Examining Espoused Beliefs and Actions of Assistant Principals in Alabama

by

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Abstract

This quantitative research study examined beliefs and actions of assistant principals in Alabama. Assistant principals were the only group used in this study. From this research study, the researcher also wanted to explore what are barriers to prevent assistant principals from making behavioral, normative, and control beliefs match instructional and transformational actions. There are few empirical studies that focus on the assistant principals and their role within the school. According to some educational research, school leaders must be able to provide both transformational and instructional leadership (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Hallinger, 2005). Using Ajzens's Theory of Planned Behavior (2002) the researchers developed an instrument and surveyed assistant principals in Alabama in regards to their educational beliefs and actions. Assistant principals control beliefs were strongly related to both their instructional and transformational actions. Through a standard multiple regression, results showed a strong positive correlation between assistant principal beliefs and instructional actions and a moderately positive correlation between assistant principal beliefs and transformational actions. The study additionally indicated that normative beliefs and control beliefs statistically and significantly predict instructional actions while behavioral beliefs and control beliefs statistically and significantly predict transformational actions.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

In today's educational settings there is renewed emphasis in school leadership and the effect it has on school improvement and student achievement. "Leadership has been, and will continue to be, a major focus in the era of school accountability and school restructuring" (Stewart, 2006, p. 2). Research on school leadership has been studied heavily since the 1950s. The 1960s and 1970s concentrated on the leader being charismatic and gaining followership of the staff to improve teaching and learning within the school. "During the mid-1990s, however, attention shifted somewhat away from instructional leadership. Interest in this topic was displaced by concepts such as school restructuring and transformational leadership" (Hallinger, 2005, p. 8). "Although the shift from instructional leadership to transformational leadership was evident in the literature, it remains questionable as to whether these changes are evident in the practices of administrators" (Stewart, 2006, p. 14). More recently, from the late-1990s until the mid-2000s, instructional leadership has reemerged in research. "Since the late 1990s both distributed leadership and instructional leadership had gained leverage" (Hallinger, 2007, p. 3). "The need for instructional leadership in schools was highlighted by the emergence of standards-based accountability and demands that principals take responsibility for student performance" (Graczewski, Knudson, & Holtzman, 2009, p. 73). According to Hallinger (2007), "at the turn of the new century, pressures from the policy environment of schools began to push the pendulum back towards instructional leadership" (p. 3).

Transformational and instructional leadership are the two terms that are being used in research on effective school leadership. Effective school leadership, in turn, is a major factor in school improvement. According to Hallinger (2007), "There is evidence that both instructional and transformational leadership contributes to school improvement" (Day, Harris, & Hatfield, 2009; Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Leithwood, 2006; Marks & Printy, 2003; Mulford, 2008). "Instructional leadership practices were those which engaged teachers (or engaged with teachers) in initiatives directly related to student learning. Transformational practices were described as those which were more teacher than student focused" (Day et al., 2009, p. 11). A combination of both forms of leadership can help define and improve the role of the 21st century educational leader.

School Leadership Roles

This focuses our attention on the role that school leaders, particularly assistant principals, play in the leadership within schools. Assistant principal roles traditionally are seen as managerial in nature but research should focus our attention on how that role is changing within the school. "The role of educational leaders has transformed as result of the current reform climate and instructional leaders must now adapt quickly to a constantly changing environment in order to be successful" (Lewis, Rice, & Rice, 2011, p. 2). According to Oleszewski, Shoho, and Barnett (2012), "the job description is becoming more complex as assistant principals strive to be an integral part of the instructional program to transform 21st century schools" (pp. 4–5). The following section provides an overview of the role of assistant principal.

Assistant Principal's Role

There has been very little research on the assistant principal's role in leading the school. The limited amount of research shows that the assistant principal is more of a manager in the

school setting. "As has been repeatedly reported in the literature, managerial tasks tend to define the role of assistant principals in the United States" (Shoho, Barnett, & Tooms, 2012, p. 6). "The average assistant principal spends a majority of his/her day working with students in disciplinary situations as well as working with the teachers and parents of the same students" (Busch, MacNeil, & Baraniuk, 2012, p. 36). This role seems to be evolving into assistant principals who work with instruction and develop a school culture that focuses on transforming the school.

> The increased job demands placed on school principals by No Child Left Behind of 2001, as well as the restructuring of schools in terms of size, organization, and increased diversity, may call for a new view of the assistant principal and his/her roles and responsibilities. (Melton, et al., 2012, p. 84)

Bray (2006), as sited in Melton, et al., (2012), explained that his role had become more of a leadership role rather than a management one, with the major deputy head responsibility being to lead in learning" (p. 87). Research by Glanz (1994) and Sun (2010) suggests that assistant principals' roles are changing in their makeup and rank of duties performed from 1994 to 2010. Standards have to be set in order to define the performance and duties of principals and assistant principals in the school.

ISLLC Standards

The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, or ISLLC, was developed to help define expected behavioral standards for school leaders. The focus was on the knowledge, performance, and disposition of school leaders. According to Busch, MacNeil, and Baraniuk (2012), "more than 40 states have adopted the ISLLC standards, or some version of them, as a uniform foundation for principal assessment" (p. 38). The original ISLLC standards focused on six areas of development among all school leaders. Alabama developed the Alabama Standards

for Instructional Leaders which was heavily influenced by the ISLLC standards. Alabama

adopted and expanded the original standards to eight areas of development for Alabama school

leaders. Table 1 represents the ISLLC standards compared to the Alabama standards. As shown

in the Table 1, Alabama standards two (teaching and learning) and three (human resources

development) are both connected to ISLLC standard two. Also standard six, technology, was

added. This shows how Alabama standards are connected to ISLLC standards.

Table 1

A Comparison of ISLLC Standards and Alabama Standards

ISLLC Standards	Alabama Standards
Standard 1: An education leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.	Standard 1: Planning for Continuous Improvement (Shared Vision)
*Standard 2: An education leader promotes the success of every student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.	***Standard 2: Teaching and Learning (Learning Environment)**
Standard 3: An education leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.	***Standard 3: Human Resources Development (Staff Development)**
Standard 4: An education leader promotes the success of every student by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.	Standard 4: Diversity (Student Needs)
Standard 5: An education leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.	Standard 5: Community and Stakeholder Relationships (Family-School-Community)

(table continues)

Table 1 (continued)

ISLLC Standards	Alabama Standards
Standard 6: An education leader promotes the success of every student by understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.	**Standard 6: Technology*** **(Integration)**
	Standard 7: Management of the Learning Organization (Fiscal Management and Operations)
	Standard 8: Ethics

*Added or expanded standards

Theory of Planned Behavior

      Along with the development of effective school leadership there is an emphasis on school leader beliefs and actions that can enhance their ability to be more effective leaders. This emphasis was grounded in the work of Icek Ajzen and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). It began with an effective leader understanding him or herself and the role he or she plays within the organization. "What one values, what one thinks of oneself, what one believes about people, what one believes about children, and what one believes to be the purpose of schools comprise one's disposition, and it is one's disposition that influences leadership behavior" (Green, 2001, p. 51). Research indicates that school leader beliefs should match the actions they perform when leading a school. "In the TPB, beliefs constitute the informational foundation that ultimately determines behavior" (Ajzen, Joyce, Sheikh, & Cote, 2011, p. 102). If beliefs do not match the actions of leaders then there is disconnect in how effective they can be in their leadership roles. The majority of research has focused on the principal as leader of the school organization. The

current research focus should be on a distribution of leadership involving the assistant principal as a shared instructional leader within the school organization.

Background

There is very little educational research that has been conducted on assistant principals and their leadership role within the school. "While there is a growing body of literature on novice administrators, very little is written specifically about vice-principals" (Read, 2012, p. 12). "By giving voice to assistant principals, we are also able to determine what aspects of leadership preparation are useful and what aspects need to be reconceptualized and changed" (Soho, Barnett, & Tooms, 2012, p. 1). Assistant principals are asked to perform various duties that take the majority of their day. According to Abebe, Lindsey, Bonner, and Heck (2010),

> Research indicates that carrying out the assigned tasks of the assistant principal position
> often does little to prepare an assistant principal to move to a higher position or allow him
> or her to feel empowered to help better the school system. (p. 68)

Bloom and Krovetz (2001) reported that it is not unusual for an assistant principal to be assigned a very narrow range of responsibilities primarily related to student discipline, meeting with parents, and building management (Abebe, Lindsey, Bonner, & Heck, 2010, p. 68). These duties limit the ability of assistant principals to be instructional and transformational leaders within the school. As stated in Busch, MacNeil, and Baraniuk (2012), "due to the fact that a majority of assistant principals seek expanded leadership positions, this role has expanded to incorporate more duties, including teacher supervision, and to an extent, instructional leadership (p. 36). The assistant principal's espoused beliefs about what they should be doing to improve the school do not always match their actions. According to Abebe, Lindsey, Bonner, and Heck

(2010), there seems to be a significant gap between what assistant principals are presently doing on the job and what they should be practicing (p. 69).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine if the type of leadership beliefs Alabama assistant principal's endorsed in their current leadership roles. Those beliefs can be behavioral, control, or normative. Also, to determine if those beliefs predict the type of actions they perform in their day-to-day duties. These actions can be instructional, transformational, or a combination of both. Hopefully, the results of this study will inform educational leadership research about gaps, if any, that exist between assistant principals' beliefs and their actions. "Schools are in need of new school-leadership models based on trust, redistribution of power, meaningful relationships, and shared purpose in order to cultivate assistant principals who accept the challenges of school improvement, bridge building, and increased student learning" (Boske & Benavente-McEnery, 2012, p. 142). The survey developed by the researchers will contribute to the knowledge of the essential role assistant principals play in an educational setting. It will also provide recommendations that will potentially improve the practice of school leadership in all schools.

Problem Statement

School reform demands that assistant principals take a more active role in student achievement within the school. "As schools continue to face demands to improve student performance, the role of the assistant principal can be critical for school improvement" (Oleszewski, Shoho, & Barnett, 2012, p. 4). "The role of the assistant principal is the most common career path followed to acquire the position of school principal, thus it requires a very specific and focused level of preparation" (Busch, MacNeil, & Baraniuk, 2012, p. 36). Assistant

7

principals are overwhelmed with duties that prevent them from performing this new role. "Today's instructional leaders are faced with the challenge of creatively managing all of their resources people, time, and money to support school improvement while leading learning experiences focused on improving student achievement through improved instructional practices" (Lewis, Rice, & Rice, 2011, p. 3). Many times their beliefs do not match the actions they perform. "In assessing whether a gap existed between the ideal and actual roles played by assistant principals, the findings suggest that there is a misalignment between what assistant principals would like to do and what they are actually doing" (Shoho, Barnett, & Tooms, 2012, p. 5). The endorsement of specific beliefs should predict the actions they carry out in their duties as assistant principal. Also, barriers can be identified to clarify what can be done to assist school administrators in transforming their beliefs into actions.

Research Questions

The study addresses the following questions:

1.   To what level do assistant principals endorse behavioral, normative, and control beliefs?

2.   In regards to school leadership beliefs, what relationship, if any, exists between Alabama assistant principals' espoused instructional leadership actions and their beliefs?

3.   In regards to school leadership beliefs, what relationship, if any, exists between Alabama assistant principals' espoused transformational leadership actions and their beliefs?

4.   In regards to assistant principals espoused beliefs, what enables or prevents those beliefs from becoming actions?

Definition of Terms

Assistant Principal – Educational leader who works under the supervision of the principal and "handles conferences with parents and students, handles behavior problems, works on the master schedule, and is expected to do classroom observations" (Marshall & Hooley, 2006, p. 5).

Behavioral Beliefs – A person's estimation of the likelihood (subjective probability) that performing a particular behavior will lead to a certain outcome (Ajzen, 2011, p. 76).

Control Beliefs – A person's estimation of the likelihood (subjective probability) that a given facilitating or inhibiting factor will be present (Ajzen, 2011, p. 77).

Instructional Leadership – According to Stewart (2006), "Leadership within this paradigm is based primarily on a strong technical knowledge of teaching and learning and secondly, on curriculum design, development and evaluation" (p. 6).

Normative Beliefs – A person's estimation of the likelihood (subjective probability) that a give referent individual or group (e.g., friends, family, one's physician or supervisor) would approve or disapprove of performing the behavior under investigation. (Ajzen, 2011, p. 77)

Theory of Planned Behavior – Human action is influenced by three major factors: a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the behavior (attitude toward the behavior); perceived social pressure to perform or not perform the behavior (subjective norm); and perceived capability to perform the behavior (self-efficacy [Bandura, 1997]), or perceived behavioral control. (Ajzen, 2011, p. 75)

Transformational Leadership – Two main components of transformational leadership are "its distributive nature and its targeting of capacity development across a broader spectrum of the school community members" (Hallinger, 2003, p. 339)

Significance of the Study

Assistant principals have long been used in a managerial role within schools. Little research has been done about their true leadership role. The significance of this study is to identify the beliefs assistant principals endorse and if those beliefs predict their actions as leaders in the school community. Also this research study identifies barriers enable or prevent transforming beliefs of assistant principals into actions. The role of the assistant principal needs to be redefined to include areas of instructional and transformational leadership so there is a greater impact on students, teachers, and the learning environment.

Organization of the Study

This research study includes four additional chapters that will explore beliefs and actions of current assistant principals in Alabama. Chapter 2 includes a review of related literature. Chapter 3 describes the methodology of the current study with a focus on the participants, procedures and design for completing this research study. Chapter 4 includes the analysis of data collected from assistant principals who participated in the study. Chapter 5 summarizes the findings of the study, conclusions, and implications for practice and further study.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study include:

1. The limited amount of research on assistant principals and their roles within the school setting.

2. The population size and if enough responses would be gathered to make the study generalizable to all assistant principals in the State of Alabama.

3. Each participant must have completed the entire survey in order for the responses to be counted in the survey data.

4. The conditions where each survey was completed may have had an impact on the participants' responses.

5. With time being a factor for school assistant principals, the participants may not have devoted the necessary time to respond to the survey appropriately.

6. The study included only assistant principals in one southern state.

Summary

Alabama assistant principals have an important job assisting in the leadership of schools in the 21st century. Their belief about educational reform and the role they must perform has changed drastically over the past twenty years. No longer can the assistant principal be the manager of the school but instead they must lead instruction and work to transform the school into a learning community. Assistant principals have evolved to become shared leaders in the operations of the school community to include more of a focus on effective instruction, student learning, and increased professional learning. Hopefully their beliefs as assistant principals can translate into actions they perform in the schools where they work. In the following chapters, the researcher provides a review of current literature, methodology, survey analysis, and implications of assistant principals as school leaders.

CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

For more than 60 years, researchers have tried in earnest to define educational leadership (Cunningham, 1985; Glasman & Glasman, 1997; Leithwood & Riehl, 2005; Northouse, 2007; Smith & Piele, 1996). Despite this work, a single definition of leadership has continued to elude even the most productive scholars (Huber, 2004; Leithwood et al., 1999; Lambert, 2003; Mulford, 2008; Yukl, 2002). Cuban (1988) stated, "There are more than 350 definitions of leadership but no clear and unequivocal understanding as to what distinguishes leaders from non-leaders" (p. 190). School leadership research surfaced as a major part of the educational settings during the 1970s. The majority of this research was based on the principal of the school as the sole leader to guide change within the organization. "Through most of the twentieth century, education modeled its leadership systems on top-down, somewhat heroic visions of the school leader as 'The Man in the Principal's Office'" (Hart, 1995, p. 1). Since this time, developments have given us evidence of an integrated model of leadership that involves both instructional leadership and transformational leadership. (Bowers et al., 2009; Hallinger, 2007)

Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) presented a synthesis of more than 70 research studies that were conducted from the 1970s through the 2000s. They found 21 leadership practices that correlated with improved student achievement. These strategies included leadership being directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices; establishing clear school goals; providing teachers with the necessary

educational research materials and professional development; recognizing and rewarding

teachers' accomplishments; monitoring the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on

student learning; and developing learning communities around current theories and instructional

practices. The researchers used thirty years of research including quantitative and theoretical

literature on leadership. Along with this research there was a combined 100 years of

professional wisdom on school leadership. Fullan (2001) describes the specific steps school

leaders need to take to sustain change. These five components of effective leadership are:

- **Moral purpose.** Leaders must act with the intention of making a positive difference in the lives of stakeholders.

- **Understanding change.** Leaders should have knowledge of and an appreciation for the change process.

- **Building relationships.** Leaders must continuously work to foster relationships with diverse stakeholders for solving problems.

- **Creating and sharing knowledge.** "Turning information into knowledge is a social process" (p. 6) for which strong relationships, moral purpose, and favorable dynamic are crucial.

- **Making coherence.** The complexity of change in today's society is riddled with ambiguity and even chaos. A leader should be able to embrace uncertainty as a means for fostering innovation but also seek coherence to effectively organize for change. (A District and School Improvement Thought Paper, 2010, p. 2)

Marzano and Fullan have researched school leadership to define leadership that is needed

to improve student achievement. That research not only engages the principal but others who are

involved in the leadership of schools and districts. Marzano and Fullan also indicated

components of effective leadership as defined in many years of research and how it can influence change in the leadership of the school. Other researchers have focused specifically on school leaders who are instructional and/or transformational.

According to Leithwood and Reihl (2003), "Major findings from research on school leadership can be summarized in the following five claims:

1. Leadership has significant effects on student learning, second only to the effects of the quality of curriculum and teachers' instruction;

2. Currently, administrators and teacher leaders provide most of the leadership in schools, but other potential sources of leadership exist;

3. A core set of leadership practices form the 'basics' of successful leadership and are valuable in almost all educational contexts;

4. Successful school leaders respond productively to challenges and opportunities created by the accountability-oriented policy context in which they work; and

5. Successful school leaders respond productively to the opportunities and challenges of educating diverse groups of students" (pp. 2–6).

This research indicated that there are several responsibilities that relate to being an instructional or a transformational leader. This research by Leithwood and Reihl (2003) was developed as a predictor of principal leadership in the school as it relates to student achievement. This information could also relate to the assistant principal of the school and his/her responsibilities within the school organization. "The characteristics that likely will set apart the effective turnaround leader are superior instructional leadership, attention to the system, and the capacity to identify and leverage (at the right time) key points within the system to advocate for

and deliver a well-aligned, well-articulated plan" (A District and School Improvement Thought Paper, 2010, p. 2).

