaders;
6. Representation: Leading outside the organization; and
7. Trust Creation: Capitalizing your leadership. (p. 7)

Measures of interpersonal communication competence. The measurements of interpersonal communication competence are as varied as the definitions found in research. Rubin and Graham (2004) compiled a list of more than 165 communication measures from a review of research literature related to interpersonal communication competence. Due to the multi-dimensional nature of communication, some have attempted to measure it globally, as does the Interpersonal Communication Competence Scale (ICCS), while others have focused on groups or subsets of the global measure

(Rubin & Martin, 1994). Others still have narrowed their study to a single aspect of communication like communication avoidance as measured by the Shyness Scale (Cheek & Buss, 1981) or cognitive flexibility as measured with the Cognitive Flexibility Scale (Rubin & Martin, 1994).

Spitzberg (1993) developed the Conversational Skills Rating Scale (CSRS) to measure perceived competence in interpersonal interaction and communication. Interpersonal communication competence concerns the appropriate and effective management of interaction among people. The achievement of interpersonal communication competence presupposes the ability to manifest various skills of interaction with others in various communication contexts, i.e., verbal interchanges, non-verbal interactions, written communication, other. Spitzberg (1993) was motivated to create the instrument because of his conviction that survival in a social world depends upon the extent of one's interpersonal communication competence and one's acquisition of the requisite communication skills needed to demonstrate interpersonal communication competence. The Conversational Skills Rating Scale (CSRS) was developed in response to the need for a psychometrically-sound instrument for assessing self or other interpersonal communication skills in the context of conversation. Over the years, a variety of formats have been introduced to meet the increased sophistication of computer-driven, electronic communication. In its contemporary form, the CSRS consists of 25 behavioral items comprising four skill clusters (attentiveness/altercentrism, composure, expressiveness, and coordination/interaction management) and five general impression items that are designed to validate the behavioral items. Responses are scaled on a continuum ranging across *Inadequate*, *Fair*, *Adequate*, and *Excellent*. Two of the

four skill clusters, composure and expressiveness, measure more leader-specific competencies that do not require participation from the follower (Sutherland, 2011). After reviewing existing measures of communication competence, the CSRS was developed in light of the following needs: a measure that could produce testable and valid predictions of communicative competence, a measure offering an “inferentially pure level of abstraction” within the items tested, and a measure offering flexibility in both its format and context for application (Spitzberg, 1993, p. 7).

Interpersonal Communication Competencies of School Superintendents

A school superintendent’s role is one of leading a school district and all of its many stakeholders, which requires competence in communication skills. Although he was addressing the full range of organizational leaders, Covey (1989) identified communication as “the most important skill in life” (p. 48). He considered skill in communication the most powerful and most important characteristic of highly effective organization leaders and described it as the habit of “seeking first to understand then to be understood” (Covey, 1989, p. 52). Central to the current study was the need for leadership skills and communication competency on the part of superintendents.

Several theories have been advanced through the years to explain the nature of communication (Phillips, Bult, & Metzger, 1974; Rubin, 1990). According to Rubin (1990), the term communication competence first appeared in research journals in 1974. The concept, however, dates back much further to the philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome. In more recent times, communication scholars and researchers have worked hard to understand and describe what it means to be a competent communicator (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984). The communication competence skills construct developed by Spitzberg

and Cupach (1984, 2002) offered clearly defined and measurable leader communication behaviors.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, scholars sought to examine empirically communication competence. Wiemann (1977) developed five dimensions to explain the concept of communicative competence. People who are judged as communication competent demonstrated significantly more of the following behaviors: affiliation/support and empathy, social relaxation, and smooth management of their interactions using more management cues (Wiemann, 1977). The element of ethics and responsible communication was introduced and advanced by researchers, most notably Littlejohn and Jabusch (1982), as an essential component for communicative competence and effectively creating meaning and developing relationships with others. Littlejohn and Jabusch (1982) proposed a theoretical model of communication competence comprised of four principal components: (a) process understanding, (b) interpersonal sensitivity, (c) communication skills, and (d) ethical responsibility. The importance of ethics has been underscored by the National Communication Association (1999): “Ethical communication is fundamental to responsible thinking, decision-making, and the development of relationships and communities within and across contexts, cultures, channels, and media” (para. 1).

Arguably, communication is an essential competency needed by superintendents and educational leaders to be successful in fulfilling their job responsibilities. Sophie (2004) notes that “research substantiates that effective communication is a key component of effective leadership” (p. 29). While the importance of communication for success in the workplace has been documented through research (Hildebrandt, Bond,

Miller, & Swineyard, 1982; Kim & Wright, 1989), the skills necessary for interpersonal communication competence still lack definition and specificity (Sophie, 2004).

Doebert (2004) defined effective communication as “ensuring open and clear communication among the groups and individuals of an organization” (p. 23). The National Communication Association (1998) identified the following essential communication competencies:

1. Identifying and adapting to changes in audience characteristics;
2. Incorporating language that captures and maintains audience interest;
3. Identifying and managing misunderstandings;
4. Demonstrating credibility;
5. Demonstrating competence and comfort with information;
6. Recognizing time constraints of a communication situation;
7. Managing multiple communication goals effectively;
8. Demonstrating attentiveness through nonverbal and verbal behaviors;
9. Adapting messages to the demands of the situation or context;
10. Incorporating information from a variety of sources to support messages;
11. Identifying and using appropriate statistical data;
12. Using motivational appeals to build on values and expectations;
13. Developing messages that influence attitudes, beliefs, and action;
14. Managing and resolving group conflicts effectively;
15. Approaching and engaging in conversation with new people in new settings;
16. Negotiating effectively;
17. Allowing others to express different views and attempt to understand them;

18. Effectively asserting oneself while respecting others' rights;
19. Conveying empathy;
20. Understanding and valuing differences in communication styles;
21. Being open-minded about and receptive of another's point of view;
22. Motivating others to participate and work effectively as a team;
23. Understanding and implementing different methods of building groups;
24. Setting and managing realistic agendas;
25. Leading meetings effectively;
26. Understanding and adapting to people from other cultures and organizations;
- and
27. Identifying important issues or problems and drawing conclusions. (pp. 22-24)

Geddes (1993) offered an explanation of the basics of effective communication as it relates to education by emphasizing the importance of improving education through communication that empowers teachers. From survey data, Geddes (1993) offered that improving communication within the school organization leads to increased staff autonomy, improved climate, and student learning. The emphasis on matching appropriate communication style with the situation, the established goals and objectives, and the needs of participants were keys to effective communication. Leaders should recognize that a message has both content and relational components.

According to Wyant, Reinhard, and Arends (1980), "Skills which are fundamental to good communication and effective leadership are directness, clarity, and the ability to elicit information from others" (p. 166). Perceptions of the source and content of a message may impact the effectiveness of the message. Therefore, communication should

be appropriate for the situation and applied in a timely fashion to ensure the desired message is transmitted.

Hoy and Miskel (1987) identified five methods necessary to send/communicate a message effectively: (a) the use of appropriate and direct language, (b) clear and complete information, (c) multiple channels, (d) face-to-face encounters, and e) minimization of physical and physiological noise (with repetition of the message when possible). Another equally important component for effective communication is active listening. This requires the willingness and ability to listen to complete messages and respond appropriately.

Several studies connect the importance of communication to leadership. Lunenburg and Ornstein (2011) cited two studies that indicated administrators spend 80% of their day involved in communication activities. Educators are involved in some form of communication more than 200 times per day (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2011; Papa & Graham, 1991; Reyes & Hoyle, 1992). The modern superintendency is increasingly complex and politically driven requiring individuals fulfilling this role to be able to effectively relate to and build trust with an ever more diverse community (Blumberg & Blumberg, 1985; Fjelstad, 1990; Herron, 2009). Effective school leaders must be able to communicate with a broad range of stakeholder and constituent groups. They must have the ability and competence to communicate with all of these groups to work together to accomplish shared goals and achieve a shared vision. The position of school superintendent is complex, and educational leaders need strong conceptual and technical skills to effectively shape public education and direct school organizations toward change (Soler, 1991). A policy brief from the American Association of School Administrators,

the largest national organization of school leaders, called for school leaders of today to change their focus from the Bs (budgets, books, buses, bonds, and buildings) to the Cs (communication, collaboration, and community building) (Kochamba & Murray, 2003). Current trends in education today emphasize development and promotion of shared leadership and collaboration among groups, such as Professional Learning Communities, requiring collaboration, communication, and the ability to build consensus (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2006). Multiple studies and surveys of administrators support the belief that strong communication skills are among the top requirements for leaders to be successful in today's schools (Lester, 1993; Smith & Greene, 1990).

The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) created standards for school leaders based on research of best practice. The Council of Chief State School Officers (2008), with representatives from 24 state education agencies and various professional associations, researched productive educational leadership to create these standards focused on defining a school administrator as an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by:

1. Facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.
2. Advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
3. Ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
4. Collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

5. Acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
6. Understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context. (pp. 14-15)

These standards, utilized in college and university preparatory programs and as a basis for educational leadership licensure, are intended to provide a benchmark for effective educational leadership, and each of the standards requires communication skills.

The inability to communicate is often cited among the top reasons for the non-renewal or dismissal of superintendents. Porterfield and Carnes (2008) referenced recent studies that support the idea that what brings the leader down is his or her inability to communicate with staff members and the community. In fact, according to Bagin (2007), the “lack of communication and failure to keep people informed” was the primary reason given by board of education members for the failure of a superintendent’s tenure (p. 6). The positive relationship between competent interpersonal communication ability and leader effectiveness and success was found to be documented in research both organizationally and specifically related to education. The literature and research lends support to the importance of training and ongoing professional development in the areas of communication and leadership. According to Wentz (1998), “Attention to communication skills and techniques that emphasize strategies used by outstanding education leaders could mean success for those already working in school leadership, as well as those who aspire to such work” (p. 112).

Summary

The study of leadership is an ever-evolving exploration that has changed over time to meet the new work and cultural environments. Although one might think it well-

worn by now, the subject of leadership continues to fascinate. This study was envisioned as one which would spotlight the role of interpersonal communication skills as an integral, essential component of the act of leading others.

The review of literature related in this chapter has served to inform the research undertaken in this dissertation. The purpose has been to trace the history of the efforts of scholars and researchers to understand the nature, origins, and impacts of leadership in all aspects of society; to identify and describe the many theories developed to explain leadership behaviors; and to investigate the relationship of leadership behaviors and interpersonal communication competencies. The position of the superintendent of schools includes the functions of leader and communicator as critical roles. A key responsibility of the superintendency is the ability to communicate the goals and objectives of the organization to the public. A lack of communication competence has been noted as a primary reason for dismissal of superintendents. For these reasons, this study was developed to examine the relationships between the self-perceived leadership style and communication competency of public school superintendents in Kansas. Chapter three provides an explanation of the methods used to address the research questions posed in chapter one.

Chapter Three

Methods

The purpose of the study was to determine the leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents, as defined by Stogdill (1963) as “initiating structure” and “consideration;” the interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents, as defined by Spitzberg (1993) as “attentiveness,” “composure,” “expressiveness,” and “interactive management;” and to examine the extent of the relationships between leadership style and communication competencies. The investigation was designed to fulfill a need for a better understanding of the nature of school district leadership in Kansas, to identify the styles of leadership used by Kansas superintendents, and to enhance understanding of the relationship between the leader behaviors and communication competencies.

This chapter details the design of the study and the process used to address the study’s research questions. It is organized as follows: an explanation of the research design used to conduct the study; a description of the population, sample, and sampling procedures; a discussion of instrumentation; an accounting of data collection techniques; a description of data analysis and hypothesis testing; and an explanation of limitations of the study.

Research Design

A non-experimental quantitative research design guided this study. This approach was well-suited to investigate the extent to which leadership style and communication competency are related. Quantitative research is a means for testing objective theories through the examination of the relationship among variables (Creswell, 2009).

Instruments were adapted so that specific variables could be measured to obtain quantifiable data, which in turn can be analyzed using statistical procedures.

According to Creswell (2009), survey research is frequently employed to carry out quantitative studies. “Survey research provides a numerical description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population” (Creswell, 2009, p. 12). A survey approach is an efficient method for broadly collecting data and measuring multiple variables. Prior to initiating the study, the following variables were identified: leadership style, interpersonal communication competency, gender, age, years of experience as an educator, years of experience as superintendent, years in current position, size of school district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership. These variables were investigated, but for purposes of this study, they were not defined as independent or dependent.

Population and Sample

The population of interest for this study was individuals employed as public school district superintendents in the state of Kansas. During the 2012-2013 school year, there were 286 unified public school districts in Kansas, each led by a superintendent of schools (KSDE, 2012c). Table 1 contains the frequencies and percentages of school districts by size strata.

Table 1

Kansas School Districts by Enrollment Categories

Enrollment Category	Frequency	%
Fewer than 500 students	128	44.7
500-999 students	70	24.4
1,000-4,999 students	67	23.7
5,000 or more students	21	7.3

Note. Analysis of Kansas State Department of Education Public School by Headcount Report. Adapted from “Headcount Enrollment Report in Kansas Public Schools 2012-2013,” Kansas State Department of Education, 2012b.

Of the 286 superintendents employed in Kansas in 2012-2013, 241 were male and 45 were female (KSDE, 2012a). Table 2 indicates the number and percentage breakdown of male and female superintendents by enrollment category.

Table 2

Gender of Kansas Superintendents by Enrollment Categories

Enrollment Category	Male		Female	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Districts with fewer than 500 students	106	82.8	22	17.2
Districts with 500-999 students	66	94.3	4	5.7
Districts with 1,000-4,999 students	52	77.6	15	22.4
Districts with 5,000 or more students	17	81.0	4	19.0

Note. Analysis of KSDE 2012-2013 Directory of Superintendents cross-referenced with the KSDE Public School by Headcount Report. Adapted from the “Directory of Superintendents for Kansas Unified School Districts,” Kansas State Department of Education, 2012a, pp. 1-11, and the “Headcount Enrollment Report in Kansas Public Schools 2012-2013,” Kansas State Department of Education, 2012b.

The sample for the study was the Kansas public school superintendents who voluntarily responded to the survey.

