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Leadership and spirituality: The indivisible leadership of African American school administrators as pastors

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Leadership and spirituality: The indivisible leadership of African American school administrators as pastors

by

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A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major: Education (Educational Leadership)

Program of Study Committee:
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Ames, Iowa

2010

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand the role that spirituality plays in the leadership of African American men who are both a pastor and a public school administrator. Very little has been written about the role of African American spirituality in educational leadership or about school administrators who are also pastors. This study examined the role of spirituality in the leadership of eight African American men who were both public school administrators and pastors of Christian congregations. The epistemological scope for this study came from social constructionism. The three-interview series method (Seidman, 1991) was used to collect data gathered from individual interviews. The key research question was, “What role does spirituality play in the leadership of African American school administrators who are also pastors?”

This study contributes to the understanding of the role of spirituality in leadership from an African American male perspective. The findings suggest that the role that spirituality played in leadership of the administrators/pastors was that their spirituality connected them to: (a) their family values; (b) the way they built relationships with teachers, students, and the community; and (c) opportunities to serve. The findings suggest that school administrators should not overlook the role of spirituality to cultivate a nurturing, caring, and supportive school environment. The practical significance that the findings suggest for educational administration programs are: (a) develop professional development workshops; (b) include a course on spirituality and leadership as a choice within the leadership preparation classes; (c) teach the method of code switching; and (d) create partnerships with school, community, and church organizations.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

I remember a scene in one of my favorite movies, *Superman*, where Lois Lane is falling off a tall building. As she is screaming her very last breath (or so she thinks), Superman swoops under her and catches her. Then Superman says with charm, “Easy, Miss. I’ve got you.” Without hesitation, Lois Lane responds, “You’ve got me? Who’s got you?”

As much as Lois Lane was excited about being saved and no longer in danger, she just wanted to know about the one who saved her. “...If you’ve got me, then who’s got you?” Similarly, those who are affected by the leadership skills of school administrators may want to know “Who’s got them.”

School administrators are often expected to be all things to all people, but the source of their strength is not always evident. Public school administrators, especially, may feel constrained about revealing these sources. Perhaps school districts are guilty of expecting Clark Kent to do a superhuman job without being able to acknowledge and affirm some of his most valuable sources of wisdom and endurance.

If, as John Maxwell (1998) stated, “Everything rises and falls on leadership,” (p. 233) then it seems leaders should be able to answer the question, “Who’s got you?” Many administrators answer this question with a spiritual component.

This study was concerned specifically with the spiritual resources on which school administrators may draw in the course of performing their duties. My interest in this topic came to mind while sitting in one of my first educational administration classes. As I was introduced to leadership concepts such as Fullan’s moral leadership and Leithwood’s transformational leadership, I recognized that these leadership characteristics were consistent

with Biblical concepts for leaders, such as having integrity, being respectable, trustworthy, able to teach, of good reputation, and willingness to serve, just to name a few. In addition, as I began to reflect in these classes, I remembered when I worked with an assistant school administrator who was also an associate pastor. I began to recall some of the struggles and successes that this school administrator/pastor had while carrying out both leadership roles.

Personally, I hold an insider/outsider status in relation to this topic of school administrator and pastor. I am an ordained minister with an administration license; thus, I see events in light of my strong Christian beliefs and my experience as a leader in both school and church. In addition to my insider status, I hold an outsider status because I am not a pastor of a congregation nor do I currently hold a school administrator position. In addition, even though I am ordained and licensed, the experiences of these roles may have different meanings for me than they do for the participants,

From my educational leadership coursework, I have learned that much of the literature related to effective leadership has used terms that carry spiritual undertones, such as servant leadership (Greenleaf, 2002), transformational leadership (Dantley, 2003), leading with soul (Bolman & Deal 1995), and moral leadership (Fullan, 2001). However, there was no voice in the literature about those individuals who have dual leadership roles as school administrator and pastor. Adding the voice of these individuals who are both administrator and pastor may add to the literature some insights about what spirituality combined with school leadership actually looks like. My thoughts were that these bi-vocational administrators and pastors would provide a model of what spirituality in leadership would look like from theory to practice. This model could be an example to other leaders who wish to incorporate spiritual convictions but may not know how. Furthermore, this model would

provide valuable information on how to honor separation of church and state in a public setting without leaving one's spirituality at the schoolhouse gate.