Even though research focuses mainly on the school principal as the school leader, the assistant principal is also a driving force when promoting change and leadership in the school. "Important findings from research on effective leaders are: i) that although they are surrounded by a matrix of expectations and demands they are clear about their core values and these permeate their thinking and actions; ii) they are constantly and consistently managing several simultaneously competing sets of tensions successfully; and iii) they have to make 'tough decisions' about the resulting leadership dilemmas" (Day, Harris, & Hadfield, 2001, p. 52). Assistant principals are involved in many tasks that are designated to them by the principal of the school. "Enacting leadership tasks is often distributed across multiple leaders in a school, including principals, assistant principals, curriculum specialists, reading or Title I teachers, and classroom teachers" (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001, p. 25). There is very little research on assistant principals as the school leader. This is one reason why this research is important for schools in the 21st century. "The reforms and the pressing challenges of standards-based education movement in the new century require reexamination of assumptions about educational leadership" (Marshall & Hooley, 2006, p. 13). School leaders, including assistant principals, need to guide change and be a leader in the instructional process. "Effective leaders understand how to balance pushing for change while at the same time, protecting aspects of culture, values, and norms worth preserving. They know which policies, practices, resources, and incentives to align and how to align them with organizational priorities" (Waters, Marzano, McNulty, 2003, p. 2).

Instructional Leadership

Since the 1970s, educational researchers have studied theories about instructional leadership. Growing demands for school improvement by federal and state initiatives have shaped the landscape of education. "Instructional leadership models emerged in the early 1980s from early research on effective schools" (Hallinger, 2003, p. 329). This research was primarily directed at principals being the instructional leader of the school. Instructional leadership is associated with top-down leadership. According to Stewart (2006), "Leadership within this paradigm is based primarily on a strong technical knowledge of teaching and learning and secondly, on curriculum design, development and evaluation" (p. 6). The principal generally is the coordinator and controller of instructional practice within the school. According to Hallinger (2003), "even though instructional leadership is explicitly focused on school improvement, it would be characterized as transactional in the sense that it seeks to manage and control organizational members to move towards a predetermined set of goals" (p. 338).

In a research study by Blase and Blase (1999), teachers reported that two major dimensions of instructional leadership are talking with teachers to promote reflection and promoting professional growth (p. 137). "During the 1980s relatively little reference was made to teachers, department heads, or even to assistant principals as instructional leaders" (Hallinger, 2005, p. 3). Today, instructional leadership is moving beyond just the principal of the school. However, in order for assistant principals to become effective instructional leader, they must learn how to lead instruction that can improve classroom instruction and student achievement. "As an instructional leader, the AP can focus on creating a learning environment that supports higher achievement for all students" (Kaplan & Owings, 1999, p. 82). With the turn of the 21st century, demands from the federal government have forced a renewed look at instructional

leadership and how it promotes more successful schools. "Successful instructional leaders work with other stakeholders to shape the purposes to fit the needs of the school and its environment" (Hallinger, 2005, p. 9). "Instructional leaders both lead through building a mission and manage through activities that increase alignment of activities with those purposes" (Hallinger, 2005, p. 9). Hallinger (2000) stated, "This model proposes three dimensions of the instructional leadership construct: defining the school's mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive school-learning climate" (Hallinger, 2003, p. 332).

Defining the school's mission includes the functions of framing and communicating the schools goals. Managing the instructional program concentrates on curriculum and instruction and the development within the school. Promoting a positive learning climate encompasses essential components such as instructional time, visibility, teacher incentives, and professional development. "Many early studies on school effectiveness, for example, reported that leadership, specifically instructional leadership, was one of several defining characteristics of successful schools" (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003, p. 2). The difference from twenty years ago is that assistant principals, along with the principal and others, must take a more active role in being an instructional leader of the school in order to have a substantial impact classroom performance and student achievement. "Policymakers must pay attention to the assistant principalship in their debates and directives aimed at locating and supporting instructional leadership" (Marshall & Hooley, 2006, p. 17). Research by Marshall and Hooley (2006) specifically looks at assistant principals' beliefs and if their actions reflect instructional leadership in the school. Although there is no evidence supporting assistant principal's as instructional leaders, there is research on principals. "The preponderance of evidence indicates that school principals contribute to school effectiveness and student achievement indirectly

17

through actions they take to influence what happens in the school and in classrooms" (Hallinger, 2003, p. 333).

Guiding teachers through instructional leadership requires balancing those tasks that are relevant to the growth of the organization and what teachers and students need most during classroom instruction. According to May and Supovitz (2010), "the most effective instructional leaders are those who can produce an optimal balance of broad and targeted activities while also identifying the teachers who are most likely to be receptive to assistance through targeted instructional leadership" (p. 348). Some teachers are receptive to change while others feel threatened when making organizational changes that are needed within the school.

According to Hallinger (2008), Burwell (1988) reported an interaction between gender and experience which suggested that more experienced female principals exercised the most active instructional leadership (p. 27). "Today's instructional leaders are expected to improve the quality of teachers, ensure school safety, and develop a community of learners that includes staff, parent groups, and business partners" (Lewis, Rice, & Rice Jr., 2011, pp. 2–3).

"A broad reading of the literature on instructional leadership that has emerged over the past twenty-five years would have the instructional leader focus on:

- creating a shared sense of purpose in the school, including clear goals focused on student learning;

- fostering the continuous improvement of the school through cyclical school development planning that involves a wide range of stakeholders;

- developing a climate of high expectations and a school culture aimed at innovation and improvement of teaching and learning;

- coordinating the curriculum and monitoring student learning outcomes;

18

- shaping the reward structure of the school to reflect the school's mission;

- organizing and monitoring a wide range of activities aimed at the continuous development of staff; and

- being a visible presence at the school, modeling the desired values of the school culture (Hallinger, 2005, p. 13).

Specific leadership practices have been associated with active and effective support of instructional improvement. According to research by Leithwood and Jantzi (2000), "the most critical practices involve:

- working directly with teachers to improve effectiveness in the classroom,

- providing resources and professional development to improve instruction,

- regularly monitoring teaching and student progress,

- participating in discussions on educational issues, and

- promoting parental and community involvement in the school" (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007, p. 10).

Findings by Blasé and Blasé (1999) suggest that effective instructional leadership should avoid restrictive and intimidating approaches to teachers, as well as approaches that provoke little more that 'dog and pony shows' based on a narrow definition of teaching; administrative control must give way to the promotion of collegiality among educators (p. 137). Blasé and Blasé (1999) stated, in order to be an effective instructional leader one should:

- acknowledge the difficulties of growing and changing, including teacher resistance and the difficulty of role changes;

- recognize that change is a journey of learning and risk taking;

19

- demonstrate fundamental respect for the knowledge and abilities of teachers; view the 'teacher as intellectual rather than teacher as technician' (Little, 1993, p. 129);

- talk openly and frequently with teachers about instruction;

- make suggestions, give feedback, and solicit teachers' advice and opinions about classroom instruction;

- develop cooperative, nonthreatening partnerships with teachers that are characterized by trust, openness, and freedom to make mistakes;

- emphasize the study of teaching and learning;

- model teaching skills;

- support development of coaching skills and reflective conversations among educators;

- provide time and opportunities for peer connections among teachers;

- provide resources and support for redesign of programs;

- apply the principles of adult learning to staff development programs;

- promote group development, teamwork, collaboration, innovation, and continual growth, trust in staff and students, and caring and respect to enhance teacher efficacy (p. 138).

The leadership capacities and practices identified by this research are consistent with professional standards established by the ISLLC" (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007, p. 10). According to Lambert (2002), "the mistake has been in looking to the principal alone for instructional leadership, when instructional leadership is everyone's work" (p. 40).

1
State
leadership,
policies, and
practices
e.g.
standards
testing
funding

2
District
leadership,
policies, and
practices
e.g.
standards
curriculum
alignment
use of data

9
Leaders'
professional
learning
experiences
e.g.
socialization
mentoring
formal
preparation

3
Student/
family
background
e.g.
family
educational
culture

4
School
leadership

5
Other
stakeholder
e.g.
unions
community
groups
business
media

6
School
conditions
e.g.
culture/
community
school
improvement
planning

7
Teachers
e.g.
individuals'
capacity
professional
community

8
Classroom
conditions
e.g.
content of
instruction
nature of
instruction
student
assessment

10
Student
learning

Figure 1. How Leadership Influences Student Learning (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe,

Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007, p. 10)

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership theory emerged in the 1970s and 1980s in leadership

literature on educational leadership; it then faded in the 1980s with the rise of instructional

leadership. In the 1990s, transformational leadership was at the forefront of educational

leadership research. Two main components of transformational leadership are "its distributive

nature and its targeting of capacity development across a broader spectrum of the school

community members" (Hallinger, 2003, p. 339). It was popular because of the shift from top-

down leadership that was popular in previous years through instructional leadership. Kenneth

Leithwood and other colleagues revisited transformational leadership in more current research.

Leithwood's model of transformational leadership included seven components: individualized

support, shared goals, vision, intellectual stimulation, culture building, rewards, high

expectations, and modeling.

Figure 2. Transformational leadership model. Adapted from Leithwood et al. (1998) (Hallinger, 2003, p.

    337).

       Hallinger (2003) stated that several features are worth noting about the model. First, the

model does not assume that the principal alone will provide the leadership that creates these

conditions. Second, the model starts from somewhat different motivational assumptions (p. 337).

In transformational leadership, the leadership is shared with assistant principals, teachers, and

other staff. Also, this model moves away from controlling to meeting the individual needs of

staff.

       As sited in Hallinger (2007), Ken Leithwood stated a different image of the ideal school

emerged—flatter, more problem than task-focused, with highly permeable boundaries, less in

need of control, more in need of support and capacity development (p. 11). In order to

understand transformational leadership one must understand the transformational process. Jack

Mezirow is one of the more influential writers on the subject of transformation. "Mezirow has

proposed a structured theory of transformational process and applied it to adult learning and

22

development in both professional and personal contexts" (Poutiatine, 2009, p. 191). He has offered a framework that describes change in four ways. These include elaborating existing frames of reference, by learning new frames of reference, by transforming points of view, or by transforming habits of mind. According to Poutiatine (2009), the foundational principles for transformation are:

1. Transformation is not synonymous with change

2. Transformation requires assent to change

3. Transformation always requires second-order change

4. Transformation always involves all aspects of an individual's or organization's life

5. Transformational change is irreversible

6. Transformational change involves a letting go of the myth of control

7. Transformational change always involves some aspect of risk, fear, and loss

8. Transformational change always involves a broadening of the scope of worldview

9. Transformation is always a movement towards a greater integrity of identity—a movement toward wholeness (pp. 192–193).

Burns (1978) described transformational leadership as a process that motivates followers by appealing to higher ideals and moral values. Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) defined transformational leadership as a leadership style that focuses on appealing to a faculty's higher level of personal commitment to organizational goals. According to research by Leithwood and Jantzi (1999),

transformational leadership is described along six 'leadership' and four 'management' dimensions. The leadership dimensions include building school vision and goals; providing intellectual stimulation; offering individualized support; symbolizing

23

professional practices and values; demonstrating high performance expectations; and

developing structures to foster participation in school decisions. (p. 454)

Hallinger (2003) stated, "Rather than focusing specifically on direct coordination, control, and supervision of curriculum and instruction, transformational leadership seeks to build the organization's capacity to select its purposes and to support the development of changes to practices of teaching and learning" (p. 330).

"Given both the theoretical context and empirical support for transformational leadership, one would expect leaders who engage in such behavior to engender many positive outcomes" (Judge & Piccolo, 2004, p. 757). According to Bass (1997), "by 1985, it had been discovered that transformational leadership was much more universal in that it could be displayed by middle managers, Army noncommissioned officers and lieutenants, first-level supervisors, and team leaders with no formal rank in their organizations" (p. 132). Several criteria that distinguishes instructional from transformational leadership as discussed by Hallinger (2003) which include:

- Top-down vs. bottom-up focus on approach to school improvement.

- First-order or second-order target for change.

- Managerial or transactional vs. transformational relationship to staff. (p. 337)

Other perspectives on transformational leadership are described by Northouse (2007) from researchers Bennis and Nanus (1985) and Kouzes and Posner (2002). Bennis and Nanus (1985) "identified four common strategies used by leaders in transforming organizations" (p. 187). These were developed from questions answered by 90 leaders. The four common strategies they found are as follows:

1. transforming leaders had a clear vision of the future state of their organizations.

2. transforming leaders were social architects for their organizations.

3. transforming leaders created trust in their organizations by making their own

   positions clearly known and then standing by them.

4. transforming leaders used creative deployment of self through positive self-regard.

   (Northouse, 2007, p. 187)

Developing a clear vision allows stakeholders to "buy in" to the organization. It gives

leaders and followers a sense of purpose within the organization. Social architects are those who

transform their organizations identity by directing them to a new set of values and norms.

Building trust in the organization allows leaders to focus on a direction and maintain that

direction in the face of adversity. Standing by followers and maintaining a direction builds

reliability within the organization. Leaders who are aware of their strengths and weaknesses but

focus on their strengths can become better transformational leaders. All of these strategies were

recognized in the research by Bennis and Nanus (1985).

"Kouzes and Posner (1987, 2002) developed their model by interviewing leaders about

leadership" (Northouse, 2007, p. 188). This model consists of five fundamental practices of

leadership. First, modeling the way consists of leaders leading by example using their own

values and beliefs. Secondly, leaders should also inspire a shared vision with followers to guide

their behavior within the organization. Innovation is a major part of challenging the process.

Third, leaders should be risk-takers and try new things to improve the organization. Fourth,

sharing leadership allows school leaders to promote collaboration and team building skills within

the organization.   And finally, school leaders should support and reward followers for their

efforts within the organization. These five fundamental practices are what Kouzes and Posner

(1987, 2002) refer to as essential in order to become effective transformational leaders. School

administrators must empower teachers to focus on curriculum and instruction in order to improve

25

schools and the level of collaboration among stakeholders. It involves work from all stakeholders to combine shared instructional leadership and transformational leadership within the school organization. Even though research focuses on principals as the school leader it can relate to assistant principals as well.

Recent research suggests that transformational leadership and instructional leadership combine to form a more productive leadership style. "One of the major impediments to effective school leadership is trying to carry the burden alone" (Hallinger, 2005, p. 14). "Transformational and instructional leadership are complementary, in our view, but neither conceptualization embraces the other. When they operate in tandem, however, the leadership approaches are integrated" (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 373). The integration of these research styles enables school leaders, including assistant principals, to transform the organization from the inside out while gaining support needed by teachers and other staff. "When principals who are transformational leaders accept their instructional role and exercise it in collaboration with teachers, they practice an integrated form of leadership" (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 376).

Other findings from studies by Bowers, Marks, and Printy (2009) "offer evidence that schools prosper when principals and teacher leaders, whether formal or informal, integrate transformational and instructional leadership approaches in their interactions with others" (pp. 504–505). There study focused on seven schools whose leadership exhibited high levels of transformational and instructional leadership. The intent was to look at transformational leaders and the characteristics that contributed to the influence on instructional leadership within those schools. According to Bowers, Marks, and Printy (2009), "If leadership is instructional, the influence relationship is oriented toward improvement of instructional, curricular, and assessment practices to improve pedagogical quality and raise student achievement" (p. 507).

While the characteristics of transformational leadership are important there is still the need to focus the school on current and relevant instruction in the classroom. There are distinct characteristics of both that help guide school leaders with daily decisions and changes that are needed. "Whereas these leadership dimensions are analytically distinct, they may cohere in practice in an integrated model of leadership. In order to elicit both forms of leadership there must be commitment from teachers, students, and other staff. This begins when everyone is on board with the vision of the school. Teacher buy-in is important for transformational and instructional changes with the school organization. Teachers must believe in what they are doing and realize that school leaders are making decisions based on data and to improve the school and all its members. These concepts are important to build the capacity of the school to effect the most change in the organization.

As can be seen in the research, a combination of transformational and instructional leadership can have the greatest impact in moving the school organization forward. "Both the instructional model and the transformational model are consistent with the notion that leadership emerges from all levels of the school organization" (Bowers, Marks, & Printy, 2009, p. 510). As stated in Hallinger (2005), "one resolution of the quest for an integrative model of educational leadership would link leadership to the needs of the school context" (p. 15). The school context would relate to what stage of the development the school is currently working. Those schools that are in school improvement would need to focus on a more top-down approach to leadership that is related to instructional leadership. School leaders would need to concentrate on improving the curriculum, instruction, and student achievement. There may be more directives on what needs to be done when increasing the level of teaching and learning in the school organization. When the school is instructionally sound then a different approach would be

suitable for the school leader to use when enacting school change. This would involve more of a bottom-up or transformational leadership. School leaders would work to empower members of the organization to transform the school. When school improvement and empowerment are not issues then a more balanced approach or shared instructional leadership may be appropriate for leadership within the school. "When the principal elicits high levels of commitment and professionalism from teachers and works interactively with teachers in a instructional leadership capacity, schools have the benefit of integrated leadership; they are organizations that learn and perform at high levels" (Hallinger, 2003, p. 345). It can be seen from various researchers that building leadership capacity is a major factor in developing a combined model of transformational and shared instructional leadership. "It is hypothesized that transformational leadership by itself is insufficient to achieve high-quality teaching and learning. In order to improve teaching and learning, the authors suggested that instructional leadership was needed to complement the tenets of transformational leadership" (Stewart, 2006, p. 21). "The notion of integrated leadership-both transformational and instructional is one possible answer to settling the discourse between the two leadership constructs" (Stewart, 2006, p. 22). As shown through research, these combined constructs can have a great impact on the future of leadership within the school organization.

In order to accomplish a model for effective leadership in schools there needs to be guidelines or standards for leaders as well as others developing future leaders. These standards can assist in defining the role of educational administrators and the development of post-secondary programs. The following sections define standards that have been developed nationwide and in the State of Alabama.

28

Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC)

In response to the demands for more effective leadership the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) was formed. "The National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA), under the leadership of its then-corporate secretary, Scott Thomson, created ISLLC in 1994 to develop standards to anchor the profession as it headed into the 21st century" (Murphy, 2005, p. 155). They were developed for the purpose of establishing quality standards for educational administration and preparing school leaders to overcome the challenges and meet the demands of 21st century educational administrators.

A significant amount of these *Standards* were supported by the empirical findings from studies of effective schools and from the larger body of research on school improvement in which school effects studies are nested (Murphy, 2005, p. 159). The development of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards for school leaders has helped guide the restructuring of school administration and expectations of the school leader.

> The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), a nationwide organization composed of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five extra state jurisdictions, is one of the organizations influencing this movement. (Green, 2001, p. 1)

"The purpose of the ISLLC standards is to provide a clear, organized set of curriculum content and performance standards that could be used to drive the preparation, professional development, and licensure of principals" (Jackson & Kelley, 2002, p. 194). Six standards were developed by ISLLC addressing school leaders' knowledge, performance, and dispositions. According to

Murphy and Shipman (1999), the seven guiding principles in the development of the ISLLC standards were:

- Standards should reflect the centrality of student learning.

- Standards should acknowledge the changing role of the school leader.

- Standards should recognize the collaborative nature of school leadership.

- Standards should be high, upgrading the quality of the profession.

- Standards should inform performance-based systems of assessment and evaluation for school leaders.

- Standards should be integrated and coherent.

- Standards should be predicated on the concepts of access, opportunity, and empowerment for all members of the school community. (p. 218)

The development of the ISLLC standards have proven to be an essential resource tool for states to consider when they are developing standards of practice for school leaders. "Standards such as ISLLC provide a vehicle for professional discourse about the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed for effective administration of educational organizations" (Jackson & Kelley, 2002, pp. 195–196).