Sampling Procedures

Total population sampling, a purposive sampling technique, was used in this study. Total population sampling allows for examination of an entire population that shares a specific set of characteristics (Creswell, 2009; Lund Research, Ltd., 2012). This technique was selected due to the limited size of the population of public school superintendents in the state of Kansas. The *Directory of Superintendents for Kansas Unified School Districts* (KSDE, 2012a) was used to create a list of the population. The directory included a list of the 286 public school districts in Kansas and the associated superintendent for each district, which was the population of interest for the study.

Instrumentation

Surveys are utilized as a method of collecting data from a group in a consistent and systematic way. Babbie (1990) suggests that “survey researchers need to find ways of procuring a sample that will represent the population they are learning about” (p. 99). Three instruments were utilized in this study.

Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ). The first instrument selected to identify the leadership styles of Kansas superintendents was the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) – Form XII (Self) (Stogdill, 1963). Staff members of the Ohio State leadership studies developed the initial LBDQ under the direction of Shartle (Halpin, 1957). Hemphill and Coons (1957) constructed the original questionnaire, and Halpin and Winer (1957) identified initiating structure and consideration as two fundamental dimensions of leader behavior. These dimensions were

formulated from the results of factor analysis. The questionnaire was revised over time and employed in a wide range of studies of leaders including military, political, law enforcement, corporate, industrial, and community leaders (Stogdill, 1963). Form XII, redesigned by Stogdill (1963), represents the fourth revision of the questionnaire. All versions of the questionnaire measure leadership behavior in two fundamental dimensions labeled initiating structure and consideration. According to Halpin (1957) in the manual for LBDQ administration:

Initiating structure refers to the leader's behavior in delineating the relationship between himself and the members of his group, and in endeavoring to establish well-defined patterns of organization, channels of communication, and ways of getting the job done. Consideration refers to behavior indicative of friendship, mutual trust, respect, and warmth in relationship between the leader and members of the group. (p. 1)

In an effort to counter criticism that two factors seemed insufficient to account for all of the observable variance in leader behavior, Stogdill (1963) constructed 12 subscales of leadership that could be used to explain the variance and to support the hypotheses of the two fundamental dimensions of leadership, initiating structure and consideration (Stogdill, 1963). The LBDQ – Form XII (Self) has been revised multiple times since its origination in 1963 using research results, updated hypotheses, and additional subscales to more accurately reflect the two dimensions of leadership. Stogdill's (1963) self-report survey format, using the subscales and response format of the original instrument, was developed to obtain the perceived personal assessment of behavior from leaders. There are hundreds of studies that have utilized the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) as a research

instrument of choice in leadership studies (Chemers, 1997; Fleishman, 1973; Judge, Piccolo, & Ilies, 2004).

For this study, LBDQ – Form XII (Self) was selected as the instrument with which to gather data from Kansas public school superintendents. While the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) contains 12 subscales, only the initiating structure and the consideration scales were used in this study. The subscales of initiating structure and consideration in the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) each contain 10 items. The actual items on the two subscales of initiating structure and consideration are presented in Table 3. On each of these subscales, behavior is assessed on a 5-point scale regarding the perception of frequency for behavior. Additionally, even though initiating structure and consideration are often perceived as sharply divided polar extreme dimensions, leadership behavior can independently range on continuums of high to low on each scale (Yukl, 1989). As a result, a leader could be evaluated as either high or low in both initiating structure and consideration or rated high on one dimension and low on the other.

Table 3

Subscale Items of Initiating Structure and Consideration

Initiating Structure	Consideration
Acts as spokesperson of the group	Is friendly and approachable
Encourages the use of uniform procedures	Does little things to make it pleasant to be a member of the group
Tries out his/her ideas in the group	Puts suggestions made by the group into operation
Makes his/her attitudes clear to the group	Treats all group members as his/her equals
Decides what shall be done and how it shall be done	Gives advance notice of changes
Assigns group members to particular tasks	Keeps to himself/herself
Makes sure that his/her part in the group is understood by the group members	Looks out for the personal welfare of group members
Schedules the work to be done	Is willing to make changes
Maintains definite standards of performance	Refuses to explain his/her actions
Asks that group members follow standard rules and regulations	Acts without consulting the group

Note. Adapted from “Manual for the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire, Form XII,” by R. Stogdill, 1963, p. 7.

The LBDQ – Form XII (Self) is the result of ongoing research in the area of leadership stemming from the original Ohio State leadership studies. Empirical research led to the identification of two broad areas of leader behavior, initiating structure and consideration. These two subscales have been used widely in research. According to

Fleishman (1995), initiating structure and consideration are among the most robust of leadership constructs.

Measurement. Because of the large population of Kansas superintendents targeted by this research, the relative ease of response of the condensed self-report version, the expansive geography of the research population, and other complexities, Stogdill's (1963) shorthand self-report version seemed a logical choice, one adaptable to electronic mail delivery and return. The participants responded *Always, Often, Occasionally, Seldom, or Never* by selecting the corresponding multiple-choice answer of A, B, C, D, or E, which was logically inverted. The scoring for each item was logically inverted with A scored as 5, B scored as 4, C scored as 3, D scored as 2, and E scored as 1. In the LBDQ – Form XII (Self), a few items are worded so that a given response, i.e., *Always*, represents an unfavorable rating for one item but a favorable rating for another. Of the items scored for this study, in order for the researcher to compare or aggregate the responses appropriately, items 12, 18, and 20 were scored in reverse order (A = 1, B = 2, C = 3, D = 4, E = 5). A higher response, as reflected by the scoring of the numbers, indicated a stronger perceived leader behavior as measured by that item on the LBDQ – Form XII (Self).

Validity and reliability. Research-based evidence of the validity and reliability of the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) has been documented. Lunenburg and Irby (2008) defined validity as “the degree to which an instrument measures what it purports to measure” (p. 181), and reliability as “the degree to which an instrument consistently measures whatever it is measuring” (p. 182).

The LBDQ is the pioneer instrument in the measurement of leader behaviors, and while other instruments have been developed over time, significant research has concluded that the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) remains valid and the best measure of the dimensions of consideration and initiating structure (Judge et al., 2004; Knight & Holen, 1985; Schriesheim & Kerr, 1974). A meta-analysis of the relationship of initiating structure and consideration with leadership provided support for the validity of these subscale constructs in conducting research related to leadership (Judge et al., 2004). Face validity, essentially a first glance at whether the items cover the content intended by the test developers, appears relatively strong according to the *Mental Measurements Yearbook* test review (Mitchell, 1985). Additionally, the quantitative meta-analysis supports construct validity of the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) instrument with validities for each construct generalized across criteria, measures, and sources and over time (Judge et al., 2004). In research performed by Stogdill (1969), scenarios were created reflecting each subscale description in the LBDQ – Form XII (Self). Stogdill (1969) found the descriptions of leader behaviors that paralleled with the coordinating subscales. These results support the validity of LBDQ – Form XII (Self) subscales for measuring their corresponding leadership behaviors.

The reliability of the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) appears relatively strong. Internal consistency coefficients using a modified Kuder-Richardson formula were reported between .70 and .80 (Stogdill, 1963). Internal consistency is an estimate of the extent to which an individual who responds in a certain manner to a survey or test item will tend to respond in the same way to other survey or test items (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). The strength of internal consistency of the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) is important to this study

to ensure that the items of the two subscales represent only one dimension. Test-retest reliability is high for consideration, with coefficients in the .70s, and measurably lower for initiating structure, with coefficients ranging between .57 and .71 (Stogdill, 1963). The LBDQ – Form XII (Self) has been found to be a reliable and valid measure of leadership behavior. The LBDQ – Form XII (Self) data obtained from the study's sample was analyzed for internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha. The result ($\alpha = .721$) indicated moderately strong internal consistency.

Conversational Skills Rating Scale (CSRS). A second instrument was used in this study to measure communication competencies. To collect data on the interpersonal communication behaviors of the research population, an examination of several instruments was undertaken to identify the instrument best suited for the correlational analysis planned for this research effort. Subsequently, the instrument chosen for this study was the Conversational Skills Rating Scale (CSRS) developed by Spitzberg (1993).

Following an extensive literature review, an examination of other communication assessment instruments, and a pilot study to test draft conceptualizations, Spitzberg (1993) and his colleagues designed the CSRS to assess perceived competence of leaders in specific areas of interpersonal communication. The instrument has been used in a variety of situations in which communication competency is required for success. In evaluating the CSRS, Morreale and Backlund (1996) found the rating procedures and scale items to be clear and well defined. They described the CSRS as user-friendly and affirmed the instrument as an effective tool in measuring interpersonal skills (Morreale & Backlund, 1996).

Measurement. The CSRS was selected to measure the communication competencies of Kansas superintendents in this study because of its demonstrated reliability as a research instrument for assessing general situational tendencies through the administration of the self-rating format. According to Spitzberg (1993), “The scaling of the instrument permits the rating of both positive and negative behaviors on the same measure because the rating scale is itself a continuum of competence” (p. 5). The instrument was developed to provide a measurement tool for self-assessment of interpersonal skills in a conversational context (Spitzberg, 1993). The scale consisted of 30 items, with the first 25 divided into four subgroups or skill clusters. Respondents were asked to rate their competency in the areas of attentiveness/altercentrism (concern or interest in a conversation partner), composure (avoidance of anxiety, confident), expressiveness (vocal variety, use of humor), and coordination/interaction management (ability to enter/exit conversations without disrupting the flow of discussion). The last five items on the CSRS represented general impression items. The 25 specific behaviors were rated by participants on a 1-5 scale, representing a competence continuum, with 1 = *Inadequate* (meaning there is extensive room for improvement); 2 = *Fair*; 3 = *Adequate*; 4 = *Good*; and 5 = *Excellent* (meaning no room for improvement). The last five general items rate performance on a 7-point scale. According to research analysts, the CSRS was found to offer a psychometrically sound instrument for assessing the interpersonal communication skills of self or others.

Validity and reliability. Research-based evidence of the validity and reliability of the CSRS has also been acknowledged. Spitzberg (1993) developed the Conversational Skills Rating Scale (CSRS) to assess perceived competence in interpersonal interaction

and communication. It has been applied in educational, business, and military settings. The *Buros Mental Measures Yearbook* included a critique of the CSRS in 2001, in which reviewers stated “face validity is demonstrated by a low level of abstraction in measuring communication competence” (Plake & Impara, 2001, p. 346). Following intensive evaluation, Spitzberg (1993) wrote that “clear evidence exists that the CSRS and its component constructs are strongly and sensibly related to motivation to communicate, knowledge of communication, the production of ‘typical’ episodes, molar perceptions of self-competence and partner competence, and contextual expectancy fulfillment” (p. 15). Plake and Impara (2001) expressed reservations about the comprehensiveness of the CSRS speculating that a more generalized interpersonal communication competence may extend beyond the construct/content validity evidence provided for this instrument. Conversely, the CSRS has been found to be related significantly to leadership effectiveness and immediacy ratings (Karch 1995). Spitzberg (1993) defended the validity of the CSRS stating it “provides a defensibly construct valid measure of competent interaction” (p. 15). According to Spitzberg and Adams (2006), “In general, the CSRS, and its component factors (i.e., attentiveness, composure, expressiveness, coordination), provide a diagnostically useful, construct valid measure of perceived competence of interaction skills in conversational episodes” (p. 42).

Spitzberg and Hurt (1987) assessed the CSRS, both as a self-perception and observational instrument, and found the results supported both the reliability and significant relationship of the behavioral items to the molar ratings of the participants’ communication competence. Dawson (1986) found the CSRS to be significantly related to the Simulated Social Interaction Test (SSIT) ($r = .55, p < .01$). According to Dawson (1986), “The

averaged CSRS competence pretest ratings were significantly related to the SSIT/skill post-test ratings three weeks later ($r = .55, p < .001$) and to SSIT/anxiety pretest ratings ($r = .67, p < .001$)” (p. 11). Brundidge found a “significant positive linear relationship with a modest effect size between communication competence and overall relational quality ($F(1, 217) = 21.97; \eta^2 = .10; p < .01$)” (as cited in Spitzberg, 1993, p. 15). This study also showed that avoidance and anxiety registered significant negative correlations with communication competence (Brundidge, 2002).

According to Spitzberg (1993), “consistently, throughout all research, internal consistencies of both the overall CSRS and its component factor subscales and molar evaluation subscale have been acceptable” (p. 14). Huwe (1990) found consistently high reliabilities for the CSRS and its components: the all molecular level (25 items, $\alpha = .94$), the molar-level (five items, $\alpha = .88$) the expressiveness subscale (nine items, $\alpha = .91$), the altercentrism subscale (six items, $\alpha = .84$), and the composure subscale (five items, $\alpha = .86$). Smith (1994) also found the CSRS highly reliable (.95 for total items, .97 for molar items). Brundidge (2002) identified consistently high reliabilities for the 25-item scale ($\alpha = .84$), the five molar items ($\alpha = .90$), and the three subscales, altercentrism, composure, and coordination ($\alpha = .86, \alpha = .78, \text{ and } \alpha = .67$, respectively). In evaluating the CSRS, Morreale and Backlund (1996) determined the rating procedures and scale items to be well defined and easily understood. Morreale and Backlund (1996) pronounced the CSRS as an effective tool for measuring interpersonal skills while being easy to administer. Response items are straightforward and expressed in simple, easily understood language. Spitzberg (1993) has warranted that all possible components of interpersonal communication are measured in the 30-item instrument. Psychometric

properties indicate the CSRS is a valid and reliable survey instrument. The CSRS data obtained for this study's sample was analyzed for internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha. The result ($\alpha = .928$) indicated strong internal consistency.

Demographic Questionnaire. A third instrument, a personal demographic data sheet, was designed by the researcher to gather demographic and career information from the participants. The questionnaire consisted of 11 items aimed at obtaining personal demographic information, educational demographic information, and career path information.

Measurement. The demographic questionnaire included eight multiple-choice items (gender, age, ethnicity, number of years as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district, and geographic location of the district), two multiple-mark items (race and pathways to leadership), and one open-ended item (educational background). The open-ended response option was used to accommodate variances in the personal experience of respondents.

