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Effect of Previous Role and Experience on Principals' Self-Reported Behaviors

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EFFECT OF PREVIOUS ROLE AND EXPERIENCE ON PRINCIPALS' SELF-REPORTED BEHAVIORS

by

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ABSTRACT

by
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Title: Effect of Previous Role and Experience on Principals' Self-Reported Behaviors
(Under the direction of Dr. Lynette Busceme)

Leading schools in the 21st Century is not a straightforward matter. Principals are responsible for the bifurcated role of managing and leading instruction in schools. However, many administrators lack the requisite skills to be instructional leaders. There are no national or state mandates designating a continuum of previous roles and experiences essential to being an effective principal. Despite the immense pressure for principals to cultivate effective learning cultures, there is limited research linking principals' effectiveness or the lack thereof to the progression of their career path. Therefore, this research study was designed to add to the diminutive body of research concerning the effect of previous role and years of experience on the development of principals' instructional leadership behaviors in Arkansas schools. The researcher sought to determine the difference between principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults versus principals without such a previous role in Hallinger's (2011) three domains: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate.

This quantitative, casual-comparative study was conducted through the administration of surveys. Surveys were deployed using convenience sampling for

elementary, middle, and high school principals across the state of Arkansas. The Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale was used to collect perceptions of instructional leadership behaviors for novice and non-probationary principals. The survey was submitted for analysis by 263 Arkansas principals representing all school levels.

A 2 x 2 factorial ANOVA was utilized to examine the data with a 0.5 significance level. There was no statistically significant difference in the interaction for previous role and years of experiences. The main effect of previous role was significant when Defining the School's Mission and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate. Likewise, the main effect of years of experience was significant when Managing the Instructional Program.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Being a school leader is not a straightforward matter, and school leadership behaviors among K-12 principals differ for countless reasons. Leading a school necessitates addressing components of curriculum and instruction along with handling essential managerial tasks. According to Goldring, Huff, May, and Camburn (2008), such an immense range of responsibilities requires principals to productively allocate time to execute the numerous management and instructional practices associated with leading a school. For some leaders, professional experience, or the lack thereof, helps determine how well they manage and lead schools. Wahlstrom and Louis (2008) insisted pedagogical knowledge and skill set were influential factors for school leadership behaviors. As time progresses and school reform evolves, the challenge of leading continues to be complex, requiring researchers to investigate to what extent school leaders' previous role and experiences matter in developing and sustaining effective schools.

With shifts in school reform and educational trends, pressure for principals to be instructional leaders continues to escalate. During the 1980s, many studies were purposed to examine attributes of effective schools. Consequently, principals in those schools became targets of the investigation. Accordingly, studies of effective schools validated findings across bodies of research indicating the principal as an indirect but significant

influence on student outcomes (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). These implications increased legislative mandates and policies designating the school principal as the change agent responsible for coordinating efforts to raise student achievement outcomes (Hallinger, 2008). According to Waters et al. (2003), many factors contributed to high achievement for students, but a preponderance of evidence indicated principal leadership was significant, second only to teachers providing substantive instruction. Findings regarding effective schools also led to principals being encouraged to evaluate their behaviors (Hallinger, 2008). Essentially, principals were encouraged to examine their role beyond being managers and move more toward being instructional leaders.

Pivotal legislation, like No Child Left Behind of 2001 (NCLB, 2002), also contributed to the ensuing interest in principal instructional leadership. Subsequently, the view of instructional leadership was described in numerous ways. Leithwood and Jantzi (2004) asserted *instructional leadership* was a catchphrase often misused to depict school leaders. For years, ambiguity in the definition of instructional leadership had resulted in challenges with capturing the essence of the term (Ginsberg, 1988). Principals needed a more precise description of an instructional leader to prepare for roles in leadership. As a result, scholars were urged to systematically investigate the role of principals as instructional leaders. The range of explanations of the instructional leadership role generated many distinctive interpretations of what leadership in schools looked like.

Global interest in facets of instructional leadership led to additional studies focused on defining instructional leadership by indicating evident behaviors of effective leaders. Keeping with the trend, policy makers expressed an increased urgency for the development of standards of performance for school leaders. The legislative mandate of

NCLB resulted in accountability measures requiring 95% of students to be assessed in reading and mathematics (Zimmer, Gill, Booker, & Lockwood, 2007). Accordingly, academic success in schools was measured based on yearly progress. The increased pressure to make annual progress propagated the principal as a change agent, and ensuing legislation supported the declaration that principals were accountable for school performance.

Following the increase in accountability measures for school leaders, numerous instruments to measure principal performance in the area of instructional management emerged (Zimmer et al., 2007). The Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) was the most widely used instrument, assessing three dimensions of instructional leadership: Defining the Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate (Hallinger, 1982). Each dimension was described by instructional leadership functions with 10 explanations to define the three dimensions (Hallinger, 2008). The novelty of the PIMRS was evident in the self-reported behaviors of principals. Prior to people using PIMRS, methodologies mainly involved the interpretation of interviews and observations of principals. With PIMRS's self-reported behaviors, reports generated data related to principals' perceptions of their performance across dimensions in leadership (Hallinger, 2008). The evolution of methodologies for assessing instructional leadership increased the number of studies conducted, and the body of research improved for future analyses.

In the midst of school reform efforts, The National Institute of School Leadership conducted ongoing research with the primary objective being to improve leadership and the secondary objective to investigate what influenced principals' day-to-day practices

(Goldring et al., 2008). The National Institute of School Leadership study sought to prepare principals with the knowledge to lead successful efforts to improve instruction. In the study, school context and individual characteristics were considerations examined about principal behavior. Additional considerations in the study included the principal's years of experience and previous role. Results showed principal leadership was aligned with having an intentional focus on instructional management (Goldring et al., 2008). In some instances, principals were launching good-faith efforts, but challenges related to previous professional roles and previous experience negated good intentions. Findings also showcased time as a universal challenge for all school leaders. Nevertheless, principals were still challenged and held accountable with leading effective schools. Goldring et al. (2008) challenged the existing paradigm that principals did not focus on instructional tasks. Previous research had focused more on what principals did from day-to-day, with the assumption that they spent a portion of the school days engaged in unanticipated tasks native to school settings.

Because of the National Institute of School Leadership study and others like it, an alternate pattern of research emerged to determine why principals were more capable of allocating time and attention to either managerial or instructional tasks (Goldring et al. 2008). Essentially, National Institute of School Leadership's study opened a theory that principals' success with instructional management practices could be less about conventional practices and more about the influences of a previous role, as well as the extent of principals' proficiencies to cultivate and improve instructional outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was three-fold. First, the purpose of this study was to analyze differences among principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when defining the school mission, considering their previous role and years of experience as measured by the PIMRS. Second, the purpose of this study was to analyze differences among principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when managing the instructional program, considering their previous role and years of experience as measured by the PIMRS. Third, the purpose of this study was to analyze differences among principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when promoting a positive school learning climate, considering their previous role and years of experience as measured by the PIMRS.

Background

A preponderance of evidence supports the notion that academic achievement is transformed based on principals' preparation and depth of knowledge about leading and sustaining positive, instructional outcomes. Despite the indication of the strong link between school-level leadership and scholastic achievement, variation exists in the conceptual framework describing why many principals thrive as leaders. Studies revealed there is not one single characteristic or action of school leaders that one can attribute to their success. Rather, there is a superfluity of characteristics that can be attributed to successful school leaders (Hallinger, Bickman, & Davis, 1996). Hallinger et al. (1996) was the forerunner in this area of study and substantiated the idea that effective school leaders have the capacity to create conditions conducive to increasing student

achievement. With this in mind, ascertaining the blueprint for preparing school leaders to have an enhanced capacity to be successful instructional leaders remained a priority.

Core Practices of School Leadership

The theoretical framework supporting this study was based on core practices of instructional leaders. Despite the leadership type, certain core practices are communal to all types of leaderships (Lezotte & Snyder, 2010). Through the years, educational experts debated whether the aforementioned leadership theories were synonymous to the phrase *effective leadership*. To be more conclusive about core practices, educational reform shifted and instigated high priority to examining core practices of school leaders. Studies were reflective of a focused shift from capturing instructional leadership as a descriptive narrative to reporting the beliefs and practices of effective school leaders to signify essential practices. To influence school leadership, Leithwood (2006) challenged stakeholders to look at the core practices of successful school leaders. He also strongly suggested leadership was about influence and direction and defined core practices as critical actions that positively influence organizational goals. The value of these practices was the outward manifestation of what it was effective leaders did. Leithwood detailed the following as core practices central to successful leadership:

- setting directions,
- developing people,
- redesigning the organization, and
- managing the instructional teaching and learning program.

There are 14 leadership behaviors detailed throughout the explanation of the four core practices. These behaviors were evident across many models of successful school

leadership. Hallinger's (2011) model of instructional leadership cited the behaviors, and Waters et al. (2003) meta-analysis explained the relevance of these behaviors. As a result, core practices have anchored many models of instructional leadership and have been adopted by many school leaders over time.

Dimensions of Instructional Leadership

Despite several studies and heightened interest, the exact dimensions and habits of successful instructional leadership have remained elusive to educational experts. A wide body of research had addressed a vast array of leadership theories; however, the impact of the research often varied from school to school (Knight, 2011). Even more importantly, the variance was evident in the differences in principal leadership. Nettles and Herrington (2007) determined that instructional leaders, such as principals, were responsible for leading learning in schools. They also noted that principals must understand the characteristics and behaviors of such leaders. Representatives of the Southern Regional Education Board agreed with Nettles and Herrington regarding the depth of understanding that school leaders must have to move school cultures to new heights in learning and achievement (Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001), asserting that knowledge was essential but previous experience was critical to daily practices. Essentially, Southern Regional Education Board used its platform to promote the importance of building the capacity of school leaders for sustainability. This idea permeated through many of the bulletins released for training for the *High Schools that Work* platform and emphasized that school leaders must lead the way to achievement by understanding standards-based planning (Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001). Ultimately, school leaders were encouraged to shape the learning culture by making informed decisions

based on research to design school missions, manage instructional programs, and promote positive school learning climates.

Designing the School's Mission

In the modern educational era, one primary responsibility of instructional leaders is to collaboratively establish a vision and mission for the school. To establish the school's mission and vision, Hallinger and Murphy (1987) claimed principals need clear and focused communication of the yearly goals as well as communication to the school population and the community-at-large to attain that mission. Effective instructional leaders comprehend the importance of framing the school goals and communicating the purpose of the objectives (Hallinger, 2008). Furthermore, outlining school goals creates channels of responsibility for reaching the vision, propelling students and staff forward to meet the school's mission and vision together.

In addition to defining and sharing the mission of the school, research shows it is important to communicate the expectation of high student-learning outcomes to all stakeholders. Marzano (2003) determined that the principal be the change agent accountable for leading efforts to define the mission. More importantly, the instructional leader was influential in aligning all tasks to the school mission. When aligning tasks, he or she is creating opportunities for continuous improvement, based on core beliefs, which is essential to the success of schools.

Managing the Instructional Program

Essentially, the idea of principals as instructional leaders evolved because of the demand for continuous improvement in student performance. Instructional leaders were challenged to think about how well they were leading their schools and to reflect on how

to improve curriculum and instruction. More importantly, leaders were encouraged to think about how well they were able to systemically implement best practices for the long term. According to Bottoms (2001), principals should be trained to lead the school community in curriculum and instruction to be respected as strong instructional leaders. Principals do not need to be experts in the content areas, but they must have adequate knowledge to lead and monitor the learning communities in reaching academic goals (Bottoms, 2001). Ultimately, leaders are accountable to offer and participate in the professional development structures that stakeholders need to cultivate learning circumstances that enhanced the school experience for all students (Fink & Resnick, 2001). In the end, good leaders will display a range of characteristics needed to be an instructional leader.

Though the idea of the principal as the instructional leader has been shown to be significant in relation to student achievement, it is often not the primary role that many school leaders assume. Fink and Resnick (2001) pointed out that many school leaders expend a bulk of time tending to managerial duties related to scheduling, reporting finance, and parental involvement. Indeed, many educational organizations have struggled with closing the achievement gap for students because principals spend most of their time managing instead of being an instructional leader (Goldring et al., 2008). Arguing that managerial duties have negated the potential progress of school leaders, many organizations have established platforms to heighten awareness of the overwhelming tasks administrators face when assuming the role of instructional leader.

Considering the aforementioned point of view, the Wallace Foundation (2012) exerted efforts to share information about pathways for better training for school leaders.

The Foundation presented five lessons in leadership for exploration and consideration by school stakeholders. The idea was to have leaders examine their current system of training against the five lessons in leadership (Wallace Foundation, 2012):

- Shaping a vision of academic success,
- Creating a climate of being hospitable to education,
- Cultivating leadership in others,
- Improving instruction, and
- Managing people, data, and processes to foster school improvement.

These lessons were designed to promote the use of the core functions of leadership and produce leaders with a focus on instructional outcomes.

Essentially, the Wallace Foundation (2012) indicated that preparation was not enough when considering candidates for school leadership positions; instead, school systems should choose the suitable person for leadership. Furthermore, the principal's disposition and perception about supporting achievements should be considered when determining their commitment to improving achievement. Lewis-Spector and Jay (2011) indicated that for principals to be successful, they must be willing to take on the role of instructional leader. When principals take on the role of instructional leader, they alter the deep-rooted belief that principals leave instruction to teachers and other instructional employees such as instructional facilitators or curriculum specialists because the principals themselves are not skillful to lead academic efforts.

Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate

As the disposition of school stakeholders directly influences the school's learning culture, Hallinger and Murphy (1987) insisted that establishing working norms for

collaborative efforts is the first step to promoting a positive school learning climate. They further claimed leadership that encourages positive climates requires the school leader to shape attitudes. Time for learning is extremely critical to the learning climate, and stakeholders need a positive attitude toward protecting instructional time. Ultimately, learning has to be the most important goal for the instructional leader (Hallinger, 2008). Continuous improvement for learning requires leaders to offer and provide professional development opportunities to support students' learning outcomes and to support staff with sustaining those outcomes. Promoting a positive learning climate also involves fostering a safe and orderly environment (Hallinger, 2008). When students and staff feel safe, they will focus on the learning without anxiety or fear. Communicating success and providing incentives can also contribute to sustaining a positive school culture.

In addition to making learning a priority and creating a safe environment, school leaders who are visible and accessible increase the likelihood that a school culture is conducive to positive learning outcomes. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) conveyed the significance of the school leader's knowledge of curriculum and instruction when promoting a positive learning climate. To observe the learning environment and provide valuable feedback, the principals should be able to recognize what an effective school looks like (Marzano et al., 2005). If necessary, the school leader must be able to model the behavior he or she cultivates. Ultimately, effective school leaders establish the attitude for the learning environment and set standards and expectations that promote improvement.

Career Paths and School Administrators

The era of accountability has prompted suspicion about what experiences principals need before becoming a school administrator. As a result, many educational entities have explored the career path of school administrators. This has been an important consideration about hiring practices of superintendents. Many found there was a clear gap between what kind of principal was needed and the pool of qualified applicants, all of whom lacked the experience or skill set to move beyond managerial leadership to instructional leadership (Hancock, Black, & Bird, 2006).

Teacher inhibitions toward becoming administrators. During the early 2000s, there was a shortage of principals applying for school leadership roles. As a result, the Institute of Educational Leadership launched a national survey to investigate the causes. Survey responses revealed that teachers' motivation to become principals was based on their personal and professional goals to improve education (Hancock et al., 2006). Teachers indicated the role of the principal was complicated, and being effective in the role was challenging. The teachers considering administrative roles viewed the transition from teaching to leading as an opportunity to expand their influence and help others. Essentially, teachers had three motivations to become administrators: personal gains, altruism, and leadership influence (Hancock et al., 2006). There were also many inhibitors that negated teachers from seeking administrative positions, including a lack of confidence in their ability to lead instruction while managing the school and not wanting to land in the pitfalls associated with being a school principal (Hancock et al., 2006). In essence, teachers did not want to enter the administrative role without enough training to be effective leaders. Teachers' apprehension to get into the profession was problematic,

as career paths of principals became progressively important to the plight of educational institutions.

In Illinois, the RAND Corporation undertook a study to examine the careers of school administrators because the state was having difficulty recruiting school principals who were qualified to lead others to improve student outcomes. This concern was led by anecdotal reports about the need for effective leadership (Ringel, Gates, Chung, Brown, and Ghosh-Dastidar, 2004). To investigate why recruitment was challenging, Illinois officials used methods from a study in North Carolina to design their study. They used state-level data to investigate questions related to the relevance of career paths that influence a principal's behavior. The objective of the study was to examine specific information about career paths of school leaders in order to identify better, select, and support school administrators effective enough to improve student outcomes. The results of the study indicated that teacher service records and teacher certification data supported the analysis that career trajectory makes a difference (Ringel et al., 2004). Looking more in-depth at the study's results, several factors influenced the likelihood that teachers would move into administrative roles (Ringel et al., 2004). For instance, when the Illinois Educational Reform Act of 1985 shifted the focus to achievement and accountability, many educators felt the stress of the accountability measures.

The stress of meeting annual yearly performance seemed to be an overwhelming task. As a result, teachers decided not to seek administrative positions. Other factors also influenced career paths, but the accountability factor played a larger role in decision-making (Ringel et al., 2004). Another factor examined was a person's role previous to the principalship; studying career paths helped identify elements that prepared teachers for

leadership. The most frequent path was from teacher to principal for Illinois school leaders. However, in large schools, it was more likely that the principal was an assistant principal before assuming the role. Overall, teaching was the gateway to the principalship in Illinois (Ringel et al., 2004).

Career paths of administrators. Southern Regional Education Board also examined the career paths of administrators once they attained their positions, eventually recommending that administrators maintain instructional leadership skills critical to leading others to improve student outcomes (Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001). In a report, the Southern Regional Education Board called for training a new breed of administrators to influence student achievement in schools, with the implication that administrators' career paths and professional experiences were important to leadership. Bottoms and O'Neill (2001) defined the primary role of the capable school leader as being the chief learning officer. To prepare a new breed of administrators, the challenge will be to redesign the programs that train teachers to become leaders. For administrators to live up to the expectation of being instructional leaders, they must have intentional opportunities in their career paths to prepare for those expectations. Building new structures for school leadership was framed in many ways, but developing potential leaders was the most cost effective. Bottoms and O'Neill recommended tapping into current resources by identifying teachers with a depth of knowledge of instructional and curricular practices. These professionals should have a desire to facilitate student learning and be considered as potential school leaders.

Career paths and instructional coaching. To satiate the void of instructional leadership in schools, a new role was implemented in school leadership models.