The vocations of school administrator and pastor are two of the most influential positions in a community (Barth, 1990; Bolman & Deal, 1999; Raboteau, 1999). No one exercises more influence on a school's culture than its administrator (Bolman & Deal, 1999; Barth, 1990). School administrators set the tone for the environment within the school: "Who school leaders are, what they do, attend to, or seem to appreciate, is constantly watched by students, teachers, parents, and members of the community" (Bolman & Deal, 1995, p. 90). Simply put, school leaders are role models and have a great deal of influence in their schools and in the community they serve. School administrators are in symbolic positions and send powerful messages not only by their actions within the school but also by their presence at the post office, the grocery store, or the city council meeting.

This public role may be especially important within the African American community. This influence dates back as far as slavery times. According to Raboteau (1999), "Slave preachers exercised a good deal of influence among the slaves in general and in the role of preacher, slaves achieved respect, authority, and power" (p. 63). In addition, within the "invisible institution" of the church among slaves, as Frazier (1974) also emphasized, the Negro preacher played an important role and was highly respected for leadership. Others attest that churches rely heavily on the leadership of their pastors (McKenna, Boyd, & Yost, 2007; Raboteau, 1999; Stewart, 1999). African American pastors are known as messengers of human freedom, spiritual guides, and spiritual mediators for the African American community (Stewart, 1999); thus, they are an important influence in the Black church and in the community.

Interpretations of the First Amendment's establishment clause have led to legal conflicts in the public education setting regarding matters involving curriculum, public programs, and expressions of faith by school employees (Brown, 2007; Whitehead, 1991; Seigler, 2003; Russo, 2003a, b; Baer & Carper, 1998). Further research is needed on the experiences of individuals who are both school administrators and pastors to determine how they intertwine spirituality into their leadership without violating the First Amendment. On the matter of expressions of faith by public employees in general, Brown (2007) asked:

How does a public employee cope with the workplace restrictions that accompany public sector employment, while at the same time, being true to the beliefs of his or her religion, expressing those beliefs through clothing, jewelry, witnessing, and other "external forms" required by that religion, and generally carrying out the duties of a believer of that religious tradition? (p. 670)

The question of "how," as Brown suggested, is what drove the current study. Religion is comprised of expressions through symbols and external forms (Brown, 2007; Raboteau, 1999; Russo, 2003; Stewart, 1999). In African American culture, pastors are seen as a symbol of religion and, if pastors are school administrators in a public school setting, then how do they lead without violating the legal requirements of their public role? This qualitative research attempted to address this question by focusing specifically on the spirituality of African American leaders whose voices have thus far not been heard, with the exception of seminal work by Dantley (Dantley & Rogers, 2001; Dantley, 2003a, 2003b;

Dantley, 2005). It was my hope that this study would add significantly to the literature on spirituality and leadership.

Statement of the Problem

Scant research exists on individuals who live out their spirituality and leadership in bi-vocational roles as school administrator and pastor in a public school setting. In terms of pastors in the public schools, most of our understanding of how clergy interact with educational institutions is limited to the private or religious arena. For example, Catholic schools tend to use pastoral priests or school chaplains to handle personal needs as well as shape the overall character of the school community (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993). However, the body of available scholarship does not include perspectives on how clergy interact with public schools (Duemer, Juarez, & Sand, 2000). Additional research is needed to identify a model that might enable other school administrators to understand how to integrate spirituality in their leadership in public schools. Examining the role that spirituality plays for school administrators who are pastors can add to the discussion on effective leadership in the public school setting by clarifying the implications of the decisions and behaviors that are influenced by their spirituality.

The place of religion in public schools is one of the most controversial topics in the contemporary landscape of education (Duemer, Juarez, & Sand, 2000). Legal interpretations of the First Amendment have determined that, within the public school system, teachers and school administrators are representatives of the state and are prohibited by the establishment clause from soliciting or encouraging religious expression of faith in the workplace.

However, the same clause gives citizens the right to freely exercise or express religious

convictions. The difficult part for school leaders is that religious convictions not only influence a leader's life, but also intersect with areas of school life. Of course, school policies are the law within the school and school leaders are expected to follow those policies to the letter. However, how a leader enforces those policies may be directly related to their ethical and moral values, which may intersect with his or her religious convictions.

