Investigating the Intersection of School Structure and Teacher Leadership: A Mixed-Methods Study

DISSERTATION

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By

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Abstract

Extending leadership opportunities to teachers may be a way to expand leadership capacity in schools. This study focused on the intersection of two discrete bodies of literature, school structure and teacher leadership, and whether there is a correlation between enabling structure and teacher leadership. The study also examined differences in teachers’ perceptions of teacher leadership and enabling school structure by school grade level and formal staff position. This study employed mixed methods to examine teacher leadership in 23 Midwestern public school districts. Teachers, formal teacher leaders such as instructional coaches, nonteaching staff such as counselors, and administrators participated in the study. A teacher survey was administered ($N = 405$), which included items from existing teacher leadership and enabling school structure scales. Results from statistical analysis of teachers’ survey responses were used to select participants for follow-up observations and interviews ($n = 7$) to further examine the relationship between teacher leadership and school structure. Findings show a moderate correlation between enabling school structure and the extent of teacher leadership as well as differences in responses based on participants’ school level and position or role. In addition, three overarching themes characterized interview responses: teachers’ lack of time, the importance of the role of the principal, and the hierarchical structure of the schools and districts.
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Publications


Fields of Study

Major Field: Education: Policy and Leadership
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Chapter 1: Problem Statement

**Background and Rationale**

Teacher leadership is a subject of increasingly detailed academic study. Books are being published, degree programs are being established, and departments of education are creating professional teacher-leader certification or endorsements in their professional structures (Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, 2011). Though definitions and understandings of teacher leadership vary, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) defined teacher leadership in this way: “Teachers who are leaders lead both within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others toward improved educational practice” (p. 5). York-Barr and Duke (2004) defined teacher leadership as “the process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of school communities to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement” (pp. 287–288). The benefits of teacher leadership are many. According to York-Barr and Duke, reasons for renewed academic interest in teacher leadership include benefits to schools that fall into these four categories: “employee participation; expertise about teaching and learning; acknowledgement, opportunities and rewards for accomplished teachers; and benefits to students” (p. 258).

At the organizational level, teacher leadership may serve to further the goals and to enhance the effectiveness and productivity of a district, building, or department
School reform may also be more effective when leadership and responsibility are shared (Slater, 2008). Thus, improving opportunities for and the efficacy of teacher leadership in schools may lead to a new approach to school reform that, according to Elmore (1999), is needed: one that does not “bend the new policy requirements to the existing structure” (p. 10), but rather improves “in whole systems instead of merely in isolated schools or classrooms” (p. 6). Teacher leadership has the potential to increase the leadership capacity of schools, extending leadership beyond the position of principal, and thereby positively affecting teaching and learning. Schools, educators, and educational researchers have recently taken and should continue to take a stronger interest in teacher leadership because of its potential to affect systematic organizational reform.

Scholarship on teacher leadership encompasses a wide area of inquiry. With the relatively broad range of interpretations of the meaning and scope of teacher leadership in existing literature, there are myriad opportunities for deepening conceptual understandings as well as for making important linkages to other areas of academic research. This potential for varied approaches to investigating teacher leadership can be seen as positive in that it allows for teacher leadership to occur under a variety of circumstances.

However, in order to formulate a study that measures its intended constructs, a precise theoretical frame must be established. One way to frame a study of teacher leadership is to investigate which aspects of organizational structure in schools and districts serve to either enable or hinder teacher leadership. Organizational structure, or bureaucracy, is an established framework (Adler & Borys, 1996; Hoy & Sweetland
2000a, 2000b, 2001; Sinden, Hoy, & Sweetland, 2004a) through which to view the somewhat loosely established, broad literature on the subject of teacher leadership. Because there are numerous potential avenues for the investigation of teacher leadership, organizational structure supplies a theoretical angle from which to approach and organize the examination of teacher leadership literature. District leaders can and do alter the bureaucratic structures of schools; if a link exists between school structure and teacher leadership, then investigating this link provides a mechanism for implementing change.

A comprehensive review of existing scholarship found no studies that specifically examined teacher leadership through the lens of organizational structure. In the context of this gap in academic knowledge, this study contributes to the field in that it methodologically connects two disparate areas of literature—those examining teacher leadership and those describing organizational structure—that have not heretofore been examined in conjunction with one another. Using organizational structure as a lens through which to examine teacher leadership provides an approach that, until now, has remained uninvestigated. Although much is known about organizational structures in education, and although teacher leadership is a burgeoning field of academic inquiry, the examination of the latter by means of the former fills an existing theoretical gap. Additionally, the study of teacher leadership from the perspective of school structure has an important practical application: the blind application of teacher leadership to organizations with structures hostile to teacher leadership may create a situation in which teacher leadership, for all its potential for improving education, fails to reach its goals.
The Study

This study examines whether a relationship exists between teacher leadership and enabling organizational structure. This study hypothesizes that there should exist a positive correlation between enabling school structure and the extent of teacher leadership. The knowledge accumulated in the first body of literature summarized in this document, which examines enabling and hindering organizational structures, is exemplified by the work of Hoy and Sweetland (2000a, 2000b, 2001) and Sinden et al. (2004a). According to Sinden et al., enabling structures “facilitate problem solving, enable cooperation, encourage collaboration, promote flexibility, encourage innovation, protect participants, value differences, delight in the unexpected, learn from mistakes, and view problems as opportunities” (p. 465). Antithetically to these aims, hindering structures “expect blind adherence to rules, promote control, act autocratically, display rigidity, discourage change, discipline subordinates, demand consensus, fear the unexpected, punish mistakes, and view problems as obstacles” (Sinden et al., 2004a, p. 465). Unlike hindering structures, enabling structures can be used to support teachers rather than to exert power over them in the context of a bureaucratic hierarchy.

The second body of literature considered in this study, which examines teacher leadership, is broad and somewhat disparate in nature. As previously noted, existing definitions and understandings of teacher leadership are varied. According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2005), “Teachers who are leaders lead both within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others toward improved educational practice” (p. 5). York-Barr and Duke (2004) understood teacher leadership as “the process by which teachers,
individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of school communities to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement” (pp. 287–288).

In the context of these two specific academic areas of inquiry, this mixed-methods study examines in particular the organizational supports for and constraints against teacher leadership. Previous research suggested that shared decision making, collaboration, principal support, and positive relationships between teachers and principals all serve to support teacher leadership (Smylie, 1992; York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Zinn, 1997), whereas tense relationships, rigid role definition, and lack of teachers’ interest in participating in leadership activities all constrain teacher leadership (Zinn, 1997). As a result of the support provided by enabling structures, and because the definitions of supports to teacher leadership and enabling school structure are so similar, this study hypothesizes that teacher leadership initiatives should prove to be more successful in organizations exhibiting the organizational qualities of these enabling structures.

As presented in detail in Chapter 2 (Literature Review), a comparison of the discrete bodies of literature examining enabling school structure, on the one hand, and teacher leadership supports, on the other hand, reveals striking similarities. For example, linkages are revealed in both bodies of literature to organizational culture and to organizational climate. Furthermore, similarities can be found between aspects of enabling school structure and those factors that support teacher leadership; however, there were no studies found in the literature that quantitatively or qualitatively examined at the relationship between organizational structure and teacher leadership. The
similarities evident between the two areas of inquiry strongly support a first study of the
correlation between these two phenomena.

This large-scale ($N = 405$), mixed-methods study focused on the intersection
between school organizational structure and the presence and extent of teacher
leadership. Surveys and interviews were undertaken in 23 Midwestern school districts.
First, a comprehensive review of literature on teacher leadership is offered. Next, after
clarifying the value of using the lens of structure to better understand the support for
teacher leadership, the focus shifts to give an overview of the literature on organizational
structure and bureaucracy, which will serve as a theoretical framework for examining
teacher leadership. Last, the intersection of the two areas of inquiry is followed by an
introduction to the methods used in this study.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Conceptual Framework

This study is situated in the intersection between two theoretical frameworks. The first theoretical framework is the distinction between enabling and hindering organizational structures. This framework is exemplified by the work of Sinden et al. (2004a) and Hoy and Sweetland (2000a, 2000b, 2001). The second theoretical framework is structures that constitute supports for and constraints against teacher leadership. This second framework stems from a variety of sources in the literature; it represents an integration of frameworks and findings from various sources. Researchers have compiled their own frameworks for teacher leadership supports and constraints (Smylie, 1992; York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Zinn, 1997). Other researchers simply identified individual supports and constraints uncovered in the course of a study, but do not synthesize them into frameworks. Because this literature dissertation includes two disparate areas of literature—teacher leadership and school structure—it bridges the conceptual gap between them in order to support a study of the supports for teacher leadership in the context of enabling school structure. Three major areas are targeted: first, general literature on teacher leadership (with a focus on the supports and constraints); next, general literature on school structure (with a focus on enabling and hindering school structures); and finally, a section that synthesizes and analyzes the two.
Teacher Leadership

*Teacher leadership* is a term used broadly in a variety of academic studies. In lieu of defining the term from the outset, this section distills a definition of teacher leadership from the literature and the definitions contained therein. To accomplish this, the rationale for teacher leadership as a topic for which academic interest has greatly increased in recent years is formulated alongside an exploration of the limitations of the existing body of literature. Next, the evolution of the meaning and purpose of teacher leadership leads into an examination of how it is typically implemented in practice. The document then shifts to a discussion of how teacher leadership is conceptualized today, beginning with a broader discussion of the leadership literature and then narrowing to the ways in which teacher leadership is situated in that broader topic, allowing for the distillation of a concrete definition of teacher leadership from the literature. From that point, the focus of the document shifts to the research on teacher leadership specific to this study, the supports for and constraints against teacher leadership, and the connections between supports to teacher leadership and organizational structure as found in the literature.

Why Teacher Leadership?

Why is teacher leadership so relevant? Why has the field of educational science seen an increase in studies of this topic, and how is the accumulation of new knowledge about teacher leadership reflected in practice by teachers and in schools? York-Barr and Duke (2004) discussed four overarching reasons for the renewed interest in teacher leadership: “employee participation; expertise about teaching and learning; acknowledgement, opportunities and rewards for accomplished teachers; and benefits to students” (p. 258). The stated factors of employee participation as well as
acknowledgement, opportunities, and rewards for accomplished teachers focus more specifically on the individual teacher, whereas expertise about teaching and learning and benefits to students redirect focus to benefits to the academic field and to the school community if teachers can be more engaged in leadership. This four-cluster organization can also serve to structure a brief overview of existing scholarship.

Benefits of employee participation and acknowledgement, opportunities, and rewards for accomplished teachers focus on retaining teachers and developing their practice over the course of their entire careers. The 2011 Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium emphasized the creation and maintenance of a work force of strong 21st century teachers as an important reason for supporting teacher leadership. The implementation of teacher leadership benefits individual teachers in a variety of ways, including increased job satisfaction and professional growth and learning (Slater, 2008), as well as expansion and diversification of teachers’ work (Smylie, 1997). Teachers participating in leadership may increase the staff’s sense of ownership in decisions, and therefore result in higher staff morale (Weiss, Cambone, & Wyeth, 1992). These factors may lead to an increase in teacher professionalism and esteem (Hart, 1995; Smylie & Denny, 1990) or teacher commitment (Smylie et al., 1996). Consequently, teachers may feel more positively about their jobs (Katzenmoyer & Moller, 2001). An additional benefit is that talented and committed teachers may be drawn to and remain in the profession to positively affect student outcomes (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Smylie, 1994). Furthermore, teacher leadership may lead to a more democratic workplace environment (Hart, 1995), which is reflective of the democratic society whose values teachers are charged with perpetuating.
In schools, teachers are most directly connected with the teaching and learning process on a daily basis. Drawing on teachers’ knowledge and expertise regarding the instructional process is an important rationale for teacher leadership (Hart, 1995; Weiss et al., 1992). Teacher leadership utilizes teacher expertise about their students and community contexts as a resource for organizational improvement (Smylie & Denny, 1990). York-Barr and Duke (2004) asserted, “Teachers hold tacit or craft knowledge needed to inform and lead improvement initiatives” (p. 256). Indeed, improvement initiatives can be numerous and overwhelming; thus, maintaining multiple sources of leadership and expertise is crucial to sustainability of the organization. Teacher expertise may serve to improve the quality of school reform initiatives; therefore, teacher leadership may serve as a mechanism for improving and restructuring schools (Smylie, 1992). By means of successful reform, educators may preserve the public’s trust in public education and the value of a basic education for all students (Elmore, 1999). As alternatives to public education arise, the need to build and maintain this trust becomes increasingly urgent.

Finally and most importantly, improved student achievement is a benefit of teacher leadership (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). Improved student learning outcomes are a result of improved teaching and learning. Teaching and learning can be improved through teacher leadership and structures of collaboration that serve to highlight instructional issues (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster, & Cobb, 1995; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Additionally, if teacher leadership results in a higher degree of teacher ownership of results, teachers may hold themselves more accountable for instructional results in the form of measurable student growth (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). According to York-
Barr and Duke (2004), the rationale for the intensive study of teacher leadership lies in
the myriad ways in which it can serve to benefit students, improve their outcomes, and
bolster the effectiveness of public education in the United States.

**Evolution of Teacher Leadership: 20th Century to Present**

Smylie, Conley, and Marks (2002) provided a concise and effective historical
overview of teacher leadership. According to Smylie et al., before the middle of the 20th
century, the purpose of efforts toward expanding teacher leadership was to democratize
teaching during a period when educational institutions were adding layers of
organizational hierarchy. Interest in teacher leadership faded during the 1960s and 1970s
but was revived in the 1980s. During this era, efforts to expand teacher leadership shifted
to focus on school improvement and better learning outcomes by means of empowering
those who worked most closely with students. During this phase, the role of the teacher-
leader was often separate from that of other classroom teachers from the teacher-leader’s
regular classroom role. Whether teacher leadership took the form of a regular classroom
teacher with additional leadership responsibilities, or whether a new role developed that
was completely separate from traditional classroom teacher work, the tasks of these
teacher leaders were administrative in nature and focused on managerial tasks rather than
on the practice and sustained quality of instruction.

Smylie et al. (2002) discussed how outcomes of this era of teacher leadership
often included work overload, stress, role ambiguity, and role conflict. Furthermore,
additional teacher leadership tasks over and above regular classroom roles and
expectations sometimes created situations of teacher burnout. Having teachers step away
from traditionally defined roles created role confusion, ambiguity, and stress around established norms and relationships between faculty members (Smylie et al., 2002).

In the late 1990s, another shift took place in educational organizations’ approaches to implementing teacher leadership. Rather than focusing on separate roles or positions for the teacher leader, studies of teacher leadership morphed to focus closely on the collective organization and how leadership is distributed among organizational participants. Proponents of teacher leadership began to focus on what teacher leaders do (task orientation) rather than who they are or what official positions they hold (role orientation). Characteristics of this shift in the literature include (a) a focus on teacher expertise, as well as on (b) less hierarchical and more organic organizational structures that are increasingly responsive to context (Smylie & Denny, 1990).

As the reasons for academic and institutional interest in teacher leadership vary, so too does teacher leadership and its implementation in practice. Researchers suggested that there are four distinct categories that illustrate how teacher leadership is implemented in practice: (a) career ladders, (b) teacher mentoring programs, (c) master and lead teacher programs, and (d) decentralized, shared, or participative decision-making efforts (Smylie, 1994, 1995, 1997). Aspects of these four forms of implementation may be subsumed under a wide array of institutional initiatives such as professional learning communities, merit pay programs, or school-based management models (Darling-Hammond et al., 1995; Smylie, 1994, 1995, 1997). Like Smylie (1994), Hart (1995) discussed how schools had implemented teacher leadership initiatives. Hart also noted ways in which teacher leadership can be implemented in practice:
Mentor teacher programs, teacher career ladders, school-based decision making, shared governance, local control, and school-based councils appear in a plethora of shapes and sizes. Most designs seek to improve schools in part by redesigning the teaching career and the tasks, activities, and responsibilities associated with it. (p. 13)

The research in these four domains of teacher leadership implementation is broad, and includes studies on outcomes, characteristics of teachers, role development, performance, program support, program design and development, roles and relationships, and external influence factors (Smylie, 1997). In summary, the historical shift in purpose and definition of teacher-leader from management-focused to instruction-focused created a variety of forms of theoretical and practical implementation of teacher leadership, with widely varied results.

**Limitations in the General Teacher Leadership Literature**

In reviewing the teacher leadership literature, Smylie (1995, 1997) ascertained that only one in 10 studies on teacher leadership was grounded in theory. The remaining studies were grounded in policy logic. The theoretical frameworks most frequently used in investigating teacher leadership are role theory, sociology/social psychology, political science, or a combination of these. In addition, designs and methodologies are idiosyncratic and “contain flaws and limitations and pose problems for establishing validity and reliability” (Smylie, 1997, p. 539). Smylie (1994, 1995, 1997) further described the design of the studies in the teacher leadership literature as mostly surveys and case studies: the studies were mostly descriptive, and very few were experimental. Longitudinal studies tended to cover a relatively short span of time, and samples tended
to be small. Research instruments were typically questionnaires and interviews. Because
of idiosyncrasies inherent to roles in different settings, external validity presents a
problem with the applicability of the findings in these studies to the broader American
educational context. Methodology was also often unclear: in her review of principal
leadership, teacher leadership, and instructional coaching literatures, Neumerski (2012)
noted that what was missing was “an integrated literature that centers on how various
instructional leaders lead, regardless of position, title, or combination of leaders” (p.
312).

Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) specifically pointed out the lack of evidence on the
effects of teacher and principal leadership beyond the realm of studies that look directly
at student achievement, as this latter information is relatively easy and cost effective to
access. They noted two studies that emphasized teacher leadership’s effects on increasing
teaching participation and increasing professional learning. In addition, Leithwood and
Jantzi noted that there are “very few large-scale, quantitative studies of teacher leadership
effects” (p. 700); they therefore suggested a shift in this direction in the scholarly study of
teacher leadership. Marsh, McCombs, and Martorell (2010) concurred that there was little
empirical evidence “regarding the nature of coaching and its effectiveness in changing
teacher practice” (p. 876). By means of the application of a theoretical framework and a
clear and scientifically repeatable methodology, this study aims to provide background
information about teacher leadership that will be transferable to practice as well as
furthering the academic study of the topic.
The Broader Leadership Literature: Shifting From Positional Focus to Task/Action Focus

Leadership is complex with many definitions and research approaches (Yukl, 1981). Before looking specifically at supports and constraints to teacher leadership, this dissertation takes up the leadership literature in a broader context. Through this wider view, characteristics of teacher leadership as a leadership approach can be shown to fit with concepts and ideas found in the broader leadership literature.

The traditional literature on educational leadership mostly focused on individual leaders in schools (e.g., on principals) rather than on leadership by teachers (Little, 1995; Ryan, 1999; Smylie et al., 2002). These studies have focused on roles or positions, particularly those of the principal or superintendent, who are situated at the top of the traditional hierarchy (Pounder, Adams, & Adams, 1995). The leadership literature focused on who those leaders are, what traits they have, what behaviors they engage in, and how their leadership responds to environmental contexts. The studies belonging to the former group centered on the person or position of authority (the ‘be’ characteristics), whereas the studies from the latter group focused on the actions that the person takes (the ‘do’ characteristics). Although the leadership literature historically focused on the ‘be’ characteristics, the trend in more contemporary general leadership literature is to focus more closely on the ‘do’ characteristics.

Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001) defined leadership as the “identification, acquisition, allocation, coordination and use of the social, material and cultural resources necessary to establish the conditions for the possibility of teaching and learning” (p. 24). This definition supports a task, action, or activity orientation rather than
a role or positional orientation. Similarly, Firestone (1996) concentrated on tasks and functions performed to define leadership, rather than on people in particular positions. Firestone argued that the functions that leadership provides are (a) providing and selling a vision, (b) obtaining resources, (c) providing encouragement and recognition, (d) adapting standard operating procedures, and (e) monitoring improvement.

Like Firestone (1996), Leithwood and Duke’s (1999) leadership definitions focused less on positional authority and more on the tasks and activities of the leadership. Leithwood and Duke described six kinds of leadership: (a) instructional leadership, which “focuses on the behaviors of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students” (p. 47); (b) transformational leadership, which focuses on the “commitments and capacities of organizational members” (p. 48); (c) moral leadership, which focuses on the “morals and ethics of the leader” (p. 50); (d) participative leadership, which focuses on the “decision-making processes of the group” (p. 51); (e) managerial leadership, which focuses on the “functions, tasks, or behaviors of the leader” (p. 53); and (f) contingent leadership, which focuses on “how leaders respond to the unique organizational circumstances or problems that they face” (p. 54). Though these are self-contained types of leadership, all of which are subsumed in the role of a leader, they all target the classification of tasks and actions performed by that leader.

Ryan’s (1999) definition was also situated in characteristics of leadership tasks (‘do’) rather than of the person or position (‘be’). Ryan’s definition aligned with the previous examples and also expanded upon them, defining leadership “as existing throughout organizations in a nonadministrative, nonrole defined way; leadership that emanates from any level of the organization, that is distributed through the organization”
According to the previous definitions, leadership happens in action, by exercising leadership. Ryan’s definition expands this to include the notion that anyone in the organization can exercise leadership by means of action. As a result, leadership may be exercised by anyone in the organization, regardless of positional authority, role, or title. In this definition, leadership is broadened beyond the administrative roles or positions of principal or superintendent. Through this perspective, teachers can also exercise leadership by acting as leaders themselves—by ‘do’-ing the tasks of leadership. The way in which Ryan expanded the definition of leadership is conceptually connected to a second trend in the leadership literature: not only a focus what tasks a person might do as a leader (the shift from a focus on role or position to task or action, as discussed in this section), but also an allowance for the notion that many people can take on the tasks of leadership, which in and of itself represents a shift away from individualized leadership to collective or group leadership.  