This quantitative study allowed for generalization from the sample of respondents who returned the survey to the population of all public school superintendents in Kansas. The analysis of the data generated by the survey provided the basis for inferences about the relationship of specific communication competencies and leadership styles. Items 1-20 of the survey were from the LBDQ XII (Self) developed by Stogdill (1963). Items 21-50 of the survey were from the CSRS developed by Spitzberg (1993). Items 51-61 of the survey were the demographic data. Both surveys, along with the demographic data questionnaire, were combined into a single self-administered instrument. The entire document resulted in a survey consisting of 61 items.

Data Collection Procedures

A formal proposal was submitted, and permission to proceed with the study was requested from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Baker University. The IRB form requesting this permission to study human subjects is included in Appendix A. Baker University granted the researcher permission to conduct the study (see Appendix B). Permission to utilize the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) was provided by representatives at the Fisher College of Business at Ohio State University via the school’s website (see Appendix C). Permission to utilize the CSRS and include a copy of the instrument in the published dissertation was requested from Brian Spitzberg, developer of the instrument, via electronic mail, as demonstrated in Appendix D. An e-mail granting permission was received (see Appendix E). A subject consent/release form (see Appendix F) and a demographic questionnaire were created by the researcher. The instruments and demographic questionnaire were combined into a single electronic format via SurveyMonkey (see Appendix G).

The survey and demographic questionnaire, along with an introductory letter, were transmitted electronically via e-mail to the school e-mail address of each of the 286 superintendents in the state of Kansas listed in the *2012-2013 KSDE Directory of Superintendents*. Respondents were assured of confidentiality as survey results were reported in aggregate and not by individual. The online electronic survey allowed superintendents to respond to all questions and submit their survey responses with ease. The software also allowed for immediate collection of data. Follow-up correspondence was sent to non-responding superintendents two weeks following the initial e-mail correspondence requesting participation (see Appendix H).

Data obtained from the participants was tabulated in accordance with the scoring keys for each survey. In order to ensure the data could be analyzed and compared accurately, the LBDQ data was recoded before tabulation. Subsequently, data for each of the surveys and demographic responses were coded and input into Excel and uploaded to statistical software, IBM® SPSS® Statistics Faculty Pack 21 for Windows®, for analysis.

Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Responses to each of the items in the survey were analyzed in relationship to one of the research questions addressed in the study. For purposes of this study, the level of significance was set at $\alpha = .05$. This study addressed the following research questions and hypotheses:

RQ1. What are the self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self)?

H1. Consideration, as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self), is reported more frequently than initiating structure by Kansas public school superintendents.

A chi-square test of equal percentages was used to address this question. A chi-square test compares the observed frequencies in each of the two specified leadership styles, consideration and initiating structure, to determine whether deviations between the observed and the expected responses are too large to be attributed to chance.

RQ2. To what extent are the self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) affected by any of the following variables: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years

as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership?

H2. The self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) are affected by gender.

H3. The self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) are affected by age.

H4. The self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) are affected by years of experience as an educator.

H5. The self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) are affected by years of experience as a superintendent.

H6. The self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) are affected by years in the current position.

H7. The self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) are affected by the size of the school district as defined by student enrollment.

H8. The self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) are affected by pathways to leadership.

To test hypotheses two through eight, chi-square tests of independence were used. This nonparametric statistic offered the best option for analyzing two categorical variables from the same population. The chi-square test of independence is well suited to analyze the relationship between discrete variables.

RQ3. What are the self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS (Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Composure, Expressiveness, or Coordination/Interaction Management)?

H9. The attentiveness/altercentrism communication competency is used more frequently than other communication competencies as measured by CSRS and reported by Kansas public school superintendents.

A chi-square test was used to compare the observed frequencies in each of the four specified communication competencies (attentiveness/altercentrism, composure, expressiveness, and coordination/interaction management) to determine whether deviations between the observed and the expected responses are too large to be attributed to chance.

RQ4. To what extent are self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents affected by any of the following variables: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership?

H10. The self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS are affected by gender.

H11. The self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS are affected by age.

H12. The self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS are affected by years of experience as an educator.

H13. The self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS are affected by years of experience as a superintendent.

H14. The self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS are affected by years of experience in the current position.

H15. The self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS are affected by the size of the school district as defined by student enrollment.

H16. The self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS are affected by pathways to leadership.

For hypotheses 10-16, chi-square tests of independence were used. This nonparametric statistic is a confirmed option for analyzing the relationship between discrete variables.

RQ5. To what extent is there a relationship between the self-perceived leadership styles, initiating structure and consideration, and the self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents?

H17. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of consideration and the self-perceived attentiveness/altercentrism communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

H18. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of consideration and the self-perceived composure communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

H19. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of consideration and the self-perceived expressiveness communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

H20. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of consideration and the self-perceived coordination/interaction management communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

H21. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of initiating structure and the self-perceived attentiveness/altercentrism communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

H22. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of initiating structure and the self-perceived composure communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

H23. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of initiating structure and the self-perceived expressiveness communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

H24. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of initiating structure and the self-perceived coordination/interaction management communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

To test hypotheses 17-24, Pearson product-moment correlations were used. The Pearson product-moment correlation measures the strength of linear association between

two variables, in this case the specific leadership style indicated by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) and the communication competency measured by the CSRS. The Pearson correlation coefficient, r , can range in value from +1 to -1, with a value of 0 indicating there is no association between the two variables. A value less than 0 indicates a negative association, while a value greater than 0 indicates a positive association. A one-sample t test was conducted to test for the statistical significance of the correlation coefficient.

RQ6. To what extent are the relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents different between the groups in the following variables: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, and size of district as defined by student enrollment?

H25. Relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents differ between groups based on gender.

H26. Relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents differ between groups based on age.

H27. Relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents differ between groups based on years of experience as an educator.

H28. Relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents differ between groups based on years of experience as a superintendent.

H29. Relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents differ between groups based on years of experience in the current position.

H30. Relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents differ between groups based on school district size as defined by student enrollment.

A Fisher's z test was conducted to address hypotheses 25-30. The sample correlations were compared between groups of each demographic variable.

Limitations

The limitations of a study are the “factors that may have an effect on the interpretation of the findings or on the generalizability of the results” (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008, p. 133). This study included the following limitations:

1. The return rate for this survey limited the sample population used to produce the data.
2. The data collected reflected the superintendent's perspective based on the selection of given alternatives.
3. The data represented the superintendent's perspective, not the perspectives of the superintendent's subordinates.

Summary

This chapter presented an overview of the methodology used in the study of leadership styles and communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents. A detailed description of the population and sample studied, the design of the study, the data collection instrumentation and procedures, and the analysis of data collected was included. Chapter four presents the data collected and a discussion of the results compiled from the study.

Chapter Four

Results

The purpose of this research was to analyze the self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents, the self-perceived communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents, and determine what relationships, if any, exist between the two. The research was also conducted to further determine whether selected demographics (gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership) impacted the leadership styles or interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents. Chapter four presents the results of the data analysis for the hypotheses associated with each of the research questions posed in the study. Chi-square tests, Pearson product-moment correlations, and Fisher's z tests were utilized to test the research hypotheses. The current chapter consists of descriptive statistics for the sample and results of the hypothesis testing.

Descriptive Statistics

In statistical analysis, it is important to know and consider the demographics and distribution of the survey respondents. Eighty-nine Kansas public school superintendents responded to the survey. One of the responses was discarded due to incomplete data, resulting in a sample of 88 superintendents. This reflects a 31% response rate. Seventy-two superintendents (81.8%) were males and 16 (18.2%) were females.

Eighty-eight superintendents responded to the item pertaining to age (see Table 4). Seventy-four percent of the respondents were over the age of 50.

Table 4

Age of Kansas Public School Superintendent Respondents

Age	<i>n</i>	%
60 years of age and older	19	21.6
Between 50 and 59	46	52.3
Between 40 and 49	20	22.7
Between 30 and 39	3	3.4
Under 30 years of age	0	0.0

Eighty-five superintendents responded to the item pertaining to ethnicity, all of whom reported their ethnicity as non-Hispanic or Latino. Eighty-six superintendents (97.7%) reported their race as White, while two superintendents (2.3%) reported their race as Native American. The variables of race and ethnicity were excluded from further data analyses.

Eighty-eight superintendents responded to the item pertaining to college or university undergraduate major. However, due to a broad interpretation of this item by respondents, this question was discarded from further data analyses due to inability to compare accurately the information across all responses.

Eighty-five superintendents responded to the item pertaining to the number of years they had been working as an educator (see Table 5). No superintendents had been working as an educator for fewer than 11 years. A vast majority (87.1%) of respondents reported working as educators for more than 20 years.

Table 5

Number of Years Kansas Superintendents Reported Serving as Educators

Number of Years	<i>n</i>	%
Fewer than 5 years	0	0.0
Between 5 and 10 years	0	0.0
Between 11 and 15 years	3	3.5
Between 16 and 20 years	8	9.4
More than 20 years	74	87.1
Total	85	100.0

Eighty-five superintendents responded to the item pertaining to the number of years they had been serving as a superintendent (see Table 6). Approximately 65% of respondents reported working as a superintendent for 10 or fewer years. Approximately 35% of respondents reported working as a superintendent for more than 11 years.

Table 6

Number of Years Served in the Position of Superintendent in Any School District for Kansas Public School Superintendents

Number of Years	<i>n</i>	%
Fewer than 5 years	28	32.9
Between 5 and 10 years	27	31.8
Between 11 and 15 years	13	15.3
Between 16 and 20 years	6	7.1
More than 20 years	11	12.9
Total	85	100.0

Eighty-eight superintendents responded to the item pertaining to the number of years they had been superintendents in the district in which they are currently employed (see Table 7). More than half of the respondents (53.4%) reported working in their current position for fewer than 5 years. Approximately 36% of the respondents indicated working in their current position for between five and 10 years. Just over 10% of respondents reported working in their current position for 11 or more years.

Table 7
*Number of Years as Superintendent in Current District
 for Kansas Public School Superintendents*

Number of Years	<i>n</i>	%
Fewer than 5 years	47	53.4
Between 5 and 10 years	32	36.4
Between 11 and 15 years	4	4.5
Between 16 and 20 years	3	3.4
More than 20 years	2	2.3
Total	88	100.0

Eighty-eight superintendents responded to the item pertaining to positions held prior to becoming the superintendent of schools. Respondents could select multiple options in response to this item. Prior service as a teacher represented the largest response with 74 respondents indicating they had served as teachers. Seven superintendents indicated they had worked as teachers in a special education setting. Service as a building-level administrator, elementary, middle, or high school principal, also appeared to be a common pathway to leadership. Of the respondents with district-level administrative experience prior to becoming superintendents, more than twice as many ($n = 27$) had experience in educational services than those with experience in the operational areas of school district leadership ($n = 12$). Thirteen superintendents worked in other roles including assistant high school principal, assistant director of special education, athletic director, counselor, human resources administrator, instructional

coach, official at the Kansas Department of Education, technology director, and transportation director.

Eighty-seven superintendents responded to the item pertaining to the geographic location of the school districts in Kansas (see Table 8). The majority of respondents identified their school districts as rural.

Table 8

*Type of Current Kansas School District Served by
Kansas Public School Superintendents*

Type	<i>N</i>	%
Urban	4	4.6
Suburban	18	20.7
Rural	65	74.7
Total	87	100.0

Eighty-eight superintendents responded to the item pertaining to the number of students enrolled in their districts (see Table 9). The data showed a somewhat even distribution of respondents across school districts with fewer than 500, 500-999, and 1,000-4,999 students. A smaller number (14.8%) of respondents reported working in school districts of 5,000 or more students.

Table 9

Kansas School District Pupil Enrollment for Districts Currently Served by Kansas Public School Superintendents

Number of Years	<i>n</i>	%
Fewer than 500 students	23	26.1
500 to 999 students	26	29.5
1,000 to 4,999 students	26	29.5
5,000 or more students	13	14.8
Total	88	100.0

Hypothesis Testing

The results of the hypothesis testing to address the six research questions used to guide this study are discussed in this section. Each research question is followed by its corresponding hypothesis statement(s). The method used to test each hypothesis is described along with the results of each test. The significance level of .05 was utilized for all statistical analyses. The instrument can be found in Appendix G.

RQ1. What are the self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self)?

H1. Consideration, as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self), is reported more frequently than initiating structure by Kansas public school superintendents.

In order to determine whether there were differences between initiating structure and consideration leadership styles, superintendent responses were classified by the difference between their initiating structure and consideration scores. Respondents were classified as either *initiating structure* or *consideration* leadership style based on which

category their composite scores favored. In seven cases, the scores were exactly equal. For purposes of RQ1 and RQ2, those seven cases were removed from the analyses (see Table 10).

Table 10

*Observed and Expected Frequencies of Leadership Styles
for All Respondents (n = 81)*

Leadership Style	Observed	Expected
Initiating Structure	24	40.5
Consideration	57	40.5

The results of the chi-square test of equal percentages indicated a statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 13.444$, $df = 1$, $p < .001$. This suggests that self-perceived leadership styles are not equally distributed across the two leadership style categories, which supports H1. Consideration was shown to be reported more frequently than initiating structure by Kansas public school superintendents (see Table 10).

RQ2. To what extent are the self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) affected by any of the following variables: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership?

H2. The self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) are affected by gender.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = .009$, $df = 1$, $p = .924$. This suggests there is no relationship between gender and leadership style, which does not support H2 (see Table 11).

Table 11

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Leadership Styles by Gender (n = 81)

Gender		Leadership Style	
		Initiating Structure	Consideration
Male	Observed	20.0	47.0
	Expected	19.9	47.1
Female	Observed	4.0	10.0
	Expected	4.1	9.9

H3. The self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) are affected by age.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = .193$, $df = 1$, $p = .660$. This suggests there is no relationship between age and leadership style, which does not support H3 (see Table 12).

