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THE INFLUENCE OF COLLECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP ON TEACHER EFFICACY

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in the College of Education at the University of Kentucky

By
Kyle Andrew Lee

Lexington, Kentucky

Director: Dr. Tricia Browne-Ferrigno, Professor, Educational Leadership Studies

Lexington, Kentucky

2015

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

THE INFLUENCE OF COLLECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP ON TEACHER EFFICACY

In understanding leadership to be the single most important factor in shaping a school's performance, and second highest factor influencing student achievement, it is a necessity for investigations to focus on what successful leaders do to have excelling schools. Research has alluded to the understanding that the principal can no longer serve as the sole instructional leader of a school. This need for collaboration within the organization places a weight on principals to incorporate others within the school decision-making process.

This study examined how collective instructional leadership is currently influencing teacher efficacy in high performing central Kentucky elementary schools. Data were collected through individual principal interviews and focus-group interviews to gain perspectives about how collective instructional leadership is currently influencing teacher efficacy, individuals involved in collective instructional leadership, and actions leaders engage in to promote individual and collective teacher efficacy.

The findings of this study identified themes to support a hypothesis around how collective instructional leadership is influencing teacher efficacy. Through the finding of this study a working model of collective instructional leadership was developed. Findings indicate the four working dimensions within the collective instructional leadership model will help raise both individual and collective teacher efficacy within schools.

KEYWORDS: Teacher Efficacy, Collective Efficacy, Collective Leadership, Instructional Leadership, Collective Instructional Leadership

Kyle A. Lee

Student's Signature

December 14, 2015

Date

THE INFLUENCE OF COLLECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP ON TEACHER EFFICACY

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DEDICATION PAGE

To my mother, who has been my greatest teacher.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The current shift on schools throughout the nation has placed a focus on student achievement and helping children become college and career ready, thus altering the role of the principal from organizational manager to instructional leader (Honig, Copland, Rainey, Lorton, & Newton, 2010). Research has revealed that leadership is the single most important influence in shaping a school's performance (Leithwood & Louis, 2012; Marzano, 2003; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005) and second highest influence on student achievement (Center for Education Leadership, 2012; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006; Stronge, Richard, & Catano, 2008). An investigation focused on what leaders do to create successful schools is thus warranted.

As researchers continually work to label and define leadership practices, the term *instructional leadership* has emerged as a concept used often in P-12 education (Marzano et al., 2005; Council of Chief School Officers [CCSSO], 2008). No universally accepted definition has been determined for instructional leadership: Instead performance functions in which a principal engages in to help improve learning and teaching are typically used to describe it (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987; Stronge, 1993; Stronge et al., 2008). With new expectations for P-12 education and new demands regularly being placed on school administrators to meet the ever-growing needs of local, state, and national policies, it is impossible for a principal to single-handedly perform all tasks needed in order to meet these expectations (Ellis, 2013).

Research has revealed that a principal can no longer serve as the sole instructional leader of a school. Instead instructional leadership needs to be a professional undertaking

assumed by everyone within the school, with some roles delegated to specific school or community members (Lambert, 2002). *Collective leadership* is the term used by researchers to define a form of instructional leadership facilitated by a principal and teachers, to promote a group effort to achieve organizational goals (Marks & Printy, 2003; Rubin & Feturell, 2009; Wahlstrom, Louis, Leithwood, & Anderson, 2001; Wepner & Hopkins, 2011).

The benefits of collective leadership, revealed through longitudinal research by Leithwood and Louis (2012), suggest that a strong influence exists between teachers and students who engage in learner centered practices with their students. Further, three areas within collective leadership were found to have the strongest effects on student achievement: (a) teachers' knowledge and skills, (b) teachers' motivation, and (c) teachers' work settings. Among these three effects, teacher motivation appeared to have the most significant impact on student achievement in relation to collective leadership practices. These findings lead to the question, how should school leaders grow in this area in order to meet the rigorous expectations placed upon them?

The intent of this study was to identify leadership practices that influence teachers' abilities to feel confident in successfully performing those tasks necessary to help students be successful. The study examined what schools do collectively to promote school success and how group decisions impacted the individual and overall efficacy levels of the organization.

Statement of the Problem

Although many definitions of instructional leadership exist, researchers need to continue exploring how principals work within their schools to assure high levels of

student learning. In order to label those strategies in which principals participate, definitions have been developed, such as collective leadership, to help develop universal understandings of leadership concepts. This study developed and utilized an operational definition of *collective instructional leadership* informed by the *4 Dimensions of Instructional Leadership* (Center for Educational Leadership, 2012) and the definition of collective leadership recommended by Leithwood and Louis (2012).

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to understand how collective instructional leadership influences teachers' judgments over their ability to create positive achievements throughout the organization. Thus, this study is significant because it (a) explored how collective instructional leadership influenced teacher efficacy, (b) revealed ways that collective decisions made by members and stakeholders of the school community influence teachers judgments about their abilities and, (c) identified functions within collective instructional leadership that can be used by principals, school leaders, district administrators, and instructors within pre-service university programs to create an understanding of how to facilitate actions promoting collective instructional leadership.

Research Questions

The overarching research question in this study was, *How does collective instructional leadership influence teacher efficacy in high performing elementary schools?* Three guiding questions helped answer the research question:

1. Who is included in collective instructional leadership within high-performing elementary schools?

2. How does collective instructional leadership function in high-performing elementary schools?
3. What actions do leaders take to facilitate and promote both individual teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy?

Methodology

Understanding how collective instructional leadership influences teacher efficacy required a two-phase qualitative design: (a) data collection through face-to-face interviews and focus-group sessions and (b) a four-stage data analysis process to identify themes and categories found in the data. An anticipated goal of this grounded-theory study (Charmaz, 2005; Glasser & Strauss, 1967) was to identify influences that may exist between collective instructional leadership and teacher efficacy.

Phase 1

During the first phase of the study, both individual interviews with principals and focus-group interviews with parents, teachers, and other administrators were conducted to gather perceptions about leadership practices that resulted in high student achievement. The goals of Phase 1were to:

- Gain an understanding about who is involved in collective instructional leadership at the elementary school level.
- Understand how collective instructional leadership functions in Central Kentucky elementary schools.
- Identify actions in which school leaders engage to promote and facilitate teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy.

- Determine which aspects of teacher efficacy are most impacted by collective instructional leadership.

Phase 2

During the second phase, the data collected through individual and focus-group interviews in Phase 1were analyzed to develop themes and categories about how collective instructional leadership influences teacher efficacy. Corbin and Strauss's (2008) four-stage coding method (i.e. open coding, axial coding, selective coding, development of a theory) was used to identify similarities and differences in responses within the interview and focus-group data. All interviews were transcribed professionally and analyzed using QSR International's NVivo for Mac software. Each transcription was scanned and coded line-by-line. The coded responses were grouped into sets based upon similarities to begin the narrowing down process. A theory was developed, in the form of a hypothesis, to help articulate an understanding of the influences between collective instructional leadership and teacher efficacy.

Potential Limitations

As a practicing principal within a public elementary school located in Central Kentucky, I realized when I designed this study that I had to be cautious of potential researcher bias; thus, I employed various strategies to avoid incorporating personal perspectives into any areas of the study. Some of these methods for holding me accountable included (a) selecting schools and districts where I have never worked and where I had no prior affiliation with principals or teachers at schools selected, (b) developing questions that would not reflect my personal point of view about the topic,

and (c) maintaining a research journal to document and log personal thoughts and experiences throughout the research process.

Summary

This dissertation is arranged in the traditional format. Chapter 2 provides an in-depth overview of the literature concerning instructional leadership, collective leadership, teacher efficacy, and collective efficacy. Also included in Chapter 2 is an operational definition for each of the topics of interest. Chapter 3 presents the methods and procedures to be used in the data collection and data analysis of the study. Chapter 4 presents findings from the data analysis, and Chapter 5 closes the dissertation with a discussion of findings, implications for practice and future research and my definition of collective instructional leadership based on study findings and research experiences.

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership is considered to be the single most important aspect in shaping the overall performance of a school and guiding the organization through effective reform efforts (Leithwood & Louis, 2012; Marzano, 2003; Marzano et al., 2005; Pounder, Ogawa, & Adams, 1995). Second only to teaching, principal leadership is highly influential on student learning and performance (Center for Education Leadership, 2012; Leithwood et al., 2006; Stronge, et al. 2008). Researchers have thus begun to investigate what school leaders do in order to create and sustain successful schools (Leithwood & Louis, 2012). This study was not about what school leaders do to have effective schools, but rather whom school leaders involve in leadership to help shape and lead their schools to success. Specifically, this study explored who was involved in school leadership and how that influenced teachers' perspectives of themselves and their capabilities to perform their job at the highest levels.

This chapter presents an overview of the literature on educational leadership styles, such as instructional leadership and collective leadership, while also addressing teacher efficacy and collective efficacy. The literature reviewed to write this chapter informed the development of an operational definition for *collective instructional leadership* that was utilized throughout the study. The importance of teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy as well as research tools previously used to measure each of these concepts are also discussed in this chapter.

Instructional Leadership

Educators working in P-12 education today must focus on student achievement and helping children become college and career ready, which has resulted in a role shift for the principalship from organizational manager to instructional leader (Honig et al., 2010). According to the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), which created the *Educational Leadership Policy Standards, Standard 2*, addressing instructional leadership, is one of the most frequently identified leadership concepts in schools across the nation (CCSSO, 2008; Marzano et al., 2005). The emergence of the principal as school instructional leader began in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Ylimaki, 2014); however, the literature shows that no universal definition has been determined for the term, as typically instructional leadership describes the characteristics and functions undertaken by a school leader (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987; Stronge, 1993; Stronge et al., 2008). Many scholars have attempted to define and provide relevance for school administrators to validate the use of instructional leadership within their professional practice (Blase & Blase, 1998; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Smith & Andrews, 1989). Although the literature shows overlap in many of the characteristics defined throughout the research, some of the most attained and visible uses include categories related to defining the school's mission (Hallinger, Murphy, Weil, Mesa, & Mitman., 1983), providing valid teacher feedback related to instructional practices (Leithwood & Seashore-Louis, 2012), communicating a clear vision and mission (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986), understanding of curriculum content (Stein & Nelson, 2003), coordinating staff professional development (Leithwood et al., 2006), and forging of professional relationships among staff members (DeBevoise, 1984).

An alternate approach to defining instructional leadership, as suggested by Avila (1990), is identifying differences in individual schools, where principals form their own definition of instructional leadership based on the needs of the school they lead. Although many definitions may contain similar characteristics, definitions need to vary to allow principals to function appropriately in "the particular context within which they operate" (Avila, 1990, p. 53).

The Center for Educational Leadership (2012) has identified *4 Dimensions of Instructional Leadership*, along with five core beliefs to help build a framework for school leaders to use in ensuring that every child has the opportunity to receive the highest quality instructional opportunity on a daily basis (see Table 2.1). These four dimensions are described as "the most salient aspects of instructional leadership" (p. 1), while the five core beliefs reflect the four dimensions of instructional leadership and lay a foundation for school leaders to adhere to in their daily practice (see Table 2.2).

According to the Center for Educational Leadership (2012), instructional leadership is currently being modified to include others in leadership and decision-making processes. With the concept of shared leadership becoming more prominent in school-administrator practices, researchers have been anticipating the shift of including others in instructional leadership as well (Stronge et al., 2008). New demands placed on school administrators (e.g. local, national and state policies, parents, and community members expectations) make it impossible for a principal to complete all tasks successfully without involving others (Ellis, 2013). As emphasized by Lambert (2002), "The days of the principal as the lone instructional leader are over. We no longer believe that one administrator can serve as the instructional leader for an entire school without

the substantial participation of other educators" (p. 37). Instructional leadership must thus be shared throughout the faculty as a community undertaking rather than an individual responsibility because "leadership is the professional work of everyone in the school" (p. 37).

Table 2.1

4 Dimensions of Instructional Leadership: Instructional Leadership Framework Version 1.0

Dimension	Vision
Vision, Mission and Culture Building	• A vision of academic success for every student is set through collaboration and shared leadership. • School leaders foster a culture of learning by setting high expectations. • School leaders create and maintain a results-focused learning environment.
Improvement of Instructional Practice	• School leaders use data to inform and monitor student learning and analyze teacher and leadership practices. • Research-based instructional frameworks are used to observe teaching and plan professional development. • School leaders deliver meaningful feedback to teachers through data and evidence of student learning.
Allocation of Resources	• School leaders use resources to accomplish goals and ensure powerful teaching and learning for all students. • Clear processes and procedures are articulated to provide instructional support. • School leaders use data to make equitable decisions about the allocations of resources.
Management of People and Processes	• School leaders recruit, hire, support and retain the most qualified staff members. • Instructional leaders plan, implement, advocate, support, communicate, and monitor all leadership responsibilities

Table 2.1 Continued

	including curriculum, instruction, and school improvement planning. • Supportive working environments are created and include professional development opportunities, time and space for collaboration, and access to professional learning communities.

Table 2.2

Five Core Beliefs of Instructional Leadership

1. Instructional leadership is learning-focused, learning for both students and adults, and learning which is measured by improvement in instruction and in the quality of student learning.
2. Instructional leadership must reside with a team of leaders of which the principal serves as the "leader of leaders."
3. A culture of public practice and reflective practice is essential for effective instructional leadership and the improvement of instructional practice.
4. Instructional leadership addresses the cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic and learning diversity in the school community.
5. Instructional leadership focuses upon the effective management of resources and of people – recruiting, hiring, developing, evaluating – particularly in changing environments.