The Broader Literature on Leadership: Shifting From an Individual, Role-Oriented Approach to a Collective, Distributed, Organizational Approach  

In order to understand leadership, Spillane et al. (2004) suggested looking not at the traits or behaviors of one person, but rather at the intersection of activity that occurs between leaders, followers, and situation. As described above, the broader literature on leadership thus shifted from the focus on the individual leader (e.g., the principal or the superintendent) to looking at collective leadership. It is in this context that teacher leadership must be situated and discussed. Weber (1996) defined shared, cooperative, collaborative, or facilitative leadership as “collaboratively managed, self-evaluating, and actively self-improving” (p. 277). As an example of this shift from thinking about
leadership as what one person at the ‘head’ of an organization does to something that anyone can do, Weber compared the relationship between the captain of a ship and his crew to the relationship between a school leader and the school staff:

Recent studies of instructional leadership have likewise moved from illustrating ship-shape organizations whose instructional leaders were captains walking their bridges in lonely watch to describing organizations with multiple leaders drawn from the crew itself. Moreover, these leaders, drawn from the faculty, have been given increasing responsibilities in site-based-management schemes for areas of school governance previously reserved for the administrators. In successful schools, the ‘crew’ themselves, the teachers, adopted the values necessary for their success. Indeed, their professionalism replaced a school’s dependence on a single leader with the use of multiple centers of instructional leadership. (p. 253–254)

In this sense, not only were individual teachers capable of leadership in their organizations in the administration and classroom instruction, but groups of teachers in collective action were also capable of teacher leadership. There is a great variety of research on this concept of collective leadership.

Seashore-Louis and Leithwood (2010) defined leadership as a set of two core functions: providing direction and exercising influence. They discussed and described teacher leadership as an extension to this definition but in a collective sense. To these researchers, teacher leadership was collective, or the “property of the system rather than an individual” (p. 16). Similarly, Smylie et al. (2002) indicated a recent “shift away from individual empowerment and role-based initiatives toward a more collective, task-
oriented and organizational approach to teacher leadership” (p. 165). This is in alignment with a shift in the literature to move away from role- and trait-focused leadership research to leadership by a collective group of participants.

York-Barr and Duke (2004) explained teacher leadership as “the process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of school communities to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement” (p. 287–288). York-Barr and Duke’s definition concentrated on leadership at the classroom level: leadership that improves teaching and learning. They situated teacher leadership in four other conceptions of leadership in their review. These concepts were not specific to teacher leadership, but reflective of the larger leadership literature in which teacher leadership exists. These four concepts of leadership included (a) participative leadership, (b) distributed leadership, (c) parallel leadership, and (d) leadership as an organizational quality. Of these four, the first, participative leadership, is the most relevant to this study.

Based on the research of Leithwood and Duke (1999) and Ogawa and Bossert (1995), participative leadership is inherently distributed by nature and is related to leadership as an organizational quality rather than an individual quality. Indeed, Ogawa and Bossert also viewed leadership as an organizational quality, a “systematic characteristic” (p. 225), rather than power or influence wielded by a few individuals in the organization. In their view, leadership exists not in formal roles but rather in relationships, interactions, and social influence. Through this lens, leadership flows through the entire organization and affects the entire organization; therefore, it must be viewed at the organizational level. Leadership can flow in any direction, not just from the
top down, and it can originate from any person, formally or informally. It consists of a web of interactions rather than a hierarchy of roles. This research also aligns with a shift in the literature away from role- and individual-focused leadership research to leadership through the interactions of many.

Smylie et al. (2002) also supported this collective, distributed view of leadership. They described teacher leadership as a social influence process aimed at achieving some collective or organizational end, which permeates organizations rather than residing in particular people or formal positions of authority. As a result, leadership can come from and be exercised by a wide range of organizational participants (Smylie et al., 2002, p. 167).

This definition also aligns with the shift in research towards leadership of an organization by more than one individual. These organizational participants can be, among others, teacher leaders. Several researchers added to this definition when they discussed not only participative leadership by the many, but also when they situated that leadership in the interactions of those many participants. It was not simply a pluralistic approach to the traditional, individual role-focused leadership literature. Rather, it fixated on the leadership exercised ‘in-between’ organizational participants in a certain context. The way in which leadership is demonstrated depends on context, activity, and situation (Spillane, Camburn, & Pareja, 2009). This framework accounts for all people involved—leaders and followers—as well as for the context of the situation, and it creates interdependency between people and context, an interdependency that echoes many of the descriptors of an open system in organizational theory.
Goldring and Greenfield (2002) identified participatory leadership as falling into one of the categories of shared, collaborative, distributed, or group leadership. Participatory leadership occurs when the leadership is spread throughout the organization, rather than being subsumed into a role to be played by a few select individuals. Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001) suggested a similar approach to leadership as a distributed force, one in which leadership was a result of both individual and collective tasks and contextual inputs that mediate outcomes. They described this as a “web of actors” (p. 23) interacting in a school context. Spillane et al. (2004) acknowledged the idea of leadership as an organizational property, but they emphasized the need to view leadership through a conceptual framework: in their case, distributed leadership. To better understand distributed leadership, Spillane et al. (2004) suggested looking not at the traits or behaviors of one person, but rather at the intersection of activity that occurs between leaders, followers, and situation.

Donaldson (2001), as well as several other researchers, echoed this description of leadership: as something that happens between persons rather than as an individual phenomenon. Ryan (1999) concentrated on “interactive” (p. 2) forms of leadership as the best environments for teacher leadership. In this sphere, she included (a) transformational leadership, (b) facilitative leadership, (c) democratic empowering leadership, (d) synergistic leadership, and (e) communities of learners. Not only were these identified as interactive forms of leadership, but they also emphasized the change in the roles of leaders into one that emphasized collaboration and the sharing of power. Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, and Hann (2001) discussed the concept of parallel leadership, which was characterized by the qualities of relatedness and collective action. Their work
emphasized the collective, distributed essence of leadership. Finally, Woods, Bennett, Harvey, and Wise (2004) defined distributed leadership as interaction among individuals in an organization that has open leadership boundaries. Drawing from prior research, Woods et al. used the term concertive action to describe distributed leadership, “This is contrasted with numerical or additive action, which represents the aggregated effect of a number of individuals contributing their initiative and expertise in different ways to a group or organization. ‘Concertive action’ is about the additional dynamic which is the product of conjoint activity” (Woods et al., 2004, p. 441). In all of these examples, emphasis is on shared and synergistic leadership by the collective many, rather than on individual leadership by one person.

For the purpose of this study, the term distributed leadership is used to describe this participatory, shared approach to leadership and decision making. There are several models of distributed leadership. As described by Smylie et al. (2002), these included (a) the task-oriented model of Heller and Firestone (1995), (b) the organizationwide use of power and influence of Ogawa and Bossert (1995), and (c) a model discussed by Spillane et al. (2001), which can be described as a combination of the previous two task-oriented and organization-oriented models. As proposed by Heller and Firestone in the first model, leadership derives from the performance of certain tasks and is not defined by the nominal role or position. This view of leadership represented a shift from the more hierarchical and traditional view of leadership as performed by those in formal positions of power, such as the principal. The other models, those of Ogawa and Bossert and of Spillane et al., focused not on a particular role or a particular task performed by a particular person, but rather on the social interactions between people. Here, power and
influence originate not in the “actions of individuals, but through interaction among individuals” (Smylie et al., 2002, p. 173). It is in the flow of influence and power, which does not belong to any one individual but rather flows among and between individuals, that leadership is found.

Heller and Firestone (1995) supported the idea that multiple participants effect school change, not just one central leader. They concurred that the leadership literature targets the roles of leadership figures as catalysts for change, but that real change involves an array of stakeholders. This change was dependent not on a particular role but on a set of leadership tasks; furthermore, these tasks were often carried out by a variety of people, rather than by one person in a particular position of leadership. They found that no one person had to lead in order to “make things happen” (Heller & Firestone, 1995, p. 84). Leithwood et al. (2009) found that colleagues identified the same kinds of leadership qualities in individuals, regardless whether those people held formal or informal leadership roles. Teachers were not simply “passive subordinates who either took orders or resisted change” (Heller & Firestone, 1995, p. 84); rather, they acted as leaders themselves, fulfilling many leadership tasks while never formally occupying a leadership role. Heller and Firestone indicated that teacher leadership in schools is possible, even as schools are currently structured, and that the effect of teacher leadership might be even greater with the optimal school structure, a fact which may be encouraging to those who assume informal leadership roles.

Several important points can be established as trends in leadership literature. Firstly, teachers can influence and lead outside of formal roles or positions. Secondly, influence and leadership come from all parts of the organization and flow in all
directions, and it is in the context of these mutual relationships that leadership is exercised. Finally, whereas there previously existed a hierarchical, positional element to the discussion of leadership, teacher leadership has since been recognized as having the potential to become collaborative, more collective, and more democratic in nature.

**Teacher Leadership: Distilling a Definition**

*Teacher leadership* is a term with a myriad of definitions. If leadership can be exercised by anyone in an organization, individually or collectively, formally or informally, then how does one pinpoint exactly who is a teacher-leader? With a firm foundation in the broader leadership literature and the relationships between the various definitions contained therein, this dissertation can now shift to explore two strong definitions of teacher leadership found in the literature and present the researcher’s own operational definition based on the literature. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) understood teacher leadership as the scenario in which “[teachers] who are leaders lead both within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others toward improved educational practice” (p. 5). Similarly, York-Barr and Duke (2004) defined teacher leadership as “the process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of school communities to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement” (pp. 287–288). Based on the review of the literature presented, this study operationally defines teacher leadership as educators, either individually or collectively, synergistically providing expert, context-specific leadership to schools and classrooms regarding teaching, learning, and educational contexts. This collective teacher leadership is defined not by individual traits
or positions/roles held by the leaders, but rather on the interaction that occurs between participants. Although this definition of teacher leadership focuses on teaching and learning, this teacher leadership ‘trickles up’ to support teacher-led, expertise-founded decisions about school management and administration that support teaching and learning in the classroom and ultimately student achievement. Thus, teacher leadership affects both the classroom as well as the wider organizational context.

**Research on the Supports and Constraints to Teacher Leadership**

This dissertation now analyzes the teacher leadership literature that is most closely related to this study regarding organizational structures that enable and hinder teacher leadership. The literature on the supports of and constraints against teacher leadership is predominately qualitative in its methodology. Throughout this section, striking similarities emerge between the results of these studies and the qualities of enabling and hindering bureaucracies, as described by Sinden et al. (2004a, 2004b), which is presented later in the chapter.

Zinn (1997) developed her own theoretical framework for understanding factors that support and impede teacher leadership by means of her examination of external, internal, and psychosocial factors. She concluded that supports and barriers to teacher leadership fall into four categories: “(a) people and interpersonal relationships; (b) institutional structures, (c) personal considerations and commitments; and (d) intellectual and psycho-social characteristics” (Conclusion, para. 1). Many of her results bear similarities to the characteristics of enabling and hindering bureaucracies as presented by Sinden et al. (2004a, 2004b). Although the focus of this study comparison is structure, “people and interpersonal relationships” and “institutional structures” are the categories
most aligned with this comparison to enabling school structure. Therefore, Zinn’s results in these two areas make up the focal points in this document.

In the category of “people and interpersonal relationships,” Zinn (1997) some of the supporting factors Zinn identified were “positive working relationship with principal and/or other administrators, mentoring or modeling by respected colleagues, mutual respect and interdependency of the staff” (Table 1) as supporting factors. For the same category (“people and interpersonal relationships”), some of the impeding factors Zinn identified are “lack of involvement or interest in leadership on the part of other teachers, passive or active opposition by administrators” (Table 1). Although Zinn considered structural concerns in a separate section of her study, aspects of this category focusing on relationships are important to note because of similarities between these structural supports and barriers and the definition of enabling structure having to do with relationship between the principal and teachers.

In the category of “institutional structures,” Zinn (1997) identified “opportunities for authentic leadership roles and responsibilities, ongoing opportunities for formal and informal leadership training, climate of collaboration and collegiality, and provision of necessary resources (i.e. time, information, financing)” as supporting factors; in contrast, “insufficient time during the school day or year for collegial work, lack of access to information or resources, rigid definition of teachers’ roles, overly broad or ill-defined teacher leadership roles and responsibilities and physical barriers” were determined to be impeding factors (Table 1). Aspects Zinn’s categories are similar to aspects of Sinden et al.’s (2004a) characteristics of enabling structures.
York-Barr and Duke (2004) identified three conditions that influence teacher leadership: (a) school culture and context, (b) roles and relationships, and (c) structure. These bear no small similarity to the categories described by Zinn (1997) and Sinden et al. (2004a). In a comprehensive review of the literature, York-Barr and Duke identified facilitators and challenges under each of these three areas. In the category of factors related to school culture and context, York-Barr and Duke classified the following as facilitators of teacher leadership:

- [School-wide] focus on learning, inquiry and reflective practice, encouragement for taking initiative, expectation for team-work and for sharing responsibility, decision making and leadership, teacher leaders viewed and valued as positive examples and role models or teaching profession, and strong teacher communities that foster professionalism. (p. 271)

As challenges related to school culture and context, York-Barr and Duke (2004) named

- [Lack] of clarity about organizational and professional direction, purpose, norms of isolation and individualism, socialization of teachers to be followers, to be private, to not take on responsibilities outside the classroom, reluctance by teachers to advance and violate egalitarianism norms, view of teacher leadership as career advancement, and a ‘crab bucket culture’ wherein teachers drag each other down instead of supporting and inspiring one another. (p. 271)

In the category of roles and relationships, York Barr and Duke (2004) recognized the following as facilitators:
[Colleagues] recognize and respect teacher leaders as teachers with subject area and instructional expertise, high trust and positive working relationships among peers and with administrators, assignment of teacher leadership work that is central to the teaching and learning process, as opposed to administrative or management tasks, recognition of ambiguity and difficulty in teacher leadership roles, principal support for teacher leadership through formal structures, informal behaviors, coaching and feedback, clarity about teacher leader and administrator leadership domains, including common ground and also attention to interpersonal aspects of the relationship between teacher leader and principal. (p. 271)

As challenges related to roles and relationships, York Barr and Duke determined the following were challenges related to roles and relationship:

[Hierarchical], instead of horizontal, relationships with peers (e.g. teacher leaders exercise authority instead of work collaboratively in learning and decision making endeavors, appointment of teacher leader by administrator without teacher input, change in the nature of relationships between teacher leaders and peers, from social to organizational and instructional purposes, ambiguities about teacher leaders’ roles and expectations, uncertainty about teacher leader versus principal domains of leadership, and inadequate communication and feedback among teacher leaders, principal, and teacher staff. (p. 271)

Lastly, for the category of structure, the facilitators identified by York-Barr and Duke (2004) included “structures that support learning and leading as embedded aspects of teachers’ roles, site based, participatory decision-making structures and processes, removal of hierarchical structures in schools and districts and access, time, and space” (p.
The challenges to structure provided by York-Barr and Duke included “traditional, top-down leadership structures, lack of clarity about process and locus of decision making and channels of authority, isolation of teachers caused by traditional schedules and structures, and inadequate time for collaboration, learning, and leading” (p. 271).

Based on their research findings, York-Barr and Duke suggested that schools need flatter, less hierarchical structures, reduced isolation and greater interdependence among staff members.

Repeatedly, commonalities are found between all three areas identified by York-Barr and Duke (2004; school culture and context, roles and relationships, and structure) and Sinden et al.’s (2004a) characteristics of enabling school structure. Using various theoretical perspectives, Smylie (1992) also constructed a framework to investigate teachers’ interactions with teacher leaders that maintained a close resemblance to the four categories identified by Zinn. Smylie’s framework included “(a) opportunities for interaction to take place, (b) the social context of the school, and (c) the psychological orientations of teachers related to working and interacting with other teachers” (p. 87–88). Using this framework, Smylie described several factors related to the school context that could impede teacher leadership initiatives, including norms of privacy, independence, egalitarianism, workplace isolation, and lack of time for interaction. This portion of Smylie’s framework paralleled the enabling/hindering framework in the work of Sinden et al., as did the research of Ryan (1999).

Ryan (1999) also analyzed several conditions that support or constrain teacher leadership. She found that collaborative culture, reduced isolation, collegial interactions among staff, shared decision making, and small school size (such that staff interactions
were more possible) are all conditions that support teacher leadership. On the contrary, lack of time, lack of teacher empowerment, lack of principal support, lack of leadership training, and the norm of egalitarianism constrained teacher leadership. Her research epitomized what has been found to support and what has been found to constrain teacher leadership.

In a study of schools in the process of restructuring in the Coalition of Essential Schools, Prestine (1991) noted the “necessity of new governance structures to promote a collaborative, shared decision making process for restructuring” (p. 160). Similarly to the previous research, which was so aligned with the characteristics of enabling school structure as defined by Sinden et al. (2004a), Prestine examined the factors that promoted (enabled) and inhibited (hindered) the restructuring process and found four factors that detracted from the restructuring process: lack of stability, lack of external support, lack of trust, and lack of commitment. Lack of stability was found do be the “primary deterrent to changes in traditional roles and relationships between teachers and principals in restructuring schools” (Prestine, 1991, p. 161). According to Prestine, lack of stability and lack of external support are dependent upon external factors, such as changing superintendent leadership or budgetary issues; additionally, internal deterrent factors include lack of trust among staff members and lack of commitment to the restructuring process.

Prestine (1991) also determined four factors that promote the restructuring process: new conceptions of power, a need for a systemic agreement, a willingness to take risks, and the need for smart schools. In a change toward a more participative leadership model, the principal’s role became crucial. In terms of power, the principal
had to understand that “sharing power was not abdicating power” and thus had to “balance efforts to empower others with maintenance of a leadership presence” (Prestine, 1991, p. 170). The principal must simultaneously play leading and supporting roles.

In a unique look at the differences in teacher leadership by grade level, Stone, Horejs, and Lomas (1997) compared the pervasiveness and success of teacher leadership between the elementary, middle and high school levels. Similarly, this study compares the responses of educators by school grade level. As in previously mentioned research, Stone et al. identified supports and constraints to teacher leadership. Supports included appropriate time for collaboration, inclusion in decision making, support from colleagues, and opportunities for professional development. Constraints included lack of time and policies or politics. Stone et al. then separated the results of the teacher feedback by grade level, exposing clear differences in the responses. For example, the middle school and high school levels cited policies and climate as a constraint for teacher leadership; however, teachers at the elementary level did not. Based on her results and in her concluding suggestions for the cultivation of teacher leadership, Stone et al. suggested diminishing hierarchical differences in school culture between grade levels, increasing opportunities for professional collaboration, and providing administrative support for teacher leadership through resources such as adequate time, professional development, etc.

Several other qualitative studies named similar areas or themes that could support or constrain teacher leadership initiatives in a variety of settings. Although these studies are not as comprehensive in nature as Stone, et al.’s (1997), nor did they produce theoretical frameworks for conceptualizing the supporting or constraining of teacher
leadership, the results of many of these studies echo the frameworks in the research that has already been discussed. For example, the following variables either supported or constrained teacher leadership: role ambiguity or identities (Beachum & Dentith, 2004; Little, 1995), time (Doyle, 2000; Little, 1995; Margolis, 2012; Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000; Suranna & Moss, 2000), funding or financial support (Margolis, 2012), isolation or lack of collaboration (Doyle, 2000; Griffin, 1995; Silva et al., 2000), information overload (Griffin, 1995), lack of feedback or constructive criticism (Griffin, 1995), support such as providing coverage for teaching responsibilities (Margolis, 2012), norms of egalitarianism (Little, 1995), lack of content expertise (Little, 1995), level of professional experience (Suranna & Moss, 2000), school structures and organizational patterns such as teaming (Beachum & Dentith, 2004), the teacher–principal relationship (Silva et al., 2000; Suranna & Moss, 2000), and other policies (Silva et al., 2000; Suranna & Moss, 2000). These supportive or constraining characteristics individual to different schools and existing in a variety of combinations can significantly impact the effectiveness of teacher leadership, but few of the studies listed are specifically focused on the relationship between organizational structure and teacher leadership.

In fact, only one study was found that looked specifically at structure and its impact on teacher leadership. In her dissertation, Galland (2008) attempted to measure the effect of school structure on teacher effectiveness. Her study was based on prior studies that focused on teacher leadership and aspects of structure that impede teacher leaders and their work. Galland looked at the relationship between teacher effectiveness and specific school structures; specifically, she discussed role clarity, school physical structure and organizational structure. Rather than examine organizational structure in the
traditional sense (Weber, 1947), Galland’s definition of structure included scheduling, team structures, and policies, which together can be viewed as the time, space, and support for collaboration with peers, in alignment with characteristics of an enabling structure.

Galland’s (2008) results showed that of the three areas (role clarity, school physical structure, and organizational structure), role clarity was the most predictive of teacher-leader effectiveness. In terms of organizational structure, which in Galland’s study subsumed the factors of scheduling, team structures, and policies, the specific role of team structures had the strongest correlation to this effectiveness. Galland segregated her results even further, finding that a combination of role understanding, team structure (working with colleagues in a team-based environment) and space for collaboration (in terms of a school’s physical structure) “accounted for 22.8% of the variance of teacher leadership effectiveness” (p. 85). The teaming structure, and hence collaborative efforts, accounted for 9% of the variance. As her study shows, attention to structure and collaboration can affect the success of teacher leadership initiatives. However, Galland’s use of the term structure is not exclusively focused on organizational structure in the traditional sense. For this study, the researcher could not locate any other previous literature on the teacher leadership and organizational structure other than what is here presented.