The original ISSLC standards provided a beginning to the movement but new demands in the educational setting have driven leaders to the revision of those original standards. These new demands call for the improvement of schools and school systems by raising test scores, and the focus of instruction has become more data-driven decision-making. The original standards were too restrictive by listing specific indicators of leadership. They did not allow flexibility in adding or deleting areas that were included in the 1996 version of the standards. According to

Educational Leadership Policy Standards (2008), "Other points of comparison between ISLLC 1996 and ISLLC 2008 include:

- The language and framework of the six "broad standards" are similar, yet not identical.

- "Indicators" are not listed in the revised policy standards as they were in the 1996 version. Policy standards are there to set overall guidance and vision.

- Significantly, "functions" that define each standard have been added to replace the knowledge, skills, and dispositions. It is here that research findings and feedback from NPBEA and its members are addressed.

- While the titles of the standards and this publication have been changed to make clear that they are policy standards, the "ISLLC" moniker remains. Because so many states have adopted the ISLLC standards in one form or another, it is important to maintain this link (pp. 6-7).

"Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC 2008 organizes the functions that help define strong school leadership under six standards. These standards represent the broad, high-priority themes that educational leaders must address in order to promote the success of every student. These six standards call for:

1. Setting a widely shared vision for learning;

2. Developing a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth;

3. Ensuring effective management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment;

4. Collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources;

5. Acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner; and

6. Understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, legal, and cultural contexts" (Educational Leadership Policy Standards, 2008, p. 6).

Most, if not all, states within the United States have adopted their own version of the ISLLC standards for their schools. "As a set of policy standards, ISLLC 2008 offers high-level guidance to policymakers and educational leaders as they set goals and design their own standards"(Educational Leadership Policy Standards, 2008, p. 11). Leadership training can be guided by the adopted policy standards to improve professional development programs that assist with school leaders' performance. They also can serve as a meaningful guide for colleges and universities with leadership preparation programs that license school administrators and other educational leaders. School systems can also develop and implement such tools as performance evaluations using these standards to guide the development of an assessment regarding the level of performance of school leaders within the system. If used effectively, this process could have a substantial impact on classroom instruction and student achievement. Together all of these factors assist states with the development and implementation of their own leadership standards. Alabama is no exception with the development of its standards for instructional leaders in school. The following section outlines the standards developed by Alabama in its commitment to improving school leader effectiveness.

Alabama Standards for Instructional Leaders

According to Lewis, Rice, and Rice Jr. (2011), Alabama Legislators recommended the development of new leadership standards reflective of the abilities and knowledge necessary for

32

improving student achievement. These eight new standards were developed, based on findings

of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), local instructional leadership evaluation and

standards from *the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools* (SACS), the Interstate School

Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), and standards from 22 other states (p. 3). These

standards are as follows:

Standard 1: Planning for Continuous Improvement

Standard 2: Teaching and Learning

Standard 3: Human Resources Development

Standard 4: Diversity

Standard 5: Community and Stakeholder Relationships

Standard 6: Technology

Standard 7: Management of the Learning Organization

Standard 8: Ethics

These standards were developed with the guidance of the ISLLC standards. Alabama

adopted these standards as a result of the focus on improved academic achievement for students.

They help guide the focus of school administrators being more effective instructional leaders in

schools. Like the ISSLC standards, there are key indicators for each standard that supply

practical activities for school leaders to engage in when leading the school. As one can see from

the list of standards, a variety of areas are covered that relate to transformational and

instructional leadership.

For the purpose of this research study, the ISLLC standards were used as the fundamental

groundwork for the development of items to measure leadership of assistant principals in

Alabama. "If there is an all-encompassing challenge for administrators of tomorrow's schools, it

is to lead the transition from the bureaucratic model of schooling, with its emphasis on minimal

levels of education for many, to a postindustrial adaptive model, with the goal of educating all

youngsters well" (Murphy & Shipman, 1999, p. 212). "Tomorrow's leaders will need to

disavow tenets of organizing consistent with bureaucracies (controlling, directing, supervising,

evaluating, and so forth) and embrace those principles associated with heterarchies (cooperation,

empowerment, community, participation, and so forth)" (Murphy & Shipman, 1999, p. 213).

The ISLLC standards were developed for the principal as educational leader of the

school. These standards can also be applied to the assistant principal as educational leader of the

school. There is much debate about educational leadership and the role assistant principals play

in the leadership of the school community. Currently, there is a limited amount of research in

regards to assistant principals as educational leaders because of how their role has been viewed

in the past as school administrators.

Based on the research in regards to educational leadership, there is no clear or obvious

definition to explain educational leadership within the school. However, reformers in regards to

education leadership have placed great demands on school leaders to transform their schools and

lead with an instructional frame of mind. "The most common strategy found in the literature is

to examine the practices of school leaders as they relate to changes in teacher practice and

improved student outcomes" (May & Supovitz, 2010, p. 336). There is an abundant amount of

research available about educational leadership and how it affects school improvement and

student achievement outcomes. Educational leadership should focus on first and second order

changes within an organization when restructuring schools for the most successful student

achievement outcomes. "Instructional leadership focuses attention on what school improvement

researchers refer to as 'first-order' changes, changes in core technology" (Leithwood, 1994,

p. 500).   These first order changes are necessary to reform schools and increase student

achievement. "Educational leaders can effect positive first-order changes within the school,

meeting the needs of the stakeholders, by using transformational leadership behaviors—in

particular proactive and moderate innovative behaviors. Yet, the constraints of the system or

framework in which educational leaders must operate hinder their ability to achieve successful

second-order changes" (Simmons, 2010, p. 135). "Second-order changes require a form of

leadership that is sensitive to organization building: developing a shared vision, creating

productive work cultures, distributing leadership to others, and the like" (Leithwood, 1994, p.

501). As noted in the literature regarding school reform, both first and second order changes are

needed to reform and restructure 21st century schools. Seeking better outcomes for schools as a

result of leadership, educators have used key words that represent criteria on which they say they

evaluate leadership (most frequently principals' leadership) in schools; self-actualized and

visionary" (Hart, 1995, pp. 16–17). Therefore, the common goal for school leadership

movements are preparing teachers to meet the demands of students and improving student

achievement.

Role of the Assistant Principal

"Too often, assistant principals are seen as uninteresting—as separate from instructional

leadership in their mock-military discipline role and as people at the bottom rung of the

administrative career ladder" (Marshall & Hooley, 2006, p. 2). Most assistant principals within

the school are generally referred to as the key manager of the school's operation in an

educational setting. Very little research has been done on the role of assistant principal in the

school. "In a review of 756 articles published between 1993 and 1999, only 8 articles, or 1

percent, focused on the role of the assistant principal" (Kaplan & Owings, 1999, p. 81). "With

increased emphasis on monitoring and improving teachers, assistant principals are now expected to assist with a major portion of classroom observation" (Marshall & Hooley, 2006, p. 5). They also are inundated with duties such as student discipline, organizational operations, and extra-curricular activities. According to Glanz (1994), "we see the assistant principalship originated as both an instructional and administrative function" (p. 286).

In practice, the administrative functions are the primary role for most assistant principals in American schools today. Assistant principals' roles are often undefined and tasks are added daily. By following an assistant principal or at least following through their days can we gain deeper insight into their roles, functions, feelings, needs, and aspirations (Marshall & Hooley, 2006, p. 50). Various roles of assistant principals cause confusion in what aspects are more important than others. This, in turn, may cause ambiguity in their role and how effective they are in their daily practice. "Role ambiguity means that the assistant principal's roles and duties include many 'gray areas'—ill-defined, inconsistent, and at times incoherent responsibilities, roles, and resources" (Marshall & Hooley, 2006, p. 7). These undefined roles and duties can cause problems with how effectively the assistant principal is performing his or her job duties at the school level.

A Southern California study involving eight secondary assistant principals revealed that "the assistant principal's function for stabilizing and transforming schools and showed the ways in which the assistant principal's work is primarily focused on organizational maintenance" (Marshall & Hooley, 2006, p. 50). They perform tasks translated as "putting out fires" instead of concentrating on the duties of leading instruction and transforming the school. According to Glanz (1994), the first task is to redefine the assistant principal's role with an emphasis on their being more involved in curricular and instructional improvement activities (Glanz, 1994, p. 286).

Performing those duties and how their beliefs match their actions can be a major issue. Marshall and Hooley (2006) stated, "The assistant principalship holds a critical position in educational organizations for several reasons" (p. 2). They consist of frequent entry-level position for administrative careers, they maintain the norms and rules of the school culture, frequently play the role of the mediator, and encounter daily the fundamental dilemmas of school systems. Assistant principal personal beliefs should match the actions they are performing when assisting with leadership in the school organization. According to Cranston, Tromans, and Reugebrink (2004), "a number of broad themes can be identified from the research that has been done. These include:

- the deputy principalship, traditionally grounded in essentially administrative activities has not provided a sound grounding for progression to the principalship — the use of terminology such as 'deputy' or 'assistant' may re-enforce role expectations across deputy principals and principals;

- an identified lack of alignment between what deputy principals actually do in their role and what they believe should be performed; and

- the role of deputy principals has been an evolving one over time, with recent moves suggesting a more leadership-focused position rather than one of a more administrative nature. (p. 230)

A study that was conducted by Cranston, Tromans, and Reugebrink (2004) surveyed two hundred and four assistant principals about their roles and responsibilities in school. For the purpose of this particular study, assistant principals were also referred to as deputy principals. Deputy principals responded to items and clusters of items for characteristics that were significant. In this study the roles and responsibilities were viewed from real versus ideal. This

explains what deputy principals feel they should be doing as opposed to what they actually have

to do within the school. Below is a chart from this research comparing these realistic and ideal

roles.

Real and Ideal Roles of Deputy Principals

Comparison – real and ideal week (24-25)	Real (%)	Ideal (%)	Difference total real & ideal (%)
Strategic leadership	59	100	41*
Educational/curriculum leadership	74	99	25*
Management/administration	92	70	22#
Student Issues	100	48	52#
Parent/community issues	87	72	15
Staffing issues	94	61	33#
Operational matters	90	39	51#

Note. Those aspects/categories marked with a * indicate where deputy principals would like to

spend more time. Those marked by a # indicate where they would like to spend less time.

(Cranston, Tromans, & Reugebrink, 2004, p. 236)

A tremendous difference in what assistant principals feel they should be doing as

opposed to what they actually have to do in their role as assistant principal was uncovered in this

study. Educational/curriculum leadership is only performed at 74% by deputy principals and

they actually see their ideal role as 99% for this category. Also, as can be seen from the chart,

deputy principals spend an overwhelming amount of time on student issues when they ideally

would like to spend only 48% of the time dealing with these type issues. The data from this study shows that what assistant principals want to do is not what they actually do in the schools.

People in different roles and at different levels of school organizational hierarchies employ personal resources to affect others (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995, p. 236). Principals and assistant principals use these personal resources to lead change in the organization. According to Ogawa and Bossert (1995), "traits and actions of individuals identify the currency and medium of leadership" (p. 237). "The relationship between leadership and organizational roles reveals that leadership is not confined to certain roles in organizations. Rather, it flows through the networks of roles that comprise organizations" (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995, p. 238).

The Assistant Principal as Instructional Leader

Assistant principals have many roles and they must assess which roles hold more priority over others. "Assistant principals become planners and actors with a clear idea of how these actions will contribute to the school's long-term goals" (Kaplan & Owings, 1999, p. 83). Sometimes, these beliefs can be cultural and form as a symbol of how they believe a school organization needs to progress. They may even be norms of the school or community for which they live. As teacher coach and evaluator, assistant principals must assess instruction that is essential to student learning. They must also use the teacher evaluation system to monitor the implementation of best teaching practices to increase student achievement. Assistant principals have to move beyond the typical checklist for teacher evaluation and be a coach to the teacher. According to Kaplan and Owings (1999), "A coach is a mentor, supporter, teacher, and guide who actively helps players improve performance through instruction on best techniques, supervised practice, and application with feedback" (p. 83) Through these methods they can become an instructional coach for teachers in their school.

39

The assistant principal can be a master schedule designer by maximizing all resources available to the extent in which they can have an effect on change with instruction and achievement in the classroom. "Assistant principals work closely with the principal to clarify their goals for student learning and achievement, review professional literature, visit successful schools that use innovative scheduling practices, and design the school day to support student achievement" (Kaplan & Owings, 1999, p. 84). Being a program developer involves changing the school program to maximize student achievement. "Using a wide assortment of school achievement data, assistant principals can work with others to identify gaps between desired goals and present performance" (Kaplan & Owings, 1999, p. 84).

As instructional manager, assistant principals can develop and oversee the building leadership team at the school. They can focus on getting teachers and others involved who value the instructional process and student learning. These staff members should reflect all the meaningful aspects of the school including regular education, special education, counselors, community members etc. "Assistant principals also gather a variety of student achievement data and prepare it in meaningful ways to share with instructional leaders, teachers, and the community" (Kaplan & Owings, 1999, p. 84). Finally, as a communicator, the assistant principal needs to have an open-door to work with all stakeholders in the instructional improvement process. "As communicators, assistant principals take every opportunity to share their vision of student achievement and of their school as a learning community with teachers, students, parents, and others" (Kaplan & Owings, 1999, pp. 84-85).

Assistant principals need support from principals to effectively perform the role of an instructional leader. With the added responsibilities, assistant principals increase several factors that might cause a more stressful role in the school. According to Kaplan and Owings (1999),

"these factors include different and wider responsibility; increased planning, organizing, and coordinating; more time needed for the job; more 'balls in the air'; more problem solving; more involvement with adults; more professional writing and public speaking; and more professional learning" (p. 87). In order to handle these new roles, the assistant principal needs to work closely with the principal or other experienced assistant principals as their mentors and co-instructional leaders in the school. "When principals or experienced assistants tell aspiring instructional leaders they have the personality and talents to advance professionally to an instructional leadership role, and they offer their goodwill and advice to make it happen, assistant principals feel personally supported in seeking professional advancement" (Kaplan & Owings, 1999, p. 90).

The Assistant Principal as Transformational Leader

The role of the assistant principal as a transformational leader takes a relatively similar approach within the school. A study by Thoonen, Sleegers, Oort, Peetsma, and Geijsel (2011) was performed to examine how transformational leadership, along with other factors can effect teaching practices. A model was developed that included five general constructs. "Transformational leadership, school organizational conditions, and teacher motivation have indirect effects on the quality of teaching practices through teachers' engagement in professional learning activities" (Thoonen, Sleegers, Oort, Peetsma, & Geijsel, 2011, p. 499). According to Ogawa and Bossert (1995):

> The context of leadership from an institutional perspective is largely cultural. Administrators are instrumental in adopting structures to mirror cultural rules in the environment. They then engage other members of their organizations in symbolic activities that focus on these structures. These activities, in turn, shape and reinforce

41

shared values and beliefs, which can produce commitment, or solidarity, leading to

coordinated activity. (p. 239)

Beliefs and Actions

The theory of planned behavior reflects the research on how beliefs and actions are an

overall predictor of the behaviors people exhibit. Icek Ajzen is a prominent researcher and

developer of this theory. "According to the theory, human behavior is guided by three kinds of

considerations: beliefs about the likely outcomes of the behavior and the evaluations of these

outcomes (behavioral beliefs), beliefs about the normative expectations of others and motivation

to comply with these expectations (normative beliefs), and beliefs about the presence of factors

that may facilitate or impede performance of the behavior and the perceived power of these

factors (control beliefs)" (Ajzen, 2006, p. 1).
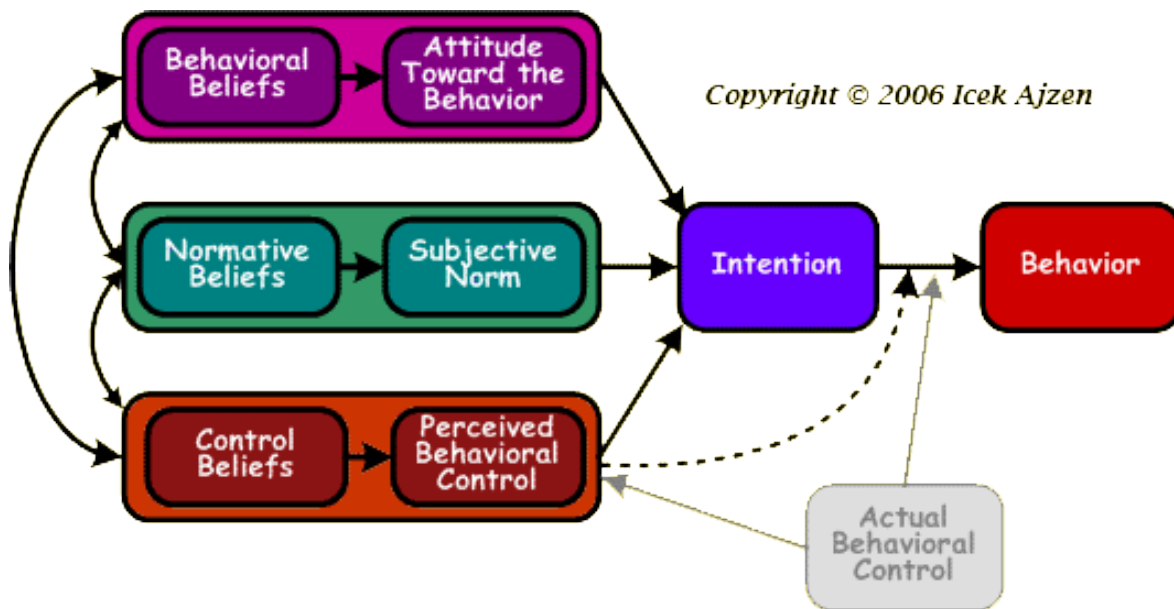
Figure 3: Theory of Planned Behavior Model by Icek Ajzen

"The perception of factors likely to facilitate or inhibit the performance of the behavior is referred to as ***control beliefs.*** These factors include both internal control factors (e.g., information, personal deficiencies, skills, abilities, emotions) and external control factors (e.g., opportunities, dependence on others, barriers)" (Armitage & Conner, 1998, p. 1432). Beliefs and actions of school leaders determine the level of success that school's gain during improvement efforts. According to Leithwood (1994), "Our interest in leaders' cognitive and affective states is based on the simple premise that what they do (leaders' practices) depends on what they think and how they feel" (p. 509). Research on problem-solving processes indentifies two types of mental activity seen in transformational school leaders. These two activities are problem interpretation and goals. Problem interpretation involves understanding the problem and its nature. Goals involve what a leader needs to do when addressing the problem. Too often what school leaders believe does not relate to the actions they take when problem-solving in a school. "There is often a difference between what people do and what they say about what they do, a distinction that can be maintained without duplicitous intent" (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004, p. 14). According to Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond (2004), "To gain insight on practice, we need to understand a task *as it unfolds* from the perspective and through the 'theories-in-use' of the practitioner" (p. 15). "What one values, what one thinks of oneself, what one believes about people, what one believes about children, and what one believes to be the purpose of schools comprise one's disposition, and it is one's disposition that influences leadership behavior" (Green, 2001, p. 51). "School leaders' efficacy beliefs are of two types—beliefs about one's self-efficacy for improving instruction and student learning (LSE) and beliefs about the collective capacity of colleagues across schools in the district to improve student learning (LCE). Both sets of efficacy beliefs were hypothesized to have significant effects on

43

school leaders' practices or behaviors, conditions in schools and classrooms known to account for student learning, and student learning" (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008, p. 498).