Table 12

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Leadership Styles by Age (n = 81)

Age		Leadership Style	
		Initiating Structure	Consideration
49 Years or Less	Observed	6.0	17.0
	Expected	6.8	16.2
50+ Years	Observed	18.0	40.0
	Expected	17.2	40.8

H4. The self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) are affected by years of experience as an educator.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = .625$, $df = 1$, $p = .429$. This suggests there is no relationship between years of experience as an educator and leadership style, which does not support H4 (see Table 13).

Table 13

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Leadership Styles by Years in Education (n = 81)

Years in Education		Leadership Style	
		Initiating Structure	Consideration
20 Years or Less	Observed	2.0	8.0
	Expected	3.1	6.9
More than 20 Years	Observed	22.0	46.0
	Expected	20.9	47.1

H5. The self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) are affected by years of experience as a superintendent.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = .455$, $df = 1$, $p = .500$. This suggests there is no relationship between years of experience as a superintendent and leadership style, which does not support H5 (see Table 14).

Table 14

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Leadership Styles by Years as Superintendent (n = 81)

Years as Superintendent		Leadership Style	
		Initiating Structure	Consideration
10 Years or Less	Observed	17.0	34.0
	Expected	15.7	35.3
11 Years or More	Observed	7.0	20.0
	Expected	8.3	18.7

H6. The self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) are affected by years in the current position.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = .266$, $df = 1$, $p = .606$. This suggests there is no relationship between years of experience in the current position and leadership style, which does not support H6 (see Table 15).

Table 15

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Leadership Styles by Years in Current Position (n = 81)

Years in Current Position		Leadership Style	
		Initiating Structure	Consideration
10 Years or Less	Observed	22.0	50.0
	Expected	21.3	50.7
11 Years or More	Observed	2.0	7.0
	Expected	2.7	6.3

H7. The self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) are affected by the size of the school district as defined by student enrollment.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = .902$, $df = 1$, $p = .342$. This suggests there is no relationship between student enrollment and leadership style, which does not support H7 (see Table 16).

Table 16

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Leadership Styles by School District Size (n = 81)

School District Size		Leadership Style	
		Initiating Structure	Consideration
999 Students or Less	Observed	12.0	35.0
	Expected	13.9	33.1
1000 Students or More	Observed	12.0	22.0
	Expected	10.1	23.9

H8. The self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) are affected by pathways to leadership.

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience as a teacher indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 1.911$, $df = 1$, $p = .167$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and leadership style, which does not support H8 (see Table 17).

Table 17

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Leadership Styles by Pathways to Leadership

(n = 81)

Pathways to Leadership		Leadership Style	
		Initiating Structure	Consideration
Prior Teacher	Observed	22.0	45.0
	Expected	19.9	47.1
Not Prior Teacher	Observed	2.0	12.0
	Expected	4.1	9.9

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience as a special education teacher indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = .643$, $df = 1$, $p = .423$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and leadership style, which does not support H8 (see Table 18).

Table 18

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Leadership Styles by Pathways to Leadership

(n = 81)

Pathways to Leadership		Leadership Style	
		Initiating Structure	Consideration
Prior SPED Teacher	Observed	3.0	4.0
	Expected	2.1	4.9
Not SPED Teacher	Observed	21.0	53.0
	Expected	21.9	52.1

Note. SPED = special education.

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience as an elementary school principal indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = .047$, $df = 1$, $p = .829$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and leadership style, which does not support H8 (see Table 19).

Table 19

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Leadership Styles by Pathways to Leadership

(n = 81)

Pathways to Leadership		Leadership Style	
		Initiating Structure	Consideration
Prior Elementary Principal	Observed	12.0	27.0
	Expected	11.6	27.4
Not Elementary Principal	Observed	12.0	30.0
	Expected	12.4	29.6

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience as a middle school principal indicated a marginal statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 2.741$, $df = 1$, $p = .098$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and leadership style, which does not support H8 (see Table 20).

Table 20

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Leadership Styles by Pathways to Leadership

(n = 81)

Pathways to Leadership		Leadership Style	
		Initiating Structure	Consideration
Prior Middle School Principal	Observed	7.0	28.0
	Expected	10.4	24.6
Not Middle School Principal	Observed	17.0	29.0
	Expected	13.6	32.4

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience as a high school principal indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = .067$, $df = 1$, $p = .796$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and leadership style, which does not support H8 (see Table 21).

Table 21

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Leadership Styles by Pathways to Leadership

(n = 81)

Pathways to Leadership		Leadership Style	
		Initiating Structure	Consideration
Prior High School Principal	Observed	14.0	35.0
	Expected	14.5	34.5
Not High School Principal	Observed	10.0	22.0
	Expected	9.5	22.5

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience as a district-level administrator with an educational focus indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 2.370$, $df = 1$, $p = .124$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and leadership style, which does not support H8 (see Table 22).

Table 22

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Leadership Styles by Pathways to Leadership

(n = 81)

Pathways to Leadership		Leadership Style	
		Initiating Structure	Consideration
Prior DL Admin Ed	Observed	10.0	14.0
	Expected	7.1	16.9
Not DL Admin Ed	Observed	14.0	43.0
	Expected	16.9	40.1

Note. DL Admin Ed = District-level administrator focused on education-related functions.

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience as a district-level administrator with an operational focus indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = .266$, $df = 1$, $p = .606$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and leadership style, which does not support H8 (see Table 23).

Table 23

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Leadership Styles by Pathways to Leadership

(n = 81)

Pathways to Leadership		Leadership Style	
		Initiating Structure	Consideration
Prior DL Admin Op	Observed	2.0	7.0
	Expected	2.7	6.3
Not DL Admin Op	Observed	22.0	50.0
	Expected	21.3	50.7

Note. DL Admin Op = District-level administrator focused on operations-related functions.

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience in other educational roles indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = .979$, $df = 1$, $p = .322$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and leadership style, which does not support H8 (see Table 24).

Table 24

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Leadership Styles by Pathways to Leadership

(n = 81)

Pathways to Leadership		Leadership Style	
		Initiating Structure	Consideration
Prior Experience Other	Observed	5.0	7.0
	Expected	3.6	8.4
No Other Prior Experience	Observed	19.0	50.0
	Expected	20.4	48.6

RQ3. What are the self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS (Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Composure, Expressiveness, or Coordination/Interaction Management)?

H9. The attentiveness/altercentrism communication competency is used more frequently than other communication competencies as measured by CSRS and reported by Kansas public school superintendents.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated a statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 33.705$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$. Analysis of the data indicated that some respondents did not show a distinct preference for a specific interpersonal communication competency category, but rather scored equally on multiple competency categories. For analysis purposes, a fifth category was added. Most respondents were aligned to the composure and expressiveness competencies. The observed frequency for composure ($n = 26$) was higher than the expected frequency ($n = 17.6$) and the observed frequency for expressiveness ($n = 34$) was higher than the expected frequency ($n = 17.6$) (see Table 25).

Table 25

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Interpersonal Communication Competencies for All Respondents (n = 88)

All Respondents	Interpersonal Communication Competencies				
	Att/Alt	Comp	Express	Coord	Mult
Observed	7.0	26.0	34.0	6.0	15.0
Expected	17.6	17.6	17.6	17.6	17.6

Note. Att/Alt = Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Comp = Composure, Express = Expressiveness, Coord = Coordination, Mult = Multiple competencies.

RQ4. To what extent are self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents affected by any of the following variables: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership?

H10. The self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS are affected by gender.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 2.193$, $df = 4$, $p = .700$. This suggests there is no relationship between gender and interpersonal communication competencies, which does not support H10 (see Table 26).

Table 26

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Interpersonal Communication Competencies by Gender (n = 88)

Gender		Interpersonal Communication Competencies				
		Att/Alt	Comp	Express	Coord	Mult
Male	Observed	6.0	20.0	27.0	6.0	13.0
	Expected	5.7	21.3	27.8	4.9	12.3
Female	Observed	1.0	6.0	7.0	0.0	2.0
	Expected	1.3	4.7	6.2	1.1	2.7

Note. Att/Alt = Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Comp = Composure, Express = Expressiveness, Coord = Coordination, Mult = Multiple competencies.

H11. The self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS are affected by age.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 1.081$, $df = 4$, $p = .897$. This suggests there is no relationship between age and interpersonal communication competencies, which does not support H11 (see Table 27).

Table 27

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Interpersonal Communication Competencies by Age (n = 88)

Age		Interpersonal Communication Competencies				
		Att/Alt	Comp	Express	Coord	Mult
49 Years and Below	Observed	1.0	8.0	9.0	1.0	4.0
	Expected	1.8	6.8	8.9	1.6	3.9
50+ Years	Observed	6.0	18.0	25.0	5.0	11.0
	Expected	5.2	19.2	25.1	4.4	11.1

Note. Att/Alt = Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Comp = Composure, Express = Expressiveness, Coord = Coordination, Mult = Multiple competencies.

H12. The self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS are affected by years of experience as an educator.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = .890$, $df = 4$, $p = .926$. This suggests there is no relationship between experience as an educator and interpersonal communication competencies, which does not support H12 (see Table 28).

Table 28

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Interpersonal Communication Competencies by Years as an Educator (n = 88)

Years as an Educator		Interpersonal Communication Competencies				
		Att/Alt	Comp	Express	Coord	Mult
20 Years or Less	Observed	1.0	4.0	3.0	1.0	2.0
	Expected	0.8	3.2	4.4	0.8	1.8
More than 20 Years	Observed	5.0	21.0	31.0	5.0	12.0
	Expected	5.2	21.8	29.6	5.2	12.2

Note. Att/Alt = Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Comp = Composure, Express = Expressiveness, Coord = Coordination, Mult = Multiple competencies.

H13. The self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS are affected by years of experience as a superintendent.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 4.205$, $df = 1$, $p = .379$. This suggests there is no relationship between years of experience as a superintendent and interpersonal communication competencies, which does not support H13 (see Table 29).

Table 29

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Interpersonal Communication Competencies by Years as Superintendent (n = 88)

Years as Superintendent		Interpersonal Communication Competencies				
		Att/Alt	Comp	Express	Coord	Mult
10 Years of Less	Observed	3.0	15.0	24.0	5.0	8.0
	Expected	4.5	15.5	21.4	3.9	9.7
11 Years or More	Observed	4.0	9.0	9.0	1.0	7.0
	Expected	2.5	8.5	11.6	2.1	5.3

Note. Att/Alt = Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Comp = Composure, Express = Expressiveness, Coord = Coordination, Mult = Multiple competencies.

H14. The self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS are affected by years of experience in the current position.

The results of the chi-square test of equal percentages indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 2.419$, $df = 4$, $p = .659$. This suggests there is no relationship between years of experience in the current position and interpersonal communication competencies, which does not support H14 (see Table 30).

Table 30

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Interpersonal Communication Competencies by Years in Current Position (n = 88)

Years in Current Position		Interpersonal Communication Competencies				
		Att/Alt	Comp	Express	Coord	Mult
10 Years or Less	Observed	6.0	22.0	32.0	6.0	13.0
	Expected	6.3	23.3	30.5	5.4	13.5
11 Years or More	Observed	1.0	4.0	2.0	0.0	2.0
	Expected	0.7	2.7	3.5	0.6	1.5

Note. Att/Alt = Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Comp = Composure, Express = Expressiveness, Coord = Coordination, Mult = Multiple competencies.

H15. The self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS are affected by the size of the school district as defined by student enrollment.

The results of the chi-square test of independence indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 1.004$, $df = 4$, $p = .909$. This suggests there is no relationship between student enrollment and interpersonal communication competencies, which does not support H15 (see Table 31).

Table 31

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Interpersonal Communication Competencies by School District Size (n = 88)

School District Size		Interpersonal Communication Competencies				
		Att/Alt	Comp	Express	Coord	Mult
999 Students or Less	Observed	4.0	16.0	17.0	3.0	9.0
	Expected	3.9	14.5	18.9	3.3	8.4
1000 students or More	Observed	3.0	10.0	17.0	3.0	6.0
	Expected	3.1	11.5	15.1	2.7	6.6

Note. Att/Alt = Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Comp = Composure, Express = Expressiveness, Coord = Coordination, Mult = Multiple competencies.

H16. The self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS are affected by pathways to leadership.

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience as a teacher indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = .246$, $df = 4$, $p = .993$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and interpersonal communication competencies, which does not support H16 (see Table 32).

Table 32

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Interpersonal Communication Competencies by Pathways to Leadership (n = 88)

Pathways to Leadership		Interpersonal Communication Competencies				
		Att/Alt	Comp	Express	Coord	Mult
Prior Teacher	Observed	6.0	22.0	29.0	5.0	12.0
	Expected	5.9	21.9	28.6	5.0	12.6
Not Teacher	Observed	1.0	4.0	5.0	1.0	3.0
	Expected	1.1	4.1	5.4	1.0	2.4

Note. Att/Alt = Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Comp = Composure, Express = Expressiveness, Coord = Coordination, Mult = Multiple competencies.

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience as a special education teacher indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 2.209$, $df = 4$, $p = .697$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and interpersonal communication competencies, which does not support H16 (see Table 33).

Table 33

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Interpersonal Communication Competencies by Pathways to Leadership (n = 88)

Pathways to Leadership		Interpersonal Communication Competencies				
		Att/Alt	Comp	Express	Coord	Mult
Prior SPED Teacher	Observed	1.0	1.0	4.0	0.0	1.0
	Expected	0.6	2.1	2.7	0.5	1.2
Not SPED Teacher	Observed	6.0	25.0	30.0	6.0	14.0
	Expected	6.4	23.9	31.3	5.5	13.8

Note. Att/Alt = Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Comp = Composure, Express = Expressiveness, Coord = Coordination, Mult = Multiple competencies, SPED = Special education.

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience as an elementary school principal indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 3.539$, $df = 4$, $p = .472$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and interpersonal communication competencies, which does not support H16 (see Table 34).

Table 34

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Interpersonal Communication Competencies by Pathways to Leadership (n = 88)

Pathways to Leadership		Interpersonal Communication Competencies				
		Att/Alt	Comp	Express	Coord	Mult
Prior Elementary Principal	Observed	5.0	9.0	16.0	3.0	8.0
	Expected	3.3	12.1	15.8	2.8	7.0
Not Elementary Principal	Observed	2.0	17.0	18.0	3.0	7.0
	Expected	3.7	13.9	18.2	3.2	8.0

Note. Att/Alt = Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Comp = Composure, Express = Expressiveness, Coord = Coordination, Mult = Multiple competencies.