To summarize, contemporary educational scholarship and the broader leadership literature view leadership as distributed, collective, and occurring in interactions at the individual and organizational levels. In addition, research has been reviewed on the supports and constraints to teacher leadership, which is analogous to the characteristics of
enabling school structure as presented by Sinden et al. (2004a). In order to bridge the connection between the supports and constraints to teacher leadership and enabling school structure, the next section of the literature review offers background on organizational structure in general and in regards to K–12 schools. The researcher then reviews the literature on enabling and hindering school structures and discusses how such a framework may provide a fruitful lens for further examination of the relationship between school structure and teacher leadership.

**Organizational Structure/Bureaucracy**

An understanding of the various theoretical perspectives that exist is crucial to the analysis of the nature of organizational environments and the effects of their structures in school contexts. Throughout the 20th century, much research and writing have explored organizational structure; in particular, bureaucratic notions of structure (Barnard, 1938; Callahan, 1962; Gulick, 1937; Hall, 1963; Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Mayo, 1945; Mintzberg, 1979b; Scott, 1992; Selznick, 1948; Taylor, 1947; Weber, 1947; Weick, 1976). For the purpose of this study, the terms *structure* and *bureaucracy* are used interchangeably, although other definitions of organizational structure do exist. To discern what bureaucracy in the context of this study means, it is important to review the development of theory on organizational structure during the last century.

In the first quarter of the 20th century, the focus of researchers and theoreticians was on rational systems and scientific management. According to Hoy and Miskel (2005), in rational systems theory, behavior in organizations was considered organized, rational, and disciplined. Rational systems theorists focus on goals and formalization and pay close attention to “division of labor, specialization, standardization, formalization,
hierarchy of authority, and narrow span of control” (Hoy & Miskel, 2005, p. 12).

Language used to generally describe rational systems included *efficiency, optimization, design,* and also *improved performance* (Scott, 1992), terms that are often used today to describe schools. Early 20th century rational systems movements included the work of Gouldner (1954), Guilick (1937), Hall (1963), Taylor (1947), and Weber (1947).

In subsequent years, natural systems theorists and open system theorists provided different lenses through which to view organizational structure. Natural systems theory is another area of social criticism concerning the nature of bureaucracy. Natural systems theory became popular in the 1930s in response to the deficiencies found in the rational systems approach (Hoy & Miskel, 2005). Critics discussed several negative aspects of the rational systems approach. One critique was that overspecialization of tasks that can lead to boredom; another was inattention to the informal structure of the organization in the rational systems theories. Conversely, rational systems theory concentrated on the formal structure of an organization, “natural-systems advocates viewed organizations as primarily social groups trying to adapt and survive in their particular situation” (Hoy & Miskel, 2005, p. 13). The rational systems theorists focused on the formal aspects of an organization, whereas the natural systems theorists fixated on the informal aspects of the organization and the people in it.

Central to natural systems theory was the concept of the informal organization that exists alongside the formal. As the studies described above in the context specific to educational leadership also discussed, the informal organization had its own informal leaders and informal patterns of communication. The informal organization was understood as distinctly separate from the formal organization. However, the formal and
informal were considered inextricably linked (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Scott, 1992). Though external to the official structure of an organization, the informal organization was seen as a result of aspects of the formal organization and simultaneously affected the formal organization. An example of the formal organization would be the official “chain of command” and its inherent orders and hierarchies when communicating information to members of the organization. In contrast, an example of the informal organization would be information passed on in conversation during lunch hour. It is unofficial and not a part of the planned, formal structure of the organization. The best-known study of informal organization is the Hawthorne Studies (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939), in which the researchers observed informal norms, patterns, and leaders that affected the output of the organization as much as the formal structure. Several other natural systems theorists contributed to the existing literature, as well, including Barnard (1938), Mayo (1945), Parsons (1947), Selznick (1948). In this study, the responses to interview questions address the informal organization and the people in it.

An alternative to both rational and natural systems theories is presented by the open system theory. Open systems theorists do not view either formal or informal structures of the organization to be more important than the other. Rather, open systems theorists take into consideration both the formal structure of the organization and the informal aspects of the organization, as well as the ways in which that organization interacts with its environment (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Scott, 1992). Open systems theory creates a middle ground between the rational and natural approaches and successfully accounts for the relationships between structure, people, and external environments: “Open systems theory stresses the complexity and variability of component parts of the system and the
looseness of the connections between them” (Leithwood & Duke, 1999, p. 61). Hierarchy is important to open systems but in a flatter, less hierarchical, less vertical way. Given the results of this study, it is in this way that balance between informal and formal organization might be improved to support teacher leadership.

Although there are many interesting aspects to open systems theory, for the purpose of this study there is one concept that is particularly central to the development of this study—loosely coupled systems. In loosely coupled systems, parts of the organization are loosely coupled with other parts: components of the organization are not necessarily tightly bound to other parts of the organization in the organization’s structure. For example, if in a school something happens to one department, it may or may not have an effect on what goes on in another department. Weick (1976) described loose coupling: “by loose coupling, the author intends to convey the image that coupled events are responsive, but that each event also preserves its own identity and some evidence of its physical or logical separateness” (p. 3). The couplings in a system can include a variety of elements, can encompass an infinite variety of couplings, and can do so quite fluidly over time. Because of the complexity and loosely coupled nature of some organizations, including educational organizations, Weick argued that elements of sections of the organization can be changed, removed, added or otherwise modified without much effect on the rest of the organization. Loosely coupled systems, therefore, are quite adaptable to varying situations. However, because habits and traditions can persist over time, this component of open systems theory can imply that change is quite difficult to effect.
Weick (1976) proposed that educational organizations act more like loosely coupled systems rather than tightly coupled systems, although educational organizations are traditionally viewed through the rational, tightly coupled lens:

Loosely coupled systems may not have been seen before because nobody believed in them or could afford to believe in them. It is conceivable that preoccupation with rationalized, tidy, efficient, coordinated structures has blinded many practitioners as well as researchers to some of the attractive properties of less rationalized and less tightly related clusters of events. (p. 3)

This point is of great importance. If researchers wish to understand the nature of organizational environments and the effects of their structures, researchers must certainly view educational organizations through a theoretical framework that is appropriate to the organization.

**A Theoretical Framework: Enabling and Hindering Organizations**

This dissertation has focused on summarizing a century of organizational theory. In selecting a framework through which to examine the structure of schools, the choices are many and varied. This document now gives an overview of the framework that is pertinent to its central study—enabling and hindering organizational structure. The structure of an organization may have an unintended impact of enabling or hindering the functioning of the organization and any initiatives that it implements. Therefore, it is important to identify what kind of organizational structures enable or hinder an organization’s functioning. The framework of enabling and hindering organizations creates a way to identify these aspects of an organization. In this section, the reader will note similarities in the definition and description of enabling bureaucracies. After
thoroughly summarizing the literature on enabling and hindering bureaucracies, these are linked to the previous discussion of teacher leadership.

**Defining Enabling and Hindering Structures**

The origins of the constructs of enabling and hindering structures begin with Adler and Borys (1996). They coined terms for two kinds of formalization: *enabling* and *coercive*. An enabling type of formalization is designed to help the employee “deal more effectively with its inevitable contingencies,” whereas the coercive type of formalization is designed to “force reluctant compliance and to extract recalcitrant effort” (p. 69). A guiding question in the work of Adler and Borys was how bureaucracy and formalization in organizations can be designed to either stifle employees in a negative way or to provide needed structure and guidance in a positive way.

The researchers endeavored to identify a framework for measuring the enabling and hindering aspects of an organization. To do this, Adler and Borys (1996) crossed degree of formalization with type of formalization. The visual illustrated how “formalization’s attitudinal outcomes depend both on the fit of the degree of formalization with the ‘routineness’ of the task, as argued by contingency theory, and on the type of formalization” (Adler & Borys, 1996, p. 77). This crossing of degree and type created four quadrants describing four unique environments. An organic environment has a low degree of formalization and is enabling rather than coercive. An autocratic environment has a low degree of formalization but is coercive. An enabling bureaucracy has a high the degree of formalization and is enabling. Lastly, a mechanistic environment has a high the degree of formalization but is coercive in nature (Adler & Borys, 1996).
The Work of Hoy and Sweetland on Enabling and Hindering Structures

Since the work of Adler and Borys (1996), the research on enabling and hindering bureaucratic structures has been extended to consider the results of these organizational structures in the particular context of educational organizations. The research of Hoy and Sweetland (2000a, 2000b, 2001) also established the mixed effects, both positive and negative, of bureaucratization. In their investigation of the difference between enabling and hindering bureaucratic school structures, Hoy and Sweetland measured formalization and centralization along continuums: formalization from enabling to coercive and centralization from enabling to hindering. This measurement was an extension of the graph created by Adler and Borys, and illustrated the range of centralization depending on degree and type of formalization. Hoy and Sweetland (2000a) defined high centralization as an organization in which few wield power. In contrast, in a setting of low centralization, many share power. For Hoy and Sweetland (2001), crossing these two centralization and formalization constructs created four different possible kinds of schools: “enabling bureaucracy (enabling hierarchy, enabling rules), hindering bureaucracy (hindering hierarchy, coercive rules), hierarchical bureaucracy (hindering hierarchy, enabling rules), and rule-bound bureaucracy (enabling hierarchy, coercive rules)” (p. 306).

Using this enabling and hindering framework, Hoy and Sweetland (2000a, 2000b, 2001) analyzed and synthesized the positive and negative consequences of school structure on a variety of variables. These variables included (a) faculty trust in the principal, (b) degree of truth spinning, (c) degree of role conflict, (d) trust, (e) powerlessness, and (f) dependence of teachers on superiors. As they anticipated, enabling
bureaucracy was positively correlated to the degree of faculty trust in the principal and in the degree of faculty trust between teachers, but negatively correlated with the sense of powerlessness among teachers, degree of truth spinning, degree of role conflict, and dependence of teachers on superiors.

With the goal of potentially improving student achievement, Sinden et al. (2004a) extended the research trajectory of Hoy and Sweetland (2000a, 2000b, 2001). With the understanding from the previous research of Adler and Borys (1996) and Hoy and Sweetland (2000a, 2000b, 2001) that there are enabling and hindering structures, Sinden et al. (2004a) developed a description of exactly what those enabling and hindering structures are. Sinden et al. began by describing the differences between coercive and enabling formalization and between coercive and enabling centralization:

Formalization is the extent to which the organization has a codified system of rules, regulations, and procedures. Enabling formalization helps individuals solve work problems. Such procedures are flexible guides that reflect best practices and help subordinates deal with difficulties and dilemmas. Coercive formalization refers to rules and procedures that are used to punish subordinates when they do not comply; such rules tend to hinder productive work practices and more often than not alienate. Centralization is the extent to which employees participate in decision making. Enabling centralization, in contrast, helps participants solve problems rather than getting in the way. Hindering centralization refers to an administrative hierarchy that impedes rather than helps solve problems. (pp. 463–464)
To summarize these four categories, enabling formalization and centralization help to solve problems in a flexible manner, whereas hindering formalization and centralization are used for punishment; they enforce compliance, and they are barriers to productivity and progress.

Next, Sinden et al. (2004a) described the characteristics of enabling and hindering structures, which stemmed from the definitions of enabling/hindering formalization and enabling/hindering centralization previously discussed. Enabling structures “facilitate problem solving, enable cooperation, encourage collaboration, promote flexibility, encourage innovation, protect participants, value differences, delight in the unexpected, learn from mistakes, and view problems as opportunities” (Sinden et al., 2004a, p. 465). They next described the characteristics of a hindering structure. As opposed to enabling structures, hindering structures “expect blind adherence to rules, promote control, act autocratically, display rigidity, discourage change, discipline subordinates, demand consensus, fear the unexpected, punish mistakes, and view problems as obstacles (Sinden et al., 2004a, p. 465).

Applying this framework to an interpretation of their data, Sinden et al. (2004a) found that smaller schools with flatter hierarchical structures tended to have higher scores on the enabling school rating. In addition, in smaller settings, there was a greater degree of informal communication, which facilitated a less hierarchical organizational structure and more shared decision making. Teacher-driven decision making, or “deference to expertise” (Sinden et al., 2004a, p. 470) was also noted in enabling organizations, which empowered teachers and made them feel more professional and credible. Principals at
enabling schools were flexible and treated teachers as professionals, and in return teachers at enabling schools reciprocated with mutual trust and professional respect.

Supplementing their prior research, Sinden et al. (2004b) addressed the importance of “collegial leadership of the principal and organizational commitment of the faculty in the development of enabling school structures” (p. 195). They found a positive correlation between the principal’s collegial leadership and an enabling school structure as well as a positive correlation between organizational commitment and an enabling school structure.

Sinden et al. (2004a, p. 473) summarized their descriptive findings with the following summary of enabling bureaucracies

   - built-in flexibility
   - few rules
   - representative rules (jointly determined)
   - informal procedures dominate
2. Structure and size: Flat, small, open, and representative.
   - smaller and flatter structures
   - accessible authorities
   - decision making migrates to expertise
   - informality and open two-way communication
3. Principal Behaviors: Open, professional, and supportive:
   - professional and open with teachers
   - respectful of teacher professionalism and of teacher expertise
   - supportive of teachers
   - use of multiple perspectives in decision making
   - process oriented using conditional thinking
   - flexible in interpretation and application of rules
4. Teacher Behaviors: informal, supportive, and trusting
   - prefer informal approaches
   - trusting of principal and principal’s professionalism
   - respectful of principal and principal’s knowledge and expertise
   - supportive of principal
The emerging theoretical framework of enabling and hindering organizational structures is ripe for use as a foundation in future research. Beyond the research reported thus far and several dissertations, relatively few studies have employed Sinden’s (2004a) summary as the theoretical framework. The dissertations that have used enabling and hindering organizational structures as a framework investigate the paradigm’s relationship to a variety of variables using the Enabling School Structure (ESS) instrument created by Hoy and Sweetland (2001). These studies examine such factors as academic optimism (Anderson, 2012; McGuigan, 2005; Messick, 2012), structures that enable professional learning communities (Gray, 2011; Tylus, 2009), organizational citizenship (Messick, 2012), collective efficacy (Rhoads, 2009), mindfulness (Watts, 2009), school effectiveness (Mayerson, 2010), trust (Mayerson, 2010), climate (Mayerson, 2010) and empowerment (Watts, 2009). Currently, the literature about school bureaucratic structures makes little reference to the concept of teacher leadership, as noted in the previous teacher leadership section.

**Additional Related Research**

There is additional literature that supports this study. Although not tightly bound to the topics of teacher leadership or of enabling school structure, this literature examines the broader picture of school context and structure to help to undergird the rationale and format of this study. This literature includes studies showing differences based on role and school level, as well as literature showing general bureaucratization trends in education.
Roles and School Grade Level

In their final report to the Wallace Foundation, Seashore-Louis and Leithwood (2010) discussed bureaucratic structure in relation to leadership, noting that although schools might try to distribute leadership to teachers, traditional bureaucratic understandings of structure often shape how leadership is exercised and perceived. For example, in Seashore-Louis and Leithwood study, teachers identified those individuals in positions holding traditionally more bureaucratic power as actually having more influence and power than persons not in those official bureaucratic positions. This ranking shows “that formal organizational structures create an institutional framework for the distribution and enactment of leadership” (Seashore-Louis and Leithwood, 2010, p. 60). This observation is important to the development of this study, which seeks to examine the difference in perceptions between those in formalized positions of leadership as opposed to those who do not occupy formalized positions of leadership.

Extending this examination of perception based on role, Ogawa and Bossert (1995) drew on the research of Selznick (1957) to point out that conceptualizations of leadership depend on how the organization itself is understood by those who work in the organization. They pointed out that most of the leadership literature stems from, or is at least is related to, the technical and rational systems theories. Ogawa and Bossert argued that seen through this lens, the leadership literature addresses formal, hierarchical structures, orientation towards performance and goal attainment, and the roles of leaders in formal positions of power in the hierarchy, such as principals (p. 227). In other words, the position of leadership in the literature serves as an indication of how it is perceived by scholars and by in-service educators—through specified roles in a hierarchy. If this is the
dominant perception, then implementation of broader leadership initiatives such as
teacher leadership may be naturally more difficult, as broad-based conceptions of
leadership are often perceived of in more hierarchical, role-oriented ways. Not only the
organizational structure and bureaucracy, but also the perception thereof, are of crucial
importance in assessing the likelihood of successful teacher leadership initiatives in
schools. This realization, too, supports the comparison of perception of teacher leadership
and school structure based on role.

In addition to differences based on roles, differences may exist based on
differences in school contexts, such as school size and level (Firestone & Herriott, 1982;
Sinden et al., 2004a; Stone et al., 1997). In their study on the supports for and constraints
against teacher leadership, Stone et al.’s (1997) ascertained differences in teachers’
perceptions of various topics based on the school level taught. Firestone and Herriott
(1982) reported that high schools had specific goals, were structured around more formal
control systems, contained highly integrated departments, and were characteristic of
closed rather than open systems. On the contrary, elementary schools studied showed an
absence of clear goals, worked with the assumption that loosely coupled component parts
are doing what they are supposed to do, had more flexibility for dealing with unexpected
circumstances, and generally operated a more open system. Therefore, considering school
structure on a continuum, high schools may be in general more rational in their
organizational structures, whereas those at the elementary level may be more natural or
open. Therefore, a study comparing responses by age level addresses this possibility.

In an empirical study testing the effects of organic management on student
achievement, Miller and Rowan (2006) discovered differences in management style
based on both grade level and position in the hierarchy. This disparity in management
style based on grade level and position in the hierarchy was fundamental to the formation
of this study. Miller and Rowan observed that teachers’ perceptions of organic
management in their organizations depend on their position in the school hierarchy. They
suggested that teachers experiencing a less routine task or placement, such as elementary
school versus high school, would perceive their organizations to be more organically
managed. Rowan et al. (1991) indicated that smaller high schools exhibited more organic
management patterns than their larger counterparts. Not only does this indication align
with Sinden et al.’s (2004a) characteristics of enabling bureaucracies, but it also provides
additional support for investigating the differences in perception by grade level and role.

**Trends Towards Centralization**

The lack of attention to or awareness of the importance of structure in educational
organizations when implementing new initiatives can also be observed when policy
makers, by means of the policies that they enact, unintentionally support the assumption
that schools function as rational, top-down organizations. For example, policy makers
may try to improve and standardize organizational outcomes through more centralization
instances of this tendency toward centralization include standardized testing and
mandated curricula. However, an analysis of enabling and hindering organizational
structures makes it clear that trends toward standardization and centralization are at odds
with the characteristics of an enabling bureaucracy as described by Sinden et al. (2004a)
in several ways: decision making is migrating away from expertise (teachers),
organizational structures are not getting smaller and flatter, and decision making is not
shared. If the trend in educational policy towards more standardization and centralization is at odds with the characteristics of enabling structures, and this study finds that support for teacher leadership is positively correlated with enabling school structure, then the trends towards more standardization and centralization may work against the presence and the success of teacher leadership in schools.

The contradiction inherent in this trend is analogous with the control paradox articulated by McNeil (1986), Tschannen-Moran (2009), and Wise (1998), in which more controls are added in order to reach a certain centralized goal, but that in the act of adding more controls, achievement of the goal is impeded. This paradox makes it difficult to optimize the balance of formalization, centralization, and standardization in an organization (Tschannen-Moran, 2009). Wise emphasized the need to move towards a more professional, client-centered environment in schools and away from a bureaucratic, control-centered environment. In line with Wise’s emphasis on a more professional orientation, which encompasses many of the characteristics of an enabling structure, Goldring and Chen (1992) noted mounting pressure towards making schools more professional and decentralized, as did Tschannen-Moran. Tschannen-Moran defined a professional orientation as one in which there is a higher degree of flexibility, collaboration, and trust. School leaders view their teachers as experts, and they view policies, rules and regulations as a means to an end, rather than an end unto themselves (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001; Tschannen-Moran, 2009). Unlike a more bureaucratic model, this professional orientation is in alignment with characteristics of an enabling bureaucracy, as described by Sinden et al. (2004a).
Tschannen-Moran (2009) suggested that schools fall into the category of professional bureaucracy, somewhere on the continuum between machine bureaucracy (in the shape of the traditional pyramid with the leaders above the teachers) and professional organization (an inverted pyramid, with the teacher experts above the leaders). She also warned that too strong an emphasis on bureaucratic structures would undermine attempts to create a more professional work environment.

Bureaucratic structures—such as hierarchy of authority, division of labor with specialization, and written rules and policies—assist schools to deal with the magnitude and complexity of their resources and tasks. However, overreliance on these structures by leaders will interfere with organizational dexterity and be counterproductive to the goals that schools strive to achieve. As such, professional structures—such as opportunities for collective inquiry, scrutiny, reflection, and decision-making—will need to be more fully integrated into school bureaucracies to promote teacher professionalism and school success. (p. 218).

It is this balance between bureaucratic and professional orientations that organizations must strive to create. Using the framework of enabling and hindering organizational structures, and understanding its relationship to teacher leadership, can help researchers and practitioners identify ways to create this delicate balance in the organization’s structure in support of initiatives like teacher leadership.

**Countering Trends Towards Centralization**

There is additional literature that points to a shift from traditional, rational, hierarchical, and bureaucratic organizations to a more professional, collaborative, and flexible model, one that is more aligned with that of enabling school structures. Should
the extent of teacher leadership be found to positively correlate with enabling school structure, this trend will also support teacher leadership in educational contexts. Much of this literature identified a shift similar to the characteristics of enabling/hindering bureaucracies as described by Sinden et al. (2004a). Cloke and Goldsmith (2002) characterized this change as a turn away from “inflexible, static, autocratic, coercive bureaucracies into agile, evolving, democratic, collaborative, self-managing webs of association” (p. 3). They argued that “autocracy, hierarchy, bureaucracy, and management are gradually being replaced by democracy, heterarchy, collaboration, and self-managing teams” (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2002, p. 4).