Instructional leaders with the aspiration to facilitate curriculum and instruction were designated as instructional coaches. The individual serving in this role was not considered an administrator; however, this person accepted responsibility for leading instructional efforts. Knight (2007) stated that the traditional method of governing instructional practices was not sufficient to support academic mandates. He interviewed 150 teachers across America and discovered that educators were frustrated with principals who failed to engage teachers in useful professional development opportunities related to their classroom practice; he also argued that principals must meet the challenge of being able to design professional opportunities that would support teachers with initiatives directly related to teaching and learning (Knight, 2007). Because experience with creating and sustaining learning conversations was advantageous to be able to sustain learning cultures, career paths of principals usually involved such experiences. Knight (2007) recommended that educational leaders assess the benefits of instructional coaching. Otherwise, principals may have difficulty understanding the professional needs of teachers, and teachers could feel slighted by the administrators.

More than 30 years of research have supported the pathway of instructional leadership as a significant way to support teachers to improve student learning. The paradigm shift of modern education has involved how to shape the career pathway of principals to prepare them to be genuine instructional leaders. Knight's (2007) research was conclusive that principals should be instructional leaders with the skill set of instructional coaches. However, the unanswered question in the research involved whether individuals who have the experience of being an instructional coach are better

prepared for the principalship, specifically in the areas of defining school mission, developing the instructional program, and promoting a positive school learning climate.

Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale

A good-faith effort to examine current practices was considered a feasible method for school leaders to evaluate the progression of the role of principals (Mitgang, 2012). As a result, key instruments were developed to help principals self-assess and to determine the extent of their leadership. The most widely-used instrument was the PIMRS developed by Phillip Hallinger (Hallinger, 1982). The common use of this rating scale became a method to measure perceptions of instructional leadership.

To date, the PIMRS has been used in at least 119 studies about instructional leadership. After the development of the PIMRS, a body of research was generated about principals as instructional leaders. The research consisted of related studies associated with the three dimensions of instructional leadership. According to Hallinger and Murphy (1985), those dimensions of Defining the School Mission, Managing the Instructional Plan, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate emerged as themes across many leadership models, guiding the leader to critical responsibilities related to successful instructional management.

Arkansas Schools and Instructional Leadership

Education in Arkansas has been dictated by legislative mandates such as NCLB (2002) and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Flexibility Wavier. State and government officials have exerted a collective effort to meet mandates while staying focused on the individual needs of schools. Through the years, many students were leaving high school unprepared for the rigor of collegiate experiences. According to the

Arkansas Senate News Report (State of Arkansas, 2014), the rate of students taking remedial college courses in Arkansas had fluctuated for many years. In March 2014, the Office for Education Policy (2014) reported that 22 schools or districts were identified as being in academic distress. Less than 49.5% of students in these schools were considered proficient in the areas of literacy, mathematics, or both. While under academic distress, these schools were governed by the Commissioner of Education. To improve conditions in distressed schools, the turnaround model was used to improve student achievement outcomes. In turnaround schools, staffing was the main strategy used to improve achievement outcomes. Teachers and administrators were considered critical assets in this model. Consequently, these stakeholders became the focus of legislation. Multiple mandates to hire highly qualified educators became the focus of many legislative sessions (Shelton, 2009). As a result, preparation for the principalship in Arkansas changed.

Legislative efforts, in response to achievement results, are focused on policies and standards to support establishing effective district and school leadership. Ultimately, the principal was identified as a significant means to increase student outcomes (Shelton, 2009). The School Support Program of 2005 was created by Act 1229. The School Support Program was designed to help support low-performing school leaders build leadership structures. In 2009, Act 222 was enacted with a continued focus on school support (State of Arkansas, 2009). The focus for school support was on building leadership capacity in schools and districts. A master principal academy was developed because of Act 222 with the intent to build a pathway to develop master principals (Arkansas Joint Education Committee, 2013). The Arkansas Leadership Academy administrators directed principals through professional development. This extensive

training focused on building systems and processes in schools. Additional legislative efforts in Arkansas were also concentrated on principal evaluations (Shelton, 2009). The Leader Excellence and Development System (LEADS) was developed to support consistency in leadership in schools and districts (Arkansas Department of Education, 2016). All principals were trained to use the rubric to self-assess and to develop professional growth plans based on the self-assessments. Essentially, this legislation was authorized and sustained to encourage reflective practices that would support instructional leadership behaviors that would boost student growth and achievement.

Beliefs and Educational Research

Research of effective schools contains descriptions of schools that emphasize stakeholders' perceptions and beliefs as indirect influences on student achievement. Pajares (1992) asserted that the concept of belief was a valuable psychological construct. Internalizing beliefs as a reliable construct accelerated the progress of how much attention was focused on self-efficacy in educational institutions. Some researchers were skeptical about this assertion (Pajares, 1992). Nevertheless, there were legitimate inquiries about efficacy in many different fields of study.

When considering the educational settings, the Social Cognitive Theory supported the pattern of thought that beliefs and perceptions were the result of successful and unsuccessful experiences. The triadic interaction between the person, the behavior, and the environment explained causation of motivation. Stajkovic and Luthans (1979) explained that the triage generated reciprocity. Pajares (1992) agreed that humans potentially could be the product and the producer of their motivation, which influences their behavior and alters the current environment. Educators who have self-efficacy have

knowledge and confidence that they can be effective when faced with challenges. Parajes specified that knowledge is great, but beliefs influence how people make sense of their world. This is critical as beliefs are considered part of episodic memory, which stimulates images from experiences. The implication for educators meant that day-to-day behaviors were grounded in personal beliefs.

Hypotheses

Based on the literature, the researcher composed the following hypotheses from the three purpose statements.

1. No significant difference will exist by years of experience between principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults versus principals without such a previous role on principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when defining the school's mission as measured by the PIMRS.
2. No significant difference will exist by years of experience between principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults versus principals without such a previous role on principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when managing the instructional program as measured by the PIMRS.
3. No significant difference will exist by years of experience between principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults versus principals without such a previous role on principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when promoting a positive school learning climate as measured by the PIMRS.

Description of Terms

Academic distress. The Arkansas Joint Education Committee (2013) defined academic distress as a designation for a school or district that indicates a failure to meet academic achievement standards.

Adequate Yearly Progress. Porter, Linn, and Trimble (2005) defined adequate yearly progress as a measure for indicating the extent that schools have successfully met standards for proficiency.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Polikoff, McEachin, Wrabel, and Duque (2014) defined Elementary and Secondary Education Act as an accountability decree that holds schools and districts responsible for school achievement.

Instructional coaching. Knight (2008) defined instructional coaching as a partnership approach to improve instruction. Instructional coaching also involved a wide-range of responsibilities with the intention of helping teachers better serve students.

Instructional leadership. Nettles and Herrington (2007) defined instructional leadership as an effort to lead learning communities. It was also defined through governance behaviors such as generating ideas, providing feedback, modeling effective instruction, and determining professional development.

Instructional leader with focused-learning for adults. Sweeney (2010) and Knight (2005) emphasized that the instructional leaders with focused-learning for adults

- advocated for curriculum and instructional resources to support classroom management and to improve teaching and learning outcomes;
- analyzed and facilitated the use of summative assessment to measure teacher effectiveness;

- analyzed and facilitated the use of formative assessment to improve teacher practice and student learning;
- demonstrated research-based instructional practices for adult learners;
- established relationships and trust with educators for the purpose of student achievement;
- facilitated teachers' reflection about classroom practices and student learning; and
- observed teaching and learning to collaborate with educators to create professional growth plans for achieving professional goals.

Instructional management. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) defined instructional management as a construct that defined the responsibility of a principal, as discussed in effective school studies, focused on coordination of curriculum and instruction.

Leadership Excellence and Development System (LEADS). The Arkansas Department of Education (2016) defined LEADS as the evaluation system for district and school leaders in Arkansas.

Learning transfer. Merriam and Leahy (2005) defined learning transfer as a learner's ability to consistently apply learning in their practice and about other organization duties and responsibilities.

Level of study. The Fulbright Commission (2016) defined the level of study in the Unites States as preschool (nursery school), primary school (grades K-5), middle school (Grades 6-8), and high school (Grades 9-12).

Non-probationary principal. The Arkansas Department of Education (2016) defined a principal with 4+ years of experience as non-probationary.

Norm-reference test. The Arkansas Department of Education (2016) defined norm-reference tests as assessment measures of the performance of each student. Student scores are compared to a group of students nationwide.

Novice principal. The Arkansas Department of Education (2016) defined a novice principal as a principal that is probationary with 0-3 years of experience.

Principal leadership. Hallinger et al. (1996) defined principal leadership as an all-encompassing role of manager, supervisor, and instructional leader.

Principal Instructional Management Scale. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) defined the PIMRS as an instrument designed to assess instructional leadership in three areas: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate.

School divisions. Horng, Klasik, and Loeb (2010) defined school divisions in K-12 schools as elementary, middle, and high school.

Significance

Research Gaps

The link between school leadership and student achievement has changed the practices of school principals nationwide. Principal leadership was second only to teacher efforts in affecting student achievement (Waters et al., 2003). However, there remains limited evidence, either positive or negative, to indicate how principals are prepared to lead schools.

Researchers also examined the influence of belief systems on principal behaviors (Pajares, 1992). The investigation was based on the assumption that belief systems influence educators' attitudes and actions in schools, but belief was difficult to measure

in empirical form. Consequently, there is limited evidence to measure the extent of influence beliefs have on behaviors of principals. However, findings were conclusive that principals have a significant influence on all stakeholders and can lead others to make a direct influence on student achievement (Kearney, Herrington, & Aguilar, 2012).

Another gap in the research was related to the experience gap for administrators. Many school principals experienced challenging problems because of their preparedness to be instructional leaders (Spillane, Hunt, & Healy, 2009). Career paths were distinguished as an essential component needed to prepare experienced and inexperienced principals for managing and leading instructional efforts (Dalgleish, 2010). Many new principals simply do not have a reference for making decisions because they lack experience. Therefore, there should be some prerequisite experiences to obtain the knowledge of how to be an instructional leader. Despite this need, research lacked specificity on the most advantageous career path for instructional leaders.

Possible Implications for Practice

Many school districts have applied extensive efforts and significant amounts of capital to improve continuing education initiatives for school leaders. The demographic data from the PIMRS would provide district officials with criteria for hiring school leaders. More importantly, the information could be used to consider the career paths of administrators. Career paths of principals vary extensively, and the demographic data from PIMRS would provide state and district officials with information related to experiences leaders in the school district must have before becoming administrators.

In addition, the perceptual data could provide a basis for employing school leaders. Human resource officials would be able to base criteria for hiring qualified

candidates for leading schools. Job descriptions might specify the requirement of a previous role as instructional leader. Reasonable opportunities to be qualified for an administrative role could be increased, leading to a potential for an expansion of professionals applying for school leadership roles.

Implications for practice also include using the PIMRS to identify the relationship between principals' perception of their leadership across the three dimensions of leadership. Perceptions of practices could lead to specific differentiated development opportunities; these opportunities may reduce barriers that prevent administrators from being instructional leaders. More importantly, evaluating current practices of school leaders also provides opportunities for alignment of professional development opportunities to evaluative tools. Professional opportunities to understand the theoretical basis for improving student outcomes could leverage principals' behaviors with what is proven to work in schools. Principals, should they choose, would have a triadic framework of defining the school mission, managing instructional programs, and promoting a positive school learning climate to frame daily practices. As a result, district leaders would be promoting continuity and sustainability of leadership practices.

Considering the abundance of continuing education programs for leaders, it is also advantageous to consider the potential of this kind of research for higher education in Arkansas. There is an abundance of money spent to prepare principals to be instructional leaders with a minimal amount of success (Merriam & Leahy, 2005). Chancellors and Deans could benefit from analyzing self-perceptions of novice and non-probationary school leaders exiting their programs. More so, leaders in higher education could use

information about perceptions to provide programs of study that better prepare aspirant leaders for success.

Process to Accomplish

Design

A quantitative, causal-comparative strategy was used in this study. Hypothesis 1 used a 2 x 2 factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) between-groups design with principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when defining the school mission as the dependent variable and previous role, instructional leader with focus on adults versus principals without such a previous role, and classification in LEADS as novice or non-probationary as the independent variables. Hypothesis 2 used a 2 x 2 factorial ANOVA between-groups design with principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when managing the instructional program as the dependent variable and previous role, instructional leader with focus on adults versus principals without such a previous role, and classification in LEADS as novice or non-probationary as the independent variables. Hypothesis 3 used a 2 x 2 factorial ANOVA between-groups design with principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when promoting a positive school learning climate as the dependent variable and previous role, instructional leader with focus on adults versus principals without such a previous role, and classification in LEADS as novice or non-probationary as the independent variables.

Sample

The study included elementary, middle, and high school principals in Arkansas schools. The researcher chose schools in Arkansas because of the representation of leadership in schools. Schools in Arkansas had equal access to training opportunities to

support required leadership behaviors outlined in LEADS ("LEADS," 2012). Every year, sessions were provided for principals to review the indicators on the LEADS' rubric. Training also involved accessing resources for professional growth. For this study, demographics of previous role and years of experience were collected for each principal. All data from the PIMRS was included based on three themes: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate.

Instrumentation

To measure the effect of the independent variables, the PIMRS was used. The PIMRS is an instrument designed to assess instructional leadership in three areas: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate (Hallinger, 2008). The PIMRS was rated on a Likert scale ranging from (1) *almost never* to (5) *almost always*. Scoring consisted of calculating the mean for the items from each subscale. Since it was developed in 1982, the PIMRS has been used in over 100 studies and has met reliability standards since the original validation study was conducted (Hallinger, 2008). Studies have also verified that the scale provides reliable data regarding instructional management. Permission to use the PIMRS to analyze principals' instructional management behaviors was obtained from Phillip Hallinger. Approval from the superintendent of each school district and the Institutional Review Board was secured before any data were collected.

Data Analysis

To address the first hypothesis, a 2 x 2 factorial ANOVA was used with the condition of previous role and experience outlined in LEADS as the independent

variables, considering the theme of defining the school mission and principals' self-reported behaviors as the dependent variable controlling for level of study of primary, middle, or high school. The second hypothesis was analyzed by a 2 x 2 factorial ANOVA with the condition of previous role and experience outlined in LEADS as the independent variables, considering the theme of managing the instructional program and principals' self-reported behaviors as the dependent variable controlling for level of study of primary, middle, or high school. The third hypothesis was examined by a 2 x 2 factorial ANOVA with the condition of previous role and experience outlined in LEADS as the independent variables, considering the theme of promoting a positive school climate and principals' self-reported behaviors as the dependent variable controlling for school level. For each of the three hypotheses, self-reported principal instructional management rating behaviors scores on the PIMRS served as the dependent variable. To test the null hypothesis, the researcher used a two-tailed test with a .05 level of significance.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter was structured to establish a theoretical framework for the authenticity of previous role and experiences on perceived leadership of school principals. Furthermore, the literature review includes research about the expanding interest in instructional leadership and the pattern of thought that effective principals exemplify commonalities in how they use core practices of instructional leadership.

In the past 35 years, three leadership models emerged to convey the range of instructional leadership behaviors needed to provoke change in schools (Hallinger, 2008). Accordingly, Cotton's (2000, 2003) Leadership Behaviors, Marzano et al.'s (2005) Leadership Responsibilities, and Hallinger's (1982) Instructional Management Model were emphasized in the literature review to reflect the significance of the similarities of the models. However, an in-depth review of Hallinger's (2013) Instructional Management Model is provided to review the extensive use of the PIMRS to measure the authenticity of perceived instructional leadership of school leaders.

Background

The bifurcated responsibility of the principal to be a manager and an instructional leader has persisted universally for numerous years. There remains an abundance of research labeling the principal as the essential change agent in schools, and the notion that the principal creates drastic differences in a school's academic performance has

shaped school reform efforts for more than 50 years (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Historically, aspiring principals would choose the administrative track or the curriculum and instruction track that involved professional development (Fink & Resnick, 2001). However, today the school administrator no longer has the choice of narrowing professional development practices solely on intricacies of management or essentials of curriculum and instruction (Fink & Resnick, 2001). Effective Schools Research connected the school instructional leader as indispensable to school improvement efforts. Subsequently, researchers have studied successful principals to understand better how they can be the link to improving school capacity for the benefit of student achievement (Marzano et al., 2005).

Concurrently, legislation has begun to shift the focus of school principals from management to instructional leadership. Between 1975 and 1990, there was a change in policy to include state-mandated evaluation systems for principals (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Evaluation systems were proposed to provide school leaders with a framework for instructional and organizational leadership. Despite authentic intentions to mature principals as instructional leaders, administrative appraisal systems were not enough to support the progression of the role of the principal. Consequently, many scholars developed studies based on the assumption that school improvement required changes in the schools' curriculum and instruction structures. Another assumption that surfaced was that school improvement had to happen through vast improvement in student growth (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Principals were determined to be change agents capable of facilitating curriculum and instruction; more importantly, principals were expected to set the example for stakeholders.

With this renewed focus, many schools also established a plan of action to improve teacher efficacy and student achievement outcomes. According to Hallinger and Heck (2010), working toward multiple goals needed to improve teacher effectiveness and student achievement could be challenging without an equipped leader and a strong model for improvement, with evidence indicating schools that make a difference in student learning outcomes have capable leaders. More importantly, principals in these schools directly influence teacher practices. Consistent findings have also revealed that the influence principals have on student achievement is indirect yet indispensable (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). The association could continue to affect the evolution of the principal from manager to instructional leader.

Being an instructional leader involves many areas of leadership. The principal's leadership in instructional tasks of framing the mission and vision of schools has represented a strong indirect influence on student outcomes (Hallinger & Heck, 1998). Models of instructional leadership include establishing the vision and mission, managing curriculum and instruction, and establishing positive learning cultures. Studies using instructional leadership models also provided evidence that principals focused daily on leading and monitoring instructional models had a significant indirect effect on achievement outcomes (Hallinger & Heck, 1998). Principals were considered to be the motivating element to induce better achievement outcomes, and effective principals were shown to be steadfast instructional leaders with the perceptiveness to coach teachers to meet the needs of students (Hallinger & Heck, 1998). Accordingly, principals' knowledge of instructional practices and experience with adult learners could influence their leadership behavior.