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience as a middle school principal indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 3.685$, $df = 4$, $p = .450$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and interpersonal communication competencies, which does not support H16 (see Table 35).

Table 35

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Interpersonal Communication Competencies by Pathways to Leadership (n = 88)

Pathways to Leadership		Interpersonal Communication Competencies				
		Att/Alt	Comp	Express	Coord	Mult
Prior Middle School Principal	Observed	5.0	9.0	14.0	3.0	5.0
	Expected	2.9	10.6	13.9	2.5	6.1
Not Middle School Principal	Observed	2.0	17.0	20.0	3.0	10.0
	Expected	4.1	15.4	20.1	3.5	8.9

Note. Att/Alt = Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Comp = Composure, Express = Expressiveness, Coord = Coordination, Mult = Multiple competencies.

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience as a high school principal indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 3.162$, $df = 4$, $p = .531$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and interpersonal communication competencies, which does not support H16 (see Table 36).

Table 36

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Interpersonal Communication Competencies by Pathways to Leadership (n = 88)

Pathways to Leadership		Interpersonal Communication Competencies				
		Att/Alt	Comp	Express	Coord	Mult
Prior High School Principal	Observed	3.0	13.0	23.0	4.0	10.0
	Expected	4.2	15.7	20.5	3.6	9.0
Not High School Principal	Observed	4.0	13.0	11.0	2.0	5.0
	Expected	2.8	10.3	13.5	2.4	6.0

Note. Att/Alt = Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Comp = Composure, Express = Expressiveness, Coord = Coordination, Mult = Multiple competencies.

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience as a district-level administrator with an educational focus indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 5.210$, $df = 4$, $p = .266$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and interpersonal communication competencies, which does not support H16 (see Table 37).

Table 37

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Interpersonal Communication Competencies by Pathways to Leadership (n = 88)

Pathways to Leadership		Interpersonal Communication Competencies				
		Att/Alt	Comp	Express	Coord	Mult
Prior DL Admin Ed	Observed	1.0	6.0	14.0	3.0	3.0
	Expected	2.1	8.0	10.4	1.8	4.6
Not DL Admin Ed	Observed	6.0	20.0	20.0	3.0	12.0
	Expected	4.9	18.0	23.6	4.2	10.4

Note. Att/Alt = Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Comp = Composure, Express = Expressiveness, Coord = Coordination, Mult = Multiple competencies, DL Admin Ed = District-level administrator focused on education-related functions.

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience as a district-level administrator with an operational focus indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 5.916$, $df = 4$, $p = .205$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and interpersonal communication competencies, which does not support H16 (see Table 38).

Table 38

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Interpersonal Communication Competencies by Pathways to Leadership (n = 88)

Pathways to Leadership		Interpersonal Communication Competencies				
		Att/Alt	Comp	Express	Coord	Mult
Prior DL Admin Op	Observed	2.0	2.0	7.0	1.0	0.0
	Expected	1.0	3.5	4.6	0.8	2.0
Not DL Admin Op	Observed	5.0	24.0	27.0	5.0	15.0
	Expected	6.0	22.5	29.4	5.2	13.0

Note. Att/Alt = Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Comp = Composure, Express = Expressiveness, Coord = Coordination, Mult = Multiple competencies, DL Admin Op = District-level administrator focused on operations-related functions.

The results of the chi-square test of independence for prior experience in other educational roles indicated no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, $\chi^2 = 4.247$, $df = 4$, $p = .374$. This suggests there is no relationship between pathways to leadership and interpersonal communication competencies, which does not support H16 (see Table 39).

Table 39

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Interpersonal Communication Competencies by Pathways to Leadership (n = 88)

Pathways to Leadership		Interpersonal Communication Competencies				
		Att/Alt	Comp	Express	Coord	Mult
Prior Experience Other	Observed	0.0	6.0	4.0	0.0	3.0
	Expected	1.0	3.8	5.0	0.9	2.2
No Other Prior Experience	Observed	7.0	20.0	30.0	6.0	12.0
	Expected	6.0	22.2	29.0	5.1	12.8

Note. Att/Alt = Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Comp = Composure, Express = Expressiveness, Coord = Coordination, Mult = Multiple competencies.

RQ5. To what extent is there a relationship between the self-perceived leadership styles, initiating structure and consideration, and the self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents?

H17. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of consideration and the self-perceived attentiveness/altercentrism communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

The correlation coefficient ($r = .311$) provided evidence for a weak positive relationship between the self-perceived leadership style of consideration and the attentiveness/altercentrism communication competency. The result of the one-sample t test indicated a statistically significant relationship between the two variables, $t = 3.039$, $df = 1, 86$, $p = .003$.

H18. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of consideration and the self-perceived composure communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

The correlation coefficient ($r = .324$) provided evidence for a weak positive relationship between the self-perceived leadership style of consideration and the composure communication competency. The result of the one-sample t test indicated a statistically significant relationship between the two variables, $t = 3.177$, $df = 1, 86$, $p = .002$.

H19. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of consideration and the self-perceived expressiveness communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

The correlation coefficient ($r = .349$) provided evidence for a weak positive relationship between the self-perceived leadership style of consideration and the expressiveness communication competency. The result of the one-sample t test indicated a statistically significant relationship between the two variables, $t = 3.459$, $df = 1, 86$, $p = .001$.

H20. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of consideration and the self-perceived coordination/interaction management communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

The correlation coefficient ($r = .299$) provided evidence for a weak positive relationship between the self-perceived leadership style of consideration and the coordination/interaction management communication competency. The result of the one-

sample t test indicated a statistically significant relationship between the two variables, $t = 2.908$, $df = 1, 86$, $p = .005$.

H21. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of initiating structure and the self-perceived attentiveness/altercentrism communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

The correlation coefficient ($r = .436$) provided evidence for a moderate positive relationship between the self-perceived leadership style of initiating structure and the attentiveness/altercentrism communication competency. The result of the one-sample t test indicated a statistically significant relationship between the two variables, $t = 4.498$, $df = 1, 86$, $p < .001$.

H22. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of initiating structure and the self-perceived composure communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

The correlation coefficient ($r = .276$) provided evidence for a weak positive relationship between the self-perceived leadership style of initiating structure and the composure communication competency. The result of the one-sample t test indicated a statistically significant relationship between the two variables, $t = 2.662$, $df = 1, 86$, $p = .009$.

H23. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of initiating structure and the self-perceived expressiveness communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

The correlation coefficient ($r = .370$) provided evidence for a weak positive relationship between the self-perceived leadership style of initiating structure and the

expressiveness communication competency. The result of the one-sample t test indicated a statistically significant relationship between the two variables, $t = 3.689$, $df = 1, 86$, $p < .001$.

H24. There is a relationship between the level of self-perceived leadership style of initiating structure and the self-perceived coordination/interaction management communication competence in Kansas public school superintendents.

The correlation coefficient ($r = .491$) provided evidence for a moderate positive relationship between the self-perceived leadership style of initiating structure and the coordination/interaction management communication competency. The result of the one-sample t test indicated a statistically significant relationship between the two variables, $t = 5.226$, $df = 1, 86$, $p < .001$.

RQ6. To what extent are the relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents different between the groups in the following variables: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, and size of district as defined by student enrollment?

H25. Relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents differ between groups based on gender.

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and attentiveness/altercentrism indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = .782$, $p = .434$ (see Table 40). The correlation for males ($r = .329$) was not different from the correlation for females ($r = .105$).

Table 40

Results of Fisher's z Tests for Correlations Between Consideration and Communication Competency by Gender

Gender	<i>r</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>
Attentiveness/Altercentrism			
Male	.329	.782	.434
Female	.105		
Composure			
Male	.269	-2.097	.036
Female	.721		
Expressiveness			
Male	.339	-.102	.918
Female	.366		
Coordination/Interaction Management			
Male	.298	.360	.719
Female	.196		

The results of the test between initiating structure and attentiveness indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = 4.114$, $p < .001$ (see Table 41). Although the strength of the relationships was approximately the same, the correlation for males was positive ($r = .553$); the correlation for females was negative ($r = -.552$).

Table 41

Results of Fisher's z Tests for Correlations Between Initiating Structure and Communication Competency by Gender

Gender	<i>r</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>
Attentiveness/Altercentrism			
Male	.553	4.114	< .001
Female	-.552		
Composure			
Male	.309	1.02	.308
Female	.011		
Expressiveness			
Male	.406	1.531	.126
Female	-.032		
Coordination/Interaction Management			
Male	.488	-.188	.851
Female	.530		

The results of the Fisher's *z* test between consideration and composure indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -2.097$, $p = .036$ (see Table 40). The correlation for males ($r = .269$) was significantly weaker than the correlation for females ($r = .721$). The results of the test between initiating structure and composure indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = 1.02$, $p = .308$

(see Table 41). The correlation for males ($r = .309$) was not different from the correlation for females ($r = .011$).

The results of the Fisher's z test between consideration and expressiveness indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.102$, $p = .918$ (see Table 40). The correlation for males ($r = .339$) was not different from the correlation for females ($r = .366$). The results of the test between initiating structure and expressiveness indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = 1.531$, $p = .126$ (see Table 41). The correlation for males ($r = .406$) was not different from the correlation for females ($r = -.032$).

The results of the Fisher's z test between consideration and coordination/interaction management indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = .36$, $p = .719$ (see Table 40). The correlation for males ($r = .298$) was not different from the correlation for females ($r = .196$). The results of the test between initiating structure and coordination/ interaction management indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.188$, $p = .851$ (see Table 41). The correlation for males ($r = .488$) was not different from the correlation for females ($r = .530$).

H26. Relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents differ between groups based on age.

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and attentiveness/altercentrism indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.702$, $p = .483$ (see Table 42). The correlation for participants under the

age of 50 ($r = .435$) was not different from the correlation for participants 50 years and older ($r = .278$).

Table 42

Results of Fisher's z Tests for Correlations Between Consideration and Communication Competency by Age

Age	r	z	p
Attentiveness/Altercentrism			
49 Years and Below	.435	-.702	.483
50+ Years	.278		
Composure			
49 Years and Below	.520	-1.24	.215
50+ Years	.252		
Expressiveness			
49 Years and Below	.428	-.433	.665
50+ Years	.333		
Coordination/Interaction Management			
49 Years and Below	.521	-1.266	.206
50+ Years	.247		

The results of the test between initiating structure and attentiveness indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = 1.211$, $p = .226$ (see Table 43). The correlation for participants under the age of 50 ($r = .221$) was not different from the correlation for participants 50 years and older ($r = .490$).

Table 43

Results of Fisher's z Tests for Correlations Between Initiating Structure and Communication Competency by Age

Age	<i>r</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>
Attentiveness/Altercentrism			
49 Years and Below	.221	1.211	.226
50+ Years	.490		
Composure			
49 Years and Below	.028	1.29	.197
50+ Years	.345		
Expressiveness			
49 Years and Below	.439	-.410	.681
50+ Years	.350		
Coordination/Interaction Management			
49 Years and Below	.503	-.093	.926
50+ Years	.485		

The results of the Fisher's *z* test for two correlations between consideration and composure indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -1.24$, $p = .215$ (see Table 42). The correlation for participants under the age of 50 ($r = .520$) was not different from the correlation for participants 50 years and older ($r = .252$). The results of the test between initiating structure and composure indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = 1.29$, $p = .197$ (see Table

43). The correlation for participants under the age of 50 ($r = .028$) was not different from the correlation for participants 50 years and older ($r = .345$).

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and expressiveness indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.433$, $p = .665$ (see Table 42). The correlation for participants under the age of 50 ($r = .428$) was not different from the correlation for participants 50 years and older ($r = .333$). The results of the test between initiating structure and expressiveness indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.41$, $p = .681$ (see Table 43). The correlation for participants under the age of 50 ($r = .439$) was not different from the correlation for participants 50 years and older ($r = .350$).

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and coordination/interaction management indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -1.266$, $p = .206$ (see Table 42). The correlation for participants under the age of 50 ($r = .521$) was not different from the correlation for participants 50 years and older ($r = .247$). The results of the test between initiating structure and coordination/interaction management indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.093$, $p = .926$ (see Table 43). The correlation for participants under the age of 50 ($r = .503$) was not different from the correlation for participants 50 years and older ($r = .485$).

H27. Relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents differ between groups based on years of experience as an educator.

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and attentiveness/altercentrism indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.566$, $p = .572$ (see Table 44). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as an educator ($r = .140$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as an educator ($r = .338$).

Table 44

Results of Fisher's z Tests for Correlations Between Consideration and Communication Competency by Years as an Educator

Years as an Educator	r	z	p
Attentiveness/Altercentrism			
20 Years or Less	.140	-.566	.572
More than 20 Years	.338		
Composure			
20 Years or Less	.158	-.537	.591
More than 20 Years	.345		
Expressiveness			
20 Years or Less	.270	-.284	.777
More than 20 Years	.365		
Coordination/Interaction Management			
20 Years or Less	.201	-.334	.738
More than 20 Years	.317		

The results of the test between initiating structure and attentiveness indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.378$, $p = .706$ (see Table 45). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as an educator ($r = .341$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as an educator ($r = .459$).

Table 45

Results of Fisher's z Tests for Correlations Between Initiating Structure and Communication Competency by Years as an Educator

Years as an Educator	<i>r</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>
Attentiveness/Altercentrism			
20 Years or Less	.341	-.378	.706
More than 20 Years	.459		
Composure			
20 Years or Less	.016	-.820	.412
More than 20 Years	.311		
Expressiveness			
20 Years or Less	.290	-.222	.824
More than 20 Years	.364		
Coordination/Interaction Management			
20 Years or Less	.726	1.072	.284
More than 20 Years	.478		

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and composure indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.537, p = .591$ (see Table 44). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as an educator ($r = .158$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as an educator ($r = .345$). The results of the test between initiating structure and composure indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.82, p = .412$ (see Table 45). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as an educator ($r = .016$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as an educator ($r = .311$).