Summary

Different methods of effective leadership have been researched over the past fifty years in literature. Although there is no clear definition of leadership there is significant research that focuses on principals of the school as transformational or instructional leaders. Current national standards about effective school leaders has assisted in the focus on leadership within the school organization. These Interstate (ISSLC) standards were developed and adopted by the federal government and have filtered to the state level. Alabama has adopted an alternate version of these standards that are known as the Alabama Standards for Instructional leaders. These Alabama standards help define the aspects of what lawmakers and local school systems consider the guideline for what it takes to be an effective school leader. These standards reflect what principals, as well as assistant principals, in Alabama are expected to do. The ISSLC standards and the Alabama standards have leadership traits that relate to transformational as well as the instructional constructs.

Assistant principals are seen very little in the research because they are seen as the person involved in everything the principal does not have time to accomplish or are not willing to do. They are inundated with duties that make their role within the organization unclear as they seek to assist in leading the school. School reforms have refocused the roles of assistant principals to include areas not previously thought of as their duties. This role includes assisting the principal with building teacher leadership capacity and leading curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Assistant principals increased duties leaves difficult decisions about what are the important aspects in their current role of school leader in the organization. Their beliefs in what should be

done and the actions they take are sometimes conflicting because of the roles they must perform on a daily basis. Assistant principals have the capability of being effective transformational and instructional leaders in the school with proper support from upper administrators and central office personnel. As the transformational leader they are expected to empower teachers to bring change within the organization. As instructional leader they must lead curriculum and instruction within the school and build a capacity for leadership among all stakeholders. A combination of these leadership constructs can make for a more effective leader. The new construct involves transformational leadership with instructional leadership.

CHAPTER III. METHODS

Overview

School leadership research has primarily focused on the principal of the school. There is a limited amount of research about the assistant principal's role and the impact they have on the leadership in the school. "In spite of the increasing burdens placed on principals and the calls for empowering educators to accept leadership roles in school reform, assistant principals receive scant mention in a selective review of the professional literature" (Kaplan & Owings, 1999, p. 81). It is important to understand how the assistant principal's role is changing within the educational setting. Marshall (1992), as cited in Mertz (2006),

> argued for going beyond the simple enumeration of duties to *understand* the role of the assistant principal; to understand not merely what assistant principals do, but how they think about and 'see' what they do and how they affect and are affected by the position and its attendant roles. (p. 648)

Understanding the assistant principal's role involves an examination of research on the traditional role versus what their new role encompasses. According to Ponder and Crow (2005), "to transform the assistant principalship into a more comprehensive training ground for aspiring principals, schools should focus on promoting shared leadership and redesigning the role of the assistant principal" (p. 59). The following section was designed to review the changing role of assistant principals in the school environment. It addresses the evolving role of assistant principals in public education.

The Assistant Principal Role

Traditionally, the assistant principal has been viewed as a school manager. "The tasks that consume most of the time of an assistant principal are largely managerial" (Abebe, Lindsey, Bonner, & Heck, 2010, p. 68). The assistant principal role is changing to include more involvement in the leadership of the school. "Sharing leadership responsibilities expands the new assistant principal's understanding of the scope of his or her own role beyond student management to include instructional monitoring, supervision, accountability, community relationships, resource allocation, and other administrative responsibilities" (Ponder & Crow, 2005, p. 59). Current research stresses a leadership role with the principal to effectively lead instruction and manage the school. This responsibility includes instructional leadership and transformational leadership. "Redesigning the position of assistant principal to expand instructional leadership responsibilities can help develop and support a pipeline of quality school leaders" (Ponder & Crow, 2005, p. 59).

> Despite the apparent singularity of much of the literature, in practice proponents of instructional, transformational, distributed and sustainable leadership have, over time, moved well away from the exclusivity of the one-size-fits-all, charismatic, heroic model of school leadership. The literature now incorporates an expanded understanding of leadership to include aspects of the context, of antecedent conditions, the school mission and culture, and also a reinforcing structure and instructional program. (Mulford, 2008, p. 48)

The assistant principal's role has expanded over the last twenty years to include various types of leadership. Just like the principal, they need to be in command of

instructional and transformational leadership of the school. The following sections

expand on the different leadership roles of the assistant principal in 21st century schools.

Instructional Leadership

The focus in education has been full circle to include instructional leadership and the

need to prepare students in the 21st century. High stakes testing and the reauthorization of No

Child Left Behind are strong proponents of leadership focused on instruction. According to

Spillane, Hallet, and Diamond (2003), instructional leadership is defined as "an influence

relationship that motivates, enables, and supports teachers' efforts to learn about and change

their instructional practices" (p. 4). Instructional leadership has been documented in research

and continues to be a driving force in school improvement efforts. One issue is the level of

research that focuses on the assistant principal as instructional leaders of the school. "An

important element in the definition of the responsibilities of the assistant principal ought to

include the role of instructional leader" (Celikten, 2001, p. 67). Another issue involves the

impact that assistant principals have as the instructional leader of the school and the role they

play when enacting that style of leadership. Research on principals must be used with the

limited amount of research about assistant principals as instructional leaders. As stated in

Jenkins (2009), "Whitaker (1997) identifies four skills essential for instructional leadership:

- Effective instructional leaders need to be resource providers.

- Effective instructional leaders need to be instructional resources.

- Effective instructional leaders need to be good communicators.

- Effective instructional leaders need to create a visible presence." (p. 36)

The instructional leader also needs to have up-to-date knowledge on three areas of education:

curriculum, instruction, and assessment (DuFour, 2002, p. 13–14).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership has been studied over the past 20 years by various researchers. According to Bass (1990), "transformational leadership — occurs when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, and when they stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group" (p. 21). Transformational leadership should transform the organization and the employees to indentify and follow the leader. Alone, transformational leadership is a complex construct. There are four dimensions that make up this construct. "The four dimensions of transformational leadership are charisma or idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration" (Judge & Piccolo, 2004, p. 755).

According to Hallinger (2011), "Successful school leadership integrates instructional, transformational, and strategic dimensions" (p. 3). This current research should help guide current and future leaders in developing a more shared leadership approach to school success.

Theory of Planned Behavior

The theory of planned behavior involves the idea that human behavior is guided by beliefs about likely outcomes and the evaluation of those outcomes. According to Abebe, Lindsey, Bonner, and Heck (2010), "there seems to be a significant gap between what assistant principals are presently doing on the job and what they should be practicing" (p. 69). Examining the role of assistant principals should influence the intentions they have to engage in behavior related to an instructional and transformational leader. "As a general rule, the stronger the intention to engage in a behavior, the more likely should be its performance" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 181). According to Ajzen (2006), "Because attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived

49

behavioral control are assumed to be based on corresponding sets of beliefs, behavioral interventions must try to change the beliefs that, according to the theory, ultimately guide performance of the behavior" (p. 2). Assistant principal performance should be based on their beliefs as instructional and transformational leaders and not on the traditional role that has limited their effectiveness in the school.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine if the type of leadership beliefs Alabama assistant principal's endorsed in their current leadership roles. Those beliefs could be behavioral, control, or normative. Also, to determine if those beliefs predict the type of actions they perform in their day-to-day duties. These actions can be instructional, transformational, or a combination of both. Hopefully, the results of this study will inform educational leadership research about gaps, if any, that exist between assistant principals' beliefs and their actions. The survey developed by the researchers will contribute to the knowledge of the essential role assistant principal's play in an educational setting. It will also provide recommendations that will potentially improve the practice of school leadership in all schools.

Significance of the Study

Assistant principals have long been used in a managerial role within schools. Little research has been done about their true leadership role. The significance of this study is to identify the beliefs assistant principals endorse and if those beliefs predict their actions as leaders in the school community. Also this research study identifies barriers enable or prevent transforming beliefs of assistant principals into actions. The role of the assistant principal needs to be redefined to include areas of instructional and transformational leadership so there is a greater impact on students, teachers, and the learning environment.

Research Questions

The study addresses the following questions:

1.   To what level do assistant principals endorse behavioral, normative, and control beliefs?

2.   In regards to school leadership beliefs, what relationship, if any, exists between Alabama assistant principals' espoused instructional leadership actions and their beliefs?

3.   In regards to school leadership beliefs, what relationship, if any, exists between Alabama assistant principals' espoused transformational leadership actions and their beliefs?

4.   In regards to assistant principals espoused beliefs, what enables or prevents those beliefs from becoming actions?

The Researcher's Role

The role of the researcher for this study was to examine the espoused beliefs and actions of assistant principals in Alabama. For the previous six years the researcher served as an assistant principal in a K–3 elementary school, a 7–8 junior high school, and a 5–8 middle school. At the time of the survey, the researcher was in a central office administrative position. The researcher's level of experience as assistant principal provided an advantage into the current role of assistant principals in Alabama. Also, the administrative experience at the central office level gave the researcher a broader view of how vital the entire school leadership team is to the overall school success.

Methods

Population and Sample

For the purpose of this study the researcher was interested in practicing K–12 assistant principals. The population for the study included all K–12 public school assistant principals in

Alabama. The email addresses for the population group were secured through the State

Department of Alabama directory of assistant principals. The only information available through

the directory was the assistant principals' names, schools, and email addresses. No other

demographic information is provided in the directory. The sample group was a volunteer sample

including only those assistant principals from the population who agreed to participate in the

study.

Instrumentation

For this quantitative study, the method for gathering data in this study was the use of an

online survey. The researcher-developed survey, *Leadership Survey*, was used to gather the data

for this study.   The survey items were developed by the researcher and a fellow graduate

student, Lakesha Brackins. The items were based on current literature on instructional and

transformational leadership. The study required the collection and analysis of data regarding two

scales: (a) leadership beliefs reported by school assistant principals and (b) leadership actions

reported by school assistant principals.

Leadership beliefs were categorized as behavioral, normative, and control beliefs as

identified by Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior. The actions were categorized as instructional

actions and transformational actions as determined by current research on leadership traits of

instructional and transformational leaders. In addition, demographic information gathered in the

survey included: years of experience, gender, highest degree earned, gender, ethnicity, and type

of school (rural, urban, or suburban). The items that were surveyed included:

Questions 1–7: Demographics

Questions 8–15: Behavior Beliefs

Questions 16–22: Normative Beliefs

Questions 23–29: Control Beliefs

Questions 30–61: Actions of Assistant Principals

The rating scale used was based on a response of one (very unlikely) to six (very likely) for each survey item.

Pilot Study

In order to assess the content validity an expert panel was assembled. This panel included four central office administrators, including one superintendent and three administrative assistants to the superintendent from three school systems. The panel was selected to review the instrument and provide feedback regarding the content of the instrument. Each of the administrators selected were considered experts in the field of K–12 education. The administrators were given a hard copy of the instrument and told what the survey was to measure before being asked to provide feedback on the content of the instrument. After the initial meeting, the researcher adjusted the instrument based on feedback from the panel.

Following the validity check, the researcher asked twenty additional Central Office Administrators from three rural school systems in Alabama to participate in the pilot study in order to assess the level of reliability of scores interpreted from the instrument. The researcher presented the survey to the pilot group using the online format selected for the main study. Piloting the instrument in the same online format which was used for the study was helpful in determining any unforeseen errors associated with design or delivery. This group was selected based on their previous experience as school leaders and their knowledge of the standards required for assistant principals in the state of Alabama. The panel of experts reassembled a second time and determined the instrument was ready for distribution.

Instrument Reliability

When the survey results were received from the twenty pilot study participants instrument reliability was computed for all scales. Alpha internal consistent reliability coefficients were computed for each of the five scales using responses from all participants. Results are reported in Tables 2–6.

Instructional Action Scale

Results are reported in Table 2 for the Instructional Action Scale. The correlation coefficient between each of the sixteen items and the total score on the Instructional Action Scale ranged from .235 to .790, thereby verifying that each of the items consistently measured what the total Instructional Action Scale was measuring. The coefficient alpha if item deleted was reduced for 14 of 16 items further verifying that each of the 14 items increased the reliability of the Instructional Action Scale. Item 15 was .925 which is slightly higher when item was deleted. Item 16 was .923 which is also slightly higher when item was deleted. This informed the researchers that item 15 and 16 slightly decreased the reliability of the Instructional Action Scale when included. All 16 instructional actions were included in the final survey. With all 16 items, the reliability coefficient for the Instructional Action Scale was .920.

Table 2

Item-Total Correlation, Coefficient Alpha if Item Deleted, and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for

the Instructional Action Scale

Instructional Actions	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. As an educational leader, I meet with the building leadership team to align goals and objectives with the school vision.	.524	.918
2. As an educational leader, I foster a culture of continuous improvement among all members of the school organization.	.503	.918
3. As an educational leader, I build teacher capacity for teaching and learning.	.745	.912
4. As an educational leader, I elevate teacher goals to enhance their commitment to organizational growth.	.768	.910
5. As an educational leader, I allow staff to work collaboratively to develop a community of learners.	.584	.916
6. As an educational leader, I establish mentoring programs for novice and veteran staff members.	.647	.915
7. As an educational leader, I work with the school community to plan, implement, and assess policies that promote diversity.	.790	.910
8. As an educational leader, I build teams of teachers that are diverse both demographically and cognitively.	.697	.913
9. As an educational leader, I communicate the vision and mission to community stakeholders.	.768	.911
10. As an educational leader, I promote shared decision-making that impacts student achievement.	.666	.914
11. As an educational leader, I provide opportunities for accessing the use of technology throughout the school.	.661	.914
12. As an educational leader, I encourage the use of technology to aid in the development of professional learning communities throughout the school.	.579	.916
13. As an educational leader, I promote problem solving within the school organization to maintain a safe and secure academic environment.	.693	.913
14. As an educational leader, I empower others to manage the learning organization.	.661	.914
15. As an educational leader, I make decisions about the school community using moral and ethical standards.	.235	.925
16. As an educational leader, I follow federal, state, and local laws that apply to the school community.	.301	.923
Coefficient Alpha internal consistency reliability for the Instructional Action Scale was .920		

Transformational Action Scale

Results are reported in Table 3 for the Transformational Action Scale. The correlation coefficient between each of the 16 items and the total score on the Transformational Action Scale ranged from .188 to .613, thereby verifying that each of the items consistently measured what the total Transformational Action Scale was measuring. The coefficient alpha if item deleted was reduced for 15 of 16 items further verifying that 15 of the items increased the reliability of the Transformational Action Scale. Item 16 was .853 which is slightly higher when item deleted. This informed the researchers that item 16 slightly decreased the reliability of the Transformational Action Scale when included. All 16 transformational actions were included in the final survey. With all 16 items the reliability coefficient for the Transformational Action Scale was .850.

Table 3

Item-Total Correlation, Coefficient Alpha if Item Deleted, and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for the Transformational Action Scale

Transformational Actions	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. As an educational leader, I make instructional time a priority when managing daily activities.	.613	.836
2. As an educational leader, I utilize a school leadership team when making both short term and long term decisions regarding curriculum and instruction.	.432	.844
3. As an educational leader, I am able to monitor student achievement through data analysis.	.380	.847
4. As an educational leader, I am confident in my knowledge of the school's curriculum as evident through my ability to coach teachers on instructional practices.	.505	.841
5. As an educational leader, I work individually with teachers and staff to determine areas of needed improvement.	.474	.842

(table continues)

Table 3 (continued)

Transformational Actions	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
6. As an educational leader, I designate time to analyze data and time to enforce the use of data to inform instruction.	.395	.845
7. As an educational leader, I am aware of the diverse needs of our students and the instructional programs/practices that need to be in place to meet their needs.	.409	.845
8. As an educational leader, I disseminate school information to all parents in a language in which they can read and understand.	.432	.844
9. As an educational leader, I involve community stakeholders in the process of the selection of curricular programs used at the school.	.591	.835
10. As an educational leader, I promote strong relationships between the home and school through involving parents in decisions regarding curriculum and instructional related issues.	.612	.834
11. As an educational leader, I model the use of technology within the school.	.520	.839
12. As an educational leader, I offer professional development to improve technology integration in the classroom.	.540	.838
13. As an educational leader, I use available fiscal resources to meet the curricular and instructional needs.	.475	.841
14. As an educational leader, I solicit input from faculty and staff when planning the curricular and instructional budgets for the school.	.594	.834
15. As an educational leader, I encourage faculty and staff to make both moral and ethical decisions are related to curriculum and instruction.	.363	.847
16. As an educational leader, I encourage teachers to use differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students.	.188	.853
Coefficient Alpha internal consistency reliability for the Transformational Action Scale was .850		

Behavioral Beliefs Scale

Results are reported in Table 4 for the Behavioral Beliefs Scale. The correlation

coefficient between each of the 8 items and the total score on the Behavioral Beliefs Scale

ranged from .235 to .775, thereby verifying that each of the items consistently measured what the

total Behavioral Beliefs Scale was measuring. The coefficient alpha if item deleted was reduced

for 6 of 8 items further verifying that 6 of the items increased the reliability of the Behavioral

Beliefs Scale. Item 7 and 8 were .831 which was slightly higher when deleted. This informed

the researchers that item 7 and 8 slightly decreased the reliability of the Behavioral Beliefs Scale.

All 8 behavioral beliefs were included in the final study. With all eight items, the reliability

coefficient for the Behavioral Beliefs Scale was .819.

Table 4

Item-Total Correlation, Coefficient Alpha if Item Deleted, and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for

the Behavioral Beliefs Scale

Behavioral Beliefs	Corrected Item – Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. The educational leader engages the school community in a shared vision for the purpose of continuous school improvement.	.661	.782
2. The educational leader aligns the curriculum, instruction, and assessment to ensure effective student achievement.	.775	.765
3. The educational leader develops professional learning communities so faculty and staff can accomplish goals for the school and system.	.641	.783
4. The educational leader actively participates in political and policy-making decisions that affect a diverse school community.	.474	.812
5. The educational leader creates and sustains family-school-community relations.	.557	.797
6. The educational leader ensures the implementation, evaluation, and integration of current technology within the school community.	.473	.807
7. The educational leader promotes a safe and effective learning environment.	.521	.831
8. The educational leader follows a personal and professional code of ethics.	.235	.831
Coefficient Alpha internal consistency reliability for the Behavioral Beliefs Scale was .819		

Normative Beliefs Scale

   Results are reported in Table 5 for the Normative Beliefs Scale. The correlation coefficient between each of the 8 items and the total score on the Normative Beliefs Scale ranged from .000 to .779, thereby verifying that each of the items consistently measured what the total Normative Beliefs Scale was measuring. The coefficient alpha if item deleted was reduced for 4 of 8 items further verifying that each of the items increased the reliability of the Normative Beliefs Scale. With all 8 items the reliability coefficient for the Normative Beliefs Scale was .701. Question 8 was removed for the final study to increase the reliability to .730.