Instructional leadership is now considered to be the most influential model to lead change in schools in the United States. Educational policy makers have historically expressed concern for putting adequate educational structures in place to support student growth. However, literature reviews guided legislative bodies to believe that the principal served in the role of manager but lacked direction to be an instructional leader (Hallinger, 2008). To determine the mutual proficiencies all principals must possess to lead effective schools, researchers were commissioned to examine distinguished principals in effective schools. Since the investigation of effective schools in the 1980s, research has continued to validate the pattern of thought that the principal is a strong, indirect link to student achievement (Hallinger, 2008). Empirical evidence, obtained through the study of effective schools, described strong instructional leaders as direct, goal-oriented trailblazers with a skill set to balance organizational and instructional responsibilities (Hallinger, 2013). Principals in effective schools have also created cultures by employing core practices of instructional leadership essential to fostering teacher effectiveness and student achievement. The aforementioned principals effectively engaged in setting directions, developing people, redesigning the organization, and managing teaching and learning (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008). In turn, Hallinger (2013) explained that effective principals were labeled as turn-around principals because they were successful leaders that demonstrated the charisma and expertise to orchestrate change in schools considered to be at the most risk of failure. Subsequently, the role of the principal continues to evolve and has been the subject of many studies. Theoretical underpinnings of core practices of instructional leadership in effective schools have resulted in models of leadership with specific dimensions for instructional leadership.

Core Practices of Instructional Leadership

The challenge for principals to assume the role of instructional leaders in schools has been supported by research concerning core practices of instructional leadership. The urgency for principals to develop instructional leadership capabilities developed during the Effective Schools movement between 1970 and 1980 (Horng & Loeb, 2010). Effective Schools' studies generated compilations of research that eventually led to four core practices of instructional leadership.

Extensive reviews of literature related to the behavior of principals asserted that effective leaders share certain basic leadership practices. The consensus was that most of the principals focused on improving teacher effectiveness (Hallinger, 2013; Leithwood et al., 2008; Sanzo, Sherman & Clayton, 2011; Waters et al., 2003). Additionally, because principals' behaviors are basic to their belief systems, core practices of instructional leadership have emerged as a best practice for school leaders. Leithwood et al. (2008) organized core practices of instructional leadership into these four categories:

1. Setting Directions,
2. Developing People,
3. Redesigning the Organization, and
4. Managing the Teaching and Learning Program.

The core practices of instructional leadership are comprised of 14 subsets, which describe the four practices in detail. The theoretical framework of core practices of instructional leadership corroborated many models of instructional leadership that undergird the expectations for instructional leaders to cultivate collegial environments through partnership practices that make a difference in the learning culture of the school

(Leithwood, 2006). Principals' content knowledge and expertise with establishing relationships with adult stakeholders to create a vision collaboratively could be the determining factor for success.

Building Vision and Setting Directions

Leithwood et al. (2008) insisted the core practice of setting directions includes two elements of vision and goals. When establishing leadership, a school principal was likely to engage in setting a plan of action or in developing a pathway for improvement. The essence of determining a pathway for improvement involved agreement of the purpose for working (Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006). The purpose was articulated through vision statements, which served as reminders for the group as they moved the work forward. Moving toward purpose also included establishing core beliefs, which specified the moral purpose of stakeholders. In turn, understanding the moral purpose provided insight into why stakeholders were motivated to do the work. Having insight into the core beliefs of the school community provided school leaders leverage to connect with the people, and connecting personal inspirations to setting direction provided the motivation for accomplishing goals (Leithwood et al., 2008). Another facet of setting direction was the practice of having high expectations for performance. Expectations were configured to increase performance and accelerate the pace of the work toward the vision. Expectations also revealed the passion of the school leader and set the pace for productivity (Leithwood et al., 2008).

Research showed goal setting and fulfillment were dependent on the success of establishing a shared vision (Leithwood et al., 2008). When strong instructional leaders established collective visions by building collaborative cultures and fostering collegiality,

stakeholders were more capable of demonstrating professional behavior that supported the vision and mission (Leithwood et al., 2008). Attaching motivation to group goals also bolstered teacher practice and improved productivity toward the vision of being an instructional leader as a principal.

Developing People

Developing stakeholders to accomplish a collective vision in schools has remained an immense undertaking. More significantly, the coordination of individuals toward a shared vision necessitates an efficient school leader with the capability to cultivate a student-centered culture. Research of the Effective Schools Movement revealed the significance of developing people to have capacities to move the vision toward success (Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson, and Wahlstrom, 2004). Developing people also meant fostering academic interest to stimulate the intellect. After identifying interest through inventories and surveys, instructional leaders found out more about the school community and designed professional opportunities around those interests. Moreover, the instructional leaders set the example by displaying exemplary behavior (Leithwood et al., 2008). Understanding and developing people was one of the critical practices that effective leaders used to affect student achievement outcomes indirectly.

The core practice of developing people also involved building stakeholder capacities to reach collective goals through commitment and resilience (Leithwood et al., 2008). Building capacities empowered more teaching professionals with high levels of confidence to meet expectations. In effective schools, principals provided differentiated levels of support for teachers to build teacher knowledge and skill sets. School leaders demonstrated models of leadership that involved both making data-driven decisions and

maintaining high levels of involvement in curriculum and instruction tasks (Leithwood et al., 2008). The readiness of these leaders to lead instructional matters included behaviors consistent with verbal expectations. In such instances, credibility undergirds teacher efficacies essential to meeting student achievement goals.

Redesigning the Organization

Meeting student achievement goals was one indicator of what was considered best practice for instructional leadership. Consideration for the context of instruction proved to be an essential element in effective schools. Therefore, redesigning the organization became a practice common for instructional leaders. Effective school leaders concerned themselves with cultivating collegial environments where teachers collaborated (Leithwood et al., 2008). Teamwork among school stakeholders established a willingness to work toward the goal of student achievement. The range of tasks necessary to organize elements of an effective school warranted cooperation and teamwork. School leaders concentrated on teachers' competencies, students' essentials, and the nature of the community as a strategy to increase student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2004). Essentially, best practice necessitated the principal be able to orchestrate collective efforts toward student achievement.

The challenge remained with the preparation of aspiring principals. Many did not have the experience with leading adult learners before the principalship. Redesigning the organization also involved cultivating adult learners. Horng and Loeb (2010) asserted that evidence of the core practices in schools represented strong instructional leaders with wisdom to utilize best practices to generate teacher effectiveness and student achievement. High-quality leadership also improved teacher effectiveness to initiate and

sustain favorable achievement outcomes. Teacher effectiveness had direct links to the core practices of the school principal (Horng & Loeb, 2010). Accordingly, students directly benefited from the practices of the classroom teacher. The challenge for the principals was to set the example for adult learners and lead the way in instructional and curriculum matters to orchestrate achievement outcomes.

Instructional Leadership Models

For many years, reform efforts in education emphasized the expanding role of the principal in demonstrating instructional leadership behaviors. The principal remained the manager of schools, but the role expanded to leading adult stakeholders through curriculum standards and instructional practices. The idea that leadership was infectious in any organization propelled school reform forward (Pounder, Ogawa & Adams, 1995). Successively, prominent researchers developed models of instructional leadership with the intention of enhancing skill sets of principals. Three researchers emerged with correlated models of leadership practices to convey the range of instructional leadership behaviors: Hallinger's (1982) Instructional Leadership Domains, Cotton's (2003) Leadership Behaviors, and Marzano et al.'s (2003) Leadership Responsibilities. All of the aforementioned models of leadership behaviors were grounded in four areas: (a) leadership functioning to influence overall performance, (b) leadership operating within organizational cultures, (c) leadership relating to organizational goals, and (d) leadership encompassing individuals who possess certain attributes or act in certain ways (Pounders et al., 1995). Collectively, these attributes empowered principals to influence the culture and performance of the school. Hallinger's (1982) Instructional Leadership Domains consisted of defining the school's mission, managing the instructional program, and

promoting positive school learning climate. Cotton's (2003) Leadership Behaviors, and Marzano et al.'s (2005) Leadership Responsibilities aligned under Hallinger's three domains, as shown in Figure 1.

Domain One: Defining of the School's Vision	**Domain Two: Managing the Instructional Program**	**Domain Three: Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate**
☐ Framing the School's Goals ☐ Communicating the School's Goals Hallinger's (1983, 2008) Instructional Leadership Domains	☐ Supervising and Evaluating Instruction ☐ Coordinating the Curriculum ☐ Monitoring Student Progress	☐ Protecting Instructional Time ☐ Promoting Professional Development ☐ Maintaining High Visibility ☐ Providing Incentives for Teachers ☐ Providing Incentives for Learning
☐ Vision and Goals Focused on High Levels of Student Learning ☐ High Expectations for Student Achievement ☐ Parent and Community Outreach and Involvement ☐ Ongoing Pursuit of High Levels of Student Learning ☐ Norm of Continuous Learning ☐ Discussion of Instructional Issues ☐ Support of Risk Taking Cotton's (2003) 25 Leadership Behaviors	☐ Self-Confidence, Responsibility, and Perseverance ☐ Shared Leadership, Decision Making, and Staff Empowerment ☐ Instructional Leadership ☐ Classroom Observation and Feedback ☐ Monitoring Student Progress and Sharing Findings ☐ Use of Student Progress Data for Program Improvement	☐ Safe and Orderly Learning Environment ☐ Visibility and Accessibility ☐ Positive and Supportive School Climate ☐ Communication and Interaction ☐ Emotional and Interpersonal Support ☐ Rituals, Ceremonies, and Other Symbolic Actions ☐ Collaboration ☐ Support of Teacher Autonomy ☐ Professional Development Opportunities and Resources ☐ Protecting Instructional Time ☐ Recognition of Student and Staff Achievement ☐ Role Modeling
☐ Focus ☐ Optimizer ☐ Outreach ☐ Intellectual Stimulation ☐ Change Agents Marzano, Waters, & McNulty's (2005) 21 Leadership Responsibilities	☐ Ideals/Beliefs ☐ Optimizer ☐ Input ☐ Communication ☐ Knowledge of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment ☐ Involvement in Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment ☐ Monitoring/ Evaluating	☐ Order ☐ Input ☐ Visibility ☐ Culture ☐ Communication ☐ Relationship ☐ Contingent rewards ☐ Affirmation ☐ Resources ☐ Discipline ☐ Flexibility ☐ Knowledge of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment ☐ Involvement in Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment

Figure 1. Hallinger's domains with corresponding leadership practices: A summary. Adapted from *The instructional leadership practices in K-8 schools and their impact on student learning outcomes*, by R. L. Haggard, 2008, p. 19. Copyright 2008 by California State University. Reprinted by permission.

All three of the instructional leadership representations in Figure 1 emerged as practical. The design across the three models also implicated the school leader as the perceptive leader responsible for continuous growth of the adult learners. Notably, all models supported paradigm shifts for the principal to be an instructional coach that led stakeholders to collaborative efforts to sustain school cultures. More noticeably, each model maintained a distinct perspective on the role the principal plays in improving student achievement (Haggard, 2008). The perspectives shown in Figure 1 were described as leadership responsibilities, behaviors, and instructional management domains; yet, similarly, Leithwood et al.'s (2004) Core Practices of setting directions, developing people, and redesigning the organization align with the corresponding leadership practices of Marzano et al. (2005), Cotton (2003), and Hallinger (1982, 2008). All three researchers reflect in their models of leadership the importance of the school principal as an instructional leader.

To address the leadership role of principals, Hallinger (1982) developed the PIMRS to directly measure to what extent principals displayed leadership behaviors across the three domains of defining the school's mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive school learning environment. The same behaviors in Hallinger's (1982) domains were encompassed in Cotton's (2003) behaviors and Waters et al.'s (2003) leadership behaviors. The functions of each of the models align under the three leadership domains developed by Hallinger (1982). Consistency among the three models reflected the findings of all three researchers of the importance for the school leader to set a collective vision, develop stakeholders, and cultivate a positive environment (Haggard, 2008). The differences in findings in Figure 1 were reflective of

differences in the motivation for the research about instructional leadership. Hallinger's (1982) studies were focused on approaches to studying instructional leadership (Haggard, 2008). Also, Hallinger's (2013) Dimensions of Instructional Leadership Model included the distinction of attributes significant to be an effective instructional leader. On the other hand, Cotton's (2003) work identified 25 leadership practices of effective instructional leaders, which fit under the three dimensions of Hallinger's (1982) instructional management model. Particularly, Cotton (2003) focused her researched on facilitation and regulation with the aim of identifying a clear path for instructional leadership (Haggard, 2008). Marzano et al.'s (2005) research focused on the 21 leadership responsibilities, which also aligned with Hallinger's (1982) domains of instructional management. Additionally, Marzano et al.'s (2005) work was more about which leadership practices improved student achievement (Haggard, 2008). Essentially, all three of these researchers examined the instructional leadership role about student achievement and provided more clarity regarding behaviors and practices of strong, effective leaders.

Although all three models outline the desired behaviors for school leaders, there was no indication of the importance of previous role and experiences principals needed to become effective instructional leaders. Nevertheless, it remained clear that the attributes of instructional coaches emerged as kindred to the instructional management expectations for principals. Despite the relationship between the instructional coach and instructional manager role, there remain gaps in research in this area.

Hallinger's Dimensions of Instructional Leadership

The matter of instructional leadership has been the subject of a wide body of research. Hallinger's (1982) PIMRS instrument, by which many instructional leadership

studies were based, was widely used to research instructional leadership practices. Moreover, the theoretical underpinnings of effective schools were grounded in logical outcomes that produced common core practices in extraordinary schools that shattered statistical odds. The scope of Effective School's Research indicated the importance of instructional leadership on student achievement outcomes. According to Sammons, Hillman, and Mortimore (1995), researchers like Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston (1979), and Duckett (1980) indicated the staffing of the principal was the most essential success factor in school reform. The implication was that the school leader needed to be knowledgeable and have some experience with instructional responsibilities. Therefore, the principal should be hired to improve adult behaviors through instructional leadership (D'Amico, 1982). The scope of the research also contended that effective principals possessed admirable individual qualities and skill sets to lead with purpose, share leadership, and exist as a leading professional in classroom curriculum and monitoring student progress.

The Effective Schools Research also provided clarity that the school leader was the designated change agent to lead schools to change. Afterward, legislative demands for school leaders were robust and multidimensional, and shifts in school reform focused on the principal as the central influence on student outcomes (Marzano et al., 2005). There were many interpretations of the extent to which principals should govern instructional leadership practices on a daily basis.

The increased pressure to move school leaders to instructional leadership generated the development of numerous instruments to measure principal performance. These instruments provided means by which to measure performance, while establishing

commonalities for dimensions of instructional leadership. The PIMRS was the most widely used instrument to assess multi-dimensions of instructional leadership (Hallinger, 1982). The dimensions of defining the mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive school learning climate became indications of essential functions for school leaders.

Defining the Mission

Part of the instructional leader's role in leading the school to academic greatness involved defining the school's mission. Defining the mission was essential to communicating the purpose for the vision to education stakeholders (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). It was crucial to establish a common purpose, to initiate buy-in, and to co-exist with the same core beliefs for educating students. Effective principals, as instructional leaders, grasped this concept and diligently used opportunities to frame school-wide goals. Framing school-wide goals proved to be an essential leadership function descriptive of developing the mission in Hallinger's (2008) framework for instructional management model for leaders.

In effective schools, principals use framing goals to set targets for the school year. Teachers and stakeholders had clarity of objectives that were relevant to the population, and the communication of goals limited suspicions about motives for educating children (Marzano, 2003). To manage the work, goals were chunked using trend data reflective of students in the present and the past. From the survey, goals were framed in measurable terms to later use as a measure of growth (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). More importantly, framing goals increased the scope of performance. Principals were able to establish the tasks for completing the mission systematically. An additional function essential to

designing the school mission involved developing a plan of action to communicate school goals to all stakeholders (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). When establishing a plan of action, communication with the community-at-large was strategic and involved explaining school goals to promote cohesiveness for the purpose of completing the mission.

Communicating school goals was considered a continuous effort for instructional leaders in effective schools. Stakeholders, especially internal staff, were consistently reminded of the purpose for the year. To reiterate the message of the vision, tools were developed to support communicative efforts. Principals used newsletters, bulletins, and other communicative devices to remind teachers (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). The communication was not limited to bulletins and open meetings; in fact, effective principals used conferencing as a strategy of communicating goal statements and other statements related to designing the school mission.

Managing the Instructional Program

The second dimension of Hallinger's Instructional Management Model pertained to the school principal managing the instructional programming related to curriculum and instruction. Specifically, the principal's job functions were to supervise and evaluate instruction, coordinate curriculum, and monitor student progress (Hallinger, 1982). All of these job functions required collegial exchanges between the school principal and teachers.

Supervising and evaluating instruction also consisted of communicating school goals for the purpose of implementation in the classroom. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) explained that the more principals performed the job function of communicating goals, the more likely school stakeholders would engage in implementation. Important tasks for

the principals included providing instructional support for teachers in writing objectives and explicit teaching (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Frequent classroom visits were a method of collecting evidence of teacher development in aligning curriculum to instruction, and providing feedback to the teachers promptly was evidenced as useful when corrective measures were required. Interestingly, supervising and evaluating instruction was only one function central to managing the instructional program.

Coordinating curriculum was also a critical function in highly efficient schools; there needed to be evidence of high curriculum coordination throughout the school (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Alignment of objectives for content and skills was essential in coordinating curriculum. However, achievement results depended on the coordinating efforts of curriculum leaders, namely the principal and teachers. Continuity of instructional aims benefitted all stakeholders. Teachers were able to narrow the instructional focus, and students had clarity of expectations for learning (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Popham (2009) emphasized that one of the six stumbling blocks of schools was having too many curricular aims. Consequently, principals benefit from coordinating curriculum efforts. With command of curriculum efforts, monitoring student progress became an essential function for school principals. Effective schools had a time designated for coordinating curriculum, which promoted meaningful interaction between teachers. Henceforth, monitoring student progress became more meaningful for classroom practices.

An additional part of monitoring student progress involved emphasizing standardized testing. Comparing student performances based on specific criteria through planning practices validated the importance of coordinating curriculum. Test results also

demonstrated evidence of standards of strength and standards of weakness to address while planning curriculum. Determining strengths and weaknesses supported the leader's decisions related to managing the instructional planning.

Promoting Positive School Learning Climate

The third and last dimension of Hallinger's Instructional Management Model was promoting a positive school learning climate. To promote positivity in schools, principals were concerned with the influence they had on the learning environment. Monitoring attitudes of all stakeholders was used as a strategy to combat naysayers and uncooperative stakeholders. An essential job function for successfully promoting a positive school learning climate involved protecting instructional time (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Research outcomes indicated the value of consecutive blocks of instructional time. Frequent disruptions, whether school-related or not, minimized the strength of the strategies being used to teach students (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Ultimately, the responsibility for designing and sustaining positive school cultures was the responsibility of the school leader.