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and expressiveness indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.284, p = .777$ (see Table 44). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as an educator ($r = .270$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as an educator ($r = .365$). The results of the test between initiating structure and expressiveness indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.222, p = .824$ (see Table 45). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as an educator ($r = .290$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as an educator ($r = .364$).

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and coordination/interaction management indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.334, p = .738$ (see Table 44). The correlation for

participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as an educator ($r = .201$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as an educator ($r = .317$). The results of the test between initiating structure and coordination/interaction management indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = 1.072$, $p = .284$ (see Table 45). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as an educator ($r = .726$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as an educator ($r = .478$).

H28. Relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents differ between groups based on years of experience as a superintendent.

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and attentiveness/altercentrism indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = .498$, $p = .619$ (see Table 46). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .344$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .236$).

Table 46

Results of Fisher's z Tests for Correlations Between Consideration and Communication Competency by Years as Superintendent

Years as Superintendent	<i>r</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>
Attentiveness/Altercentrism			
10 Years or Less	.344	.498	.619
11 Years or More	.236		
Composure			
10 Years or Less	.272	-.540	.589
11 Years or More	.386		
Expressiveness			
10 Years or Less	.328	-.365	.715
11 Years or More	.403		
Coordination/Interaction Management			
10 Years or Less	.265	-.344	.731
11 Years or More	.339		

The results of the test between initiating structure and attentiveness/altercentrism indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -1.313$, $p = .189$ (see Table 47). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .352$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .591$).

Table 47

Results of Fisher's z Tests for Correlations Between Initiating Structure and Communication Competency by Years as Superintendent

Years as Superintendent	<i>r</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>
Attentiveness/Altercentrism			
10 Years or Less	.352	-1.313	.189
11 Years or More	.591		
Composure			
10 Years or Less	.161	-1.137	.256
11 Years or More	.407		
Expressiveness			
10 Years or Less	.281	-1.207	.228
11 Years or More	.519		
Coordination/Interaction Management			
10 Years or Less	.526	.613	.540
11 Years or More	.413		

The results of the Fisher's *z* test for two correlations between consideration and composure indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.54$, $p = .589$ (see Table 46). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .272$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .236$). The results of the test between initiating structure and composure indicated no statistically

significant difference between the two values, $z = -1.137$, $p = .256$ (see Table 47). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .161$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .407$).

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and expressiveness indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.365$, $p = .715$ (see Table 46). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .328$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .403$). The results of the test between initiating structure and expressiveness indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -1.207$, $p = .228$ (see Table 47). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .281$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .519$).

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and coordination/interaction management indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.344$, $p = .731$ (see Table 46). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .265$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .339$). The results of the test between initiating structure and coordination/interaction management indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = .613$, $p = .54$ (see Table 47). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .526$) was not different from

the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience as a superintendent ($r = .413$).

H29. Relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents differ between groups based on years of experience in the current position.

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and attentiveness/altercentrism indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = .913$, $p = .361$ (see Table 48). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience in the current position ($r = .342$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience in the current position ($r = -.031$).

Table 48

Results of Fisher's z Tests for Correlations Between Consideration and Communication Competency by Years in Current Position

Years in Current Position	<i>r</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>p</i>
Attentiveness/Altercentrism			
10 Years or Less	.342	.913	.361
11 Years or More	-.031		
Composure			
10 Years or Less	.293	-.622	.534
11 Years or More	.512		
Expressiveness			
10 Years or Less	.321	-.914	.361
11 Years or More	.617		
Coordination/Interaction Management			
10 Years or Less	.308	.228	.819
11 Years or More	.218		

The results of the test between initiating structure and attentiveness/altercentrism indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = 1.212$, $p = .225$ (see Table 49). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience in the current position ($r = .463$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience in the current position ($r = -.013$).

Table 49

Results of Fisher's z Tests for Correlations Between Initiating Structure and Communication Competency by Years in Current Position

Years in Current Position	<i>r</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>
Attentiveness/Altercentrism			
10 Years or Less	.463	1.212	.225
11 Years or More	-.013		
Composure			
10 Years or Less	.267	-.388	.698
11 Years or More	.412		
Expressiveness			
10 Years or Less	.382	.468	.639
11 Years or More	.201		
Coordination/Interaction Management			
10 Years or Less	.524	1.066	.286
11 Years or More	.129		

The results of the Fisher's *z* test for two correlations between consideration and composure indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.622$, $p = .534$ (see Table 48). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience in the current position ($r = .293$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience in the current position ($r = .512$). The results of the test between initiating structure and composure indicated no statistically

significant difference between the two values, $z = -.388$, $p = .698$ (see Table 49). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience in the current position ($r = .267$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience in the current position ($r = .412$).

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and expressiveness indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.914$, $p = .361$ (see Table 48). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience in the current position ($r = .321$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience in the current position ($r = .617$). The results of the test between initiating structure and expressiveness indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = .468$, $p = .639$ (see Table 49). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience in the current position ($r = .382$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience in the current position ($r = .201$).

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and coordination/interaction management indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = .228$, $p = .819$ (see Table 48). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience in the current position ($r = .308$) was not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience in the current position ($r = .218$). The results of the test between initiating structure and coordination/interaction management indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = 1.066$, $p = .286$ (see Table 49). The correlation for participants with 10 or fewer years of experience in the current position ($r = .524$) was

not different from the correlation for participants with 11 or more years of experience in the current position ($r = .129$).

H30. Relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents differ between groups based on school district size as defined by student enrollment.

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and attentiveness/altercentrism indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = .243$, $p = .808$ (see Table 50). The correlation for participants in school districts of 999 or fewer students ($r = .329$) was not different from the correlation for participants in school districts of 1,000 or more students ($r = .280$).

Table 50

Results of Fisher's z Tests for Correlations Between Consideration and Communication Competency by School District Size

School District Size	<i>r</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>
Attentiveness/Altercentrism			
999 Students or Less	.329	.243	.808
1000 Students or More	.280		
Composure			
999 Students or Less	.194	-1.29	.197
1000 Students or More	.449		
Expressiveness			
999 Students or Less	.346	.156	.876
1000 Students or More	.315		
Coordination/Interaction Management			
999 Students or Less	.135	-1.568	.117
1000 Students or More	.450		

The results of the test between initiating structure and attentiveness/altercentrism indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = .348$, $p = .728$ (see Table 51). The correlation for participants in school districts of 999 or fewer students ($r = .463$) was not different from the correlation for participants in districts of 1,000 or more students ($r = .400$).

Table 51

Results of Fisher's z Tests for Correlations Between Initiating Structure and Communication Competency by School District Size

School District Size	<i>r</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>
Attentiveness/Altercentrism			
999 Students or Less	.463	.348	.728
1000 Students or More	.400		
Composure			
999 Students or Less	.157	-.880	.379
1000 Students or More	.340		
Expressiveness			
999 Students or Less	.282	-.569	.569
1000 Students or More	.394		
Coordination/Interaction Management			
999 Students or Less	.570	1.154	.249
1000 Students or More	.372		

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and composure indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -1.29$, $p = .197$ (see Table 50). The correlation for participants in school districts of 999 or fewer students ($r = .194$) was not different from the correlation for participants in school districts of 1,000 or more students ($r = .449$). The results of the test between initiating structure and composure indicated no statistically significant difference between the two

values, $z = -.88$, $p = .379$ (see Table 51). The correlation for participants in school districts of 999 or fewer students ($r = .157$) was not different from the correlation for participants in districts of 1,000 or more students ($r = .340$).

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and expressiveness indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = .156$, $p = .876$ (see Table 50). The correlation for participants in school districts of 999 or fewer students ($r = .346$) was not different from the correlation for participants in school districts of 1,000 or more students ($r = .315$). The results of the test between initiating structure and expressiveness indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -.569$, $p = .569$ (see Table 51). The correlation for participants in school districts of 999 or fewer students ($r = .282$) was not different from the correlation for participants in districts of 1,000 or more students ($r = .394$).

The results of the Fisher's z test for two correlations between consideration and coordination/interaction management indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = -1.568$, $p = .117$ (see Table 50). The correlation for participants in school districts of 999 or fewer students ($r = .135$) was not different from the correlation for participants in school districts of 1,000 or more students ($r = .450$). The results of the test between initiating structure and coordination/interaction management indicated no statistically significant difference between the two values, $z = 1.154$, $p = .249$ (see Table 51). The correlation for participants in school districts of 999 or fewer students ($r = .570$) was not different from the correlation for participants in districts of 1,000 or more students ($r = .372$).

Summary

This chapter utilized descriptive statistics to describe the demographics of the sample: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, years of experience as a superintendent, years in the current position, size of school district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership for the study sample. The results of the study's hypothesis testing were also presented in this chapter. The results of a chi-square test of equal percentages provided evidence of a significant difference in the responses of Kansas superintendents regarding self-perceived leadership styles. A higher number of respondents aligned to the consideration leadership style than to the initiating structure style. Additional chi-square tests provided evidence that many of the demographic variables (gender, age, years of experience, and school district size) did not have an effect on either leadership style or communication competency as reported by Kansas public school superintendents. The results of the chi-square tests of independence suggest that pathways to leadership characteristics are independent from whether a respondent favored either of the two leadership style characteristic categories—initiating structure or consideration. However, prior experience as a teacher and an elementary school principal did indicate statistical significance related to the alignment of communication competency. The results of the one-sample t tests for the correlations provided evidence of statistical significance regarding the relationship between leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies. The correlations were moderately weak but did indicate the relationship could not be attributed to chance. Results of Fisher's z tests indicated the relationships between leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies were not different among the categories of the demographic variables.

Chapter five describes the findings related to the literature, implications for action, recommendations for future research, and conclusions.

Chapter Five

Interpretation and Recommendations

This study examined Kansas public school superintendents' perceptions of their leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies. The results of this study make a significant contribution to the communication competence literature and the practice of leadership and support the need for focus and training in the area of communication for educational leaders. This chapter provides a summary of the findings and recommendations for future research related to leadership style and communication competence.

Study Summary

The following section summarizes the current study. An overview of the problem, the purpose of the study and research questions, review of methodology, the study's major findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future research are provided.

Overview of the problem. Limited research has been published specifically investigating the relationship between leadership style and interpersonal communication competency in school administration. The current study was undertaken in the belief that identifiable leadership styles do exist and are evidenced in educational settings as in other venues and that the leadership effectiveness of Kansas school superintendents can be improved through awareness and training in leadership style and interpersonal communication skills. Leadership style is thought to comprise behavioral components including interpersonal communication competency. It has been suggested that productive leader-follower relationships center on effective interpersonal communication

competency as a critical component of leadership style. A leader's success depends on the ability to communicate effectively with a broad range of followers, which requires possession of key communication competencies. Recognizing that school organizations have formal and informal lines of communication, it is essential that educational leaders are not only aware of these channels but also have the competencies with which to navigate them effectively.

Purpose statement and research questions. The purpose of this study was to determine the leadership styles used by Kansas superintendents, identify the interpersonal communication skills used by Kansas superintendents, and determine what relationships exist between leadership style and interpersonal communication competency.

Additionally, data were collected and analyzed for the purpose of determining what, if any, impact the following demographic variables have on the leadership styles and the interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership. To investigate these ideas, six research questions guided the study: (1) What are the self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self)?; (2) To what extent are the self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) affected by any of the following variables: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership?; (3) What are the self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies

of Kansas public school superintendents as measured by the CSRS (Attentiveness/Altercentrism, Composure, Expressiveness, or Coordination/Interaction Management)?; (4) To what extent are self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents affected by any of the following variables: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership?; (5) To what extent is there a relationship between the self-perceived leadership styles, initiating structure and consideration, and the self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents?; and (6) To what extent are the relationships between the self-perceived leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents different between the groups in the following variables: gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, and size of district as defined by student enrollment?

Review of the methodology. Using a non-experimental quantitative research design, Kansas public school superintendents' perception data were collected via an electronic survey. The focus of the survey was on superintendents' self-perceptions of their leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies. Two instruments, the LBDQ – Form XII (Self) and the CSRS, along with a personal demographic data questionnaire, were combined into a single electronic self-report instrument. The population of interest was all public school superintendents in Kansas. The sample for this study consisted of 88 superintendents serving in Kansas public schools during the 2012-2013 school year who voluntarily responded to the survey. Responses to each of

the survey items were analyzed in relationship to one of the research questions addressed in this study. Chi-square tests, Pearson product-moment correlations, and Fisher's z tests were used to test the hypotheses in this study.

Major findings. The descriptive statistics revealed that the majority of respondents were male, between the ages of 50 and 59, who had worked more than 20 years as educators. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents had served in the role of superintendent for 10 years or less. Interestingly, these demographic statistics are similar to those in a study by Toth and Farmer (1999) who surveyed West Virginia school superintendents. Findings of the current study are presented with regard to each of the research questions. Research question one examined Kansas public school superintendents' perceptions related to their leadership style as measured by the LBDQ – Form XII (Self). An analysis of the data revealed that a significant majority of respondents reported their leadership style to be consideration rather than initiating structure. This suggests that superintendents in Kansas perceive their leadership styles to be more people-relational focused than task focused.

Research question two assessed to what extent self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents were affected by the demographic variables (gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership). An analysis of the data showed no significant differences in leadership styles based on demographic data.

Research question three examined Kansas public school superintendents' perceptions related to interpersonal communication competencies as measured by the

CSRS (attentiveness/ altercentrism, composure, expressiveness, or coordination/interaction management). Analysis of the data showed statistically significant differences among the responses related to the four competencies. Most superintendents indicated strong alignment with competencies of expressiveness and composure.

With the majority of superintendents indicating consideration as their leadership style, the small number of responses aligned to attentiveness and coordination/interaction was surprising. This finding raises questions about why the expressiveness and composure factors were identified more frequently than the attentiveness and coordination factors. Attentiveness refers to other-centered or other-focused behaviors such as empathy, interpersonal diplomacy, and responsiveness to others in a transaction (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2002). These behaviors are thought to engage followers in reciprocal interactions that form relationships. Coordination is used to guide and manage interactions and manage interactions through behaviors such as balancing the time spent by the leaders and follower in the interactions, sustaining the topic, and managing behaviors, emotions, and interruptions (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2002). Perhaps the data from this study reflects the findings of Sutherland (2011) that composure and expressiveness may operate within the leader and not the follower, while attentiveness and coordination require follower participation.