Hargreaves (1994) described this shift in different terms: modernity and postmodernity in an organizational sense. Modern organizations can be characterized as complex, cumbersome, segmented, and hierarchical bureaucracies that focus on vertical rank in the hierarchy (Hargreaves, 1994). Hargreaves depicted postmodern organizations as flexible, responsive, decentralized, noncompartmentalized, collaborative, flatter, and having blurred roles or boundaries that are constantly shifting. He argued that schools are typically modern institutions; however, there is a shift towards structuring organizations with more postmodern characteristics.

Similar to Hargreave’s (1994) definition, Miller and Rowan (2006) explained organic management as a shift away from conventional, hierarchical patterns of bureaucratic control to what has been referred to as a network pattern of control, that is, a pattern of control in which line employees are actively involved in organizational decision making, staff cooperation and collegiality supplant the hierarchy as a means of
coordinating work flows and resolving technical uncertainties, and supportive (as opposed to directive) forms of administrative leadership emerge to facilitate line employees work” (pp. 219–220).

This explanation of organic management embodies several of the aspects of an enabling bureaucracy regarding rules and procedures, as well as the characteristics of teacher and leader behaviors.

Adler and Borys (1996) discussed the growing legitimacy of enabling structures with noncoercive methods of practice. Organizations are becoming more transparent and participatory, and the researchers noted “procedures designed with subordinate participation are less coercion-oriented” (Adler & Borys, 1996, p. 82). This view or organizations supports the notion that more participatory organizations and schools incorporating distributed leadership may be more enabling of the structures and therefore the beneficial results of teacher leadership.

Cloke and Goldsmith (2002) explained that in the new organizational paradigm, the fundamental unit of structure is not the isolated individual but the collaborative self-managing team. The primary aim is not on personal skills but on relationships between associated individuals in support of a common purpose” (p. 138).

Similarly, in a study that focused not on teacher leadership, but on supports for and constraints against the distributed leadership model, in which category teacher leadership may be understood, Leithwood et al. (2009) found that distributed leadership patterns were supported when “collaborative structures are established, when the numbers of people collaborating on an initiative are kept manageable, and when influence is
exercised through expert rather than positional power” (pp. 246–247). This assertion aligned with the characteristics of an enabling bureaucracy as defined by Sinden et al. (2004a) in that informal and multidirectional communication takes place, and in that decision-making power resides not necessarily in the formal position, but rather within the team of experts.

**Viewing Teacher Leadership Through the Enabling/Hindering Framework:**

**Practical and Scholarly Significance**

As Smylie et al. (2002) specified, “Leadership cannot be extracted from its organizational, structural, and social-cultural contexts” (p. 176). Because of leadership’s inextricability with relationship to its context, understanding those aspects of organizational structure that enable or hinder teacher leadership would represent an important contribution to the teacher leadership literature. When all of the research on teacher leadership is compared with the summary of enabling bureaucracies presented by Sinden et al. (2004a), as well as the trends in the wider leadership and organizational structure literatures, striking similarities and themes emerge. In comparing the characteristics of enabling bureaucracies to the supports and constraints to teacher leadership, it is clear that many of the characteristics of enabling bureaucracies as presented by Sinden et al. corresponded with aspects of organizations that enable teacher leadership. Some of the common themes included shared/participatory decision making, horizontal (flat) instead of hierarchical (vertical, top-down) relationships, informal procedures and communication, reduced isolation and norms of privacy and independence, increased collaboration, collegiality, accessibility, teamwork, interdependency, shared responsibility, openness, multidirectional communication, and
professionalism, mutual support, and mutual respect. In view of the many similarities between enabling bureaucracies and the characteristics that support or inhibit teacher leadership, researchers may hypothesize that organizations featuring the characteristics of a more enabling bureaucracy will provide a more conducive environment for the development of teacher leadership.

Although there are strong similarities between enabling bureaucracies and the characteristics of organizations that are supportive to teacher leadership, there is a paucity of literature investigating teacher leadership through the lens of organizational structure. There are, however, separate but common linkages in other research areas, including those of organizational culture and organizational climate. There are a number of studies linking aspects of enabling structure to aspects of organizational culture and organizational climate.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Culture</th>
<th>Organizational Climate</th>
<th>Other Constructs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust between teachers (Hoy &amp; Sweetland, 2000a, 2000b, 2001)</td>
<td>Mutual respect (Sinden et al., 2004a)</td>
<td>Empowerment (Watts, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust between teachers and principals (Hoy &amp; Sweetland, 2000a, 2000b, 2001)</td>
<td>Principal collegial leadership &amp; organizational commitment (organizational health; Sinden et al., 2004b)</td>
<td>Mindfulness (Watts, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutual respect (Sinden et al., 2004a)</td>
<td>Organizational citizenship (Messick, 2012; Climate, specifically organizational health)</td>
<td>Degree to which enabling structures enable professional learning communities (Gray, 2011; Tylus, 2009)</td>
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Table 1 continued

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<tr>
<th>Organizational Culture</th>
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<th>Other Constructs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student achievement with academic optimism serving as a mediator between the two (Anderson, 2012)</td>
<td>Climate (Mayerson, 2010)</td>
<td>School effectiveness (may be categorized as organizational health rather than organizational climate as it has to do with mobilization to achieve goals; Mayerson, 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic optimism (Anderson, 2012; McGuigan, 2005; Messick, 2012)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collective efficacy (Rhoads, 2009)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust (Gray, 2011; Mayerson, 2010)</td>
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These studies focus on an examination of the relationship between enabling structure and trust (e.g., trust between teachers and between teachers and principals; Hoy & Sweetland 2000a, 2000b, 2001; Mayerson, 2010), respect (Sinden et al., 2004a), student achievement with academic optimism serving as a mediator between the student achievement and enabling organizational structure (Anderson, 2012), academic optimism (Anderson, 2012; McGuigan, 2005; Messick, 2012), collective efficacy (Rhoads, 2009), climate (Mayerson, 2010), principal collegial leadership and organizational commitment (Sinden et al., 2004a), and organizational citizenship (Messick, 2012). As shown in Table 1, these last two can be categorized under organizational climate, or more specifically, under organizational health. All of these studies linked enabling structures to aspects of organizational culture and organizational climate.

Similarly, the supports for teacher leadership have been linked, both positively and negatively, to aspects of organizational culture and organizational climate.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Culture</th>
<th>Organizational Climate</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative, collegial culture (Ryan 1999; Zinn, 1997)</td>
<td>Climate of collegiality /collaboration, positive working</td>
<td>Support such as provision of necessary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negative: norms of privacy;</td>
<td>relationship, respect (York-Barr &amp; Duke, 2004; Zinn, 1997)</td>
<td>resources (time, information, financing,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>norms of workplace isolation (Ryan, 1999; Smylie, 1997;</td>
<td>Collegial interaction among)</td>
<td>access; Zinn, 1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative: norm of egalitarianism (Little, 1995; Smylie,</td>
<td>The teacher–principal relationship (Silva et al., 2000;</td>
<td>Involvement or interest in leadership on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation or lack of collaboration (Doyle, 2000; Griffin,</td>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunities for authentic leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995; Silva et al., 2000)</td>
<td></td>
<td>roles and responsibilities (Zinn, 1997)</td>
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These correlations include a collaborative, collegial culture (Ryan, 1999; Zinn, 1997), norms of privacy and norms of workplace isolation (Ryan, 1999; Smylie, 1997; York-Barr & Duke, 2004), norms of egalitarianism (Little, 1995; Smylie, 1997; York-Barr & Duke, 2004), isolation or lack of collaboration (Doyle, 2000; Griffin, 1995; Silva et al., 2000), a climate of collegiality and collaboration, a positive working relationship, respect (York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Zinn, 1997), collegial interaction among teachers, staff, and administrators (Firestone & Bader, 1992), and the teacher–principal relationship (Silva et al., 2000; Suranna & Moss, 2000). The common themes linking enabling school structure and organizational climate/culture and between teacher leadership and organizational climate/culture suggest the need to examine the relationship of organizational structure and teacher leadership. If both enabling structure and teacher leadership make linkages to
organizational culture and organizational climate, then this serves as a further rationale for examination of the relationship between enabling structure and teacher leadership.

In addition to interconnections to organizational culture and organizational climate, several teacher leadership studies identified supports to teacher leadership that could be categorized as aspects of organizational structure, specifically centralization and formalization, though the connection is not explicit in the literature. Centralization and formalization are at the heart of the definition of enabling bureaucracy as presented by Sinden et al. (2004a).

Table 3

Linkages Between Teacher Leadership and Aspects of Organizational Structure:

Centralization, Formalization, and Division of Labor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centralization</th>
<th>Formalization</th>
<th>Division of Labor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarity about process and locus of decision making and channels of authority (York-Barr &amp; Duke, 2004; locus of decision making is centralization, whereas channels of authority are procedures)</td>
<td>Clarity about process and locus of decision making and channels of authority (York-Barr &amp; Duke, 2004) (locus of decision making is centralization, whereas channels of authority are procedures)</td>
<td>Clearly defined roles (York-Barr &amp; Duke, 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participatory decision-making structures and processes (York-Barr &amp; Duke, 2004; participatory decision making is centralization, whereas processes are procedures)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Flexible, as opposed to rigid, definition of teachers' roles (Zinn, 1997; can also be linked to centralization because rigidity can get in the way)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rotating assignments and the use of teachers to help select those who received the special positions (Firestone &amp; Bader, 1992)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Centralization</th>
<th>Formalization</th>
<th>Division of Labor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horizontal relationships (York-Barr &amp; Duke, 2004)</td>
<td>(participatory decision making is centralization, whereas processes are procedures)</td>
<td>Role ambiguity or identities (Beachum &amp; Dentith, 2004; Little, 1995)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased teacher discretion &amp; decision making in classroom/curriculum/training (Firestone &amp; Bader, 1992; same as decision making migrates to expertise)</td>
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These characteristics included (a) clarity about process and locus of decision making and channels of authority (York-Barr & Duke, 2004) with locus of decision making as centralization and channels of authority as procedures or formalization, (b) participatory decision-making structures and processes (York-Barr & Duke, 2004) with participatory decision making as centralization and processes as procedures or formalization, (c) shared decision making (Firestone & Bader, 1992; Ryan, 1999), (d) horizontal relationships, removal of hierarchical structures (York-Barr & Duke, 2004), and (e) increased teacher discretion & decision making in classroom/curriculum/training, which is the same as when decision making migrates to expertise (Firestone & Bader, 1992). In addition to centralization and formalization, additional characteristics of organizations that support teacher leadership could be characterized as related to division.
of labor, another aspect of organizational structure as defined by Weber (1947). These characteristics included clearly defining roles (York-Barr & Duke, 2004), flexible, as opposed to rigid, definition of teachers' roles (which can also be linked to centralization, as rigidity can hinder progress; Zinn, 1997), rotating assignments, the use of teacher input to help select those who receive special positions (Firestone & Bader, 1992), and role or identity ambiguity (Beachum & Dentith, 2004; Little, 1995).

Conclusion

In comparing the literature on two discrete areas of supports and constraints to teacher leadership and enabling and hindering organizational structures, considerable conceptual overlap exists. In addition, both teacher leadership and enabling and hindering structures have been linked to aspects of organizational culture and organizational climate. One study was found that connected aspects of teacher leadership to aspects organizational structure (Galland, 2008). Galland’s definition of structure included scheduling, team policies, and policies. Her study examined the relationship between teacher effectiveness and specific school structures such as role clarity, school physical structure, and organizational structure. No studies were found that connected teacher leadership to organizational structure in the theoretical, Weberian sense.

In addition, the research on both enabling bureaucracy and supports to teacher leadership provide linkages to organizational culture and organizational climate (see Tables 1& 2), though there exists no research on the relationship between enabling bureaucracy and supports to teacher leadership. Studies linking organizational culture and climate to organizational structure, furthermore, are also absent; therefore, using that connection as a reference point for comparison is not possible. These gaps, along with so
many similarities between enabling bureaucracies and those characteristics that support or inhibit teacher leadership, provide support in the literature for this study.

Even with the best of intentions, without a conducive organizational structure, teacher leadership initiatives may be set up to fail, dismantling the trust of teachers and the hope that teacher leadership might serve as a vehicle for school change. Seashore-Louis and Leithwood (2010) warned against simply paying lip service to distributed leadership initiatives, and to be aware of these lingering bureaucratic effects, lest attempts at distributing leadership to teachers be unexpectedly thwarted. “Formal bureaucratic structures do not necessarily require or facilitate the kind of consensus building, communication, interaction, and collaboration that we would associate with the planned alignment of leadership” (Seashore-Louis and Leithwood, 2010, p. 60). Therefore, assessing a school’s organizational structure and its context is of integral importance before implementing an initiative such as teacher leadership, which thrives in a very particular kind of organizational environment.

If a school that operates as rational, top-down organization desires to implement a teacher leadership initiative, and if teacher leadership is not supported by a rational, top-down, hierarchical organizational structure, then the potential for success of the teacher leadership initiative is limited in that school. In other words, the success of any initiative seeking to implement teacher leadership may be strongly dependent on the organizational structure of the school setting itself. It is therefore important to assess an organization’s structure to be certain that it is suited to any particular initiative. If it is not well suited, perhaps attention to forming a more conducive and supporting organizational structure should be a school’s priority before implementing an initiative in support of teacher
leadership. In the case of teacher leadership and school structure, this relationship has yet
to be researched.

Sinden et al. (2004a) described the paradoxical dilemma facing educational
institutions: order versus freedom and coordination versus communication. It is a
precarious balance of these opposing forces that ultimately facilitates the development of
either an enabling or a hindering organizational structure. The ideal balance in
organizational structure is crucial in creating an organizational context that will
support/enable rather than constrain/ hinder teacher leadership. With so many similarities
existing between organizational characteristics that support teacher leadership and the
understood description of enabling bureaucracies, and with so little research connecting
the two, it is important to undertake a study in this area. If this study can indeed
demonstrate a positive correlation between enabling school structure and success of
teacher leadership initiatives, and if a district finds that it is has bureaucratic
characteristics that are more hindering than enabling, then that school district may start
by attempting to change some of those structural characteristics to make them more
enabling. This prudent practical application of research is of utmost importance in
today’s educational organizations, and it also optimizes hopes for developing teacher
leadership initiatives in organizations, which may ultimately provide the leadership
capacity necessary to reach a host of organizational goals.
Chapter 3: Methods

The purpose of this study has been, firstly, to examine the relationship between enabling school structure and the extent of teacher leadership, and secondly, to compare the responses to perception of both (a) the extent of teacher leadership and (b) enabling school structure by (a) school grade level (elementary, middle, and high school) and (b) formal position/role (teacher, teacher in a formalized position of leadership, administrator). From this initial purpose, the researcher formulated the overarching research question: What is the relationship between enabling school structure and the extent of teacher leadership?

Additional research questions include

1. Do educators at different grade levels (elementary, middle, and high school) differ in their perception of enabling school structure?
2. Do educators in different roles or positions (teacher, teacher in a formalized position of leadership, administrator) differ in their perception of enabling school structure?
3. Do educators at different grade levels (elementary, middle, and high school) differ in their perception of the extent of teacher leadership?
4. Do educators in different roles or positions (teacher, teacher in a formalized position of leadership, administrator) differ in their perception of the extent of teacher leadership?
5. Is there an interaction between grade level and position/role regarding their perceptions of enabling school structure?

6. Is there an interaction between grade level and position/role regarding their perceptions of extent of teacher leadership?

7. How do the responses given by educators in interviews at different school grade levels and in different positions provide contextual examples that more deeply illustrate the aspects of structure of schools that support or constrain teacher leadership?

**Research Design**

This study utilized a nonexperimental, sequential mixed-methods design (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). The quantitative portion of the study used a correlational and causal–comparative design and the qualitative portion employed case study design (Fraenkel et al., 2012). The researcher used an explanatory correlational design to measure the degree of the relationship between enabling school structure and the extent of teacher leadership and anticipated a positive correlation between the extent of teacher leadership and enabling school structure. This test was inferential, determining whether the correlation between enabling school structure and teacher leadership is significantly different from zero. Next, the researcher used two-way ANOVAs to test the difference in responses to the survey based on grade level and role. Lastly, the researcher conducted semistructured interviews to give further depth to the responses on the survey portion of the study.
Study Context and Participants

For the survey portion of the study, the researcher engaged the participation of twenty-three Midwestern school districts. Counties, districts and schools were randomly selected within a predetermined geographical area. The population of these counties in combination with one another represented urban, suburban, and rural school districts. To ensure the participation of at least 20 districts, random sampling was utilized to select 25 districts from which to solicit participation. The contact information for school faculty and staff was not publicly available for 2 of the 25 districts selected, leaving 23 districts. From those 23 districts, stratified random sampling was used to randomly sample three participating schools in those districts, with at least one school per level (elementary, middle and high school) participating in each district. In each school, classroom teachers, teachers in formalized positions of leadership, nonclassroom teachers who were not in formalized positions of leadership (for example, counselor or media specialist), and administrators were individually emailed an invitation and link to participate in the survey.

The Ohio Department of Education (2013) assigns a typology to each of its school districts with a total of 8 different typologies. The districts that participated in this study came from 6 of those typologies. In the survey portion of the study, three districts were in the category of Urban - High Student Poverty & Average Student Population (Category 7), five districts were in the category of Suburban - Very Low Student Poverty & Large Student Population (Category 6), four districts were in the category of Suburban - Low Student Poverty & Average Student Population Size (Category 5), four districts were in the category of Small Town - High Student Poverty & Average Student
Population Size (Category 4), four districts were in the category of Small Town - Low Student Poverty & Small Student Population (Category 3), and three districts were in the category of Rural - Average Student Poverty & Very Small Student Population (Category 2). Viewed through the typology types of the Ohio Department of Education, the participating districts are rather diverse.

Table 4

List of Surveyed Districts: Total Number of Responses by District and Correlation

Results for the Six Districts with the Highest Number of Survey Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>ODE Typology</th>
<th>Total # Responses</th>
<th>Total # Recruited</th>
<th>Pearson Coefficient</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Significant Cor-relation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selected</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>.424</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(declined to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participate in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interviews)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>.473</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selected</td>
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<td>.499</td>
<td>.004</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not Selected</td>
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<td>.020</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.570</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>20</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Selected</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Selected</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>146</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Selected</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>131</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Selected</td>
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<td>86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Not Selected</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>129</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Selected</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Selected</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Selected</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Selected</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>111</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For the interview portion of the study, schools at which to conduct interviews were chosen based on responses to the initial survey. Details on this selection are presented in a subsequent Interview Data Collection section of this document and in Table 4. With permission from the school district secured, seven interviewees were selected from two school districts that participated in the survey portion of the study. Care was taken to choose a panel of interviewees who represented all school levels (elementary, middle, and high school), as well as a range of positions including teachers, nonclassroom teachers, teacher leaders in formal positions of leadership, and administrators. The two districts selected were from districts labeled as Small Town - Low Student Poverty & Small Student Population (Category 3) and Suburban - Very Low Student Poverty & Large Student Population (Category 6).

**Research Variables**

For the correlational research question, the study examined the relationship between enabling school structure and the extent of teacher leadership. For the research subquestions, there were two categorical variables: school grade level taught and position/role. For school grade level, the independent variable was school grade level taught and the dependent variable was perception of enabling school structure and extent of teacher leadership. For position/role, the independent variable was formal position/role and the dependent variable was perception of enabling school structure and support for teacher leadership. For both subquestions, two separate two-way ANOVAs were performed. The presence of two independent categorical variables (position/role and school grade level) and three or more levels of each of the independent variables served as the rationale for the selection of this method. Classroom teachers, nonclassroom
teachers, teachers in formalized positions of leadership, and administrators completed the Teacher Leadership Inventory (TLI) survey. However, the ESS survey was taken by classroom teacher, nonclassroom teachers, teachers in formalized positions of leadership, but not by administrators, because the ESS survey is not designed for administrative responses. Due to the administrators not taking the ESS survey, the groups changed; therefore, a MANOVA including both instruments could not be performed. Instead, two 2-way ANOVAs were performed, one on each instrument.

For school grade level, the levels of the independent categorical variable in the ANOVA included elementary, middle, and high school. For official position, the levels of the independent variable for the ANOVA were classroom teachers, nonclassroom teachers, and teacher leaders such as instructional coaches. For the ESS survey, administrators constituted an additional level. Although independent t tests could have been completed for each group, or one-way ANOVA separating the ANOVA for role/position from the ANOVA for school grade level, using a two-factor ANOVA to reduce Type 1 error rate was preferable.

Linked with the research questions previously stated, the variables included in this study are

1. What is the relationship between *enabling school structure* and the *extent of teacher leadership*? (correlation variables)

2. Do educators at different grade levels (elementary, middle, and high school-independent variable) differ in their perception of enabling school structure (dependent variable)?
3. Do educators in different roles or positions (teacher, teacher in a formalized position of leadership, administrator; independent variable) differ in their perception of enabling school structure (dependent variable)?

4. Do educators at different grade levels (elementary, middle, and high school; independent variable) differ in their perception of the extent of teacher leadership (dependent variable)?

5. Do educators in different roles or positions (teacher, teacher in a formalized position of leadership, administrator; independent variable) differ in their perception of the extent of teacher leadership (dependent variable)?