According to Hallinger and Murphy (1985), school leaders would direct attention to constructing policies and procedures to sustain best practices. However, emphasizing best practices also meant promoting professional development. Effective school principals used professional development opportunities to heighten teachers' awareness and participation in training opportunities related to areas where growth was needed to improve practices. Also, principals worked to align professional development to the goals tied to the school's mission and vision. The challenge for principals was in assisting teachers with implementing strategies learned in trainings into daily practices (Hallinger

& Murphy, 1985). Effective schools had leaders that worked intentionally with classroom teachers to implement and sustain best practices from professional development opportunities (Marzano, 2003). In the *School Leadership That Works* research, Marzano (2003) compared two categories of schools: an effective school and an ineffective school. These two schools were categorized by pass and fail rates. Findings indicated the school leader as critical because of defining characteristics related to the ability to lead curricular and instructional matters.

Correspondingly, implementation of best practices was a priority and occurred in response to the instructional leaders understanding the function of maintaining high visibility in the school. Visibility was credited with encouraging high interaction rates in the classroom. With elevated levels of interaction, instructional leaders observed authentic learning and were able to assess the use of strategies learned in professional development sessions (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). As a result, the instructional leader provided support directly related to teacher and student needs.

Although meeting professional development needs and being visible were essential functions of promoting a positive learning culture, instructional leaders have also had to provide incentives to generate desired outcomes (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). For many leaders, incentives included praise for efforts related to focus areas. Money was also an option in providing incentives for stakeholders, and in effective schools, praise was evidenced as a significant contributor to teacher performance (Marzano, 2003). Incentives for teachers validated the teachers' work and aided in sustaining the positive academic culture.

Another function essential to promoting a positive academic culture involved developing and enforcing academic standards in effective schools. High expectations, along with clearly defined standards, supported high levels of success (Marzano, 2003). The instructional leader chose incentives based on student populations. If students valued praise over tangible incentives, the leader would use praise when students demonstrated efforts toward academic goals. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) noted the importance of extending incentives at the classroom and school levels. Effective principals set the example by providing incentives for teachers, and teachers applied the same notion to students (Marzano, 2003). More importantly, providing incentives created reciprocity from school leader to teacher and from teacher to student. Reciprocity generated the cultural balance fundamental to the structure of instructional leadership.

Pathways to the Principalship

The nature of the principalship proves to be multi-faceted. Principals have to acquire knowledge and specific skill sets to be successful. For some administrators, the acquisition of skills is developed through job-based experience, and for others, skills are developed through job-embedded training.

Commission to Advance Instructional Leadership

The inconsistency in training paths for school leaders was the purpose for the formation of The National Commission for the Advancement of Educational Leadership Preparation (NCAELP). The commission assembled in 2002 to focus on contextual factors related to preparation for instructional leadership (Young & Peterson, 2002). Members of the NCALEP recognized there was a need for innovative methods for training principals for instructional leadership. In addition, members of the NCALEP

wanted to delineate professional development opportunities to support principals with acquiring skills to be better instructional leaders. They sought to create action plans outlining change in preparation, evaluation, and continual improvement (Young & Peterson, 2002). Essentially, the agenda of the NCALEP coincided with the national movement to determine if structured career paths contributed to the success or the lack thereof of the school leader.

Dalgleish and the Expanding Nature of Principalship

Historically, many researchers had not studied career paths of school leaders. However, as the scope of responsibility for the principals increased, the need to consider patterns of preparation for the school leader became increasingly important. Dalgleish (2010) professed that tomorrow's school principal needed insight into the expanding nature of the principalship. In response to Dalgleish, a request was issued for research relevant to instructional leadership. Since then, there have been significant studies about principals' career paths. Several studies were conducted in New York, North Carolina, and Illinois to examine patterns in a career. Primarily, researchers were interested in tracking routes teachers take from the classroom to the principalship so they could establish well-thought-out pathways to leadership (Papa, Lankford, & Wyckoff, 2002).

States have traditionally depended on collegiate programs to educate and prepare prospective school leaders for school assignments. Dalgleish (2010) explained that the plight of collegiate training programs was to certify aspiring principals to meet state licensure criteria. Before the increase in accountability during the era of NCLB (2002), collegiate programs met the needs of aspiring principals. However, as demands increased, the principalship was re-conceptualized from traditional management to progressive

leadership, and many programs were not redesigned to train principals to meet the demands in the shifts for instructional leadership (Browne-Ferrigno & Shoho, 2002). Seemingly, postgraduate college degrees were not enough to support educators' transition from teaching in the classroom to leading in a school. Also, although there were no mandates or requirements for teachers seeking administrative licensure to serve in instructional roles as a pathway to the principalship, the expectation for principals to be instructional leaders persisted. Researchers like Bottoms and O'Neill (2001); Coggshall, Stewart, and Bhatt (2008); Dalgleish (2010); Fink and Resnick (2001); Hale and Moorman (2003); Mitgang (2012); and Papa et al. (2002) sought to explore the career paths of the administrators and to determine the best way to support principals in the transition from the classroom to leadership.

Many states, beyond the administrators' licensure, required three to five years of teaching experience before becoming a principal. However, some school systems and state departments of education did not enforce teaching for an extended amount of time as a requirement before a teacher could seek an administrative position in a school setting (Browne-Ferrigno & Shoho, 2002). Considering the complexity of leading organizations in instructional matters, preparation for principals became a national concern. In many states, policy and programming had changed to influence the behaviors of school leaders. To influence policy and programs, NCAELP examined the quality of educational leadership in the United States and reported the inconsistencies in professional development and other support structures (Young & Peterson, 2002). Consequently, many states vested time in reform efforts to improve student outcomes by focusing on principals' leadership proficiencies.

Learning Point Associates and Alternative Paths to Principalship

A small-scale study conducted by the Learning Point Associates focused on the professional characteristics of administrators and the pathways of preparation for prospective principals. The premise of the investigation was based on the notion that there needed to be smoother, wider paths to the urban school principalship (Coggshall et al., 2008). The narrow, traditional path of obtaining licensure and completing an internship was not sufficient enough for the majority of individuals seeking a principalship (Levine, 2005). Successively, researchers for the study examined alternative paths that had been developed. Programs like New Leaders for New Schools and the Principal Residency Network developed internships much like residencies. Also, there were additional alternative paths developed that included a 2-year mentorship after becoming a principal. To analyze the direct influence of the alternative paths on instructional leadership, Coggshall et al. (2008) launched a study to investigate preparation for the principalship further.

The Learning Point Associates enrolled 74 aspiring principals from Washington DC, Chicago, and New York City to participate in the small-scale study (Coggshall et al., 2008). The principals were enrolled in preparation programs provided by Trinity University-Washington and the University of Illinois-Chicago. Through interviews ranging from 30 to 90 minutes, participants shared attributes they believed enhanced their leadership practices and those attributes they believed to be deterrents to their professional growth. The top five deterrents were discussed comprehensively in small groups, and principals made suggestions for policy about the deterrents (Coggshall et al.,

2008). The representation of the group was diverse, including representatives from minority groups from three geographic regions.

Research results affirmed that prospective principals adequately prepared for leadership positions had strong instructional knowledge and expertise. Many of the principals worked in school leadership positions such as reading coach, content coordinator, and dean of students (Coggshall et al., 2008). More importantly, those who succeeded in school leadership also demonstrated excellent teaching skills and had a personal philosophy of education. Beyond possessing classroom-teaching skills, the principals established interest in adult education. It was essential that aspiring principals wanted to work directly with teachers. Improving student outcomes involved the principals partnering with teachers in instructional tasks and invoking reflective practices (Knight, 2008). Great leaders possessed the attributes of instructional coaches and would do whatever it took to strengthen teaching practices (Collins, 2005). Essentially, principals in the focus group were appreciative of training programs, but many expressed a desire for more training and consideration from policymakers, researchers, and educators for paving the school leadership pathway before entry into the principalship.

The Arkansas Leadership Academy and Program for Effective Teaching

In Arkansas, the Arkansas Leadership Academy was commissioned to design programming to assist principals in job-embedded training in instructional and management responsibilities to increase proficiencies. The commission of the Arkansas Leadership Academy was one of many reform efforts in Arkansas designed to improve instructional leaders' competencies. Prior to the commission of Arkansas Leadership

Academy, an attempt to support instructional leadership was commissioned through a staff development model.

In the 1970s, the Program for Effective Teaching model, a state staff development model, was commissioned to emphasize teacher accountability in the state of Arkansas. However, successful implementation of Program for Effective Teaching depended on principals being able to oversee implementation of the model and coach teachers in making decisions about instructional practices (Terry, 1993). The implementation of Program for Effective Teaching was controversial for several reasons, primarily because though the Program for Effective Teaching model was developed for principals to evaluate teacher performance through implementation, coaching, and sustaining of the program, there was limited professional development for principals. Principals were not trained to be instructional coaches, and the expectations for coaching teachers were overwhelming for many school leaders (Terry, 1993). A study was conducted to examine the attitudes of teachers and principals toward the Program for Effective Teaching and to measure to what extent principals felt their administrative skills were enhanced through the Program for Effective Teaching (Terry, 1993). Surveys were mailed to principals with a rating scale for the following areas: *Attitude, Quality, Enhancement,* and *Coaching*, and 43% of the participants answered the survey from a sample of 459 principals. Results revealed that principals had a positive attitude toward the Program for Effective Teaching model. However, a small percentage of principals expressed that they wanted professional development to assist with how to coach teachers (Terry, 1993). Essentially, principals wanted more direction in training faculty and communicating instructional practice so they could influence teaching practices to improve student outcomes.

Responses regarding the coaching quality revealed that elementary and secondary principals differed on how they felt about leading teachers through coaching (Terry, 1993). Elementary principals expressed they benefited from the coaching training and felt more competent as coaching teachers. However, secondary principals were less comfortable with coaching techniques native to the Program for Effective Teaching model. Overwhelmingly, principals felt that Program for Effective Teaching training was not enough to sufficiently and adequately guide the teachers in the model. However, principals did recognize that they needed to be stronger in instructional techniques to observe classroom instruction and provide feedback. They also concluded that coaching teachers was progressive and would require two years of practice with coaching to cultivate proficiencies (Terry, 1993). Recommendations from the study were that principals should gain more experience in coaching to implement the Program for Effective Teaching model or any other instructional model and that administrators needed more experience with coaching skills to sustain the practice of providing feedback to inform teaching practices.

New York Principals Study

In New York, the career paths of principals were also examined for the purpose of improving policy to support expectations for principals to be instructional leaders. Twelve hundred school principals were surveyed to explore interest and qualifications to be instructional leaders. Results from the examination revealed that schools, where student scores were below expectations, were likely led by less experienced principals than schools with proficient scores (Papa et al., 2002). Results also showed there were no

structures in place to support principals in New York to acquire skills needed to attend to curriculum and instruction in schools.

Instructional Leaders and Instructional Coaching

Instructional leaders in effective schools share the unitary mission of achievement for all students. Rosenholtz (1985) reasoned that principals in effective schools embodied certainty about goals as leaders and exerted time and effort in aligning resources with student-driven goals in mind. This intrinsic motivation evident in school principals was substantiated by the academic accomplishments of learners. During the Effective Schools movement in the 1980s, instructional leadership practices reflected the leader of the school as the primary expert in the school setting (Marks & Printy, 2003). Consequently, the leader was expected to establish practices, select curriculum resources, and monitor instruction to support effective teaching. Being an instructional influence ultimately meant being competent with research-based, academic tasks. Beyond being competent in best practices, instructional leaders in effective schools also found value in job-embedded professional development practices (Marks & Printy, 2003). Leaders in effective schools respected teacher responsibility and thus directly influenced their effectiveness. Although these leaders embedded professional practices to sustain implementation of best practices, there were no structures established to support the task of leading curriculum and instruction along with other managerial duties. The lack of structure was credited with countless failures in schools.

Knight's Collaborative Approach for Instructional Coaching

Considering the past, innumerable failures to meet academic goals, effective leaders recognized the opportunity to differentiate services for all stakeholders. Knight

(2007) authored a text about personalizing learning to meet the individual need of stakeholders outweighing meeting the need of the group. Overall, Knight recognized cognitive coaching as a method for leading instructional initiatives that promoted differentiation of instruction in schools. To personalize learning, the principal had to have extensive knowledge of cognitive processes pertinent to school success. Cognitive coaching simply implied collaborating with teachers to engage in practices resulting in academic growth. Later, Knight referenced the cognitive coach as an instructional coach. He also wrote about the collaborative thinking process shared by the instructional coach and the school stakeholder, which involved authentic, extensive interactions between collaborators that strengthened the learning culture (Knight, 2007). Ultimately, Knight (2007) insisted the sentiment of the instructional leader reflected the belief that the principal was a teacher at heart; though the audience had changed, the undertaking of teaching remained unchanged.

The transition from the teacher mindset to the principal mindset encompassed teaching and extended to being an instructional leader. Principals encouraged interdependence among stakeholders and had the propensity to demonstrate it as the instructional leader. Knight (2007) described an instructional leader as having a partnership mindset. In effective schools, the administrator embodied the role of collaborator in curriculum and instructional tasks and was conscientious of other stakeholders possessing the same skill set. Ultimately, the principal believed in the partnership principle (Knight, 2007). With the partnership mindset, the leader believed in the following:

- equality conveyed in collegial relationships,
- choice being personal and decisions being collaborative,
- voice being expressed openly and freely,
- dialogue as a method of expressing critical thinking and listening for opportunities to learn,
- reflection as a way to calibrate thinking and make the right choices,
- Praxis, applying what is learned in authentic ways, as a means for reflecting, and
- reciprocity as the benefit of collegiality (Knight, 2007).

The partnership principles listed above-represented lifelines from the instructional coach to stakeholders, and the tactical strategies expanded opportunities for collaborative efforts to be frequent and productive (Knight, 2007). The implication is that principals with the partnership mindset are instructional leaders.

Sweeney's Student-Centered Process

Sweeney (2013) defined instructional leadership as a student-centered process. The focus on student-centered coaching was about moving all students toward academic success. To have student-centered conversations, stakeholders needed experience analyzing data and making curricular decisions. Core practices included (a) conversations about specific learning targets, (b) regular analysis of student artifacts, (c) evidence of student learning, (d) collaboration to co-plan and co-teach, (e) ongoing coaching cycles with teams or individuals, and (f) processes led by the school leader (Sweeney, 2013). The presumption that teacher knowledge directly impacted student learning was the foundation of the model. However, school leaders were intended as catalysts for initiating

and sustaining the accountability for instructional practices to meet the academic and social needs of students. Sweeney (2013) asserted that effective school leaders managed the coaching effort by nurturing the culture of high expectations and thoughtful reflections. Within a culture of high expectations, demand for instructional leadership would be high. Teachers and other key stakeholders would solicit assistance with curricular choices, assessment practices, and other scholastic responsibilities. Instructional leaders in effective schools also directed learning-oriented cultures, and teachers centered all tasks on students' needs. The inclusion of a data-driven assessment framework demonstrated the need for instructional decisions. The evidence of the partnership between the leader and classroom teacher was reflected in classroom practices. The bonus of teacher buy-in was evident in the teachers' propensity to acknowledge accountability for teaching practices. At any point in their career, should they ponder how to prepare for leadership as a school principal, they would understand the value of pursuing employment in a role with primary responsibilities in curriculum and instruction. This implication was predicated on the legislative mandates indicative of the prerequisite that principals should be prepared to be instructional leaders.

Cultivating the Art of Leadership

In many organizations, the art of leadership was cultivated through preparation and partnership. Hargrove (2008) wrote *Masterful Coaching* to denote that leadership required developing new skills to influence others around them. Hargrove further inferred that bringing out the best in others meant fostering others to develop new skills, which creates collaboration among stakeholders. Being able to contribute to the well-being of others was central to instructional leadership. Beyond building the efficacy in others,

leading required people to be passionate about their work as well as others' work. Administrators in successful schools strove to gain insight into the perspective of others (Covey, 1989). Fittingly, understanding different viewpoints afforded leaders insight into the humanity of the patrons and gave specific insight into intentions. With knowledge of stakeholders' intentions to contribute to the accomplishment of the vision and mission, instructional leaders had the leverage to encourage positive intentions and to shift negative intentions. Marks and Printy (2003) labeled the relationship between teachers and principals as critical to shifting intentions. Reciprocity increased the likelihood of transfer of practice.

In effective schools, the leader concentrated on building leadership capacity to improve educational outcomes. The key to building capacity involved engaging teachers in dialogue that extended to making decisions regarding academic matters (Marks & Printy, 2003). Effective leaders also valued firsthand information about students' academic conditions and contributed to the relevance of decision-making in curricular and instructional matters by coaching teachers to be reflective about instructional practices. Expanding the ability to take successful action was critical for effective school leaders.

Hargrove (2008) suggested two ways to coach people to take successful action. The first way involved fine-tuning current practice and personalizing learning. The second way introduced new modes of thinking for a different outcome. Intentional coaching solicited what Hargrove (2008) called a thinking partner. Thinking partners provided assistance in non-threatening ways and simplified the process for change. School-level factors for effective schools included the challenging of goals and effective

feedback. Instructional leaders, as thinking partners, urged this school-level factor. Marzano (2003) explained this school-level factor as including frequent monitoring of progress and pressure to achieve. To cultivate and sustain an achieving school, instructional leaders used feedback to ease the pressure to obtain academic goals. Instructional leadership also was reflected in the school leaders' conscientiousness that the measure of success was based solely on positive student-achievement outcomes. The heart of leadership practices embraced decision-making by a quorum of teacher-leaders. This kind of collegiality resulted in strong influences on the professional culture. The art of leadership through preparation and partnership enhanced the skill set of teacher-leaders. Therefore, teachers departed the classroom with enhanced expertise and knowledge to lead in curriculum and instruction. Essentially, implications of desired, cultural norms arose, and instructional leaders inside and outside the classroom were prime candidates to become school leaders.

Beliefs and Instructional Leadership

A preponderance of the evidence supported the legitimacy of beliefs and self-efficacy. The theoretical framework of the Social Cognitive Theory encompassed self-efficacy as its first construct to understand why people were motivated to exert efforts for the desired reality (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1979). Research reports of effective schools included the relevance of perceptions and beliefs as a construct to accelerate school improvement efforts (Pajares, 1992). In educational settings, the pattern of thought that beliefs and perceptions buttressed the actions of stakeholders, whether positive or negative, also spurred legitimate inquiries into the role of perceptions in the area of instructional leadership. Pajares (1992) attributed the triadic interaction between the

individual, behavior, and environment as causation for motivation, which insinuated the potential for individuals to be the product and producer of their motivation.