Table 5

Item-Total Correlation, Coefficient Alpha if Item Deleted, and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for the Normative Beliefs Scale

Normative Beliefs	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if item deleted
1. As an educational leader, I am expected to improve teaching and learning within my school.	.000	.715
2. As an educational leader, I am expected to set expectations for those within my realm of leadership.	.671	.625
3. As an educational leader, I am expected to track the progress and performance of my students.	.000	.716
4. As an educational leader, I am expected to provide teachers with the necessary support needed to be successful.	.560	.631
5. As an educational leader, I am expected to promote the learning of all students regardless of race and socioeconomic background.	.000	.716
6. As an educational leader, I am expected to provide teachers with the training necessary in order to be effective.	.779	.548
7. As an educational leader, I am expected to act as a policy enforcer.	.560	.631
8. As an educational leader, I am expected to empower others in making significant decisions regarding school improvement.	.366	.730*

Coefficient Alpha internal consistency reliability for the Normative Beliefs Scale was .701
*Question 8 was removed from the final study to increase the reliability to .730

Control Beliefs Scale

Results are reported in Table 6 for the Control Beliefs Scale. The correlation coefficient between each of the 8 items and the total score on the Control Beliefs Scale ranged from .307 to .857, thereby verifying that each of the items consistently measured what the total Control Beliefs Scale was measuring. The coefficient alpha if item deleted was reduced for 5 of 8 items further verifying that each of the items increased the reliability of the Control Beliefs Scale. With all 8 items the reliability coefficient for the Control Beliefs Scale was .857. Question 6 was removed for the final study to increase the reliability to .867.

Table 6

Item-Total Correlation, Coefficient Alpha if Item Deleted, and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for the Control Beliefs Scale

Control Beliefs	Corrected Item – Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Correlation
1. As an educational leader, I receive support from district level administrators.	.857	.818
2. As an educational leader, I have an impact on student achievement.	.339	.863
3. As an educational leader, I am supported in my efforts by the teachers within the school.	.702	.826
4. As an educational leader, I have control over the decision-making process utilizing data to inform instruction.	.819	.809
5. As an educational leader, I improve instruction by providing an organized mentoring program.	.487	.862
6. As an educational leader, I create an atmosphere where all students are able to learn.	.307	.867*
7. As an educational leader, I provide professional development that is relevant to all faculty.	.765	.817
8. As an educational leader, I provide a professional learning atmosphere.	.680	.836
Coefficient Alpha internal consistency reliability for the Control Beliefs Scale was .857 *Question 6 was removed from the final study to increase the reliability to .867		

Research Design

The study used a quantitative design to determine the relationship between assistant principals' beliefs and actions.

Independent/Dependent Variables

The independent variable in the study was school assistant principals' beliefs (behavioral, normative, and perceived control) and the dependent variables were the instructional and transformational actions of the school assistant principals.

Research Procedures

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Institutional Review Board approval was obtained by submitting an application for human subject research to Auburn University. The application included type of research, the objectives of the research and its significance, methods for selecting subjects, a consent form, and methods used to ensure confidentiality. The researcher acquired exempt status for the study.

Data Collection

The survey was administered to the pilot population on July 11, 2011. The researchers contact information was attached to the letter given to all participants in the pilot study. Respondents were given one week to complete and send back the survey.

The data collection for the study began on October 14, 2011 and ended on December 20, 2011, giving the participants approximately two months to complete the online survey. Each participant was contacted via telephone and asked to participate in the study. Upon agreeing to participate, each participant was sent an email containing the consent to participate letter outlining the procedure for participating in the study and a link to the survey. Participants were also informed of their option to cancel their participation at any point during the study. In

addition, it was stressed to the participants that their identity was strictly anonymous and that the research had no identifiable information to determine how they responded to the survey items. Once consent was agreed upon, participants were immediately directed to the online survey. The survey engine used for the study was Qualtrics. A follow-up letter was sent every two weeks during the two month window reminding participants to complete the study and thanking them for their participation in the study. On December 20, 2011, the researcher closed the online survey and ended the data collection.

Statistical Analysis

The researcher utilized the statistical analysis procedures of descriptive statistics programs in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 19.0. Responses for the 167 surveys completed were exported into SPSS and an analysis was performed using the SPSS 19.0 version. The most appropriate statistical method for this study was determined to be means, standard deviation and multiple linear regressions using Pearson Correlations.

Descriptive statistics were used with the demographic data gathered on the participant in the study. For this study, the researcher was primarily interested in the beliefs and actions of school assistant principals. Therefore, the demographic data was gathered only to describe the study participants.

<div align="center">

Summary

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This chapter provided a detailed discussion of the methods used for the present study. It included information in regards to the instrument's development, the validity and reliability of the instrument, the pilot study and the full statewide survey of assistant principals. The study focused on examining the beliefs and actions of school assistant principals in Alabama. All assistant principals in Alabama were invited to participate in the study via Qualtrics, an online

survey tool. One hundred and sixty-seven surveys were completed and submitted. Validity was established using an expert panel of Central Office Administrators. Reliability coefficients were established through the administration of the survey to twenty individuals who have served in a school leadership capacity during their career in education and were chosen through convenience sampling.

The next chapter details the findings of the study. It includes information about the demographics of the study participants and their perceptions of their beliefs and actions as school assistant principals.

CHAPTER IV. RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this research study was to examine espoused beliefs and actions of assistant principals in Alabama. The researcher was trying to determine if espoused beliefs of assistant principals in Alabama matched instructional actions, transformational actions, or a combination of both in their current roles within the school. According to Lange, Kruglanski, and Higgins (2012),

> In the theory of reasoned action, beliefs that performing a behavior will lead to certain outcomes, together with the evaluations of these outcomes, are assumed to produce a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the behavior in question. And this attitude is further assumed to have a causal effect on intentions to engage in the behavior. (p. 442)

The independent variable for this research study was beliefs of current assistant principals. It included three domains:

- Behavioral Beliefs
- Normative Beliefs
- Control Beliefs

The dependent variable was the measured actions of assistant principals in their current role within the school. This included instructional and transformational actions. According to Bowers, Marks, and Printy (2009), "The findings of our studies offer evidence that schools prosper when principals and teacher leaders, whether formal or informal, integrate

transformational and instructional leadership approaches in their interactions with others" (pp. 504–505). Actions were measured across the three domains using a researcher developed survey. A follow up questionnaire was distributed to assistant principals in two Alabama counties to measure barriers of actions they perform in the school.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed to further define the role of assistant principal in Alabama. They were developed from knowledge gained from the current review of literature.

1. To what level do assistant principals endorse behavioral, normative, and control beliefs?

2. In regards to school leadership beliefs, what relationship, if any, exists between Alabama assistant principals' espoused instructional leadership actions and their beliefs?

3. In regards to school leadership beliefs, what relationship, if any, exists between Alabama assistant principals' espoused transformational leadership actions and their beliefs?

4. In regards to assistant principals espoused beliefs, what enables or prevents those beliefs from becoming actions?

Reliability of the Survey Instrument

Reliability of the survey instrument was run to ensure a strong relationship among items on the final survey. The Cronbach's alpha for instructional and transformational actions was .954. This showed a strong relationship among all actions included in the survey. Cronbach's was also run on all three beliefs scales. The Cronbach's on the behavior beliefs was .710 on eight items in the scale. Question 11 was removed from the final study to improve the Cronbach's alpha to .725. The Cronbach's on normative beliefs was .804 on seven items

included. Finally, the Cronbach's on control beliefs was .759. All three belief scales showed a

strong relationship among the items within those scales. The overall reliability of the instrument

is high based on all Cronbach's alpha reports. Table 7 outlines this data.

Table 7

Reliability of All Items Included in the Survey Instrument

Survey Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Instructional and Transformational Actions	.954
Behavioral Beliefs	.725*
Normative Beliefs	.804
Control Beliefs	.759

* Cronbach's after question eleven was deleted

The appropriate statistical method for this study was determined to be means, standard

deviation, and standard multiple regressions. Descriptive statistics were used for the

demographic descriptions of the participants. For the present study, the researcher was interested

in the possible relationships between beliefs and actions of school assistant principals; therefore

standard multiple regression was used.

Description of the Population

The population of this survey was gathered from current assistant principals in the State

of Alabama. One hundred sixty-seven (167) assistant principals from Alabama completed the

survey. Of those participants who completed the survey, 58.1% (n = 97) were females and

41.9% (n = 70) were males (see table 8). The ethnicity data of those who completed the survey

were 65.9% (*n* = 110) American/Caucasian, 29.9% (*n* = 50) African American, 1.8% (*n* = 3)

Native American, and 2.4% (*n* = 4) Other (see Table 9).

Table 8

Frequency and Percentages for Assistant Principals by Gender

	Gender	
	Frequency	Percentage
Males	97	58.1%
Females	70	41.9%
Total	167	100%

Table 9

Frequency and Percentages for Assistant Principals by Ethnicity

	Ethnicity	
	Frequency	Percentage
American/Caucasian	110	65.9%
African American	50	29.9%
Native American	3	1.8%
Other	4	2.4%
Total	167	100%

Other demographic data collected included years of experience, age, highest degree, and

description of the school. Tables 10–13 report the frequency and percentages for each category.

Table 10

Frequency and Percentage of Assistant Principals by Years of Experience

	Years of Experience	
	Frequency	Percentage
1–5 years	70	41.9%
6–10 years	60	35.9%
11–15 years	20	12.0%
16–20 years	9	5.4%
20+ years	8	4.8%
Total	167	100%

Table 11

Frequency and Percentage of Assistant Principals by Age

	Age	
	Frequency	Percentage
Under 30	1	0.6%
30–39	44	26.3%
40–49	65	38.9%
50–59	45	26.9%
60–69	12	7.2%
70+	0	0.0%
Total	167	100%

Table 12

Frequency and Percentage of Assistant Principals by Highest Degree

	Highest Degree	
	Frequency	Percentage
Bachelor's Degree	0	0.0%
Master's Degree	84	50.3%
Educational Specialist	62	37.1%
Doctorate	21	12.6%
Total	167	100%

Table 13

Frequency and Percentage of Assistant Principals by School Description

	Description of School	
	Frequency	Percentage
Rural	86	51.5%
Urban	34	20.4%
Suburban	47	28.1%
Total	167	100%

Results of Research Questions

Research Question 1: To what level did assistant principals endorse behavioral, normative, and control beliefs?

Table 14 indicates that 167 assistant principals surveyed endorsed behavioral beliefs with a mean of 5.76 out of 6.00 possible and a standard deviation of .293. Assistant principals endorsed normative beliefs with a mean of 5.79 out of 6.00 and a standard deviation of .350. The assistant principals endorsed control beliefs with a mean of 5.19 out of 6.00 and a standard deviation of .557.

Table 14

Mean, Standard Deviation, and N for Assistant Principals' Level of Endorsed Beliefs

	Descriptive Statistics		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Behavioral Beliefs	5.76	.293	167
Normative Beliefs	5.79	.350	167
Control Beliefs	5.19	.557	167

Research Question 2: In regards to school leadership beliefs, what relationship, if any existed between Alabama assistant principals' espoused instructional leadership actions and their beliefs?

Research question two was analyzed using standard multiple regression. The dependent variable for this research question was assistant principals' instructional actions. The independent variable was the assistant principals' perceived behavioral, normative, and control beliefs. According to the results there is a strong positive correlation between the three assistant

principal beliefs and instructional actions, R = .836. The coefficient of determination (R^2) = .699

indicates that approximately 70% of the variance in the assistant principals' instructional actions

was accounted for by the linear relationship with assistant principals' beliefs. The mean for

instructional actions was 5.25. The mean for behavior beliefs was 5.76 with a standard deviation

of .293. The regression resulted in a standardized beta weight of .064, a correlation coefficient

of .521, a partial correlation of .088, and a part correlation of .048. The mean for normative

beliefs was 5.79 with a standard deviation of .350. The regression resulted in a standardized beta

weight of .201, a correlation coefficient of .614, a partial correlation of .254, and a part

correlation of .144. The mean for control beliefs was 5.19 with a standard deviation of .557.

The regression resulted in a standardized beta weight of .668, a correlation coefficient of .812, a

partial correlation of .703, and a part correlation of .542. Table 15 depicts these values.

Table 15

Means, Standard Deviations (Parentheses), Correlation Coefficients, Standardized Beta

Weights, Zero-Order Correlations, Part and Partial Correlations for Variables in the Regression

Variable	Mean (SD)	Beta Weight	Correlation Coefficient	Partial Correlation	Part Correlation
Instructional Actions					
Behavioral Beliefs	5.76 (.293)	.064	.521	.088	.048
Normative Beliefs	5.79 (.350)	.201	.614	.254	.144
Control Beliefs	5.19 (.557)	.668	.812	.703	.542

A comparison of standardized beta weights indicates that normative beliefs, $\beta = .201$, $p = .001$ and control beliefs, $\beta = .668$, $p < .001$ were statistically significant in predicting instructional actions. Behavioral beliefs were not statistically significant in predicting instructional actions, $\beta = .064$, $p = .261$.

Research Question 3: In regards to school leadership beliefs, what relationship, if any, exists between Alabama assistant principals' espoused transformational leadership actions and their beliefs?

Standard multiple regression analysis was used to address research question three. The dependent variable for this research question was assistant principals' transformational actions. The independent variable was assistant principals' behavior, normative, and control beliefs. According to the results there was a moderate to high positive correlation between assistant principal beliefs and transformational actions, $R = .768$. The coefficient of determination (R^2) = .590 indicated approximately 59% of the variance in assistant principals' transformational actions were accounted for by the linear relationship with assistant principals' beliefs. The mean for transformational actions was 5.32 with a standard deviation of .513. The mean for behavioral beliefs was 5.76 with a standard deviation of .293. The analysis produced a standardized beta weight of .177, correlation coefficient of .533, partial correlation of .204, and part correlation of .133. The mean for normative beliefs was 5.79 with a standard deviation of .350. Analysis produced a standardized beta weight of .095, a correlation coefficient of .542, partial correlation of .105, and a part correlation of .068. The mean for control beliefs was 5.19 with a standard deviation of .557. The analysis produced a standardized beta weight of .600, correlation coefficient of .740, a partial correlation of .605, and a part correlation of .487. Table 16 shows all indicated values.

Table 16

Means, Standard Deviations (Parentheses), Correlation Coefficients, Standardized Beta

Weights, Zero-Order Correlations, Part and Partial Correlations for Variables in the Regression

Variable	Mean (SD)	Beta Weight	Correlation Coefficient	Partial Correlation	Part Correlation
Transformational Actions					
Behavioral Beliefs	5.76 (.293)	.177	.533	.204	.133
Normative Beliefs	5.79 (.350)	.095	.542	.105	.068
Control Beliefs	5.19 (.557)	.600	.740	.605	.487

A comparison of standardized beta weights indicates that control beliefs, $\beta = .600$, $p < .001$ and behavioral beliefs, $p = .009$, were statistically significant in predicting transformational actions. Normative beliefs, $p = .178$, did not predict transformational actions at a statistically significant level.

Research Question 4: In regards to assistant principals espoused beliefs, what enables or prevents those beliefs from becoming actions?

Question four was analyzed by identifying trends or patterns in the data that was gathered from open-ended responses given to randomly select assistant principals that completed the survey. Assistant principals identified some areas that would enable or prevent behavioral, normative, and control beliefs from becoming transformational or instructional actions. As seen

73

in Table 17, time, limited resources, perceived assistant principal role, established laws and policies, and adequate professional development were all seen as barriers to assistant principal beliefs becoming actions. Those areas reported that would enable assistant principal beliefs in becoming actions are delegation of job responsibilities, funding, collaborative work environment, better classroom management, and laws and established procedures. Assistant principal roles also had an effect on beliefs becoming actions. Those areas reported as current roles of assistant principals are student discipline, evaluation of teachers, and instructional leadership.

Table 17

Common Themes among Randomly Selected Assistant Principals Who Participated in the Research Study

	Assistant Principal Responses
Barriers to Actions	• Time
	• Limited Resources
	• Perceived AP Role
	• Laws and Policies
	• Adequate Professional Development
Enablers to Actions	• Delegation of Job Responsibilities
	• Funding
	• Collaborative Work Environment
	• Better Classroom Management
	• Laws and Established Procedures
Current Assistant Principal Role	• Student Discipline
	• Evaluation of Teachers
	• Instructional Leadership

Summary of Findings

According to the data, behavioral and normative beliefs moderately endorsed instructional actions. Also, behavioral and normative beliefs moderately endorsed transformational actions. Control beliefs had a strong positive correlation to instructional and transformational actions. Overall, control beliefs endorsed instructional and transformational actions at a statistically higher level than behavioral or normative beliefs. Tables 18 and 19 summarize the findings of this research study.

Table 18

Summary Coefficient Correlations for Instructional Actions, Transformational Actions, and Behavioral, Normative, and Control Beliefs

Correlation Coefficients

	Instructional Actions	Transformational Actions
Behavioral Beliefs	.521*	.533*
Normative Beliefs	.614*	.542*
Control Beliefs	.812**	.740**

*There is a moderately positive correlation with behavioral and normative beliefs.

**There is a strong positive correlation for control beliefs with all actions.

Other findings showed there was a strong positive correlation between assistant principals' behavioral, normative and control beliefs and their instructional actions, R = .836 and a moderate to strong positive correlation between assistant principals' behavioral, normative and control beliefs and transformational actions, R = .768. Normative beliefs, p = .001 and control

beliefs, p < .001 were statistically significant to predict assistant principals' instructional actions. Behavior beliefs, p = .009 and control beliefs, p < .001 were statistically significant to predict assistant principals' transformational actions.

Table 19

Summary of Standardized Beta Weights for Instructional and Transformational Actions

	Instructional Actions R = .836	Transformational Actions R = .768
Behavioral Beliefs	β = .064, p = .261	β = .177, p = .009 Statistically Significant
Normative Beliefs	β = .201, p = .001 Statistically Significant	β = .095, p = .178
Control Beliefs	β = .668, p < .001 Statistically Significant	β = .600, p < .001 Statistically Significant

Conclusion

The analysis of data collected indicates normative beliefs, p = .001, and control beliefs, p < .001, statistically significantly predict instructional actions. Also, behavioral beliefs, p = .009, and control beliefs, p < .001, statistically significantly predict transformational actions. The data also shows that behavioral beliefs, p = .261, do not statistically significantly predict instructional actions and normative beliefs, p = .178, do not statistically significantly predict transformational actions. Also, barriers that prevent beliefs from becoming actions were time, limited resources, perceived assistant principal role, laws and policies, and adequate professional

development. Those areas reported that enabled assistant principal beliefs to become actions were delegation of job responsibilities, funding, collaborative work environment, better classroom management, and laws and established procedures. The assistant principal role was reported as student discipline, evaluation of teachers, and instructional leadership. The following chapter discusses the results and their implications to assistant principals in their role as school leader. Also, future research is discussed to improve the field of school leadership.