**Research Instruments**

**Instrument 1: Enabling School Structure Survey**

This study employed two previously developed instruments. The first of two instruments was the 12-item Likert scale ESS instrument developed and validated by Hoy and Sweetland (2001). The purpose of the instrument is to measure the degree of enabling or hindering in a school’s structure along a continuum, and to test for enabling formalization, coercive formalization, enabling centralization, and hindering centralization (Hoy & Sweetland, 2000a, 2000b). An enabling school structure is flexible and helps to solve problems, whereas in a hindering structure, rules are used to punish and to enforce compliance (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001). The ESS Instrument that was used in this study has been modified in several stages. In preliminary studies, the scale was a 24-item scale (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001). In one exploratory factor analysis for this instrument, Hoy and Sweetland (2001) ascertained that items loaded strongly on both factors; they decided to create a one-factor solution with factor loadings ranging from .40
to .81 in the expected positive (enabling) and negative (hindering) directions. In that exploratory study, the 24-item scale of enabling bureaucracy demonstrated an internal consistency of alpha = .94 (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001). In a second exploratory study by Hoy and Sweetland (2000a) with the original 24-item scale, factor loadings ranged from .53 to .81 in the expected positive (enabling) and negative (hindering) directions and had a reliability of alpha = .96.

Hoy and Sweetland (2000a) observed similar levels of reliability, validity, and factor stability results with the shortened 12-item scale. On the first test, factor loadings ranged from .52 to .80 with the expected positive and negative directions. Subsequent tests resulted in factor loadings ranging between .55–.85 and between .69–.86. These three tests of the 12-item scale indicated that the factor explained the 46.8%, 53.6%, and finally 64.4% of the variance. The alpha coefficients for the three studies were .90, .93, and .95 (Hoy & Sweetland, 2000). A high score on the 12-item scale indicates an enabling structure, whereas a low score on the scale indicates a hindering structure. Although this scale is a condensed version of the original 24-item instrument, the instrument authors pointed out that the shortened, 6-item instrument correlates with the original 24-item instrument almost perfectly (nearing 1); therefore, the validity tests of earlier and longer instruments still apply to the shorter, 12-item instrument (Hoy & Sweetland, 2000a). The form includes 12 items (six with positive, six with negative loadings) and uses a Likert-type scale. According to Hoy and Sweetland (2001), final items from the scale, grouped by item type, are included in Table 5.
Table 5

Items From Enabling Structure, by Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enabling Formalization</th>
<th>Coercive Formalization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Administrative rules enable authentic communication between teachers and administrators.</td>
<td>1) Red tape is a problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Administrative rules help rather than hinder.</td>
<td>2) Administrative rules used to punish teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Administrative rules are guides to solutions rather than rigid procedures.</td>
<td>3) Administrative rules substitute for professional judgment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enabling Centralization</th>
<th>Hindering Centralization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Administrative hierarchy enables teachers to do their job.</td>
<td>1) Administrative hierarchy obstructs student achievement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Administrative hierarchy facilitates the mission of the school.</td>
<td>2) Administrative hierarchy obstructs innovation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Administrators use their authority to enable teachers to do their jobs.</td>
<td>3) Principal’s authority used to undermine teachers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Instrument 2: Teacher Leadership Inventory**

The second instrument used was the TLI, created by Angelle and DeHart (2010). Although many items focus on teachers and processes, the authors described the purpose of this instrument as measuring the perceptions of the extent of teacher leadership. Angelle and DeHart presented examples of these processes, including “re-structuring time, selecting teachers to leadership positions, and offering teachers opportunities to share their expertise” (p. 2). Measurement of teachers’ perceptions of these processes, makes possible a measure of the extent of teacher leadership at a particular school or organization. Although support for teacher leadership cannot be precisely measured, measuring the extent of teacher leadership in a setting is the approach taken by this study to measuring the support for teacher leadership in a given setting.
Like the ESS instrument, the TLI instrument also underwent several stages of development that culminated in a 25-item survey. This survey was subsequently revised and improved, and it underwent testing by means of a factor-analysis process eight times, reducing the overall survey to 17 items and a four-factor model: sharing expertise, sharing leadership, suprapractitioner, principal selection. The researchers created a dendrogram to examine the links between variables, and this dendrogram supported the prior factor analysis results. The final version of the TLI includes 17 items on a 4-point Likert scale. Angelle and DeHart (2010) reported a Cronbach’s alpha reliability of .85 for the instrument. Instrument items are included in Table 5 and are categorized by the four areas of the model.

The first area of the model—sharing expertise—measures teacher-leader skills as well as collaboration and knowledge sharing with other teachers. The second area of the model—sharing leadership—measures the willingness of principals to share leadership and of teachers to accept leadership responsibilities. Angelle and DeHart (2011) identified this as a “give and take relationship” (p. 149). The third area outlined by Angelle and DeHart—suprapractitioner—measures teachers’ “perceptions of teacher behaviors that are not only beyond the prescribed roles, but are also engaged willingly by the staff” (Angelle & DeHart, 2011, p. 149). These are teachers who are willing to work above and beyond the tasks assigned to their prescribed roles. Finally, the fourth factor—principal selection—measures the ‘we/them’ mentality, whether there are in-groups of teacher leaders who are formally identified, and how each of these groups perceives the educational organization.
Table 6

Items From the TLI, by Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sharing Expertise</th>
<th>Sharing Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Teachers ask one another for assistance when we have a problem with student</td>
<td>5) Teachers are involved in making decisions about activities such as professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behavior in the classroom.</td>
<td>development, cross-curricular projects, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Other teachers willingly offer me assistance if I have questions about how to</td>
<td>6) Teachers are actively involved in improving the school as a whole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teach a new topic or skills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Teachers here share new ideas for teaching with other teachers such as through</td>
<td>12) The principal responds to the concerns and ideas of teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grade/department meetings, school wide meetings, professional development, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Teachers discuss ways to improve student learning.</td>
<td>13) Teachers plan the content of professional learning activities at my school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Teachers stay current on education research in our grade level/subject area/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>department.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Teachers willingly stay after school to help other teachers who need assistance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Teachers willingly stay after school to work with administrators, if administrators need assistance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SupraPractitioner</th>
<th>Principal Selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8) Teachers willingly stay after school to work on school improvement activities.</td>
<td>11) Administrators object when teachers take on leadership responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Teachers willingly stay after school to help other teachers who need assistance.</td>
<td>15) The principal consults the same small group of teachers for input on decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Teachers willingly stay after school to work with administrators, if administrators need assistance.</td>
<td>17) Most teachers in leadership positions only serve because they have been principal appointed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When Angelle and DeHart (2011) utilized this instrument to measure teacher perceptions, they were able to compare the perceptions of teachers in various roles and positions. These varying roles included teachers in formal positions of leadership as well as teachers holding no formal positions of leadership. By identifying whether the respondent held a formal position of leadership, the instrument can acknowledge
disparities between the perceptions as they vary between those holding these roles and those not holding these roles. Administered in this way, the instrument measured the degree to which formal and informal forms of teacher leadership were supported.

**Using the Two Instruments Together**

Although the groundwork has been laid for the creation of a framework to describe supports for and constraints against teacher leadership, no instrument is available to specifically measure supports for and constraints against teacher leadership. In fact, very few instruments exist for the measurement of aspects of teacher leadership. For this study, an alternative measurement instrument is utilized in order to approach the intended measure as closely as possible. Because teacher leadership can thrive only in an environment in which it is supported, measuring the extent of teacher leadership in an organization, as the TLI does in this study, may serve as an alternative indicator of the support for teacher leadership in an organization. In other words, if little support exists for teacher leadership in an organization, teacher leadership is likely not to exist to a great extent in that setting. This study therefore measured the relationship between the extent of teacher leadership and the degree to which a school structure is understood as enabling. Using the ESS survey to measure the extent to which a school or organization is enabling or hindering in combination with the TLI to measure teachers’ perceptions about the extent of teacher leadership in a given context enables an examination of the correlation between these two constructs.

Because the ESS survey is not intended for administrators and would therefore skew results, administrators were asked to take the TLI only. Therefore, principals were only surveyed to measure results using the TLI and not the ESS.
Semistructured interviews followed the initial survey. Cohen and Crabtree (2006) describe semistructured interviews as formal, where predeveloped interview questions serve as a guide for the interview. Although the interviewer follows the questions, the conversation is fluid and can divert from the original set of questions if it is appropriate. Interview questions, based on the definition of enabling school structure, are included in Appendix A.

**Instrument Limitations**

An additional limitation of this study was in the choice of instrument for the measurement of teacher leadership. As previously discussed, although researchers had identified multiple supports for and constraints against teacher leadership, and some researchers had created frameworks for identifying supports for and constraints against teacher leadership, no instruments were available that specifically and objectively measured these supports and constraints. The closest and best available instrument choice for this study was the TLI, which measures the extent to which teacher leadership takes place in a given setting, according to individual teacher perceptions aggregated as a group. In other words, the instrument measures how much teacher leadership exists in a particular setting. This instrument was chosen for several reasons. Firstly, of all of the available teacher leadership instruments, of which there were very few, it aligned most closely with the background literature and research questions of this study. Secondly, the instrument’s author provides background information about the creation, testing, validity, reliability, etc. of the instrument. Because teacher leadership can thrive only in an environment in which it is supported, measuring the extent of teacher leadership in an organization, as the TLI does in this study, can serve as a reasonable alternative indicator
for the support for teacher leadership in an organization. In other words, if there exists little support for teacher leadership in an organization, teacher leadership is likely not to exist to a great extent in that setting. There are limitations inherent in this assumption, however. It is unclear whether high levels of teacher leadership can be found in an environment in which there is little support for teacher leadership; it may also be possible to identify limited teacher leadership in an environment in which a good deal of support for teacher leadership exists.

**Data Collection**

**Survey Data Collection**

The method of data collection for this study was surveys and interviews. The first part of the study included the survey research. A link to the online study survey was sent via email individually to personnel in the participating districts. All individuals received their own survey link, and each link allowed the individual participant to indicate the school level at which he or she teaches such that correlation to participant perceptions can be examined at the school and district level. In addition to school level analysis, the data were analyzed and gave a broad overview of generalized results for all responses.

The first page of the questionnaire described the study and asked for informed consent. Participants indicated their consent by completing the questionnaire. This study posed little risk and results of the survey were kept confidential. The questionnaire asked for formal school district type (urban, suburban, rural), participant position type (to identify those in formal leadership roles), number of years taught, degree attained, and grade level taught.
Those asked to respond to the survey included administrators, classroom teachers, formal teacher leaders such as instructional coaches or teachers on special assignment, teaching staff members such as counselors, and special education teachers who are not classroom teachers. Participants identified as administrators only took the TLI and not the ESS Survey because the ESS is not designed for those in administrative positions (W. Hoy, personal communication, November 19, 2013). Participants came from all grade levels taught in each school district: elementary, middle, and high school. Because of the variation among school districts as related to the specific grade levels assigned to different levels of schools, respondents self-identified their school level as either elementary, middle or high school grades. This self-selection accounted for large districts that have both middle schools and junior high schools and served to limit the categories from which respondents can select to three grade-level bands. Staff members in these schools completed the questionnaire in May of 2014.

**Interview Data Collection**

Based on the data from the survey portion of the study, follow up interviews were conducted with teachers and administrators in two of the twenty-three districts. Districts with 30 or more responses were considered for follow-up interviews. Within those parameters, there were six districts with response rates of 30 to 55. For the purpose of identifying and selecting districts in which to conduct interviews, correlation analyses were performed for respondents in each school district with responses numbers greater than 30 (see Table 4 for a list of number of responses of each school district and correlation results for districts with responses of 30 or greater). In addition to looking for a positive correlation, no correlation, or a negative correlation by district grouping, the
number of responses given by a school district was considered in making interview site selections. The number of responses from districts ranged from three to 55. In order for interview sites to be chosen that had a reasonable number of survey responses, response analysis identified districts with both a high number of responses and significant correlation results. The district with the greatest response rate (\(n = 55\)) and third highest response rate (\(n = 35\)) by participants had the very strongest correlation results of all district with more than 30 responses. The district with the greatest response rate showed a Pearson’s \(r\) of .424 and significance of \(p = .002\). The district with the third highest response rate showed a Pearson’s \(r\) of .499 and significance of \(p = .004\). Of these two positive correlations, one district agreed to participate. The district with the second highest response rate (\(n = 39\)) was one of two districts that showed no correlation and also had more than 30 responses (Pearson’s \(r = .132, p = .473\)). As there were no districts with a negative correlation, this district was selected for interviews along with a district with a high response rate and a high positive correlation.

The two districts that participated in the interview portion of the study (one showing a moderate positive correlation and one no correlation) also provided a glimpse into two different kinds of districts. The district showing no relationship was a large, semiaffluent suburban district. The district showing a positive relationship was a large rural district further from the major metropolitan area, home of both an established farming community as well as a growing number of suburban style housing communities.

Interviews were arranged through the district for follow up, and districts were chosen based on responses to the survey as previously detailed. Approximately three to four interviews were solicited from districts where follow-up questioning was desired.
This follow up enabled the researcher to further probe the reasons for the results found in the survey. To ensure representative sampling for interviews, both teachers and administrators were interviewed. Of the teachers interviewed, a balance of teachers, teacher leaders, non-classroom teachers, and administrators was selected in order to gather responses from each of the initial survey’s role categories. In the first district, a classroom teacher, a media specialist, and an elementary administrator were selected. In the second district, a high school administrator, a teacher on special assignment as a mathematics coach at the junior high, an elementary classroom teacher, and an elementary guidance counselor were selected. Interviews were carried out in person and were recorded and subsequently transcribed.

**Data Analysis**

**Correlation Analysis**

For both the correlation and ANOVA portions of the analysis, all of the responses from the individuals at the 23 school districts were grouped together ($N = 405$). The correlation between the ESS survey and the TLI survey were examined by summing and dividing the 17 TLI items and 12 ESS items to create a new variable for each instrument that could be used to correlate the two instruments. For the correlation, the assumptions of linearity and independence were checked.

**ANOVA Analysis**

Two two-way ANOVAs were performed, one two-way ANOVA with the score on the Teacher Leadership Inventory survey as the dependent variable and one two-way ANOVA with the score on the Enabling School Structure survey as the dependent variable. For the two-way ANOVAs, homogeneity of variance was checked with the
Levene’s test, normality was tested through the checking of skewness, kurtosis, histograms and box plots, as well as the Shapiro-Wilk test. For comparing groups by role and grade level, Tukey HSD was used.

**Interview Analysis**

The interviews in this study followed a case-study design (Fraenkel et al., 2012). As previously described in the Data Collection section, correlation analysis was used to identify districts with a positive correlation, no correlation, or a negative correlation by district grouping (see Table 4). Once interview sites were selected based on that correlation analysis, the participants were recruited for follow up interviews. In selecting interview participants, the maximal variation method of sampling (Fraenkel et al., 2012) was used. Maximal variation sampling is described as selecting “to represent a diversity of perspectives or characteristics” (Fraenkel et al., 2012, p. 436). This method was chosen to maintain the balance of teachers, teacher leaders, non-classroom teachers, and administrators selected from each of the initial survey’s role categories. For the interview portion of the analysis, questions were written in alignment with the definition of enabling school structure, including the following subcategories: formalization, division of labor, formal vs. informal leadership, centralization, mutual support and professionalism, and principal support and professionalism (for interview questions, see Appendix A). Responses to these questions were analyzed by subcategory (Fraenkel et al., 2012). When all subcategories had been analyzed, the researcher identified three overarching themes that had arisen in each subcategory.
Bias/Error

The researcher for this study has taught for 11 years in the geographical area of this study. The researcher’s work district and her spouse’s work district were randomly selected to participate in this study. Thus, there may be a personal and professional bias in that the researcher has worked in schools in this study and is professionally and personally connected with teachers and administrators in participating districts. In the survey portion of the study, these possible biases are not a concern as districts and schools were randomly selected and responses objectively calculated.

In the interview portion of the study, researcher bias may be more of a concern. The researcher may be biased to assume that an enabling school structure leads to more opportunities for teacher leadership or that teacher leadership is a positive occurrence rather than a negative occurrence. In addition, the researcher’s work district and her spouse’s district were selected based on the response rates and district-level correlations described earlier in this study. When choosing schools at which to carry out semistructured interviews, the researcher based the choices on the data from the initial survey, which is objective and was described previously. Also, in choosing those to interview at a school, a cross-section of respondents were gathered based on position/role, ensuring representation from teachers as well as those in positions of leadership. In this way, the researcher’s professional and personal biases were minimized.

Validity and Reliability

Threats to validity in this study were minimal. According to Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012),
Validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, correctness, and usefulness of the inferences a researcher makes. Reliability refers to the consistency of scores or answers from one administration of an instrument to another, and from one set of items to another. (p. 147)

**Instrumentation**

The validity and reliability tests of the ESS survey and TLI are discussed in the section on instrumentation. Although reliability was addressed in instrument design, this is the first study examining the relationship between the scores on the two instruments. The results of this study show a moderate correlation between the scores on the ESS and TLI. Further studies correlating the two instruments will be required in order to validate the relationship between the two instruments. As this study administered the survey only once, using the pre-test/post-test method (Fraenkel et al., 2012) to measure consistency was not possible. In addition, no alternative forms of the instruments were available to administer simultaneously with the original instrument forms to test validity.

**Correlation Study**

Fraenkel et al. (2012) addressed these threats to validity in a correlational study: (a) subject characteristics, (b) location of study, (c) instrument decay, (d) data collector characteristics, (e) data collector bias, (f) testing bias, and (g) mortality (pp. 340–344). In this study, threats by subject characteristics were minimized by randomly sampling 23 participating school districts. From those 23 districts, random sampling of schools ensured a range of participant background and experience. In order to maintain an appropriate sample size at each school, responses were not separated by gender or ethnicity. For the portion of the study in which differences between groups and roles
were measured, one limitation was not being able to form independent variable groups. Because the purpose of this study was to examine the differences in responses by role and position, this threat is not applicable. The method of location sampling also addressed the threats that location might have made to the study. As this study was not a repeated measure design, the threat of instrument decay was minimal. In addition, the instruments included 29 short questions, which limited a threat to participant fatigue. The threat of instrument decay because of fatigue in the interview process was also minimal. The researcher met participants at a time that was convenient for the participant and interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes. In the survey portion of the study, data collector bias was minimized due to the administration of the survey online. As both instruments in this study were administered through the same survey, a threat to testing validity may occur, as the responses to one survey may affect the responses on the other. The threat to internal validity by mortality in the correlation study was addressed by including for the study only the participants who responded to both instruments in the survey. However, mortality poses a threat to external validity in that participants may have chosen not to respond to the survey or participate in the interviews for various reasons. Lastly, history may have posed a threat to validity in the form of recent faculty experiences as new, formalized teacher-leader positions as instructional coaches have emerged. Trochim (2006) defined a history threat as “some historical event that occurred” (para. 4) that affected the outcome. It is possible that these newly created and formalized positions of teacher leadership may have altered teachers’ perceptions of teacher leadership and school structure, thereby affecting responses. However, these changes and new positions were not made during the course of the study.
ANOVA Portion of Study

Fraenkel et al. (2012) addressed these threats to validity in a causal-comparative study: (a) subject characteristics, (b) mortality, (c) location, (d) instrumentation (p. 370–373). Of these, Frankel et al. (2012) identify subject characteristics as the greatest threat to internal validity for causal-comparative research. Of the ways to minimize subject characteristic threats, Fraenkel et al. (2012) suggests the following: (a) matching of subjects, (b) finding or creating homogeneous subgroups, and (c) statistical matching (p. 371). For the purpose of this study, these methods for minimizing the threat to causal-comparative research do not apply. However, this ANOVA portion of this study seeks to identify differences by role and by level, making subject characteristics less of a threat. The other threats to causal-comparative research identified by Fraenkel et al. (2012) are similar to threats to correlational research and are addressed in the previous paragraph.

Interviews

The interview questions were written based on the characteristics of enabling school structure and linked to aspects of teacher leadership to ensure direct alignment with the survey content. For the interview portion of the study, the threat to data collector bias was higher because the data collector was an experienced teacher. Fraenkel et al. (2012) list the following threats to validity and reliability in qualitative research: (a) using a variety of instruments to collect data, (b) checking the informant’s descriptions of something against another informant’s descriptions of the same thing, (c) learning to understand and, where appropriate speak the vocabulary of the group being studied, (d) writing down the questions asked (in addition to the answers received), (e) recording personal thoughts while conducting observations and interviews, (f) asking one or more
participants in the study to review the accuracy of the research report, (g) obtaining an individual outside of the study to review and evaluate the report, (h) documenting the sources of remarks whenever possible and appropriate, (i) documenting the basis for inferences, (j) describing the context in which questions are asked and situations are observed, (k) using audio and video recordings when possible and appropriate, (l) drawing conclusions based on one’s understanding of the situation being observed and then acting on those conclusions, (m) interviewing individuals more than once, (n) observing the setting or situation of interest over a period of time, and (o) analyzing negative cases (Fraenkel et al., 2012, p. 459). These methods for minimizing threats to validity and reliability were addressed in this study. The responses given in each interview were checked against the responses given by other interviewees (b). Because the interviewer was a teacher in the geographic area, she already spoke the vocabulary of the group (c) and understood language, acronyms, etc. Questions and answers were written, recorded, and transcribed, satisfying (d), (e), and (k). Follow up questioning and requests for anecdotal examples provided the basis for understanding context (h), (i), and (j). An attempt to analyze negative cases (o) was attempted by including interviewees from a district with and without a positive correlation. Interviewing participants more than once (m), making observations over time (n), and using a variety of instruments was not possible in this study as there was only one form of the instrument.
Chapter 4: Results

Chapter 4 is divided into four parts. The first part discusses the results of the correlation portion of the study. Then, the results of the two-way ANOVA on the Teacher Leadership Inventory are presented. This is followed by the results of the two-way ANOVA on the Enabling School Structure Survey. The results of the interview portion of the study conclude this chapter.

**Correlation Study**

A Pearson correlation was conducted to examine whether a relationship exists between the TLI (measuring the extent of teacher leadership) and the ESS (measuring enabling school structure). The results of the correlation study and output tables are presented in Table 8. First, this dissertation will address assumptions met.