Self-Efficacy

Many leaders were limited in their knowledge about beliefs. Therefore, the psychological mechanism of self-motivation was considered to be an under-used practice. Researchers argued self-efficacy was the critical mechanism to cultivate intelligences necessary to improve outcomes, and with motivation from the school leader, it was more probable to produce educators with growing efficacy (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1979). The influence of the Social Cognitive Theory was in the dichotomy of the meaning of intelligence. Beyond the cognitive abilities to learn, intelligence was also related to the adaptability to use perceptions to cultivate the environment. Thus, the paradigm shift was from reliance on knowledge and skills to generate the context to dependence on the power of human perception to determine patterns of behavior (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1979).

School leaders in effective schools have verified the power of self-efficacy. Cawelti (1984) asserted that behavior patterns of successful school principals were based on what the school leader believed. Essentially, beliefs were determinants of daily actions of effective school leaders. Principals possessed a range of responsibilities to lead schools, and they allocated time based on what they perceived as important (Goldring et al., 2008). Implications were made that combined individual attributes and experiences over time influenced how and why school leaders made decisions. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) conducted studies to determine how social constructs influenced behaviors. Findings evidenced the importance of strategic and practical knowledge being integrated

into career paths of instructional leaders. According to Pajares (1992), separating belief and experience proved difficult. In many studies, it was hard to clarify where knowledge ended and belief began. Essentially, cognitive processes result from memory, experiences, and training related to problem-solving (Pajares, 1992). Therefore, leaders did not separate knowledge and belief because they depended on both constructs to evaluate and make decisions.

Behavior Patterns and Action Plans

Effective school leaders used belief structures to establish behavior patterns when seeking attainment of goals. According to Cawelti (1984), behaviors in one school differed from those in another school relative to the belief structure of the leader. However, in effective schools, leaders had similar cognitive constructs for establishing visions and developing action plans for school improvement efforts. Effective leaders also viewed instructional support as an active focus because of their beliefs and experiences. Cawelti asserted that patterns of effective schools revealed they spend considerable time in classrooms observing and providing teachers with feedback to improve teaching practices. The difference between effective leaders and managers striving to be effective was their cognitive constructs that drove judgments to invest time in curricular and instructional matters (Cawelti, 1984). Considerations for the connections of beliefs and experiences influenced the patterns of change in research and dispositions of educators.

Educational inquiry into the influence of beliefs proved necessary to improve policy and practices related to instructional leadership. Pajares (1992) asserted that studies conducted without consideration for the role of beliefs were one-sided and limited

the analysis of the survey. Considering beliefs and experiences provided the entire scope of influence on educators' actions and increased the value of the research for the purpose of implementing change in school learning cultures.

Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale

Inquiries into the influence of beliefs on educational practices suggested a strong correlation between educational beliefs and preparation. Inventories have been used to solicit insight into the disposition of educators (Pajares, 1992). The PIMRS was considered a reliable and valid research tool used mostly to survey principals on perceptions and practices and to effectively highlight patterns of leadership behaviors of principals (Hallinger, 2008). Furthermore, data generated by the PIMRS were used to emphasize different facets of instructional leadership and to problem solve or set goals for leadership development (Hallinger, 2008). Most importantly, the PIMRS had been used extensively to collect pertinent qualitative and quantitative data to influence leadership in schools positively.

For over 20 years, researchers have used the PIMRS in over eight countries, including the Philippines, Canada, Thailand, Taiwan, England, Hong Kong, Cameroon, Guam, and the United States. Trends in studies of instructional leadership have varied over time (Hallinger, 2008). According to Hallinger (2008), of the 119 studies conducted, 27 were explicitly used to petition only principals' perceptions of their instructional leadership behavior. Studies carried out examined the demographics or school contextual factors on the instructional leadership of principals; these studies were classified as part of the Antecedent Effects Model of research (Hallinger, 2008). Researchers studying demographic variables considered administrative experience, gender, age, efficacy,

teaching experience, and knowledge of curriculum and instruction. Studies involving school contextual factors included the variables of school size, school level, or district size (Hallinger, 2008). The most popular variables examined using the PIMRS were gender, years of experience as principal, years of teaching experience prior to the principalship, and age or ethnicity (Hallinger, 2008). According to Hallinger (2008), the variable of years of experience, as a demographic variable, repeatedly proved to be significant. As a result, interest persisted in how to determine to what extent the principal's years of experience had on his or her instructional leadership behaviors.

Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale Studies

Aspiring principals entered the profession with unique belief systems and diverse professional experiences. However, each school leader shared the accountability and aspiration of establishing and sustaining effective learning cultures to benefit all school stakeholders. Effective School stories sustained the idea that instructional leaders demonstrated behaviors developed through a previous role and experiences. Nonetheless, there remained a paradox between the enormous expectations for administrators and the preparation requirements. According to Wardlow (2008), current principals faced different circumstances than in previous years. As the role of principal adapted into an instructional leader, the principalship required more than experiences with teaching students and simply attaining credentials for an administrative license (Hess, 2003). More than ever before, the nation was confronted with barriers related to employing principals equipped to lead upon entry into the principalship (Hess, 2003). Many principals lacked the prerequisite skills and experiences essential to be an instructional leader. Inexperience in the principalship typically was the case as teaching typically had been the gateway to

the principalship (Ringel et al., 2004). Accordingly, it was sensible for policy makers and researchers to consider the importance of previous role and experiences throughout the career path of an aspiring principal.

A 2007 summit on connecting teaching and leading sponsored by the Regional Educational Laboratory discussed the pathway to leadership involving continuums of leadership for school principals that moved from the classroom to the principalship (Coggshall et al., 2008). Continuums of leadership signified the pathway for school principals and included career paths with features of school leadership roles that increased proficiencies in principals. However, without legislative mandates, challenges persisted in how to standardize pathways for principals. Historically, there was no standardization for previous role or experiences established for school administrators, but as demands for achievement increased, there needed to be more attention delegated to the career pathway of principals (Coggshall et al., 2008). The persistent paradox between the expectations for administrators to be instructional leaders and the ambiguous preparation requirements created a basis for empirical research relating principals' perceptions of their role as an instructional leader to individual background variables (Knezke, 2001). Leadership studies about instructional leadership emerged with a focus on constructs linked to intervening variables, which influence principals' perceptions and behaviors concerning instructional leadership.

Researchers hypothesized behaviors of the school leaders were influenced by internal and external processes and sought to find out if their suspicions had any substance to them (Hallinger & Heck, 2011). Internal processes were related to each individual's personal mechanisms and included at a minimum the school leader's past

experiences and belief systems. External processes included training opportunities and variables nurtured intentionally to mature leaders for instructional and curricular matters (Hallinger & Heck, 2011). To identify intervening variables, Hallinger (2008) deployed the Instructional Leadership Management Model and used the PIMRS as a research tool designed to solicit principals' perceptions, beliefs, and practices for instructional leadership.

Knezke Study on Leadership Experience and Behaviors

The PIMRS was used in very few studies to exclusively survey principals' perceptions about the importance of the background variables of experience and previous role in cultivating skillfulness to be instructional leaders. Knezke (2001) developed a study to determine if the effect of instructional leadership behaviors and character traits of the principal was correlated with higher levels of student achievement. Also, Knezke examined how specific instructional leadership behaviors of knowing curriculum and instruction influenced achievement. Specific emphasis was placed on the context of supervision performance in elementary schools in the area of reading.

To determine to what extent school principals' experience with pedagogy in reading differed, the researcher employed quantitative and qualitative methodologies, assembling data from 484 elementary principals in Texas (Knezek, 2001). Quantitative procedures included an ANOVA for achievement levels, individual characteristics, and subscale scores for instructional leadership functions. Specifically, principals were chosen to be part of the study because of the academic performance of their schools over the previous three years. Only 343 met the criteria for the study and were considered in data analysis. Survey data were evaluated to establish the relationship of teaching

certification and specialization with the 10 domains native to the survey (Knezek, 2001). To clarify previous experience, additional questions regarding tenure, additional certification, and experiences with teaching were included in the survey. Qualitative procedures for the study included principals using journals to record supervisory tasks and complete the PIMRS. Focus groups were also structured for the purpose of interviewing individual principals to determine to what extent they possessed content knowledge in reading, methodology, and pedagogy (Knezek, 2001). Using focus groups allowed for thorough interviews and observations, which helped Knezek (2001) to substantiate data.

Research revealed that principals with knowledge of instructional practices for reading with reading specialists were more likely to lead schools that performed higher than principals leading a school without any experience or previous training in teaching reading (Knezek, 2001). It was also observed that principals with specialized training in reading perceived themselves to be more credible instructional leaders because of their content knowledge and experience with teaching reading. According to Knezek (2001), principals with a specialty in reading shared the responsibility of being content leaders in reading. Essentially, the principals were more involved in instruction and curriculum because of previous experience in the subject area of reading. Therefore, principals with previous experience with instructional leadership cultivated high-performing schools where student growth rates were consistently progressive (Knezek, 2001). Other factors, beyond being a reading specialist, that contributed to positive outcomes involved the principal engaging in instructional leadership tasks of classroom observations and providing professional development and feedback through conferences with teachers.

Results from the PIMRS also exposed a relationship between certification, specialization, and gender. Female principals with certification in curriculum areas were more likely to be hands-on with demonstrating lessons in the classroom. More importantly, students and teachers viewed these principals as both competent educators and principals (Knezek, 2001). The credibility established generated high levels of respect for the principals as instructional specialists. Knezek (2001) concluded that distinctive requirements might be necessary to cultivate effective instructional leaders.

Leading curriculum and instructional tasks, whether in reading or any other content-area, necessitated some previous experience during the progression of the career path of the administrator. Knezek's (2001) study was one of the few designed to address the gap in research related to what experiences instructional leaders needed before the principalship. The study also afforded aspiring researchers with the premise to further explore the significance of establishing a continuum of leadership practices including previous role and experiences essential to instructional leadership.

The inherent nature of leadership denoted that the administrator possessed the finesse and expertise prior to leading other stakeholders. The natural progression for acquiring instructional leadership experiences throughout the career path of the aspiring administrator had provided a context for responsibilities associated with the principalship (Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001). According to Bottoms and O'Neill (2001), developing school leaders in progression to the principalship remained critical to increasing student achievement outcomes. Breeding a new generation of leaders better prepared for the principalship proved to be favorable for all stakeholders.

Study on Supported Versus Unsupported Principals

In 2011, a study was designed to investigate differences in self-reported leadership behaviors of novice principals who felt supported versus those who felt unsupported (Grande, 2011). A national sampling of 7,000 school administrators with at least two years of experience as principal was organized, and the PIMRS was administered as an online survey. Researchers analyzed 186 respondents' survey results, using a *t*-test, to compare means of responses for Hallinger's domains of instructional leadership management model. Additionally, the researchers analyzed the difference of means in school principals' behaviors with supported professional development as a method of learning versus school principals' behaviors without sustained professional development (Grande, 2011). Researchers gathered data for seven consecutive weeks. The School Leaders Network, a partner in this study, also invited 250 principals in their network to answer the survey. From the School Leaders Network, 210 principals answered surveys. Initially, results indicated a statistically significant difference of $p = .020$ in Domain One (School Visioning). Results for Domain Two (Managing Instructional Program) and Domain Three (School Climate and Culture) indicated no significance. With a Bonferroni correction, Domain One resulted in $p = .017$, which negated the significance in Domain One.

Study results also indicated that student achievement and leadership practices in Domain One had the strongest link, though not significant with the Bonferroni correction (Grande, 2011). The assertion generated interest in the role of trained instructional leaders or mentors and the relevance of professional learning communities (Grande, 2011). The affirmation also connected the importance of instructional leadership to all of

Hallinger's three domains. Principals with supported professional development indicated higher use of instructional leadership practices versus principals with no supportive professional development in Hallinger's three domains (Grande, 2011). Results suggesting using supported professional development facilitated thinking that principals should be able to instructionally coach school stakeholders in curricular matters.

Studies on Professional Experience Prior to Principalship

Awareness of the importance of professional experience proved evident in a study that examined the instructional behaviors of 10 principals in a school district. With a focus on specific job behaviors of the school administrators, the motivation behind the study was related to the school district's superintendent's desire to assess the readiness for principals to lead instructional tasks and to provide professional development experiences to support principals (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Profiles of the 10 administrators revealed differences in their approaches to instructional leadership. Specifically, patterns of school cultures emerged from the data collected from the three top-rated and the three bottom-rated principals. The most obvious differences were evidenced in the *proxies of knowledge* of curricular and instructional domains. According to Hallinger and Murphy (1985), top-rated principals, based on student achievement data, served in schools with different policies, practices, and behaviors. Despite differences, the school leaders supervised and evaluated instructional practices more than many other principals in previous studies (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). The groups also differed in years of experience and professional training opportunities. According to Hallinger and Murphy (1985), organizational and individual factors were synonymous and persisted as influential factors when principals rated their instructional leadership behaviors;

consequently, perceptions about their leadership capacities varied. Research results indicated that proxies of knowledge influenced leadership outcomes and that designing a systematic plan to funnel educators with previous experience with instructional leadership into the principalship could prove beneficial.

The combination of experience and previous campus-based roles with instructional leadership tasks buttressed school leaders' abilities to balance leadership of instructional areas, while making management choices advantageous for the school. Hallinger and Heck (1998) conveyed that instructional leaders' behaviors were predicated on individual personality traits and desires to show continual progress. Sterrett (2002) conducted a study focused on which background factors predicted how principals would portray their instructional leadership roles. The background variables included in the study comprised of the following: years of experience as an administrator, years of experience teaching, gender, size of student body, and free and reduced lunch. Variables were chosen in relation to research that indicated that distinction in background variables influenced instructional leadership behaviors of principals (Sterrett, 2002). For the purpose of this dissertation, results for the independent variables of years of experience as principal and years of teaching experience were investigated.

Methodology for the Virginia study included a random sampling of principals using the PIMRS to generate perceptions of instructional leadership, practices, behaviors, and beliefs of principals in Virginia (Sterrett, 2002). The survey was mailed and sent to the elementary principals selected, with 580 surveys mailed and 402 of those returned (Sterrett, 2002). There were three questions purposed in the study:

1. How do principals characterize their instructional leadership role?
2. What is the relationship between the background variables and how principals characterize their instructional role?
3. What background variables predict how principals characterize their instructional role?

For Question 1, regarding how principals characterized their instructional leadership role, descriptive statistics were used to generate data from participants. There were five subgroups for this area: clear instructional focus, monitoring of student progress, learning-centered climate, coordination of curriculum and instruction, and use of performance data and measurable goals (Sterrett, 2002). Means of subgroups ranged from a low 16.6 for coordination of curriculum and instruction to a high of 18.45 for a learning-centered climate, indicating that elementary principals in Virginia perceived their instructional leadership responsibility to be more toward cultivating a learning-centered climate and monitoring student progress opposed to the tasks of coordination of curriculum and instruction and guiding a clear instructional focus based on performance data (Sterrett, 2002).

For Question 2, inferential statistics were run for predictions related to the dependent variable of perceived instructional leadership role using a correlation matrix to examine the relationship between independent and dependent variables (Sterrett, 2002). Findings indicated a significant correlation between the independent variable, years of experience as principal, and the dependent variable of clear instructional focus and coordination of curriculum and instruction (Sterrett, 2002). Research results indicated

that principals exhibited self-efficacy with coaching and leading stakeholders in matters of teaching and learning, as a result of adequate preparation and experience.

For Question 3, the researcher conducted a linear regression to determine which background variables served as predictors. Research results indicated that the completion of an internship significantly predicted the dependent measures of clear instructional focus, use of performance data and measurable goals, and coordination of curriculum and instruction (Sterrett, 2002). The independent variable of years of experience as an elementary teacher significantly predicted the dependent measure of monitoring student progress and resulted in a higher characterization for monitoring student progress (Sterrett, 2002). Essentially, the independent variable of completion of an administrative internship was more predictive of principals conceptualizing their instructional leadership role than any other variable (Sterrett, 2002). The research results for the three research questions specified implications for further study about background variables and instructional leadership. The author's findings encouraged researchers and practitioners to investigate further best practices related to the background variables of the previous role and administrative experience for instructional leaders.

Conclusion

Empirical research studies included instructional leadership as an expanding topic studied by scholars. The value of understanding principals' conceptualization of the role of instructional leadership proved invaluable to education reform efforts. Hallinger's (2008) PIMRS afforded many researchers with the option to have a valid and reliable instrument to research and capture principals' perceptions of practices as school principals, while Sterrett (2002) asserted the relative importance of the research explained

and exposed the importance of background variables necessary for principals to be effective instructional leaders. Waters et al. (2003) also concluded that principals needed ample practice with instructional practices upon entry into the principalship. The indication that the pathway to the principalship should be designed to develop skill and knowledge for instructional leadership was an indicator of the relevance of the previous role. However, whether the preparation for the role of instructional leader was best cultivated through roles such as instructional facilitator or curriculum specialist remained ambiguous in research.

Unquestionably, there were implications that instructional leadership practices were developed in employment circumstances. Zellner, Jinkins, Gideon, Doughty, and McNamara (2002) emphasized that adequate preparation for instructional leadership should develop throughout the career of the principal. Hess (2003) also asserted that improving school leadership depended on systematic practices related to the succession to the principalship, emphasizing aspiring principals should be afforded a more professional progression to the principalship with unquestionable preparation to meet challenges of leadership. Hess implied that the extensive range of responsibilities instructional leaders face daily remained multifaceted and warranted a systematic approach to developing leaders before the principalship. Notably, the review of the literature revealed that a vast amount of pedagogical knowledge and skillfulness in leading instructional matters were prerequisites to the principalship. However, there were few studies straightforwardly designating previous role and years of experience as essential to cultivating leadership behaviors in aspiring principals. Accordingly, the inspiration for this study was to analyze differences among principals' self-reported

instructional leadership behaviors, considering previous role and years of experience with instructional leadership versus principals without such experiences.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Educational researchers have established the responsibility of the principal to be an instructional leader. However, many school leaders lack the expertise essential to leading stakeholders in matters associated with curriculum and instruction. Therefore, policymakers and state leaders focused on how to empower school leaders with knowledge and skill to implement the core practices of instructional leadership (Lezotte & Synder, 2010). Another influence on instructional leadership includes the importance of career paths of principals. Ideally, principals needed to come to the principalship with the skill set to be instructional leaders with the propensity to monitor teacher practices, which directly influences student achievement outcomes (Reeves, 2009). With the hustle and bustle of schools, principals make decisions relative to best practices. Therefore, the school leader should have enough experience with best practices of instructional leadership to make sound decisions one after the other.