CHAPTER V. SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the espoused beliefs and actions of assistant principals in Alabama. The researcher wanted to know if espoused beliefs of assistant principals matched the actions they perform within the school. In addition, the researcher wanted to know what barriers might assist or prevent assistant principals from transferring what they believe into the actions they perform. This can help define the current role of assistant principals and the areas of focus when developing future school leaders.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed to further define the role of assistant principal in Alabama. They were developed from knowledge gained from the current review of literature.

1.   To what level do assistant principals endorse behavioral, normative, and control beliefs?

2.   In regards to school leadership beliefs, what relationship, if any, exists between Alabama assistant principals' espoused instructional leadership actions and their beliefs?

3.   In regards to school leadership beliefs, what relationship, if any, exists between Alabama assistant principals' espoused transformational leadership actions and their beliefs?

4.   In regards to assistant principals espoused beliefs, what enables or prevents those beliefs from becoming actions?

Summary of Instrument Development

The researcher and another graduate student, Lakeshia Brackins, created the instrument using current research on school leadership, Theory of Planned Behavior, ISSLC standards, and Alabama Standards for Instructional Leaders. The instrument was divided into five domains. The five domains were Instructional Actions, Transformational Actions, Behavioral Beliefs, Normative Beliefs, and Control Beliefs. The initial survey was developed and checked for content validity by four upper level central office administrators. A pilot survey was also conducted to test the reliability of the instrument. Once the survey was tested for validity and reliability it was revised for the final survey. The final survey consisted of sixteen instructional actions and sixteen transformational actions. Also, there were seven of each of the behavioral, normative, and control beliefs.

Summary and Discussion of Demographics

The Alabama State Department of Education provided a list of names and email addresses for assistant principals in the entire state. This was the most current listing available for sending out an electronic survey. A total of 167 assistant principals throughout the state responded to the online survey. Of those participants who completed the survey, 58.1% (n = 97) were females and 41.9% (n = 70) were males. The ethnicity data of those who completed the survey were 65.9% (n = 110) American/Caucasian, 29.9% (n = 50) African American, 1.8% (n = 3) Native American, and 2.4% (n = 4) Other. Other demographic data collected included years of experience, age, highest degree, and description of the school.
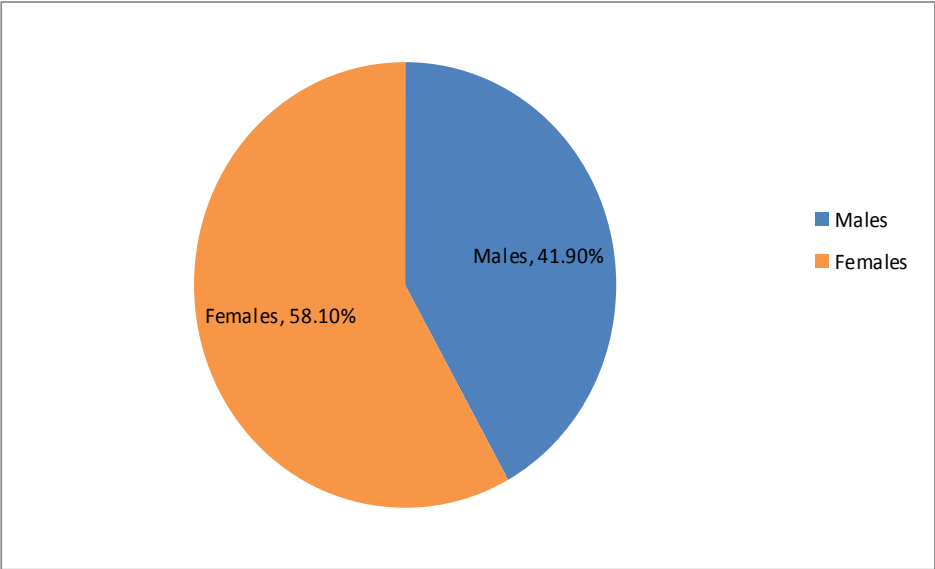
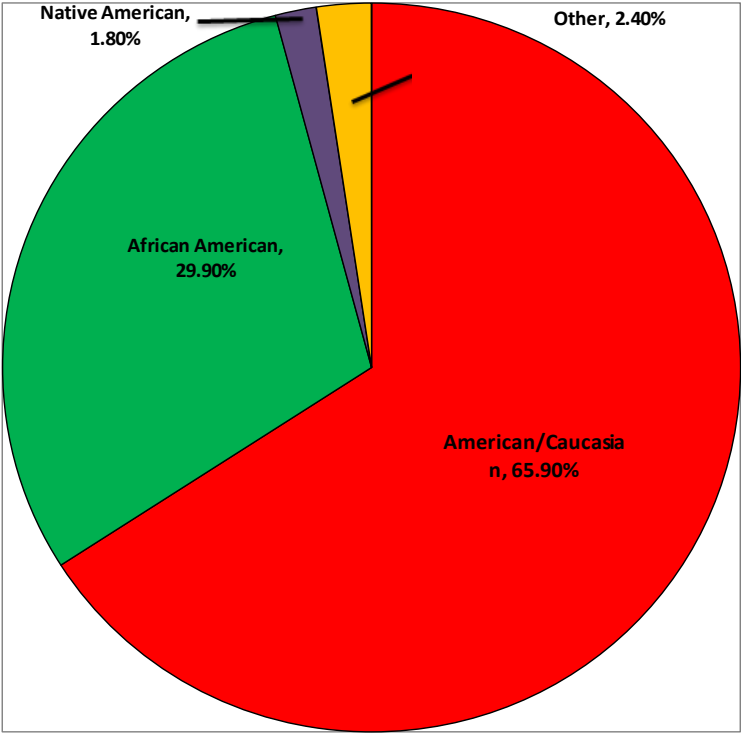*Figure 4.* Gender of Participants Who Completed the Survey

Figure 5. Ethnicity of Participants Who Completed the Survey

The responses from participants about years of experience indicated that 41.9% (n = 70) had five years of experience or less, 35.9% (n = 60) had 6–10 years of experience, 12.0% (n = 20) had 11–15 years of experience, 5.4% (n = 9) had 16–20 years of experience, and 4.8% (n = 8) had 20+ years of experience.

The following demographic data describes the age of assistant principals who participated in the research study. The response from participants about age indicated that 0.6% (n = 1) were under the age of thirty, 26.3% (n = 44) were age 30–39, 38.9% (n = 65) were age 40–49, 26.9% (n = 45) were age 50–59, 7.2% (n = 12) were age 60–69, and no participants reported being 70+.

In relation to the highest degree held, the following data was reported. No participants reported only holding a Bachelor's degree, 50.3% (n = 84) held a Master's degree, 37.1% (n = 62) held an Educational Specialist degree, and 12.6% (n = 21) held a Doctorate degree.

Finally, participants were asked to give a description of the school where they currently worked. The results indicated that 51.5% (n = 86) worked at a Rural school, 20.4% (n = 34) worked at an Urban school, and 28.1% (n = 47) worked in Suburban schools.

Summary of Findings

The findings suggest that assistant principals endorse behavioral, normative, and control beliefs. Assistant principals endorsed behavioral and normative beliefs at a higher level than control beliefs. Assistant principals surveyed endorsed behavioral beliefs with a mean of 5.76 out of 6.00 possible and a standard deviation of .293. They endorsed normative beliefs with a mean of 5.79 out of 6.00 and a standard deviation of .350. Finally, they endorsed control beliefs with a mean of 5.19 out of 6.00 and a standard deviation of .557. Behavioral beliefs are those that assistant principals have control over and normative beliefs are those expected of others.

Normative beliefs were endorsed by assistant principals at the highest level. "A normative belief is the expectation or subjective probability that a given referent individual or group (e.g., friends, family, spouse, coworkers, one's physician or supervisor) would approve or disapprove of performing the behavior under investigation" (Ajzen & Cote, 2008, p. 302). These findings suggest that those expectations and behaviors of others are more likely to be endorsed. It also suggests that assistant principals endorse behavioral beliefs that will produce certain outcomes. According to Ajzen et al. (2011),

> Specifically, beliefs about a behavior's likely consequences (behavioral beliefs) are assumed to determine attitudes toward the behavior, beliefs about the expectations and behaviors of others (normative beliefs) are assumed to determine subjective norms, and beliefs about potential facilitating or inhibiting factors (control beliefs) are assumed to determine perceived control. Attitudes, subjective norms, and perceptions of control in turn combine to produce intentions which, together with actual control, determine performance of the behavior. (p. 102)

Other findings suggest that there was a strong positive correlation between school leadership beliefs and assistant principals' instructional actions, R = .836. The coefficient of determination (R^2) = .699 indicated that approximately 70% of the variance in the assistant principals' instructional actions was accounted for by the linear relationship with assistant principals' beliefs. The mean for instructional actions was 5.25. The mean for behavior beliefs was 5.76 with a standard deviation of .293. The regression resulted in a standardized beta weight of .064, a correlation coefficient of .521, a partial correlation of .088, and a part correlation of .048. The mean for normative beliefs was 5.79 with a standard deviation of .350. The regression resulted in a standardized beta weight of .201, a correlation coefficient of .614, a partial

correlation of .254, and a part correlation of .144. The mean for control beliefs was 5.19 with a standard deviation of .557. The regression resulted in a standardized beta weight of .668, a correlation coefficient of .812, a partial correlation of .703, and a part correlation of .542. A comparison of standardized beta weights indicates that normative beliefs, $\beta = .201$, $p = .001$, and control beliefs, $\beta = .668$, $p < .001$, were statistically significant in predicting instructional actions.

Behavioral beliefs were not statistically significant in predicting instructional actions, $\beta = .064$, $p = .261$. Normative and control beliefs were found to be statistically significant in predicting instructional actions. Behavioral beliefs were not statistically significant in predicting instructional actions. "Empirical evidence shows a strong correlation between a direct measure of perceived behavioral control and a composite of control beliefs" (Lange, Kruglanski, & Higgins, 2012, p. 448). If assistant principals have feelings of perceived behavioral control they are more likely to perform instructional actions in the school. This also shows that assistant principals in Alabama have a perceived behavioral control when implementing instructional actions in their role as assistant principal. According to Lange, Kruglanski, and Higgins (2012), "The results of empirical research provide support for the proposition that perceived behavioral control can be predicted from control beliefs" (p. 448).

Findings suggest a moderate to high positive correlation between assistant principal beliefs and transformational actions, $R = .768$. The coefficient of determination $(R^2) = .590$ indicated approximately 59% of the variance in assistant principals' transformational actions were accounted for by the linear relationship with assistant principals' beliefs. The mean for transformational actions was 5.32 with a standard deviation of .513. The mean for behavioral beliefs was 5.76 with a standard deviation of .293. The analysis produced a standardized beta

weight of .177, correlation coefficient of .533, partial correlation of .204, and part correlation of

.133. The mean for normative beliefs was 5.79 with a standard deviation of .350. Analysis

produced a standardized beta weight of .095, a correlation coefficient of .542, partial correlation

of .105, and a part correlation of .068. The mean for control beliefs was 5.19 with a standard

deviation of .557. The analysis produced a standardized beta weight of .600, correlation

coefficient of .740, a partial correlation of .605, and a part correlation of .487. A comparison of

standardized beta weights indicates that control beliefs, β = .668, p < .001, and behavioral

beliefs, p = .009, were statistically significant in predicting transformational actions. Normative

beliefs, p = .178, did not predict transformational actions at a statistically significant level.

Control beliefs and behavioral beliefs were found to be statistically significant in predicting

transformational leadership actions.

Assistant principals reported that more perceived behavioral control leads to a likelihood

they will perform more transformational actions in their leadership role. Also, assistant

principals reported that behavioral beliefs will produce a more favorable outcome when

performing transformational actions. Normative beliefs were not found to be statistically

significant in predicting assistant principals' transformational actions. "In domains in which

people have less information (e.g., technology integration), subjective norm becomes relatively

more important" (Pryor & Pryor, 2005, p. 5). When assistant principals have a better grasp on

certain domains they are more likely to implement transformational actions in their leadership

role.

Assistant principals reported that their beliefs about consequences of the behavior

(behavioral beliefs) and the expectation and behavior of others (normative beliefs) have a greater

influence on their beliefs than potential facilitating or inhibiting factors (control beliefs) of certain behaviors.

> According to the theory, intention is the immediate antecedent of behavior and is itself a function of attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control; and these determinants follow, respectively, from beliefs about the behavior's likely consequences, about normative expectations of others, and about the presence of factors that control behavioral performance. (Lange, Kruglanski, & Higgins, 2012, p. 438)

> People should be able to act on their intentions to the extent that they have the information, intelligence, skills, abilities, and other internal factors required to perform the behavior and to the extent that they can overcome any external obstacles that may interfere with behavioral performance. (Lange, Kruglanski, & Higgins, 2012, p. 446)

"In their respective aggregates, behavioral beliefs produce a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the behavior; normative beliefs result in perceived social pressure or subjective norm; and control beliefs give rise to perceived behavioral control" (Lange, Kruglanski, & Higgins, 2012, p. 448). Assistant principals perceived behavioral control or control beliefs were lower among all assistant principals surveyed. Research suggests that a combination of these beliefs create a greater behavioral intention to perform actions whether they are instructional or transformational. "In combination, attitude toward behavior, subjective norm, and perception of behavioral control lead to the formation of behavioral intention" (Ajzen & Cote, 2008, p. 301). Although control beliefs were endorsed at a lower level, research states that control over behavior will likely lead to assistant principals carrying out their actions. According to Ajzen

and Cote (2008), "given a sufficient degree of control over the behavior, people are expected to carry out their intentions when the opportunity arises" (p. 301).

Assistant principals also identified some areas that would enable or prevent behavioral, normative, and control beliefs from becoming transformational or instructional actions. As seen in Table 16, time, limited resources, perceived assistant principal role, established laws and policies, and adequate professional development were all seen as barriers to assistant principal beliefs becoming actions. Those areas reported that would enable assistant principal beliefs in becoming actions are delegation of job responsibilities, funding, collaborative work environment, better classroom management, and laws and established procedures. Assistant principal roles also has an effect on beliefs becoming actions. Those areas reported as current roles of assistant principals are student discipline, evaluation of teachers, and instructional leadership.

In summary the data revealed that behavioral and normative beliefs moderately endorsed instructional actions while behavioral and normative beliefs moderately endorsed transformational actions. There was a strong positive correlation between control beliefs and instructional and transformational actions. Control beliefs endorsed instructional and transformational actions at a statistically and significantly higher level than behavioral or normative beliefs. Tables 20 and 21 summarize the findings of this research study.

Table 20

Summary Coefficient Correlations for Instructional Actions, Transformational Actions, and

Behavioral, Normative, and Control Beliefs

	Instructional Actions	Transformational Actions
Behavioral Beliefs	.521*	.533*
Normative Beliefs	.614*	.542*
Control Beliefs	.812**	.740**

*There is a moderately positive correlation with behavioral and normative beliefs.

**There is a strong positive correlation for control beliefs with all actions.

Also, findings showed a strong positive correlation between assistant principals' beliefs and instructional actions, R = .836 and a moderate to strong positive correlation between assistant principals' beliefs and transformational actions, R = .768. Normative beliefs, p = .001 and control beliefs, β = .668, p < .001, were statistically significant to predict assistant principals' instructional actions. Behavior beliefs, p = .009 and control beliefs, β = .668, p < .001, were statistically significant to predict assistant principals' transformational actions.

Table 21

Summary of Standardized Beta Weights for Instructional and Transformational Actions

	Instructional Actions R = .836	Transformational Actions R = .768
Behavioral Beliefs	β = .064, p = .261	β = .177, p = .009 Statistically Significant
Normative Beliefs	β = .201, p = .001 Statistically Significant	β = .095, p = .178
Control Beliefs	β = .668, p < .001 Statistically Significant	β = .600, p < .001 Statistically Significant

Discussion and Implications

School leadership continues to be a growing research topic to improve student achievement and overall school success. With this research, there was a focus on assistant principals as part of the school leadership team to assist with instructional and transformational leadership in schools. Research has also focused on school leadership beliefs and the actions that are performed. The role of assistant principal is gradually moving to one of sharing responsibility for instructional and transformational leadership. This study contained implications that will inform current school leaders including assistant principals, principals, and central office administration. It will also assist those who are doing further research on assistant principal leadership in the school setting. The following paragraphs discuss and explain several implications of this research study.

The first implication to this study was that it added to the knowledge about assistant principal's beliefs and actions within the school. "There is a real need for inspired, research-

based information telling the world about the ways in which assistant principals are essential to the ongoing work of schooling" (Marshall & Hooley, 2006, p. 130). Specifically, are Alabama assistant principal espoused beliefs matching the actions they perform in the school? The research study can also help district administrators and school level principals in defining what assistant principals should be doing in their role within the school community. According to Marshall and Hooley (2006), "By taking a look at what assistant principals do, we can begin to identify the special nature, the functions served, and the inherent dilemmas in their job" (p. 4). As seen in this research study, assistant principals endorse behavioral, normative, and control beliefs. Defining the role of assistant principal to match their beliefs should produce outcomes of an instructional and transformational leader of the school. In combination, this will cause less role ambiguity among assistant principals within the school.

A second implication of this research study is in the selection of assistant principals. The selection of assistant principals is a task that can be very difficult for all stakeholders involved in the hiring process. This research study can help define what attributes should be important for entry level administrators so they can be better prepared to be an instructional or transformational leader of the school. Using the ISLLC standards and Alabama Standards for Instructional Leaders it can assist those stakeholders involved in the hiring process with guidelines to follow when selecting future assistant principals. Actions defined in these standards serve as selection criteria when identifying and interviewing these potential school leaders. As this research study indicated, assistant principals endorsed all leadership beliefs as defined by Ajzen (2011). Hiring future school leaders that endorse behavioral, normative, and control beliefs will ensure that the assistant principal will be a more instructional and transformational leader. Also, reported in this research study was an alignment of normative and

89

control beliefs with instructional actions as well as behavioral and control beliefs with transformational actions. This alignment can help define criteria for the selection of assistant principals. According to Marshall and Hooley (2006), "Attempts at defining tasks and skills and formalizing the selection process are signals of progress toward eliminating reliance on word of mouth and the 'old boys' network and toward making selection closely tied to job functions" (p. 93).

A third implication of this research study is to assist principals in mentoring assistant principals. Mentoring of assistant principals has come to the forefront of developing future principals. This research study can assist principals in the development of their assistant principals and will also help them define their own role within the school community. Using the beliefs and actions framework from this research study, principals and other central office staff can develop professional development programs that enhance assistant principals' ability to transform beliefs into actions. The focus of a mentoring program should reflect what beliefs and actions are expected for future leaders to be an effective instructional and transformational leader of the school. Given the critical role of education in society, the roles of educational leaders must continually be redefined with the accompanying changes to the development and training of aspiring leaders (Read, 2012, p. 31). When principals know the beliefs and the daily actions of their assistant principals it will allow them to lighten the burden of traditional duties and focus on more relevant duties during the school day. This research study can be used to mentor assistant principals in transitioning from their current position to the principal position.