Collective Leadership

With an emphasis on sharing leadership responsibilities, it is essential for school leaders to nurture and sustain a school culture promoting collaboration. Thus, to facilitate a trusting, collaborative environment, principals must establish and maintain a focus on positive working relationships (O'Connor, Anthony-Stevens, & Gonzalez, 2014). School leaders--who understand the importance of involving others in the many facets and responsibilities leadership entails--strive to build nurturing relationships and forge partnerships with members of the school and broader school community. Only through joint efforts can organizational goals be achieved (Wepner, 2011). School leaders who facilitate a culture of collaboration purposefully shift the responsibility for

goal setting from themselves to working with others to gain widespread support. Typically, these leaders promote teachers efforts to support one another in improving instructional practices, assuming responsibility for their own decision making, sharing ideas with colleagues, and evaluating new ideas based upon shared goals (Kohm & Nace, 2009). It is important however, for principals and others to understand that collective leadership is not based upon the delegation of tasks by the leader or hierarchical dominance of the administration; rather collective leadership is an opportunity to create an atmosphere where stakeholders work together with the leader to accomplish shared goals (Marks & Printy, 2003; Rubin & Futrell, 2009; Wahlstrom, et al., 2001; Wepner & Hopkins, 2011).

Through their ambitious five-year study on effective school leadership, Leithwood and Louis (2012) were able to develop a definition for *collective leadership*, a concept they define as "the extent of influence that organizational members and stakeholders exert on decisions in their schools" (p.11). Their definition was informed by the previous work of Miller and Rowan's (2006) concept of *organic management*. Based on their research, Miller and Rowan proposed a shift in what was considered the normal hierarchical management of control to include not only upper level management in organizational decision-making, but also those *subordinates* (Rost, 1991) who are actively involved in the line operation of the organization. Although focused on management, Miller and Rowan's notion of involving those most closely associated with work has relevance in P-12 schools (i.e., involving teachers in leadership).

This collective form of leadership also carries a positive association and support for other leadership theories. For example, in their organizational formation theory,

Wenger and Snyder (2001) define *communities of practice* as groups of people, bound by shared expertise and joint enterprise, coming together to share free-flowing, creative approaches in order to solve organizational problems. Communities of practice help organizations "drive strategy, generate new lines of business, solve problems, promote the spread of best practices, develop people's skills, and help companies recruit and retain talent" (p. 2). In P-12 schools, tasks associated with instructional leadership are elements that school members and stakeholders strive to accomplish and protect as they exert influence on organizational decisions. These efforts evidence collective leadership (Leithwood & Louis, 2012).

Collective Leadership and Student Achievement

Effective interpersonal relationships between teachers and students have emerged when school leaders use a collective-leadership style (Leithwood & Louis, 2012). The strongest indirect effects on student achievement due to collective leadership were found to exist in teachers' knowledge and skills, motivation, and work setting (see Figure 2.1).

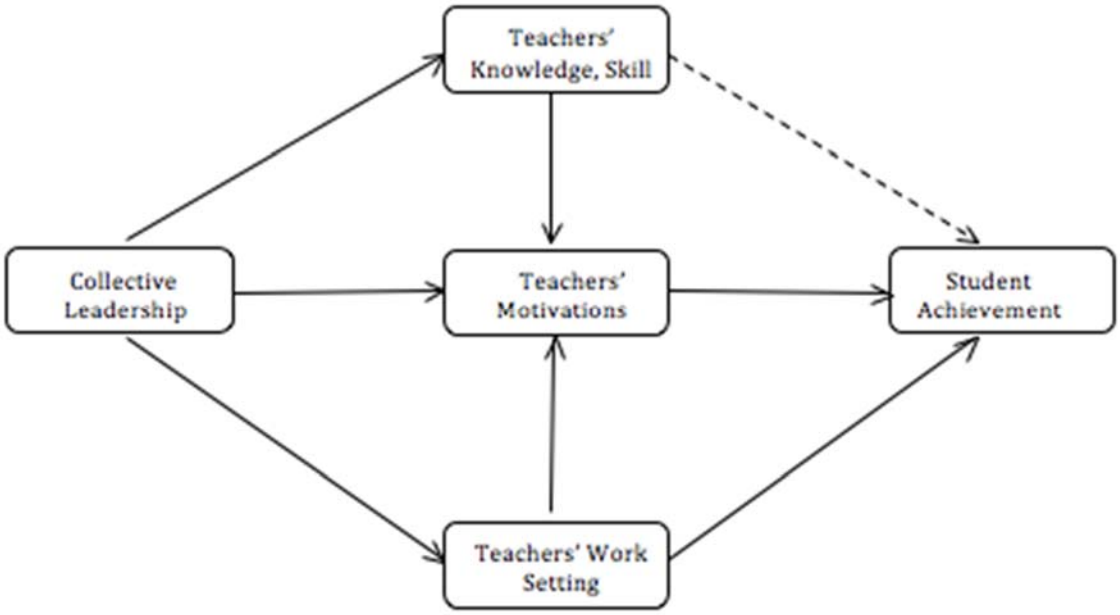

Figure 2.1

The Indirect Effects of Collective Leadership on Student Achievement

As shown in Figure 2.1 (Leithwood & Louis, 2012, p. 16), the paths indicate collective leadership influences student achievement through teacher motivation and working setting; however, teachers' knowledge and skills were found to be insignificant in relation to student achievement. Leithwood and Louis (2012) also perceived that teacher motivation is impacted by three different variables: collective leadership, teachers' knowledge and skills, and teachers' work setting, which all directly affect student achievement.

Collective Instructional Leadership

An operational definition of collective instructional leadership was developed for this study. Figure 2.2 displays the six key elements of collective instructional leadership. It combines concepts within the four dimensions of instructional leadership promoted by the Center for Educational Leadership and the four elements with Leithwood and Louis'

(2012) definition of collective leadership. For this study, the term *collective instructional leadership* is defined as the influence that organizational members and stakeholders of schools exert on (a) vision, mission, and culture building; (b) improvement of instructional practices; (c) allocation of resources; and (d) management of people and processes (see Figure 2.2).

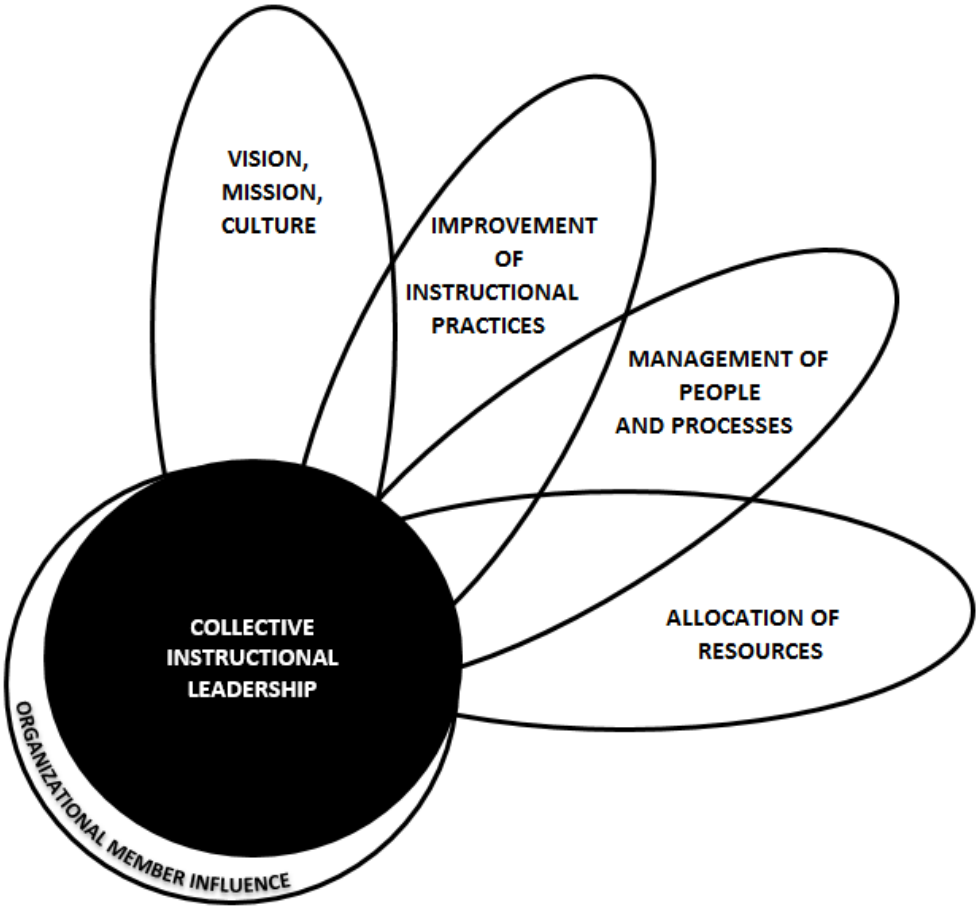

Figure 2.2

Collective Instructional Leadership

Teacher Efficacy

Strong connections have been made between student achievement and teacher efficacy in the literature (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2004); however, researchers agree that

many problems still exist for those trying to study teacher efficacy (Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Goddard et al., 2000; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990). Researchers continue to question the validity and reliability of tools currently in place for measuring teacher efficacy (Denzine, Cooney, & McKenzie, 2005). In the past, many factor analyses led to the creation of a two-factor structure causing confusion and debate around the two structures (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Attempts to measure teacher efficacy over the past 50 years include Rotter's (1966) social learning theory, Bandura's (1971) behavioral change theory, Guskey's (1981) responsibility for student achievement, and Gibson and Dembo's (1984) teacher-efficacy scale. The methods, developed for measuring teacher efficacy, have nonetheless made a significant impact in how current measures are used and developed.

Historical Perspectives

Grounded in the work of social learning theory, Rotter (1966) is noted as the first theorist to make an attempt at studying teacher efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Rotter theorized that teachers' perceptions of their own capabilities were the most important measure of teacher efficacy. This paved the way for the Rand Corporation to begin research on teacher efficacy by studying the effectiveness of reading instruction and teachers' beliefs that they could control and reinforce their own actions (Armor et al., 1976; Goddard et al., 2000). The Rand Corporation was able to develop two definitions to describe why teachers feel both capable and confident in their teaching and why other teachers believe efforts are outside of their control (Armor et al., 1976; Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998).

At the same time, beginning with his work on behavioral change theory, Bandura (1977) defined self-efficacy as the "strength of people's convictions in their own effectiveness" (p. 193). He perceived that people have a tendency to avoid threatening and fearful situations, for which they perceive they are unable to cope, and prefer actively engaging in situations for which they feel they are capable of accomplishing. Throughout his work on self-efficacy, Bandura theorized that an individual's level of competence directly effects his or her belief in the ability not only to perform a given task but also the length of time and effort required to work through a difficult situation (Bandura, 1993).

Further, Guskey (1981) developed a 30-item instrument to measure who is responsible for student achievement; the scores reported from this instrument were intended to yield a measure of how much responsibility the teacher assumed for student outcomes. The research instrument showed that teachers tended to assume responsibility for influencing positive student outcomes instead of preventing negative ones (Guskey, 1984). In another study, Guskey (1987) found that positive and negative outcomes operated independently from one another on teachers' perception of efficacy. However, due to a lack of widespread adoption, Guskey's responsibility for student achievement tool seemed to have disappeared within the research field (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

By bringing together the formulations within the orginal Rand Study and Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory, Gibson and Dembo (1984) created and confirmed a 30-item instrument to measure the existence of both personal teaching efficacy and general teaching efficacy (Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). However, further research and factor analysis of data gathered through the

various models has revealed major inconsistencies exist within the tools to measure teacher efficacy (Soodak & Podell, 1993; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990).

Definition of Teacher Efficacy

Similar to the concept of instructional leadership, a consistent definition for teacher efficacy is not used among researchers or characteristics exhibited by teachers with a strong sense of self-efficacy (Protheroe, 2008). Among the characteristics exhibited by teachers showing a strong sense of efficacy are (a) advanced levels of effective planning and organization, (b) openness to experimenting with new ideas and teaching strategies to address student learning needs, (c) ability to respond quickly when things do not go smoothly, (d) being less critical of students when they make errors, and (e) recommending fewer students for special education (Goddard et al., 2004; Protheroe, 2008).

The research on teacher efficacy also included various definitions. For example, Ashton (1984) defines teacher efficacy as teachers' beliefs in their ability to have positive impacts on student learning and achievement. Many definitions evidenced links to Ashton's definition such as the one offered by Tschannen-Moran and colleagues (1998) who define teacher efficacy as teachers who control or strongly influence student achievement and motivation. Another is by Hoy and Spero (2005) who define teacher efficacy as "teachers' judgments about their abilities to promote students' learning" (p. 343). Despite differences in definitions, two characteristics are always present: (a) teachers' belief, confidence, or judgments about themselves and their capabilities to do their jobs well and (b) enhanced student learning and achievement. Keeping these two

characteristics in mind, it is important to understand how teacher efficacy influences school culture and how the school culture affects the teachers.