Global interests in facets of instructional leadership have prompted researchers to develop instruments to assess principals' perceptions of their readiness to lead instructional tasks. The PIMRS was considered as a reliable and valid research tool used mostly to survey principals on their leadership behaviors (Hallinger, 2008). Most importantly, the PIMRS has been used extensively to collect pertinent qualitative and quantitative data to influence leadership in schools positively.

This study is designed to investigate the behaviors of K-12 principals in Arkansas, comparing those with a previous role as an instructional leader focused on adult learners with those who did not have a similar career path. The researcher analyzed the differences in self-reported behaviors of two groups of principals associated with years of experience. The research hypotheses are as follows:

1. No significant difference will exist by years of experience between principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults versus principals without such a previous role on principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when defining the school's mission as measured by the PIMRS.
2. No significant difference will exist by years of experience between principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults versus principals without such a previous role on principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when managing the instructional program as measured by the PIMRS.
3. No significant difference will exist by years of experience between principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults versus principals without such a previous role on principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when promoting a positive school learning climate as measured by the PIMRS.

The six goals of this chapter are to (a) describe the research design for the study, (b) describe the subjects and explain the sample selection, (c) explain instrumentation, (d)

outline the data collection procedures, (e) provide details of the analytical methods, and (f) identify limitations of the study.

Research Design

This quantitative, casual-comparative study is non-experimental and includes a between-groups design. Educational researchers utilize casual-comparative studies to describe a condition and to identify causes of a condition (Patten, 2012). Likewise, causal-comparative was appropriate as most educational research studies are non-experimental and seek to determine relationships of ex post facto matters (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012). The purpose of the study is to determine the differences in self-reported instructional leadership behaviors based on the principals' previous role and experience. The independent variables are previous role and years of experience in all three hypotheses. The dependent variables are the self-reported instructional leadership behaviors of principals as measured by the three domains of the PIMRS. For all hypotheses, a 2 x 2 factorial ANOVA, between-groups design was used. Statistical significance was calculated using the Tests of Between-Subjects Effects when running a two-way ANOVA.

Sample

This study used a nonprobability sampling method. Nonprobability sampling, also known as nonrandom sampling, disallows the researcher from specifying the probability that members of the population will be selected for the sample (Gay et al., 2012). Nonprobability sampling supported the specific selection of contributors in the study as opposed to probability sampling, which involves random selection of participants (Gay et al., 2012). Participants in the study included elementary, middle, and high school

principals in Arkansas schools. All principals were currently practicing in Arkansas public schools based on information gathered from the 2015-2016 Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators Principal Directory (Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators, 2015). Participating principals led schools in both rural and urban areas with variations in demographics and size. The Arkansas Public School Resource Committee (n.d.) identified that 82% of Arkansas school districts are rural based on enrollments of less than 2,500 students.

In the 2015-2016 school year, there were 1,062 principals in the state of Arkansas, 545 elementary schools, 221 middle/junior high schools and 296 high schools (Arkansas Department of Education Data Center, n.d.). Of the 1,062 principals, an email list of 992 administrators was compiled, and surveys were sent; 70 email addresses were unattainable. According to Gay et al. (2012), guidelines for sampling with a survey suggested at least 30 participants to establish existence or nonexistence of a relation. Furthermore, sampling should be in relation to the size of the population (Gay et al., 2012). To determine the minimum sample size for the ANOVA, a power analysis should be calculated ("Power Analysis," n.d.). A total of 272 (30%) surveys were opened; nine administrators opted out of the survey. This resulted in 263 recipients completing 100% of the survey, for a return rate of 29%.

Instrumentation

To collect data from school administrators, a cross-sectional survey was deployed. According to Gay et al. (2012), cross-sectional surveys are used to gather data from participants in a single period. Cross-sectional surveys were appropriate to use to take a snapshot of the current behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs of a population (Gay et al., 2012).

To measure the effect of the independent variables, the researcher used Hallinger's (1982) PIMRS. The PIMRS is an instrument designed to measure instructional leadership in three areas: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate (Hallinger, 2008). Each dimension of the PIMRS included leadership functions explanatory of what principals should be doing to be considered instructional leaders (Hallinger, 2008). The PIMRS is rated on a Likert scale ranging from (1) *almost never* to (5) *almost always*. There were 10 subscales and 50 behaviorally anchored items to help principals assess to what extent they are displaying instructional leadership behaviors (Hallinger, Wang, & Chen, 2013). Essentially, the self-reported behaviors of principals generate data that can be used to analyze differences in school leaders and perhaps enhance professional practices.

Principals were asked additional questions about previous role and years of experience. The participants were asked to respond to the following questions:

1. Did your previous role include ALL of the following responsibilities? Yes or No
    - Advocated for curriculum and instructional resources to support classroom management and to improve teaching and learning outcomes
    - Analyzed and facilitated use of summative assessment to measure teacher effectiveness
    - Analyzed and facilitated use of formative assessment to improve teacher practice and student learning
    - Demonstrated research-based instructional practices for adult learners

- Observed teaching and learning to collaborate with educators to create professional growth plans for achieving professional goals
- Facilitated teachers' reflection about classroom practices and student learning
- Established relationships and trust with educators for the purpose of student achievement

2. How many years have you been a principal? 0-3 years or 4+ years

The researcher determined that 180 principals had a previous role as an instructional leader with focused learning for adults, and there were 83 without such a role prior to the principalship. Table 1 explains the groupings of principals with a previous role with responsibilities of an instructional leader versus those without such a role prior to the principalship. Additionally, the researcher determined that the principal group consisted of 92 principals with 0-3 years of experience and 171 with 4+ years of experience. Table 1 explains the breakdown of principals by years of experience.

Table 1

Demographics of Previous Role and Years of Experience

Grouping		How many years have you been a principal?		
		0-3 years	4+ years	Total
Did your previous role include the following responsibilities	Yes	62	118	180
	No	30	53	83
	Total	92	171	263

Scoring consisted of calculating the mean for the items from each subscale. Since its development in 1982, the PIMRS has been used in over 100 studies (Hallinger, 2008). Subsequently, the PIMRS has met reliability standards since the original validation study was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha and Ebel's Test of reliability (Hallinger, 2008). Studies have also supported that the scale provides reliable data regarding instructional management. In subsequent reviews of studies using the PIMRS, Hallinger (2013) used Cronbach's Alpha in testing the reliability of the principal response data in a sample that consisted of 2,508 principals. The whole-scale alpha reliability estimate was 0.96, which reflects a high standard of reliability. Reliability for the three dimensions was 0.88 for *Defining a School Mission*, 0.91 for *Managing the Instructional Program*, and 0.93 for *Developing a Positive School Learning Climate* (Hallinger, 2013). Validity was also assessed for the PIMRS. Validity is important for measuring the use of the instrument for a particular purpose in a certain setting with a specific population (Morgan, Leech, Gloeckner, & Barrett, 2012). For the PIMRS, content and construct validity were measured. Condon and Clifford (2010) noted the following:

> Content validity is based on a review of the instructional leadership literature. Content is validated through extensive expert review. Agreement among raters was 0.80 for each item for inclusion in the scale. Construct validity is shown by higher correlations among items within a subscale than for the same items for other subscales. In addition, PIMRS scores are corroborated by school documents. (p. 8)

Permission to use the PIMRS to analyze principals' instructional management behaviors was obtained from the author. The Institutional Review Board approval was secured before any data were collected.

Data Collection Procedures

Following Institutional Review Board approval, all elementary, middle and high school administrators in the state of Arkansas were contacted by email to explain the purpose of the study and to solicit participation to take the PIMRS as a survey. The email message informed principals of the option to deny participation because the study was strictly voluntary. Also, the principals were informed of the confidentiality of the study and assured that their identities would be protected.

The researcher used a web-based survey tool (Survey Monkey) to administer the PIMRS to all school administrators choosing to participate. The preferred, web-based survey tool was used to collect data from contributing principals. The survey was made available for two months. To increase response rates, a reminder email was sent every Monday morning to principals that had not answered the survey. The conjecture that most administrators checked email on Monday morning at the start of the workweek was the rationale for sending emails on Monday. In follow-up emails, participants were reminded of the purpose of the study and the value of collecting responses for the study.

Analytical Methods

IBM Statistical Packages for Social Sciences Version 21 was used to conduct data analysis. A data codebook was developed to enter and code data into the statistical package strategically. Data coding schemes were assigned for different data sets for each of the 50 behaviorally anchored items used to measure principals' perceptions of their

instructional leadership. Assumptions for a 2 x 2 factorial ANOVA were tested. The assumptions that the observations were independent, the variances of groups were equal (homogeneity of variances), and the distributions of dependent variables were normal for each group were tested. The researcher used Levene's statistic to test the assumption of homogeneity of variances.

Finally, all hypotheses were examined by using a 2 x 2 factorial ANOVA with the condition of previous role and years of experience as the independent variables considering the themes of Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate. For each of the three hypotheses, self-reported instructional leadership behavior scores on the PIMRS served as the dependent variable. For each hypothesis, the mean score was calculated for the three domains of the PIMRS. To test the null hypothesis, the researcher used a two-tail test with a .05 level of significance.

Limitations

Possible limitations to the research worth consideration included constraints with survey questions, general conditions of using a survey, an adequate pool for the survey sample, and principals' self-assessment of instructional leadership behaviors. The first limitation was the restriction to alter the survey questions of the PIMRS. The requirement to include all questions, including demographic questions in the PIMRS unless waived by the publisher, limited the researcher's leverage to evaluate questions for sensitivity. Asking for demographic data such as the name of the school district and school potentially limited the response rate. A guideline for constructing a survey should include avoiding sensitive questions that respondents will avoid on the survey (Gay et al., 2012).

Structuring the survey to solicit honesty from all respondents was the goal. However, restrictions from the publisher restricted the candidate from removing questions; however, there was the option of adding questions.

The second potential limitation of the study resides with general facets of using a survey. According to Gay et al. (2012), surveys are not a straightforward matter, and researchers have to plan to obtain responses from potential participants intentionally. Survey data can be collected through the mail, email, telephone, or through an interview (Gay et al., 2012). For this study, the researcher chose to send the survey via email. The scheduling of when to administer the survey is also an important facet of using a survey. The survey was sent near the end of the school year. This may have affected principals' willingness to participate. Scheduling of the survey could have also attributed to the unattainable and bounced emails.

The third limitation of the study is associated with principals' availability to answer the survey with 0-3 years of experience as an instructional leader as a school principal. Currently, there are no mandates for hiring principals with different years of experience. As a result, the pool of principals with 0-3 years of experience as a principal may be much smaller than those with 4+ years of experience.

The fourth limitation of the study is associated with principals' self-assessment of instructional leadership behaviors. Questionnaires have been found to provide reliable and valid data on managerial behavior (Hallinger, 2012). Three parallel forms of the PIMRS for the principal, teacher, and supervisor were developed. All forms of the PIMRS are valid and reliable. However, the researcher only surveyed principals to examine the differences in principals' perceptions of instructional leadership behaviors

based on the independent variables of their previous role and years of experience. Surveying additional stakeholders might have supported or challenged the researcher's findings.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This research took a quantitative approach to determine if principals' self-reported behaviors for instructional management differ by years of experience between principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults versus principals without such a previous role when examining three domains: Defining the School Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Environment, as measured by the PIMRS. The survey was submitted for analysis by 263 Arkansas principals representing all grade levels. Previous role and experience served as the independent variables in all three hypotheses. The self-reported, instructional leadership behaviors of principals acted as the dependent variables. Using IBM Statistical Packages for Social Sciences Version 21, a 2 x 2 factorial ANOVA was used to examine each of the three hypotheses. Before running the statistical analysis, the assumptions of independent observations were examined, and assumptions of homogeneity of variances and normal distributions of the dependent variable for each group were checked. The results of the analysis are found in this chapter.

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 stated that no significant difference will exist by years of experience between principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults versus principals without such a previous role on principals' self-reported

instructional leadership behaviors when defining the school's mission as measured by the PIMRS. Descriptive statistics for variables of previous role and years of experience for Defining the School Mission are in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Mean Score for Theme 1 Defining the School Mission

Years of Exp	Previous Role	*M*	*SD*	*N*
0-3	Yes	34.21	4.25	62
	No	31.57	4.73	30
	Total	33.35	4.56	92
4+ yrs.	Yes	34.88	3.55	118
	No	32.42	4.52	53
	Total	34.12	4.03	171
Total	Yes	34.65	3.81	180
	No	32.11	4.59	83
	Total	33.85	4.23	263

An analysis was performed for the assumptions of the two-way ANOVA**.** One outlier was found but remained as part of the sample. Levene's test of equality of variances indicated homogeneity of variances across the groups, $F(3, 259) = 0.31$, $p > .05$. A line plot indicated parallel lines for the variable of Defining the Mission with no interaction between previous role and years of experience. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to test for normality with $p < .05$ for each group, indicating that the assumption of normality was not normally distributed across all groups. Despite this violation,

analysis of data using ANOVA was deemed appropriate, as the ANOVA is considered robust to mild violations of the assumption of normality (Morgan et al., 2012). A 2 x 2 factorial ANOVA was used to test the hypothesis. The results of the ANOVA are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3

Factorial ANOVA Results for Theme 1 Defining the School Mission

Source	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	*ES*
Previous Role	339.88	1	339.88	20.54	.000	0.07
Years of Exp.	30.09	1	30.10	1.82	.179	0.01
YearsExp*PrevRole	0.41	1	0.41	0.03	.876	0.00
Error	4284.85	259	16.54			
Total	305998.00	263				

The interaction between previous role and years of experience on principals' perceptions of their instructional leadership when Defining the School Mission was not statistically significant, $F(1, 259) = 0.03$, $p = .876$, $ES = 0.00$. Therefore, the null hypothesis for the interaction effect was not rejected. Because no significant interaction was found between previous role and years of experience, the main effect of each variable was examined independently. The analysis of the main effect for the previous role was performed, which indicated that the main effect was statistically significant, $F(1, 259) = 20.54$, $p = .000$, $ES = 0.07$. The effect size was medium according to Cohen's

guidelines. In addition, an analysis of the main effect for years of experience was performed, which indicated that the main effect was not statistically significant, $F(1, 259) = 1.82$, $p = .179$, $ES = 0.01$. Figure 2 shows the means for Defining the School Mission as a function of previous role and years of experience.

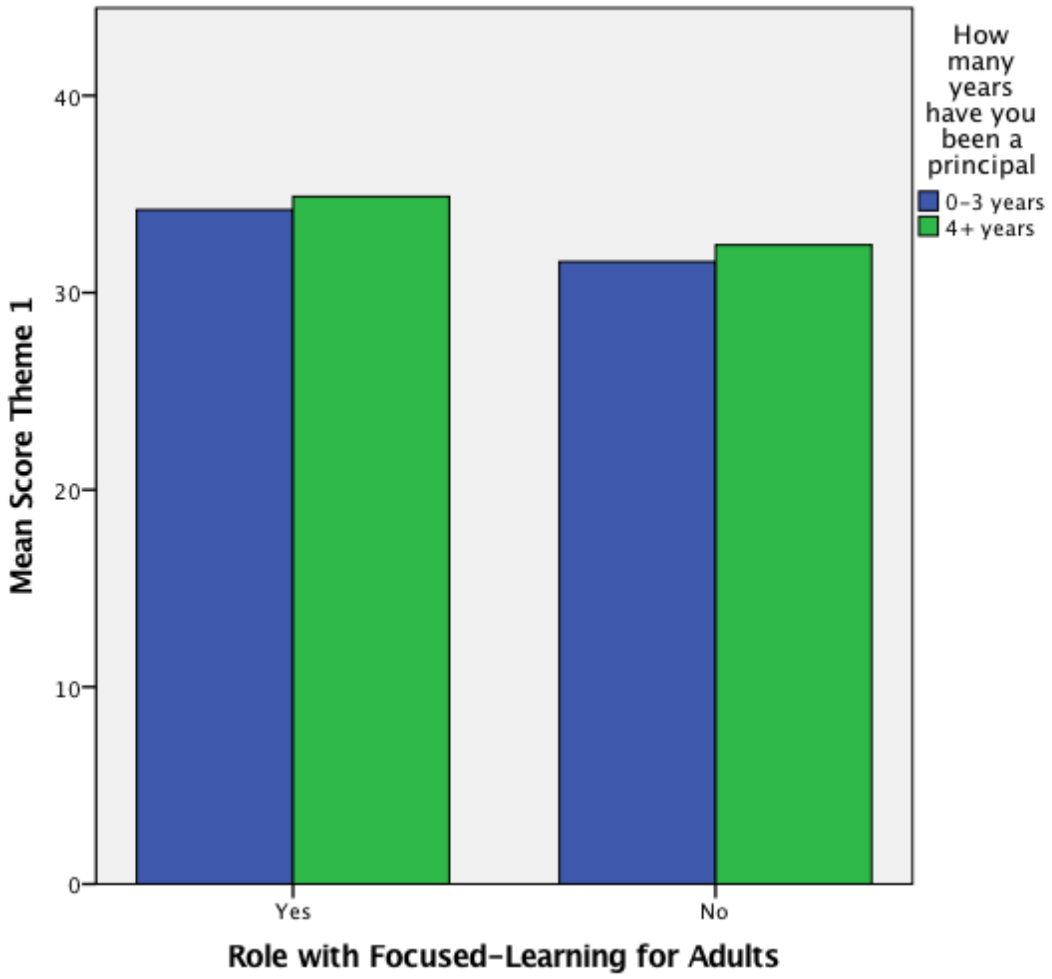

Figure 2. Means for Defining the School Mission as a function of previous role and years of experience.