Different religious voices have grown stronger and the courts have become more active in interpreting the Establishment and Free Exercise clauses of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (J. Marshall, 2006, p. 181). Although courts have become more active in interpretation, public schools still struggle to maintain the line between the state and the church. Since religion and spirituality are seen by some as interchangeable, clarification is needed as to what constitutes violation and what does not. In part, what has been unclear is that separation of church and state does not require separation of religion and politics, or of spirituality and school administration.

Purpose

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand the role that spirituality plays in the leadership of African American men who are both a pastor and a school administrator in a public school setting. Since very little has been written about the role of African American spirituality in educational leadership and school administrators who are also pastors, this study sought the stories of African American administrators in the public school setting who are also pastors. Seidman's (1991) three interview series was used to gather information about the role that spirituality plays in the leadership of eight school administrators who were pastors working in a public school setting. Thus this study had two

purposes: (1) Explore the role of spirituality in leadership and administration; and (2) explore the role of African American male spirituality and leadership, in particular. It is my hope that this study will contribute to the literature addressing the relationship of African American spirituality, religion, and leadership in education as well as to the literature on spirituality and public leadership more generally.

Description of the Study

This study examines the role of spirituality in the leadership of eight African American men who are both public school administrators and pastors. The epistemological scope for this study comes from social constructionism. The methodology of this study is phenomenological research and the method was individual interviews. Seidman's (1991) three-interview series method was used to collect data. The three interview series is an interview process where the first interview establishes the context of the participant's experience, the second allows participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within the context in which it occurs, and the third encourages the participants to reflect on the meaning their experience holds for them. The primary means of data collection was semi-structured interviews that lasted approximately 60 to 90 minutes each. These interviews were audio-taped and transcribed, and the transcriptions were then analyzed.

Rationale

Research literature focusing on spirituality and leadership in general is not new (Capper et al., 2000; Dantley, 2003a, b; Greenleaf, 1970, 2002, 2003; Shield, 2005); nor is research on spirituality within the African American tradition (Dantley, 2003; Pinn, 2002, Milner, 2006; Stewart, 1999); nor is pastoral leadership development (Berman, 1997;

Brewster, 1996; Davies, 1998; Groshch & Olsen, 2000; Laliotis & Grayson, 1985; McKenna, Boyd, & Yost, 2007, Meek et al, 2000, 2003; Meloy, 1986; Ruzicka, 1997; Von Stroh, Mines & Anderson, 1995). However, research literature that focuses on African American experiences of spirituality and leadership in educational leadership is limited.

In terms of leadership and the role that spirituality plays in the school setting, considerable literature points to the importance of character and moral practices in leadership (Fullan, 2001; Deal & Peterson, 1999). However, scant literature specifically discusses leaders who carry dual leadership roles as both school administrator and pastor, especially with regard to the role that spirituality plays in their school leadership. General information about bi-vocational pastors is inconsistent and the total current number of pastors who are school administrators is unavailable. There is a void in research about individuals who live out their spirituality and leadership in bi-vocational roles as school administrator and pastor, Therefore, research with this particular group to identify models for integrating spirituality into public school leadership is potentially quite valuable.

Research Questions

Past research has found that spirituality is an important aspect in leadership because spirituality helps leaders include the need to make meaning of what they do and attributes what a leader does to something higher than him or herself (Capper, Keyes, & Theoharis, 2000; Dantley, 2003; Shields, 2005; Starratt & Guare, 1995). Other researchers (Fullan, 2001; Deal & Peterson, 1999) have found that moral and ethical leadership encourages effective leadership, largely in establishing a moral purpose or vision for a school.

For these reasons, I wanted to know what occurs in the leadership of school administrators who are also pastors in public school settings. The purpose of this study was to understand the role that spirituality plays in the leadership of African American men who are both school administrator and pastor. The following research questions guided the study to focus specifically on the role of African American spirituality in leadership:

1. What role does spirituality play in the leadership of African American school administrators who are also pastors?
2. How does spirituality influence their leadership behaviors or decision-making?
3. How do bi-vocational African American school administrators and pastors negotiate church-state issues?