School Variables Affecting Teacher Efficacy

Several environmental variables play a major role in shaping teachers' sense of self-efficacy, such as professional and collegial relationships, academic expectations, and principal leadership (Bidwell, 1965). These environmental variables also contribute to Hoy and Woolfolk's (1993) model of a "healthy school" (p. 357), which evidences six dimensions school leaders should focus on in order to achieve harmony across all institutional levels in congruence with one another. The six dimensions described by Hoy and Woolfolk include (a) institutional integrity, (b) principal influence, (c) consideration, (d) resource support, (e) morale, and (f) academic emphasis. Although many of these dimensions impact teachers' beliefs, confidence, and judgments about their capability to perform their job, little research has been done to explore further the relationships that may exist between school organizations and teacher efficacy (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993).

Collective Efficacy

Many of today's educational problems require teachers to work together as a collective group to find solutions (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). With research showing a positive relationship existing between collective efficacy and student achievement (Bandura, 1993; Goddard, 2001; Protheroe, 2008), school leaders should understand what collective efficacy is and how to facilitate it.

Many researchers have examined the significance of collective teacher efficacy in schools and found that it plays a bigger role on student achievement than student

socioeconomic status (Hoy & Sabo, 1998; Hoy, Sweetland, and Smith, 2002). That is, a strong collective efficacy among teachers results in their setting high but reasonable goals for student learning and greater resiliency to overcome temporary setbacks. Parent-teacher relationships can also benefit from collective teacher efficacy. According to Brinson and Steiner (2007), staff members who are confident in their work practices and abilities are more likely to welcome parent participation and forge working relationships with parents.

The relationship between teacher efficacy and collective efficacy beliefs has also sparked an interest with researchers. For example, Goddard and Goddard (2001) tested multilevel relationships between both teacher efficacy and collective efficacy. They postulate that collective efficacy is a way to characterize a school culture and that collective efficacy influences student achievement indirectly through teachers' individual sense of self-efficacy. Teachers who hold high respect for their school's collective efficacy are more likely to put forth a valiant effort to help students learn; conversely, when collective efficacy levels are low or viewed with negativity, teachers are less willing to work with their colleagues when things go wrong or fail. Unfortunately, with all the positives that have been generated through the research on collective efficacy, only minimal research has been conducted on the relationship between school performance and student achievement (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

Definition of Collective Efficacy

Similar to teacher efficacy, collective teacher efficacy has been defined in different ways. The most often used definition is by Goddard and colleagues (2000) who define collective efficacy as "the perceptions of teachers in a school that the efforts of the

faculty as a whole will have a positive effect on students" (p. 480). This definition was used throughout this study when referring to and referencing collective efficacy.

Building Collective Efficacy

Since contemporary schools have aimed their focus on student achievement, it makes sense that principals search for ways and methods to raise students' performance levels. While Bandura (1997) found four factors that directly relate to shaping schools' efficacy levels (e.g., mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social-persuasion, affective state), Goddard and colleagues (2000) assert that mastery experiences make the biggest impact on school efficacy. However, mastery experiences may be the most difficult for a principal to deliver, especially to a faculty that has a low perception about its collective efficacy.

One solution for school leaders seeking ways to raise their school communities' collective-efficacy level would be to focus on creating opportunities for teachers to work together to address student learning, motivation, and behavior (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Principals also need to be responsive to teachers' concerns while looking for opportunities to encourage innovation through collective leadership practices (Fuller & Izu, 1986; Newmann, Rutter, & Smith, 1989). Through enabling faculty members to have a voice in school decision-making, empowering teachers to take instructional risks, and being aware of staff needs, principals can promote a strong sense of collective efficacy within their schools. Moreover, positive collective efficacy helps enhance individual teacher efficacy levels, thus helping the school achieve its goals and raise student achievement regardless of students' socioeconomic background or home life

(Goddard & Skrla, 2006; Hoy & Sabo, 1998; Hoy et al., 2002; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

Summary

This chapter discussed the evolving role of the principal as it has shifted to focus on instructional leadership concepts. School leaders must make an effort to include others in decision-making practices that impact the overall functioning of the school. As teachers and other school-community stakeholders increase their involvement in decision-making, their individual sense of efficacy will also be raised, therefore impacting the overall collective efficacy of the school. Through the strengthening of collective efficacy, a school community can overcome socioeconomic issues and raise student achievement. Chapter 3 presents the research methods used for gathering data and outline criteria for how individuals were selected to participate in this study.

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CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted to develop an understanding of how collective instructional leadership influences teacher efficacy in high-performing elementary schools in central Kentucky. The in-depth, face-to-face interviews and focus-group sessions generated data used to form themes and descriptions associated with influences that impact collective instructional leadership and teacher efficacy. This study utilized a two-phase grounded-theory approach (Charmaz, 2005; Glasser & Strauss, 1967) to help identify connections that exist between collective instructional leadership and teacher efficacy.

Research Questions

The overarching research question for this study was, *How does collective instructional leadership influence teacher efficacy in high performing elementary schools?* Three guiding questions ensured the research question was answered:

1. Who is included in collective instructional leadership within high-performing elementary schools?
2. How does collective instructional leadership function in high-performing elementary schools?
3. What actions do leaders take to facilitate and promote both individual teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy?

Rationale

The decision to use qualitative methods stemmed from the understanding that qualitative research design allowed me to gather data in the form of study-participants'

words about their lived experiences (Creswell, 2007; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In order to achieve a deep understanding of the phenomena being studied, I encouraged study participants to share their personal experiences and stories during private interviews or focus-group interviews. From the interview data, I identified common themes and developed codes (Hatch, 2002; Maxwell, 2005), which I then to used to analyze the data a second time to create a theory about the phenomena being studied. To address disagreements within the research literature about the best approach for analyzing data in a grounded-theory study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Walker & Myrick, 2006), I used the four-step data analysis approach developed by Corbin and Strauss (2008) to code data and then develop a theory about the influence of collective instructional leadership on teacher efficacy.

Study Design

This two-phase study used a qualitative design in which data were gathered through individual face-to-face interviews and focus-group interviews. Because personal interpretation of the data is often used in qualitative research (Creswell, 2003), I anticipated the data collected through these interviews would highlight participant voices and experiences. My goal was to develop a grounded theory about collective instructional leadership and its influence on teacher efficacy.

Phase 1: Interviews

The first phase of this study involved collecting data through individual interviews with principals and focus-group interviews with parents, teachers, and other school administrators within selected high-performing elementary schools within central Kentucky. The goals of Phase 1 were (a) to understand who is involved in collective

instructional leadership at the elementary school level, (b) to gain an understanding of how collective instructional leadership functions in high-performing elementary schools, (c) to determine actions leaders use to facilitate and promote both teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy, and (d) to identify aspects of teacher efficacy that are most impacted through collective instructional leadership. Achieving answers to each of these questions allowed me to begin Phase 2 of the study where data were analyzed and interpreted to develop codes and themes, and then ultimately to develop a theory about the influence of collective instructional leadership on teacher efficacy.

Participants

According to Maxwell (2005), the most important consideration in qualitative decisions is selecting times, settings, and individuals that provide information needed to answer the research question. Knowing this, I used both purposeful and convenient sampling methods as strategies for choosing participants and venues for both individual and focus-group interviews. Participants for this study were identified through a purposeful selection process that ensured the criteria aligned with elements of the original definition of the research question: (a) high-performing elementary school; (b) central Kentucky region; (c) school principals that have served in that leadership role at that given school for five or more years; and (d) parents, teachers, and school administrators of elementary schools selected to participate in the study.

High-performing elementary schools. High performing elementary schools were defined as those Kentucky elementary schools achieving the rating of distinguished or higher on the 2012-2013 Kentucky Core Academic Standards Assessment (Kentucky Department of Education, 2012). Out of a total of 733 public elementary schools in

2013, only 77 schools received a rating of distinguished (Kentucky Department of Education, 2013). For this study, only those distinguished schools located in Central Kentucky were considered as potential study sites because as a practicing school principal I had limited time to travel to study sites. Among the 77 schools receiving the distinguished rating in 2013, 19 schools in central Kentucky met all four selection criteria.

Central Kentucky elementary schools. The Kentucky Cooperative Extension divided the commonwealth into seven separate districts (see Figure 3.1). For convenience sampling of study sites, schools within District 4 of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension were considered for this study. District 4 is labeled under the Central Region according to the Kentucky Cooperative Extension coordinators and for this study is defined as Central Kentucky (University of Kentucky, 2014). District 4 contains 20 separate school districts.

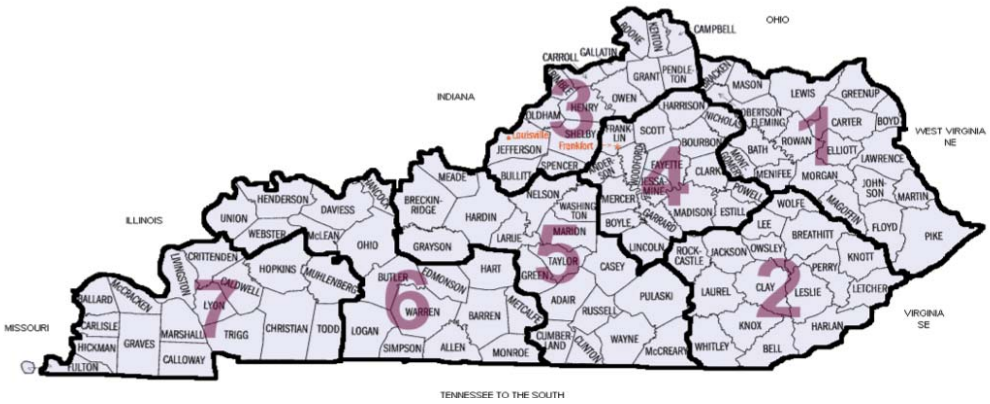

Figure 3.1

Kentucky Cooperative Extension Districts

When analyzing the Kentucky school assessment results within the District 4 region, only five school districts had schools (N=19) that became the study population

(i.e. Boyle County Public Schools, Clark County Public Schools, Fayette County Public Schools, Scott County Public Schools, Jessamine County Public Schools). Fayette County had 11 elementary schools receiving distinguished ratings, and Scott County and Clark County both had 3 elementary schools with distinguished ratings. Jessamine County and Boyle County had one elementary school each that achieved distinguished ratings in 2013. For this study, 3 elementary schools, out of the possible 19 schools within the population, were sites where data collection was conducted. My intent in creating the sample was to assure the schools selected would generate data that would represent data that may have been generated at the other eligible study sites. Each school participating in the study was located in one of three different districts within the central Kentucky region as defined above. Only one district required permission for the study to take place, which was, granted by one of the district's associate superintendents; the other two districts required only school-level approval. Although eight schools were asked to participate, only three responded positively to my invitation; one school rejected the invitation and four others did not respond to my invitation. Electronic mail communication was used to recruit teacher and parent volunteers and to schedule times and venues for individual and focus-group interviews.

Principals with five or more years of experience. It takes approximately five years for a principal to create a teaching staff according to his or her specifications and to implement fully policies and practices that impact a school's overall performance (Louis et al, 2010). Research suggests that most principals' tenure at a school is approximately three to four years (Louis et al, 2010), which suggests that most principals do not remain at schools long enough for their leadership to be considered a direct influence on the

school's performance. The intent for limiting the distinguished schools within the sample to include only those schools whose principal has served in that position at that school for five or more years was to assure that principals' leadership could be considered an influence on the school achieving a distinguished rating. If the study had included schools with principals serving less than five years, findings may have reflected influences of previous principals' efforts as instructional leaders.

Parents, teachers, and other school administrators. In Chapter 2, collective instructional leadership was defined as *the influence that organizational members and stakeholders exert on (a) vision, mission, and culture building; (b) improvement of instructional practices; (c) allocation of resources; and (d) management of people and processes in their schools*. Because the definition intentionally includes *organizational members and stakeholders*, parents, and other school administrators were invited to participate in this study. For this study, members of the organization included teachers, staff, and school administrators other than the principal. Parents were defined as those individuals who possess guardianship of a student or students that were currently enrolled at the school being studied and also referred to as stakeholders.

Data Collection

Individual interviews and focus-group interview sessions were conducted with targeted individuals at all three study sites. Prior to conducting each interview, I read an IRB-approved statement of consent and all individuals who participated in the study signed a consent form. Each principal at the sample elementary schools participated in a private interview that lasted no longer than an hour in length and was recorded using two

audio recording devices. Ten prepared questions were asked to each principal participating in the study (see Appendix B).

Focus group interviews were also utilized in this study. Although the number of participants in the focus groups varied among the schools, each group included at minimum two teachers, one parent, and a school administrator other than the principal. Recruitment letters seeking study participants were sent to principals to distribute to teachers currently working at their school and parents who had an active role in a school committee or support group. A separate letter was sent to other administrators in the school, other than the principal, seeking participation in the study. All focus-group interview sessions were conducted prior to the individual principal interviews, and no focus-group interview session lasted longer than an hour in length. Similar to the individual principal interviews, focus-group interviews were conducted at participants' school locations and recorded using two audio recording devices. The same eight open-ended questions were asked to participants during each focus-group session (see Appendix C).

The audio files produced from the interviews were transcribed by a professional, and the transcripts were uploaded into QSR International's NVivo for Mac software. Using a line-by-line approach, initial codes and themes were assigned to words and phrases collected during the interviews. Once I completed the initial coding, I then began the second review of the codes using Corbin and Strauss's (2008) four-stage coding method. It is important to note that data collection continued into Stage 2 of the data analysis process. Once all data were collected, entered, coded, and reduced, Stage 2 of

the coding process was completed, which allowed me to move into Stage 3 of data analysis.