**Table 7**

Descriptive Statistics for the Correlation of Enabling School Structure and the Extent of Teacher Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TLLav</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.0380</td>
<td>.3539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESSav</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.6888</td>
<td>.68007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>405</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

84
Table 7 shows the basic descriptive statistics for the examination of the relationship between enabling school structure and teacher leadership.

Assumptions of linearity and independence were checked and confirmed. In the scatter plot in Figure 1, the points show a band that is from lower left to upper right, showing a positive correlation, suggesting that schools with a higher degree of enabling school structure also have a higher extent of teacher leadership. Visible on the plot are several outliers. As this was an exploratory study, the researcher chose to retain the outliers because the figures reflect actual practices in schools. This study does not attempt to fit data to the line; rather, the study shows the full sample to see if a relationship exists. Outliers may also give insight to future research.

Figure 1. Scatter plot of correlation of enabling school structure and the extent of teacher leadership
Table 8

Correlation of Enabling School Structure and the Extent of Teacher Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TLLav correlation</th>
<th>ESSav correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TLLav</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.458**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESSav</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.458**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>411</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 8 shows the correlation is significant for a two-tailed test at a p < .01 level for N = 405, showing a moderate correlation between the two instruments. The Pearson correlation was .458, also showing a moderate positive correlation between enabling school structure and the extent of teacher leadership. The coefficient of determination (r²), or the proportion of variance in one variable that is explained by the other variable is .2098, which means that teacher’s perceptions of enabling school structure statistically explains 21% of the variability in perceptions of teacher leadership.

**First Two-Way ANOVA: Teacher Leadership Inventory**

In addition to the moderate relationship shown to exist between the two instruments, and thus a moderate relationship between enabling school structure and the extent of teacher leadership, two 2-way ANOVAs were performed. In the first, the dependent variable was the score on the TLI. Output tables and analysis of results are interspersed throughout the tables.
Table 9 shows general descriptive statistics for the ANOVA on the TLI.
Figure 2. Boxplot of ANOVA on Teacher Leadership Inventory

As previously noted, there are several outliers visible on the plot. As this was an exploratory study, the researcher chose to retain the outliers because the figures reflect actual practices in schools. Outliers may also give insight to future research.

Figure 3: Histogram of ANOVA on Teacher Leadership Inventory
The histogram in Figure 3 is slightly negatively skewed but approaching a normal distribution, suggesting normality.

![Normal Q-Q Plot of Residual for TLIav](image)

**Figure 4:** Q-Q Plot of ANOVA on Teacher Leadership Inventory

The QQ plots are slightly curved but approached a line, suggesting normality.

Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residual for TLIav</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.01613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95% confidence interval for</td>
<td>Lower bound</td>
<td>-.0317</td>
<td>.0317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5% trimmed mean</td>
<td></td>
<td>.0133</td>
<td>.0684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td></td>
<td>.0684</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td></td>
<td>.117</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. deviation</td>
<td></td>
<td>.34256</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td></td>
<td>.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interquartile range</td>
<td></td>
<td>.46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.578</td>
<td>.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurtosis</td>
<td></td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>.229</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Skewness results were .578 and Kurtosis results were .066, which lay in the -2/2 normality range.

Table 11
Tests for Normality of ANOVA on Teacher Leadership Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kolmogorov-Smirnova</th>
<th>Shapiro-Wilk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual for TLLav</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>451</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Shapiro-Wilk results were .972, df = 451, p = .000. The Shapiro-Wilk results show a significant difference from normal distribution, but this test has been identified as sensitive to slight nonnormal distribution with sample sizes of more than 200 (Field, 2012). Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) also supported the robustness of ANOVAs to violations of normality: “Univariate F is robust to modest violations of normality as long as there are at least 20 degrees of freedom for error in a univariate ANOVA and the violations are not due to outliers. Even with unequal n and only a few dependent variables, a sample size of about 20 in the smallest cell should ensure robustness” (p. 253).
Table 12

Levene’s Test of Equality of Error and Variances of ANOVA on Teacher Leadership Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.846</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>.594</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Dependent variable TLIav. Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

Levene’s test of homogeneity of variance was met $F(11,439) = .846, p = .594$. In the Levene’s test, a $p$ value less than alpha would not be significant, whereas a $p$ value greater than alpha would be significant. In addition, the plots provide a view of random display of points, reinforcing the homogeneity of variance assumption ascertained with the Levene’s test.
Figure 5 shows estimated marginal means of the ANOVA on TLI. Lines for the middle and high school intersect, whereas the lines for the elementary school are further from the lines from the middle and high schools and are significantly higher in terms of perception of teacher leadership. In addition, the crossing middle/high school lines tell us that an interaction probably exists between middle school and high schools.
### Table 13

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects of ANOVA on Teacher Leadership Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
<th>Noncent. Parameter</th>
<th>Observed Powerb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>3.676a</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.334</td>
<td>2.778</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>30.557</td>
<td>.980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>1385.970</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1385.970</td>
<td>11522.163</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.963</td>
<td>11522.163</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2.3gradelevel</td>
<td>.739</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.370</td>
<td>3.073</td>
<td>.047</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>6.146</td>
<td>.592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2.1role</td>
<td>.527</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.176</td>
<td>1.460</td>
<td>.225</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>4.381</td>
<td>.387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2.3gradelevel* Q2.1role</td>
<td>.273</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.378</td>
<td>.893</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>2.268</td>
<td>.160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>52.806</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4218.837</td>
<td>451</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>56.482</td>
<td>450</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Dependent variable TLLav; a. \( R^2 = .065 \) (adjusted \( R^2 = .042 \)); b. Computed using alpha = .05. In the test of between-subject effects, \( r^2 \) squared is .065.

For grade level on the TLI Two-Way ANOVA, the \( p \) value of .047 was significant at the .05 level. Observed power for grade level was .592. There was no significant interaction between role*grade level (\( p = .893 \)) with an observed power of .160. For role, the \( p \) value of .225 was not significant at the .05 level. Observed power for role is .387. This result shows that perception of the extent of teacher leadership does not vary based on the role of the respondent (see Table 13).
Table 14

Multiple Comparisons (Role) of ANOVA on Teacher Leadership Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Role</th>
<th>(J) Role</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound</th>
<th>Upper Bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrator in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>Teacher-leader in a formalized position of leadership</td>
<td>-.1447</td>
<td>.09197</td>
<td>.395</td>
<td>-.3819</td>
<td>.0924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>Teacher NOT in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>-.0512</td>
<td>.08648</td>
<td>.934</td>
<td>-.2742</td>
<td>.1718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>Nonclassroom teacher</td>
<td>-.0679</td>
<td>.09789</td>
<td>.899</td>
<td>-.3203</td>
<td>.1845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>Teacher-leader in a formalized position of leadership</td>
<td>.1447</td>
<td>.09197</td>
<td>.395</td>
<td>-.0924</td>
<td>.3819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-leader in a formalized position of leadership</td>
<td>Teacher NOT in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>.0935</td>
<td>.04225</td>
<td>.121</td>
<td>-.0154</td>
<td>.2025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-leader in a formalized position of leadership</td>
<td>Nonclassroom teacher</td>
<td>.0768</td>
<td>.06236</td>
<td>.607</td>
<td>-.0840</td>
<td>.2376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-leader in a formalized position of leadership</td>
<td>Administrator in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>.0512</td>
<td>.08648</td>
<td>.934</td>
<td>-.1718</td>
<td>.2742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher NOT in a formal position of leadership, as described above</td>
<td>Teacher-leader in a formalized position of leadership</td>
<td>-.0935</td>
<td>.04225</td>
<td>.121</td>
<td>-.2025</td>
<td>.0154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher NOT in a formal position of leadership, as described above</td>
<td>Nonclassroom teacher</td>
<td>-.0167</td>
<td>.05393</td>
<td>.990</td>
<td>-.1558</td>
<td>.1224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher NOT in a formal position of leadership, as described above</td>
<td>Administrator in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>.0679</td>
<td>.09789</td>
<td>.899</td>
<td>-.1845</td>
<td>.3203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher NOT in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>Teacher-leader in a formalized position of leadership</td>
<td>-.0768</td>
<td>.06236</td>
<td>.607</td>
<td>-.2376</td>
<td>.0840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher NOT in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>Teacher NOT in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>.0167</td>
<td>.05393</td>
<td>.990</td>
<td>-.1224</td>
<td>.1558</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Dependent variable: TLIav; Tukey HSD; the error term is Mean Square(Error) = .120; based on observed means.
When comparing between groups using Tukey HSD, there was no significant
difference between any of the roles in the perception of extent of teacher leadership.

### Table 15

Multiple Comparisons (School Grade Level) of ANOVA on Teacher Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Grade Level</th>
<th>(J) Grade Level</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>Middle school or junior high</td>
<td>-.0665</td>
<td>.03888</td>
<td>.202</td>
<td>-.1579 - .0249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary or intermediate</td>
<td>-.1949*</td>
<td>.04108</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.2915 - .0983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School or Junior High</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>.0665</td>
<td>.03888</td>
<td>.202</td>
<td>-.0249 - .1579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary or intermediate</td>
<td>-.1284*</td>
<td>.04600</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>-.2366 - -.0202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary or Intermediate</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>.1949*</td>
<td>.04108</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.0983 - .2915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle school or junior high</td>
<td>.1284*</td>
<td>.04600</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.0202 - .2366</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Dependent variable: TLLav; Tukey HSD; Based on observed means; error term is mean square (Error) = .120; *mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

When comparing between groups using Tukey HSD, there was a statistically significant
difference between the responses from those teaching at the elementary level as
compared to the middle grades \((p = .015)\) and high school grades \((p = .000)\). The
difference between the responses from those at the middle school as compared to the high
school level was not significant \((p = .202)\). This lack of significance demonstrates that
there is a difference in perception of the extent of teacher leadership between those
teaching at the elementary level as compared to those teaching at the middle and high
school levels, with those at the elementary level perceiving a greater extent of teacher leadership.

**Second Two-Way ANOVA: Enabling School Structure**

The second two-way ANOVA used the score on the enabling school structure survey as the dependent variable. All output for this two-way ANOVA can be found below, as well as a summarization of results.

Table 16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-leader in a formalized position of leadership</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>3.7622</td>
<td>.57147</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle school or junior high</td>
<td>3.9203</td>
<td>.57925</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary or intermediate</td>
<td>4.1667</td>
<td>.67185</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.8986</td>
<td>.61196</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>3.5768</td>
<td>.63700</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher NOT in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>Middle school or junior high</td>
<td>3.6341</td>
<td>.76125</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary or intermediate</td>
<td>3.8429</td>
<td>.69324</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.6483</td>
<td>.68698</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>3.2549</td>
<td>.74679</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle school or junior high</td>
<td>3.4236</td>
<td>.76083</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonclassroom Teacher</td>
<td>Elementary or intermediate</td>
<td>3.9635</td>
<td>.32910</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.5519</td>
<td>.69615</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>3.5869</td>
<td>.64299</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle school or junior high</td>
<td>3.6731</td>
<td>.73347</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Elementary or intermediate</td>
<td>3.9271</td>
<td>.64993</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.6884</td>
<td>.68087</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Dependent variable: ESSav

Table 16 provides an overview of the descriptive statistics of the ANOVA on the ESS survey results.
Figure 6. Boxplot of ANOVA on ESS Survey

The rationale for including outliers was included with the boxplot for the previous ANOVA.

Figure 7. Histogram of ANOVA on ESS Survey

The histogram in Figure 6 shows a slightly negatively skewed set of data, but that it also was approaching a normal distribution for normality.
The QQ plot in Figure 8 shows points close to the line, and the box plot in Figure 8 also suggests normality.

Table 17

Descriptives Including Skewness / Kurtosis of ANOVA on ESS Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residual for ESSav</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>.03230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95% conf.</td>
<td>Lower bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mean</td>
<td>Upper bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5% Trimmed mean</td>
<td>.0275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Median</td>
<td>.0538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>.428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. deviation</td>
<td>.65411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>-2.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Range</td>
<td>4.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interquartile range</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td>-.632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kurtosis</td>
<td>.799</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumptions were addressed and tested through a variety of tests. Skewness was -.632 and kurtosis was .799, which lay in the -2/2 normality range.
Table 18

Tests of Normality of ANOVA on ESS Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residual for ESSav</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>.977</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Shapiro Wilk = .977, *df* 410, *p* = .000. Though this indicated nonnormality, the same explanation from the section on the TLI applies.

Table 19

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances of ANOVA on ESS Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>F</em></th>
<th><em>df1</em></th>
<th><em>df2</em></th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.879</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>.062</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Dependent variable: ESSav. Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups; a. Design: Intercept + Q2.1role + Q2.3gradelevel + Q2.1role * Q2.3gradelevel

Levene’s test of homogeneity of variance was met: *F*(8, 401) = 1.879, *p* = .062. Homogeneity of variance assumption ascertained by the Levene’s test was supported by a random display of points on a plot.
Table 20

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects of ANOVA on ESS Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
<th>Noncent. parameter</th>
<th>Observed power</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>14.608a</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.826</td>
<td>4.184</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.077</td>
<td>33.473</td>
<td>.994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>3103.124</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3103.124</td>
<td>7110.712</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.947</td>
<td>7110.712</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2.1role</td>
<td>5.551</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.775</td>
<td>6.360</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>12.719</td>
<td>.899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2.3gradelevel</td>
<td>8.754</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.377</td>
<td>10.029</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>20.059</td>
<td>.985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2.1role*</td>
<td>1.529</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.382</td>
<td>.876</td>
<td>.478</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>3.503</td>
<td>.279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2.3gradelevel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>174.997</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>.436</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(continued)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5767.410</td>
<td>410</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>189.605</td>
<td>409</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Dependent variable is ESSav; a. R squared = .077 (adjusted R squared = .059)

The p value of .002 was significant at the .05 level with an observed power for role of .899. For grade level, the p value of .000 was significant at the .05 level with an observed power of .985. These results indicate that the perception of enabling school structure depends on the grade level and role of the respondent. There was not a significant interaction between role*grade level: p = .478 with an observed power of .279. R squared was .077 in tests of between-subjects effects.
Table 21

Multiple Comparisons (Role) of ANOVA on ESS Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Role</th>
<th>(J) Role</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-leader in a formalized position of leadership</td>
<td>Teacher NOT in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>.2502*</td>
<td>.08249</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.0562 to .4443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher NOT in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>Teacher-leader in a formalized position of leadership</td>
<td>.3467*</td>
<td>.12229</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.0591 to .6344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonclassroom teacher</td>
<td>Teacher-leader in a formalized position of leadership</td>
<td>-.2502*</td>
<td>.08249</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>-.4443 to -.0562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonclassroom teacher</td>
<td>Teacher NOT in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>.0965</td>
<td>.10604</td>
<td>.634</td>
<td>-.1530 to .3460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher NOT in a formal position of leadership</td>
<td>Nonclassroom teacher</td>
<td>-.3467*</td>
<td>.12229</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>-.6344 to -.0591</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Dependent variable: ESSav; Tukey HSD; based on observed means; error term is mean square(error) = .436

When comparing between groups using Tukey HSD, a significant difference was found between the role of formal teacher leaders as compared to either classroom teacher (with no formal leadership role) at p=.007 or non classroom teacher (with no formal leadership role) at p=.013. There was no significant difference between classroom teacher (with no formal leadership role) and non-classroom teacher (with no formal leadership role) at p=.634. This indicates that in terms of perception of enabling school structure, there is a significant difference between how the formally labeled teacher leaders perceive school
structure as compared to the other two groups. According to the results of this study, formal teacher leaders perceived the school structure to be more enabling than did their counterparts who hold no formal leadership role or title.

Table 22
Multiple Comparisons (Grade Level) of ANOVA on ESS Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Grade Level</th>
<th>(J) Grade Level</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval Upper Bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>Middle School or Junior High</td>
<td>-0.0862</td>
<td>0.0792</td>
<td>0.522</td>
<td>-0.2725</td>
<td>0.1002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary or Intermediate</td>
<td>-0.3402*</td>
<td>0.08139</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.5316</td>
<td>-0.1487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School or Junior High</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>0.0862</td>
<td>0.0792</td>
<td>0.522</td>
<td>-0.1002</td>
<td>0.2725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary or Intermediate</td>
<td>-0.2540*</td>
<td>0.09350</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>-0.4740</td>
<td>-0.0341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary or Intermediate</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>0.3402*</td>
<td>0.08139</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.1487</td>
<td>0.5316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle School or Junior High</td>
<td>0.2540*</td>
<td>0.09350</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>0.0341</td>
<td>0.4740</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Dependent variable: ESSav; Tukey HSD; based on observed means; error term is mean square(error) = .436

When comparing responses based on grade level, there was a significant difference between the responses from those teaching at the elementary level as compared to the middle grades ($p = .019$) and high school grades ($p = .000$). The difference between the responses from those at the middle school level as compared to the high school level was not significant ($p = .522$), which means that in terms of perception of enabling school structure, the responses of elementary teachers is statistically different from the responses of those at the other grade levels. In this study,
elementary teachers perceive school structure to be more enabling, which reiterates the outcome that was found in comparing differences by grade level with regard to responses for perception of the extent of teacher leadership, discussed previously, and is in alignment with Stone et al.’s (1997) study which also showed differences in responses by grade level.

**Interview Results**

In this section, a brief introduction to the participants starts the report of interview results, followed by the definitions of teacher leadership given by each participant. Next, overarching themes and commonalities that illuminate quantitative findings are discussed with examples from interviews. These themes include lack of time, the importance of the principal in making leadership opportunities available to all, and the hierarchical, top-down perception of schools and districts by the interview participants.

**Interview Participants**

Seven interviews were conducted in two districts with participants in various positions, including classroom teachers, nonclassroom teachers, teacher leaders in formal positions of leadership, and administrators. In the first school district, three interviews were completed, and in the second district four interviews were completed. Among the interviewees were a high school media specialist (Heather), a high school assistant principal (Victor), a high school English classroom teacher (Ariana), an elementary special education administrator who worked with multiple elementary buildings (Tabitha) throughout the district, a secondary level (middle and high school grades) teacher on special assignment in a formal position of leadership as a mathematics coach (Maureen), an elementary classroom teacher (Eleanor), and an elementary guidance counselor
Several of the participants had worked in other districts and school levels, and throughout the interviews, were able to make comparisons to other organizations at which they had previously worked. For example, the elementary guidance counselor had formerly worked at a middle school in another state, the elementary classroom teacher had worked as an elementary teacher in another state, and the high school assistant principal had worked as an assistant principal in a neighboring district. In this way, the participants were able to give comparative examples from their work experience.

**Defining Teacher Leadership**

The first question asked each participant to give his or her own definition of teacher leadership. Ariana, the high school English teacher, clearly separated teacher leadership in the classroom from teacher leadership outside of the classroom. She also articulated a difference between formal and informal leadership right at the beginning of the interview. As examples, she named a department head as an example of a formal leadership role.

Like Ariana, Heather, the high school media specialist, clearly saw teacher leadership in two ways. First, she saw the leader of other teachers, one who guides, directs, and reflects with teachers. The other kind of teacher-leader, according to Heather, is an administrator. Administrators provide tools to teachers but do not micromanage teachers.

David, the elementary guidance counselor, defined teacher leadership this way: “Following your own way of teaching, but within the rules, but your own way, not trying to be someone you’re not, having a plan, being organized, participating in all of the school programs, being creative, a role model for the kids, professional, and motivated and a motivator.”

Maureen, the secondary math coach, defined teacher leadership as “teachers themselves helping other teachers with instruction, with assessment, and all the things that teachers
do, and I think we have teacher leadership with students, as far as being a good role model.” She later added that teacher leadership includes “guiding instruction based on student need, being responsible for knowing what the students need and taking them in the direction that’s going to allow them to be successful.” Tabitha, the elementary special education administrator, described teacher leadership as guiding teachers to be the best that they can be, without doing it for them. For example, a good teacher-leader guides teachers to do it for themselves. She stated that leaders push people to be the best they can be. They exhibit drive and ambition, and are always reevaluating what they do. For example,

There are teachers in this district that could show up to work every day and do things because they’ve taught the same things over, even with Common Core and things, who could lean back in the drivers seat and finish their careers out. But then there are those people that come out every year and get excited, redo lesson plans, rethink things, get new materials and do those kinds of things, and that’s a leader.

Eleanor, the elementary school teacher, explained that teacher leadership is being a role model, stepping up when things need to be done, looking for ways to enhance the curriculum, and having a willingness to share. Victor, the high school administrator saw leadership with perhaps the most wide-ranging perspective. He began his definition of teacher leadership by saying that its focus is on instructional leadership but then extends into other areas of school. He stated that some teachers are classroom teachers only, whereas some take a step further and volunteer to do things outside of the classroom. He
noted that those people who lead outside of the classroom are much more visible and identified a progression of leadership:

I think you have to let teachers kind of progress through the different stages. I think a lot of it has to do with experience level, personalities, and I think you’ve got to, you know, as an administrator, kind of get to know your staff and realize what strengths the teachers have what area they are in, in terms of their development as a teacher.

Common to all of these definitions is a willingness to help others professionally, both by serving as an example of best pedagogical practices as well as work with others, and a focus on curricular leadership and improving teaching. Both Heather and Ariana, a classroom teacher and a nonclassroom teacher respectively (but neither in formal positions of leadership), separated leadership between formalized roles and informal roles: those of administrator and teacher. Other definitions, however, concentrated on tasks and activities that do not require a formalized position outside of the classroom. These definitions of teacher leadership given by interviewees are in alignment with the literature on the teacher leadership in that they focus more on the activities and tasks of teacher leaders rather than the position or role of the person exercising leadership. The responses also support the researcher’s own definition of teacher leadership, as distilled from the literature: the leadership of educators, either individually or collectively, synergistically providing expert, context-specific leadership to schools and classrooms regarding teaching, learning and educational contexts.
Overarching Themes and Commonalities From the Interviews

This section identifies overarching themes and commonalities between interview sections, connects to the quantitative portion of this study, and refers to related research presented in the literature review. These three essential themes include lack of time, the importance of the principal in making leadership opportunities available to all, and the hierarchical nature of schools and districts.