Significance of the Study

A study of the role that spirituality plays in the leadership of school leaders with pastoral background is important for several reasons. First, researchers and scholars have studied the integration of spirituality with secular leadership and organizational development, and have found that spirituality can have a place within secular organizations' work culture and individuals' work practices (Fairholm, 2000; Grant, O'Neil, & Stephens, 2004; Nash, 1999; Roof, 1999; Wuthnow, 1999). Although organizations have come to realize that the moral standards of civic and corporate institutional leaders affect everyone, these studies fail to address the specific ways that African American leaders integrate spirituality with secular leadership and organizations.

Second, understanding the place of spirituality in public leadership may help school communities create an atmosphere where moral behavior is evident and practiced (Fullan,

2001; Greenfield, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1992). Third, students might see that there is a connection between what is taught on Sunday and what is taught during the week while they are at school. School administrators who are pastors can facilitate this connection, especially within schools that are comprised predominately of students of color. As Billingsley and Caldwell (1991) explained, it is in the public school system that the Black church has made its greatest impact on the education of African American children and youth. Many Black churches have provided programs for educational support such as after school tutoring and mentoring.

Fourth, leaders who work in schools populated by urban youth, as Dantley (2003) argued, must embrace the fact that very often, communities of color are deeply grounded in religious or spiritual contexts. Thus, “school leadership grounded in African American spirituality welcomes the engagement of the total self in the educational process” (Dantley, 2005, p. 658) and this example can also be found in school administrators who are also pastors.

Fifth, Dantley (2005) argued that the field of educational leadership must adopt a radical democratic approach to leadership which understands that school administrators’ work extends beyond the building site to include motivating, inspiring, and transforming the lives of those with whom they are engaged. Spiritually attuned leaders who understand how to purposely integrate spirituality into their leadership with strategies to improve students’ academic achievement create spiritually attuned schools. In spiritually attuned schools, students are encouraged by educational leaders to affix a greater meaning and purpose to their acquisition of academic skills.

Sixth, the study of spirituality in the leadership of pastors who are school administrators in a public school setting may provide a model for integrating spirituality in a public school setting where the administrator is not also a pastor. This study sought to present ways in which three of the most critical institutions—the church, the community, and the school—can interact to provide a major resource for strengthening the school environment for all students, parents, staff, and community members.

Finally, rather than arguing about whether religion or spirituality has a place in public education, it may be productive to take a slightly more indirect route, which is one that recognizes the close ties among culture, identity, relationships, and spirituality (Shields, 2006). This study attempted to make these connections.

Delimitations

This study was delimited to male African American pastors who are school administrators in public school settings. However, the study could be useful to other central office administrators, pastors, school districts, school organizations, community members, professors, educational researchers, and leadership preparation programs because of the potential power of spirituality to move leaders and schools to form supportive school environments that promote academic achievement for all students.

Defining Religion and Spirituality

Although they are related, spirituality and religion are not the same. In this research, attention was given to the connection between the school administrator/pastor's Christian religion and their spirituality. While definitions of each of these terms abound, for purposes of this study it was important to arrive at a working or operational definition of both terms.

As a starting point, Starratt and Guare (1995) defined spirituality as the reflection of our inner, honest, probing self and as the expression of our tender, receptive, and hoping heart (p. 200). Some of the better known researchers on leadership and spirituality have defined spirituality variously as that intangible dimension of ourselves that connects us with something greater than ourselves (Dantley, 2003); the acceptance of universal values that individuals believe guide their everyday actions and by which they judge those actions (Fairholm, 1997); the human quest for connectedness (Palmer, 1998); and an expression of the ways in which we understand and live our lives, ground our identities, and relate to the world outside ourselves (Shields, 2006).

Two aspects of these definitions seem pertinent. First, spirituality involves connectedness—with ourselves, with one another, and often, though not always, with a higher or transcendent power beyond ourselves. Second, spirituality leads to action. Spirituality is expressed in our everyday lives; conversely, our actions become a statement of our spiritual values and worldview. Spirituality not only helps answer questions about who we are and what is the meaning of life, but also provides guidance for how we live our lives.

For purposes of this study, the working definition of spirituality is the experience and expression of connection with the Sacred, Divine, Spirit (who is often named God) in everyday life.