Phase 2: Data Analysis

The goal of Phase 2 was to use the data collected in Phase 1 to develop common themes regarding the perceptions among principals, parents, teachers, and other school administrators about how collective instructional leadership influences teacher efficacy.

Data Analysis

The quality of qualitative data analysis lies in the researcher's ability to reduce the data collected into detailed themes, which eventually are molded into rich descriptions, models, and theories (Walker & Myrick, 2006). In grounded theory, coding is known as the "fundamental analytic process used by the researcher" (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 12) in order to explore gathered bits of information, while looking for similarities and differences to categorize the data (Padgett 1998; Patton, 2002).

For this study, Corbin and Strauss' (2008) four-stage coding method was utilized to code and categorize data for the development of a theory (see Table 3.1). In order to have the opportunity to refine categories and themes established from the data, I used the four-stage coding system concurrently with the data-collection process of the research. The coding system is similar to an inductive data analysis (Hatch, 2002) approach where the researcher searches for patterns within the data in order to develop a general statement about the phenomenon being studied.

Open coding. During Stage 1, I analyzed data collected from interviews by seeking similar characteristics. The data were grouped into categories, sub-categories, and themes based upon likeness of content and properties. Overall, this stage began the

reduction process of data by placing various pieces of data into similar sets that best described and helped me create an understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). In other words, during this stage, I began to take the first sets of interview data and develop overarching categories and themes based upon commonalities.

Table 3.1

Four Stage Data Analysis

Open Coding	The first stage of the coding process is reducing data into smaller sets and themes that help describe the phenomenon under investigation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). • Data are divided into segments. • Data are categorized and examined for properties, specific attributes, or subcategories.
Axial Coding	The second stage of the coding process involves making connections between categories and subcategories. As data are continuing to be gathered, the researcher is able to refine categories and establish connections between themes (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). • Focus on determining more about each category. • Established connections are found between categories.
Selective Coding	The third stage of the coding process is combining multiple categories into "core" categories (Walker & Myrick, 2006). • Categories are combined to form a story line that describes the phenomenon. • Selective coding is similar to axial coding in that categories are narrowed down; however, this takes place once all data are collected.
Development of a Theory	The final stage in the coding process is developing a hypothesis to explain the phenomenon being studied (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). • The theory is based entirely on the data collected. • The theory can be in the form of verbal statement, visual model, or series of hypothesis.

Axial coding. While analyzing data during Stage 2, I attempted to make connections between categories developed during Stage 1. Data collection continued during this stage, and the process created a flow, allowing new data to both refine and

reinforce categories and themes produced in the open coding stage (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Kolb, 2012). During the axial coding stage, I investigated connections between categories related to the influence collective instructional leadership has on teacher efficacy. The creation of new categories and subcategories were monitored while adjustments were made in the development of new categories and themes related to how collective instructional leadership influences teacher efficacy.

Selective coding. After the completion of data collection and Stage 2 axial coding process, I began the selective coding stage. Thus, during Stage 3, categories and interrelationships were combined to create a core category that systematically connected all other categories formed during the first two stages. The categories were also combined to form a story to help me understand and describe what participants had reported (Kolb, 2012; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Walker & Myrick, 2006). I focused on all categories and developed a main theme derived from the interview data collected. This derived theme began to give me an overall understanding of how collective instructional leadership is influencing teacher efficacy in high-performing central Kentucky elementary schools.

Development of a theory. Stage 4 of the coding process involves developing a theory related to the phenomenon being studied. For this study, the theory is presented as a hypothesis due to the outcome of the data collection and analysis process. I chose the format of a hypothesis because it can logically present the results and explain the influence that exists between collective instructional leadership and teacher efficacy. It is important to note that this format was chosen to present the theory and based solely on the data collected throughout the study (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The composed theory

discussed in Chapter 4 depicts "the evolving nature of the phenomenon" and describes how "certain conditions lead to certain actions and interactions." (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 143). For this study, I used the overall core category defined in Stage 3 of the coding process to help develop a theory related to the influence of collective instructional leadership on teacher efficacy presented in the form of a hypothesis.

Second Analysis

A second reviewer, trained in qualitative data analysis, reviewed all transcriptions and findings for accuracy and reliability. A confirmation that all codes and themes were accurate was deemed necessary before moving on in the study. Appropriate measures such as the reconstruction of themes and a second analysis of the data were taken when inaccuracy, inconstancy, or unreliability was found within the transcriptions, codes, findings, or themes. Upon reconstruction of the identified categories, a third review was completed to check for 95% accuracy and reliability.

Quality and Validity

To ensure a high level of quality and validity throughout the study, I used Yardley's (2000) four principles for assessing qualitative research: (a) sensitivity to context, (b) commitment and rigor, (c) transparency and coherence, and (d) impact and importance. Sensitivity to context was met through my understanding of the literature related to the research topic, the social interactions that occurred between study participants and me during the interviews, and the relationships I developed with participants during the study. Commitment and rigor were met through my development of competency in the methods being used, the prolonged time period during which the study participants and I were engaged in the topic, and my purposeful attempt to ensure

completeness of the data interpretation through the undertaking of several levels of analysis. Transparency and coherence involve the clarity of the research narrative to be of the highest quality: thus ensured to the best of my ability that all the research questions fit the phenomenon being studied. Impact and importance helped hold me accountable for reporting results that inform my audience of something important related to the phenomenon being studied and are useful to future research studies.

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research, the researcher is the primary research instrument (Hatch, 2002; Maxwell, 2005; Creswell, 2007). Most qualitative researchers believe that "the researcher's ability to interpret and make sense of what he or she sees is critical for understanding any social phenomenon" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 135). As the sole researcher for this study, I interacted directly with participants during the interviews in Phase 1 assuring the results were reliable for Phase 2 of the study. As a current school principal and former teacher in two elementary schools in central Kentucky, I understood that my professional experiences could play a role in shaping and influencing the research study's findings. Hence, I vowed to make a determined effort to remain objective throughout all phases of the study.

Potential Limitations

As a current elementary school principal and former elementary school teacher, I have first-hand knowledge and understanding of the educational system in which the study participants work. Due to my professional experiences I have developed beliefs and understandings about leadership and its influence on teacher efficacy. In realizing that

these biases exist, I have attempted to avoid incorporating my perspectives into any aspects of this study.

The first of these strategies to diminish potential research bias involved the selection of districts and schools to participate in this study. Among all the distinguished schools identified within the Central Kentucky District 4 region, none are located in my current or former district of employment. I also ensured that I did not have any personal or working relationships with any individuals or employees of the schools where data were collected.

Second, I intentionally developed interview questions that would avoid allowing a specific answer that would align with my personal point of view concerning collective instructional leadership or teacher efficacy. That is, all questions were prepared beforehand to ensure validity, and interviews were conducted to maintain a semi-structured format (Hatch, 2002).

Lastly, I maintained a reflective research journal throughout the entire research study to record thoughts and log experiences throughout the research process. This journal acted as a system for me to monitor my personal reactions to what was being discovered while also maintaining a way to self-assess my own bias when completing data interpretations (Hatch, 2002).

Summary

This qualitative study used a grounded-theory model to gather data and identify how collective instructional leadership is influencing teacher efficacy in high performing central Kentucky elementary schools. The data analysis helped to create a theory in understanding the influence between collective instructional leadership's influences on teacher efficacy. The next chapter presents, in detail, the themes, codes, and categories derived from the individual and focus group interviews.

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CHAPTER 4

INTERVIEW FINDINGS

The overall purpose of this study was to determine how collective instructional leadership influences teachers' judgments concerning their ability to create positive achievements throughout a school. Two goals of the study were to develop a better understanding of how collective instructional leadership influences teacher efficacy and to reveal ways collective decisions, made by various members within high-performing elementary schools, influence teachers judgments with regards to their abilities to be successful. The results of this study are intended for use by principals, teacher leaders, district administrators, and instructors in principal preparation programs to facilitate collective instructional leadership throughout schools and school districts. Through data collected during individual interviews with principals and focus-group interviews with parents, teachers, and other administrators, this study attempted to answer the question, *How does collective instructional leadership influence teacher efficacy in high-performing elementary schools?*

This grounded-theory study (Charmaz, 2005; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was conducted in two phases. Data were gathered through interviews with principals and focus-group interviews with parents, teachers, and other school administrators to (a) understand who is involved in collective instructional leadership at the elementary school level, (b) gain an understanding of how collective instructional leadership functions in Kentucky elementary schools, (c) determine actions leaders take to facilitate and promote both teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy, and (d) identify aspects of teacher efficacy that are most impacted through collective instructional leadership. Three schools

met two criteria defined by my selection criteria: (a) high-performing elementary school in central Kentucky and (b) principal had served at least five continuous years at the identified high-performing elementary school.

During Phase 2, I analyzed data using different strategies to identify common themes that explained how collective instructional leadership influences teacher efficacy in the high-performing elementary schools. A four-stage coding method developed by Corbin and Strauss (2008) was used to transform the categories and themes into a hypothesis. After completing the four-stage coding process and before developing the hypothesis, a second reviewer conducted an independent analysis of the interview transcript themes and categories. The initial comparison of the separate interpretations revealed a 94% agreement rate. After a face-to-face meeting with the second reviewer to discuss vocabulary and definitions of themes and categories, I was able to create justification within the themes and categories, resulting in a 98% agreement rate based upon the deductive analysis.

Categories and themes derived from individual principal interviews and focus-group interview sessions were compared to study participants' comments used to support the findings. Those findings were then used to create a data-informed definition for collective instructional leadership that will help future principals, district administrators, and instructors in preservice preparation programs identify and define practices in which educational leaders and organizational members currently participate. It is my hope that the definition will generate awareness among educational leaders and administrators about the importance of the influence that a school's decision-making processes have on both individual teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy.

Phase 1: Individual and Focus-Group Interviews

Schools identified to participate in Phase 1 of the study were selected through a convenient and purposeful sampling and met all selection criteria. After contacting eight schools through electronic mail communication to seek participation, I obtained consent from three schools to participate in both individual face-to-face interviews and focus-group interviews. The interviews were conducted at the most convenient time and location (i.e., schools where participants worked) for study participants. All interviews were conducted between April 2015 and May 2015. Personnel at all three schools agreed to participate in either a private principal interview or focus-group interviews with parents, teachers, and other school administrators during the same day, which minimized the number of school visits. At all three schools, the focus-group interview took place before the private principal interview. The individual interviews and focus-group sessions lasted no longer than 60 minutes; the shortest interview was 14 minutes and involved a principal whose background affirmed the lack of details he provided within the interview session. Each principal was asked the same ten interview questions, and each focus group was asked the same eight interview questions. When appropriate, I asked individuals to clarify or elaborate upon their responses in order to clarify their thinking.

Participants in the study included principals, teachers, assistant principals, administrative coaches, family resource coordinators, school psychologists, counselors, and parents. Of the three principals that participated in individual interviews, two were female and one was male with experience as principal ranging from 11 to 16 years. Three focus groups were composed in total of two assistant principals, nine teachers, one

family resource coordinator, one administrative coach, two counselors, one school psychologist and eight parents. The largest focus-group interview had a total of seven participants while the smallest was made up of five individuals.

Phase 2: Data Analysis

After all interviews were conducted and audio recordings were professionally transcribed, I analyzed data using Corbin and Strauss's (2008) four-stage coding method to categorize data and develop themes. Before moving forward into Stage 1 (open coding) I read through all transcripts while listening to the interview recordings to check for errors made by the transcriptionist. After making corrections in the transcriptions to align with interviewees' comments, I read the transcriptions again, once while listening to the audio recordings and once without listening. Then I completed a fourth reading of the transcripts to begin development of understanding and familiarity with the data.

Stage 1–Open Coding

The first stage of the coding process involved the use of the QRS International computer software NVivo for Mac to categorize data into different nodes (i.e. codes and themes as defined by NVivo). Word versions of all interview transcripts were uploaded into NVivo, and two internal files were created that included (a) focus-group interview transcripts and (b) individual principal interview transcripts. I then created six node categories, of which four centered on the four goals to be achieved during Phase 1, one that identified the negative impacts associated with teacher efficacy, and one that detailed a need for the use of collective instructional leadership. The process yielded 331 different reference codes from the six transcription sources (i.e., three focus-groups and three principal interviews).

Category A, which focused on codes associated with who is involved in collective instructional leadership at the elementary school level, yielded the greatest number of nodes (N=93). Category D, which included comments about aspects of teacher efficacy most impacted through collective instructional leadership, yielded the least number of nodes (N=64).

Two new node categories were created during the open coding phase. Because these categories were not part of the original Phase 1 goals, and created while data were being segmented into goal sets, I labeled them X and Z. Category Z includes codes about the need for collective instructional leadership whereas Category X highlighted negative impacts associated with teacher efficacy. Together these two node categories contained nine comments by study participants across a total of three different interview data sources.

Stage 2–Axial Coding

The second stage of the coding process involved making connections between data categories through the narrowing of codes developed during Stage 1. I utilized the phase-goal references generated in NVivo to begin establishing codes and categories according to focus-group participant data and principal data.