Research question four addressed to what extent self-perceived interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents were affected by the demographic variables (gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district as defined

by student enrollment, and pathways to leadership). An analysis of the data showed no significant differences in interpersonal communication competencies based on demographic data.

Research question five examined the extent to which there was a relationship between leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents. Data analysis showed statistically significant positive relationships for each of the communication competencies and the two leadership styles that ranged from weak to moderate. Moderate positive relationships were found among the communication competencies of attentiveness/altercentrism and coordination/interaction management and the initiating structure leadership style. Weak positive relationships were found among attentiveness/altercentrism and consideration, composure and consideration, expressiveness and consideration, coordination/interaction management and consideration, composure and initiating structure, and expressiveness and initiating structure with the strength of the correlations ranging generally from .276 to .370. These findings support that a relationship does exist between leadership style and interpersonal communication competency that is not simply attributed to chance.

Research question six addressed the extent to which the relationships between leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies differ between the groups in demographic variables (gender, age, years of experience as an educator, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, and size of district as defined by student enrollment). The only statistically significant differences were found related to gender. Between males and females, a statistically significant difference was found regarding the relationship of attentiveness/altercentrism and

initiating structure, as well as regarding the relationship between consideration and composure.

Findings Related to the Literature

This section examines the study's findings as they relate to the literature regarding leadership styles and communication competencies. Specifically, the research focused on superintendents' perceptions pertaining to personal leadership style and interpersonal communication competencies of attentiveness/altercentrism, composure, expressiveness, and coordination/interaction management.

In terms of a preference for leadership style, consideration, which refers to behavior indicative of mutual trust, respect, and warmth in relationship between the leader and followers, or initiating structure, which refers to behavior that is task-focused and establishes well-defined patterns of organization and methods of procedure, the findings of this study support previous research involving superintendents in West Virginia and Texas. In the current study, the majority of superintendents reported a preference for consideration. This supports the work of Toth and Farmer (1999) and Canales et al. (2008) who found school superintendents in West Virginia and Texas, respectively, indicated a self-perceived preference for the consideration style of leadership.

The leadership styles of initiating structure and consideration can be characterized as those of task leaders and social leaders (Hoy & Miskel, 1987). The results indicated statistically significant evidence in favor of consideration; however, no relationship was found between individual demographic variables and leadership style. A review of literature revealed a common thread among many theorists in defining leadership that

points to leadership as a relationship between leaders and followers in which leaders influence the group to achieve a common goal (Hemphill & Coons, 1957; House et al., 1999; Jacobs & Jacques, 1990; Leavitt, 1973; Rauch & Behling, 1984; Salacuse, 2006; Yukl, 2012). A critical element for effectiveness in an educational leader's ability to relate to followers is developing the trust and commitment of followers (Fjelstad, 1990). The preference of superintendents in this study for the people-oriented leadership style of consideration supports the research of Fjelstad (1990) and Herron (2009) who point to the importance of trust-building and relating to followers for effective leadership. Effective leaders have a primary interest in developing individual relationships (Barnard, 1938/1968).

Literature clearly shows that the position of the superintendent has become more politically-defined, particularly as the issues that must be addressed by educational leaders becomes more complex and constituent stakeholders become increasingly diverse (Blumberg & Blumberg, 1985). This may explain the findings in the current study and others in which school district leaders demonstrate a preference for consideration-style leadership. The consideration-style leader by characteristic embodies the skills to influence followers to set goals to champion the vision for the future for public school organizations.

The literature review supported the need for communication competency among educational leaders. The findings in this study support the research of Doebert (2004) who found expressiveness and composure to be key competencies for school district leaders. Theoretical and empirical literature highlighted the fact that educational leaders are regularly engaged in communication with a broad range of stakeholders requiring

competence in interpersonal communication skills. Oversight organizations, including the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), support the need for strong communication skills as an essential element for effective leadership (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2008). The literature supports the contention that educational leaders need more training in communication skills, and organizations that represent educational leaders also contend there is a need to include communication skills in both administrator preparation programs as well as in ongoing professional development offerings. The current study provides further empirical support for the communication competence skills model (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2002). The results of the current study, which builds on existing literature and earlier studies (Doebert, 2004; Sophie, 2004), further demonstrates a relationship between leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies, thereby supporting the need for targeted training of communication skills for school superintendents.

Conclusions

This section provides conclusions drawn from the current study. Implications for action, recommendations for future research, and concluding remarks are provided.

Implications for action. This research can be used by aspiring or practicing public school superintendents to inform practice and encourage development of both leadership and communication competencies. This study supported the relationship between leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies generally and for school superintendents specifically. Educational leadership and administration preparation programs and leadership certification/recertification programs need to

address the importance of communication as it relates to leadership and incorporate specific training for that purpose.

Professional organizations that support educational leaders, like the American Association of School Administrators and state organizations like the Kansas School Superintendents Association should develop ongoing professional development training in interpersonal communication to further develop competent leaders. Boards of education and the organizations that support them should also note the connection between communication competency and leadership style when selecting educational leaders and in encouraging continued professional growth of existing leaders to meet community needs and expectations.

Recommendations for future research. The present research was unique in that the study consisted of 88 superintendents serving in Kansas public school districts during the 2012-2013 school year. Additional research is necessary for generalizability to a broader population. The first recommendation is to extend the current study by expanding the sample to include superintendents from districts in other states nationwide. One of the limitations of this study was that the survey was self-administered. The second recommendation is to extend the study by including the perception of others (e.g., followers, board of education members) as it relates to the superintendents' leadership styles and communication competencies. The third recommendation would be to further the research between leadership and other forms of communication competency (i.e., written communication, public speaking, group organizational communication, nonverbal communication). The fourth recommendation is to include other variables pertaining to student achievement and teacher retention. The fifth recommendation is to extend the

study by conducting a study with a mixed-methods research design. A mixed methods research design combines the elements of quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell, 2009). A qualitative approach would allow a researcher to interview and capture superintendents' perspectives regarding leadership and communication.

Concluding remarks. This study sought to identify and address the relationship between leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents. The findings of this study offer important contributions regarding communication competence and styles of leadership that push beyond traditional leader-follower dyads. The school superintendency is an essential, complex, and demanding position in American society because the individual fulfilling this role is the primary influence shaping public education (Soler, 1991). Current trends in schools appear to promote the development of groups such as Professional Learning Communities (DuFour et al., 2006) rather than individuals. This focus on group development emphasizes shared leadership, developing collaborative cultures, and fostering consensus building. Education requires visionary, people-oriented leaders who will empower followers to implement constructive change; in this study, 70% of the surveyed superintendents reported preferences for a people-oriented leadership style. Interpersonal communication is an important component in building relationships and relating to followers. The communication process is of primary importance as school district leaders become aware of and attend to how meetings are conducted, how conflicts are addressed, and how decisions are made. Shared leadership does not work if approached as simply following a checklist of behaviors. Instead, leaders need to

integrate into their practice guiding principles regarding human interaction in order to develop and nurture important connections with stakeholders.

The results presented in this study should compel superintendents and other leaders to examine their behavior when interacting with followers. The results also serve as a reminder to leadership preparation programs about the importance of relationships and the impact of communication as essential to leadership. Course experiences related to communication and relationships should be incorporated alongside other content material such as school law, data driven management, curriculum development and management, and finance. Knowledge, training, and awareness of leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies and their impact on educational leader effectiveness are essential areas of study and understanding for aspiring and practicing superintendents. An understanding of these connections could lend assurance to a positive movement forward to accomplishing key goals for schools districts and their communities.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Baker University IRB Proposal for Research Permission Form



Date: _____

School of education

IRB PROTOCOL NUMBER

Graduate department

(irb USE ONLY)

**IRB Request
Proposal for Research
Submitted to the Baker University Institutional Review Board**

I. Research Investigator(s) (Students must list faculty sponsor first)**Department(s)** **School of Education Graduate Department**

Name	Signature	
1. Dr. Brad Tate	_____	Major Advisor
2. Katie Hole	_____	Research Analyst
3. Dr. Susan Rogers	_____	University Committee Member
4. Dr. Gene Johnson	_____	External Committee Member

Principal Investigator: Leigh Anne Neal _____
 Phone: 816-769-0215
 Email: LeighANeal@stu.bakeru.edu
 Mailing address: 5400 Mohawk Lane, Fairway, KS 66205

Faculty sponsor: Dr. Brad Tate
 Phone: 913-491-4432
 Email: btate@bakeru.edu
 Expected Category of Review: Exempt Expedited Full

II: Protocol: (Type the title of your study)

An Analysis of Self-Assessed Leadership Styles and Interpersonal Communication
Competencies of Kansas Public School Superintendents

Summary

In a sentence or two, please describe the background and purpose of the research.

Much has been written and a great deal of research has been conducted to hypothesize the existence of leadership style and to describe and label leader behaviors so they can be discussed, analyzed, researched, and applied (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012). Leadership style is thought to incorporate important behavioral components including interpersonal communication competency. Effective interpersonal communication competency has been posited by Bennis (1989) as the centerpiece of productive leader-follower relationships and as one of the most important components of leadership style. A leader's success is dependent upon the possession of a specific communication skill set or competencies (Barge & Hirokawa, 1989). It is imperative that administrators are aware of communication channels within schools and different methods of communicating. Every organization has both formal and informal lines of communication and schools are no different. Good administrators will engage with stakeholders and use the most effective and efficient line of communication depending on the situation at hand (Mourshed, Chijioke, & Barber 2010; Wentz 1998). However, school superintendents can only use the strategies, techniques, and skills with which they are familiar. A 2005 survey conducted by the National School Public Relations Association identified the lack of communication expertise as a primary reason superintendents lose their jobs. According to the 2010 Decennial Study of the American School Superintendency, 33% of school superintendents reported a need for professional development and training in communication and public relations, and 25% identified

needs related to interpersonal relations and group dynamics (Kowalski, McCord, Petersen, Young, & Ellerson, 2010).

A limited body of research has been published specifically investigating the relationship between leadership style and communication competency in school administration. The purpose of this study is to identify the leadership styles and the interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents, and determine to what extent relationships exist between leadership style and interpersonal communication skills. Additionally, data will be collected and analyzed for the purpose of determining what, if any, impact the following demographic variables have on the leadership styles and interpersonal communication competencies of Kansas public school superintendents: gender, age, ethnicity, race, educational background, years of experience as an educator, pathways to leadership, number of years as a superintendent, number of years in current position, size of district, and geo/cultural features of the district. Additionally, this study has the potential to inform the development of training for both aspiring and practicing superintendents in the areas of leadership style and interpersonal communication competence. This study of the leadership styles and communication competencies of school superintendents will focus on individuals employed as Kansas public school superintendents during the 2012-2013 school year.

Briefly describe each condition or manipulation to be included within the study.

There will be no manipulation or condition included in this study.

What measures or observations will be taken in the study? If any questionnaire or other instruments are used, provide a brief description and attach a copy. Will the subjects encounter the risk of psychological, social, physical or legal risk? If so,

please describe the nature of the risk and any measures designed to mitigate that risk.

Three instruments will be utilized in this study. The first instrument is the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire – Form XII (Self) developed by Stogdill (1963) and used in the Ohio State studies and extensively over the past 50 years to measure leadership style. The LBDQ-Form XII (Self) will be used to identify the self-perceived leadership styles of Kansas public school superintendents. A second instrument, the Conversational Skills Rating Scale (CSRS) developed by Spitzberg (1993) will be used to measure self-perceived communication competencies of the respondents. The third instrument, a personal demographic questionnaire designed by the researcher, will be used to gather demographic and career information from the participants. Subjects will encounter no psychological, social, physical, or legal risk.

Will any stress to subjects be involved? If so, please describe.

Participants will not be subjected to any stress.

Will the subjects be deceived or misled in any way? If so, include an outline or script of the debriefing.

Participants will not be deceived or misled in any way.

Will there be a request for information which subjects might consider to be personal or sensitive? If so, please include a description.

There will be no request for information that subjects might consider to be personal or sensitive.

Will the subjects be presented with materials which might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading? If so, please describe.

Subjects will not be presented with materials which might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading.

Approximately how much time will be demanded of each subject?

The survey instruments should require approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Who will be the subjects in this study? How will they be solicited or contacted? Provide an outline or script of the information which will be provided to subjects prior to their volunteering to participate. Include a copy of any written solicitation as well as an outline of any oral solicitation.

The population of interest for this study is individuals employed as public school superintendents in the state of Kansas during the 2012-2013 school year. A listing of e-mail addresses will be obtained from the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) Directory of Superintendents, and a cover letter along with a link to the combined survey instrument, containing the LBDQ – Form XII (Self), CSRS, and personal demographic questionnaire, will be sent electronically to the 286 Kansas public school superintendents. The combined survey will be developed using SurveyMonkey, an online survey and questionnaire resource. In the e-mail cover letter, a statement will be included as a preface that states by completing/submitting the survey, respondents consent to participation and inclusion in the research study (see attached survey instrument).

What steps will be taken to insure that each subject's participation is voluntary? What if any inducements will be offered to the subjects for their participation?

Included in the cover letter soliciting participation will be a statement that participation in the survey is voluntary (see attached cover letter). There will be no inducements included in the solicitation of participants for this study.

How will you insure that the subjects give their consent prior to participating? Will a written consent form be used? If so, include the form. If not, explain why not.

Included in the introductory remarks in the electronic communication inviting participants to participate, there will be an explanation of the requested participation and statement informing participants that by completing and submitting the survey, participants indicate they give their consent to participate.

Will any aspect of the data be made a part of any permanent record that can be identified with the subject? If so, please explain the necessity.

No aspect of the data to be used in this study will be made part of any permanent record that can be identified with the subject.

Will the fact that a subject did or did not participate in a specific experiment or study be made part of any permanent record available to a supervisor, teacher or employer? If so, explain.