When analyzing the main effect for years of experience on Defining the School Mission, even though the mean of the 4+ years of experience group ($M = 34.12$, $SD = 4.03$) was slightly higher, it was not significantly different compared to the 0-3 years of

experience group's mean (M = 33.25, SD = 4.56). However, when analyzing the main effect for previous role, the mean of the previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults group (M = 34.65, SD = 3.81) was significantly greater compared to the mean for the principals without such a previous role group (M = 32.11, SD = 4.59). Therefore, the main effect hypothesis for years of experience was retained, and the main effect hypothesis for the previous role was rejected.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 stated that no significant difference will exist by years of experience between principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults versus principals without such a previous role on principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when managing the instructional program as measured by the PIMRS. Descriptive statistics for variables of previous role and years of experience for Managing the Instructional Program are in Table 4.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Mean Score for Theme 2 Managing the Instructional Program

Years of Exp	Previous Role	*M*	*SD*	*N*
0-3	Yes	49.00	8.04	62
	No	48.07	8.33	30
	Total	48.70	8.10	92
4+ yrs.	Yes	54.37	9.49	118
	No	52.53	9.06	53
	Total	53.80	9.37	171
Total	Yes	52.52	9.35	180
	No	50.92	9.01	83
	Total	52.02	9.26	263

An analysis was performed for the assumptions of the two-way ANOVA. No outliers were found. Levene's test of equality of variances indicated homogeneity of variances across the groups was violated, $F(3, 259) = 0.03$, $p < .05$. However, because the two-way ANOVA is robust relative to violations of homogeneity of variances, no adjustments were made (Morgan et al., 2012). A line plot indicated parallel lines for the variable of Managing the Instructional Program with no interaction between previous role and years of experience. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to test for normality with $p < .05$ across groups, indicating that the data were not normally distributed across all groups. Despite this violation, analysis of data using ANOVA was deemed appropriate, as the ANOVA is considered robust to mild violations of the assumption of normality (Morgan et al., 2012). The results of the ANOVA are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

Factorial ANOVA Results for Theme 2 Managing the Instructional Program

Source	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	*ES*
Previous Role	100.47	1	100.47	1.25	.264	0.01
Years of Exp.	1259.27	1	1259.27	15.71	.000	0.06
YearsExp*PrevRole	10.81	1	10.81	0.16	.714	0.00
Error	20762.67	259	80.17			
Total	734032.00	263				

The interaction between previous role and years of experience on principals perceptions of their instructional leadership when Managing the Instructional Program was not statistically significant, $F(1, 259) = 0.16$, $p = .714$, $ES = 0.00$. Therefore, the null hypothesis for the interaction effect was not rejected. Because no significant interaction was found between previous role and years of experience, the analysis of the main effect for previous role was performed and indicated that the main effect is not statistically significant, $F(1, 259) = 1.25$, $p = .264$, $ES = 0.01$. In contrast, an analysis of the main effect for years of experience was performed, which indicated that the main effect was statistically significant, $F(1, 259) = 15.71$, $p = .000$, $ES = 0.06$. The effect size is medium according to Cohen's guidelines. Figure 3 shows the means for Managing the Instructional Program as a function of previous role and years of experience.

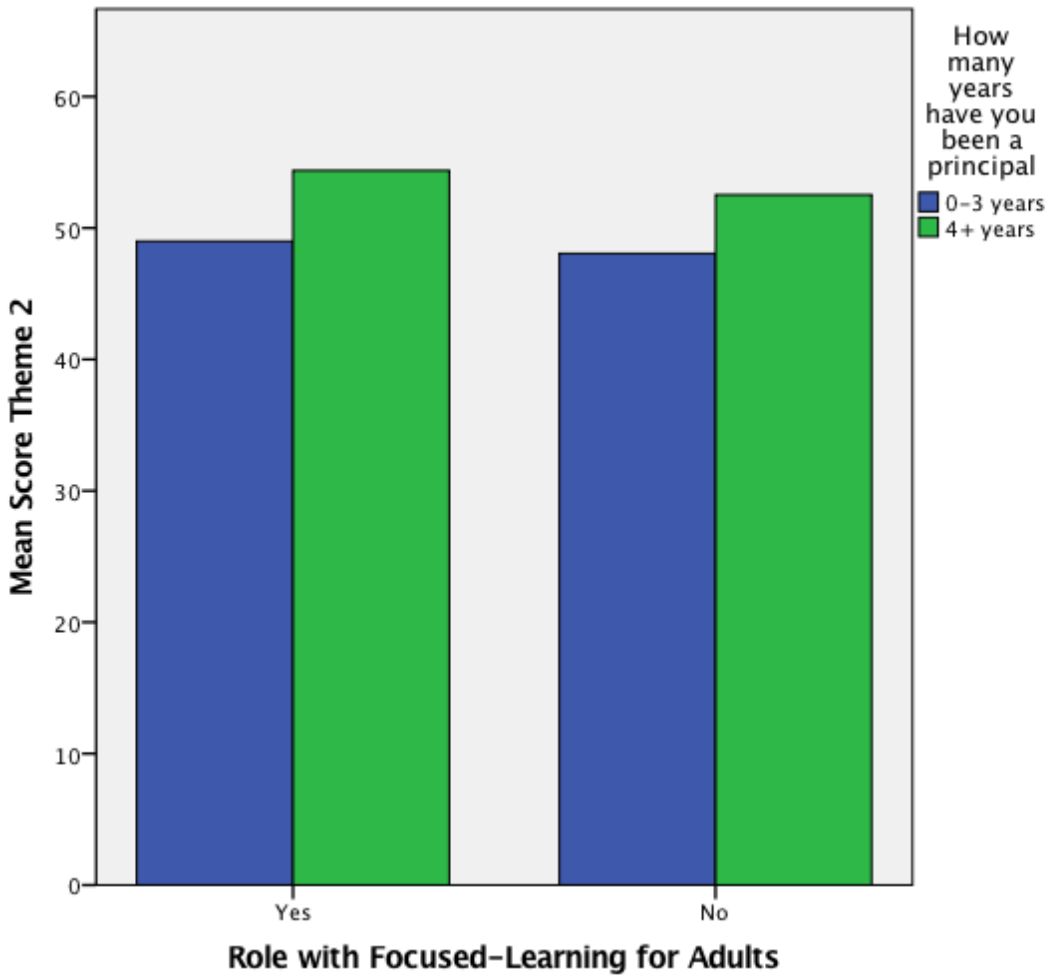

Figure 3. Means for Managing the Instructional Program as a function of previous role and years of experience.

When analyzing the main effect for years of experience on Managing the Instructional Program, the mean of the 4+ years of experience group (M = 53.80, SD = 9.37) was significantly greater compared to the mean for the 0-3 years of experience group (M = 48.70, SD = 8.10). Therefore, the main effect hypothesis for years of experience was rejected. However, when analyzing the main effect for previous role, even though the mean of the principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults group (M = 52.52, SD = 9.35) was slightly higher, it was

not significantly different compared to the principals without such a previous role group's mean (M = 50.92, SD = 9.01). Thus, the main effect hypothesis for previous role was retained.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 stated that no significant difference will exist by years of experience between principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults versus principals without such a previous role on principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when promoting a positive school learning climate as measured by the PIMRS. Descriptive statistics for variables of previous role and years of experience on Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate are in Table 6.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Mean Score for Theme 3 Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate

Years of Exp	Previous Role	*M*	*SD*	*N*
0-3	Yes	99.37	11.79	62
	No	95.93	13.60	30
	Total	98.25	12.44	92
4+ yrs.	Yes	102.26	10.18	118
	No	97.32	10.72	53
	Total	100.73	10.57	171
Total	Yes	101.27	10.82	180
	No	96.82	11.78	83
	Total	99.86	11.30	263

An analysis was performed for the assumptions of the two-way ANOVA. One outlier was found but remained as part of the sample. Levene's test of equality of variances indicated homogeneity of variances across the groups, $F(3, 259) = 0.36$, $p > .05$. A line plot indicated parallel lines for the variable of Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate with no interaction between previous role and years of experience. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to test for normality with $p < .05$ for each group, indicating that the data were not normally distributed across all groups. Despite this violation, analysis of data using ANOVA was deemed appropriate, as the ANOVA is considered robust to mild violations of the assumption of normality (Morgan et al., 2012). A 2 x 2 factorial ANOVA was used to test the hypothesis. The results of the ANOVA are displayed in Table 7.

Table 7

Factorial ANOVA Results for Theme 3 Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate

Source	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	*ES*
Previous Role	914.23	1	914.23	7.41	.007	0.03
Years of Exp.	238.41	1	238.41	1.93	.166	0.01
YearsExp*PrevRole	29.46	1	29.46	0.24	.625	0.00
Error	31958.74	259	123.39			
Total	2656264.00	263				

The interaction between previous role and years of experience on principals perceptions of their instructional leadership when Promoting a Positive School Learning

Climate was not statistically significant, $F(1, 259) = 0.24$, $p = .625$, $ES = 0.00$. Therefore, the null hypothesis could not be rejected. Because no significant interaction was found between previous role and years of experience, the main effect of each variable was examined independently. The analysis of the main effect for previous role was performed and indicated that the main effect was statistically significant, $F(1, 259) = 7.41$, $p = .007$, $ES = 0.03$. The effect size was small to medium according to Cohen's guidelines. In contrast, an analysis of the main effect for years of experience was performed, which indicated that the main effect was not statistically significant, $F(1, 259) = 1.93$, $p = .166$, $ES = 0.01$. Figure 4 shows the means for Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate as a function of previous role and years of experience.

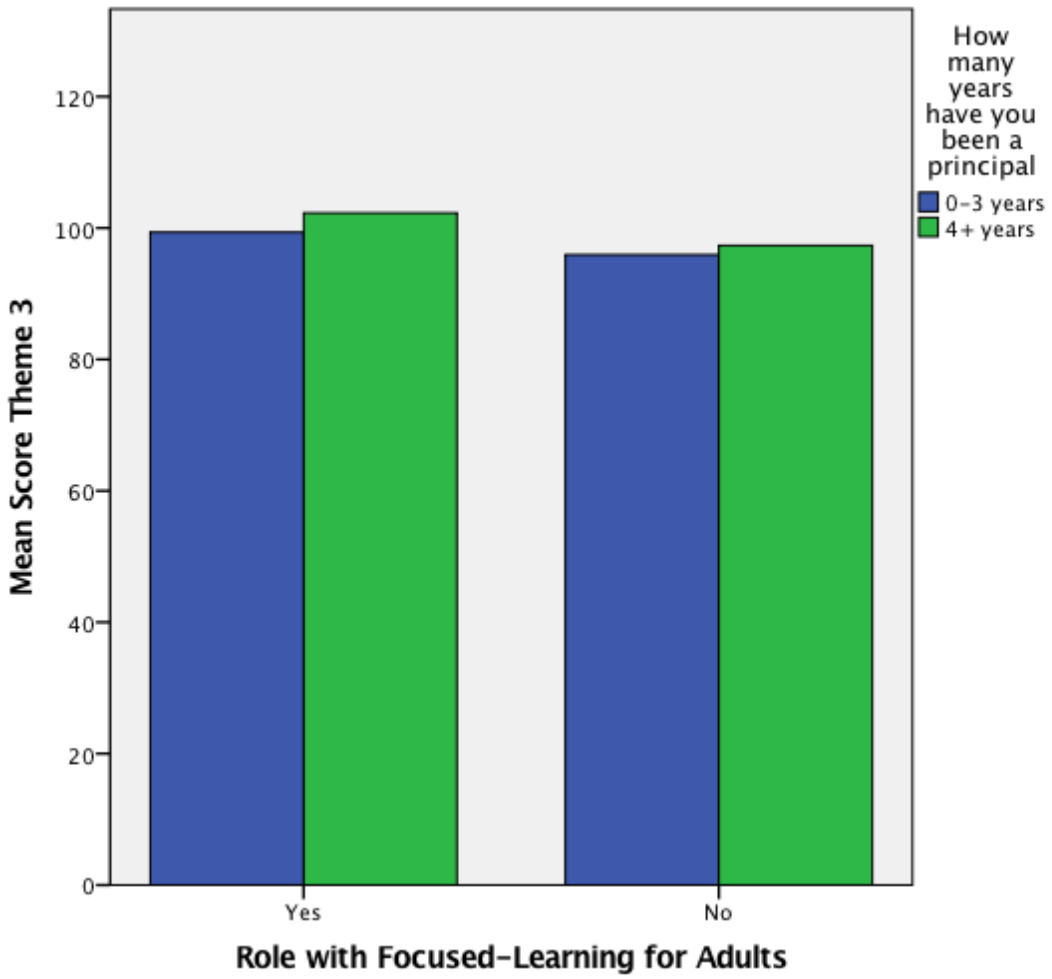

Figure 4. Means for Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate as a function of previous role and years of experience.

When analyzing the main effect for years of experience on Positive School Learning Climate, even though the mean of the 4+ years of experience group (M = 100.73, SD = 10.57) was slightly higher, it was not significantly different compared to the 0-3 years of experience group's mean (M = 98.25, SD = 12.44). However, when analyzing the main effect for previous role, the mean of the previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults group (M = 101.27, SD = 10.82) was significantly greater compared to the mean for the principals without such a previous role

group (M = 96.82, SD = 11.78). Therefore, the main effect hypothesis for years of experience was retained, and the main effect hypothesis for previous role was rejected.

Summary

In summary, this study contained three hypotheses. All hypotheses used a 2 x 2 factorial between-groups design. The independent variables for the three hypotheses were years of experience and previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults. The dependent variables for Hypotheses 1-3 were Defining the Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Climate, respectively. The same sample was used in the three hypotheses. A summary of the findings of each of the hypotheses is presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Summary of Statistically Significant Results for Hypotheses 1-3

Hypothesis	Significant Result	*p*	*ES*
1	Main effect of Previous Role	.000	0.07
2	Main effect of Years of Experience	.000	0.06
3	Main effect of Previous Role	.007	0.03

There were no statistically significant differences in the interactions for previous role and years of experience for all three hypotheses as measured by the PIMRS. The main effect of the previous role was significant for Hypothesis 1 when Defining the Mission with a medium effect size. The main effect of years of experience was significant for Hypothesis 2 when Managing the Instructional Program with a medium

effect size. The main effect of the previous role was significant for Hypothesis3 when Promoting a Positive School Climate with a small to medium effect size.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The nature of the principalship proved to be multifaceted, and leading schools in the 21st Century was not a straightforward matter for school leaders. Day-to-day, principals assumed the essential roles of manager and instructional leader. Subsequently, a principal's myriad of responsibilities ranged from maintenance, human resources, and finance issues to instructional tasks related to defining the school's mission, leading instructional programs, and promoting positive school learning climates (Waters et al., 2003). Some school leaders entered the principalship with adequate experiences, through previous roles, to manage and lead schools. However, many principals lacked knowledge and experience with some dimensions of instructional leadership to perform in the role of instructional leader at the onset of the principalship (Louis, 2007; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). Sterrett (2002) propositioned that background variables such as previous role and years of experience may have contributed to the readiness of the principal to cultivate, lead, and sustain effective, learning communities. Hallinger and Heck (1998) also asserted that principals' behaviors were predicated on their personality traits and desires to show continual progress. The supposition that principal performance could be predicated on background variables, experiences, and personal values inspired this study. Consequently, the researcher sought to examine the difference between principals with critical experiences associated with instructional leadership roles focused on adult

learners upon entry into the principalship versus principals without such experience using the PIMRS.

A preponderance of evidence linked the principal to the increase in academic achievement. Hallinger et al. (1996) substantiated the idea that effective school leaders have the capacity to create conditions to increase student achievement. However, if principals were going to meet the challenge of being an instructional leader, they would need to exemplify prerequisite knowledge and skills related to instructional leadership. More importantly, school leaders must be aware of how well they have mastered necessary instructional leadership skills (Hess, 2003). To measure principal performance in instructional leadership, the PIMRS was a tool that was used by school leaders. The PIMRS was an instrument designed to assess behaviors in three dimensions of instructional leadership (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). In this study principals used the PIMRS to rate to what extent they perceive themselves to be instructional leaders when Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate.

This study was built upon the tenets of Lezotte and Snyder's (2010) core practices of school leadership and Knight's (2007) core practices of instructional coaching. Knight advocated that creating and sustaining learning cultures was predicated on being involved in experiences related to instructional learning. Therefore, this study attended to the effect of previous roles with focused-learning for adults and years of experience on principals' self-reported behaviors. A casual-comparative study was conducted, and a cross-sectional survey was deployed. Participants in the sample consisted of school principals at all

school levels of elementary, middle, and high school that vary in size and population. Participating principals directed schools in rural and urban areas of Arkansas.

First, this chapter includes a description of data collected and analyzed in this study. Second, implications and significance of this study are discussed in this chapter along with findings for each of the three hypotheses. Finally, recommendations, based on results of the study, are included as a research base to improve preparation and development of school principals as instructional leaders.

Conclusions

To address each hypothesis, a two-way ANOVA was conducted using previous role and years of experience as the independent variables. Principals' self-reported behaviors around the themes of the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate served as the dependent variables. Differences in means between the groups were examined. To test the null hypotheses, the researcher used a two-tailed test with a .05 level of significance. Further analyses included analyzing the main effects in all three hypotheses. The following hypotheses were tested, and conclusions were determined.

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 stated that no significant difference will exist by years of experience between principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults versus principals without such a previous role on principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when Defining the School's Mission as measured by the PIMRS. There was no statistically significant difference for the interaction effect of previous role and years of experience on principals' perceptions of their instructional

leadership when Defining the School's Mission. Insufficient evidence existed based on the difference of the means to reject the null hypothesis.

Further review of the main effect of the previous role indicated that principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning on adults had higher perceptions of their instructional leadership practices when Defining the School's Mission. Sufficient evidence existed to reject the null hypothesis. There was a medium effect size. The examination of the main effect of years of experience when Defining the School's Mission indicated that novice principals with less than 0-3 years of experience and non-probationary principals with 4+ years of experience yielded no significant difference in their instructional leadership behaviors when Defining the School's Mission. Insufficient evidence existed based on the difference of means to reject the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 stated that no significant difference will exist by years of experience between principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults versus principals without such a previous role on principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when Managing the Instructional Program as measured by the PIMRS. There was no statistically significant difference for the interaction effect of previous role and years of experience on principals' perceptions of their instructional leadership when Managing the Instructional Program. Insufficient evidence existed based on the difference of the means to reject the null hypothesis.

Further review of the main effect of the previous role indicated that principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning on adults did not

have higher perceptions of their instructional leadership practices when Managing the Instructional Program. Insufficient evidence existed based on the difference of means to reject the null hypothesis. The examination of the main effect of years of experience on the variable, Managing the Instructional Program, indicated that non-probationary principals with 4+ years of experience have higher perceptions of their instructional leadership practices than novice principals in this area. Sufficient evidence existed to reject the null hypothesis. There was a medium effect size.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 stated that no significant difference will exist by years of experience between principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults versus principals without such a previous role on principals' self-reported instructional leadership behaviors when Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate as measured by the PIMRS. There was no statistically significant difference for the interaction effect of previous role and years of experience on principals' perceptions of their instructional leadership when Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate. Insufficient evidence existed based on the difference of the means to reject the null hypothesis.

Further review of the main effect of the previous role indicated that principals with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning on adults have higher perceptions of their instructional leadership practices when Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate. Sufficient evidence existed to reject the null hypothesis. There was a small to medium effect size. The examination of the main effect of years of experience when Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate indicated that novice

principals with less than 0-3 years of experience and non-probationary principals with 4+ years of experience yielded no significant difference in their instructional leadership behaviors when Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate. Insufficient evidence existed based on the difference of means to reject the null hypothesis.