A fourth implication of this research study is that it can be used to guide post-secondary institutions in preparing assistant principals. "The role of the assistant principal is the most common career path followed to acquire the position of school principal, thus it requires a very

specific and focused level of preparation" (Shoho, Barnett, & Tooms, 2012, p. 36). Post-secondary institutions are constantly finding ways to improve their pre-service training for future school leaders. A program located at California State University-Fresno focuses on a two-tiered program that reflects the California licensure requirements. This two-tiered program involves Phase I which focuses on instructional leadership and Phase II that focuses on working as an assistant administrator while taking on transformational leadership courses (Hess & Kelly, 2005, p. 160). In phase I of this program, student's intern as master teachers to better understand the demands of teaching. In phase II they work as administrators and take transformational leadership courses that cover more traditional content for new administrators. Universities can use this more current research study to further examine the requirements and leadership courses that are being offered to design programs that address ways in which novice assistant principals can deal with the pressures of the daily routine of traditional assistant principals. Hess and Kelly (2005) reported that 96% of practicing principals state that they learned more from their colleagues in the field than from traditional graduate school programs, and that two thirds of principals polled believed that these programs were out of touch with the real needs of school leaders. The use of this research study can assist those traditional graduate programs that may be out of touch with developing programs that more effectively train assistant principals on their changing role.

A fifth implication of this research study is the benefit it will provide to current assistant principals. This research study clearly shows that assistant principals in Alabama endorse beliefs about what they should be doing in their current role. The idea is to use this research to better define what actions they should be taking to enable these beliefs to become actions within the school setting. According to Ajzen (2011), "Once an intention to perform a behavior has been

91

formed, individuals enter the implementation phase, which involves translating the intention into action" (p. 90). Assistant principals can dig deeper into their role and assist with changing it to match their beliefs. This research is also beneficial for acting assistant principals because it will allow them to refocus their roles to become true instructional or transformational leaders of the school. When assistant principals transform their beliefs into actions they can become a more effective school leader that is both instructional and transformational.

Research indicated that normative and control beliefs statistically and significantly predicted instructional actions of assistant principals in Alabama. When assistant principals reflect on their normative and control beliefs then they can be more effective as an instructional leader of the school. Reflection about assistant principals normative and control beliefs can assist those assistant principals in redefining what beliefs they should have to better produce an instructional leader of the school. Research also indicated that behavioral and control beliefs statistically and significantly predicted transformational actions of assistant principals in Alabama. The same can be said about their reflection on these beliefs to assist them in becoming a more effective transformational leader of the school. Combining this research can redefine the assistant principals' role so they will be a more effective instructional and transformational leader of the school.

The final implication for this research study is how assistant principals perform their roles as an instructional or transformational leader of the school. According to Bowers, Marks, and Printy (2009), "Both the instructional model and the transformational model are consistent with the notion that leadership emerges from all levels of the school organization." (p. 510) Instructional leadership focuses on teaching and learning while transformational leadership focuses on the development of the school community. According to Hallinger (2003), "Research

has determined that effective leadership requires both transactional and transformational elements" (p. 338). Together these two leadership models are known as integrated leadership. According to Marks and Printy (2003), "the integrated view of leadership we propose highlights the synergistic power of leadership shared by individuals throughout the school organization" (p. 393). This research study is beneficial for assistant principals in their interaction with others around the school. The way in which they treat others and lead instruction will allow them to be viewed as instructional and/or transformational leaders. As seen in Hallinger (2011), successful school leadership integrates instructional, transformational and strategic dimensions (p. 7). This research study will allow assistant principals to examine what they believe and the instructional and/or transformational actions they are performing in the school. Figure 4 explains the relationship that makes a successful school leader. Whether the label instructional or transformational is attached, leadership in schools can be understood as a shared property (Bowers, Marks, & Printy, 2009, p. 511).

School Leader

Instructional

Share   Teams

Transformational

Teachers
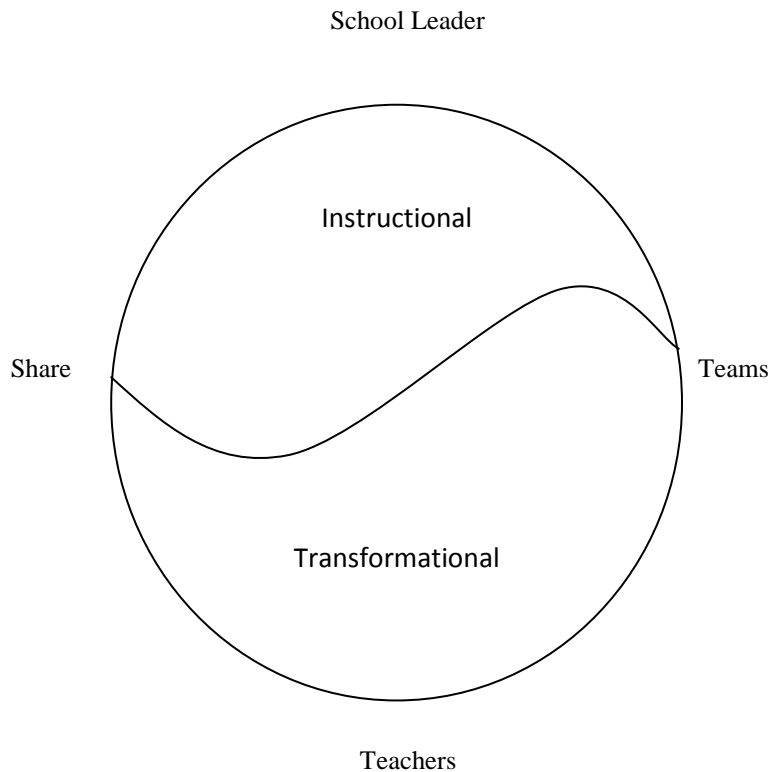
Figure 6. Successful School Leadership (Hallinger, 2011, p. 4)

Some of the most current research from Hallinger (2011) states that when school leaders

build capacity and share leadership there can be a model of integrated leadership within the

school community. The focus on learning and building capacity within the organization will

allow principals and assistant principals the guidelines for being effective school leaders. The

dimensions of instructional and transformational leadership that are commonly seen in the

research are building a school vision and setting goals. Those dimensions overlap for

instructional and transformational leadership and remain primary goals for developing effective

leadership within the school. Although instructional leadership remains a primary focus of

school leadership, some aspects of transformational leadership are needed to develop a strong

school leadership model where student achievement is the primary goal. Focusing on the

behavioral, normative, and control beliefs will allow assistant principals to meet those dimensions in the actions they perform to become effective instructional and transformational leaders.

Recommendations for Future Research

There is very little research on assistant principals and their leadership role within the school community. Also, very little research has been done on the type of leadership that assistant principals should be engaged in within the school. This research study expands the investigation into assistant principals and the role they must play in becoming more effective leaders. In order to expand assistant principal research there are other areas that could be addressed in future research. The following includes a list of areas for future research.

Further research needs to be conducted on assistant principals using case studies about how their role can be improved. Case studies provide a deeper understanding of what current assistant principals encounter in the school setting. Case studies can also expand on what survey data shows and give a voice to assistant principals currently in the field of administration. This will provide greater insight in how the assistant principal role can be redefined to effectively meet the needs of the school community. One example of a case study would be one-on-one interviews with participants about the duties they actually perform within the school. They could also be grouped by district to answer questions about their beliefs as compared to the actions they perform. This would allow district leaders a better understanding of the needs and problems current assistant principals face while leading the school. Too often district leaders are disconnected to the leadership of the school, especially assistant principals. Case studies would also allow more detailed responses of the types of barriers assistant principals encounter when

performing duties within the school. This would assist in defining their role to more effectively meet the needs of the school.

Further research also needs to be done on how to implement instructional and transformational practices into the assistant principal role. This research can focus on meaningful professional development that concentrates on the assistant principal as instructional and transformational leader of the school. Professional development with assistant principals that focuses on instructional leadership would allow them to understand the true instructional role within the school. This focus would be on curriculum and teaching. Professional development with assistant principals that focuses on transformational leadership would allow them to understand how building relationships and empowering followers can enhance teaching and learning. This combined professional development would link instructional and transformational leadership to define the role of assistant principals within the school. This will help further define the specific duties assistant principals need to effectively perform their changed roles. It will also provide principals and other district leaders a model of professional development to follow when planning meaning professional development for assistant principals.

Finally, further research needs to focus on pre-service training of school administrators and their role in leadership of the school. Pre-service training is a vital part of the initial development of future school leaders. With further research, colleges and universities can focus the curriculum on meeting the needs in K–12 education. They can begin by educating future school leaders about how beliefs should match actions. By doing this they can define specific actions that will have the most impact on assistant principal leadership within the school. Also post-secondary institutions can provide ways in which future school leaders can eliminate barriers to accomplish this task. Barriers that are addressed in this research can hinder progress

of assistant principals when enacting their desired role. Addressing these barriers during pre-service training will give future school leaders the tools necessary to eliminate potential problems when they enter the field of administration. Another area of concentration would be focusing on the type of beliefs that produce instructional and/or transformational leadership in the school. Using this research will be a starting point when looking at what beliefs significantly affect the style of leadership assistant principal's use while leading the school. This research can change the landscape of how post-secondary institutions educate future school leaders.

These are a few areas where future research can focus to enhance this research study. More research will help better define the role of assistant principals and the type(s) of leadership they can use to be effective school leaders in 21st century schools. The ultimate goal is to align beliefs with instructional and transformational actions to form an integrated leadership model for all assistant principals to follow.

Conclusion

Assistant principals are an underrepresented actor in the history of empirical research studies. Specifically, their style of leadership and the role they play in the leadership of the school. This research study focused on assistant principals espoused beliefs and actions in their current role within the school. The Theory of Planned Behavior, ISLLC Standards, The Alabama Standards for Instructional Leaders, and current research are all factors in developing an assistant principal who has characteristics of an instructional or transformational leader of the school. The concepts of the Theory of Planned Behavior clearly have an impact on the actions that assistant principals perform in their current role.

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Appendix 1

Examining Educational Leaders' Espoused Beliefs and Actions Survey

Examining Educational Leaders' Espoused Beliefs and Actions

1. What is your current position in the school?

○ Principal (1)
○ Assistant Principal (2)

2. What is your gender?

○ Male (1)
○ Female (2)

3. What is your ethnicity? Choose the best one that describes you.

○ African American (1)
○ Asian American (2)
○ European American/Caucasian (3)
○ Hispanic/Latino (4)
○ Native American (5)
○ Native Hawaiian/Other South Pacific Islander (6)
○ Other (7)

4. How many years of experience do you have as leader of a school?

○ 1 - 5 years (1)
○ 6 - 10 years (2)
○ 11 - 15 years (3)
○ 16 - 20 years (4)
○ 20+ years (5)

5. What is your age?

- ○ Under 30 (1)
- ○ 30-39 (2)
- ○ 40-49 (3)
- ○ 50-59 (4)
- ○ 60-69 (5)
- ○ 70+ (6)

6. What is the highest degree you have received?

- ○ Bachelors Degree (1)
- ○ Masters Degree (2)
- ○ Educational Specialist/ED.S. Degree (3)
- ○ Ph.D/Ed.D (4)

7. How do you describe your current school?

- ○ Rural (1)
- ○ Urban (2)
- ○ Suburban (3)

8. As an educational leader, I think I should engage the school community in a shared vision for the purpose of continuous school improvement.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

9. As an educational leader, I think I should align the curriculum, instruction, and assessment to ensure student achievement.

- ◯ Very Unlikely (1)
- ◯ Unlikely (2)
- ◯ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ◯ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ◯ Likely (5)
- ◯ Very Likely (6)

10. As an educational leader, I think I should develop professional learning communities so faculty and staff can accomplish goals for the school and system.

- ◯ Very Unlikely (1)
- ◯ Unlikely (2)
- ◯ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ◯ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ◯ Likely (5)
- ◯ Very Likely (6)

11. As an educational leader, I think I should actively participate in political and policy-making decisions that affect a diverse school community.

- ◯ Very Unlikely (1)
- ◯ Unlikely (2)
- ◯ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ◯ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ◯ Likely (5)
- ◯ Very Likely (6)

12. As an educational leader, I think I should create and sustain family-school-community relations.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

13. As an educational leader, I think I should ensure the implementation, evaluation, and integration of current technologies within the school community.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

14. As an educational leader, I think I should promote a safe and effective learning environment.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

15. As an educational leader, I think I should follow a personal and professional code of ethics.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

16. As an educational leader, I am expected to improve teaching and learning within my school.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

17. As an educational leader, I am expected to set expectations for those within the realm of my leadership.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

18. As an educational leader, I am expected to track the progress and performance of my students.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

19. As an educational leader, I am expected to provide teachers with the necessary support needed to be successful.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

20. As an educational leader, I am expected to promote the learning of all students regardless of race and socioeconomic background.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

21. As an educational leader, I am expected to provide teachers with the training necessary in order to be effective.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

22. As an educational leader, I am expected to act as a policy enforcer.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

23. As an educational leader, I receive support from district level administrators.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

24. As an educational leader, I have an impact on student achievement.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

25. As an educational leader, I am supported in my efforts by the teachers within the school.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

26. As an educational leader, I have control over the decision-making process utilizing data to inform instruction.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

27. As an educational leader, I improve instruction by providing an organized mentoring program.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

28. As an educational leader, I provide professional development that is relevant to all faculty.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

29. As an educational leader, I provide a professional learning atmosphere.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

30. As an educational leader, I meet with the building leadership team to align goals and objectives with the school vision.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

31. As an educational leader, I foster a culture of continuous improvement among all members of the school organization.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

32. As an educational leader, I make instructional time a priority when managing daily activities.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

33. As an educational leader, I utilize a school leadership team when making both short term and long term decisions regarding curriculum and instruction.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

34. As an educational leader, I build teacher capacity for teaching and learning.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

35. As an educational leader, I elevate teacher goals to enhance their commitment to organizational growth.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

36. As an educational leader, I am able to monitor student achievement through data analysis.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

37. As an educational leader, I am confident in my knowledge of the school's curriculum as evident through my ability to coach teachers on instructional practices.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

38. As an educational leader, I allow staff to work collaboratively to develop a community of learners.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

39. As an educational leader, I establish mentoring programs for novice and veteran staff members.

○ Very Unlikely (1)
○ Unlikely (2)
○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
○ Somewhat Likely (4)
○ Likely (5)
○ Very Likely (6)

40. As an educational leader, I work individually with teachers and staff to determine areas of needed improvement.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

41. As an educational leader, I designate time to analyze data and time to enforce the use of data to inform instruction.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

42. As an educational leader, I work with the school community to plan, implement, and assess policies that promote diversity.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

43. As an educational leader, I build teams of teachers that are diverse both demographically and cognitively.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

44. As an educational leader, I am aware of the diverse needs of our students and the instructional programs/practices that need to be in place to meet their needs.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

45. As an educational leader, I disseminate school information to all parents in a language in which they can read and understand.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

46. As an educational leader, I communicate the vision and mission to community stakeholders.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

47. As an educational leader, I promote shared decision-making that impacts student achievement.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

48. As an educational leader, I involve community stakeholders in the process of the selection of curricular programs used at the school.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

49. As an educational leader, I promote strong relationships between the home and school through involving parents in decisions regarding curriculum and instructional related issues.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

50. As an educational leader, I provide opportunities for accessing the use of technology throughout the school.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

51. As an educational leader, I encourage the use of technology to aid in the development of professional learning communities throughout the school.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

52. As an educational leader, I model the use of technology within the school.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

53. As an educational leader, I offer professional development to improve technology integration in the classroom.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

54. As an educational leader, I promote problem solving within the school organization to maintain a safe and secure academic environment.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

55. As an educational leader, I empower others to manage the learning organization.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

56. As an educational leader, I use available fiscal resources to meet the curricular and instructional needs.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

57. As an educational leader, I solicit input from faculty and staff when planning the curricular and instructional budgets for the school.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

58. As an educational leader, I make decisions about the school community using moral and ethical standards.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

59. As an educational leader, I follow federal, state, and local laws that apply to the school community.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

60. As an educational leader, I encourage faculty and staff to make both moral and ethical decisions are related to curriculum and instruction.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

61. As an educational leader, I encourage teachers to use differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students.

- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Unlikely (2)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Likely (5)
- ○ Very Likely (6)

Appendix 2

Auburn University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval

AUBURN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD for RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS
RESEARCH PROTOCOL REVIEW FORM

For Information or help contact **THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE**, 115 Ramsay Hall, Auburn University
Phone: 334-844-5966   e-mail: hsubjec@auburn.edu   Web Address: http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/ohs/

Revised 03.26.11 — DO NOT STAPLE, CLIP TOGETHER ONLY.   [Save a Copy]

1. **PROPOSED START DATE of STUDY:** Aug 1, 2011

PROPOSED REVIEW CATEGORY (Check one):   FULL BOARD   ✓ EXPEDITED   EXEMPT

2. **PROJECT TITLE:** Examining Principals' and Assistant Principals' Espoused Beliefs and Actions

3. Lakesha Brackins/Robert Slater   Graduate Students   EFLT   334-844-1415   llb0011@auburn.edu
   PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR   **TITLE**   **DEPT**   **PHONE**   **AU E-MAIL**

   332 Jasmine Circle, Enterprise, AL 36330   334-897-2839   rds0008@auburn.edu
   MAILING ADDRESS   **FAX**   **ALTERNATE E-MAIL**

4. **SOURCE OF FUNDING SUPPORT:**   ✓ Not Applicable   Internal   External Agency:_____   Pending   Received

5. **LIST ANY CONTRACTORS, SUB-CONTRACTORS, OTHER ENTITIES OR IRBs ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROJECT:**
   NA

6. **GENERAL RESEARCH PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS**

6A. Mandatory CITI Training

Names of key personnel who have completed CITI:
Lakesha Brackins ✓
Robert Slater ✓

CITI group completed for this study:
✓ Social/Behavioral   Biomedical

PLEASE ATTACH TO HARD COPY ALL CITI CERTIFICATES FOR EACH KEY PERSONNEL

6B. Research Methodology

Please check all descriptors that best apply to the research methodology

Data Source(s):   ✓ New Data   Existing Data

Will recorded data directly or indirectly identify participants?
        Yes   ✓ No
Data collection will involve the use of:
__ Educational Tests (cognitive diagnostic, aptitude, etc.)
__ Interview / Observation
__ Physical / Physiological Measures or Specimens (see Section
✓ Surveys / Questionnaires
__ Internet / Electronic
__ Audio / Video / Photos
__ Private records or files

6C. Participant Information

Please check all descriptors that apply to the participant population.
✓ Males   ✓ Females   AU students
Vulnerable Populations
    Pregnant Women/Fetuses   __ Prisoners
    Children and/or Adolescents (under age 19 in AL)
Persons with:
    Economic Disadvantages   Physical Disabilities
    Educational Disadvantages   Intellectual Disabilities
Do you plan to compensate your participants? __ Yes __ No

6D. Risks to Participants

Please identify all risks that participants might encounter in this research.
✓ Breach of Confidentiality*   Coercion
__ Deception   Physical
__ Psychological   Social
__ None   Other:

RECEIVED
IIII 1 8 2011

_____
_____

*Note that if the investigator is using or accessing confidential or identifiable data, breach of confidentiality is always a risk.