Participants in collective instructional leadership. By reviewing only the focus-group interview data, I was able to narrow 63 references down to 12 codes that focus group members perceived were individuals involved in collective instructional leadership. Then, reviewing only principal interview data, I collapsed the original 30 references into 13 codes that principals perceived were involved in collective instructional leadership practices. The 13 codes were combined and refined to develop

themes of those individuals involved in the four dimensions of collective instructional leadership. Data from both the individual principal interviews and the focus-group interviews identified individuals and groups involved in collective instructional leadership (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1

Individuals Involved in the Four Dimensions of Collective Instructional Leadership

Dimension	Individuals/Groups Involved
Vision, Mission, and Culture	• Teachers • Leadership Teams • School-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Council • Faculty
Improvement of Instructional Practices	• Principals • Teachers • District Administrators
Management of People and Processes	• Principals • Faculty • Committees
Allocation of Resources	• Parent-Teacher Organization Members (PTO/PTA) • School-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Council • Principals

Functions within collective instructional leadership. Instead of analyzing two disjoint datasets (i.e., focus-group participants, principals), I combined the original 77 references to collective instructional leadership created in NVivo and collapsed them into 34 codes. Codes consisted of people or groups involved, actions used by principals and teachers, or descriptions of activities and events that included collective instructional leadership. The codes were then divided and placed into dimensions they best represented within the collective instructional leadership model (see Figure 2.2). Table

4.2 displays the breakdown of codes and themes within each dimension as well as words spoken by study participants.

Table 4.2

Functions of Collective Instructional Leadership Dimensions

Dimension	Number of Codes	Code Content
Vision, Mission, and Culture	12	• Teachers/Staff create school vision and revisit throughout the school year. • Many opportunities are created for parents to be involved in school committees and activities.
Improvement of Instructional Practices	14	• Consistent goals and common expectations. • Teachers supported and given freedom to try new ideas and concepts. • No micro-managing. • Professional Development is based upon individual teacher needs.
Management of People and Processes	8	• Teachers included in the hiring of quality staff/teachers. • Feedback is consistent and given in a timely manner.
Allocation of Resources	7	• Parents provide classroom resources when needed. • Many opportunities are created for parents to be involved in school committees and activities.
Impacting All Domains	9	• School-Based Decision Making (SBDM) councils. • Creation of committees to focus on topics and decisions regarding specific issues. • Creation of leadership opportunities for others to be involved.

A fifth category was assigned to nine codes that contained overlap in all four collective instructional leadership dimensions. This dimension was labeled *Impacting All Domains of Collective Instructional Leadership*. This was the only dimension in which

all three schools are represented and labeled with identical codes. Examples of code content included school based decision-making council (SBDM), creation of leadership opportunities for others to be involved, and the formation of committees to focus on topics and decisions regarding specific issues.

In some cases, overlap did occur when a code represented more than one dimension of the model. The dimension Vision, Mission, and Culture and the dimension Improvement of Instructional Practices evidenced the most overlap with a total of 7 codes; the dimension Improvement of Instructional Practices and the dimension Management of People and Processes contained 6 codes that overlapped. In two instances, there was overlap across three dimensions. The code describing *professional development based upon individual teacher needs*, which was referenced by all three schools, showed an overlap in the following dimensions: (a) Improvement of Instructional Practices, (b) Management of People and Processes, and (c) Allocation of Resources. The second instance revolved around the code *no-micro managing/teachers are trusted to make appropriate instructional decisions* and spanned over three dimensions: (a) Vision, Mission, and Culture, (b) Improvement of Instructional Practices, and (c) Management of People and Processes.

During Stage 1 (open coding), two new code categories were created that were not part of the original Phase 1 goals, but provide evidence to support parts of the study. The first code category focused on the negative impacts associated with teacher efficacy, which is discussed later in this chapter, while the second category pertained to the need for collective instructional leadership. As one principal explained:

> I think the most important thing is the instructional leadership aspect of things. I just feel like if I am not in classrooms and don't know what teachers are doing

> and what kids are learning, I can't effectively lead the school. I just don't believe you can. So, for me instructional leadership is a big thing, but shared leadership is really important to me. We have never had a leadership team, but we do now. We meet weekly and we talk about not just plans for the week and calendar kind of things but about effectiveness school wide.

This statement supports the definition of collective instructional leadership used in this study. As with most school principals, including all three principals participating in this study, many leadership styles must be balanced and utilized on a daily basis. Based upon the above statement, the principal highlights an important need for both instructional leadership and shared leadership practices.

Actions by leaders. To identify leaders, again I chose to isolate focus-group data from principal data to construct categories leading to the development of overarching themes related to the actions by leaders to promote and facilitate teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy. After narrowing down the original 52 focus-group references to 46 codes, I was able to categorize codes into grouped categories based upon content similarities. From data gathered through focus-group interviews, six categories were formed to identify actions that leaders engage in to facilitate teacher efficacy. These include (a) collaborative involvement of teachers in the decision-making process, (b) providing leadership opportunities to empower and support professional growth in teachers, (c) creating respect, support, and trust in teachers, (d) school culture supported through clearly outlined goals, (e) transparent communication, and (f) necessary resources and professional development provided.

Unlike the narrowing of focus-group codes, all 38 principal data codes generated in NVivo were utilized during the axial coding process for the phase goal question. These 38 codes were used to create seven categories to describe actions principals in this

study engage in to promote and facilitate teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy in their school building. Those seven categories are (a) open communication and transparency in decision-making, (b) hiring of good teachers, (c) no-micromanaging, (d) creation of a positive school culture through the celebration of teacher and student successes, (e) sense of value and trust created in teachers, (f) creation of opportunities for shared leadership, and (g) meaningful professional development for teachers.

During Stage 3, selective coding, which will be discussed later in this chapter, categories from this phase goal were further analyzed to help narrow a focus on those actions leaders engage in to promote and facilitate both teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy.

Collective leadership impact on teacher efficacy. During the open coding stage I was able to reduce the focus-group interview data to 36 codes using the computer software NVivo. For this axial coding process regarding the phase goal question, *Which aspects of teacher efficacy are most impacted through collective instructional leadership,* I chose to use all 36 codes to determine a focus for the question. Each code was further given a label to help categorize the data with some codes yielding more than one label characteristic. Labels used to categorize themes were based upon the characteristics included in the definition of teacher efficacy: (a) teacher confidence, (b) teacher judgment, (c) teacher belief, (d) planning and organization, (e) student achievement, and (f) teachers' openness to experiment with new ideas. Among these six categories, collective instructional leadership most greatly influenced teacher confidence with a total of 29 codes, while teachers' openness to experimenting with new ideas was the least impacted with only 4 codes. Table 4.3 shows the assignment of codes for all six

categories listed with the characteristics having the most codes being the areas that teacher efficacy is most impacted through collective instructional leadership.

Table 4.3

Teacher Efficacy Characteristics Impacted Through Collective Instructional Leadership

Characteristic	# of codes assigned
Teacher confidence	29
Teacher judgment	18
Teacher beliefs	9
Planning and organization	8
Student achievement	5
Teachers' openness to experiment with new ideas	4

For the individual principal interviews, the original 29 codes created during Stage 1 were narrowed down to 25 codes that were used during the axial coding stage. Similar to the focus-group data, the 25 principal codes were given labels to help categorize them according to characteristics within the definition of teacher efficacy. Unlike the focus-group categories, the principal labels only utilized five of the six characteristics used in the definition of teacher efficacy. Mirroring the focus-group results, teacher confidence was found to be the most impacted through collective instructional leadership with a total of 24 codes, while planning and organization was viewed as the least impacted with only 4 codes (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4

Principal Perspectives about Teacher Efficacy and Collective Instructional Leadership

Characteristic	# of codes assigned
Teacher confidence	24
Teacher judgment	11
Teacher beliefs	6
Student achievement	5
Planning and organization	4

As previously discussed, two new code categories were developed based upon data gathered during the interview process. The second of these two code categories focused on those activities and characteristics that have a negative impact on teacher efficacy. As referenced by two different principals during separate interviews, one of the major negative impacts on teacher efficacy is the continued changing of mandated programs from both the school district and state department. As one 11-year veteran principal explained:

> It does seem like we get really good at a program or initiative over the course of three to four years, and then someone comes along and says "guess what, we are going to change this." That is hard for teachers. I think when they (teachers) start feeling less confident is when we change things and there are constantly new initiatives. When this happens teachers feel we have to start all over and have to learn a new way to do something.

Another principal confirmed this consistent change in programs to have a negative impact on teacher efficacy when she stated the following while discussing the implementation of a new statewide growth and effectiveness system:

> We have all said this makes us sick to our stomachs and we feel like the new system almost makes us feel incompetent as professionals.

The idea of making teachers feel "sick" and "incompetent" while never allowing them to fully master a new program or initiative undeniably lays a negative foundation for teacher

efficacy. Other examples of negative impacts on teacher efficacy shared during the interviews included the cutting of allocations and resources. This was best described in this principal comment:

> We have a lot less money to deal with in our allocations this year, which is a good thing and a bad thing. But this past year we had 20 homerooms; next year we will have more students and less money so we are having to downsize to 19 homerooms. It becomes a discussion of if we [the school] are going to have to take a homeroom from somewhere and where can we afford to do so? Do we want to look at a testing grade where they had large classes the year before, or do we want to look at first grade where all the foundational skills are taught? We juggle and try to do the best we can but it is tough. I do think it can really have a negative impact on morale, especially in a case like having to cut a homeroom. Everybody is going to feel the pinch because there are going to probably be two really large classes. That is not good, but we do the best we can.

From this example, it can be inferred that due to low allocations designated from the district level, the school must adjust the total number of classrooms and volume of students per classroom. Due to the adjustment, one of the 20 positions will have to be eliminated, possibly resulting in the loss of a teacher along with teachers in this school being faced with larger class size numbers. Both of these actions have great potential of negatively impacting both morale and confidence within the staff and lowering the overall level of collective teacher efficacy. In the next stage of the data analysis process, I further narrowed categories and began to combine data from each phase goal question to develop themes related to understanding how collective instructional leadership is influencing teacher efficacy in high-performing elementary schools in central Kentucky.

Stage 3–Selective Coding

The selective coding stage involved the combining of multiple categories created during the axial coding stage to form themes in order to answer Phase 1 goal questions. These themes were then used in the final stage of data analysis to help develop a theory

explaining how collective instructional leadership is influencing teacher efficacy in high performing central Kentucky elementary schools.

Individuals involved in collective instructional leadership. The principal and focus-group members identified those individuals who were most closely related to the various dimensions of collective instructional leadership through various parts of interviews. Through the axial coding stage, data from interviews were consolidated to show individuals most closely involved with collective instructional leadership to be teachers, leadership teams, SBDM council members, principals, district administrators, school-wide committees, and parent teacher organizations. Participants' perceptions about school-wide decisions were almost always based upon the involvement of other individuals in the decision-making process. As one principal noted, "We don't ever really want to make that decision on our own, so we take it to the faculty," thus implying a genuine need for others to be involved in various decision-making at the school.

From the interview data, it was determined that three out of the four dimensions, comprising the makeup of collective instructional leadership, utilized the principal as a key individual involved in the process. The three dimensions of collective instructional leadership in which the principal plays a crucial role were identified by study participants as: Improvement of Instructional Practices, Management of People and Processes, and Allocation of Resources. Oddly enough, none of the focus-groups or individual principals referenced the principal as being a major player in shaping the school vision, mission, and culture. According to one principal, her role is to help others shape the vision for the school through shared leadership.

> We revisit our vision and mission statements every year because things change from year to year. We do this at the beginning of every school year at our August

> faculty meeting. We pull back out our vision and our mission and discuss things such as, is this still why we are here and is this why we exist? Depending on the focus and initiatives put in place for the year, we almost always make little changes. We also take this to our school-based council where we have a lot of parent participation.

From the data analysis of both principal and focus-group data, it can be inferred that the principal has the most involvement in implementation of collective instructional leadership for the school. Although the principal does not play a main role in all dimensions, he or she helps facilitate the overall practice of collective instructional leadership within the organization.

All schools and interview groups also discussed how pleased they were with parent support in their schools. Several examples of parent support were given in each interview. According to a teachers during one focus-group interview,

> They're [parents in the parent teacher organization] very supportive with the classroom teachers and with the building as a whole. They do a lot of fundraising and allocate funds back to the classrooms. For example, if I'm doing an activity and need 24 water bottles, they quickly provide them with no questions asked. Just last week I needed Kleenex, paper towels and Clorox wipes. I sent an email out around 8:00 am and by 9:30 am someone had dropped them off in the office. It was instantaneous.

However, parents were not only discussed in the role of providing resources. During one focus group session, a teacher explained how her parents trust in her abilities as an educator.

> I also feel that we have the parent trust. To give you an example, I had a discipline situation that I dealt with and had to bring the parents in to talk with them. It felt really good to hear the parents say "I trust you. I know that you're doing what is best for my child and other children too. I trust the decision that you've made and appreciate that you took it seriously." So I feel like, they do trust me as a professional.

This overwhelming gratitude toward parent participation in all three schools suggests that parents and parent teacher organizations also play a crucial role in the

collective instructional leadership dimension reflecting allocation of resources and undoubtedly raising the level of individual teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy throughout the school.

How collective instructional leadership functions in schools. Through the outcomes of the axial coding stage, I was able to determine that from all four dimensions represented in the collective instructional leadership model, Improvement of Instructional Practices is the most widely used function of collective instructional leadership with the dimension Vision, Mission, and Culture being the second highest dimension utilized. Instructional leadership clearly emphasizes the need for the principal to actively facilitate a growth in curriculum and instruction, or as one principal put it, "I just feel like if you are not in classrooms and you don't know what teachers are doing and what kids are learning, you can't effectively lead the school." It is crucial this leadership practice remain a part of the collective instructional leadership definition.