In contrast, religion has been defined as a system of practices and beliefs in which a social group engages (Dyson, Cobb, & Forman, 1997). Often, it is spiritual experience that gives rise to organized religion; Johnson (1994) suggested that, in turn, this organized structure may facilitate the development of a person or a person's spirituality. Adding detail, Seul (1999) indicated that religion promotes the stabilization of individual and group identity

by preserving old content (experience) in the form of doctrine, ritual, moral frameworks, role expectations, symbols, and the like (p. 558). In other words, religion uniquely offers both the individual and the collectivity a common history that can be drawn on to build community. Thus, religion plays a social function that goes beyond the spirituality of the individual.

In conducting this research, the working definition of religion is an organized unit with designated leaders, specified beliefs, and expected practices. While not all religions have written scriptures, such documents are central to the religion at issue, namely Christianity.

A word about the term “secular” is in order. For the purpose of this study, the term secular means neither religious nor spiritual.

Definitions

Following are additional operational definition of terms central to the study:

Administrate: Derives from the Latin *administrare*, meaning to help or assist—to “minister to” (Graseck, 2005).

Associate Pastor: Assist pastors with administrative and pastoral duties.

Bi-vocational: A pastor who has two jobs: (1) part or full-time church job and (2) part or full-time job outside of the church (Whitten, 1993).

Calling: A strong impulse from God or Spirit to pursue a life role or task (Dalton, 2001)

God: Refers to a transcendent power that may also be described as Spirit, the Divine, the Holy One.

Pastor: An overseer of a Christian Church.

Preacher: A person who preaches or one who publicly proclaims on religious subjects/
the Christian gospel.

Principal: Head of a primary or secondary school; sometimes referred to as
administrator.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The following discussion reviews literature pertaining to four key aspects of this study: (a) leadership and spirituality; (b) leadership and spirituality in a public school; (c) African American spirituality and religion; and (d) African American leadership.

In order to find information on these topics, a list of key terms were searched within ERIC, Professional Development Collections, Dissertation and Theses, and ATLA religion databases. Key search terms included spirituality and leadership, religion and leadership, African American spirituality, African American religious experience, African American leadership, Black leadership, clergy, pastor, bi-vocation, and spirituality in the workplace. References located spanned the years of 1903 to 2009.

Leadership and Spirituality

Leadership has often been thought of in terms of controlling individuals and group behavior to attain a desired result. This style of leadership is more of a management style. Certainly, leadership involves some specific skills but, ultimately, leadership is more about “being” than about “doing” (Blackaby & Blackaby, 2001; Fairholm, 1997; Maxwell, 1998). In terms of what to look for in leaders, Fairholm (1997) commented, “We need to know not only what people do but understand why they do it” (p. 9). Leadership is not only just getting people to follow, but it is also being an example or a model of what one can contribute to make society better.

The literature on the role of spirituality in leadership is expanding. In his essay, *Spirituality as Leadership*, Greenleaf (1982) argued “to lead stands in sharp contrast to guide, direct, manage, or administer” (p.55). He believed that leading involves creative venture, and

risk and is free from any implication of coercion or manipulation. Greenleaf also connected leading to that which is spiritual, and posited that spirit is an animating force, and that force must encourage one to be a servant of others. It was Greenleaf's view that many of those who occupy positions from which leadership is expected are desperately in need of an infusion of spirit.

Fairholm (1997) added that many business leaders and workers are making the quest for meaning and congruence with their innermost source of power a part of their work goals. According to Fairholm, leadership that integrates spirituality seems to have a much different view than leadership that does not include spirituality. Fairholm believed that this new kind of leadership understands that people need to find meaning through their work.

From a secular perspective, leadership is simply the art of getting other people to do what one wants them to do. However, leadership with spirituality is different. In *Leadership as an Identity*, Loritts (2009) expounded on leadership from a Christian perspective:

Distinctive leadership must be the assignments given to us by God....But by its very nature, Christian leadership is different. God's view of success is very different from that of the world. The world looks at numbers, at growth, at influence and power. But God looks at the human heart and is in the business of drawing people to Him. God gives us assignments and gives us the responsibility of leading others to implement that work. To be a leader is a sacred trust. (pp. 24-25)

When leadership is saturated with spirituality, leading is not only what a person does but also who a person is. Leadership is spirituality in action. In the 17th century, Sir Isaac Newton

explained the physical law of motion this way: For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. This same physical law of compensation can also be applied as a spiritual law. The law of compensation in spiritual terms is the Golden Rule: “In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you” (Matthew 7:12 NASB). Those who incorporate this rule within their leadership relate in a spiritual manner to people with whom they come into contact everyday.

