

TITLE: The Relationship Between Mississippi School Superintendents's Leadership Behaviors and the Level of Shared Decision Making in Curriculum and Instruction as Perceived by Principals

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OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Mississippi public school superintendents' leadership behaviors and the level of shared decision making in curriculum and instruction as perceived by principals.

METHODOLOGY: From the population of Mississippi public school districts, where superintendents had been in place for a minimum of two years (N=90), sixty were selected, yielding a possible sample of 364 school principals. The response rate was 55 percent (N=200). Respondents completed the Leadership Practices Inventory- Observer form about their superintendent and the Shared Education Decisions Survey-Revised (Ferrara, 1994), and provided demographic information. The typical respondent had ten or less years experience as a principal (65%), was male (56%), Caucasian (73%), and held a masters degree (67%).

KEY FINDINGS: Correlations were all positive and statistically significant between the superintendent's leadership behavior (challenging, inspiring, enabling, modeling, and encouraging) and the level of shared decision making in the area of curriculum and innovation (correlations ranged between .34 and .42). Clearly, the researcher notes, "from the findings of this study, superintendents who are risk takers, have a clear vision, empower others, model desired behaviors, and are encouragers have school systems where principals feel like they have an impact in what teachers are teaching and how they are teaching it" (p. 79).