When looking at the dimension of Vision, Mission, and Culture, it is important to note that it was discussed from the idea of collective or shared leadership responsibilities. One teacher referenced this dimension during the interviews:

> I think our principal definitely shares leadership practices in the sense that anytime a major decision is made typically he forms a committee. He values input of teachers and respects their opinions. He looks at them as the experts and rarely does he make a decision on his own without their input.

Another teacher asserted, "I feel like he empowers different people, whether it will be teachers, staff and PTA members. He trusts how they show their leadership and empowers them to grow as leaders." Just as with instructional leadership, collective leadership also plays a major role in how principals and administrators currently lead

their schools, therefore, it only makes sense that it too remains a part of the collective instruction leadership definition.

In understanding a need for how both leadership styles play a role in the functioning of a school, I assert the original definition of collective instructional leadership to include parts of both instructional leadership and collective leadership.

Actions by leaders to promote teacher efficacy. As discussed in the axial coding stage, both focus-group and principal interview data were narrowed to develop categories related to the actions principals engage in to promote teacher efficacy. The focus-group interview data included six overall categories while principal data produced seven. Based upon overlap between the focus-group categories and principal categories, five overall themes were developed to describe actions leaders engage in to promote teacher efficacy: (a) creation of leadership opportunities, (b) open communication and transparency, (c) facilitate a positive school culture, (d) provide resources including meaningful professional development, and (e) trusts teachers.

Teachers discussed instances where their principals are allowing them and others to participate in leadership roles. According to one teacher,

> Teachers actually lead PLCs as a result of the shared leadership meetings. Those are all conducted by teachers, and we have some teachers who are part of the teacher leadership network. They also come back and facilitate different ELA and PLCs to other staff members.

Principals also understand that others, specifically teachers, are experts in their fields. By allowing teachers the chance to utilize their expertise through leadership roles, the principal, school, and individual teachers benefit and grow. One of the principals explained:

> I fully realize that just because I'm in the position of principal that does not mean I'm the expert in everything. I know who my strong math people are, my strong language arts people and whenever. Like right now, we are looking to improve writing in our school. I have identified who the strong writing teachers would be in our building and go to them for guidance…it's depending on what we are trying to improve and that determines who I pull in to help out.

Open communication is essential. According to a school counselor, "communication is just key to have." Although not always easy, the action of openly communicating with staff and being transparent in decision-making creates buy-in, builds camaraderie within the school culture, and constructs trust among the faculty. According to one teacher her principal "is just very transparent." And I think everyone really appreciates that it doesn't seem like it is taking place behind closed doors, instead, it is our decision. It's our school." This statement seems to justify the importance of open communication and transparency within the school.

Facilitating a positive school culture requires the "opportunity to have input on just about everything" according to one principal. Through the open facilitation of actions, events, and decision-making, the principal begins to shape the beliefs and perceptions of those inside and outside the school. According to a guidance counselor, "I don't see and I don't feel the sense of fear. If teachers have a concern about anything, I don't think they hold back. I think they feel comfortable in coming to them [school leaders] with any concerns they have." During focus-group interviews, a teacher disclosed, "We know that we have both of their [principals] support and that helps the confidence of teachers."

Being one of the many roles principals must balance, servant leadership constitutes a crucial aspect in helping a school become successful. In many cases,

principals are asked to obtain and provide resources for teachers and students including professional development opportunities. As put by one principal:

> We try to make it a situation where if we are asking something of teachers then we are going to give them the PD to understand it. We are going to teach you how to do it and you are going to have time to get it accomplished.

When provided with meaningful professional development opportunities, it was perceived through one teachers' comment during focus-groups that teachers "are always supported and helped through the process so that we all have a better understanding of it." Principals and school leaders alike need to be very intentional in their servant leadership role, making sure to capitalize on the opportunity of allowing teachers specific professional development to meet their needs in order to strengthen instruction in the classroom leading to higher student achievement levels.

The last theme identified as actions by leaders is that of trust. According to one administrative coach,

> I do feel like we all share a common goal and feel like those are represented well, so we know what direction we want to go. Teams work together to create activities and plans, but we really support autonomy in order to allow teachers to decide the best path based upon their individual student's needs.

Another teacher in a different focus group interview reiterated, "He [the principal] values input of teachers and respects their opinions. He looks at them as the expert and rarely does he make a decision on his own." When teachers are trusted and treated as professionals, the level of efficacy within themselves and the school collectively improves, in turn, allowing teachers to experiment with new ideas and methods leading to greater student achievement levels.

Aspects of teacher efficacy most impacted. Stage 2 (axial coding) allowed me to develop six categories from focus-group interviews and five categories from principal

interviews revealing those characteristics associated with the definition of teacher efficacy that are most impacted through collective instructional leadership. During stage 3 (selective coding), I combined all nine categories to develop themes disseminating those characteristics of teacher efficacy that are most impacted by collective instructional leadership. A total of four themes were determined to be the most impacted through collective instructional leadership: (a) teacher confidence, (b) teacher judgment, (c) teacher beliefs, and (d) student achievement. Although planning and organization yielded many codes by focus-group and principal interviews, it was not mentioned by all three schools involved in the study whereas the other four areas were. Due to this gap in recognition from all data sources, I feel further investigation around this characteristic needs to be completed before it can be recognized as an aspect impacted through collective instructional leadership.

From all four themes, teacher confidence is easily identified as the characteristic most impacted through collective instructional leadership. Descriptions of actions associated with building and sustaining teacher confidence include (a) teachers being empowered through school leadership opportunities, (b) teachers feeling confident they will receive support by going to the principal over issues of concern, (c) teachers viewed as experts in the building, (d) teachers having successes recognized and celebrated, and (e) teachers feeling they are advocated for and supported by school leadership.

Teacher judgment was seen as the second most-impacted characteristic of teacher efficacy and was influenced through the following: (a) teachers having the opportunity to give input in school decision-making, (b) teachers having input into decisions is

genuinely valued, (c) teachers being trusted to do the right thing, and (d) teachers being given the opportunity to plan instruction with other teachers.

Teacher beliefs were also highly regarded as being the most impacted through collective instructional leadership. Even though teacher beliefs were not found to be at the same level as teachers' confidence and judgment, teachers' beliefs were still highlighted as the third most impacted by collective instructional leadership. This was present through the following actions: (a) teachers feel their voices are truly heard and taken into consideration, (b) school leadership respects teacher opinions, and (c) teachers are sought in the development of school vision and mission statements and school expectations.

Although it did not yield as many codes as planning and organization, during interviews all three schools referenced student achievement as being impacted through collective instructional leadership, whereas planning and organization was referenced by only two schools. Being impacted through collective instructional leadership, student achievement was evidenced through statements and comments pertaining to: (a) teachers being supported to try new ideas, (b) kids being the emphasis of school leaders, not test scores, (c) authentic feedback given to teachers to help support instruction within the classroom, and (d) individual professional development needs are addressed by school leadership.

Stage 4–Development of a Theory

Based upon data analysis of both individual principal and focus-group interviews, I hypothesize that collective instructional leadership is indeed currently taking place in the three high-performing central Kentucky elementary schools. Through the four

dimensions, it was determined that principals have the greatest amount of influence in Improvement of Instructional practices; however, no dimension is of any greater importance than another. I am suggesting that educational leaders look to combine their instructional leadership and collective leadership practices in order to gain a better focus and avoid situational overlap in their daily facilitation of the school. Through collective collaboration with teachers and parents, not only those individuals defined as school leaders, principals increase the overall efficacy levels within the school, allowing for the focus to remain on student achievement.

According to interview data in this study, the use of collective instructional leadership influences both teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy in a positive manner. When principals give teachers opportunities to shape the vision, mission, and culture of the school, teachers feel more empowered and are afforded the genuine chance to participate in school decision-making, helping boost their confidence, judgment, and beliefs. This hypothesis of collective instructional leadership is also supported in Leithwood and Louis (2012) work focusing on collaboration. They postulate that successful school leaders create opportunities for teachers to collaborate and through collaboration both instruction and teacher quality are enhanced.

Through the improvement of instructional practices, principals are given the chance to support teachers in trying new ideas and allowing them freedom within their educational practice. Also, by allowing teachers the time to plan together and collaborate, while supporting them with instructional coaches as needed, teacher trust and autonomy is built, in turn, generating higher levels of creativity, student achievement, and contributing to higher levels of planning and organization.

Management of people and processes shows simple actions, such as allowing teachers to be involved in the hiring of new staff and formatting professional development based upon the individual teachers' needs, will build teachers' trust and confidence while also supporting the culture of the building and teachers as professionals.

In working with various committees and organizations such as the parent teacher organization members or SBDM council members in the allocation of resources, principals are able to provide outside stakeholders, parents, and community members the opportunity to be involved in the school. This outreach promotes a transparent partnership that will in turn help provide resources needed by teachers and students. The outcome will result in teachers feeling more supported and trusted as professionals, thus raising the level of both individual and collective teacher efficacy.

Summary

This chapter described how collective instructional leadership is currently influencing teacher efficacy in high-performing elementary schools in central Kentucky through a two-phase research process. The results confirmed the operational definition of collective instructional leadership I developed for this grounded-theory study and provided evidence that collective instructional leadership is currently taking place in the three participating high-performing elementary schools. By engaging in collective instructional leadership, principals and other leaders within those schools are afforded the opportunity to raise both individual teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy within their schools. Chapter 5 suggests ways for implementing collective instructional leadership, showcases examples of how I currently utilize it at the elementary school

where I serve as principal, and lays groundwork for future research of collective instructional leadership.

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CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The final chapter of this dissertation restates the research problem while reviewing the methods utilized during the study. Throughout the chapter, specific sections summarize the results, discuss implications associated with the study, and lay the foundation for future research about collective instructional leadership.

This grounded-theory study (Charmaz, 2005; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) examined how collective instructional leadership is utilized within high-performing elementary schools in central Kentucky according to principals, teachers, parents, and other school personnel. This study was based on an operational definition of *collective instructional leadership* framed by four dimensions of collective and instructional leadership (Center for Educational Leadership, 2012; Leithwood & Louis, 2012) that were shown to have a direct impact on teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy. Through the use of the grounded theory process, I was able to create themes from individual principal interviews and focus-group interviews, which were used to hypothesize a positive influence between collective instructional leadership and teacher efficacy. This study's findings are to be used by principals, teacher leaders, district administrators, and instructors of preservice preparation programs to support both individual teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy through collective instructional leadership.

Discussion of Findings

This two-phase qualitative design utilized participants' perceptions gathered through individual interviews with principals and focus-group interviews with parents, teachers, and other school administrators (Phase 1). A sequence of data analysis of

participants' commentary provided answers to the overarching research question and guiding questions. During Phase 2 of the study, Corbin and Strauss's (2008) four-stage coding method was used to merge codes and categories into themes, resulting in a hypothesis about how collective instructional leadership is influencing teacher efficacy in high-performing elementary schools in central Kentucky.

Individuals Involved in Collective Instructional Leadership

Although many individuals play a crucial role in the facilitation of collective instructional leadership (see Chapter 4) this study confirms that the principal is the key individual involved in creating and implementing collective instructional leadership in elementary schools. Data revealed that three of the four dimensions associated with collective instructional leadership showed the principal playing a critical role. The only dimension in which the principal was not referenced as key individual was that associated with vision, mission, and culture. Focus-group participants provided examples of their principals empowering them and others to create and shape the school mission and vision. Through empowering others, the culture of the school is positively impacted by optimization (Marzano et al., 2005) of teachers and staff, thus raising levels of collective teacher efficacy. Warranting this sense of ownership within themselves, teachers commit to achieving the school's vision and engaging in creating collective teacher efficacy.

Parents, through their involvement in diverse school-based organizations, also reported having an influence on the collective instructional leadership model. Although only associated with the dimension pertaining to allocation of resources, parental support appeared to be one of the greatest influences in raising the level of teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy. All three schools participating in the study achieved the

highest performance level for elementary schools in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. This achievement appears connected to high levels of parent involvement within the elementary schools, which impacts teachers' perception and confidence in their abilities to do their jobs at the highest levels. That is, parental trust in teachers appears to generate high levels of student achievement.

Like principals, teachers also play a vital role in the collective instructional leadership model. This study revealed that teachers actively contribute to the following three dimensions of collective instructional leadership: (a) creation of vision, mission and culture, (b) improvement of instructional practices, and (c) allocation of resources. During several interviews, study participants discussed how committees were formed by the principal or by the school council to make decisions concerning instructional and resource issues. Most of these committees were comprised of teachers, and occasionally included parents, who shared a common goal or assumed a leadership role to fulfill a given task. Findings from this study suggest that when principals and school councils make decisions based upon teacher and parent recommendations, individual teacher beliefs, confidence, and judgments are elevated, which in turn generates collective teacher efficacy and higher student achievement.

Functions of Collective Instructional Leadership

The model of collective instructional leadership (see Figure 2.2) purposed in this dissertation included the four dimensions suggested in the literature:

- Vision, Mission, and Culture
- Improvement of Instructional Practices
- Management of People and Processes

- Allocation of Resources

Through analyses of data gathered during principal interviews and focus-group interviews, all four dimensions were found to play crucial roles in the overall performance of the school. The Improvement of Instructional Practices dimension was the most frequently referenced by participants in this study. According to the literature, it is important for principals to conduct classroom walkthroughs regularly and provide meaningful feedback to teachers with regards to instructional practices (Center for Educational Leadership, 2012; Marzano et al. 2005). Findings from this study suggest teachers need opportunities and freedom to try new ideas in their classrooms, without fear of consequences for failing, and to collaborate with peers about those experiences. Findings from interview data suggest, when teachers are given professional autonomy and trusted to make sound instructional decisions, the collective-efficacy level and overall confidence among personnel within an elementary school is raised.