Assertion 1: The perceived lack of time or misuse of time can hinder the engagement of teachers in leadership activities. The first and most prominent theme among interviews is a lack of time. The identification of lack of time as an impediment to teachers taking on leadership roles is mentioned across multiple interviews. No participants mention an instance when time allowances made by schools and districts were enabling. In her responses to questions about formalization, Heather stated that the greatest impediment to teachers taking on leadership roles is time. She noted that there is not enough time in the school day to accomplish the tasks that the standard teaching job requires, let alone the extra tasks of a leadership role. Heather indicated that there is simply not enough time for teachers to properly complete their teaching tasks in the school day, and squeezing in additional leadership tasks to an already packed schedule is thus prohibitive. Similarly, Eleanor, who serves in informal leadership roles at her school, noted that lack of time is an impediment to those who wanted to take on leadership roles.

The constraints on a teacher’s time emerged in David’s comments when he noted that time to visibly take on leadership roles as a result of spending less time in active instruction is an advantage to some. David remarked that it is his belief that those who are not in the classroom all day have more time to exercise leadership-like tasks, and
hinted that perhaps this factor (that is, the sheer availability of time during which one can be visible) may be one reason that these people are perceived as leaders. The identification of the principal as one who exhibits leadership thus makes a great deal of sense, as this is a person who is visible performing leadership tasks throughout the school building but spends little to no time in active instruction. The person who works intensively in his or her classroom and may be a model of excellent instructional practices may not be as successful in visibly taking on leadership tasks because of a lack of time outside of the classroom. David indicated that he takes significant leadership tasks because his role as guidance counselor permits him to do so.

Time, paired with lack of motivation, resurfaced again in responses to questions about mutual support and professionalism as an impediment to teachers and administrators working together to solve problems and make changes. Disagreement about how the precious resource of time should be used can cause unnecessary friction between teachers and administrators. Lack of time plays a negative role because unnecessary layers of formalization detracts from other, potentially more useful activities for which educators could be using their time. Heather explained it this way:

Time. I think time, more so in the last two or three years as we’ve prepared for the Common Core, as we’ve prepared for [Ohio Teacher Evaluation System, (OTES)]. I think everyone is feeling so time crunched to get it, to get prepared, to get it done, to meet with this person, to get this form filled out so they can have the next evaluation, to do…that they just, if they have any extra time, they don’t want to spend it at school. They want to spend it with their family; they want to spend it with their friends; they want to spend it at the movies. They’re done. It’s
“Let’s figure out how to survive in this new world.” And there’s a lot of disheartened teachers, even if they want Common Core to go out, that with the new discussion that Common Core may be leaving, that why does it matter what I’m doing right now? And [OTES] may be changing, but it’s up to your district, and so what is my district doing? And, there’s just a, they don’t have any more that they want to give. So I would go back to time.

Ariana also found that an administrator’s poor use of time could be an impediment to the work that teachers and administrators do together, thus potentially damaging the teacher–principal relationship. She gave as an example a beginning of the year professional development day that had taken place at her school. Instead of focusing on the many other pressing professional needs demanding the staff’s focus, the principal used the time to do a staff activity on the topic of “This is where we are, this is where we want to be, how do we get there?” On that day, Ariana wondered, “What recent workshop did the principal attend that gave him the idea to do this right now on this day?” She didn’t believe that it was a good use of the staff’s precious time, though she did recognize that the principal was trying to gather the opinions of the staff members. Thus, she believed the poor use of time was an impediment to working together.

Assertion 2: When the principal opens leadership to many participants, the result is more teacher leader engagement. The role of the principal also continually resurfaced as important to the support of teacher leadership in two different ways. The first is how the principal goes about distributing leadership formal and informal tasks. The second is how principal perception may affect teacher-leader selection. Ariana, a high school classroom teacher, revealed several examples of how formalization affects
access to leadership opportunities. She regularly emphasized a tension between volunteering and waiting to be asked to do something. In her school, she believes that in order to take on a formal leadership role, one needs to wait to be asked by the principal. For these kinds of roles, according to Ariana, people need to be appointed. For informal leadership roles, Ariana indicated that it is standard for teachers to volunteer to jump in and get the job done, which could be rephrased as a natural emergence of leadership that she mentioned in her definition of teacher leadership. Thus, for teachers who wish to take on a formal leadership role, the principal’s selection or perception of the teacher can act as an enabling or hindering factor, depending on the person.

David repeatedly emphasized his elementary principal’s efforts to share leadership opportunities with teachers at his school. He indicated that at his school, teachers are able to volunteer for leadership opportunities. Because he noted that the principal encourages teachers to get involved, David saw few impediments to teachers taking on leadership roles. Similarly, everyone has a chance to lead according to Eleanor, who works at the same school as David. Opportunities to lead are “thrown out there” by the principal. This throwing out of opportunities is an example of how a principal can enable teacher leadership. Elementary respondents noted how important the openness and inclusiveness in terms of leadership opportunity of their principal as being particularly important to them. According to the elementary respondents, the principal makes a point to include as many as possible through various roles in school leadership.

Heather, who worked in two high school buildings, described an important difference between the implementation of leadership in each building, with one being much more regimented, strict, and formal than the other. In that building, the people who take on
leadership roles have been put into positions to perform specific tasks. She describes the other school as more “groovy and free form.” In that school, the question “Who wants to help out?” is posed openly, and individuals take on tasks as needed. Similarly, Tabitha noted that teachers are more likely to step in and take on leadership tasks informally in one of her buildings. Heather also stated that the “groovy” building has a much better atmosphere of trust and respect among staff members than the regimented, strict, formal building, which is in alignment with Sindén et al.’s (2004a) characteristics of an enabling bureaucracy.

In addition to principals making leadership opportunities available, Debra mentioned that she believes that principal perception plays an important role in selection, but “[has] no concrete evidence” to support her hunch. This response indicates the importance of the principal’s perception of a teacher in both whether that teacher is offered a leadership role, as well as the opposite (and possibly punitive) response for teachers who are negatively perceived by principal. Tabitha also noted that there are some teachers who always jump in to do things and do a good job. Because of this, the principal is happy with their work and other teachers just “sit back” and wait for this person to volunteer to do the job. In this way, the same people tend to end up doing particular kinds of tasks with noticeable regularity.

Victor, who serves as an assistant principal, emphasized the power of the “informal side of things” as compared to the implementation of formal leadership roles, because he views teaching as “relationship driven profession.” In discussing the distribution of leadership tasks, he explained that some leadership opportunities come as a result of previous contact and conversations between principals and teachers. “Some of the
opportunities come to teachers, you know, principals will bring them to their attention based upon their own observations and say, hey, this is an opportunity I think you should consider.” This reemphasizes the important role of the principal in distribution of leadership opportunity.

Assertion 3: Perceptions of teacher leadership are influenced by perceptions of school hierarchy and positional authority. A final overarching theme is the hierarchical, chain of command, somewhat rigid nature that these interviewees perceived and described their districts to have. Although there are only two districts in this interview sample, the emphasis on the hierarchy and chain of command in both districts is apparent, particularly when interviewees go beyond the school level and discuss the policies and procedures in their districts. Their responses emphasized two distinct themes: (a) hierarchy and division of labor and (b) hierarchy and decision making.

In terms of division of labor, the responses from participants showed distinct differences in what they perceived are the tasks done by those who hold a formal position of leadership as opposed to those who do not hold formal positions of leadership. Ariana indicated that those in formal roles delegate work to other adults, whereas classroom teachers are in charge of their classrooms and students only. Similarly, David, at the elementary level, described classroom teachers as people who are in charge of kids. Heather saw a definite hierarchy and perceived teacher leaders as the communicative conduit or middleman between the administration and classroom teachers. Maureen also understood the roles of teacher leaders as a conduit between administrators and teachers. In the hierarchy, she explained that she sees teacher leaders in between teachers and administrators. For Maureen, teachers concentrate on students, whereas administrators
keep everything coordinated and “[make] sure that everyone is doing what they are supposed to be doing.”

According to Victor, the high school assistant principal, more authoritative positions in a school hierarchy correspond to a broader scope of authority. Teachers are in charge of their classrooms and their 175 or so students. Teacher leaders are interested in their own classrooms and then a bit beyond that, taking the department or school level concerns into consideration. An assistant principal focuses on the building and his or her assigned department. Victor noted that those who have a “smaller piece of the pie” might not see the bigger picture. Victor named the job description as a good example of which tasks should compose each formalized role. The job description delineates someone’s “turf.” In his more formalized school, where tasks are very compartmentalized by position, Victor was very careful to stick to his job description and not step on other people’s toes. In his former position, where there was less formalization, he found there to be a greater degree of task flexibility.

Likewise, Tabitha noted a similar change in scope depending on a person’s formal position. According to Tabitha, the higher one’s position in the school hierarchy, the more one is in charge of adults, rather than students. Those in positions higher up in the hierarchy focus more on policy and less on methodology of teaching. Tabitha explicitly noted that there is an unspoken hierarchy. Furthermore, a person must move up the ranks of leadership in order. It is atypical to skip ranks as one moves up the hierarchy.

Responses also indicated that hierarchy affects participation in decision making. Ariana, as well as all the other participants, identified her school and district as very top-down in its leadership structures and that this affects teacher input on decision making. She voiced
the importance of teachers being involved in decision making to feel more invested in
decisions that are made. She observed that in her school, the decision-making process is
often shared with those going through administrator licensure programs, but others are
left out of the decision making process, which is characterized by little transparency.
Maureen and Victor agreed with Ariana that having teacher input on decision making
encourages teacher buy-in; with a chuckle, Maureen commented that teachers should “not
mistake input for power.” In her district, “people are always welcome to give their
opinions, whether or not it goes anywhere.” In her building and district, the building
leadership teams are responsible for communicating the input of teachers up the chain of
command. Like Maureen, Victor, and Ariana, David highlighted the importance of the
building leadership teams in giving teachers a voice in the decision-making process.
However, he noted that many of the participants on these formal leadership teams are
encouraged to take part or are selected to do so by the principal, which epitomizes the
essential theme: principal selection and perception. Tabitha observed that some schools
try to get everyone involved in decision making and some use the same people
repeatedly. Thus, she perceived the buildings with more teachers involved in leadership
seem to be more successful, “maybe not necessarily from the standpoint of the state
report card. But the feeling throughout the building, I guess, is better, from a management
standpoint.”
Heather’s school and district communicates similarly in a very chain-of-command
manner. The example she gave as to how this communication can appear differently in
the same district at different buildings was in gathering teacher input for an electronic
device policy. One school’s administration took the information/input from teachers,
wrote the policy as originally envisioned by the administration absent any input, and then took credit for the policy. In the other school, the teachers were given more ownership of the process, and the administration made greater use of teachers. In this way, in the same district, gathering teacher input looked entirely different at the school level based on how the administration used the input.

Heather also believed that there is a difference in approach from when administration sets and executes a goal as compared to when teachers want to do something. She noted that teacher-driven initiatives are undertaken less frequently than administration-driven initiatives. She explained it this way,

I feel as though the problem that’s brought to the table many times is an administrative-noticed problem, not so much a teacher-noticed problem. And if the teachers do bring a problem that the administration doesn’t think is a problem, or something that needs to be addressed or changed or modified—I don’t want to say that we’re just full of problems, but—it’s not always warmly received, like, “Oh, we should do something; what do you guys think?” It has to come, especially at one building, more so from them [the administration]. In the other one [building], if we keep kind of dancing around long enough and saying this is a problem and here’s more examples of it, both buildings will take it, but they have to ultimately bring it to us [the teachers], not we bring it to them [the administration].

Not only do her comments demonstrate an imbalance in the source of initiation (teacher as opposed to administration) for problem solving and decision making, but according to Heather, the speed of decision making is also usually faster if it is the issue being
resolved is identified by administration, rather than by teachers. This imbalance reflects negatively on ability of teachers to give input on decision making in a school and district, even though there is a structure in place for teacher input.

Victor, at the high school level, also believed that involving teachers in decision making has the potential to make a school and district stronger. He identified formalized building teams as the primary vehicle for teachers to give input in decision making. These teams are designed to create collaboration, “I think there are a lot of teacher-driven programs that are, you know, allowed to occur and allowed to, you know, to try.” In other words, where teachers are ‘allowed’ to drive programming, they can thrive, which reemphasizes the importance of the building principals in making sure that they create a space where teachers feel comfortable exercising leadership. Victor’s specific use of the word *allow* indicates a need for permission to exercise leadership and give input, and supports Ariana’s sense that permission or appointment is needed to exercise leadership that carries any degree of authority or recognition.

As another impediment to teachers giving input, Victor identified hierarchy and formality: “People would say, hell, I don’t really want to do that because it’s too formal and I’d rather just say my piece and get out. I think as well, and I’m not sure if it’s education or if it’s just the district, I think sometimes there’s a sense of not wanting to rock the boat, or not wanting to go against what’s been said or whatever.” He described his previous district as less hierarchical and less formal, where he felt that teachers had a little more freedom to dissent. In his current, more formalized district, he perceived that if a decision comes from the administration, teachers feel that that decision is final and that they have less control. “[In the less hierarchical district], you had a little bit more ability
to kind of question decisions that were made, and here [in the more hierarchical district], once the decision’s made, if you question it sometimes, it’s perceived as being negative.”

Given the importance of principal perception noted in the last section, teachers aspiring to lead may feel less comfortable questioning authority, lest they be perceived as negative. In this way, they may choose to not participate in the decision-making process by giving their opinions for fear of damaging their positive reputation.

At the elementary level, Eleanor made a sharp distinction between teacher input in decision making at the school level and at the district level. At the school level, she believed that the principal’s openness to teacher input is very positive.

And I think [the principal] is really good about presenting us with information, getting feedback before they even go discuss things, so you kind of know what everybody’s thinking. So it’s not a matter of, it’s not like a dictatorship where, like, you’re doing this and you’re doing this. I mean, you always get, I feel like, input. And if something were ever decided that you don’t feel comfortable with, if you go to her, she’s like, well, let’s figure out how…

In contrast, Eleanor saw the district use of teacher input in decision making very differently:

I think that’s more where they kind of decide and sometimes we feel like they put the cart before the horse and, like, our spelling program, you’re saying, no, you’re doing this spelling, and we’re like, but it’s not working for the kids. So, like, within our school we’ve kind of figured out how we could …kind of adapt it and modify it to kind of fit in with how we want to do it. But like I said, some of the things, like the math program, no one’s happy with. But they said we’re doing it,
so we’re doing it. So, I mean, there are definitely some areas that we’ve had to work really hard to try to figure out how to work around the… yeah…I don’t know how much our input really matters.

Her comments show that teachers question whether their input is used and valued. The hierarchy of the school, specifically how hierarchy affects division of labor and decision making, compounds the issues of lack of time and principal perception.

The lack of time, the importance of the role of the principal, and the hierarchical structure of the schools and districts were the emergent themes from the interviews. The interview participants’ comments indicated that each factor serves to enable or hinder teacher leadership in various situations. The combination and interaction of these three factors can amplify the enabling or hindering nature of a school’s context. Similar themes can be found in other research on teacher leadership. Connections to this literature are made in the conclusion portion of this study.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

Introduction

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to examine the relationship between enabling school structure and the extent of teacher leadership. In addition, a second purpose of this study was to compare the responses to perception of both the extent of teacher leadership and enabling school structure by school grade level (elementary, middle, and high school) and formal position/role (teacher, teacher in a formalized position of leadership, administrator). The study was situated between two theoretical perspectives: enabling school structure and the supports and constraints to teacher leadership. The literature on enabling school structure is exemplified by the work of Hoy and Sweetland (2000a, 2000b, 2001) and Sinden et al. (2004a). The second body of literature, supports and constraints to teacher leadership, is somewhat broad and heterogeneous in nature and organization.

The study examines in particular the organizational supports for and constraints against teacher leadership. Characteristics of organizations such as shared decision making, collaboration, principal support, and positive relationships between teachers and principals, have been shown in prior research to support teacher leadership (Smylie, 1992; York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Zinn, 1997). Tense relationships, rigid role definition, and lack of teachers’ interest in participating in leadership activities have been shown in
prior research to constrain teacher leadership (Zinn, 1997). Though in disparate areas of literature, striking similarities are found between enabling school structure and teacher leadership supports, including linkages in both bodies of literature to organizational culture and to organizational climate. In addition, similarities can be found between aspects of enabling school structure and those factors that support teacher leadership. The similarities strongly affirmed this study of the relationship between enabling school structure and the supports to teacher leadership.

Summary and Discussion of Results

Correlation Portion of the Study

As expected, the quantitative portion of this study found a moderate positive correlation between enabling school structure and the extent of teacher leadership, which indicates that there is a greater extent of teacher leadership in a school where structure is more enabling. This result accentuates the importance of school structure for teacher leadership: if researchers and practitioners desire to expand leadership capacity in schools, one avenue for doing so is through addressing structure. In addition to the separate linkages made by enabling school structure and teacher leadership to organizational climate and culture, these results also reiterate the many similarities between Sinden et al.’s (2004a) characteristics of enabling school structure and the literature concerning supports and constraints to teacher leadership. These commonalities include shared/participatory decision making, horizontal (flat) instead of hierarchical (vertical, top-down) relationships, informal procedures and communication, reduced isolation and norms of privacy and independence, increased collaboration, collegiality,
accessibility, teamwork, interdependency, shared responsibility, openness, multidirectional communication, professionalism, mutual support, and mutual respect.

**ANOVA Portion of the Study**

Two-way ANOVAs further examined the differences in responses from participants at different grade levels and different positions. The significant differences revealed in the study’s ANOVAs revealed the following:

**Two-Way ANOVA on TLI**

The two-way ANOVA on the Teacher Leadership Inventory (measuring the extent of teacher leadership) indicated that those in different roles in the school do not perceive the extent of teacher leadership to be different. Those working at the elementary level perceive the extent of teacher leadership to be statistically significantly higher than those at the middle and high school levels.

**Two-Way ANOVA on ESS**

The two-way ANOVA on Enabling School Structure (measuring the degree to which a school’s structure is perceived to be enabling or hindering) indicated that the perception of enabling school structure is different for those teachers who already serve in a formalized position of leadership. Those in formalized positions of leadership perceive the school’s structure to be more enabling. Those working at the elementary level perceive the school’s enabling structure to be statistically significantly higher than those at the middle and high school levels.
Access to time and space for collaboration, among other factors, may play a part in (a) why participants in elementary schools have statistically different responses as compared to their colleagues in the middle and high schools in the survey and (b) why the responses by elementary interview participants depict such different perspectives on teacher leadership and school structure. In their study using the TLI, Angelle and DeHart (2010) discovered differences in perception based on grade level. The research of Firestone and Herriott (1982) also provided a connection in the literature for this difference. Firestone and Herriott observed that high schools had specific goals, were structured around more formal control systems, contained highly integrated departments, and were characteristic of closed rather than open systems. On the contrary, elementary schools in the study showed an absence of clear goals, worked with the assumption that loosely coupled component parts were doing what they were supposed to do, and had more flexibility for dealing with unexpected circumstances, and generally operated as a more open system. When considering the difference in results by grade level along with emerging themes from the interviews, this may be why the elementary schools responded so differently. High schools in general may be more rational in their organizational structures, whereas elementary schools may be more natural or open. The implications of this finding may encourage adapting schools structures at the middle and high school levels to aspire to structures more like those that characterize their elementary counterparts. In an attempt to expand leadership opportunities for teachers, this may need to be addressed by some schools and districts in new and creative ways.

The difference in responses on the survey based on role is also in alignment with prior research. Angelle and DeHart (2010) found similar differences in perception on the
TLI. Based on grade level and position in the hierarchy, Miller and Rowan (2006) noticed differences in management style. The researchers also found that teacher’s perceptions of organic management varied by the teacher’s position in the hierarchy. Like the work of Miller and Rowan, the ANOVA performed on the survey data showed parallel differences based on role: teachers in formalized positions of leadership perceive the structure of their schools to be more enabling than their informal counterparts. This is an important point. Teacher-leaders, and by extension principals, must strive to see their organizations through the eyes of the teachers. If they wish to mobilize teachers to take on more leadership tasks in order to increase leadership capacity, and teachers do not feel empowered to do so by the structures their organizations, it should be the role of the principal or other school leader to modify the organizations to enable teachers to lead. If principals and teacher leaders in formalized positions of leadership do not see hindering aspects of the organization in the same way that teachers do, this process is impeded.

**Interview Portion of the Study**

Lastly, overarching themes emerged in follow-up interviews. These themes include lack of time, the role of the principal in extending leadership opportunities to teachers, and the hierarchical nature of schools and particularly its effect on teacher input on decision making. These themes give greater depth to the findings of the quantitative portion of the study.

**Assertion 1: The perceived lack of time or misuse of time can hinder the engagement of teachers in leadership activities.** In the interviews, the participants’ acknowledgement of a lack of time for teachers to engage in informal leadership tasks also aligns with prior research (Smylie, 1992; York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Zinn, 1997). When there is time for
administrators and teachers to sit down with each other and discuss what is best for students, it seems as though the experience is a positive example of how teachers, teacher leaders and administrators at a school can work together, support each other, and solve problems or make changes, characteristics of an enabling structure. Where there is lack of time, an administrator trying to get input from teachers in an opening professional development session irritated the teacher because of her opinion that there were more important things to discuss. In this way, lack of time can damage the relationships integral to building an enabling school structure.