Implications

Background and Significance

Significant implications for practice as an instructional leader emerged from this research study about Hallinger's (2008) instructional management model. With large shifts in professional practices for school leaders, considerations for the path to the principalship have become increasingly more important. Aspiring principals seek the principalship with distinctive kinds of professional experiences. However, most school leaders share the aspiration of cultivating progressive, learning cultures. Wardlow (2008) affirmed that modern-day principals needed a different standard to be successful instructional leaders. However, a number of support principals were provided from the classroom to the principalship was inconsistent (Coggshall et al., 2008). Nevertheless, pedagogical knowledge and skill development remained influential factors on principals' behaviors in schools (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). As teaching typically was the gateway to the principalship, principals lacked the requisite skills and experiences essential to instructional leadership (Ringel et al., 2004). Acquisition of skill and experiences included at a minimum school leaders' past experiences and belief systems (Hallinger and Heck, 2011). Reasonably, several implications emerged from the research related to the development of effective school leaders through previous roles and on-the-job experiences. Implications will be discussed in relation to Hallinger's (2008) three

dimensions of instructional leadership: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate.

In reviewing the conclusions associated with the present study, previous role may have a significant effect on principals' perceptions in the domains of Defining the School's Mission and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate. However, when managing the instructional program, years of experience may be what matters most. Findings indicated that the interaction of the independent variables, previous role and years of experience, did not combine to influence principals' perceptions of their instructional leadership. This conclusion was developed from the literature. It is important to note that literature addresses the variables separately. Rosenholtz's (1985) research implied that effective principals should embody the skill set of instructional coaches and exert time and effort in aligning resources with student-driven goals, which could suggest that previous role and experience were significant background factors of successful principals. The present research study aligns with research findings, as principals with previous roles with focused-learning for adults had higher perceptions of their abilities to demonstrate mission and climate-related responsibilities.

Further examination of the difference of mean scores indicated that both novice and non-probationary principals with a previous role with focused-learning for adults reported higher perceptions of themselves as instructional leaders when answering prompts associated with the variables Defining the School's Mission and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate. Regarding the previous role and Defining the School's Mission, Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) study sustained the indication that specific job behaviors prior to the principalship influenced principals' readiness to be effective

instructional leaders at the onset of the principalship. Coggshall et al. (2008), Dalgleish (2010), Fink and Resnick (2001), Papa et al. (2002), and Mitgang (2012) also indicated that previous roles along the career path mattered and provided school leaders with leverage to lead mission-related tasks. In the present study, principals with previous roles reported higher perceptions when developing a focused set of annual school-wide goals and developing goals that are easily understood. The findings are supported by the research. Hallinger and Murphy (1987) asserted that principals should collaboratively develop yearly goals with stakeholders and communicate these aims to the school population and community-at-large. Hallinger's (2008) research also concluded that outlining goals created channels of responsibility for reaching the vision and propelling students and staff forward to meet the school's mission and vision together. The implication was that preparation for the principalship should include principals gaining strong instructional knowledge and expertise with adult learners to lead mission-related practices.

Gaining skills and knowledge to lead stakeholders in mission-related tasks may require experience prior to the principalship. According to Sammons et al. (1995), staffing schools with principals capable of leading mission-related responsibilities is critical to school improvement efforts. To that end, the researcher affirms that principals may need prior experience in Defining the School's Mission with adults to lead efforts of framing goals and communicating those goals to other stakeholders. Collins' (2005) research supported the notion that great leaders possess the attributes of instructional coaches and would do whatever it takes to strengthen professional practices. Unquestionably, the main effect of the previous role when Defining the School's Mission

is supported by research. Notably, the conclusions of the present research study add to the body of research, suggesting that a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults may improve perceptions of leadership, which may be translated into better-developed leadership behaviors.

Since perceptions associated with school climate were also positively affected by previous role, the implications of those findings are discussed next. Regarding previous role and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate, previous role may have a significant effect on principals' perception of their abilities to promote positivity in schools. This finding was supported by the research. According to Marzano's (2003) research, effective school leaders work purposefully with classroom teachers to sustain best practices by being visible and accessible. High visibility may encourage high instances of interaction between the principal and stakeholders. According to Hallinger's (2008) instructional management model, promoting a positive climate required that principals develop a skill set for protecting instructional time and promoting professional development. In the present study, principals used the PIMRS to rate to what extent they were able to reinforce performance by teachers and staff, compliment teachers privately, acknowledge exceptional performance, and create professional development performance for teachers as a reward. The questions indicated the prerequisites for principals to be able to communicate and interact with adult learners. Knight's (2007) research conveyed the importance of building capacities of professionals by using cognitive coaching to collaborate with educators. School leaders could use cognitive coaching to construct policy and best practices to sustain the climate. Sustaining climate also involved promoting a positive learning culture through incentives. Hallinger and Murphy (1985)

agreed that generating desired outcomes in the culture required providing incentives. Providing incentives validated the efforts of the teachers and motivated them (Marzano, 2003). More importantly, through promoting a positive school learning climate, school leaders can create reciprocity from themselves to teachers and from teachers to students.

In the present study, approximately a third of the respondents lacked a previous role with adult learners prior to the principalship. Their lower scores relative to school mission and climate among the group of respondents may be attributed to the lack of opportunities along their career path to refine leadership skills in those areas. Levine (2005) concluded that the narrow path to the principalship was not sufficient for many school administrators. Many factors influenced the movement from the classroom to the principalship (Ringel et al., 2004). Solely requiring licensure and an internship was not sufficient to prepare principals to be instructional leaders (Grande, 2011). These findings denote that principals may benefit from a previous role with responsibilities to lead adult learners to uphold a positive school learning climate.

A small-scale study conducted by the Learning Point Associates indicated the importance of alternative career pathways to the principalship. Alternative career paths included principals working in leadership roles such as reading coach, content coordinator, and dean of students before the principalship (Coggshall et al., 2008). It is important to note that over half of the principals surveyed indicated that their previous role included the responsibilities correlated with that of which Knight (2007) termed as an instructional coach. Knight indicated the urgency for instructional leaders to transition from the teacher mindset to developing a partnership mindset. To do this, principals had to embody the role of collaborator in climate-based tasks and be conscientious of other

stakeholders possessing skill sets to sustain the culture (Knight, 2007). Assuming the role of an instructional coach or a role similar would provide leaders with the practice needed to cultivate a partnership mindset to protect instructional time by limiting disruptions, ensuring that all students are not called to the office during instructional time, and restrict the intrusion of extracurricular activities (Hallinger, 2008). For some administrators, obtaining skills to cultivate and sustain positive learning climates are best developed in a previous role through job-embedded training.

Regarding previous role and Defining the Mission and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate, there is an implication that a smoother transition into the role of principalship may be predicated on the progression to the principalship. Research supports this claim. Dalgleish (2010) emphasized that tomorrow's principal would require insight into the expanding nature of the principalship. Previous roles in route to the principalship from the classroom could make a difference (Papa et al., 2002). The present study expands the empirical research regarding principals who have followed an alternate career path to the principalship and expands the gateway to study the significance of the background variable of previous role with focused-learning for adults on leadership in mission and climate-related domains.

Unlike the results for Hypotheses 1 and 3, when examining perceptions of managing the instructional program, years of experience are what seemed to matter. Regarding the main effect of years of experience and the variable, Managing the Instructional Program, the researcher found significance for the novice and non-probationary principals' perceptions of their instructional leadership. Notably, as a group, non-probationary principals with 4+ years of experience had significantly higher

perceptions of their readiness to manage instruction. This aligns with Zellner et al.'s (2002) research finding that adequate preparation for instructional leadership, particularly when managing the instructional program, may be best developed throughout the career of the principal. Using the PIMRS, principals rated the extent to which they were able to ensure classroom priorities were consistent with school goals. They were also asked to what extent they conducted informal observations on a regular basis to provide feedback on teachers' instructional practices.

The behaviors mentioned are instructional management behaviors that are specific to the principalship and require on-the-job practice. Hess (2003) emphasized that improving school leadership was dependent on systematic practices related to the responsibilities of instructional management and leadership. Grande's (2011) work also connected effective leadership to principals that felt supported through systematic, ongoing support during the principalship. Principals in Grande's study with supported professional development reported higher use of instructional management practices. This finding also connects to the conclusions of the Learning Point and Associates examination of career paths and alternative paths to the principalship. According to Coggshall et al. (2008), The Learning Point and Associates concluded that mentorships, during the principalship, attributed to the success of principals demonstrating skill and knowledge in their leadership roles. The collegiality gained from mentorships support the indication that instructional management involves shared accountability for instructional practices, coordinating the curriculum, and monitoring student progress.

Instructional management tasks require collegial exchanges between the school principal and teachers. Therefore, the system of support provided by governing bodies

remains critical to principals. Knezek (2001) affirmed in his study that experience enhanced a principal's development of pedagogy, regardless of the content. In Knezek's study, principals perceived themselves to be effective leaders because of the amount of time they had to engage in instructional tasks throughout the tenure of their principalship. More distinctly, experienced principals, with 4+ years of experience, were more likely to have higher perceptions of their instructional leadership as measured by the PIMRS (Knezek, 2001). Questions on the PIMRS challenged principals to assess their practices of coordinating curriculum with stakeholder groups. They also rated to what extent they were able to monitor classroom curriculum and participate in curriculum review. The extensiveness of such tasks is rigorous and time intensive, requiring management skills, and understanding the preparation and support required to be a manager of instruction denotes the importance of the researcher's inquiry using the PIMRS. Designing ongoing and systematic support systems for principals as instructional managers remains sensible and supports the proposition that instructional management may be best developed in employment circumstances.

Fittingly, the findings of the present study provide additional literature for the consideration of state and district administrators for the purpose of cultivating instructional leaders, before and during the principalship, who lack the experience in a previous role with focused-learning for adults. More importantly, the findings should encourage researchers and practitioners to investigate further best practices for cultivating principals to be instructional leaders while on the job. The results of this study suggested that the interaction of previous role and years of experience did not combine to influence the behaviors of school leaders significantly. However, the main effect of the previous

role may significantly affect the behavior of principals when developing the school's mission and positively affecting the learning climate. However, when managing the instructional program, years of experience may be what matters most. Therefore, the proposition for this study is that cultivating principals to be effective instructional leaders could be possible through a better-defined pathway to the principalship.

Recommendation

Potential for Practice/Policy

Institutions of education have exerted extensive efforts to improve student achievement outcomes. As a result, principals have experienced an increase in their accountability to assume the dual role of manager and instructional leader. However, with limited information about what way is best to improve principals' success rates with cultivating learning cultures, demographic and perceptual data were investigated using the PIMRS. This researcher examined the significance of previous preparation in a role similar to an instructional coach prior to the principalship. As a result of the findings of the present study, the following recommendations for policy and practice are extended.

Findings relative to mission definition and promoting a positive learning climate indicated the importance of leadership development in the progression to the principalship associated with previous role. Fittingly, the potential for district and school leaders to intentionally develop teacher leaders is the first practical recommendation. Classroom teachers, with the propensity to lead others, should have a pathway to develop and sharpen instructional leadership skills. Opportunities to serve on district and school leadership teams to gain experience with practices like framing goals and communicating those goals to stakeholders should be afforded to aspiring leaders.

Notably, there should be prerequisites for the progression to the principalship. However, there was not a nationwide structure in place to support prospective principals with leading curriculum development and instructional practices, along with other managerial tasks. Knight (2007), through his collaborative coaching model, implied that school leaders needed the skill set of instructional coaches. Therefore, the second recommendation for practice and policy is to develop a straightforward career path to the principalship to include aspiring principals gaining experience as instructional coaches, which Knight specified as cognitive coaching. Principals have an advantage when they can use cognitive coaching when collaborating with teachers to enhance student growth. Knight asserted that to gain competence with cognitive coaching, instructional leaders needed experience with authentic, extensive interactions with colleagues. More importantly, the role of instructional coach cultivated a partnership mindset (Knight, 2007). In consideration of career paths, principals could benefit from a previous role as an instructional coach.

The third recommendation is to enhance and refine recruitment approaches to incorporate searches for perspective principals who purposely prepared for the role of the instructional leader through a previous role with similar characteristics as an instructional coach. This practice will attend to the dual responsibility required of the principal as manager and instructional leader to make a positive impact on teacher effectiveness (Knight, 2011). Staffing schools with capable and well-informed principals is advantageous to teacher effectiveness outcomes and sustains cultures conducive to positive student performance.

The fourth recommendation is to develop pre-service training and ongoing professional development opportunities as possible conduits to developing the skills necessary for managing curriculum and instruction. The proposal is to develop professional development training that move beyond the knowledge that principals need to be instructional leaders to include the opportunity to develop skills similar to the role Knight (2007) designated as an instructional coach. With the understanding that manager and instructional leader responsibilities differ, establishing opportunities to develop principals in the bifurcated role promotes growth. More importantly, it provides clarity for supervising and evaluating instruction. The significance of years of experience relative to managing the instructional program indicates that principals require practice to grow professionally during their tenure as administrators. Focused attention on actions related to management would be advantageous for principals' professional growth. District administrators would benefit from establishing supervisory practices that promote collaborative actions when managing the instructional program.

The fifth recommendation is to create a series of professional development opportunities for principal candidates to gain knowledge and skill set native to managing the instructional program. Logically, principals would need varying degrees of support upon entry into the principalship, and support for principals should be predicated on their individual needs. Those needs may be predicted based on previous roles and years of experience as a principal.

The significance of previous role and years of experience provides insight for higher education officials to begin the process at the collegiate level. Therefore, the sixth recommendation is for colleges and universities to consider incorporating courses for

instructional coaching in collegiate programs. Cultivating effective schools depends heavily on education and training. Being exposed to the twofold role of an administrator as early as possible may increase the likelihood that educators will enter the principalship with the clarity of what it means for principals to be instructional leaders in the areas of mission definition and developing a positive school climate.

The last recommendation encourages leaders to develop mentorships for principals to succeed in managing the instructional program while on the job. Novice principals could benefit from mentorship with non-probationary principals with experience in a previous role as an instructional coach. The real time, collegial support could accelerate learning for principals who lack experiences with instructional coaching. Principals with experience as instructional coaches, by the nature of the role, should have the skill set to engage novice or inexperienced principals in discussions about best practice for goal setting, norming for continuous learning, promoting positive professional development, and providing incentives for teachers. More importantly, the mentor should have on-the-job experience with supporting and cultivating adult stakeholders to improve performance. Also, there could be an opportunity for the mentor to gain a wider perspective of the instructional needs of teachers through the obstacles of the novice or inexperienced principal.

The findings of this research add to the research gap related to the relevance of years of experience and previous role on principals' perceptions of their instructional leadership. Accordingly, experiences with instructional coaching, before the principalship, appear to enhance principals' perceptions and perhaps behaviors about defining the school mission and climate development. However, when managing the

instructional program, experience may be what matters most, especially since management is typically reserved for the administrator. Therefore, commendations for school leaders are critical to developing principals capable of managing and leading instruction. More importantly, the recommendations provide school leaders with knowledge and skill to directly influence teacher effectiveness and student success.

Future Research Considerations

Findings from this study support a more straightforward pathway to the principalship to include a previous role with responsibilities of an instructional coach. There is also a proposition that experience on the job should be orchestrated and enhanced throughout the career of the school administrator. Specifically, individuals should have an expectation of professional responsibility to be prepared for the principalship should they decide to take the on the responsibility of fostering effective school cultures. More importantly, principals deserve to be supported as they courageously perform the bifurcated role of manager and instructional leader. To this end, the following future research considerations are extended to potential researchers.

First, future research of principals' perceptions of their instructional leadership should move beyond a survey. This would particularly include follow-up interviews with principals willing to share their thinking into why they provided such ratings. Questions should include specificity to better understand the influence of principals' perceptions on their instructional leadership behaviors within Hallinger's (2008) three leadership domains.

Second, the variable of school level also has some relevance for future studies. Researchers could explore how education levels of elementary, middle, and high school

influence the way that principals report instructional leadership behaviors. Decision-making processes in primary and secondary schools likely vary since the prerequisites and requirements for the students are different. More information regarding influences on perceptions of instructional leadership behaviors could support adaptations of professional development for principals.

Third, researchers should examine the correlation of perceptions of instructional leadership behaviors and school performance. Correlations of perceptions of instructional leadership behaviors may help substantiate the research associating self-perceptions to effective school outcomes and examine to what extent previous role and years of experience influence the principals' readiness to influence teacher effectiveness outcomes.

This researcher does not make the claim that previous role and years of experience are the only background variables that significantly affect the instructional leadership behaviors of principals. However, the results do indicate that the main effect of the previous role is a significant background variable that influences principals' perceptions of their leadership in Hallinger's (2008) domains of Defining the School's Mission and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate. Results also indicate that the main effect of years of experience is a significant background variable that influences principals' perception of their leadership in Hallinger's domain of Managing the Instructional Program. Conceptualizing the implication that principals need ample practice to supervise instruction and make sound decisions provides a platform for principals to be successful managers.

Conclusively, previous role and years of experience should be considered as substantial background variables essential to the understanding of how a principal emerges as an instructional manager and leader. Specifically, the background variable of previous role may improve principals' predispositions to lead stakeholders to define and frame the mission while cultivating and sustaining a positive and supportive school climate. Novice and non-probationary principals would be afforded a more professional progression to the principalship. Regarding instructional management, experience may be what matters most. Supporting principals in employment circumstances through ongoing, relevant professional development may improve the success of principals to meet the challenge of supervising, evaluating, and monitoring instructional practices. Attending to support structures for both background variables of previous role and years of experience should result in stronger leaders in schools.

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APPENDIX

HARDING UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Status of Request for Exemption from IRB Review

(For Board Use Only)

Date: 4/18/16
Proposal Number: 2016-056
Title of Project: Effect of Previous Role and Experiences on Principal's Self-Reported Behaviors
Principal Investigator(s) &o-Investigator(s): Kiffany Pride kiffanydavis@me.com

■ Research exempted from IRB review.

☐ Research requires IRB review.

☐ More information is needed before a determination can be made. (See attachment.)

I have reviewed the proposal referenced above and have rendered the decision noted above.
This study has been found to fall under the following exemption(s):

1 ☐ 2 ■ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐

In the event that, after this exemption is granted, this research proposal is changed, it may require a review by the full IRB. In such case, a ***Request for Amendment to Approved Research*** form must be completed and submitted.

This exemption is granted for one year from the date of this letter. Renewals will need to be reviewed and granted before expiration.

The IRB reserves the right to observe, review and evaluate this study and its procedures during the course of the study.

Rebecca O. Weaver

Chair
Harding University Institutional Review Board