Principal's Actions and Facilitation of Teacher Efficacy

Five actions by principals appeared to have the greatest impact on promoting teacher efficacy in the high-performing elementary schools participating in this study. The five principal actions include (a) creating leadership opportunities, (b) providing open communication and transparency, (c) facilitating a positive school culture, (d) providing resources and meaningful professional development, and (e) trusting teachers.

Create leadership opportunities. During principal interviews, many instances were reported when they purposefully created opportunities for others to be involved in leadership roles throughout the school. These opportunities spanned a continuum from allowing teachers to lead Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings with their

peers, to developing and facilitating school-wide instructional programs. During their interview sessions, the three principals voiced their understanding that they were not the experts at everything within their schools. They asserted, it was more important that they be able to identify individuals' strengths, in order to capitalize on their abilities, rather than attempt to direct something about which they were not familiar. By placing others in diverse leadership roles, individuals' confidence levels, beliefs within themselves, and professional judgments were positively influenced, paving the way for organizational growth and increased levels of teacher efficacy.

Provide open communication and transparency. Although not always easy, according to the principals, being open and transparent, especially during the school decision-making process, creates support for decisions made and invites staff members to participate in school-wide initiatives. Through the development of openly communicated issues, teachers' structural understanding related to those issues is altered, helping them create a sense of need for their professional insight related to the problem at hand. As discussed by participants during focus-group interviews, this transparency and allowance of others to be involved in the decision-making process shapes organizational members views when regarding problems. Instead of feeling top-down initiatives are being dictated to them, school-community members are pro-active and informed, enabling them to develop a plan for how to embrace and support new initiatives, which in turn further enhances the organization's level of collective efficacy.

Facilitate a positive school culture. According to study participants, it is important to understand that the principal is not singly responsible for creating a positive school culture, but rather the responsibility of all school-community members to facilitate

and promote a positive school culture. Findings overlap with the theme of open communication and transparency: One of the best ways for principals to facilitate a positive school culture is through providing opportunities for others to be involved in the decision-making process (Leithwood & Louis, 2012; Marzano et al., 2005; Miller & Rowan, 2006). Although not the only capacity in which school leaders can work to facilitate a positive school culture, allowing teachers and staff to take part in the decision-making process proved to be one of the strongest ways to assist in the growth of a positive school culture.

Provide resources and professional development. Study findings revealed that a major contributor to principals' successes as organizational leaders relates to their ability to provide resources for organizational members. An analysis of focus-group interview data showed that teacher efficacy was significantly influenced when professional development focused on individual teachers' needs and was used to guide teachers through new initiatives and mandates. Due to the individualized attention and support provided by their principals, teachers voiced a feeling of being valued in their work and satisfied professionally as their concerns for growth were not only being heard, but attended to by school administration.

Study findings also revealed that when teachers are provided with the resources necessary for instruction their overall success and efficacy levels were raised. Study participants also mentioned the support that parents provided when the elementary schools needed resources not provided by their districts. Through their engagement in various school-wide parent organizations, school-based decision making councils, and

individual efforts, parents provided needed instructional resources, which yielded a positive impact on individual teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy.

Trust teachers. The most cited theme regarding trust involved principals valuing teacher input in decision making. Discussed in the capacity of both individual teacher input on specific situations and the willingness of principals to compose teacher committees to tackle a specific task, teacher input in various school decision-making activities elevated individual teacher efficacy and reassured their ability to believe in their own personal judgments. Trust was also discussed as a positive factor when principals allowed teachers autonomy within their lesson planning and classroom instructional practices. Teachers explained that when given the opportunity to plan and teach according to their own professional judgments, their level of confidence within their abilities was elevated. Due to this trust in instructional decisions, teachers also discussed how they were more eager to experiment and try new instructional practices within their own classrooms.

Negative Impacts on Teacher Efficacy

Although this study focused on the positive associations of teacher efficacy, it was evident within the interview data that negative aspects of teacher efficacy were occurring in the three high performing elementary schools. According to teachers and principals, two actions negatively affected teacher efficacy: (a) continuous changing of programs from the district and state levels and (b) irrelevant mandated professional development. When discussing the continuous turnover of both state and district mandates, one principal emphasized the disheartening impact the changes had on teachers: About the time they felt proficient in addressing requirements within one

mandate, another one was introduced that required them to do something different. This consistent change from the highest administrative levels, particularly within the most recent three years, had generated much frustration and tension among both experienced and novice teachers.

The other negative impact on teacher efficacy was associated with professional development. During focus-group interviews, some teachers discussed how in previous jobs at other schools they were commonly forced to participate in professional development that was either irrelevant to their practice or not well designed. Essentially, frustration arose when they were required to participate in training that they could not use to improve their instructional practice and that wasted their personal time. With both of these areas being found to negatively impact teacher efficacy, it is suggested that upper educational administration, local district administration, and principals make themselves aware of the negative consequences associated within their implementation of programs and professional development.

Relationship to Current Research

When comparing the findings of this study to the Center for Educational Leadership's (2012) dimensions for instructional leadership (see Table 2.1), I suggest the vocabulary within the model be modified for those seeking to describe accurately and utilize collective instructional leadership. Table 5.1 displays the instructional leadership framework from the Center for Educational Leadership (2012) with an updated vocabulary, reflecting current descriptions of collective instructional leadership that emerged through data analysis.

Table 5.1

4 Dimensions and Descriptions of Collective Instructional Leadership

Dimension	Descriptions
Vision, Mission and Culture Building	• A vision of academic success for every student is set through collaboration and shared leadership. • *Organizational members* foster a culture of learning through setting high expectations. • *Organizational members* create and maintain a results-focused learning environment.
Improvement of Instructional Practice	• *Organizational members* use data driven inquiry to monitor student learning and analyze teacher and leadership practices. • Research based instructional frameworks are used to observe teaching and plan professional developments. • *Organizational members* deliver meaningful feedback to teachers through data and evidence of student learning.
Allocation of Resources	• *Organizational members* use resources to accomplish goals and ensure powerful teaching and learning for all students. • Clear processes and procedures are articulated to provide instructional support. • *Organizational members* use data to make equitable decisions about the allocations of resources.
Management of People and Processes	• *Organizational members* recruit, hire, support and retain the most qualified staff members. • Instructional leaders plan, implement, advocate, support, communicate, and monitor all leadership responsibilities including curriculum, instruction, and school improvement planning. • Supportive working environments are created and include professional development opportunities, time and space for collaboration, and access to professional learning communities.

The inclusion of others, in addition to school leaders, within the definition of school leadership is reinforced through other means of research. DuFour and Marzano (2011) assert that effective leaders must understand that they are not able to accomplish great things on their own and that no single person can bring about effective organizational change. Kouzes and Posner (2003) also highlight a need for collaboration within an organization noting, "Without it people can't get extraordinary things done in organizations" (p. 22). In both instances above, the researchers never discuss school leadership as a task completed by a single individual but rather through a collective approach to organizational leadership. Research findings from this study support the idea that effective instructional leadership is a collective responsibility (Lambert, 2002; Leithwood & Louis, 2012). The greater involvement among school-community members with school leaders, the greater chance the organization has of raising its collective efficacy levels and in turn, improving instruction and overall student achievement.

Implications for Research and Practice

This study explored how collective instructional leadership is influencing teacher efficacy in three high-performing elementary schools in central Kentucky. Beginning with an extensive review of the literature and continuing with data collection through individual principal interviews and focus-group interviews, I was able to compose a beginning model for collective instructional leadership and develop an understanding of how the dimensions within the model generate a positive impact on individual and collective teacher efficacy.

Themes outlining individuals involved in collective instructional leadership, how collective instructional leadership is currently functioning in high-performing elementary

schools, and actions leaders engage in to promote teacher efficacy, were all generated through principal and focus group responses. These findings not only provided a preliminary identification of *who* and *how* within collective instructional leadership but also the actions associated with promoting individual and collective teacher efficacy. Because data were collected at only three elementary schools, further research needs to be conducted in other settings (e.g., middle schools, high schools) to identify more fully (a) who is involved in collective instructional leadership, (b) how collective instructional leadership functions, and (c) actions by leaders that promote individual and collective teacher efficacy.

Results generated by the study also suggest vocabulary modifications to the Center for Educational Leadership's current instructional leadership dimensions in order to best reflect the collective instructional leadership model. It is suggested that further research be conducted on different education levels other than elementary and schools outside of central Kentucky to help validate the present collective instructional leadership model, its influence on teacher efficacy, and changes suggested to the instructional leadership definition.

Lessons Learned

Being a doctoral candidate at the University of Kentucky afforded me the opportunity to enhance my understanding of leadership through gathering perceptions among current school leaders and organizational members. Without realizing it when developing the proposal for my dissertation, the topic of collective instructional leadership and teacher efficacy has proven to be of great value in my current career. As I launched my dissertation study, I also assumed a position as an elementary school

principal. Conducting this study has shifted my thinking about how I practice leadership, and extended my knowledge and understanding to the importance of individual and collective teacher efficacy.

Currently, my staff and other school-community members are working closely to overcome many challenges on a daily basis. Over the past year, I have looked for more ways to involve others in the four dimensions of collective instructional leadership, and at this writing, my school is making steady gains through my doing that. During the past year, my staff and I sat down together and shaped a new vision and mission for the school. This was something in the past that had always been dictated to teachers and other school-community members from the administration. Now that we have worked together to form a vision for our destination, the teachers, staff members and parents seem to take greater pride and ownership in accomplishing the goals we set. We are also currently looking for more ways to incorporate parents into the school. Our PTA is making a push this year to get more parents involved within the organization, and teachers are reaching out to parents for material and instructional support.

This year I have also allowed teachers more autonomy in their instructional planning and delivery. It is my hope they will begin to develop greater confidence in their teaching abilities and open up to try new ideas and strategies for instruction. Along with other improvements linked to implementing the collective instructional leadership model, my anticipation is these changes will help our students toward continued success and make our school a place everyone feels valued.

Closing Thoughts

As the public education system continues to grow and change, it is my hope this study helps principals, district administrators, and instructors in preservice preparation programs see the value within individual and collective teacher efficacy. By adjusting current thinking and leadership practices to include the collective instructional leadership model, school administrators may begin to see a positive shift throughout their school organization. Through continued encouragement and support, teachers may build confidence in their instructional capabilities, which in turn, may promote greater student achievement and enhanced school success.

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APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL

UK
UNIVERSITY OF
KENTUCKY

Office of Research Integrity
IRB, IACUC, CORC
315 Kinkead Hall
Lexington, KY 40506-0057
859-257-9428
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Initial Review

Approval Ends
March 2, 2016

IRB Number
15-0018-P4S

TO: Kyle Lee
Education
111 Dickey Hall
0017
PI phone #: (502) 751-7205

FROM: Chairperson/Vice Chairperson
Non-medical Institutional Review Board (IRB)

SUBJECT: Approval of Protocol Number 15-0018-P4S

DATE: March 11, 2015

On March 4, 2015, the Non-medical Institutional Review Board approved your protocol entitled:

Influence of Collective Instructional Leadership on Teacher Efficacy

Approval is effective from March 4, 2015 until March 2, 2016 and extends to any consent/assent form, cover letter, and/or phone script. If applicable, attached is the IRB approved consent/assent document(s) to be used when enrolling subjects. **[Note, subjects can only be enrolled using consent/assent forms which have a valid "IRB Approval" stamp unless special waiver has been obtained from the IRB.]** Prior to the end of this period, you will be sent a Continuation Review Report Form which must be completed and returned to the Office of Research Integrity so that the protocol can be reviewed and approved for the next period.

In implementing the research activities, you are responsible for complying with IRB decisions, conditions and requirements. The research procedures should be implemented as approved by the IRB protocol. It is the principal investigator's responsibility to ensure any changes planned for the research are submitted for review and approval by the IRB prior to implementation. Protocol changes made without prior IRB approval to eliminate apparent hazards to the subject(s) should be reported in writing immediately to the IRB. Furthermore, discontinuing a study or completion of a study is considered a change in the protocol's status and therefore the IRB should be promptly notified in writing.

For information describing investigator responsibilities after obtaining IRB approval, download and read the document "PI Guidance to Responsibilities, Qualifications, Records and Documentation of Human Subjects Research" from the Office of Research Integrity's IRB Survival Handbook web page [http://www.research.uky.edu/ori/IRB-Survival-Handbook.html#PIresponsibilities]. Additional information regarding IRB review, federal regulations, and institutional policies may be found through ORI's web site [http://www.research.uky.edu/ori]. If you have questions, need additional information, or would like a paper copy of the above mentioned document, contact the Office of Research Integrity at (859) 257-9428.

M. Van Tuinen, PhD/ah
Chairperson/Vice Chairperson

APPENDIX B: SCRIPTED PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about how you came to be an elementary school principal.

2. How do people within the school community exert an influence on the school's vision, mission, and culture?

3. Do you consider yourself, and your school, to participate in any certain type of leadership style? If so, which? Please explain you answer.

4. Who is included in the decision-making practices in your school? Why those individuals?

5. How are others included in the overall improvement of school instructional practices?

6. How does the school go about deciding the allocation of resources? Why?

7. Is it important that teachers feel confident in possessing the skills necessary to be successful at their jobs? Please explain your answer.