The practical implication of this finding is clear. Lack of time can be ameliorated by district leadership, creating the space for teachers to collaborate and share in the load of leadership tasks. This emergent theme is echoed in the literature reviewed. In Ryan’s (1999) study, Stone et al.’s (1997) study, and Zinn’s (1997) study, and, lack of time was also found to be a constraint on teacher leadership. Similarly, Smylie (1992) identified “opportunities for interaction to take place” (pp. 87–88) as necessary for teacher leadership, which can include time. York-Barr and Duke (2004) cite “access, time and space” (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 271) as facilitators of teacher leadership and “inadequate time for collaboration” (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 271) as a challenge.

Assertion 2: When the principal opens leadership to many participants, the result is more teacher leader engagement. According to the interviews, the principal’s method for involving teachers is crucial. When the principal limits access to leadership opportunities to a few, rather than making sure opportunities are open to all and actively attempting to engage as many teachers as possible, the result is less teacher engagement. The principal has the ability to provide teachers with time in the school day to take on
leadership roles, and to create an environment conducive to all interested parties taking
on informal leadership tasks.

The interview responses indicate the importance of the role of the principal in
encouraging teacher leadership. An open, accessible, and visible principal is important to
set the tone for teachers, make opportunities available to a variety of leaders, as well as
allow an awareness of his or her own perceptions of teachers. The results of Zinn’s
(1997) study suggested “opportunities for authentic leadership roles and responsibilities”
(Table 1) as important for supporting teacher leadership. In addition, the results of York-
Barr and Duke’s (2004) work indicated aspects of roles and relationships as one of the
conditions affecting teacher leadership. Specifically, they identified “principal support for
teacher leadership through formal structures” (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 271) as a
facilitator and “hierarchical, instead of horizontal, relationships with peers” and
“appointment of a teacher leader without teacher input” as challenges (York-Barr &
Duke, 2004, p. 271). Ryan’s (1999) study also identified principal support as a support to
teacher leadership and the study of Silva et al. (2000) and Suranna and Moss (2000)
emphasized the importance of the teacher–principal relationship. Hoy and Sweetland
(2000a, 2000b, 2001) also indicated the importance of faculty trust in the principal. The
elementary schools in the quantitative portion of this study perceived their schools to be
more enabling and have a higher extent of teacher leadership. The responses in the
interviews show that the principal’s behaviors effect this perception.

Effective methods for spreading leadership opportunities to more teachers may be
as simple as rotating terms for teachers in formal positions of leadership such as
department head, or keeping a tally of how many times a principal has asked each teacher
to take on leadership roles, much like teachers are encouraged to make note of how many times they have called on certain students. Additionally, the principal should find out the strengths each teacher has and employ those talents as leadership opportunities arise. This may be a point that principal preparation programs need to emphasize concurrently with teacher leadership endorsement programs to increase principal awareness. It also connects to the results of the quantitative portion of the study, where there was a significantly higher perception of enabling school structure by those in formalized positions of leadership. By distributing leadership opportunities more equally and not only to those in formalized positions of leadership (or perhaps not creating formalized positions of leadership at all), this significant difference in the perception of enabling school structure can be reduced.

**Assertion 3: Perceptions of teacher leadership are influenced by perceptions of school hierarchy and positional authority.** There is an underlying common thesis to the responses given about hierarchy and division of labor. First, in defining the difference between a classroom teacher, a teacher leader, and an administrator, descriptions indicate that classroom teachers are in charge of students only and focus on classroom instruction. Contrastingly, the work of teacher leaders and administrators encompasses overseeing adults and work beyond the classroom. The distinction drawn by the interviewees implies two assumptions about the tasks of leaders that do not align completely with their definitions of teacher leadership nor to the idea that teachers can exhibit leadership through and from the classroom.

The first assumption, that classroom teachers lead students rather than adults, contradicts the definitions of teacher leadership given in the literature review portion of
this study as well as the interviewees themselves: leaders can lead by example to other adults, even from in the classroom. The second assumption conceptualizes classroom teachers to be focused on students and teaching and learning, and as one moves up the hierarchy, the attention gravitates to policy, orchestration, and oversight. In other words, these teacher leaders strive to manage instead of directly instruct students, which can be seen as contrary to the definitions of teacher leadership given at the beginning of the interviews. If teacher leadership’s role is to improve instruction, teaching and learning, as was indicated in the definitions of teacher leadership given at the beginning of each interview, as well in the definitions of teacher leadership found in the literature, and if a more authoritative position in the school’s hierarchy corresponds to a greater focus on management and a lesser focus on instruction, teacher leaders are by definition more likely to be nonadministrators. Thus, the examples that the interviewees give of teacher leaders should be predominately nonadministrators. Despite this, interview participants often name their principals as examples of those who exhibit teacher leadership. This inherent hierarchy is also apparent in descriptions of administrators as ‘supervisors’ and ‘overseers’.

To increase the participation and input of teachers, the ostensible innovation districts need to make is to be less vertically aligned. The current hierarchical structure is perceived as an impediment to teachers. Teachers need to feel that their input is welcomed and considered. In addition, they need to be secure in voicing professional opinions, without fear of reprimand, which Maureen noted as plausible.

Overwhelmingly, the similarities across descriptions of the districts as having a hierarchical and chain-of-command structural orientation are striking. As much as
schools and districts may wish to be more distributed and flat in their organizational natures, the staggering response from these interviews demonstrate districts fail to achieve this ideal. The formal building level leadership teams mentioned by multiple interviewees are an excellent example of how teachers are given input into the decision-making process in a very formalized, hierarchical way. The imbalance noted in the input going from the ‘bottom’ of the hierarchical organizations to the ‘top’ noted, as well as the lack of comfort felt by teachers in voicing their professional feedback, is disquieting. Schools and districts wish to encourage trust, respect, and teacher input, all characteristics of enabling school structure. And, teachers desire the same. Nonetheless, teachers are not always comfortable in giving input without feeling threatened with “backlash” as Maureen mentions, or the sense that they will be labeled as “negative,” as Victor noted.

These results are in alignment with research cited in the literature review portion of this study. First, these findings are in alignment with what York-Barr and Duke (2004) identified as facilitators of teacher leadership for the category of structure: “participatory decision-making structures and processes, removal of hierarchical structures in schools and districts” (p. 271). York-Barr and Duke (2004) also identified “traditional, top-down leadership structures, lack of clarity about process and locus of decision-making and channels of authority” (p. 271) as challenges to teacher leadership. Prestine (1991) and Ryan (1999) also determined shared decision making as a condition that supports teacher leadership.

Lastly, Adler and Borys’ (1996) work shared examples of when formalization can have a negative effect on the organization. The interview responses stating the necessity
for more input from teachers on decision making, the more teacher leadership will flourish, which is logical in the context of the findings in the quantitative portion of the study. Similarly, the quantitative portion of the study found a moderate correlation between enabling school structure (which by definition includes teacher input on decision making) and the extent of teacher leadership.

**Implications for Future Research**

There are many possibilities for future research to extend the findings of this study. First, additional studies of the relationship between school structure and teacher leadership are warranted. Given the results of this study, further research should examine what makes educators at the elementary perceive school structure and teacher leadership significantly different than their middle and high school counterparts. These findings would reveal how practitioners can change aspects of their middle and high school structures to resemble the structure of elementary schools. Another possibility for future research is to collect more data from principals. The ESS instrument used for the survey portion of this study did not allow the principals to be surveyed. The development of an ESS survey for principals would help extend this research. In addition, interviewing more principals about their efforts to influence school structure in ways that increase opportunities for teacher leadership is an avenue for continuing this research. In addition, further research on the role of the principal in expanding leadership capacity in schools has a great deal of potential, which will help principals learn to monitor their perceptions and gain awareness of their role in expanding leadership opportunity to others. This thread of research would help, in turn, to identify and reduce hierarchical barriers, which
result in less teacher input in decision making, such as those noted in the interview portion of this study.

In light of the literature’s discussion of positional/role leadership vs. leadership by performing tasks, additional research that focuses on how principals can have a role orientation and perform tasks of leadership would be intriguing. The literature does not suggest an evolutionary development where role orientation replaces task orientation or vice versa. Rather, the two can coexist and provide synergy. Research on how principals incorporate the leadership of others into the school or expand leadership opportunities to others, such as through building leadership teams or committees, encouraging professionalism, etc., would be valuable research. Particularly interesting would be whether principals extend leadership opportunity more through assigning people to roles and positions that are in charge of certain tasks, whether leadership tasks are made available to anyone despite role/position, or whether/how these occur simultaneously.

**Implications for Practice**

Education practitioners also benefit from this study. Because a correlation is found between teacher leadership and enabling school structure, school districts are provided with an effective method for measuring their level of support for both. In an era of budget belt-tightening, it is important for schools to assess the organization’s readiness for new initiatives such as teacher leadership before investing heavily in them. If in a replication of this study, a district were to find that its structure is hindering and there is little teacher leadership present, then it might choose to delay implementation of the teacher leadership initiative until work has been done to address structural changes in the organization. For example, knowing the results of this study have shown differences in
perception of enabling school structure and teacher leadership based on grade level, districts might work with a particular school grade level (elementary, middle, or high school) to make the school’s structure more enabling before implementing new initiatives. Or, if it is discovered that administrators and those in formal positions of leadership perceive there to be more teacher leadership than do teachers who are not in a formal position of leadership; or if administrators find out that their staff perceives the organization to be more coercive than enabling, it might encourage communication between administrators and teachers concerning these issues. The result would be an increase in the flow of ideas and authentic conversation among stakeholders. Next, teachers’ input on the organizational decision making would escalate and ultimately lead to more democratic, more distributed decision-making procedures.

The analysis of the interview portion of this study also indicates some concrete ways practitioners can support teacher leadership. First, districts can make an effort to create more time for collaboration among teachers and administrators, which was a clear barrier noted throughout the interviews. Additionally, the importance of the role of the principal was emphasized throughout the interviews. Administrators’ selection of those to take on leadership opportunities is crucial, and is something of which individual administrators can be aware. It is also something that can be emphasized in principal licensure and teacher-leader endorsement programs. Lastly, the hierarchical nature of districts evident from the interviews inhibits participation from teachers, and districts can endeavor to address this.

There are also implications for those who train practitioners. Not only is an awareness of hierarchy and structure needed by the principal, but also by those training to be teacher
leaders in various capacities. For institutions of higher education with programs that train future principals and also future teacher leaders (for example, a teacher leader endorsement program), considering the findings of this study when planning courses of study is of important. One possibility for reducing a sense of separateness by leadership position (principal vs. teacher leader) is to, in part, dovetail the coursework of these two programs of study. In this way, aspiring principals and aspiring teacher leaders begin collaborative, professional work from the beginning of their training programs. Important to their studies is understanding that leadership can come from sources other than the person residing in the role of principal, encouraging consideration of methods for increasing leadership engagement among teachers, and extending collaborative work between aspiring principals and aspiring teacher leaders. This may result in the extension and continuation of these practices as those students take on leadership positions in schools.

**Contribution to the Literature**

The results study adds to the enabling school structure literature and teacher leadership literature in several ways. First, in the literature on enabling and hindering structures, there are several studies examining the relationship between enabling and hindering organizational structures and a variety of variables. These variables include student achievement with academic optimism serving as a mediator between the two (Anderson, 2012), academic optimism (Anderson, 2012; McGuigan, 2005; Messick, 2012), those structures that enable professional learning communities (Gray, 2011; Tylus, 2009), organizational citizenship (Messick, 2012), collective efficacy (Rhoads, 2009), mindfulness (Watts, 2009), school effectiveness (Mayerson, 2010), trust (Mayerson,
climate (Mayerson, 2010) and empowerment (Watts, 2009). The only study discovered having to do specifically with teacher leadership and structure was Galland’s (2008), which discussed the relationship between teacher effectiveness and specific school structures (such as school physical structure and organizational structure). This study bridges these two areas of research for the first time and shows a moderately positive correlation between the two.

This study also extends the work of Angelle and DeHart (2011). Their work described the differences in perceptions of teacher leadership as related to school level, position/role, and degree level attained. This study will not only extend the school level and position/role assessment, but also connect their TLI to another body of literature by correlating the results of this study to those of the ESS research.

In terms of method, the literature on teacher leadership is predominately qualitative. Only one in ten studies on teacher leadership is grounded in theory (Smylie 1995, 1997). In addition, Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) noted, “There are very few large-scale, quantitative studies of teacher leadership effects” (p. 700) and suggested a shift in this direction in the study of teacher leadership. The review of the literature relevant to this proposal revealed a great deal of research using qualitative methods to describe which factors support and which factors constrain teacher leadership. A broadening of the research methodology by means of a large-scale quantitative study in the teacher leadership literature is another benefit of this study.

Lastly, the researcher also provides a definition for teacher leadership distilled from the existing literature that is focused on teaching and learning and flexible in terms of locus of action: the leadership of educators, either individually or collectively,
synergistically providing expert, context-specific leadership to schools and classrooms regarding teaching, learning and educational contexts.

**Conclusion**

If the trend in educational organizations toward more standardization and bureaucratic formalization and centralization is at odds with the characteristics of enabling structures, and enabling structures support teacher leadership, then these trends may inhibit teacher leadership in schools at a time when the expansion of leadership capacity in schools is crucial. If initiatives such as expanding teacher leadership opportunities are not supported by a rational, top down, hierarchical organization structure, then the potential success of these initiatives is fallacious. Smylie (1992) emphasized the importance of teacher expertise in improving the quality of school reform initiatives, but a reliance on teacher expertise and leadership will not thrive in nonenabling contexts that insidiously undermine teacher leadership. Tschannen-Moran (2009) noted, “Professional structures, such as opportunities for collective inquiry, scrutiny, reflection, and decision making, may need to be more fully integrated into school bureaucracies to promote teacher professionalism and school success” (p. 218). Tschannen-Moran’s statement could be adapted to reflect the results of this study, changing the ending from “teacher professionalism and school success” to ‘promote teacher leadership’. Scholars of teacher leadership and leaders in schools must be aware of these contextual factors in order to create schools where teacher leadership can thrive and contribute to improving our schools through increased capacity for leadership and perspective from a diverse body of practitioners.
References


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Appendix A: Instrumentation
**Instrument 1: The Enabling School Structure Survey (Hoy & Sweetland)**

See Table 5 for instrument items by category.

**Instrument 2: Teacher Leadership Inventory (Angelle & DeHart)**

See Table 6 for instrument items by category.

**Interview Questions:**

General First Questions:

How do you define teacher leadership?

Can you give me some examples of what you consider to be teacher leadership?

(This question will help to determine how people in different positions might conceive the construct ‘teacher leadership’ differently, i.e., role orientation vs. task orientation.)

#1 Formalization

In what ways, if any, do the rules, regulations, and procedures in your school encourage or discourage teachers from taking on leadership tasks or roles?

Probing Subquestions:

What examples can you give, if any, of rules, regulations and procedures in your school that act as flexible guides for one’s work?

What examples can you give, if any, of rules, regulations and procedures in your school that act as a way to enforce compliance?
Do you perceive that rules and procedures in your school function more as formal rules or more as informal guidelines? Why? Can you provide an example?

What are other impediments, if any, to teachers taking on leadership tasks or roles?

#2 Division of Labor:

What are the roles and responsibilities of someone who is in a leadership position or role as opposed to someone who is not, if there is a difference at all? Can you give me any examples?

Probing Subquestions:

In what ways, if any, does the leadership of classroom teachers, teacher leaders, and administrators differ in your school?

In what ways, if any, does position in the school hierarchy affect access to leadership opportunities at your school?

#3 Formal vs Informal Leadership:

Who would you name at your school as a leader and why do you consider this person to be a leader? In other words, what do they do that exhibits leadership? You can name more than one person.

Probing Subquestions:

In what ways, if any, are the responsibilities the same or different for those in formal positions of leadership as compared to those who exercise informal leadership?
Which kind of leadership, formal or informal, do you think occurs more often at your school? Or do you think that they occur equally in your school? Why? Can you provide some examples?

Are there any people at your school who you consider to be a leader who are not in formal positions of leadership? If so, what do they do that exhibits leadership? How is what they do different from the people you have already mentioned?

#4 Centralization

In what ways, if any, are teachers encouraged to take initiative and to participate in decision making at your school?

Probing Subquestions:

Can you explain how?

Can you describe any impediments, if any, to teachers giving input at your school/district?

How does having teachers take part in decision making for your school/district influence your work and your school/district?

How does the decision making process at your school or district shared with teachers?

#5 Mutual Support and Professionalism

In what ways, if any, do teachers, teacher leaders, and administrators at your school work together and support each other to solve problems or make changes?
Probing Subquestions:

If they do not, what impediments, if any, exist that keep teachers and administrators from working together and supporting each other to solve problems or make changes?

How would you characterize the interactions between teachers, administrators, and teacher leaders when they are charged with solving problems and making changes in your school?

#6 Principal Support and Professionalism

In what ways, if any, do the administrators at your school show their confidence in teachers and respect for teachers’ professional skills, expertise, competence, and work at your school?

Probing Subquestions:

If they do, could you provide some examples of this?

If they do not, could you provide examples of when this confidence and respect could have been stronger?

Could you provide some examples of ways, if any, that you suggest administrators in your school might increase their show of confidence in teachers and respect for teachers’ professional skills, expertise, and competence?
Appendix B: Human Subjects Approval
Office of Research
Office of Responsible Research Practices

Protocol Title: Investigating the Intersection of School Structure and Teacher Leadership: A Mixed Methods Study

Protocol Number: 2014EO185

Principal Investigator: Anika Anthony

Date of Determination: 04/08/2014

Qualifying Category: 2

Attachments: None

Dear Investigators,

The Office of Responsible Research Practices has determined the above referenced project exempt from IRB review.

Please note the following:

- Retain a copy of this correspondence for your records.
- Only the OSU staff and students named on the application are approved as OSU investigators and/or key personnel for this study.
- No changes may be made to exempt research (e.g., personnel, recruitment procedures, advertisements, instruments, etc.). If changes are needed, a new application for exemption must be submitted for review and approval prior to implementing the changes.
- Per university requirements, all research-related records (e.g., application materials, letters of support, signed consent forms, etc.) must be retained and available for audit for a period of at least three years after the research has ended.
- It is the responsibility of the investigators to promptly report events that may represent unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

This determination is issued under The Ohio State University’s OHRP Federally Required Assurance #00006378. All forms and procedures can be found on the ORRP website: www.orrp.osu.edu.

Please feel free to contact the Office of Responsible Research Practices with any questions or concerns.

Thank You,
Ellen

Ellen Patricia, MS, CIP
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HRPP Quality Improvement
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Appendix C: Consent Forms
Enabling Structure and Teacher Leadership Mixed Methods Study
Survey

Survey Informed Consent
Welcome!

You have been invited to participate in a study that is being conducted by researchers at The Ohio State University. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between enabling school structure and the extent of teacher leadership. Study findings will contribute to understandings about how the structure of the organization can support or detract from teacher leadership in schools. De-identified summary findings may also be shared with school district leaders who are interested in understanding better differences in perception of school structure and teacher leadership between staff members in different roles and positions. This information allows district leaders to make changes to organizational structure to support teacher leadership.

By electing to participate in this study, you agree to complete one 10-minute online survey.

Survey responses will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed to employers or any others who are not conducting this study, except as may be required by federal, state, or local law. Survey responses will be stored on a password-protected server. Your involvement in this study is voluntary, and survey questions may be skipped without penalty. Even after you consent to participate, you may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about this study, please contact research staff, Marie Hurt hurt.43@buckeyemail.osu.edu or principal investigator, Anika Anthony anthony.171@osu.edu.

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-8251.

By clicking the “I consent to participate in this study” button below, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the consent form. You may print this screen now to keep a copy of this consent form for your personal records.

___ I consent to participate in this study

___ I do not consent to participate in this study
The Ohio State University - Consent to Participate in Research
Enabling Structure and Teacher Leadership Mixed Methods Study
Interview

This is a consent form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate.

Your participation is voluntary. Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and will receive a copy for your records.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between enabling school structure and the extent of teacher leadership.

Procedures/Tasks: As a participant in this study, researchers request to conduct and audio record a 30–45 minute interview with you in person, by telephone, or by written response.

Duration: You may be asked to participate sometime between April 2014 –August 2015. You may stop participating in the study at any time.

Risks and Benefits: There are no known risks to you as a result of your participation in this study. Study findings will contribute to understandings about the relationship between enabling school structure and teacher leadership. De-identified summary findings may also be shared with school district leaders who are interested in ways to improve support for teacher leadership initiatives.

Confidentiality: We will work to make sure that no one sees your interview responses without your approval. Interview responses will be stored on a password-protected server. Data will be kept for at least 5 years and will be stored on password-protected online file.
storage system when not being analyzed. Efforts will be made to keep your study-related information confidential. However, there may be circumstances where this information must be released. For example, personal information regarding your participation in this study may be disclosed if required by state law. Also, your records may be reviewed by the following groups (as applicable to the research):

- Office for Human Research Protections or other federal, state, or international regulatory agencies;
- The Ohio State University Institutional Review Board or Office of Responsible Research Practices;

Participant Rights: You may refuse to participate in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you are a student or employee at Ohio State, your decision will not affect your grades or employment status. If you choose to participate in the study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. You may also choose to not respond to a question if you feel uncomfortable. By signing this form, you do not give up any personal legal rights you may have as a participant in this study.

Contacts and Questions: If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about this study, please contact research staff, Marie Hurt hurt.43@buckeyemail.osu.edu or principal investigator, Anika Anthony anthony.171@osu.edu.

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

By checking the “I consent to participate in this study” button below, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the consent form. You will receive a copy of this consent form for your personal records.

Name_____________________________
Signature of participant__________________________
___ I consent to participate in this study
___ I do not consent to participate in this study