No aspect of the data to be used in this study will be made part of any permanent record available to a supervisor, teacher, or employer.

What steps will be taken to insure the confidentiality of the data? Where will it be stored? How long will it be stored? What will be done with it after the study is completed?

By utilizing SurveyMonkey, information can be exported as a delimited file and maintained on the secure servers of the Shawnee Mission School District. No personally identifiable information, i.e., name or school district name, will be requested in the survey, in order to maintain anonymity of respondents. Subjects will be able to respond anonymously and will be assured of confidentiality, as survey results will be reported in aggregate and not by individual. Survey responses will be archived for up to two years and deleted after that period of time.

If there are any risks involved in the study, are there any offsetting benefits that might accrue to either the subjects or society?

There will be no risks involved in this study that would offset benefits that may accrue from the findings of the research and potential contributions to the profession.

Will any data from files or archival data be used? If so, please describe.

No data from files or archival data will be used in this research study. The data used in this study will come directly from the surveys that will be administered electronically.

Appendix B: Baker University IRB Approval to Conduct Research Form



May 24, 2013

Ms. Leigh Ann Neal
5400 Mohawk Lane
Fairway, KS 66205

Dear Ms. Neal:

The Baker University IRB has reviewed your research project application (E-0181-0523-0524-G) and approved this project under Expedited Review. As described, the project complies with all the requirements and policies established by the University for protection of human subjects in research. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date.

The Baker University IRB requires that your consent form must include the date of approval and expiration date (one year from today). Please be aware of the following:

1. At designated intervals (usually annually) until the project is completed, a Project Status Report must be returned to the IRB.
2. Any significant change in the research protocol as described should be reviewed by this Committee prior to altering the project.
3. Notify the OIR about any new investigators not named in original application.
4. Any injury to a subject because of the research procedure must be reported to the IRB Chair or representative immediately.
5. When signed consent documents are required, the primary investigator must retain the signed consent documents for at least three years past completion of the research activity. If you use a signed consent form, provide a copy of the consent form to subjects at the time of consent.
6. If this is a funded project, keep a copy of this approval letter with your proposal/grant file.

Please inform Office of Institutional Research (OIR) or myself when this project is terminated. As noted above, you must also provide OIR with an annual status report and receive approval for maintaining your status. If your project receives funding which requests an annual update approval,

you must request this from the IRB one month prior to the annual update. Thanks for your cooperation. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carolyn Doolittle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carolyn Doolittle, EdD
Chair, Baker University IRB

Appendix C: Permission to Utilize LBDQ – Form XII (Self)

The following permission appears on The Ohio State University website indicating a formal request for permission to use the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) – Form XII (Self) is not required:

The Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) was developed by the staff of the Personnel Research Board, The Ohio State University, as one project of the Ohio State leadership studies, directed by Dr. Carroll L. Shartle. There is no cost and no need to request permission to use the LBDQ forms provided via this website.

The LBDQ provides a technique whereby group members may describe the behavior of the leader, or leaders, in any type of group or organization, provided the followers have had an opportunity to observe the leader in action as a leader of their group. Use of the following LBDQ components should be for research purposes only and no monetary gain should be realized from their use (Retrieved from <http://fisher.osu.edu/research/lbdq/>).

Appendix D: Request for Permission to Utilize CSRS

Leigh Anne Neal
5400 Mohawk Avenue
Fairway, KS 66205

Brian Spitzberg
c/o San Diego State University
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-4560
spitz@mail.sdsu.edu

April 23, 2013

Dear Dr. Spitzberg,

My name is Leigh Anne Neal, and I am a doctoral student at Baker University studying educational leadership. I am working on a dissertation research study. For my research study, I am studying the correlation of self-assessed leadership styles and communication competencies of public school superintendents in Kansas.

In researching the measurement of communication competency, I learned of your work in this area and the survey instrument, the Conversational Skills Rating Scale, that you developed. I would very much like to utilize the CSRS self-rating form as one of two instruments to survey the population for my research study. In addition to the CSRS, I plan to utilize the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire – Form XII (Self), a longstanding research instrument used in a variety of settings over decades to measure leader behavior.

I hope to conduct the research online, and I am writing to respectfully request permission to utilize the CSRS self-rating measure in the research. Please advise how I may acquire permission to administer 286 online surveys using the CSRS (Self). Also, I would like to request permission to include the survey instrument and the research findings in the final published dissertation.

Through this research, I intend to provide evidence of a direct correlation between effective leadership styles and communication competency for today's educational leaders. I am happy to share the results with you in any form you desire. I hope to inform the preparation programs for aspiring superintendents, as well as the professional development for practicing school leaders for the future.

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to receiving a response from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,
Leigh Anne Neal

Appendix E: Permission to Utilize CSRS

From: Brian Spitzberg [mailto:spitz@mail.sdsu.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2013 7:11 PM
To: Leigh Anne Neal
Subject: Re: Conversational Skills Rating Scale

Hi Leigh Anne,

You are most welcome to use the CSRS, and any other of my measures, and to make modifications as needed by your research design. I hope you will let me know how it comes out, as I like to keep updated on how my measures perform.

I'm attaching a little collection of information in case it helps.

Brian

Brian H. Spitzberg, Ph.D., Senate Distinguished Professor
School of Communication
San Diego State University
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-4560
spitz@mail.sdsu.edu

On Tue, Apr 23, 2013 at 4:54 PM, Leigh Anne Neal <leighanneneal@smsd.org> wrote:

Leigh Anne Neal

5400 Mohawk Avenue

Fairway, KS 66205

Brian Spitzberg

Professor, School of Communication

San Diego State University

5500 Campanile Drive

San Diego, CA 92182

Appendix F: Cover Letter with Consent to Participate Information Sent via E-mail to Kansas Public School Superintendents

May 28, 2013

Dear Superintendent _____,

You are invited to participate in a research project titled *An Analysis of Self-Assessed Leadership Styles and Interpersonal Communication Competencies of Kansas Public School Superintendents* being conducted by Leigh Anne Neal, associate superintendent for communications in the Shawnee Mission School District and current doctoral student at Baker University. The purpose of the study is to investigate and analyze the relationships between leadership styles and communication competencies reported by school superintendents.

I recognize that in your role as superintendent you are very busy, and I want to express my appreciation to you in advance for your consideration and participation. In order to minimize the amount of time required, I have created an electronic survey instrument comprised of components from two survey tools and a personal demographic census questionnaire. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

No individual or his/her school district will be identified in the results of the survey, and all responses will be held in the strictest of confidence. If you have questions concerning this study, please contact me at leighanneal@stu.bakeru.edu, or at (816)769-0215.

By completing and submitting the electronic survey instrument, you are consenting to participate in this project. Thank you again for your assistance and for sharing your responses as part of this doctoral research study.

Sincerely,

Leigh Anne Neal

Appendix G: Electronic Survey (Combined LBDQ – Form XII (Self), CSRS, and Demographic Data Questionnaire)

Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ – Form XII (Self))

Directions:

READ each item carefully. THINK about how frequently you engage in the behavior described by the item. DECIDE whether you (A) *Always* (B) *Often*, (C) *Occasionally*, (D) *Seldom* or (E) *Never* act as described by the item. Select one of the five letters (A B C D E) following the item to show the answer you selected.

A = Always
 B = Often
 C = Occasionally
 D = Seldom
 E = Never

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 1) | I let group members know what is expected of them | A B C D E |
| 2) | I am friendly and approachable | A B C D E |
| 3) | I encourage the use of uniform procedures | A B C D E |
| 4) | I do little things to make it pleasant to be a member of the group | A B C D E |
| 5) | I try out my ideas in the group | A B C D E |
| 6) | I put suggestions made by the group into operation | A B C D E |
| 7) | I make my attitudes clear to the group | A B C D E |
| 8) | I treat all group members as my equals | A B C D E |
| 9) | I decide what shall be done and how it shall be done | A B C D E |
| 10) | I give advance notice of changes | A B C D E |
| 11) | I assign group members to particular tasks | A B C D E |
| 12) | I keep to myself | A B C D E |
| 13) | I make sure that my part in the group is understood by the group members | A B C D E |

- | | | |
|-----|---|-----------|
| 14) | I look out for the personal welfare of group members | A B C D E |
| 15) | I schedule the work to be done | A B C D E |
| 16) | I am willing to make changes | A B C D E |
| 17) | I maintain definite standards of performance | A B C D E |
| 18) | I refuse to explain my actions | A B C D E |
| 19) | I ask that group members to follow standard rules and regulations | A B C D E |
| 20) | I act without consulting the group | A B C D E |

Conversational Skills Rating Scale (Self Trait Rating Form)

Rate how skillfully YOU generally use, or do not use, the following communicative behaviors in conversation:

- 1 = INADEQUATE (use is awkward, disruptive, or results in a negative impression of communication skills)
- 2 = FAIR (use is occasionally awkward or disruptive, occasionally adequate)
- 3 = ADEQUATE (use is sufficient but neither noticeable nor excellent. Produces neither strong positive nor negative impression)
- 4 = GOOD (use is better than adequate but not outstanding)
- 5 = EXCELLENT (use is smooth, controlled, results in positive impression of communicative skills)

Choose the single-most accurate response for each behavior in the following 30 statements:

	Inadequate	Fair	Adequate	Good	Excellent
21) Speaking rate (neither too slow nor too fast)	1	2	3	4	5
22) Speaking fluency (pauses, silences, "uh", etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
23) Vocal confidence (neither too tense/nervous nor overly confident sounding)	1	2	3	4	5
24) Articulation (clarity of pronunciation and linguistic expression)	1	2	3	4	5
25) Vocal variety (neither overly monotone or dramatic voice)	1	2	3	4	5

26) Volume (neither too loud nor too soft)	1	2	3	4	5
27) Posture (neither too closed/formal nor too open/informal)	1	2	3	4	5
28) Lean toward partner (neither too forward nor too far back)	1	2	3	4	5
29) Shaking or nervous twitches (aren't noticeable or distracting)	1	2	3	4	5
30) Unmotivated movements (tapping feet, fingers)	1	2	3	4	5
31) Facial expressiveness (neither blank nor exaggerated)	1	2	3	4	5
32) Nodding of head in response to partner statements	1	2	3	4	5
33) Use of gestures to emphasize what is being said	1	2	3	4	5
34) Use of humor and/or stories	1	2	3	4	5
35) Smiling and/or laughing	1	2	3	4	5
36) Use of eye contact	1	2	3	4	5
37) Asking of questions	1	2	3	4	5
38) Speaking about partner (involvement of partner as a topic of conversation)	1	2	3	4	5
39) Speaking about self (neither too much nor too little)	1	2	3	4	5
40) Encouragements or agreements (encouragement of partner to talk)	1	2	3	4	5
41) Personal opinion expression (neither too passive nor too aggressive)	1	2	3	4	5
42) Initiation of new topics	1	2	3	4	5

- 43) Maintenance of topics and follow-up comments 1 2 3 4 5
- 44) Interruption of partner speaking turns 1 2 3 4 5
- 45) Use of time speaking relative to partner 1 2 3 4 5
 Poor Conversationalist Good Conversationalist
- 46) Please rate your general overall performance in conversations with others 1 2 3 4 5
 Socially Unskilled Socially Skilled
- 47) Please rate your general overall performance in conversations with others 1 2 3 4 5
 Incompetent Communicator Competent Communicator
- 48) Please rate your general overall performance in conversations with others 1 2 3 4 5
 Inappropriate Communicator Appropriate Communicator
- 49) Please rate your general overall performance in conversations with others 1 2 3 4 5
 Ineffective Communicator Effective Communicator
- 50) Please rate your general overall performance in conversations with others 1 2 3 4 5

Demographic Data Questionnaire

51) Gender:

- Male
- Female

52) Age:

- 60 years of age and older
- 50-59 years of age
- 40-49 years of age
- 30-39 years of age
- Under 30 years of age

53) Ethnicity:

Please designate ethnicity:

- Hispanic or Latino
- Non-Hispanic or Latino

54) Race:

Indicate one or more races that apply among the following:

- American Indian
- Alaska native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- White

55) College/University Undergraduate Major: _____

56) Years as an Educator:

- Fewer than 5 years
- 5-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- More than 20 years

57) Years as Superintendent:

- Fewer than 5 years
- 5-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- More than 20 years

58) Years as Superintendent in Current Position/District:

- Fewer than 5 years
- 5-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- More than 20 years

59) Positions Held Prior to Attaining Superintendent Position (Check all that apply):

- Teacher
- Special Education Teacher
- Elementary School Principal
- Middle School/Junior High Principal
- High School Principal

- District-level Administrator (Educational Services – i.e. curriculum & instruction)
- District-level Administrator (Operational services – i.e. business & finance)
- Other: _____

60) Which best describes the geographic location of your school district?

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural

61) Student enrollment of your school district for the 2012-2013 school year:

- Fewer than 500 students
- 500-999 students
- 1,000-4,999 students
- 5,000 or more students

Appendix H: Follow-Up Letter Sent via E-mail to Kansas Public School Superintendents as a Reminder to Participate

June 13, 2013

Dear Kansas Public School Superintendents,

I know how very busy you are. However, I am asking a personal favor of you. Recently I sent you an email message inviting you to participate in a research project titled *An Analysis of Self-Assessed Leadership Styles and Interpersonal Communication Competencies of Kansas Public School Superintendents*. I appreciate those of you who have responded with such generous support. I am asking those of you who have not yet responded to please complete the survey in order that I may achieve as robust a sample size for the research as possible.

I hope that you will take just a moment to complete the survey. In order to minimize the amount of time required, I have created an electronic survey instrument that should take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

No individual or his/her school district will be identified in the results of the survey, and all responses will be held in the strictest of confidence. If you have questions concerning this study, please contact me at leighanneal@stu.bakeru.edu, or at (816)769-0215.

By completing and submitting the electronic survey instrument, you are consenting to participate in this project. Thank you again for your assistance and for sharing your responses as part of this doctoral research study. Please click this link (or copy and paste the link into your Internet browser) to complete the survey
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LANealResearch>.

Sincerely,

Leigh Anne Neal
Associate Superintendent for Communications, Shawnee Mission School District
Doctoral Student, Baker University