Do you need IBC Approval for this study? ✓ No   Yes - BUA #_____   Expiration date _____

FOR OHSR OFFICE USE ONLY

DATE RECEIVED IN OHSR: ~~original~~ 7-18-11 by 6B   PROTOCOL # 11-238 EX 1108
DATE OF IRB REVIEW: 8/24/11 by KJE   APPROVAL CATEGORY: 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2)
DATE OF IRB APPROVAL: _____ by _____   INTERVAL FOR CONTINUING REVIEW: 1 year
COMMENTS: revisions 8/26/11; OK - SRA 8/30/11   APR by KJE on 8/24/11

128

7. PROJECT ASSURANCES

PROJECT TITLE: Examining Principals' and Assistant Principals' Espoused Beliefs and Actions

A. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR'S ASSSURANCES

1. I certify that all information provided in this application is complete and correct.
2. I understand that, as Principal Investigator, I have ultimate responsibility for the conduct of this study, the ethical performance this project, the protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects, and strict adherence to any stipulations imposed by the Auburn University IRB.
3. I certify that all individuals involved with the conduct of this project are qualified to carry out their specified roles and responsibilities and are in compliance with Auburn University policies regarding the collection and analysis of the research data.
4. I agree to comply with all Auburn policies and procedures, as well as with all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding the protection of human subjects, including, but not limited to the following:
   a. Conducting the project by qualified personnel according to the approved protocol
   b. Implementing no changes in the approved protocol or consent form without prior approval from the Office of Human Subjects Research
   c. Obtaining the legally effective informed consent from each participant or their legally responsible representative prior to their participation in this project using only the currently approved, stamped consent form
   d. Promptly reporting significant adverse events and/or effects to the Office of Human Subjects Research in writing within 5 working days of the occurrence.
5. If I will be unavailable to direct this research personally, I will arrange for a co-investigator to assume direct responsibility in my absence. This person has been named as co-investigator in this application, or I will advise OHSR, by letter, in advance of such arrangements.
6. I agree to conduct this study only during the period approved by the Auburn University IRB.
7. I will prepare and submit a renewal request and supply all supporting documents to the Office of Human Subjects Research before the approval period has expired if it is necessary to continue the research project beyond the time period approved by the Auburn University IRB.
8. I will prepare and submit a final report upon completion of this research project.

My signature indicates that I have read, understand and agree to conduct this research project in accordance with the assurances listed above.

Lakesha Brackins/Robert Slater

Printed name of Principal Investigator

Principal Investigator's Signature 07/15/11
(SIGN IN BLUE INK ONLY) Date

B. FACULTY ADVISOR/SPONSOR'S ASSURANCES

1. By my signature as faculty advisor/sponsor on this research application, I certify that the student or guest investigator is knowledgeable about the regulations and policies governing research with human subjects and has sufficient training and experience to conduct this particular study in accord with the approved protocol.
2. I certify that the project will be performed by qualified personnel according to the approved protocol using conventional or experimental methodology.
3. I agree to meet with the investigator on a regular basis to monitor study progress.
4. Should problems arise during the course of the study, I agree to be available, personally, to supervise the investigator in solving them.
5. I assure that the investigator will promptly report significant adverse events and/or effects to the OHSR in writing within 5 working days of the occurrence.
6. If I will be unavailable, I will arrange for an alternate faculty sponsor to assume responsibility during my absence, and I will advise the OHSR by letter of such arrangements. If the investigator is unable to fulfill requirements for submission of renewals, modifications or the final report, I will assume that responsibility.
7. I have read the protocol submitted for this project for content, clarity, and methodology

Dr. Ellen Reames

Printed name of Faculty Advisor / Sponsor

Signature (SIGN IN BLUE INK ONLY) 7/16/11
Date

C. DEPARTMENT HEAD'S ASSSURANCE

By my signature as department head, I certify that I will cooperate with the administration in the application and enforcement of all Auburn University policies and procedures, as well as all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding the protection and ethical treatment of human participants by researchers in my department.

SHERIDA DOWNER

Printed name of Department Head

SHERIDA DOWNER
Signature (SIGN IN BLUE INK ONLY) 7/16/2011
Date

2

8. **PROJECT OVERVIEW:** Prepare an abstract that includes:
(400 word maximum, in language understandable to someone who is not familiar with your area of study):

    I.) **A summary of relevant research findings leading to this research proposal:**
        (Cite sources; include a "Reference List" as Appendix A.)
    II.) **A brief description of the methodology,**
    III.) **Expected and/or possible outcomes, and,**
    IV.) **A statement regarding the potential significance of this research project.**

I. One of the core areas of study for decades, based on Allport (1935) which "is probably the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary American social society (p.798), has been the study of attitudes. With the numerous functions that attitudes serve, research by Maio & Olson (2000), argues that the myriad of functions that attitudes serve continue to be a fast growing area of research and concluded that attitudes serve to guide people's behavior. Historically, a person's attitude has been assumed to be a direct predictor of the individual's behavior. This particular study will examine how school leaders actions / behaviors are influenced by their attitudes/beliefs. School leaders of tomorrow must meet the demands of educational reform and accountability while meeting the needs of a diverse and drastically changing student population. Therefore, it is important to review the role of the leaders who will be leading our nation's schools through reform efforts and determine if the beliefs and actions of our current and future school leaders are aligned with the standard expectations set forth by the State of Alabama.

II. The purpose of this study is to explore school leaders' beliefs and actions (instructional and transformational) and determine if their is an alignment between school leaders' espoused beliefs and their actions as school leaders. The theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) and the theory of reasoned actions (Fishbein, 1975) will provide the theoretical underpinning for the study as the exploratory study seeks to understand the attitudes, normative beliefs, and control beliefs of school leaders in relation to their actions.

III. If we know more about how actions are influenced by beliefs, we may develop a stronger understanding of what actions constitute effective school leadership in order to better prepare our school leaders. Through this study, we will being to examine these beliefs and actions as we begin to analyze what actions are required of effective school leaders.

IV. "If the South and the Nation fail to come to terms with the educational needs of the new majority of diverse public schools' students described in this report, the impact on the region's and nation's economy, global competitiveness, quality of life, and democratic institutions, will be catastrophic" (SEF Research Report - A New Diverse Majority, 2010). Therefore, it is imperative to have an effective school leader in all of our schools who's beliefs and actions have a direct effect on teacher performance which leads to an effect on the ultimate goal of student achievement.

(430 words)

9. **PURPOSE.**
    a. **Clearly state all of the objectives, goals, or aims of this project.**

The purpose of this study is to explore school leaders' beliefs and actions (instructional and transformational) and determine if there is an alignment between school leader's espoused beliefs and their actions as school leaders.

    b. **How will the results of this project be used? (e.g., Presentation? Publication? Thesis? Dissertation?)**

The results of this project will be used for academic purposes in the completion of dissertation requirements for Auburn University. The researchers also intend to use the findings of the study for both conference presentations and possible publications as well as for professional development opportunities for school leaders.

3

10a. KEY PERSONNEL. Describe responsibilities. Include information on research training or certifications related to this project. CITI is required. Be as specific as possible. (Attach extra page if needed.) *All non AU-affiliated key personnel must attach CITI certificates of completion.*

Principle Investigator _____ Lakesha Brackins _____ Title: Graduate Student _____ E-mail address _____ llbrackins@auburn.edu
Dept / Affiliation: EFLT

Roles / Responsibilities:
The purpose of this individual will be to serve as one of the two lead researchers in gather data and reviewing the data in order to get the desired outcome of the study. Data will be collected from an online survey using the survey engine Qualtrics. The survey participants will include both principals and assistant principals throughout the state of Alabama. Citi training has been completed in order to complete the requested research.

Individual: _____ Robert Slater _____ Title: Graduate Student _____ E-mail address _____ rds0008@auburn.edu
Dept / Affiliation: EFLT

Roles / Responsibilities:
The purpose of this individual will be to serve as one of the two lead researchers in gather data and reviewing the data in order to get the desired outcome of the study. Data will be collected from an online survey using the survey engine Qualtrics. The survey participants will include both principals and assistant principals throughout the state of Alabama. Citi training has been completed in order to complete the requested research.

Individual: _____ Dr. Ellen Reames _____ Title: Faculty Advisor _____ E-mail address _____ reamesh@auburn.edu
Dept / Affiliation: EFLT

Roles / Responsibilities:
The faculty advisor will oversee the project and assist in data collection and interpretation.

Individual: _____ Title: _____ E-mail address _____
Dept / Affiliation: _____

Roles / Responsibilities:

Individual: _____ Title: _____ E-mail address _____
Dept / Affiliation: _____

Roles / Responsibilities:

Individual: _____ Title: _____ E-mail address _____
Dept / Affiliation: _____

Roles / Responsibilities:

11. LOCATION OF RESEARCH. List all locations where data collection will take place. (School systems, organizations, businesses, buildings and room numbers, servers for web surveys, etc.) Be as specific as possible. Attach permission letters in Appendix E. *(See sample letters at http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/ohs/sample.htm)*

This study will be conducted online through on online/electronic survey. All principals and assistant principals from the 132 school systems in Alabama will be invited to participate in the study. Therefore, all data collection will take place electronically for participants. Participants will be able to participate wherever they have internet access. The survey will be collected via a third party system, Qualtrics, which will not collect IP addresses.

4

12. PARTICIPANTS.

a. Describe the participant population you have chosen for this project.

___ Check here if there is existing data; describe the population from whom data was collected & include the # of data files.

The participant population for this study will be the entire population of public school principals and assistant principals throughout the state of Alabama.

b. Describe why is this participant population is appropriate for inclusion in this research project. (Include criteria for selection.)

The purpose of this study is to explore school leaders' beliefs and actions and determine if there is an alignment between school leaders' espoused beliefs and their actions as school leaders. The participant population (principals and assistant principals in Alabama) will allow the perspective necessary to explore the indicated concepts.

c. Describe, step-by-step, all procedures you will use to recruit participants. *Include in Appendix B a copy of all e-mails, flyers, advertisements, recruiting scripts, invitations, etc., that will be used to invite people to participate. [See sample documents at http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/ohs/sample.htm.]*

Script

In order to recruit participants, we will be using the State Department of Alabama database to collect web addresses for each principal and assistant principal throughout the state of Alabama. Each principal and assistant principal will be contacted via telephone and asked to participate in the study. Upon agreement to participate in the study, each participant will be emailed the letter of consent as well as a link to the online survey.

What is the minimum number of participants you need to validate the study? 1000 _____

Is there a limit on the number of participants you will recruit? ☐ No ☑ Yes – the number is ___2500___

Is there a limit on the number of participants you will include in the study? ☐ No ☑ Yes – the number is ___1000___

d. Describe the type, amount and method of compensation and/or incentives for participants. (If no compensation will be given, check here ✓.)

Select the type of compensation: ___ Monetary ___ Incentives

  ___ Raffle or Drawing incentive (Include the chances of winning.)
  ___ Extra Credit (State the value)
  ___ Other

Description:

No compensation will be provided to participants.

5

13. PROJECT DESIGN & METHODS.

a. Describe, step-by-step, all procedures and methods that will be used to consent participants.
(⌐ Check here if this is "not applicable"; you are using existing data.)

1. The electronic survey will have an information letter as the first page. (See appendix B Electronic Information Letter for Adult Participants).
2. After consent is given, the participants will then be sent a link to the online survey which they will be asked to complete.

b. Describe the procedures you will use in order to address your purpose. Provide a step-by-step description of how you will carry out this research project. Include specific information about the participants' time and effort commitment. (NOTE: Use language that would be understandable to someone who is not familiar with your area of study. Without a complete description of all procedures, the Auburn University IRB will not be able to review this protocol. If additional space is needed for this section, save the information as a .PDF file and insert after page 5 of this form.)

To address the purpose of this research project, a 42 item survey will be submitted to those principals and assistant principals in Alabama who consent to participate. The survey will take approximately thirty minutes to complete and will be taken using Qualtrics, an online survey instrument. Survey data compiled by the online instrument will be analyzed and coded using statistical software (SPSS).

6

13c. List all data collection instruments used in this project, in the order they appear in Appendix C.
(e.g., surveys and questionnaires in the format that will be presented to participants, educational tests, data collection sheets, interview questions, audio/video taping methods etc.)

Group assignments will not be used in this study. The actual survey which will be used for the collection of data is enclosed in Appendix C.

d. Data analysis: Explain how the data will be analyzed.

The quantitative data will be analyzed using statistical software (SPSS) to determine frequencies and percents; means and standard deviations, and a simple regression to determine beta weights for each variable. The will be coded for relevance to the research questions.

14. RISKS & DISCOMFORTS: List and describe all of the risks that participants might encounter in this research. _If you are using deception in this study, please justify the use of deception and be sure to attach a copy of the debriefing form you plan to use in Appendix D._ (Examples of possible risks are in section #6D on page 1.)

The study will engage willing participates only and will not use any form of deception. The topic of the study is not a sensitive topic and should elicit no discomfort in the participants. However, the pressure of time for completion may be an issue for school administrators considering their daily demands which will be rectified by simply providing a significant amount of time for the participant to complete the online survey.

7

15. **PRECAUTIONS.** Identify and describe all precautions you have taken to eliminate or reduce risks as listed in #14. If the participants can be classified as a "vulnerable" population, please describe additional safeguards that you will use to assure the ethical treatment of these individuals. *Provide a copy of any emergency plans/procedures and medical referral lists in Appendix D.*

No identifiable data will be collected during this research project.

If using the Internet to collect data, what confidentiality or security precautions are in place to protect (or not collect) identifiable data? Include protections used during both the collection and transfer of data.
(These are likely listed on the server's website.)

The participants will not be asked to provide any identifiable information and no questions are included in the survey which could be used to identify the participants through their responses.

16. **BENEFITS.**
   a. List all realistic direct benefits participants can expect by participating in this specific study.
       (Do not include "compensation" listed in #12d.)   Check here if there are no direct benefits to participants.

       No direct benefit to the participant(s).

   b. List all realistic benefits for the general population that may be generated from this study.

       The benefits that the general population will gain from this study will be data regarding how principals and assistant principals can become more effective leaders in their school based on their espoused beliefs and actions. The study will also develop a framework for further studies and publications on the topic of school leaders' beliefs and actions.

8

135

17. PROTECTION OF DATA.

a. Will data be collected as anonymous? ☑ Yes ☐ No *If "YES", skip to part "g".*
("Anonymous" means that you will <u>not</u> collect any identifiable data.)

b. Will data be collected as confidential? ☐ Yes ☑ No
("Confidential" means that you <u>will</u> collect and protect identifiable data.)

c. If data are collected as confidential, will the participants' data be coded or linked to identifying information?
■ Yes (If so, describe how linked.) No ■
Data will not be linked with any identifying information.

d. Justify your need to code participants' data or link the data with identifying information.

NA

e. Where will code lists be stored? (Building, room number?)

NA

f. Will data collected as "confidential" be recorded and analyzed as "anonymous"? ☑ Yes ☐ No
(If you will maintain identifiable data, protections should have been described in #15.)

g. Describe how and where the data will be stored (e.g., hard copy, audio cassette, electronic data, etc.), and how the location where data is stored will be secured in your absence. For electronic data, describe security. If applicable, state specifically where any IRB-approved and participant-signed consent documents will be kept on campus for 3 years after the study ends.

The data collected will be stored in the online program Qualtrics and a hard copy of the results will be stored on the researchers' personal computers. The online program used will be Qualtrics and security will not be an issue since no data will be identifiable.

h. Who will have access to participants' data?
(*The faculty advisor should have full access and be able to produce the data in the case of a federal or institutional audit.*)

There will be restricted access to the collected data and access will only be allowed to the researchers and their dissertation committee which will consist of Auburn University faculty members.

i. When is the latest date that <u>confidential</u> data will be retained? (Check here if only anonymous data will be retained.)

Indefinitely

j. How will the <u>confidential</u> data be destroyed? (*NOTE: Data recorded and analyzed as "anonymous" may be retained indefinitely.*)
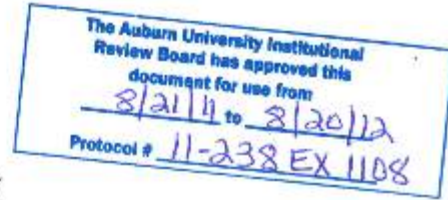
No special destruction requirements are necessary as data will be recorded and analyzed anonymously.

9

Appendix 3

Auburn University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Informed Consent Letter

AUBURN UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Technology (EFLT)
College of Education • Auburn University, Alabama
www.auburn.edu/eflt
(NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS AN IRB APPROVAL STAMP WITH CURRENT DATES HAS
BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)

INFORMATION LETTER
for a Research Study entitled
"Examining Principals' and Assistant Principals' Espoused Beliefs and
Actions"

To Whom It May Concern:

You are invited to participate in a research study to examine your beliefs and
practices about leadership at your school. The study is being conducted by
Lakesha Brackins and Robert Slater, Graduate Students under the direction of
Dr. Ellen Reames, Associate Professor in the Auburn University Department of
Education, Foundation, Leadership, and Technology. You were selected as a
possible participant because you are a Principal/Assistant Principal and are age
19 or older.

If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to fill out a
survey online. Your total time commitment will be approximately thirty
minutes.

If you change your mind about participating, you can withdraw at any time
during the study. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to
withdraw, your data can be withdrawn as long as it is identifiable. Your
decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not
jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University or the Department of
Education, Foundation, Leadership, and Technology.

Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous.
Information obtained through your participation may be used to fulfill
educational requirements, published in a professional journal, or presented at
professional meetings.

If you have questions about this study, please contact Lakesha Brackins at
llb0011@auburn.edu , Robert Slater at rds0008@auburn.edu , or Dr. Ellen Reames
at reamseh@auburn.edu .

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may
contact the Auburn University Office of Human Subjects Research or the

138

Institutional Review Board by phone (334)-844-5966 or e-mail at
hsubjec@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE, THE DATA YOU PROVIDE WILL SERVE AS YOUR AGREEMENT TO DO SO. THIS LETTER IS YOURS TO KEEP.

_____   _____
Investigator   Date

_____   _____
Co-Investigator   Date

The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document from August 21, 2011 to August 20, 2012. *Protocol # 11-238*

The Auburn University Institutional
Review Board has approved this
document for use from
8/21/11 to 8/20/12
11-238 EX 1108