8. What does teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy mean to you?

9. What actions do you take to facilitate and promote both individual teacher efficacy and collective teacher efficacy?

10. How do you think overall school leadership practices influence teacher efficacy at your school? Please explain you answer.

APPENDIX C: SCRIPTED FOCUS-GROUP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Who is included in leadership practices and or decision-making at your school?

2. Describe how people within the school community exert an influence on the school's vision, mission, and culture.

3. How does the principal facilitate and or promote the sharing of leadership practices and decisions at the school?

4. How are others included in the overall improvement of school instructional practices?

5. Do you feel it is important that teachers are confident in their abilities to perform their job at the highest levels? Why? Please explain your answer.

6. How does the school go about deciding the allocation of resources? Do you agree or disagree with these methods? Why?

7. What type of leadership style or styles does your principal utilize on a consistent basis? How do you know?

8. How do you think leadership practices in your school are influencing teachers' confidence in their abilities to do their jobs?

APPENDIX D: RECRUITMENT FOR INTERVIEWS

Hello,

My name is ***Kyle Lee***, and I am a doctoral candidate conducting dissertation research under the supervision of ***Dr. Tricia Browne-Ferrigno,*** Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership Studies at the University of Kentucky.

I am seeking principals, teachers, administrators, and parents from your school in the central Kentucky region to volunteer to participate in interviews and focus groups to investigate the influence of collective instructional leadership on teacher efficacy.

Participation in this study involves interviews and focus groups that will focus on leadership, decision-making, and individual/group efficacy as it is practiced at your school. The interviews and focus groups will take approximately 45-60 minutes of your time and will be conducted in a location convenient to you that assures privacy.

If you are interested in participating, please contact me via electronic mail at kylelee0923@gmail.com or kyle.lee@uky.edu. I will send you a confirmation email that provides information concerning the location of the interview. If you have to cancel your appointment, please email or call me at 502-751-7203. Thank you.
Sincerely,

Kyle Lee

APPENDIX E: INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW CONSENT

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Influence of Collective Instructional Leadership on Teacher Efficacy

Individual Interview Consent

WHY ARE YOU BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?

You are being invited to take part in a research study about the influence of collective instructional leadership on teacher efficacy. You are being invited to take part in this research study because you are currently serving as a principal of a central Kentucky elementary school that earned a distinguished rating. If you volunteer to take part in this study, you will be one of about 20 people to do so.

WHO IS DOING THE STUDY?

The person in charge of this study is Kyle A. Lee a student at the University of Kentucky, Department of Educational Leadership Studies. He is being guided in this research by Dr. Tricia Browne-Ferrigno, a Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Kentucky.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

It is often misunderstood what schools do as a collective effort to promote school success and how group decisions impact the individual and overall efficacy levels of the school organization. Therefore, it is the intent of this study to find out how leadership practices and group decision-making influence teachers' abilities to feel confident in successfully performing those tasks necessary to help students be successful.

By doing this study, we hope to learn if and in what ways collective instructional leadership influences teacher efficacy in central Kentucky elementary schools.

ARE THERE REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

You should not participate in this study if you are not a principal of a central Kentucky elementary school identified as a distinguished school according to the 2012-2013 state KPREP results.

WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

The research procedures will be conducted at a convenient location for the participants to ensure safety and privacy (e.g. school office, conference room at the school, classroom at the school, or local library). Each interview session will take approximately 45-60 minutes. The PI may contact you via electronic email or telephone to ask for clarification on something that was said during interviews; you have the right to refuse to participate in any follow-up questions. The total amount of time you will be asked to volunteer for this study is 45 minutes to 1 hour over the next month.

WHAT WILL YOU BE ASKED TO DO?

You will be asked to participate in one semi-structured face-to-face interview, lasting no longer than 45 minutes in length, that include questions about leadership, school decision-making, and teacher efficacy. You will be interviewed individually and the interview will focus on how collective leadership and instructional leadership influences teacher efficacy in your school.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?

To the best of our knowledge, the things you will be doing have no more risk of harm than you would experience in everyday life.

WILL YOU BENEFIT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

There is no guarantee that you will get any benefit from taking part in this study. Your willingness to take part, however, may, in the future, help society as a whole better understand this research topic.

DO YOU HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the study and still keep the benefits and rights you had before volunteering.

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY, ARE THERE OTHER CHOICES?

If you do not want to be in the study, there are no other choices except not to take part in the study.

WHAT WILL IT COST YOU TO PARTICIPATE?

There are no costs associated with taking part in the study.

WILL YOU RECEIVE ANY REWARDS FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

You will not receive any rewards or payment for taking part in the study.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT YOU GIVE?

I will make every effort to keep private all research records that identify you to the extent allowed by law.

Your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When I write about the study to share it with other researchers, I will write about the combined information we have gathered. You will not be personally identified in these written materials. I may publish the results of this study; however, I will keep your name and other identifying information private.

I will make every effort to prevent anyone from knowing that you gave me information, or what that information is. Comments made during the interviews will not be shared with or disclosed to any other participants in the study. All transcriptions and data collected will be kept in my possession under lock and key. Volunteers' identification will remain confidential by use of an assigned code for use in data management.

I will keep private all research records that identify you to the extent allowed by law. However, there are some circumstances in which I may have to show your information to other people. For example, the law may require me to show your information to a court or to tell authorities if you report information about a child being abused or if you pose a danger to yourself or someone else. Also, I may be required to show information which identifies you to people who need to be sure we have done the research correctly; these would be people from such organizations as the University of Kentucky.

CAN YOUR TAKING PART IN THE STUDY END EARLY?

If you decide to take part in the study you still have the right to decide at any time that you no longer want to continue. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study.

The individual conducting the study may need to withdraw you from the study. This may occur if you are not able to follow the directions they give you, if they find that your being in the study is more risk than benefit to you, or if the agency funding the study decides to stop the study early for a variety of scientific reasons.

WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

There is a possibility that the data collected from you may be shared with other investigators in the future. If that is the case the data will not contain information that can identify you unless you give your consent or the UK Institutional Review Board (IRB) approves the research. The IRB is a committee that reviews ethical issues, according to federal, state and local regulations on research with human subjects, to make sure the study complies with these before approval of a research study is issued.

WHAT IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS, CONCERNS, OR COMPLAINTS?

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have questions, suggestions, concerns, or complaints about the study, you can contact the investigator, Kyle A. Lee at 502-751-7203 or via electronic mail (kylelee0923@gmail.com or kyle.lee@uky.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the staff in the Office of Research Integrity at the University of Kentucky between the business hours of 8am and 5pm EST, Mon-Fri. at 859-257-9428 or toll free at 1-866-400-9428. We will give you a signed copy of this consent form to take with you.

_____ _____

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study Date

_____

Printed name of person agreeing to take part in the study

_____ _____

Name of (authorized) person obtaining informed consent Date

APPENDIX F: FOCUS-GROUP INTERVIEW CONSENT

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Influence of Collective Instructional Leadership on Teacher Efficacy

Focus Group Interview Consent

WHY ARE YOU BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?

You are being invited to take part in a research study about the influence of collective instructional leadership on teacher efficacy. You are being invited to take part in this research study because you are currently serving as a teacher, administrator, or parent in a central Kentucky elementary school that earned a distinguished rating. If you volunteer to take part in this study, you will be one of about 20 people to do so.

WHO IS DOING THE STUDY?

The person in charge of this study is Kyle A. Lee a student at the University of Kentucky, Department of Educational Leadership Studies. He is being guided in this research by Dr. Tricia Browne-Ferrigno, a Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Kentucky.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

It is often misunderstood what schools do as a collective effort to promote school success and how group decisions impact the individual and overall efficacy levels of the school organization. Therefore, it is the intent of this study to find out how leadership practices and group decision-making influence teachers' abilities to feel confident in successfully performing those tasks necessary to help students be successful.

By doing this study, we hope to learn if and in what ways collective instructional leadership influences teacher efficacy in central Kentucky elementary schools.

ARE THERE REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

You should not participate in this study if you are not a teacher, administrator, or parent in a central Kentucky elementary school identified as a distinguished school according to the 2012-2013 state KPREP results.

WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

The research procedures will be conducted at a convenient location for the participants to ensure safety and privacy (e.g. school office, conference room at the school, classroom at the school, or local library). Each interview session will take approximately 45-60 minutes. The PI may contact you via electronic email or telephone to ask for clarification on something that was said during interviews; you have the right to refuse to participate in any follow-up questions. The total amount of time you will be asked to volunteer for this study is 45 minutes to 1 hour over the next month.

WHAT WILL YOU BE ASKED TO DO?

You will be asked to participate in one semi-structured focus group interview, lasting no longer than 1 hour in length, that include questions about leadership, school decision-making, and teacher efficacy. You will be interviewed with other individuals and the interview will focus on how collective leadership and instructional leadership influences teacher efficacy in your school.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?

To the best of our knowledge, the things you will be doing have no more risk of harm than you would experience in everyday life.

WILL YOU BENEFIT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

There is no guarantee that you will get any benefit from taking part in this study. Your willingness to take part, however, may, in the future, help society as a whole better understand this research topic.

DO YOU HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the study and still keep the benefits and rights you had before volunteering.

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY, ARE THERE OTHER CHOICES?

If you do not want to be in the study, there are no other choices except not to take part in the study.

WHAT WILL IT COST YOU TO PARTICIPATE?

There are no costs associated with taking part in the study.

WILL YOU RECEIVE ANY REWARDS FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

You will not receive any rewards or payment for taking part in the study.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT YOU GIVE?

As a focus group participant your identity will be known to all other subjects participating in the focus-group interview session. Prior to beginning the focus group, I shall ask that everyone present protect the confidentiality of all involved by not disclosing who was present and by not sharing any portion of the comments made. Please know that privacy cannot be guaranteed in the focus group session due to other subjects present during the focus group knowing what was said and by whom.

I shall make every effort to keep confidential all research records that identify you to the extent allowed by law. Your comments will be combined with those other participants taking part in this

study. When I write about the study to share it with other researchers, I will write about the combined information we have gathered. You will not be personally identified in these written materials. I may publish the results of this study; however, I will keep your name and other identifying information private.

I shall make every effort to prevent anyone from knowing that you gave us information, or what that information is. Comments and mapping diagrams made during the interviews will not be shared with or disclosed to any other participants in the study. All transcriptions and data collected will be kept in my possession under lock and key. Volunteers' identification will remain confidential by use of an assigned code for use in data management.

I will keep private all research records that identify you to the extent allowed by law. However, there are some circumstances in which I may have to show your information to other people. For example, the law may require me to show your information to a court or to tell authorities if you report information about a child being abused or if you pose a danger to yourself or someone else. Also, I may be required to show information which identifies you to people who need to be sure we have done the research correctly; these would be people from such organizations as the University of Kentucky.

CAN YOUR TAKING PART IN THE STUDY END EARLY?

If you decide to take part in the study you still have the right to decide at any time that you no longer want to continue. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study.

The individual conducting the study may need to withdraw you from the study. This may occur if you are not able to follow the directions they give you, if they find that your being in the study is more risk than benefit to you, or if the agency funding the study decides to stop the study early for a variety of scientific reasons.

WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

There is a possibility that the data collected from you may be shared with other investigators in the future. If that is the case the data will not contain information that can identify you unless you give your consent or the UK Institutional Review Board (IRB) approves the research. The IRB is a committee that reviews ethical issues, according to federal, state and local regulations on research with human subjects, to make sure the study complies with these before approval of a research study is issued.

WHAT IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS, CONCERNS, OR COMPLAINTS?

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have questions, suggestions, concerns, or complaints about the study, you can contact the investigator, Kyle A. Lee at 502-751-7203 or via electronic mail (kylelee0923@gmail.com or kyle.lee@uky.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the staff in the Office of Research Integrity at the University of Kentucky between the business hours of 8am and 5pm EST, Mon-Fri. at 859-257-9428 or toll free at 1-866-400-9428. We will give you a signed copy of this consent form to take with you.

_____ _____

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study Date

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Printed name of person agreeing to take part in the study

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Name of (authorized) person obtaining informed consent Date

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VITA

Kyle Andrew Lee

ACADEMIC DEGREES

Rank I	Superintendent Certification K-12 University of Kentucky, College of Education Lexington, Kentucky
MA Ed	Educational Administration – Principal Certification K-12 University of the Cumberlands, College of Education Williamsburg, Kentucky
BME	Music Education K-12 Morehead State University, College of Music Education Morehead, Kentucky

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2014-Present	Principal, Hearn Elementary School, Frankfort, Kentucky
2014-2015	Adjunct Professor, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky
2011-2014	Teacher, Emma B. Ward Elementary School, Lawrenceburg, Kentucky
2009-2011	Teacher, Lakewood Elementary School, Cecilia, Kentucky
2008-2009	Teacher, Overton High School, Memphis, Tennessee

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Invited Presentations

Lee, K. A. & Sampson, S. (2015). *PLCs in practice*. Conference session presenter Franklin County Professional Growth and Development Seminar, Frankfort, KY.

Lee, K. A. (2012). *A&H program review: Evidence collection and classroom practice.* Presenter Anderson County Professional Development Day, Lawrenceburg, KY.

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTATION AND SERVICES

Guest Lecturer

Lee, K. A. (2014 October; 2015 April, 2015 November) The interview and application process for new teachers. *LIS 510 Library and Information Science.* University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY.