

LEADERSHIP FRAME PREFERENCES OF  
ELECTED AND APPOINTED SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS  
IN ALABAMA, FLORIDA, AND MISSISSIPPI

By

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To my husband, Carl for all of your support

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School  
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By

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Major: Educational Leadership

This study investigated the leadership orientation frames of school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi, which are the only three states in the United States with both elected and appointed school district superintendents. The theoretical framework for this study was developed by Bolman and Deal's (1997) four frame typology. The frames included in the typology are the Structural, Human Resource, Political, and Symbolic. The purpose of the study was to determine whether there was a difference in frame use between elected and appointed school district superintendents based on their method of selection. The study also investigated the effects of demographic characteristics (age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree, years of experience in education, years of experience as superintendent, years of experience as superintendent in current district, and size of district) on the superintendents' cognitive frame use. Superintendent use of single and multiple frames was also investigated.

Of the 348 *Leadership Orientation (Self) Surveys* distributed to the population of school district superintendents 145 (42%) were returned. Surveys were completed by 89 appointed superintendents and 56 elected superintendents.

The demographic characteristics of the participating superintendents mirrored the demographics of the larger population of superintendents in these states. The pattern of frame use (Human Resource, Structural, Symbolic, and Political) proved to be the same for elected and appointed superintendents; however, elected superintendents had a statistically significant mean score for the Human Resource Frame. Frame use implied that the school district superintendents in these three states were effective school managers. Regression analysis results suggested that method of selection as well as demographics (age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree, and district size) had a statistically significant effect in the use of Structural, Political, and Symbolic frames when performed with appointed as the selection variable.

The findings have implication for professional development of school district superintendents as well as those aspiring to the position. Further studies on superintendent leadership effectiveness and frame choice are indicated, especially those that include feedback from peers and colleagues.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Life's daily challenges rarely arrive neatly categorized or clearly labeled. Instead, they flow over us in a murky and turbulent stream of experience. The art of reframing, and of leadership, uses knowledge and intuition to make sense of the flow and to find sensible and effective ways to channel the current in productive directions (Bolman & Deal, 1997, p. 354).

The challenges of leadership in various types of organizations have long been a topic for serious study. Just as theories of leadership and organizations have evolved over the years, so has the role of school district superintendent changed since the first local superintendencies were established in 1837 (Konnert & Augenstein, 1995; Norton, Webb, Dlugosh, & Sybouts, 1996).

“The superintendent of schools in America have one of the most responsible and complex roles in modern society. The superintendents’ role makes them central to the welfare of their communities, and they are often very visible in their communities, but their job is rarely understood or fully appreciated” (Houston, 2007, p. ix). Leadership has only grown in complexity requiring us to reassess our vision of how leaders function in our contemporary, complex, technological organizations.

In 1962 the American Association of School Administrators wrote that the success of schools and students is strongly related to the caliber of school district leadership (Carter & Cunningham, 1997). There are major gaps in the research regarding the superintendency and its impact and even larger gaps in the research regarding any differences in the leadership of appointed and elected superintendents. This topic merits reflection as well as empirical examination since only a few studies have analyzed the effects of the chief executive (Bridges, 1982). The literature is also lacking on educational qualifications of school district superintendents (Schuh &

Herrington, 1990). “The superintendency encompasses responsibilities in instructional leadership, fiscal management, community relations, board relations, personnel management, and operations management. The role is one of both leadership and management within the district and the community” (Glass & Franceschini, 2007, p. xiii). In the face of today’s demands, further study of leadership of district school superintendents, how they are selected, and how they lead is warranted.

### **Historical Roles for Superintendents**

The role of superintendent has changed greatly throughout history. “Superintendents play a unique and critical role being the connecting link between schools and communities represented by school boards” (Glass & Franceschini, 2007, p. xiii). They have served as clerks for the school board, scholarly educational leaders, business managers, educational statesmen, educational professionals, accountable public servants, and political strategists (Petersen & Barnett, 2003). The first superintendents had no special training for the position and essentially performed the duties of a school inspector—more clerical than administrative. The duties of the early superintendents were limited to serving as representatives of the school boards. They prepared annual reports, visited and supervised schools, and had little influence on financial matters. As superintendents grew in experience, they began to acquire more duties and responsibilities. The business of administering school systems fell less and less to committees. The position evolved into executive officer of the board with the additional responsibility of employing teachers, business management, finance and facilities (Konnert & Augenstein, 1995; Norton et al., 1996).

As states began requiring that teachers be certified, programs were also developed to provide additional training and course work for school administrators and

superintendents. Following the Great Depression administrative emphasis began to change from the Taylorist scientific management to a more democratic, participatory style of leadership. With the teachings of John Dewey encouraging teachers to become involved in decisions related to the goals and operation of their schools, superintendents were urged to become human relations experts (Carter & Cunningham, 1997; Chapman, 1997; Konnert & Augenstein, 1995; Norton et al., 1996).

Superintendents then became interested in behavioral theory in anticipation that reactions to change in district procedures and policies could better be predicted. The emergence of behavior science theory also gave credibility to the science of administration (Chapman, 1997; Norton et al., 1996).

The superintendency encountered many transformations in the realm of education, not the least of which was desegregation. Federal and state governments became more involved in the authority of school systems, and teachers' unions grew in numbers and influence. More conflict in education arose during the 1980's and 1990's. Superintendents could no longer deny the political nature of the position. School reform became a serious entity to be addressed by superintendents along with school-based management, schools of choice, and teacher empowerment. Houston (2001) proposed that for superintendents to be successful, the traditional approach needs to be revised. He projected that, rather than the management issues of "the Killer B's (buildings, buses, books, budgets, and bonds)" (p. 428), superintendents will have to deal with the leadership issues of "the Crucial C's (connection, communication, collaboration, community building, child advocacy, and curricular choices)" (p. 428). A more recent transformation has occurred as a result of school accountability. Mandates for

increased student performance began to come from all directions with little or no increase in funding, prompting accountability and school finance to become the greatest challenges facing school districts and superintendents (Carter & Cunningham, 1997; Chapman, 1997; Konnert & Augenstein, 1995; Norton et al., 1996).

Hoyle (1999) stated that the responsibilities and stressors for school superintendents intensify each year creating the need to visualize the solutions to problems through non-traditional lenses. In the January 2003 newsletter, the American Educational Research Association (AERA) proposed that educational leaders have the responsibility to lead their schools through the tests presented by an environment which grows increasingly problematical. Indeed, the position of superintendent has evolved into a much more complex and demanding role. Many have recognized the difficulties leaders face in approaching new problems with old ideas relying on old thinking rather than using imagination and metaphor. A new approach which fosters critical thinking and promotes understanding of multiple meanings of situations must be learned to enable leaders and managers to face and control new situations effectively (Carlson, 1996; Morgan, 1997).

Hersey and Blanchard (1977) stated that, in order to be effective, a leader must be able to analyze his environment and adapt his leadership style to fit the demands of that environment. Leaders are forced to simplify their situations by reframing what they see based on their own experiences. They must be able to create new viewpoints in order to develop new ways of addressing the concerns and issues that face most educational organizations. In order to accomplish this feat, leaders must filter their experience through their own frames or lenses developed through both experience and

education. Unfortunately this may cause some situations to be ignored or be imperceptible as they are out of the leader's frame of cognizance. Leaders have not been successful when their perception of a situation is restricted. A misinterpretation of situations will lead to inappropriate action, just as medical misdiagnosis leads to mistreatment. Leaders must be able to envision organizations in flexible terms and view them from various perspectives in order to contend with the complex matters they will encounter (Bolman & Deal, 1997; Morgan, 1997; Norton et al., 1996).

Phil Schlecty looks upon the role of superintendent as that of CEO (Brandt, 1993). He stated that superintendents cause decisions, not make them. They are the ones that determine which problems are worth solving and then establish an environment in which those problems are solved.

Superintendents must not only be able to monitor and evaluate student performance, but also to explain how well their students compare with students in their state and the nation. They can no longer proclaim that their districts are doing well. They must be able to communicate this message through the interpretation of student performance scores on state and national standardized tests. Political and societal demands for success on high stakes test are primarily the result of mandates for test based accountability and standardized curriculum created by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). NCLB was enacted to "ensure that all children would learn and contribute to the economic vitality of the nation and preserve democratic traditions of the republic" (Hoyle, Bjork, Collier & Glass, 2005, p. 42). The superintendent must go beyond the emphasis on test accountability to support their teachers and students by creating

learning environments that are comprehensive and inclusive. Superintendents must promote respect for all in an increasingly multicultural society.

The need for strategic planning is also driven by legislative accountability systems. Strategic planning must be expanded from merely addressing curriculum alignment to including finance, facilities, staff development, adequate meals, safe transportation, disabled and bilingual students, athletic and music programs, as well as the physical and mental well-being of the students. All require adequate planning for effective implementation (Hoyle et al, 2005).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Although the leadership orientations of school principals have been studied at all grade levels, few studies of the leadership orientations of district school superintendents have been conducted, in particular those directed at the method of selection of district school superintendents. There is very little research comparing leadership orientations of appointed and elected superintendents (Sumner, 1986). One reason for this dearth of research may be the fact that in 1990 there were six remaining states with elected and appointed superintendents (Schuh & Herrington, 1990). By 2006 that number had further declined to only three states: Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi (SREB, 2000). With an impending shortage of superintendents due to the “graying of the superintendency”, more qualified individuals will be needed to fill this critical position. In order to select (by whatever means) the best individuals for the job, we must know more about the individuals occupying the office of the superintendent. It is imperative to understand their leadership styles as they relate to decision-making and effectiveness.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the leadership orientation preferences (as developed by Bolman & Deal 1984, 1991c, 1997, 2008) of elected and appointed school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. Demographic characteristics of these superintendents, including age, gender, ethnicity, education, method of selection, years of experience in education, years of experience as a superintendent, length of tenure in current district, and size of district (number of students) were also analyzed. The *Leadership Orientation (Self) Survey (LO(S)S)* (Bolman & Deal, 1990) was employed to determine leadership orientation frame preferences of the superintendents included in the study.

## **Research Questions**

This study examined the following research questions.

- What are the self-reported leadership orientation frame preferences of the elected and appointed school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi?
- Is there a difference between self-reported leadership style preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents?
- Is there a difference in single or multi-frame preferences between elected and appointed school district superintendents?
- Is there a difference in leadership style preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents when considering selected demographic variables, (i.e., age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree earned, experience in education, length of experience as a superintendent, length of tenure as superintendent in current district, and size of district)?

## **Delimitations**

The following delimitations were observed while completing this study.

- The study was delimited to data gathered from selected school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi who returned a completed survey within the specified time period.

- The study was delimited to responses obtained during the 2006-2007 school year.
- Data collection was delimited to responses to the *LO(S)S* and the characteristics demographic addendum.
- This study made no effort to measure effectiveness of leadership perspectives.

### **Limitations**

In this study, the following limitations were recognized.

- It was assumed that the superintendents included in the study and the researcher had a mutual comprehension of the terminology in Bolman and Deal's (1990) *LO(S)S*.
- It was assumed that the school district superintendent respondents accurately indicated their perceptions of their use of leadership orientation frames on the *LO(S)S*.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Frame** is a tool or lens that brings a situation into focus providing individuals with a particular perspective through which to view a situation. The Bolman and Deal (1984, 1991c, 1997, 2008) frames are structural, human resource, political and symbolic.

**Multi-frame thinking** is the ability to view situations within an organization through various perspectives that identify with combinations of three or four of Bolman and Deal's (1984, 1991c, 1997, 2008) leadership orientation frames.

The **human resource frame** emphasizes the needs of individuals within an organization and adapts the needs of the organization to fit the people so that they might experience improved self-esteem when performing their responsibilities (Bolman & Deal, 1984, 1991c, 1997, 2008).

The **political frame** views organizations as groups of different interests vying for power and scant resources; conflict is the central theme of this perspective (Bolman & Deal, 1984, 1991c, 1997, 2008).

The **structural frame**, based on a division of labor and the creation of policies, rules and procedures, is a more traditional approach rooted in the factory metaphor (Bolman & Deal, 1984, 1991c, 1997, 2008).

The **symbolic frame** emphasizes the culture of organizations and is concerned with rebuilding the expressive or spiritual aspects of the organization through the use of stories, myths, metaphors, heroes, ceremonies and rituals (Bolman & Deal, 1984, 1991c, 1997, 2008).

**Leadership styles** are behaviors that are representative of managers and leaders of organizations, and that have a powerful effect on morale and productivity (Bolman & Deal, 1997).

**Leadership behaviors** refer to specific characteristics demonstrated by managers and leaders of organizations (Bolman & Deal, 1997).

### **Justification for the Study**

The role of district school superintendent has become increasingly complicated, especially in today's modern technological society. "The rapid increase in both number and diversity of students in our nation's largest urban areas demands new skills of teachers and administrators" (Houston, 2000, p.1). The widespread use of the internet complicates matters even more, creating a "digital divide" between mainstream society and the poor, in addition to our nationwide commitment to accountability and maintenance of high standards (Houston, 2000). As school districts experience the retirements of the baby boomers, more qualified superintendents will be needed.

Frames are mental models which enable leaders to comprehend and negotiate a particular territory. "A good frame makes it easier to know what you are up against and, ultimately what you can do about it (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p.11)." These mental

maps in effective serve as a global positioning system that leaders carry in their heads to enable them to navigate the twists and turns of leadership in organizations (Bolman & Deal, 2008). “Our basic premise is that a primary cause of managerial failure is faulty thinking rooted in inadequate ideas. Managers . . . too often rely on constricted models that capture only part of organizational life. Learning multiple perspectives, or frames is a defense against thrashing around without a clue about what you are doing or why” (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 21). Anna-Marie Cote’ (1999) revealed the importance of multi-frame thinking in school principals for enhancing problem-solving skills and the ability to develop creative solutions. “Leaders fail when they take too narrow a view. Unless they can think flexibly and see organizations from multiple angles, they will be unable to deal with the full range of issues they inevitably encounter (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 437).” It is necessary for us to know and understand the decision-making processes that superintendents employ.

Due to the pressures on district school superintendents and the complexities of their role, multi-frame thinking is critical. Awareness of the frame preferences of school district superintendents both appointed and elected and how they view their leadership styles would expand the research knowledge and understanding of the use superintendents make of multi-frame thinking and how this relates to effectiveness. “It is tempting to track familiar paths in a shifting terrain and to summon time-worn solutions, even when problems have changed” (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 435).

The issue of whether to elect or appoint school district superintendents is an important one. Do the qualifications and size of the candidate pool outweigh the issue of local control? The leadership of schools is critical to the development of American

society. The selection process should lead to the very best leaders available. The leadership orientations of superintendents have a tremendous impact on the school systems that they lead. The examination of leadership styles of appointed and elected superintendents would increase knowledge as to the importance of the method of selecting school district superintendents. If there is a difference in leadership frame orientation based on method, then the method should be examined in order to ensure that the appropriate individual is selected for the position. The leadership frame orientation should fit the needs of the school district. Because of the essential role of the school district superintendent, there is a need for research to determine if appointed school superintendent's leadership orientations, and thus their behavior, differ from those of elected superintendents.

### **Organization of the Study**

Chapter 1 provided background information, a statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, delimitations and limitations, definition of terms and justification for the study. Chapter 2 contains a review of related literature and research. Chapter 3 presents the population, the data collection method, and the methodology used to respond to the research questions. Chapter 4 contains a presentation and analysis of the data collected. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the study, conclusions drawn from the data analysis, major findings of the study, and recommendations for further research.

## CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The history of the school superintendent has been a fitful journey from manager to leader. As conditions have changed over the last 200 years, the role has evolved from an ad hoc response to local needs for school management to leading a complex community learning enterprise. Superintendents typically lead one of the largest institutions in the community and they have some of the greatest responsibilities in town, yet little is known about them. It is a position that is widely influential but narrowly understood. (Houston, 2006)

This study investigated the leadership frame orientations of school district superintendents in the states of Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. The study also focused on whether the leadership frame orientation of the superintendents who were elected differed from those who were appointed to their positions. Was there a difference in their use of single, paired, and multi-frame use of leadership orientation frames? Demographic characteristics associated with these superintendents, including age, gender, race, education, method of selection, years of experience in education, years of experience as a superintendent, size of district (number of students), and length of tenure in current district were also analyzed to determine their influence on leadership frame choices of the superintendents.

This review of the literature is organized into four sections. The first section addresses the alignment of organizational leadership theory and leadership orientation frame development. Section two examines literature related to superintendent leadership (including appointed and elected superintendents) as well as gender and the superintendency. Section three examines studies employing the leadership orientation frame theory of Bolman and Deal. The final section is devoted to studies that relate to the specific demographic characteristics addressed in this study.

## **Organizational Leadership Theory**

Leaders and leader/managers are distinguished from ordinary managers by six aspects: thinking in the long term; understanding the relationship of their organization to the larger organization; reaching constituents beyond the organization; emphasizing vision, values, motivation, and interaction; employing political skills to cope with conflict; and emphasizing renewal and revision to meet requirements of a changing reality (Gardner, 2000). There are many kinds of leaders and styles of leadership. Diverse settings clearly affect leadership, but the most critical influence is the nature of the group being led.

In exploring the elements of a classical view of leadership, four characteristics of leaders using the classical view were identified: (a) identified by position as part of the hierarchy; (b) focus on solutions and answers; (c) have vision and give direction; and (d) exhibit special characteristics that set them apart from their followers (Doyle & Smith, 2001).

Organizations require five critical disciplines: (a) systems thinking which is a framework, a body of knowledge, and tools that have been developed over time to make patterns clear in order to be able to change them effectively; (b) personal mastery which requires a commitment to lifelong learning about oneself and entails continuously clarifying and developing personal vision, energy, patience, and objectivity; (c) mental models which influence how one sees the world; (d) building shared vision rather than dictating a personal vision; and (e) team learning which emphasizes dialogue (Senge, 2000). Senge believes that a learning organization is where people learn how they create their own problems by their actions, and how they can change. Norton et al. (1996) discussed Senge's mental models and the importance of checking current ones

in order to develop new ones by which to function. They recognize that superintendents must examine their deep-rooted assumptions in order to be able to revise them as necessary. New ways of thinking must be created to meet new challenges.

In order to be effective a leader must be able to analyze his environment and adapt his leadership to fit the demands of that environment (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977). Leaders are forced to simplify their situations by reframing what they see based on their own experiences. They must be able to create new viewpoints in order to develop new ways of addressing the concerns and issues that face most educational organizations. In order to accomplish this feat, leaders must filter their experience through their own frames or lenses developed through both experience and education. Leaders must be able to envision organizations in flexible terms and view them from various perspectives in order to contend with the complex matters they will encounter (Bolman & Deal, 1997; Morgan, 1997; Norton et al, 1996).

Leaders have difficulty when they approach new problems with old ideas (Carlson, 1996). The four frames of Bolman and Deal (1984, 1991c, 1997, 2008) provide leaders/managers with new and different views for approaching situations within organizations, thus increasing their problem-solving repertoire. Carlson noted concerns regarding the limitations of reliance on old thinking rather than using imagination and metaphor. Again, this new approach fosters critical thinking and promotes understanding of multiple meanings of situations enabling leaders/managers to face and control new situations effectively.

Thinking in a new way in effect jeopardizes a leader's security. Individuals grow accustomed to leaders behaving a certain way and come to expect the same patterns of

behavior. Although some would prefer to try alternate views, it would seem that intrapersonal and interpersonal forces prefer the status quo. Leader/managers that are able to create new viewpoints are capable of developing new ways of addressing the unending concerns and issues which face most organizations (Carlson, 1996).

Administrators who try approach the problems in educational organizations base their methodology on how they view their options. Similar to Bolman and Deal's frames, Owens (1991) explains that individuals are limited in their ability to comprehend problems and attack them by the number and variety of ways with which they are familiar.

When Bolman and Deal attempted to teach an organizational leadership course together, they found that their different perspectives influenced their ability to work together and to further student understand. As a result, they developed a framework that aided in enhancing their own understanding by looking at issues through different lenses (Englert, 2008).

Bolman and Deal (1984, 1991b, 1991c, 1997, 2008) describe four frames: Structural, Human Resources, Political, and Symbolic in order to enhance mutual understanding for leaders and followers (Bolman & Deal, 1997). Each of the frames has a distinct purpose and function in creating a clearer image of understanding. The Structural frame emphasizes details and goals. Individuals are categorized into roles while the various activities are managed by rules, policies, and chain of command. The leaders of these organizations value data and analysis of data. Their concern is for the bottom line. The Human Resource frame focuses on the needs of people rather than the needs of the organization. When the leader seeks alignment between the people

and the organization, the organization is adjusted to meet the requirements of the people. Leadership is achieved through empowerment and facilitation. These leaders value feelings and relationships. Using the Political frame, leaders view organizations as “arenas of continuous conflict and competition ... for scarce resources” (Bolman and Deal, 1991b, p. 515). Leaders serve as advocates and intermediaries while valuing realism and common sense. Political leaders spend their time forming coalitions, networking, building power bases, and negotiating compromises. The Symbolic frame is used to give meaning and predictability to a disordered world. Facts are interpretive rather than objective. The organization creates symbols to provide a shared sense of community and human behavior. The leader’s job is to inspire commitment and enthusiasm using rituals and drama. Charisma is a critical characteristic of the Symbolic leader.

“Leaders view experience through a set of preconditioned lenses and filters” (Bolman and Deal, 1991b, p. 510). They resist questioning their view of the manner in which the organization functions. Accordingly, if the frames fit, the leaders understand and can shape the human experience; if not, the frames freeze into distorted pictures trapping them in misconceptions. Circumstance is then blamed for failure. Just as a medical misdiagnosis rarely results in a cure, so misinterpretation of situations can weaken even an exceptional leader. The question remains as to whether or not patterns appear in the frames or lenses leaders utilize. If these frames represent organizing theories, then one must suppose that individuals view situations in different ways because of differing values and cultures. Frames of reference shape how individuals view situations and also establish the actions that they choose to take.

*Leading with Soul*, an allegory written by Bolman and Deal (1994), draws from the Symbolic frame. Its purpose is to show that leaders' actions serve to create meaning in the organization. Leaders must realize the importance of developing a philosophical framework by which they will act. Educational leaders need assistance in integrating the logical and artistic aspects of their position. Leaders must be bifocal in nature, having the ability to manage the technical while still maintaining the importance of the symbolic side of leadership (Deal & Peterson, 1994).

Leadership is often mistakenly considered rational when actually it is basically political. Achieving power in order to get things accomplished is critical and makes conflict inevitable. The symbolic role including cultures, values and vision, is equally critical to leadership. "Having a vision may not be as important as engaging people in a process of visioning" (Bolman & Deal, 1994b, p. 84). Leadership is primarily developed through experience. The authors believe that leaders should be exposed to difficult challenges early in their experience to enhance their learning. Another aspect critical to leadership is self-reflection including feedback from others. Leaders require their own personal frameworks in order to be able to interpret feedback. Leaders are being provided with adequate training in the areas of management; however, they are not often mastering the symbolic side of organizations. Leadership must be redefined in "human, moral, and spiritual terms" (p. 95).

Bensimon (1987) considered Bolman and Deal's (1984) frame theory to be one of the most useful organizational theories from a leadership perspective. The idea of frames is useful as it suggests that different perspectives of followers and leaders will result in different interpretations of leadership. As perceptions change so the

expectations of leadership change. As leaders develop cognitive complexity, they will be more able to contend with the uncertain and volatile environments of organizations.

In a leadership case study, Parry and Horton (1998) utilized the Bolman and Deal frames model and determined that leadership is crisis or change driven, but it addresses change through cooperation. Leadership is based on power through communication and implementation of ideas. While using vision and the existing culture, leadership is symbolic but still recognizes politics. It is learned and based on intangibles (Parry & Horton, 1998).

A leadership framework for educational change based on Bolman and Deal's model as well as those of others was developed by Creasey (2002). Relationship-building for trusting, caring relationships, passion and communication were all included in her model. Each of these components is also loosely based on the Bolman and Deal Human Resources frame.

### **Superintendent Leadership**

Major gaps exist in the research regarding the superintendency (Bridges, 1982). Considering the importance of the position of the superintendent to education and society, only a small number of studies have analyzed the effect of the leadership of the chief executive. Bridges suggested that this topic merits reflection as well as empirical examination since "nothing of consequence is known about the impact of the occupants of this role" (p. 26). Further, Bridges believes that formidable theoretical, procedural, and political obstacles stand in the way of such a study.

## **Role of the Superintendent**

“To outsiders, the role of the school superintendent has always been a little mystifying. Most people can explain that the superintendent is the ultimate person in charge, but what superintendents actually do remains vague (Lashway, 2002).

Petersen and Barnett (2003) aggregated the development of the position of superintendent into seven eras: (1) 1820-1850 – clerks for the school board; (2) 1850-early 1900’s – scholarly educational leaders; (3) early 1900’s-1930 – business managers; (4) 1930-mid 1950’s – educational statesmen; (5) mid 1950’s-1970 – educational professionals; (6) 1970-1980 – accountable public servant; (7) 1980-1990 – political strategist. Now it appears that district superintendents are required “to provide powerful, authentic and rigorous learning for all students” (p. 10).

Holloway (2001) developed nine job domain categories important to beginning superintendents identifying the most important as comprehension and reaction to political issues. The least important was developing school board relations. Facilitating student learning was one of the least important, while providing professional development and maintaining group processes were considered of high value. Holloway also listed standards for effective leadership which reflect best practices in the role of superintendent. These included aiding in the creation of a shared learning vision; maintaining an instructional program that is conducive to student learning; providing a safe learning environment; collaborating with members of the community; displaying ethics, fairness, and integrity; and finally, being knowledgeable of the political, social, economic, legal and cultural composition of the school district.

Cuban (1998) describes three roles of superintendents: instructional, managerial, and political. They must improve student achievement, operate their

districts efficiently, and negotiate with numerous stakeholders for approval of programs and resources.

In order for superintendents of the future to be successful, they must learn a completely new approach to their jobs. Excelling at managerial issues will no longer provide success. Superintendents will have to master the processes that support the work, i.e., “connection, communication, collaboration, community building, child advocacy, and curricular choices” (Houston, 2001, p. 430). Houston believes that leadership of the future will necessarily focus on relationships between children, adults, school, and community. Communication skills will be critical for success. Superintendents will no longer need command skills as much as collaboration skills.

The quality of the individual who is selected as superintendent is primarily responsible for the scope and quality of the educational program that will be developed in a school district (American Association of School Administrators, 1962). Schlecty envisioned the superintendent as CEO who is called on not to solve problems, but to decide which problems are worth solving, and to create the environment in which the problems get solved. He sees the superintendent as a decision causer rather than a decision maker (Brandt, 1993).

An additional role for the school district superintendent is that of change-agent in school reform. Superintendents are critical to school reform as they make the majority of reform proposals in their districts (Bjork & Rodgers, 1999). Superintendents are key in creating organizational changes, thus causing a transformation in the ways that problems are viewed and solved (Ireh & Bailey, 1999). The major force pushing superintendents to reframe problems and solutions to various issues is the ever-

changing world. The pressures and responsibilities of superintendents increase yearly because of the speed of information processing (Hoyle, 1999).

“The superintendent is somewhat of a generalist . . . The superintendent cannot be an expert in one area and ignore others” (Sharp & Walter, 2004, p.15). The importance of the superintendent is to understand the big picture.

### **Characteristics of Superintendents**

Superintendents from the largest school districts have the shortest tenure, 26 to 28 months (Snider, 2006). Regardless of their accomplishments in the school districts, superintendents have become political scapegoats. They are one of the few remaining district employees with little or no job security, making it difficult to properly implement effective reforms. When other school district employees know that they will more than likely outlast the tenure of the superintendent, it becomes more difficult for superintendents to be effective leaders. In a study of 50 superintendents, Willower and Fraser (1980) found that superintendents “deal with a wide range of problems, are irked by the paperwork demands of state and federal agencies, regret not being closer to the classroom, and feel the pressure of the job but are ready to do it over again” (p. 5).

The superintendency is the most male-dominated executive position of any profession in the United States (Table 2-1). Bjork and Rodgers (1999) found that 96% of the superintendents in the United States are male. Females in the superintendency appear to have greater knowledge of instructional methods, provide more assistance to beginning teachers, supervise teachers directly, and provide school environments which are more suited to learning. They also tend to employ more democratic methods that encourage participation, thus achieving higher levels of participation and job satisfaction.

Table 2-1. Superintendent demographics from AASA superintendent studies 2000 and 2006

Year	Age	% Female	% Minority	% Doctorate	Tenure (yrs)	District Size
2000	52.5	14	5.1	45	6.47	4,026
2007	54.5	21.7	6.2	51	5.5	2,750

### **Appointed or Elected Superintendents**

Using the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire developed by Halpin, Sumner (1986) studied how principals perceived the leadership behavior of elected and appointed school superintendents in Mississippi. He found very little literature comparing the leadership behaviors of appointed and elected superintendents. The results of his study concluded that appointed superintendents held more advanced degrees and were rated higher in Initiation of Structure. Initiation of Structure is defined as “leadership behavior endeavoring to establish well defined patterns of organization, channels of communication, and methods of procedure” (p. 5). There was not enough diversity in the sample of superintendents to draw conclusions regarding gender or race. Sumner recommended that further studies using other instruments were needed to explore any leadership differences in elected and appointed superintendents. He also recommended further studies to investigate any factors that may have influenced superintendent behaviors. Further, Sumner suggested that state leaders review this study and reconsider Mississippi’s method of selection for superintendents.

In examining both elected and appointed school district superintendents, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB, 2000) found that the number of elected superintendents is diminishing. The number has declined by one-half in the last decade. The practice of electing superintendents is now limited to three states: Alabama, Florida, and Georgia. There was still one district in South Carolina with an

elected superintendent, but that district also had an appointed superintendent and was in the process of eliminating the elected superintendent position. In 1992 the manner of selection for Georgia's superintendents was changed to appointed, with the state of Tennessee making the same change in 1999.

Those who argue in favor of electing superintendents believe that the process is more democratic resulting in a superintendent who better represents the community's and district's needs. Electing superintendents also creates a balance of power with the school board. Opponents of elected superintendents claim that an appointed system creates a clear line of accountability with the superintendent being accountable to the board. An appointive system also increased the pool of candidates for the position. Superintendents can then spend their time running the schools and not running for office (SREB, 2000).

In an attempt to determine why superintendents had been successful in maintaining their positions over an extended period of time (20 plus years), Waller and Richardson (1997) interviewed 13 long-term Georgia superintendents (3 appointed, 10 elected). Superintendents were also questioned regarding their perceptions of educational reform. All were from small towns, were middle-aged, and held varying degrees. There was only one minority represented in the group. These superintendents expressed that an increase in political awareness aided in their ability to hold their positions for 20 or more years. In regard to school reform, the superintendents expressed their concerns regarding the change from elected to appointed superintendents which they believed would remove the control of education from the political arena. They observed that the superintendency is a political office and

expressed the concern that elected school boards could be even more political. The superintendents predicted that the educational system would return to the previous lack of stability and continuity.

McGriff, Bishop, and Rice (1997) examined how teacher leaders and school board chairmen perceive the work-related behaviors of local school district superintendents in Alabama. The study identified 23 work-related behaviors that were frequently demonstrated by superintendents and examined these behaviors to determine whether they were demonstrated equally by elected and appointed superintendents. They found that there was a difference in the effectiveness of superintendents based on whether they were appointed or elected. The appointed superintendents demonstrated these work-related behaviors more often than elected superintendents, while the elected superintendents completed specific improvement actions more often. The process of electing superintendents gives control of schools to the public thus creating a superintendent who is more responsive to the needs of his/her constituents. It is less likely to have high turnover in the superintendency or abuse of power. Appointed systems, however, create specific personnel selection qualifications and a more efficient process of decision-making. This method does away with the political process and establishes a professional one. There is access to a greater number of candidates that are highly qualified. Appointed superintendents are more likely to hold advanced degrees. The authors recommended that the state of Alabama re-evaluate continuing their system of electing district school superintendents.

When Miller-Whitehead (2000) studied school districts in Alabama that had received a grade of A from the state board of education, she was searching for a

common denominator for success. In Alabama the city school systems appoint their superintendents while county system superintendents are elected. Miller-Whitehead found the superintendents of these successful school districts were all appointed.

While examining student performance in Oklahoma schools, it was found that elected superintendents were less likely to publicize poor academic performances by their schools for fear of losing votes. In 1989 the appointed superintendent printed 2500 copies of state test results so that as many individuals as possible could see them and compare their district and school results with others. In 1991, 1992, and 1993 the elected state superintendent had only 300 copies of the state test results printed, which was not even enough copies for every school district superintendent to examine the results (Wood, 2004).

The Georgia Governor's Review Commission (1994) prepared a report defining quality basic education in the state of Georgia and made several recommendations for achieving this for all students. One of the recommendations was to change the system to all appointed school superintendents rather than elected. Their argument in favor of appointed superintendents was that appointed superintendents tend to be more responsive to the school board. They demonstrate greater support for taxing for education and spend more of their funds on items directly related to instruction. Appointed superintendents produce higher achievement scores. The qualifications for appointed superintendents would be more professional and not related to fund-raising abilities for a political campaign. Appointed superintendents are not as susceptible to political pressures.

A constitutional provision in Georgia requires that all school district school superintendents be appointed by the school board. Part of the justification for this change was to remove politics from the position. There is some question, however, whether this provision has served to remove politics or has simply changed them (Lindsay, 1996).

Schuh and Herrington (1990) found that 97.8% of school district superintendents were appointed with only six states (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Tennessee) having elected and appointed superintendents. Initiatives in each of these states failed to change the process to appointed superintendents. They suggest that the issue is basically local control versus professionalism. Although having schools governed by the public is a valid concern, the complex issues facing school districts today require a professional who holds greater authority and influence in policy making and implementation. Further, regardless of the method of selection, school boards and superintendents are all involved in political activity.

Although the literature is lacking on educational qualifications of school district superintendents, it appears that appointed superintendents tend to have more and higher degrees than those who are elected. The three states that are still electing superintendents are all southern and primarily rural. Legislatures in all of these states have considered changing their systems to all appointed superintendents, but the importance of local control (also called democratization) has prevailed. Alabama and Mississippi would only require some statutory revision to change, but for Florida to make the change to all appointed superintendents would require a constitutional amendment approved through a general statewide election (Schuh & Herrington, 1990).

In Alabama the state superintendent is appointed and so are the city superintendents. County superintendents, however, are mostly elected. Legislation in Alabama has been filed, but has failed since 1984 for lack of support from educational organizations. A significant factor in the failure to change to an appointed system is the fact that some of the local school boards are appointed. Voters would lose any control of the school system (Schuh & Herrington, 1990).

In Florida after 1885, it was mandated that all district school superintendents be elected because of issues perpetrated by carpetbaggers during Reconstruction. Later (1955 and 1962) constitutional provisions were adopted to allow some large counties to vote for appointing or electing local school district superintendents. A special act by the legislature could also create this change in designated counties. Florida Statutes (Section 230.241 FS) require that the school boards of these counties adopt and present a formal resolution to the county commission in order to place the resolution on the general election ballot. Twenty-two (22) of the 67 counties in Florida now have appointed superintendents (Schuh & Herrington, 1990).

Although the state of Georgia recently changed to a system of appointed superintendents, this was achieved only after many failed efforts. Again, the primary reason for the prior repeated failure of this legislation was local control (Schuh & Herrington, 1990).

Schuh and Herrington (1990) further reported that although Mississippi changed the state superintendent of education from elected to appointed in 1982, many county superintendents are still elected. Superintendents in municipal, agricultural, and consolidated districts have appointed superintendents. In 1988 the Mississippi

legislature passed a bill which allowed school districts to decide through a vote to change the superintendent position from elected to appointed. No county took advantage of this opportunity even though the NAACP filed lawsuits claiming that the system of electing superintendents is discriminatory. There is, however, a requirement in Mississippi for all local school superintendents (elected and appointed) to have the equivalent of a master's degree.

The constitution in South Carolina allows for both appointed and elected superintendents. Schuh and Herrington (1990) found that recent legislation was enacted requiring all superintendents to be appointed by the local board.

The state of Tennessee had a system of appointed and elected superintendents with the majority of them elected. Districts were allowed to change the system through local referendum or private act. After many failed attempts, the Tennessee legislature finally passed a proposal for all appointed superintendents. Schuh and Herrington (1990) found that the major stumbling block to early attempts at change was again the issue of local control.

Schuh and Herrington (1990) also discussed the pros and cons of appointing versus electing local school district school superintendents. Those who favor electing superintendents reason that the people should have control of the schools. They believe that elected superintendents in essence are closer to the people and thus tend to be more responsive to their needs and desires. This is more important to voters than the possibility of greater efficiency. The elected superintendent is not owned by the board and therefore is more independent. Appointed superintendents are often viewed as puppets of the board, reducing the power of the voters in decision-making and

strengthening the autocratic rule of the school board. The turnover rate of appointed superintendents is greater and there is a greater possibility of abuse of power. One of the strengths of an appointed system is that a qualified individual can be selected, as qualifications for the position can be established along with the salary; unqualified candidates can be eliminated, creating a smaller, quality group to choose from and making the selection process quicker and easier. The pool of applicants is generated from a larger geographic area. Schuh and Herrington (1990) also point out that in business the board of directors selects the CEO. Appointed superintendents can focus their time and efforts on their educational jobs and not on raising money and running for office. The position becomes professional rather than political. Also, when the school board can be held responsible, schools tend to be closer to the needs and desires of the electorate. Elected superintendents and elected boards often have allegiances to different individuals creating conflict and confusion. When the superintendent is held responsible to the board, there is less opportunity for an abuse of power. Groups who are in favor of a system of appointed superintendents are more concerned with the qualifications of elected superintendents. They assume that appointed superintendents are more highly educated, better qualified, and more stable.

In a focus report for the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB, 2000) the issue of elected and appointed superintendents was investigated. It was found that those in favor of electing superintendents believe this to be more democratic and that elected superintendents will be more responsible to the people and the needs of the district. They also believe that elected superintendents are freer to disagree with the school boards. Proponents of appointed superintendents assert that this system

creates a more clear line of accountability and increases the pool of candidates providing a better opportunity to find a qualified individual who will meet the needs of the district. They say that “appointed superintendents spend their time running schools, not running for office” (p. 1). The prediction of this report was that by 2000 there would only be 154 elected superintendents left in the United States.

The American Association of School Administrators (1962) proposed that elected superintendents should meet the same qualifications as those who are appointed. The operation and maintenance of a successful school system requires a leader who is knowledgeable and professional. Without qualifications, there are no safeguards against mismanagement; however, smaller counties often have considerable difficulty in finding qualified educational leaders who are willing to run for office.

Situations where there are elected superintendents and elected school boards create a system of dual accountability which creates a dichotomy of authority and responsibility. Local politics can have a negative impact on schools, even though elected superintendents do have strong ties to the community (AASA, 1962).

The AASA (1962) also found that groups who oppose changing to an appointed system include elected superintendents, state legislators, and in some instances (e.g. Florida) school superintendent associations. The superintendents in Florida argue that the voters of the school districts are the most qualified to make decisions about how the school system should be run. Since the school system in many districts is the largest employer, the voters want greater control of the decision-making process.

The remaining states with elected superintendents are primarily rural, Reconstructionist states. “Local control in the South is considered a basic democratic

right and continues to be an important issue in many communities” (Schuh & Herrington, 1990, p. 32).

Two national associations performed an evaluation of Indiana’s education system and, as a result, encouraged the state to abolish the process of electing the chief state school officer and implement the office of appointed state superintendent. Although this refers to the superintendency at the state level, the same objections held true. Elected superintendents not only have to raise money in order to run a campaign, they also must carry out a political agenda once in office. This detracts from the goal of improving education (Zehr, 2001). The executive director of the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) stated that state superintendents should be hired and evaluated based on what they can do to improve education. The argument against this is again that individuals elected by the people have allegiances only to those people and not just to one individual or administration

Investigating whether the mode of selection (appointed or elected) relates to leadership, Carol Brand (1993) asked principals in Georgia to rate their superintendents. Brand discovered that the majority of female superintendents were elected. She found that appointed superintendents were older; more experienced in administration, and held higher degrees. Elected superintendents had been involved in education longer and also held their positions longer. Appointed superintendents appeared to be concerned with school board relations, while elected superintendents were focused on budget and finance. Most importantly, appointed superintendents were rated as superior overall by their colleagues. Brand found that appointed superintendents received higher salaries and more perks with their positions. Larger

school systems frequently have appointed superintendents with more professional preparation. The majority of female superintendents are elected. In November 1992 Georgians voted to change to a system of appointed superintendents. Brand recommended that this study be repeated after this change was fully implemented.

### **Leadership Orientation Frame Studies**

#### **Frame Choices**

Bolman and Deal (1991a) explained that leaders view situations based on their own experience, so if their perspectives (or frames) match the situation, they can be successful. If their frames do not fit, the situation can become vague and misdiagnosed thus leading to action that is not effective. Bolman and Deal used both qualitative and quantitative methods in their data gathering. The *Leadership Orientations (Self) Survey (LO(S)S)*, (1990) was used including both the self and colleague ratings. Their hypothesis was that "...the capacity to reframe is a critical issue in success as both manager and leader" (p. 519). They discovered that the respondents saw linkage between frames in the items and saw them as separate and distinct as well. The results of this study showed that American leaders scored higher in both the structural and human resources frames while international leaders scored highest in structural and lowest in symbolic. Leaders from Singapore had results similar to the Americans except for scoring unusually high in the symbolic frame.

Another study by Bolman and Deal (1991b) was used to operationalize the Bolman and Deal model (1984, 1991b, 1991c) for understanding leadership and organizations through the four frames: Structural, Human Resources, Political, and Symbolic. This study used critical incidents to assess which and how many frames were used. One or two frames were frequently used—most often Structural and least

often Symbolic. The use of Human resources and Political frames varied. The frames as implemented by managers were the focus of this particular report.

### **Frames and Effectiveness**

The findings of Bolman and Deal (1991a) study showed that frame orientations are related to success as manager and leader. Further, they showed that the effectiveness of managers and leaders was not the same thing. While managerial success emphasized the Structural frame, this frame was found to be ineffective in leaders. Leadership effectiveness was related to use of the Symbolic and Political frames. Frame orientations that are successful depend on the work environment. In the corporate environment, the Structural frame proved to be more effective than the Symbolic.

Most managerial training programs were found to focus on management rather than leadership while leadership programs focus on Structural and Human Resources frames. Use of the Political frame appears to be a better predictor of management and leadership effectiveness than the use of the Human Resource frame, possibly because those who are skilled in the Political frame are perceived as better leaders and managers. In regards to gender, there were little or no differences in frame orientation preference; however, females tended to rate themselves lower in the Political frame than they were rated by their colleagues. While it appears that managers frequently employ only one or two frames, they need to rely on all four frames in order to be fully effective as both managers and leaders (Bolman & Deal, 1991a).

Further, leadership frames reflect significant elements of the leadership approach and have a significant association with leader effectiveness. The frames orientation of an individual can predict effectiveness of an individual as a manager or a leader,

although the frames preferences are different. In three different samples of educational administrators, Bolman and Deal (1991a) revealed that more than two frames were rarely used and that all four frames were almost never used. Leadership is significantly associated with the Symbolic frame and almost never with the Structural frame. In determining the effectiveness of managers, the results were the opposite with the Structural frame being a positive predictor and the Symbolic frame never a predictor.

Bolman and Deal (1991b) assessed frame preferences of managers and then had colleagues rate the managers' effectiveness as manager and leader based on their frame orientations. The effectiveness of managers was found to be linked to the Structural frame, while the effectiveness of leaders related more closely to the Symbolic frame. Gender was not significantly related to orientation or effectiveness.

Leadership and management are two very different entities (Bolman & Deal, 1992a). This research was based on the hypothesis that leaders and managers must both be able to reframe, and that the ability to use multiple frames has a positive effect on the success of managers and leaders. Secondly, they hypothesized that leadership is based on context with different situations requiring different thinking patterns. The results suggested that having the ability to employ multiple frames is critical to success as leader or manager.

### **College Presidents/Deans**

Several studies have been performed to assess the leadership orientation frames preferences of college presidents (Bensimon, 1987; Echols-Tobe, 2000; Jordan, 1999; Tedesco, 2004). Bensimon explored the extent that college presidents employed single or multiple frame perspectives in evaluating good leadership based on the Bolman and Deal model. She concluded that of the 32 presidents interviewed, 13 relied on a single

frame, 11 used two frames, seven employed three frames and only one perceived using all four. The Structural or Human Resources frames were most used by single-frame presidents. Dual frame presidents were likely to use a combination of Human Resources and Symbolic frames, while the majority of the three frame presidents identified Human Resources – Political – Symbolic combination. The ability to use multiple frames positively correlates to the length and range of experience of the presidents. As a result of this study, Bensimon (1987) recommended that the colleges create leadership teams composed of individuals with complementary frame orientations in instances where the president relied on only one or two frames in order to create a balanced approach to leadership.

Another study of college presidents studied 13 female presidents in research universities. Experience did not appear to correlate to a use of multiple frames; however, it was found that more experienced presidents were more likely to prefer the Human Resources or Symbolic frame (Welch, 2002).

Echols-Tobe (2000) studied leadership development among African American female college and university presidents collecting data through the LO(S)S (Bolman and Deal, 1990) and through personal interviews. It was determined that the vast majority of presidents had multiple frame orientations. Jordan (1999) also used the LO(S)S to examine the leadership frames of presidents of southern women's colleges. The presidents in this study were all found to use a combination of single, paired, or multiple frames; however, due to the small population (3), results were inconclusive. Tedesco (2004) investigated the leadership frames orientations of Iowa community college presidents and k-12 superintendents. The differences that he found between

the leadership orientations of these two groups existed only in the Symbolic frame which was more likely to be used by the community college presidents.

Cantu (1997) investigated the leadership orientation frame preferences of public college and university deans. The deans had either been nominated because of their effectiveness or randomly selected. The most frequently preferred leadership frame used by the deans was the Human Resources frame with the Symbolic frame being the least preferred. The difference between the two groups of deans chosen was in the use of the Political frame by the nominated deans. Experience was found to have a significant impact on the leadership orientation of the deans studied. The nominated deans used the Political frame more often than the randomly selected deans.

Englert (2008) investigated the leadership orientations of rural community college presidents serving appointed or elected independent governing boards using the LO(S)S. Significant differences were found between the presidents and board chairs as well as between presidents serving appointed and elected boards. Board chairs reported that the presidents used the Structural and Political frames more often than the presidents reported in their survey responses. The self-perception of the presidents was that the Human Resources and Symbolic frames were used more. It was also reported that presidents serving appointed boards employed the Human Resources frame more than presidents serving elected boards.

### **Superintendents**

Strickland (1992) also used the LO(S)S (Bolman and Deal, 1990) to survey superintendents and their colleagues in Tennessee regarding superintendent leadership and management style. Her results were supplied to the school system's human resources department to assist in understanding expectations related to the four frames.

She found that the Tennessee superintendents generally employed multiple frames with the Human Resources and Structural frames being the most preferred and the Symbolic frame the least. In her study of leadership orientations of selected female school superintendents, Flak (1998) also found that these women employed a multi-frame approach to leadership.

Harlow (1994) showed different results in her study of the leadership orientation frames of Washington state public school superintendents. She found that the superintendents rarely used more than one or two frames. More experienced superintendents used the Political frame most often in describing critical incidents but used the Human Resources frame when defining leadership. Less experienced superintendents described critical incidents using the Structural frame, but defined leadership using either the Structural or Human Resources frames. Superintendents rated themselves highest in Human Resources followed by Political, Structural, and Symbolic. Harlow indicates that employing all four frames produces a more complete understanding of organizations as well as the leadership perspective necessary for success. She recommended that leaders need to develop more sophisticated modes of thinking and concluded that frame orientation was not a predictor of leadership effectiveness. These findings were in contrast to previous findings by Bolman and Deal.

Using the Bolman and Deal LO(S)S, Faverty (1997) surveyed a random sample of 55 of 539 California small district superintendents and the entire population of 14 superintendents trained by the ACSA Small School District Superintendents' Academy. He found no significant differences in the leadership orientations of the superintendents

surveyed; however the Human Resources frame was shown to be the primary leadership orientation.

In another study of leadership orientations of superintendents, Moss (2002) examined district superintendents in a mid-western state. He found that while the superintendents perceived themselves as predominantly using the symbolic frame, their school board presidents saw the superintendents as being much more technical (structural frame).

Clisbee (2004) investigated the leadership styles of school superintendents specifically to determine if gender impacted leadership style. After surveying 100 superintendents in Massachusetts (76 male and 24 female), the author found that there were no significant differences in leadership based on gender.

An examination of the leadership orientation of Indiana public school superintendents, utilizing the LO(S)S, identified the Human Resources frame of leadership as their dominant frame while the Political frame was the least preferred. The study included demographic variables of gender, years of experience as a superintendent, school district setting, and initial level of training which were shown to have no significant effect on leadership frame choices (Ward, 2006).

### **Foreign Cultures**

Redman (1991) compared the leadership orientations of higher education administrators in five private Japanese institutions with the leadership orientations of higher education administrators in five private American institutions using the LO(S)S. She found that the frame rankings of both groups were identical; however, the means of the Americans surveyed were much higher. The differences between the two groups

may be due to cultural influences which could indicate that the two groups were more alike than different.

Using the *LO(S)S* (1990) Bolman and Bloch (1999) surveyed 788 managers and interviewed 37 managers in Venezuela in order to determine the validity of the Bolman and Deal leadership orientation frames in another culture. Their findings upheld the validity of the frames research. It was shown that Venezuelan managers tend to use one or two frames, preferably structural and human resources. There was some variability in the patterns of frame use.

Suzuki (1994) studied leadership orientation of Asian and other K-12 school principals using the *LO(S)S*. His research showed that females used the human resources frame more often than males. Further, foreign-born principals preferred the structural frame. Again, this study revealed a strong relationship between the use of multiple frames and leader effectiveness.

Bolman and Deal's *LO(S)S* and other instruments were used in this comparison study by Childress (1994). Japanese and American leaders in U.S. based automotive manufacturing industry were studied to determine leadership orientation frames. American participants viewed structural, political and symbolic frames as indicators of management effectiveness and the political frame as indicators of leadership effectiveness. They saw themselves as primarily employing the human resources frame, while others saw them as more political. The Japanese participants viewed the structural frame as a management indicator, but did not equate any frame with an indicator of leadership. The findings do not support previous Bolman and Deal studies, but do corroborate cultural differences between American and Japanese participants.

McCartney-Infelise (1999) studied the leadership orientations of school directors and compared them with those of small school district superintendents in California. This researcher surveyed directors of overseas American curriculum schools in the Mediterranean region of Europe as well as superintendents of small school districts in California. The findings showed that there was a preference for the structural leadership frame in female overseas directors and in the California superintendents. Both groups also scored highly in the human resources orientation. These findings were similar to those of Bolman and Bloch (1990) and Suzuki (1994).

Hodge (2003) investigated the cognitive frame orientations of school leaders in Belize and demographic factors that influenced their leadership. She determined that the pattern of frame use was the same for all principals in Belize. Human Resource frame was the first choice followed by the Structural and Symbolic frames. The Political frame was the least used. Demographic variables did not show a significant effect on leadership orientation frames choices.

### **School Administrators**

Burks (1992) applied organizational frame theory to determine the need for leadership development training in the Tennessee Board of Regents system by examining leadership orientations of effective school administrators. His results showed a need for leadership development in all frames. Further, he found no significant difference between genders.

Durocher (1995) also examined leadership orientations of effective school administrators using the *LO(S)S*. Durocher reported significant differences in the number of frames used by male and female administrators. Her findings showed the Human Resource frame as the dominant choice with Structural being the least chosen.

She also found that nearly half of the administrators surveyed used three to four of the Bolman and Deal frames. This use of multiple frames was concluded to be partially responsible for the success of these administrators.

A study of elementary principals by Johnson (1995) determined that these principals tend to view their organizations from more than one frame of reference. He also found the females in the study exhibited higher levels of complex thinking; however, there were no significant differences in the number or types of leadership frames in males and females. A similar study of elementary principals by Meade (1992) found that females exhibited a stronger tendency toward the Human Resource and Symbolic frames. Principal's gender was shown to have a significant impact on both of these frames. Leadership orientation was shown to be a stable characteristic which was not just a function of leadership training. Cote (1999) also performed an investigation of the leadership orientation frames of a stratified random sample of elementary school principals in Florida utilizing the LO(S)S. Socio-economic status and school enrollment were used for stratification purposes. Cote found a significant relationship between enrollment and frame categorization; gender and Human Resource frame use; gender and tenure. Similar to the findings of Bolman and Deal (1991a, 1991b, 1992a), she also found a significant relationship between managerial effectiveness and the use of the Structural and Political frames. Use of the Symbolic frame and Structural frame were significantly related to leadership effectiveness.

Martinez (1996) compared leadership orientations of elementary school principals who completed the California School Leadership Academy (CSLA) with California elementary school principals who had not participated in the training. Not only did the

CSLA training not make a significant difference in the leadership orientations of the principals, but gender age, ethnicity, location, size of district, and other demographic factors did not have a significant impact on the leadership orientations of these principals.

Miro (1993) studied the leadership orientation frames of high school principals. Defining frame as a particular vantage point one takes to view the world which impacts leadership and management, Miro found the dominant frame of the principals studied was Human Resources with Symbolic being the least. He also found no significant difference in gender. These finding concur with previous findings of Bolman and Deal (1991b).

Thompson (2000) explored the differences in gender between leadership orientation, leadership characteristics, and the perceived effectiveness of educational leaders by examining the responses of subordinates using Bolman and Deal's frames theory (1984, 1994, 1997) as well as Quinn's competing values model. He found that males and females were seen to be equally effective and their leadership characteristics were similar.

In her study, Rivers (1996) employed the *LO(S)S* to study all levels of principals. She found that more than half of the principals surveyed employed multiple frames while three-quarters of the high school principals used multiple frames. As in similar studies, Rivers found that the dominant frame used was Human Resources followed by Structural, Symbolic, and Political. She concluded that the use of multiple frames enhanced leadership and management effectiveness. No significance was found related to gender, age, or school level and the principals' leadership orientations.

## **Studies Addressing Specific Demographic Characteristics**

In reviewing the literature regarding the superintendency, many studies were found that address some of the demographic characteristics addressed in this study; other studies had few or none of these. The demographic characteristics studied in this research were age, gender, race, highest academic degree earned, experience in education, length of experience as a superintendent, size of district (number of students), and length of tenure as superintendent in current district.

### **Gender**

The demographic characteristic found to be most commonly addressed in the literature was gender. Ninety-six percent (96%) of the superintendents in the United States are male with the superintendency being the most male-dominated profession in our country (Bjork & Rodgers (1999). Bjork and Rodgers further reported that students see females as having higher morals. They are more oriented towards the instructional concerns of teachers and strive to provide environments conducive to learning. Females are also viewed as more democratic, demonstrating a more participative style of leadership (Bjork & Rodgers, 1999). Brand (1993) reported that the majority of female superintendents are elected. The bulk of the literature, including studies of business leaders, college presidents, superintendents, and school administrators, shows little or no differences in leadership orientation frame preference or effectiveness in regards to gender (Bolman & Deal, 1991a, 1991b; Burks, 1992; Clisbee, 1994; DeFrank-Cole, 2003; Guidry, 2007; Hodge, 2003; Johnson, 1995; Martinez, 1996; Miro, 1993; Rivers, 1996; Thompson, 2000; Ward, 2006). Hodge (2003) did note a difference in frame orientation by gender in the qualitative analysis of her study, but found no differences in the quantitative analysis. Davis (1996) did not find gender to be significant in

determining the primary orientation of principals; however, female principals were found to use all four frames more often while men used no more than two. There are, however, some studies that found gender to be a significant factor. These studies found that females were more likely to use multiple frames (Cote, 1999; Durocher, 1995; Meade, 1992; Suzuki, 1994). Meade (1992) found that females used the Human Resource Frame most frequently, while Cote (1999) determined that males were more likely to employ the Human Resources frame.

### **Age, Race, Education, and Experience**

Studies which included age, race, education, and experience were not as prevalent in the research. None of these factors was found to be significant in the majority of the studies reviewed (Durocher, 1995; Kelly, 1997; Martinez, 1996; Salley et al, 1979; Ward, 2006). Since the superintendency is a white, male dominated profession, study populations may not have yielded enough racial diversity for race to have been a factor. Experience was found to be a significant factor, or at least to have an effect on individual frame use (Cantu, 1997; Harlow, 1994; Welch, 2002). These studies determined that more experience had a significant impact on the use of the Political frame with more experienced leaders showing more political orientation than those with less experience.

Many studies found that superintendents are older and hold varying degrees (Brand, 1993; Shuh & Herrington, 1990; Waller & Richardson, 1997). A difference was found between appointed and elected superintendents with appointed superintendents generally having more and higher degrees than elected superintendents (Shuh & Herrington, 1990); however, elected superintendents had been in education and held their positions longer (Brand, 1993).

Cote (1999) determined that education was a significant factor in principal leadership orientation, finding that principals with less education were more likely to use the Structural frame than those with more education. She also determined that use of the symbolic frame decreased as principal's experience increased. Educational background was also found to be a significant influence on frame choice in a study of deans of women (Guidry, 2007).

### **Tenure and Size of District**

Snider (2006) found that superintendents from the largest school districts have the shortest tenure making it difficult for them to develop the loyalty of other district employees needed to achieve necessary goals. Waller and Richardson (1997) were also concerned with the tenure of superintendents but did not determine its significance as an influence on leadership orientation frame choices. Cote' (1999) reported a significant difference among mean school enrollments of principals using different frames, but there was no indication in the research whether this result would carry over to superintendents. In a study of self-perceived leadership styles of 18 permanently appointed African American women presidents of historically black colleges and universities, years of service as president was found to be related to the number of leadership orientation frames utilized.

### **Summary**

In this review of literature, research was presented to support investigation of the problem statement and resulting research questions. The problem addressed in this study was to determine if there is a difference between the leadership orientation frames of appointed and elected school district superintendents in the states of Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. Research regarding Bolman and Deal's frame

theory was presented. Examination of the use of structural, human resources, political, and symbolic frames by leaders in a variety of organizations revealed that leaders' abilities to define, analyze, and address situations from multiple perspectives enhances their abilities to solve problems.

Research addressing superintendent leadership was presented in section two. Research addressing the issue of appointed and elected superintendents was included in this section along with projections relating to modern leadership challenges confirmed the need for continuing to conduct investigations to support the superintendency.

The third section reviewed studies specifically related to Bolman and Deal's leadership orientation frame categorization based on use of the *Leadership Orientation (Self) Survey*. The emphasis in this section was to include available research on the leadership orientation frames of school district superintendents and those that addressed other demographic characteristics that will be included in the study. Results of these studies were presented and discussed (Bensimon, 1987; Bolman & Deal, 1991a, 1991b, 1992a; Childress, 1994; Clisbee, 2004; Cote, 1999; Durocher, 1995; Harlow, 1994; Johnson, 1995; Martinez, 1996; Meade, 1992; Miro, 1993; Redman, 1991; Rivers, 1996; Strickland, 1992; Suzuki, 1994).

In the final section studies which specifically address the demographic characteristics included in this study were reviewed. The following studies related to the demographics were presented and discussed: Gender: (Bjork & Rodgers, 1999; Bolman & Deal, 1991a, 1991b; Brand, 1993; Burks, 1992; Clisbee, 1994; Cote, 1999; DeFrank-Cole, 2003; Durocher, 1995, Guidry, 2007; Hodge, 2003; Johnson, 1995; Martinez, 1996; Meade, 1992; Miro, 1993; Rivers, 1996; Suzuki, 1994; Thompson,

2000; Ward, 2006): Age, Ethnicity, Education, and Experience: (Brand, 1993; Cantu, 1997; Cote, 1999; Durocher, 1995; Guidry, 2007; Harlow, 1994; Kelly, 1997; Martinez, 1996; Salley et al, 1979; Shuh & Herrington, 1990; Welch, 2002; Ward, 2006); Tenure and Size of District: (Cote, 1999; Snider, 2006; Waller & Richardson, 1997).

Review of the literature has shown that more research on this critical position is needed. Studies have shown that superintendents tend to use the Human Resource Frames more than the other three frames, but the studies also show that the use of Human Resource Frame is not necessarily associated with effective leadership, only effective management. The second most commonly used frame is Structural, also related to management effectiveness. The use of multiple frames has also been shown to increase leadership effectiveness, but many of the studies have reported little self-reported use of multiple frames. This could indicate a need for further training of superintendents and those wishing to be superintendents in the use of all four of the leadership orientation frames.

The review of literature also found few studies which addressed the method by which superintendents were selected, but does show that most of the United States has moved to systems requiring that all superintendents be appointed. There is a need to determine if there is a difference in the process used by superintendents in making decisions, and whether this process is linked to their method of selection.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

### **Procedure**

The purpose of this study was to examine the leadership orientation frame preferences (as developed by Bolman & Deal 1984, 1991c, 1997, 2008) of elected and appointed school district superintendents in the states of Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. Demographic characteristics of these superintendents, including age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree, method of selection, years of experience in education, years of experience as a superintendent, length of tenure in current district, and size of district (number of students) were also analyzed. The *Leadership Orientation (Self) Survey (LO(S)S)* (Bolman & Deal, 1990) was utilized to determine leadership orientation frame preferences of the superintendents participating in the study

### **Research Questions**

This study investigated the self-reported leadership orientation frame preferences in order to determine whether or not there were any differences in leadership frame use by the appointed and elected superintendents in the states of Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. This study also examined the effects of contextual factors (district size) and superintendent's individual characteristics (age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree, method of selection, years of experience in education, years of experience as superintendent, years of experience as superintendent in current district) on their frame use. This study focused on answering four questions:

- What are the self-reported leadership orientation frame preferences of the elected and appointed school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi?

- Is there a difference between self-reported leadership style preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents?
- Is there a difference in single or multi-frame preferences between elected and appointed school district superintendents?
- Is there a difference in leadership style preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents when considering selected demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree earned, experience in education, length of experience as a superintendent, length of tenure as superintendent in current district, and size of district)?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were created for the purpose of statistical analysis:

- There are no differences between self-reported leadership frame preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi.
- There are no differences in single or multi-frame preferences between elected and appointed school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi.
- Demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree earned, experience in education, length of experience as a superintendent, length of tenure as superintendent in current district, and size of district) have no statistically significant effect and/or predictive value on the self-reported leadership frame preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents.

### **Type of Study**

Survey methodology was used to investigate the research questions. Reactions to Bolman and Deal's (1990) *LO(S)S* Sections I, II, and III offered descriptive data. The survey included a demographic addendum, Section IV, which provided data concerning selected context and demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree, experience in education, length of experience as superintendent, length of tenure in current district, and size of district). The demographic addendum attached to the end of the survey did not influence responses to the previous sections.

## **Study Population**

The superintendents' associations of Alabama and Mississippi reported that there were 131 superintendents in Alabama (39 elected, 92 appointed) and 150 superintendents in Mississippi (65 elected, 85 appointed). According to the Florida Department of Education on-line services, there were 67 superintendents in Florida (44 elected, 23 appointed). This provided a population of 348 superintendents, 148 elected and 200 appointed, in the three states. As these were the only states having elected and appointed superintendents, all 348 were included in the survey.

## **Instrumentation**

The *Leadership Orientations (Self) Survey* (Bolman & Deal, 1990) instrument was used to identify superintendents' self-reported leadership style preferences in terms of the four frames introduced by Bolman and Deal. The instrument included 40 items, as well as subscales to represent each frame, and was divided into three sections.

Section I included 32 questions to be rated on a Likert type scale of 1 (Never) to 5 (Always) depending on how often each of the items applied to the respondent. The questions were divided equally among the Structural, Human Resource, Political, and Symbolic frames. There were two leadership dimensions associated with each of the four frames as shown in Table 3-1 (Bolman & Deal, 2001). There were four (4) subscales in this section with eight statements to assess each of the four frames. Items 1, 9, 17, and 25 were associated with the Analytic section of Structural Frame, while items 5, 13, 21, and 29 assessed the Organized component of the Structural Frame. The Supportive piece of the Human Resource Frame was assessed by items 2, 10, 18, and 26; and items 6, 14, 22, and 30 were associated with the Participative component of Human Resource. Political Frame was composed of Powerful (items 3, 11, 19, 27) and

Adroit (items 7, 15, 23, 31). Inspirational (items 4, 12, 20, and 28) and Charismatic (items 8, 16, 24, 32) made up the Symbolic Frame.

Table 3-1. Descriptions of dimensions of leadership of the *LO(S)S*

Frame (Dimensions)	Description
<b>Structural</b>	
Analytic	Thinks clearly and logically; approaches problems with facts and attends to detail. (Items 1, 9, 17, 25)
Organized	Develops clear goals and policies; holds people accountable for results. (Items 5, 13, 21, 29)
<b>Human Resource</b>	
Supportive	Concerned about the feelings of others; supportive and responsive. (Items 2, 10, 18, 26)
Participative	Fosters participation and involvement; listens and is open to new ideas. (Items 6, 14, 22, 30)
<b>Political</b>	
Powerful	Persuasive, high level of ability to mobilize people and resources; effective at building alliances and support. (Items 3, 11, 19, 27)
Adroit	Politically sensitive and skillful; a skillful negotiator in face of conflict and opposition. (Items 7, 15, 23, 31)
<b>Symbolic</b>	
Inspirational	Inspires others to loyalty and enthusiasm; communicates a strong sense of vision. (Items 4, 12, 20, 28)
Charismatic	Imaginative, emphasizes culture and values; is highly charismatic. (Items 8, 16, 24, 32)

Section II of the *LO(S)S* consisted of 6 forced-choice items which “produces a sharper differentiation among the frames because it does not permit rating someone high on everything” (Bolman & Deal, 1992a, p. 320). Section III, comprised of two items, asked the respondents to rate their own effectiveness as managers and as leaders. These two terms are purposely not defined. The ratings are compared with other leaders with comparable levels of experience and responsibility. The section employed an anchored scale with the lowest score (1) being the bottom 20% and the highest score (5) being the top 20%. Bolman and Deal (1992a) expected to see a high

correlation between the two measures, and found that they are typically between .75 and .85.

Section IV is a demographic addendum including age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree earned, experience in education, years of experience as a superintendent, years of experience as superintendent in current district, and size of district. The resulting data was used to determine whether these characteristics have a significant influence on the self-reported leadership frame preferences of the responding superintendents.

In the current study, participants were asked to respond to all three sections of the *LO(S)S*; however, only the responses to Section I were used to identify frame use. The items in Section II were more appropriate for determining variance within people rather than between them (Hodge, 2003).

### **Reliability of the Leadership Orientations (Self) Survey**

Bolman and Deal (2004) reported reliability statistics for the *LO(S)S* based on 1309 colleague ratings of managers in education and business. It should be noted that the alpha coefficients for items in Section I were consistently higher than the reliability coefficients for Section II. Chronbach alpha coefficients for all items were reported in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2. Reliability of the Leadership Orientations (Self) Survey

Frame	Coefficient alpha (Section I)	Coefficient alpha (Section II)
Structural	.92	.84
Human Resource	.93	.84
Political	.91	.79
Symbolic	.93	.84

## **Validity of the Leadership Orientations (Self) Survey**

Bolman and Deal (1991a, 1991b, 1992a) examined the validity of the *LO(S)S* using regression analysis. They determined that the self-rating of managerial and leadership effectiveness (Section III) was predicted by the four frames. A minimum of 66% of the variance in managerial effectiveness and 74% in leadership effectiveness were predicted. Bolman and Deal also concluded that those variables that were associated with managerial effectiveness were almost the opposite of those associated with leadership effectiveness. The structural frame was determined the best predictor for management effectiveness and the worst for leadership effectiveness. The symbolic frame proved to be the best predictor for leadership effectiveness and the worst for managerial effectiveness.

Bolman and Deal (1991a) employed factor analysis to indicate the internal consistency of frame scores of the *LO(S)S*. They deleted six of the 32 items that showed loading factors of less than .50 and retained all of those with .50 and above. It should be noted that the original instrument with 32 questions has been used successfully in many other studies (Cote, 1999; Durocher, 1995; Harlow, 1994; Hodge, 2003; Johnson, 1995; Rivers, 1996; Suzuki, 1994).

### **Data Collection**

Permission was requested from Dr. Lee Bolman and Dr. Terrence Deal to use the *LO(S)S* in this study. A copy of the findings of the study as well as the actual raw data will be made available to them.

The Alabama, Mississippi and Florida superintendents' associations were contacted and asked to endorse the study to encourage superintendents' responses to the survey. No response was received from either the Alabama or Mississippi

associations. A phone call from the president of the Florida Association of School Superintendents was received indicating that he would not provide endorsement for any studies. The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) was also contacted for an endorsement, and an endorsement of the study was received from Dr. Paul Houston, Executive Director of the AASA.

Packets including a cover letter with endorsement from AASA, a copy of the *LO(S)S*, and demographic addendum were mailed to the 348 school superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi in July 2007. In addition to the paper surveys, a website was included for those superintendents who preferred to respond electronically. Superintendents were also sent the survey via email when requested. Summaries of the completed study will be sent to any superintendent who expressed interest. Follow-up emails were also sent in an effort to increase response rate. Responses were considered confidential.

### **Data Analysis**

Each item response for Section I of the *LO(S)S* was scored based on the respondents' rating of how often each behavior item was true, using a five-point scale. Scores for the eight items measuring each frame were added and then divided by 8 to provide a mean score that reflected the superintendent's leadership behavior on that frame.

Leadership orientation studies that have used only the questions in Sections I and III to investigate leader's leadership orientation frames have used the mean of the eight items on each of the four subscales in Section I to identify frame use (Durocher, 1995; Hodge, 2005; Johnson, 1995; Rivers, 1996; Suzuki, 1994). The highest possible mean was five and the lowest was zero. For the purposes of this study, the scores for each of

the four frames were computed by finding the average rating of each of the subscales (eight items per subscale) in Section I. A mean score of 4.0 or greater was used to indicate frame use often or always; frames with scores lower than 4.0 were considered to be used less often (Durocher, 1995; Hodge, 2003).

The quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 16.0. Descriptive statistics, analysis of variance, and Chi-square were computed, and operations of regression analysis were conducted. The self-reported leadership frame preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents were compared on each of the four frames (Structural, Human Resource, Political, and Symbolic). One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), which focused on a comparison of the variability within groups and between groups, was computed on each of the four frames to determine whether statistically significant differences existed between the leadership orientation frame preferences of appointed and elected superintendents. The ANOVA yielded a value of  $F_{\text{observed}}$  on each variable which was compared with  $F_{\text{critical}}$  using a level of significance of  $p < .05$ .

Another focus of this study was whether or not there was a difference between appointed and elected in the use of single or multiple frames. Chi Square was used to determine if statistically significant differences were discovered between the groups of appointed and elected superintendents.

The inquiry of this dissertation also focused on discovering what contextual and personal characteristics were related to superintendents' frame use; therefore, multiple regression analyses were also used in this study. Multiple linear regressions were used to analyze the strength of the relationship between the independent variables and a

single dependent variable. For this analysis, the dependent variables were the four frames: Structural, Human Resources, Political, and Symbolic as measured by Section I of the *Leadership Orientation (Self) Survey*. The independent variables were the demographic characteristics and their various categories after collinearity diagnostics. The methods of selection (appointed, elected) were used as selection variables.

A general linear regression model was used to examine the relationship between superintendent's scores on specific leadership orientation frames and individual contextual and demographic variables. The frame scores were used as a continuous dependent variable with the independent variables of age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree earned, experience in education, length of experience as a superintendent, length of tenure, and size of district while controlling for method of selection. Collinearity, or close correlations among independent variables, is always a concern in Multiple Regression; consequently, collinearity diagnostics were run to determine collinearity among variables. The first regression was performed using the Structural Frame as the dependent variable and appointed as the method of selection. This was followed by another regression using the elected method of selection. The other models followed the same pattern changing frame types and methods of selection. These eight models were estimated to address the fourth and final research question. Model fit was judged on the basis of the magnitude of the model  $R^2$  and the statistical significance of the associated  $F$  value. All statistical tests were conducted at  $p = <.05$ . Multiple linear regression was used by the researcher to analyze whether superintendent frame preference could be predicted by one or more of the demographic variables included in the survey.

## Summary

Chapter 3 described the method used to investigate the leadership orientation frames used by school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. The *Leadership Orientation (Self)* Survey and demographic addendum were used to collect data. Population demographics, data collection techniques, as well data analysis procedures were presented in this chapter. Chapter 4 presents the results from the survey instrument as well as the data analysis and interpretation in view of the research questions and hypotheses. Chapter 5 presents conclusions, implications of the study, and suggestions for further research.

## CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to examine the leadership orientation preferences (as developed by Bolman & Deal, 1984, 1991c, 1997) of elected and appointed school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. Demographic characteristics of these superintendents, including age, gender, race, education, method of selection, years of experience in education, years of experience as a superintendent, size of district (number of students), and length of tenure in the district were also analyzed. The *Leadership Orientation (Self) Survey (LO(S)S)* (Bolman & Deal, 1990) was employed to determine leadership orientation frame preferences of the superintendents included in the study. Four research questions framed and structured this study:

- What are the self-reported leadership orientation frame preferences of the elected and appointed school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi?
- Is there a difference between self-reported leadership style preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents?
- Is there a difference in single or multi-frame preferences between elected and appointed school district superintendents?
- Is there a difference in leadership style preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents when considering selected demographic variables, (i.e., age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree earned, experience in education, length of experience as a superintendent, length of tenure as superintendent in current district, and size of district)?

Chapter 4 presents the results of the analysis of the quantitative data. The results are presented based on the research questions. First, descriptive data are presented. These include the demographic characteristics as well as descriptive statistics and comparisons of participants' espoused use of the cognitive leadership frames. Next,

analyses and results of analysis of variance and linear regressions are presented that were used to examine relationships between variables and the self-reported leadership orientation frames.

Respondent superintendent's leadership orientation frames were determined by summarizing their responses to Section I of the LO(S)S (Bolman and Deal, 1990). Scores on leadership and management effectiveness were taken from superintendent responses to Section III, but were not used in determining preferences in leadership orientation frames. Demographic characteristics of superintendent respondents were reported from responses to Section IV the demographic addendum.

Superintendent demographic data were grouped and reported using four (4) categories for age, ethnicity, years completed in education, total years as superintendent, years as superintendent in current district, and the FTE enrollment in the district; and three (3) categories for highest degree earned.

A total of 348 *Leadership Orientations (Self) Survey* instruments were distributed to the entire population of school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. One hundred forty-five (145) questionnaires were returned either by U.S. mail or electronically, resulting in a return rate of 41.7%. Of the returned questionnaires, 89 (61.4%) were from appointed school district superintendents and 56 (38.6%) from elected school district superintendents. Participation rate for appointed school district superintendents was 44.5%; participation rate for elected school district superintendents was 37.8%. Participants from each state represented approximately 40% of their respective state's district superintendent population (Alabama 38.3%; Florida 44.7%; Mississippi 42.06%). The size of participating school districts ranged

from 170 to 128,000 student FTE's (full time equivalence), with a median district size of 3,327 student FTE's.

## **Descriptive Data**

### **Demographics**

Table 4-1 is a summary of the number and percentage of superintendent characteristic responses as well as a breakdown of appointed and elected superintendents according to the variables of age, gender, and ethnicity.

Superintendents were asked to identify their ages according to the following ranges: (a) 25-34, (b) 35-44, (c) 45-54, and (d) 55 and over. Ethnicity was also identified according to four categories: (a) African American, (b) Caucasian, (c) Hispanic, and (d) Other.

Data on age, gender and ethnicity revealed that 63.4% of the superintendents were age 55 and over with only just 4.1% within the ages of 35-44. No superintendents were reported between 25-34 years. Most of the superintendents were male (77.2%) and Caucasian (82.8%).

Superintendent answers to the question regarding highest academic degree were limited to (a) masters, (b) specialist, and (c) doctorate. Only two (2) responses, appointed and elected, identified the method of selection to the superintendency.

Survey participants were asked to indicate both their total years as a superintendent as well as the total number of complete years as superintendent in their current district.

Response categories for these items were: (a) less than one year, (b) 1-5 years, (c) 6-15 years, and (d) 16 or more years. Superintendents were also asked to indicate their total number of complete years in education based on four (4) categories: (a) 1-5; (b) 6-15; (c) 16-20; or (d) 21 or more.

Table 4-1. Age, gender, and ethnicity of superintendents N = 145

Characteristic	Frequency	%	Appointed (89)	Elected (56)
<b>Age</b>				
25-34	0	0	0	0
35-44	6	4.1	6	0
45-54	47	32.4	33	14
55 +	92	63.4	50	42
<b>Gender</b>				
Female	33	22.8	24	9
Male	112	7.2	65	50
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
African Am.	21	14.5	14	7
Caucasian	120	82.8	72	48
Hispanic	3	2.1	2	1
Other	1	.7	1	0

Responses to the item regarding number of full time equivalency (FTE) students enrolled in a district were free responses which were placed into four (4) categories for statistical purposes. These data, reported in Table 4-2, indicate that 49.7% of the respondents held doctoral degrees, while 31% held master's degrees. Appointed superintendents comprised 61.4% of the respondents; 38.6% of the superintendents were elected to their positions. The vast majority of superintendents (93.1%) had spent 21 or more years in the field of education and 48% had served as superintendents for six or more years. School district sizes were divided into four categories to coincide with the AASA's 2000 study (Glass, Bjork, Brunner, 2000) for the purpose of reporting results. (Category 1 contains school districts with a student FTE of less than 300; category 2 districts serve a student population between 300-2,999; category 3 includes FTE student enrollments of 3000-24,999; and category 4 districts have student FTE enrollments of 25,000 or more.) This study included superintendents from three different states: 51 from Alabama (20.7%), 30 from Florida (35.2%) and 51 from

Mississippi (42.1%). Three (3) respondents failed to report the state in which they currently served as superintendent.

Table 4-2. Highest degree, method of selection, years as superintendent, years in current district, experience in education, district size, state (N = 145)

Superintendents	Frequency	%	Appointed (89)	Elected (56)
<b>Highest degree</b>				
Masters	45	31.0	12	33
Specialist	28	19.3	16	12
Doctorate	72	49.7	61	11
<b>Method of selection</b>				
Appointed	89	61.4		
Elected	56	38.6		
<b>Years in education</b>				
1-5	0	0	0	0
6-15	0	0	0	0
16-20	10	6.9	9	1
21+	135	93.1	80	55
<b>Years as superintendent</b>				
<1	13	9.0	10	3
1-5	59	40.7	38	21
6-15	60	41.4	32	28
16+	11	7.6	8	3
No response	2	1.4	1	1
<b>Years superintendent in current district</b>				
Less than one	13	9.0	9	4
1-5	72	49.7	53	19
6-15	57	39.3	26	31
16+	2	1.4	1	1
No response	1	.6	0	1
<b>Size of district</b>				
Group 1 (<300)	1	.7	1	0
Group 2 (300-2999)	63	44.1	42	21
Group 3 (3000-24999)	65	45.5	35	30
Group 4 (>24999)	14	9.8	10	4
No response	2	1.4	1	1
<b>State</b>				
Alabama	51	35.9	40	11
Florida	30	21.1	12	18
Mississippi	61	42.9	35	26
Not identified	3	2.1	2	1

## Self-rated Effectiveness as Manager and Leader

This study included opportunities for respondents to indicate self-ratings in the areas of effectiveness both as managers and leaders (Table 4-3). There were five possible ratings, ranging from 1 (Bottom 20%) to 5 (Top 20%) in both areas. The mean self-rating of participating superintendents on management effectiveness was 4.38 (SD .68). The mean self-rating of appointed superintendents on management effectiveness was 4.36 (SD .71), while the mean self-rating of elected superintendents was 4.42 (SD .63). Self-ratings on effectiveness as a leader were even higher, with a mean of the total superintendents (4.52, SD.63). The mean of appointed superintendents in leadership effectiveness was 4.56 (SD .64) with elected superintendents reporting a mean of 4.45 (SD .60). There were no significant differences between the self-ratings of appointed and elected superintendents in either manager or leader effectiveness (Table 4-4). These self-ratings were not used in computing respondents' leadership orientation frame preferences.

Table 4-3. Effectiveness as manager (M) and leader (L)

Self-Rating	n (M)	% (M)	n (L)	% (L)
Below middle	0	0	1	.7
Middle 20%	16	11.0	7	4.8
Above middle	56	38.6	52	35.9
Top 20%	71	49.0	83	57.2
No response	2	1.4	2	1.4

Table 4-4. Effectiveness self-rating: Manager (M) and leader (L) by selection method

Method	n (M)	Mean	SD	t	p	n (L)	Mean	SD	t	p
All	144	4.38	.68			144	4.52	.63		
Appointed	88	4.36	.71			88	4.56	.64		
Elected	56	4.42	.63			56	4.45	.60		
				.95	.17				47	.32

$p < .05$

## Participants' Use of Cognitive Frames

### **What are the self-reported leadership orientation frame preferences of the elected and appointed school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi?**

Section I of the LO(S)S was used to determine the leadership orientation frame preferences of participating superintendents. Frame use was determined by adding the eight (8) item scores in pertinent sections and dividing by eight (8). This method of scoring was selected because the current study is specifically investigating the differences between elected and appointed superintendents. The method which includes Section II in determining frame use is preferred for determining differences within groups (Hodge, 2003). Structural Frame use was determined by adding item scores for Analytic (items 1, 9, 17, 25) and Organized (items 5, 13, 21, 26). Responses on Supportive (items 2, 10, 18, 26) and Participative (items 6, 14, 22, 30) determined Human Resource Frame preference. Scores on Powerful (items 3, 11, 19, 27) and Adroit (items 7, 15, 23, 31) were used to determine Political Frame, and scores on Inspirational (items 4, 12, 20, 28) and Charismatic (items 8, 16, 24, and 32) were determiners for Symbolic Frame.

Tables 4-5 and 4-6 summarize descriptive data of the four frames used by elected, appointed and combined superintendents. Respondents' scores could range from 1.00 to 5.00 on each item. A mean score of 4.00 or above indicated that participants used that frame often or always. Scores of less than 4.00 indicated that the frame was used less frequently (Durocher, 1995; Hodge, 2003).

Table 4-5 shows that the mean score on the Human Resource Frame (3.78) was the highest frame score for all superintendents participating in this study. Scores ranged from 2.5 to 4.57. The Structural Frame received a mean score of 3.49 (Range

2.14-5.29), and the Symbolic Frame received a 3.39 (range 2.07-4.43). The Political Frame received the lowest mean score (3.23) with a range of 2.21-4.50.

**Is there a difference between self-reported leadership style preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents?**

**Research hypothesis: There are no differences between self-reported leadership frame preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi.**

This hypothesis was rejected as a significant difference was found in the self-reported leadership frame preferences of elected and appointed superintendents in the use of the Human Resource Frame. The data below support the rejection of this hypothesis.

Table 4-6 documents that 9 superintendents (6 appointed; 3 elected) showed a preference for the Structural Frame. The Human Resource Frame was preferred by 32 superintendents (15 appointed; 17 elected). The Political Frame was identified by 3 superintendents (1 appointed; 2 elected), while the Symbolic Frame was selected by 6 superintendents (4 appointed, 2 elected).

Table 4-5. Superintendent frame preference (mean and standard deviation) (N = 145)

Frames	M	SD	Minimum	Maximum
ST	3.49	.53	2.14	5.29*
HR	3.78	.41	2.50	4.57
PO	3.23	.47	2.21	4.50
SY	3.39	.49	2.07	4.43

ST = Structural, HR = Human Resource, PO = Political, SY = Symbolic

\*Maximum >5.0 caused by invalid response

Table 4-6. Superintendent frame preference (\*n = number of valid responses)

Frame	*n	Users	%	Appointed	Elected
ST	134	9	6	6	3
HR	134	32	22.1	15	17
PO	135	3	2	1	2
SY	136	6	4	4	2

The means and standard deviations for appointed and elected superintendents in the preference for each frame are listed in Table 4-7, as well as the totals and standard deviations for both. Results of the analysis of variance between groups test results are presented in Table 4-8. A significant difference,  $F(1, 132) = 4.11; p < .05$ , was revealed among appointed and elected superintendent self-reported preferences for the Human Resource Frame. The analysis of variance reported no significant differences between appointed and elected superintendents in self-reported preferences for the other three frames.

Table 4-7. Superintendent frame preferences (M) by selection method

Frame	n (number of responses)	Method	Mean	SD
ST	82	Appointed	3.51	.50
	52	Elected	3.46	.58
	134	All	3.49	.53
HR	82	Appointed	3.73	.43
	52	Elected	3.87	.36
	134	All	3.78	.41
PO	83	Appointed	3.23	.44
	52	Elected	3.33	.53
	135	All	3.27	.47
SY	84	Appointed	3.40	.47
	52	Elected	3.37	.52
	136	All	3.39	.49

Data in Table 4-9 show that of the superintendents responding, 60 (41%) showed no frame preference. This means that none of their self-reported frame scores reached the 4.0 mean required for reporting frame preference. Fifty (50) superintendents (35%) demonstrated a preference for using one frame, and 32 (22%) of those preferred the Human Resource Frame. The use of two frames was reported by 11 of the respondents (8%). The most common two-frame combination was that of the Structural and Human



**Research hypothesis: There are no differences in single or multi-frame preferences between elected and appointed school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi.**

This hypothesis is accepted as no statistically significant differences were found in single or multi-frame preferences between elected and appointed school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. A statistically significant difference was found in no preference between elected and appointed superintendents in these three states. The data below support the acceptance of this hypothesis.

Further statistical study by method of selection (Table 4-10) showed that 47% of appointed superintendents and 32% of elected superintendents indicated no frame preference. Twenty-six (29%) of the appointed superintendents preferred a single frame, while 43% of the elected superintendents preferred a single frame. The most preferred frame was Human Resource with 17% of appointed and 30% of elected superintendents indicating this preference. The use of two frames was preferred by 10% of the appointed superintendents and 4% of elected superintendents. Preference for three frames was indicated by 2% of the appointed superintendents and 8% of the elected superintendents. None of the appointed superintendents indicated a preference for the use of all 4 frames; 7% of elected superintendents preferred the use of all of the frames. In summary, 12% of the appointed superintendents and 18% of the elected superintendents responding indicated a preference for the use of multiple frames.

A Chi-square test was used to determine whether or not there was a difference between the use of no preference, single preference, and multi-frame preference by appointed and elected superintendents. The test for no frame preference showed a

statistically significant difference of .037. The results of the Chi-square procedure are reported in Table 4-11.

Table 4-10. Single and multiple frame preferences by method (N=145)

Frame Preference	N	%	Appointed	%	Elected	%
None	60	41	42	47	18	32
Single	50	35	26	29	24	43
Structural	9	6	6	7	3	4
Human Resource	32	22	15	17	17	30
Political	3	2	1	1	2	4
Symbolic	6	4	4	5	2	4
Multiple Frames	21	15	11	12	10	18
ST+HR	7	5	6	7	1	2
ST+PO	1	1	0	0	1	2
HR+SY	3	2	3	3	0	0
ST+HR+SY	1	1	1	1	0	0
ST+HR+PO	2	1	0	0	2	4
ST+PO+SY	1	1	1	1	0	0
HR+PO+SY	2	1	0	0	2	4
All Frames	4	3	0	0	4	7
Missing	14	10	10	10	4	7

Table 4-11. Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) of no preference, single and multi-frame use by appointed and elected superintendents (N = 145, Missing = 14)

Frame	Appointed	Elected	Total	$\chi^2$ (Pearson 2-sided)
None	42	18	60	.037*
Single	26	24	50	.127
Multiple	11	10	21	.418

$p < .05$

### Multiple Regression

Collinearity is always a concern when conducting multiple regressions. Prior to performing the multiple regression procedures, diagnostic measures were conducted to determine the relationships between the eight explanatory variables (age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree earned, experience in education, length of experience as a superintendent, years as superintendent in current district, and size of

district). The greatest concerns of collinearity were between: (a) Age and Years as Superintendent (-.297); (b) Years in Education (-.438) and Gender (-.438); (c) Years as Superintendent in Current District and Total Years as Superintendent (-.712). Some degree of collinearity also existed between Gender and Highest Academic Degree (.329), Total Years as Superintendent, and Years as Superintendent in Current District (.745). Due to the number of respondents and the fact that participants were primarily white males, some collinearity had to be tolerated; however, in order to reduce the collinearity, the demographic characteristics were broken into smaller variables utilizing the responses available on the survey. The independent variables selected for use in the regressions were: Age (1, 2, 3, 4), Ethnicity (1, 2, 3, 4), Gender, Highest Academic Degree (1, 2, 3), Years as Superintendent (1, 2, 3, 4), and District Size (1, 2, 3, 4). Years in Education and Years in Current District were not selected for use in the regressions due to collinearity between these variables and Age and Years as Superintendent. The dependent variables for the regressions were the four frames (Structural, Human Resource, Political, and Symbolic) and the selection variable was Method of Selection (Appointed, Elected). The .05 level of significance was used for each model. Eight regression models were tested to investigate the influence of these explanatory variables on each of the leadership orientation frames (dependent variable).

**Is there a difference in leadership style preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents when considering selected demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree earned, experience in education, length of experience as a superintendent, length of tenure as superintendent in current district, and size of district)?**

**Demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree earned, experience in education, length of experience as a superintendent, length of tenure as superintendent in current district, and size of district) have no statistically significant effect and/or predictive value on the self-reported**

## **leadership frame preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents.**

This hypothesis is rejected as significant effects and/or predictive values on the self-reported leadership frame preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents were found. The data below supports the rejection of this hypothesis.

The Structural Frame preference by Appointed superintendents was the first model followed by Structural Frame by Elected. The other models were similar using each frame separately twice, once by each method of selection. The resulting multiple linear regression output was reported using only three output components (Model Summary, ANOVA, and Coefficients) that were used to interpret the results.

The first regression model consisted of the dependent variable, Structural Frame, the independent or predictor variables, and the selection variable (method of selection-appointed). Results showed that the  $R^2$  of .266 was statistically significant,  $F(13,67) = 1.87$ ,  $p = .050$  (Table 4-11). This model indicated that together the demographic variables accounted for 26.6% of the variance in scores on the Structural Frame reported by the appointed superintendents. Also included in Table 4-11, the second regression model included Structural Frame, the independent variables, and selection variable, (method of selection-elected). Results of this model indicated that the  $R^2$  of .287 was not statistically significant,  $F(11,38) = 1.389$ ,  $p = .218$ .

Tables 4-12 and 4-13 show the regression coefficients of each of the independent variables included in the two Structural models. In the first Structural model (Appointed), the independent variables Gender (Beta = .295,  $p = .020$ ), Ethnicity1 (Beta = .327,  $p = .008$ ), and DistSize 4 (Beta = -.274,  $p = .023$ ) were all statistically significant. DistSize 4 contributes negatively to the variance. In the second Structural

model (Elected) Eth1 (Beta = .314,  $p = .041$ ) was found to be statistically significant.

Eth1, African Americans was found to be statistically significant in both Structural models.

Table 4-11. Summary of Multiple Regression Analyses for Variables Related to Superintendents' Use of the Structural Frame

Model	R <sup>2</sup>	SS	df	MS	F	p
1. Structural (appointed)	13.67					
Regression		5.377	13	.414	1.87	.050*
Residual		14.821	67	.221		
Total		20.198	80			
2. Structural (elected)	.287					
Regression		4.779	11	.434	1.389	.218
Residual		11.887	38	.313		
Total		16.666	49			

$p = <.05$

Table 4-12. Summary of multiple regression coefficients for model 1 Structural (appointed)

Variables	B	SE	Beta	t	p
(Constant)	2.929	.326		12.399	.000
Gender	.336	.140	.295	2.390	.020*
Age2	-.055	.229	-.029	-.241	.810
Age3	-.062	.118	-.060	-.527	.600
Eth1	.476	.173	.327	2.749	.008*
Eth3	.630	.357	.196	1.763	.083
Degree1	-.135	.173	-.089	-.778	.439
Degree2	-.107	.163	-.086	-.660	.512
YRSup1	.266	.188	.168	1.418	.161
YRSup3	.001	.127	.001	.008	.994
YRSup4	.270	.207	.152	1.302	.197
DistSize1	-.102	.490	-.022	-.207	.836
DistSize3	-.064	.126	-.062	-.503	.616
DistSize4	-.436	.187	-.274	-2.327	.023*

$p = <.05$

The third regression model consisted of the dependent variable, Human Resource Frame, the independent variables, and the selection variable (method of selection-appointed). Results showed that the R<sup>2</sup> of .140 was not statistically significant,  $F(14, 66) = .767$ ,  $p = .699$  (Table 4-14). This model indicated that together the demographic

variables accounted for only 14% of the variance in scores on the Human Resource Frame reported by the appointed superintendents. Also included in Table 4-14, the fourth regression model consisted of the dependent variable, Human Resource Frame, the independent variables, and the selection variable (method of selection-elected).

Table 4-13. Summary of multiple regression coefficients for model 2 Structural (elected)

Variables	B	SE	Beta	t	p
(Constant)	3.366	.520		6.472	.000
Gender	-.110	.243	-.073	-.454	.653
Age4	.398	.204	.309	1.951	.058
Eth1	.605	.286	.314	2.113	.041*
Eth3	-.544	.580	-.132	-.937	.355
Degree2	.098	.224	.070	.439	.633
Degree3	-.081	.228	-.058	-.354	.725
YRSup1	.087	.527	.036	.164	.870
YRSup2	-.211	.183	-.177	-1.155	.255
YRSup4	-.055	.369	-.022	-.148	.883
DistSize2	.080	.193	.068	.417	.679
DistSize4	-.133	.450	-.055	-.295	.769

$p = <.05$

Table 4-14. Summary of multiple regression analyses for variables related to superintendents' use of the Human Resource Frame

Model	R <sup>2</sup>	SS	df	MS	F	p
3. Human Resource (appointed)	.140					
Regression		2.471	14	.177	.767	.699
Residual		15.183	66	.230		
Total		17.654	80			
4. Human Resource (elected)	.323					
Regression		4.032	11	.367	1.649	.124
Residual		8.448	38	.222		
Total		12.480	49			

$p = <.05$

Results of this regression model showed that the R<sup>2</sup> of .323 was not statistically significant,  $F(11, 38) = 1.649$ ,  $p = .124$ .

Tables 4-15 and 4-16 show the regression coefficients of each of the independent variables included in the two Human Resource models. None of the independent variables was found to be statistically significant in the first Human Resource model;

however, in the second Human Resource model Degree 3 (Beta = -.403,  $p = .016$ ).

Degree3 (doctorate) contributes a negative 40.3% to the variance shown in the model.

DistSize 2 (300-2,999 FTE) is not quite considered significant ( $p = .055$ ), and also makes a negative contribution.

Table 4-15. Summary of multiple regression coefficients for Model 1 Human Resource Frame (appointed)

Variables	B	SE	Beta	t	$p$
(Constant)	.273	.241		1.132	.262
Gender	.025	.143	.024	.176	.860
Age2	.122	.234	.069	.524	.602
Age3	-.076	.121	-.079	-.628	.532
Eth1	.310	.185	.219	1.677	.098
Eth3	-.213	.366	-.071	-.581	.563
Eth4	-.203	.521	-.048	-.390	.698
Degree1	.107	.177	.075	.605	.547
Degree2	-.063	.170	-.051	-.369	.713
YRSup1	.295	.192	.199	1.536	.129
YRSup3	-.038	.132	-.039	-.289	.773
YRSup4	.076	.202	.049	.377	.708
DistSize1	-.286	.500	-.068	-.571	.570
DistSize3	-.083	.129	-.086	-.644	.522
DistSize4	-.006	.191	-.004	-.033	.974

$p = <.05$

The fifth regression model consisted of the dependent variable (Political Frame), the independent variables, and the selection variable (method of selection-appointed). Results showed that the  $R^2$  of .316 was statistically significant,  $F(14, 67) = 2.208$ ,  $p = .016$  (Table 4-17). This model indicated that together the demographic variables accounted for 31.6% of the variance in scores on the Political Frame reported by the appointed superintendents. Also included in Table 4-17, the sixth regression model consisted of the dependent variable, Political Frame, the independent variables, and the selection variable (method of selection-elected). Results of the second Political

regression model showed that the  $R^2$  of .215 was not statistically significant,  $F(11, 38) = .946, p = .509$ .

Table 4-16. Summary of multiple regression coefficients for Model 2 Human Resource Frame (elected)

Variables	B	SE	Beta	t	$p$
(Constant)	.965	.438		2.201	.034
Gender	-.100	.205	-.077	-.487	.629
Age4	-.060	.072	-.054	-.348	.730
Eth1	.388	.241	.233	1.609	.116
Eth3	.294	.489	.082	.601	.552
Degree2	-.147	.189	-.122	-.778	.441
Degree3	-.487	.192	-.403	-2.532	.016*
YRSup1	.295	.445	.140	.663	.511
YRSup2	-.098	.154	-.095	-.636	.529
YRSup4	.036	.311	.017	.116	.908
DistSize2	-.321	.162	-.312	-1.976	.055
DistSize4	-.448	.380	-.213	-1.179	.246

$p < .05$

Table 4-17. Summary of multiple regression analyses for variables related to superintendents' use of the Political Frame

Model	$R^2$	SS	df	MS	$F$	$p$
5. Political (appointed)	.316					
Regression		.616	14	.044	2.208	.016*
Residual		1.335	67	.020		
Total		1.951	81			
6. Political (elected)	.215					
Regression		1.720	11	.156	.946	.509
Residual		6.280	38	.165		
Total		8.000	49			

$p < .05$

Tables 4-18 and 4-19 show the regression coefficients of each of the independent variables included in the two Political Frame models. In the first Political Frame model the independent variable Eth3 (Beta =  $-.486, p = .000$ ). The variable Eth3 (Hispanic) contributes negatively to the variance in this model. In the second Political Frame model, Age4 (55 and over) was found to be statistically significant (Beta =  $.168, p = .024$ ).

Table 4-18. Summary of multiple regression coefficients for Model 1 Political Frame (appointed)

Variables	B	SE	Beta	t	<i>p</i>
(Constant)	-.032	.071		-.458	.649
Gender	.032	.042	.091	.764	.448
Age2	-.057	.069	-.097	-.830	.410
Age3	-.054	.036	-.171	-1.524	.132
Eth1	-.023	.052	-.051	-.442	.660
Eth3	.486	.107	.486	4.533	.000*
Eth4	.055	.153	.039	.356	.723
Degree1	-.024	.052	-.052	-.468	.641
Degree2	.020	.149	.052	.411	.682
YRSup1	.016	.056	.032	.276	.783
YRSup3	.029	.038	.091	.769	.444
YRSup4	-.023	.060	-.044	-.385	.701
DistSize1	-.062	.148	-.044	-.418	.677
DistSize3	.035	.038	.109	.912	.365
DistSize4	-.062	.056	-.132	-1.101	.275

*p* = <.05

Table 4-19. Summary of multiple regression coefficients for Model 2 Political Frame (elected)

Variables	B	SE	Beta	t	<i>p</i>
(Constant)	.245	.378		.647	.521
Gender	-.119	.176	-.114	-.672	.506
Age4	.347	.148	.390	2.343	.024*
Eth1	.224	.208	.168	1.078	.288
Eth3	-.355	.422	-.124	-.841	.405
Degree2	-.053	.163	-.055	-.328	.744
Degree3	.069	.166	.071	.415	.680
YRSup1	.011	.383	.006	.028	.978
YRSup2	-.038	.133	-.046	-.284	.778
YRSup4	-.388	.268	-.230	-1.445	.157
DistSize2	-.131	.140	-.159	-.938	.354
DistSize4	-.180	.327	-.107	-.551	.585

*p* = <.05

The seventh regression model consisted of the dependent variable (Symbolic Frame), the independent variables, and the selection variable (method of selection-appointed). Results showed that the  $R^2$  of .393 was statistically significant,  $F(14, 68) = 3.138$ ,  $p = .001$  (Table 4-20). This model indicated that together the demographic variables accounted for 39.3% of the variance in scores on the Symbolic Frame

reported by the appointed superintendents. Also included in Table 4-20, the eighth regression model consisted of the dependent variable, Symbolic Frame, the independent variables, and the selection variable (method of selection-elected).

Results of the second Symbolic regression model showed that the  $R^2$  of .366 was not statistically significant,  $F(11, 38) = 1.999, p = .056$ .

Tables 4-21 and 4-22 show the regression coefficients of each of the independent variables included in the two Symbolic Frame models. In the first Symbolic

Frame model the independent variable Eth3 (Beta = 507,  $p = .000$ ) and DistSize1 (Beta = .361,  $p = .000$ ) were both found to be statistically significant. These variables represent Hispanic and District Size of less than 300 FTE's. In the second Symbolic Frame model, DistSize 2 (Beta = -.424,  $p = .008$ ), representing districts from 300-2,999 FTE's, was found to be statistically significant. This variable contributed negatively to the variance in this model.

Table 4-20. Summary of multiple regression analyses for variables related to superintendents' use of the Symbolic Frame

Model	$R^2$	SS	df	MS	F	p
7. Symbolic (appointed)	.393					
Regression		3.150	14	.225	3.138	.001*
Residual		4.675	68	.072		
Total		8.024	82			
8. Symbolic (elected)	.366					
Regression		2.206	11	.201	1.999	.056
Residual		3.814	38	.100		
Total		6.020	49			

$p < .05$

Table 4-21. Summary of multiple regression coefficients for Model 1 Symbolic Frame (appointed)

Variables	B	SE	Beta	t	p
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(Constant)	.204	.134		1.516	.134
Gender	-.048	.080	-.067	-.602	.549
Age2	-.095	.130	-.079	-.731	.467
Age3	-.037	.067	-.058	-.559	.578
Eth1	.067	.098	.073	.678	.500
Eth3	1.027	.203	.507	5.052	.000*
Eth4	.112	.291	.039	.387	.700
Degree1	.063	.099	.066	.643	.522
Degree2	.088	.093	.112	.954	.343
YRSup1	-.037	.107	-.037	-.346	.731
YRSup3	-.138	.072	-.213	-1.908	.061
YRSup4	-.129	.113	-.123	-1.147	.255
DistSize1	1.030	.279	.361	3.695	.000*
DistSize3	.025	.072	.038	.344	.732
DistSize4	-.045	.106	-.047	-.421	.675

$p = <.05$

Table 4-22. Summary of multiple regression coefficients for Model 2 Symbolic Frame (elected)

Variables	B	SE	Beta	t	$p$
(Constant)	-.248	.295		-.843	.405
Gender	.133	.138	.148	.970	.338
Age4	.163	.115	.211	1.414	.166
Eth1	.310	.162	.268	1.912	.063
Eth3	-.182	.329	-.073	-.553	.584
Degree2	.111	.127	.133	.877	.386
Degree3	.242	.129	.289	1.875	.068
YRSup1	.175	.299	.120	.585	.562
YRSup2	.155	.103	.217	1.501	.142
YRSup4	-.244	.209	-.167	-1.168	.250
DistSize2	-.303	.109	-.424	-2.778	.008*
DistSize4	-.277	.255	-.190	-1.087	.284

$p = <.05$

Chapter 4 presented data analysis results and procedures. Descriptive data of the demographic characteristics of the 145 participating superintendents (89 appointed, 56 elected) indicated that most of the superintendents were Caucasian, male, and 55 years of age or older. Most had been in the field of education for 21+ years and 16 of them had been superintendents for 16 or more years, although just two (2) had been superintendents in their current district for 16 or more years. District sizes (FTE) ranged

from 170 to 128,000 with a median district size of 3,327. Approximately 90% of all participating superintendents worked in districts ranging from 300 to 24,999 student FTE's.

Sixty (60) of the participating superintendents indicated no particular leadership orientation frame preference, while multiple frames were used by 22 (15%) of the superintendents. The Human Resource Frame was indicated as the most preferred frame by 32 (23%) respondents. A statistically significant difference of  $p = .045$  was found in the analysis of variance for the Human Resource Frame between appointed and elected superintendents with the elected superintendents indicating a higher preference for this frame.

Multiple Regression procedures were performed to determine whether or not the demographic characteristics had any significant effect on the leadership orientation frame choices of appointed and elected. The regression models further indicated any statistically significant influence of specific demographic characteristics on the leadership frame choices of the participating superintendents. The Structural Frame was found to be statistically significant for appointed superintendents with an  $R^2$  of .266 indicating that the demographic variables accounted for 26.6% of the variance in the model. Gender and African American ethnicity were found to be statistically significant as was District Size 4. District Size contributed negatively to the variance. Neither of the Human Resource Frame models was found to be significant; although, a Doctoral degree was a significant contributor to the variance in the Human Resource-Elected model. Regressions for the Political Frame indicated a significant influence on the variance in the model for Appointed superintendents of 21.5%. Hispanic Ethnicity and

Age (55 and over) respectively were statistically significant variables in the two models. Models for the Symbolic Frame proved to be statistically significant for Appointed superintendents ( $p = .001$ ). The independent variables Hispanic ethnicity and District Size 2 (300-2999) respectively were found to be statistically significant in the Symbolic Frame models. District Size contributed negatively to the model. Chapter 5 discusses the findings and presents conclusions and recommendations for further study.

## CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Summary

Chapter 5 summarizes the study, discusses the findings, draws conclusions, and presents recommendations for further investigation. This study investigated the cognitive leadership frame preferences, as defined by the Bolman and Deal (1984) four-frame typology, of school district superintendents in the states of Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. These four leadership orientation frames (Structural, Human Resource, Political and Symbolic) were the primary focus of this study of appointed and elected school district superintendents and their method of selection. Also examined were the effects of demographic factors and leader characteristics on superintendent cognitive frame use as well as the similarities and differences between appointed and elected school district superintendent leadership frame preferences.

Four research questions framed and structured this study:

- What are the self-reported leadership orientation frame preferences of the elected and appointed school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi?
- Is there a difference between self-reported leadership style preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents?
- Is there a difference in single or multi-frame preferences between elected and appointed school district superintendents?
- Is there a difference in leadership style preferences of elected and appointed school district superintendents when considering demographic and contextual variables (i.e., age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree earned, experience in education, length of experience as a superintendent, length of tenure as superintendent in current district, and size of district)?

Chapter 1 established the purpose, boundaries, and significance of the study.

Chapter 2 presented a review of the literature on the superintendency, appointed and

elected superintendents, frames, and frame studies relevant to the current investigation. Chapter 3 presented an overview of the design and methodology of the study including information on the population of the study, the *Leadership Orientation (Self) Survey*, and the statistical procedures used to analyze the quantitative data.

Chapter 4 reported the results of the data that were gathered and analyzed. The total population of school district superintendents in the states of Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi were surveyed using the *LO(S)S*. Surveys were sent to 131 Alabama superintendents (39 elected, 92 appointed); 67 Florida superintendents (44 elected, 23 appointed); and 150 Mississippi superintendents (65 elected, 85 appointed). A total of 348 surveys designed to collect data on frame use and demographic information were distributed by United States Postal Service as well as electronically and resulted in a return of 145 surveys (41.7%). The participation rate by state was: Alabama (38.3%), Florida (44.7%), and Mississippi (42.1%). The participation rate included 89 appointed superintendents (44.5%) and 56 elected superintendents (37.8%).

## **Discussion**

This section of Chapter 5 addresses the findings from analysis of descriptive data relative to the participants' demographic characteristics and use of cognitive frames, as well as their use of single and multiple frames. This is followed by a discussion of the findings from analysis of variance and multiple regression analyses.

### **Demographics**

Demographic data were obtained through participant responses to the Demographic Addendum portion included by the researcher with the *LO(S)S*. Data indicated that most of the superintendents were 55 or older (63.4%), male (77.2%), and Caucasian (82.8%). This corresponds closely with data reported by the American

Association of School Administrators (AASA) which estimated the mean age of superintendents to be 54.6 years and the estimated median age to be 55 years (Glass & Franceschini, 2007). The AASA study reported on the “graying of the superintendency” because conditions such as health and finances tend to keep individuals in the superintendency longer than previously. Glass (2000) reported that most superintendents typically retire at age 57 or 58 after having spent 17 years in the superintendency. He stated that the mean age of superintendents may be expected to increase as individuals enter the superintendency later in their careers; however, the number of years spent in the superintendency may decline as many school districts encourage retirement at age 60 (Glass & Franceschini, 2007).

Gender is another characteristic which is changing the face of the superintendency. The percentage of women in the superintendency has increased to 21.7%. Greater numbers of females are becoming superintendents as the number of female principals and central office administrators increase (Glass & Franceschini, 2007). Data reported in the current study indicated that 22.8% of the participating superintendents were female. Glass and Franceschini (2007) also reported that, although the percentage of females is rising, the number of minority superintendents is only 6%. Responses to the current study indicated that 17% of the participating superintendents were minorities, and 84% of these were African American. It is not surprising that the number of minority superintendents in these three states is higher than average as the US Census Bureau reports that each of these states has more than the US average 12.8% population of African Americans. Table 5-1 shows that Florida has nearly 16% African American population, Alabama has more than double the US

average of African Americans, while Mississippi’s African American population is almost triple that of the US average.

Table 5-1. African American population percentage (N = 2008 population)

State	N	% African Americans
Alabama	4,661,900	26.4
Florida	18,328,340	15.9
Mississippi	2,938,618	37.2
United States	304,059,724	12.8

Data related to highest earned academic degree indicated that nearly half (49.7%) of the superintendents in the study had earned a doctorate; another 19.3% held a specialist degree, while the remaining 31% held masters’ degrees. (Table 5-2) No superintendents reported less than a master’s degree. Further statistical study revealed that, of the 33 female superintendents responding, 22 (67%) held doctorates with an additional four (12%) holding specialist degrees. Forty-eight percent (48%) of the minority superintendents held doctorates, and 32% had earned specialist degrees. To summarize this data, 78% of the female superintendents and 80% of minority superintendents had earned advanced degrees beyond the master’s level. All (100%) of the African American females had advanced degrees; 6 (75%) of the 8 female participants held doctoral degrees and the other two (25%) had earned specialist degrees.

In the AASA mid-decade study (2007) 51% of the participating superintendents had earned doctoral degrees. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the female superintendents held doctoral degrees. There was no reported breakdown as to the number or percentage of minority superintendents having advanced degrees. Perhaps the reason for women and minorities having earned advanced degrees may be related to the fact that the superintendency is dominated by white males (Bjork & Rodgers, 1999; Glass,

Table 5-2. Participating superintendents by gender, ethnicity and academic degree (N = 145)

Ethnicity	Highest Degree	Female	Male	Total
African American	Masters	0	3	3
	Specialist	2	5	7
	Doctorate	6	5	11
	Total	8	13	21
Caucasian	Masters	7	34	41
	Specialist	2	18	20
	Doctorate	16	43	59
	Total	25	95	120
Hispanic	Masters		1	1
	Specialist		1	1
	Doctorate		1	1
	Total		3	3
Other	Doctorate		1	1
	Total		1	1

Bjork, & Brunner, 2000). Glass, Bjork, & Brunner (2000) reported that 86.8% of AASA superintendents were male, and 94.9% were Caucasian. Seven years later Glass and Franceschini (2007) reported that 78.3% of the responding AASA superintendents were male, and 93.8% were Caucasian. It takes women and minorities more years in education to achieve the office of superintendent partly due to the lack of a viable network already in the superintendency. These individuals take more time approaching the superintendency, jumping through the educational hoops (i.e., assistant principal, principal, central office administrator). Earning an advanced degree could increase the credibility of female and minority superintendent candidates, for either appointment or election.

Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi are the only US states that continue to have both appointed and elected superintendents. Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee

previously relinquished their elected superintendent option in favor of an appointed only system of superintendents (Schuh & Herrington, 1990). At the time of this study only 148 elected superintendents remained in the United States (Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi). Superintendents who chose to participate in this study represented 89 (44.5%) of the appointed superintendents and 56 (37.8%) of the elected superintendents in these states

Table 5-3. Appointed and elected superintendents by state

State	Appointed	Elected	Total
Alabama	92	39	131
Florida	23	44	67
Mississippi	85	65	150
Total	200	148	348

### **Superintendent Frame Use**

This study investigated the use of the Bolman and Deal (1997) four leadership frames. Use of these frames is based on the leaders' experience (Bolman & Deal, 1991a) and must be adjustable in order to match the needs of the situation if leaders are to be successful. Situations viewed through the wrong lens may be handled inappropriately.

- The Structural Frame is focused on the rational. It emphasizes rules, policies, and procedures and overlooks the humanistic side of any organization.
- The Human Resource Frame is more focused on the needs of the employees and aligning them with the needs of the organization. The emphasis is on skill development and relationships.
- The Political Frame sees organizations as competitive arenas where one must compete for scarce resources. Competition, negotiation, and alliances are seen as necessary for survival of the group.

- The Symbolic Frame focuses on the organizational culture, using symbols, ceremonies, and stories to create meaning within the organization.

In this study the researcher examined the self-reported frame preferences of school superintendents. The pattern of frame use that was revealed was similar to the findings of other leadership studies involving school level principals (Cote, 1999; Hodge, 2003; Rivers, 1996; Suzuki, 1994). In each of these instances it was discovered that the most frequently used frame was Human Resource, followed by Structural, Symbolic, and Political. Durocher (1995) also found the Human Resource Frame as the most frequently used, but indicated that the Political and Symbolic Frames were used more frequently than the Structural.

Studies of college presidents (Bensimon, 1987; Welch, 2002) showed that leaders at this level preferred the use of the Structural and Human Resource frames. Echols-Tobe (1999) as well as Cantu (1997) in a study of college/university deans found that the Human Resource Frame was the most frequently used with the Symbolic Frame being used the least.

In other studies of superintendent frame usage (Faverty, 1997; Harlow, 1994; Strickland, 1992; Ward, 2006), the Human Resource Frame was used most frequently. The least used frames were Political and Symbolic with Structural Frame commonly reported as the second preference.

Primary use of the Human Resource Frame may be related to the perception that schools are similar to extended families. Superintendents may be working to shape school districts into organizations that are able to meet the needs of the community (students, employees, parents). Even though such action is not a component of the Political Frame, it may be, in some instances, part of a political agenda.

The findings of Bolman and Deal (1991a) showed that frame orientations are related to success as manager and leader. Management and Leadership are not viewed the same; therefore, the related frames are also different. The Human Resource and Structural Frame were found to be good predictors of management effectiveness, while leadership effectiveness was related to the Symbolic and Political Frames.

In the current study the majority of superintendents participating reported their management and leadership effectiveness as above average. This effectiveness rating is not supported by their choice of frame usage. Use of the Political frame appears to be a better predictor of management and leadership effectiveness than the use of the Human Resource Frame; however, in this study Human Resource was used most frequently and Political Frame was least used.

Bolman and Deal (1992a) reported that the ability to use multiple frames has a positive effect on the success of managers and leaders. They hypothesized that leadership is based on context with different situations requiring different thinking patterns. The results suggested that having the ability to employ multiple frames is critical to success as leader and manager. In this study 41% of the participating superintendents indicated no frame preference. Chi-square procedure indicated a statistically significant difference between appointed and elected superintendents ( $p = .037$ ), with appointed superintendents (47%) more likely to indicate no preference than elected superintendents (18%). Thirty-five percent (35%) of the superintendents indicated a preference for a single frame, and only 15% indicated a preference for

multiple frames. Studies available in the literature were mixed as to multiple frame use results.

### **Multiple Regression Analysis**

Eight regression models were tested to investigate the relationship of demographic variables (age, gender, ethnicity, highest academic degree earned, experience in education, length of experience as a superintendent, length of tenure as superintendent in current district, and size of district) with each of the four frames while controlling for method of selection. Structural, Political, and Symbolic frame use by appointed superintendents were all found to have statistically significant  $R^2$  and  $F$  test results. This suggests that, when taken together, the demographic variables significantly influenced appointed superintendents' frame use.

With regard to the demographic characteristics, years in education, years as superintendent, years as superintendent in current district were combined into one variable (years as superintendent). This characteristic was the only one that did not prove statistically significant in any of the models. One possible reason for this is that it could have been too closely related to age.

Age was divided into categories relative to available responses on the *Leadership Orientation (Self) Survey*. Age (55 and over) was determined to be statistically significant in the Regression model for Political Frame-Elected. Perhaps as elected superintendents age, they become more politically minded.

Gender was found to be significant only in the Regression model for Structural-Appointed. A statistically significant  $R^2$  of .266 was found in this model ( $p = .05$ ). Gender was determined to contribute 29.5% to the variance in this model. This is contrary to the bulk of the literature which shows little or no differences in leadership

orientation frame preferences in regards to gender (Bolman & Deal, 1991a, 1991b; Burks, 1992; Clisbee, 1994; DeFrank-Cole, 2003; Guidry, 2007; Hodge, 2003; Johnson, 1995; Martinez, 1996; Miro, 1993; Rivers, 1996; Thompson, 2000; Ward, 2006).

Age, ethnicity and education have not been found to be significant factors influencing leadership orientation frame use (Durocher, 1995; Kelly, 1997; Martinez, 1996; Salley et al, 1979; Ward, 2006). Since the superintendency is a white, male dominated profession, study populations may not have yielded enough racial diversity for ethnicity to have been a factor.

Ethnicity1 (African American) was found to be statistically significant in both appointed and elected regression models for the Structural Frame, contributing over 30% to the variance in each model. Ethnicity3 (Hispanic) was also found to be significant in the Political Frame-Appointed and Symbolic Frame-Appointed, contributing almost 49% to the variance in the Political model and 50% in the Symbolic model. The reason for the influence of these ethnicities may be a factor of their culture. African American culture has been traditionally matriarchal, based on a strict enforcement of rules (McAdoo, 1997; Johnson & Staples, 2005). The contribution to the Political Frame model could be similar to the reason that so many of the minority and female superintendents in this study have attained higher academic degrees. As minorities their opportunities have traditionally been fewer than their white counterparts. Adopting a political orientation, competing for scarce resources, may be a way of securing their positions.

Attainment of a doctoral degree proved to be a statistically significant factor in the Regression model for Human Resource-Elected. As there are fewer and fewer elected

superintendents, it is possible that achieving an advanced degree could increase one's appeal to the electorate, giving an individual more status and credibility in a race for the office of superintendent.

Size of District proved to be statistically significant in both of the Symbolic Frame regressions, with DistSize1 (less than 300 FTE's) proving significant in the appointed model (Beta = .361); and DistSize2 (300 – 2999 FTE's) showing significance in the elected model (Beta = -.424). The superintendency in a small school district would lend itself more easily to a Symbolic leadership frame as individuals living in a small community are more likely to share the same values. Building on these values in the school system could prove an easier task than attempting this in a larger district. The large negative effect of school district size in the second Symbolic Regression should be interpreted with caution because the test was not statistically significant. It would be interesting to ascertain the cause of the negative aspect of this variable. It is possible that factors other than those included in the regression models (e.g., bureaucratic constraints, community expectations, and cultural differences) may account for the differences in frame use among superintendents.

### **Conclusions**

Several conclusions may be made from this study. First, for the most part, the demographic characteristics included in this study mirrored the demographics in the larger populations in the states of Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. The pattern of frame use by the superintendents, both appointed and elected is similar (Human Resource, Structural, Symbolic, and Political). The only statistically significant difference between appointed and elected superintendents regarding frame use was that elected superintendents tended to use the Human Resource Frame significantly

more than appointed superintendents. This is consistent with prior findings regarding frame use of college level, school, and school district leaders. The Bolman and Deal (1997) four-frame typology appears to be useful in providing information explaining the cognitive frame use of school district superintendents.

It may also be concluded that the school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi are effective managers. Their preferred use of the Human Resource and Structural Frames, predictors of managerial effectiveness (Bolman & Deal, 1991a), provides data for that conclusion. Based on current data, it cannot be concluded that these same superintendents are effective leaders based on their leadership orientation frame preferences.

Several of the demographic characteristics (method of selection, gender, age, ethnicity, highest academic degree, and district size) proved to be statistically significant related to superintendent frame use; however, there appear to be other factors not included in this study which also influence the superintendents' frame preferences.

### **Implications of the Findings**

The quantitative findings may be generalized to the population of superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. These findings have implications for the professional development of school district superintendents. The results of this study may serve as a basis for superintendents to reflect on their practice as school district leaders and the importance of developing their understanding and use of the four frames regardless of their manner of selection to the superintendency. As baby boomers age and enter retirement, the need for individuals to assume the responsibilities as school district superintendent becomes increasingly urgent. Further study of the use of the four frames is needed to prepare school district leaders with the

skills to develop and use multiple frames, lenses through which effective leadership can be achieved.

Results of the study reinforce the need for further development in superintendents' awareness and use of the Political and Symbolic Frames. Given the current economic climate and budget cuts and shortfalls, training in the use of the Political Frame could enhance the abilities of superintendents to acquire scarce resources through the skills of negotiation and compromise. Use of the Symbolic Frame could enhance renewal of schools as a symbol of American culture, a safe haven for children, and a trusted resource for parents and community.

### **Recommendations for Further Study**

This study was exploratory and revealed information that has not been available from a single source, especially regarding the similarities and differences between appointed and elected superintendents. This was a study of superintendents' self-reported responses regarding frame use and leadership and management effectiveness. Further studies using other Bolman and Deal surveys that ascertain information about superintendents' leadership styles and effectiveness from their peers and colleagues might provide more insight into the way that these leaders frame and solve problems. Such studies could reveal more comprehensive data about the actual functioning of superintendents as leaders and managers.

Qualitative studies that include interviews with superintendents and other school district employees might shed light on other characteristics, personal and otherwise, that affect how leaders function and their effectiveness. Such data could be used in developing and implementing superintendent education and training programs.

Conducting this study shined light on the need for a comprehensive, centralized professional database of information regarding the performance of superintendents. The AASA currently relies on surveys of participating members and lack extensive performance data regarding superintendents across the nation and in other parts of the world. Current efforts to create effective schools and school systems would benefit from centralization of data related to the effective performance of school district superintendents.

APPENDIX A  
REQUEST AND PERMISSION TO USE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

From: LANDRY,CHERI [<mailto:landryc@ufl.edu>]  
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2006 11:22 AM  
To: bolmanl@umkc.edu  
Subject: Permission to use LO(S)S

Dear Dr. Bolman,

I am a University of Florida Educational Administration and Policy doctoral candidate. In order to complete my program of study, I am conducting a research investigation, the purpose of which is to examine the leadership orientation preferences (as developed by Bolman & Deal) of elected and appointed school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. Demographic characteristics of these superintendents, including age, gender, race, education, method of selection, years of experience in education, years of experience as a superintendent, size of district (number of students), and length of tenure in district will also be analyzed. I would like to use the Leadership Orientation (Self) Survey developed by you and Dr. Deal.

The purpose of this communication is to secure your permission to use this instrument in collecting data for my study. This is an auspicious opportunity for me, in that my study will encompass all 148 elected superintendents remaining in the country. The results of this study could have implications for school districts throughout the United States that are considering changing from one type of superintendent selection process to another. It will further provide information regarding the influence of specific demographic characteristics on the leadership orientation preferences of school district leaders.

I am more than happy to provide you and Dr. Deal with a copy of the results of this study, including any papers or publications that are based in whole or in part on the survey. I will also provide you, upon request, with a copy of my data file.

I will be writing to the superintendent associations in these three states to apprise them of the research study and to secure their endorsement. If you have questions, comments, or suggestions please feel free to contact me by email, telephone, or letter correspondence (email is best for me).

I would very much appreciate your permission to use this instrument, as I would like to begin the survey as soon as possible. If you like, you can mail and/or fax a letter of permission should you grant it.

With deep appreciation,

Cheri Landry  
11921 NW 8th Road  
Gainesville, FL 32606  
(352)331-3618 (home and fax)

-----  
Lee Bolman <bolmanl@umkc.edu> [Add to address book](#)

**To:** "LANDRY,CHERI"  
<landryc@ufl.edu>  
**CC:**  
**Date:** Wed Nov 15 23:28:01 EST  
2006  
**Subject:** RE: [1] Permission to use  
LO(S)S

Dear Ms. Landry,

Thanks for your interest in Leadership Orientations Survey.

Given your agreement to provide us with results of your research, I am  
happy  
to offer you permission to use the instrument in your doctoral research.

Best wishes for a very successful study.

Lee G. Bolman  
Marion Bloch/Missouri Chair in Leadership  
Bloch School of Business and Public Administration  
University of Missouri-Kansas City  
5100 Rockhill Road  
Kansas City, MO 64110

Tel: (816) 235-5407  
Fax: (816) 235-6529  
Email: bolmanl@umkc.edu  
Web site: www.leebolman.com

APPENDIX B  
SURVEY LETTER, ENDORSEMENT, AND FOLLOW-UP

Jul-05-2007 05:55

From-AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS 17038411543

T-809 P.001/001 F-419

Cheri Landry  
11921 NW 8<sup>th</sup> Road  
Gainesville, FL 32606

(352)331-3618 Home  
(352)331-3618 Fax  
Email: landryc@ufl.edu

July 2, 2007

Dr. Paul Houston  
Executive Director, AASA

Dear Dr. Houston,

I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Florida in Educational Leadership. In order to complete my program of study I am conducting a research investigation, the purpose of which is to examine the leadership orientation frame preferences of elected and appointed district school superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi.

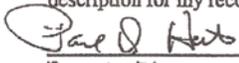
The purpose of this letter is to secure your endorsement of this research study since I will be asking the superintendents in three states to participate by completing Bolman and Deal's *Leadership Orientation (Self)* Survey as well as the appended demographic characteristics. The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. There are no right or wrong answers. The superintendent's name will not appear in conjunction with any records of their responses and their identity will be kept confidential and will not be revealed in the final manuscript.

As the United States now has only approximately 148 elected superintendents in three states, I believe that this study will provide some important data regarding the superintendency. The results of this study will contribute to further understanding how school district superintendents (appointed and elected) operate within the complexity of the day to day demands on their roles as superintendent.

Please sign below and fax this letter back to me to show your endorsement of this study. Keep the original copy of the letter for your records. If you have questions, comments, or suggestions please feel free to contact me by email, telephone, or letter. I am also seeking the endorsements of the directors of the individual state superintendents' associations.

With deep appreciation,  
Cheri Landry

I have read the procedure described above for the research study on the leadership orientation frames preferences of school district superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. I endorse the use of the Bolman and Deal questionnaire and I have received a copy of this description for my records.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Director,  
American Association of School Administrators

7-5-07  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

August 30, 2007

Dear Superintendent

Several weeks ago I sent a request for you to participate in a research study of the leadership styles of elected and appointed school district superintendents. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Florida.

Included in the mailing were a letter of endorsement from Paul Houston of the American Association of School Administrators and a copy of the Leadership Orientations (Self) Survey created by Drs. Bolman and Deal. This survey was sent to all superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi, as these are the only remaining states to have elected and appointed superintendents.

I have received a fair response, but would like to make this study even stronger by having more participation. The survey is brief (about 15 minutes) and is on line at <https://www.education.ufl.edu:8443/survey/entry.jsp?id=1180833211284>. The survey code is the first letter of your state and your district number. The password is super. You should be able to click on this link to connect to the survey; otherwise please copy and paste the link in your browser window.

Please reconsider your decision not to participate and complete the survey on-line, or if you still have it, on the paper copy.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email me at [landryc@ufl.edu](mailto:landryc@ufl.edu) or my committee chair James Doud at [jldoud@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:jldoud@coe.ufl.edu). Your input is extremely important and your participation would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely

--

Cheri Landry  
PhD Candidate  
Dept. of Administration and Policy  
College of Education  
University of Florida

APPENDIX C  
LEADERSHIP ORIENTATION (SELF) SURVEY

LEADERSHIP ORIENTATIONS (SELF)

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This questionnaire asks you to describe your leadership and management style.

**I. Behaviors**

You are asked to indicate *how often* each of the items below is true of you.

Please use the following scale in answering each item.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Occasionally	Sometimes	Often	Always

So, you would answer '1' for an item that is never true of you, '2' for one that is occasionally true, '3' for one that is sometimes true of you, and so on.

**Be discriminating!** Your results will be more helpful if you think about each item and distinguish the things that you really do all the time from the things that you do seldom or never.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ *Think very clearly and logically.*
2. \_\_\_\_\_ *Show high levels of support and concern for others.*
3. \_\_\_\_\_ *Have exceptional ability to mobilize people and resources to get things done.*
4. \_\_\_\_\_ *Inspire others to do their best.*
5. \_\_\_\_\_ *Strongly emphasize careful planning and clear time lines.*
6. \_\_\_\_\_ *Build trust through open and collaborative relationships.*
7. \_\_\_\_\_ *Am a very skillful and shrewd negotiator.*
8. \_\_\_\_\_ *Am highly charismatic.*
9. \_\_\_\_\_ *Approach problems through logical analysis and careful thinking.*

10. \_\_\_\_\_ *Show high sensitivity and concern for others' needs and feelings.*
11. \_\_\_\_\_ *Am unusually persuasive and influential.*
12. \_\_\_\_\_ *Am able to be an inspiration to others.*
13. \_\_\_\_\_ *Develop and implement clear, logical policies and procedures.*
14. \_\_\_\_\_ *Foster high levels of participation and involvement in decisions.*
15. \_\_\_\_\_ *Anticipate and deal adroitly with organizational conflict.*
16. \_\_\_\_\_ *Am highly imaginative and creative.*
17. \_\_\_\_\_ *Approach problems with facts and logic.*
18. \_\_\_\_\_ *Am consistently helpful and responsive to others.*
19. \_\_\_\_\_ *Am very effective in getting support from people with influence and power.*
20. \_\_\_\_\_ *Communicate a strong and challenging sense of vision and mission.*
21. \_\_\_\_\_ *Set specific, measurable goals and hold people accountable for results.*
22. \_\_\_\_\_ *Listen well and am unusually receptive to other people's ideas and input.*
23. \_\_\_\_\_ *Am politically very sensitive and skillful.*
24. \_\_\_\_\_ *See beyond current realities to generate exciting new opportunities.*
25. \_\_\_\_\_ *Have extraordinary attention to detail.*
26. \_\_\_\_\_ *Give personal recognition for work well done.*
27. \_\_\_\_\_ *Develop alliances to build a strong base of support.*
28. \_\_\_\_\_ *Generate loyalty and enthusiasm.*
29. \_\_\_\_\_ *Strongly believe in clear structure and a chain of command.*
30. \_\_\_\_\_ *Am a highly participative manager.*
31. \_\_\_\_\_ *Succeed in the face of conflict and opposition.*
32. \_\_\_\_\_ *Serve as an influential model of organizational aspirations and values.*

## II. Leadership Style

This section asks you to describe your leadership style. For each item, give the number "4" to the phrase that best describes you, "3" to the item that is next best, and on down to "1" for the item that is least like you.

1. My strongest skills are:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. *Analytic skills*
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. *Interpersonal skills*
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. *Political skills*
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. *Ability to excite and motivate*

2. The best way to describe me is:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. *Technical expert*
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. *Good listener*
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. *Skilled negotiator*
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. *Inspirational leader*

3. What has helped me the most to be successful is my ability to:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. *Make good decisions*
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. *Coach and develop people*
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. *Build strong alliances and a power base*
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. *Energize and inspire others*

4. What people are most likely to notice about me is my:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. *Attention to detail*
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. *Concern for people*

\_\_\_\_\_ c. *Ability to succeed, in the face of conflict and opposition*

\_\_\_\_\_ d. *Charisma.*

5. My most important leadership trait is:

\_\_\_\_\_ a. *Clear, logical thinking*

\_\_\_\_\_ b. *Caring and support for others*

\_\_\_\_\_ c. *Toughness and aggressiveness*

\_\_\_\_\_ d. *Imagination and creativity*

6. I am best described as:

\_\_\_\_\_ a. *An analyst*

\_\_\_\_\_ b. *A humanist*

\_\_\_\_\_ c. *A politician*

\_\_\_\_\_ d. *A visionary*

### III. Overall rating

Compared to other individuals that you have known with comparable levels of experience and responsibility, how would you rate yourself on:

1. Overall effectiveness as a **manager**.

1	2	3	4	5
Bottom 20%		Middle 20%		Top 20%

2. Overall effectiveness as a **leader**.

1	2	3	4	5
Bottom 20%		Middle 20%		Top 20%

#### IV. Demographic Addendum

1. Gender:

\_\_\_\_\_Female      \_\_\_\_\_Male

2. Age:

\_\_\_\_\_25-34    \_\_\_\_\_35-44    \_\_\_\_\_45-54    \_\_\_\_\_55-and over

3. Ethnicity:

\_\_\_\_\_African American    \_\_\_\_\_Caucasian    \_\_\_\_\_Hispanic    \_\_\_\_\_Other

4. Highest Academic Degree Earned:

\_\_\_\_\_Masters      \_\_\_\_\_Specialist      \_\_\_\_\_Doctorate

5. Method of Selection to Superintendency:

\_\_\_\_\_Appointed      \_\_\_\_\_Elected

6. Total Number of Complete Years as a Superintendent:

\_\_\_\_\_Less than 1    \_\_\_\_\_1-5    \_\_\_\_\_6-15    \_\_\_\_\_16+

7. Total Number of Complete Years as Superintendent in Current District:

\_\_\_\_\_Less than 1    \_\_\_\_\_1-5    \_\_\_\_\_6-15    \_\_\_\_\_16+

8. Total Number of Complete Years in Education:

\_\_\_\_\_1-5    \_\_\_\_\_6-15    \_\_\_\_\_16-20    \_\_\_\_\_21+

9. Number of Full Time Equivalent Students Enrolled in District:

\_\_\_\_\_Students

## APPENDIX D IRB FORMS



PO Box 112250  
Gainesville, FL 32611-2250  
352-392-0433 (Phone)  
352-392-9234 (Fax)  
irb2@ufl.edu

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DATE: June 20, 2007

TO: Cheri Landry  
11921 NW 8<sup>th</sup> Road  
Gainesville, FL 32606

FROM: Ira S. Fischler, PhD, Chair *ISF:dl*  
University of Florida  
Institutional Review Board

SUBJECT: Approval of Protocol #2007-U-0558

TITLE: Leadership Frame Preferences of Elected and Appointed School District  
Superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi

SPONSOR: None

I am pleased to advise you that the University of Florida Institutional Review Board has recommended approval of this protocol. Based on its review, the UFIRB determined that this research presents no more than minimal risk to participants, and based on 45 CFR 46.117(c), authorizes you to administer the informed consent process as specified in the protocol.

If you wish to make any changes to this protocol, *including the need to increase the number of participants authorized*, you must disclose your plans before you implement them so that the Board can assess their impact on your protocol. In addition, you must report to the Board any unexpected complications that affect your participants.

If you have not completed this protocol by June 10, 2008, please telephone our office (392-0433), and we will discuss the renewal process with you. It is important that you keep your Department Chair informed about the status of this research protocol.

ISF:dl

**Please type or word process the following information.**

UFIRB #2007-U-558 PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Cheri Landry

PROTOCOL TITLE: **Leadership Frame Preferences of Elected and Appointed School District Superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi**

**Continuing Review/Study Closure Report**

To help us keep our records current, please complete the following and return it to the UFIRB Office, PO Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250.

If you have any questions, please call 392-0433. (This form is also available at <http://www.ortge.ufl.edu/irb/irb02>.)

Check all items that apply to your protocol and provide requested information. (You may attach additional sheets if necessary.)

1. On what date did data collection begin? June 15, 2007

2. Please indicate the statement that best describes the status of this protocol:

a) I have completed work on this protocol. I will answer the remaining questions on this form to enable the IRB office to officially close the protocol.

b) I have not begun data collection. I plan to start on \_\_\_\_\_.

c) Human participants are currently being recruited.

I have attached 3 clean copies of the current informed consent. Upon approval, the IRB will stamp an expiration date on them, and return one copy for me to duplicate.

d) No further recruiting will occur after the expiration date. However, the data collected during the research shall be analyzed.

e) No further recruiting of participants will occur, but data collection will continue on at least one participant.

f) No further recruiting will occur. All interventions are completed on all participants, but follow-up is being conducted as described in the informed consent. These follow-up activities are described as follows:

3. If there have been any additions or deletions to the list of researchers involved with this protocol, I have described the reason for each change below and have updated the informed consent form to include only the current researcher(s):

N/A

4. If the protocol is externally funded, and the information about sponsorship is not correct in the protocol, the revised IRB form identifies the following sponsor(s): N/A

5. Please indicate the following:

a) The total number of participants recruited during the past year: 348

b) The total number of participants to be recruited during the next year: 0

c) I have recruited, or plan to recruit, more participants than originally estimated because:

d) I have recruited no participants because:

6. Was written informed consent required by the IRB and obtained from each participant?  Yes  No

If the answer is YES, attach to this form a photocopy of the last signed consent that you obtained.

If the answer is NO, please explain the circumstances under which written informed consent was not obtained:

7. Were any changes, however minor, made to your protocol last year?  Yes  No

If YES, were those changes reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to their implementation?  Yes  No

If changes were made to the protocol that were not submitted to and approved by the IRB, please describe the revision and explain why it was not sent to the IRB for review:

**Please type or word process the following information.**

UFIRB #2007-U-558 PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Cheri Landry

**PROTOCOL TITLE: Leadership Frame Preferences of Elected and Appointed School District Superintendents in Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi**

**Continuing Review/Study Closure Report**

To help us keep our records current, please complete the following and return it to the UFIRB Office, PO Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250.

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Cheri was born in Jacksonville, Florida where she graduated from Landon High School. She then attended Florida State University where she earned a Bachelor of Science in English Education. Ten years later she graduated with a Master of Education from the University of North Florida in Jacksonville in 1977; and completed requirements for certification in Administration and Supervision in 1978.

Cheri taught Language Arts (English, speech, reading, drama) as well as classes for the educationally mentally handicapped in various school systems in North and Central Florida until 1980 when she was promoted to assistant principal and then vice principal in Duval County. Later she moved to Hamilton County where she served as high school principal and principal of the juvenile justice school located in Jasper, Florida. She also taught as an adjunct for North Florida Community College in Madison, Florida.

In 2001 after retiring from the public school system, Cheri moved to Gainesville, Florida to pursue her doctorate in educational leadership. She worked as an adjunct lecturer at the University of Florida and also served as an instructor in the Educator Preparation Institute at Santa Fe College.

Cheri hopes to pursue a career in teaching at the university level or serving as a central office administrator for public schools. She would also like to become involved in volunteer work that benefits children.