In public schools

Historically, school districts have supported the development of the school administrator as the instructional and managerial leader of the school. However, the school administrator as an instructional and managerial leader is too narrow a concept to address all of the needs within the public school system (Fullan, 1998, 2003, 2004; Hoyle, 2002; Purpel, 1989; Purpel & McLaurin, 2004). While providing instruction and managing a public school system are a part of what leaders do, Thompson (2005, p. 132) noted that leaders engaged in transforming school systems are continuously surrounded by pressures, resistance, and conflicting forces. Many educational leaders face increasingly demanding and discerning clientele who may challenge the reasons for decisions and the ethical foundations on which they are based (Duignan, 2006). Bolman and Deal (1995) suggested that, because of the increasing level of complexity in the issues that principals deal with daily, there is growing consensus of a need for a new paradigm to move beyond the traps of conventional thinking. One of these efforts to avoid the traps is to look into the role of spirituality in leadership. Since spirituality is a leadership issue (Fairholm, 1997, p. 54), it makes sense to understand the role of spirituality and leadership in the public school setting.

During the past three decades, significant contributions have been made to the affective domain of leadership as well as spirituality in the public schools. This leadership domain includes servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1980), charismatic leadership (Conger, 1989), ethical leadership (Starratt, 1991), authentic leadership (Evans, 2000), moral leadership (Fullan, 2001,2003, 2004; Sergiovanni, 1992), and purpose-driven leadership (Dantley, 2003). The majority of the initial research about spirituality and leadership originated in the arena of business leadership. More practical studies are needed that examine the connection between spirituality and leadership within the context of school leadership. In particular, attention needs to be given to African American educators and their perspectives on leadership and spirituality.

A theoretical approach

In their discussion of spirituality and leadership, Starratt and Guare (1995) suggested that spirituality of leadership has a lot to do with what they call “risk belief” (p.193). Risk belief in the spirituality of leadership occurs when leaders realize the risk in speaking about the sacred nature of human life. In other words, it is risky to believe that within oneself there is a sacred nature that can assist a leader in moving beyond mediocre routines and practices of leadership to create leadership that responds to others and to situations with openness, acceptance, and reverence.

The challenge, then, is for those in educational leadership to gain an understanding of the acceptable role of religion and spirituality established in public school systems. The separation of church and state does not mean that matters related to “church,” such as spirituality, cannot be brought into public schools (Shields, 2005). Discussions of spirituality

are avoided because of prohibitions on teaching religion or proselytizing (Shields), confusion about legal interpretations, and misunderstandings of the difference between religion and spirituality. The current study attempted to clarify how individuals, who, on one hand represent the church (pastors) and, on the other hand represent the state (school administrators) yet deal with spirituality in their work as educational leaders.

Shields' (2005) argument is that it is incumbent on educational leaders to understand their own spirituality (what it is they are present to) and how their desire for connectedness shapes their understanding of their work. Palmer (1998, p. 2) noted that teachers project the condition of their souls on their students, their subject matter, and their ways of being together. Whether it is intentional or not, educational leaders also project the condition of their souls on those whom they lead. Leaders are people who are able to make meaning of what they are called to do and have the ability to motivate others to do the same. Once educational leaders understand that spirituality plays a role in their leadership, they will recognize the deeply personal, ethical, and moral nature of their work (Shields, 2006). When this self-knowledge is gained, they will begin to recognize that there are also deeper levels for those whom they lead, and they will understand the importance of not leaving their ethnicity, class, gender, or spirituality at the door. Furthermore, when educational leaders understand that those whom they lead are much more than lesson plans, grades, and subjects, they will understand the need for openness, trust, care, and compassion in their leadership.

The "story" of spirituality and leadership is continually being developed and legitimated in the broader field of educational leadership (Hafner & Capper, 2005). Hafner and Capper pointed out that discussions of spirituality and leadership first became legitimate because White men espoused them. However, there is always room for more stories to give

insight into spirituality and leadership. The current study attempted to add more stories by examining the role spirituality plays in the leadership of African American school administrators who are also pastors. The spiritual and administrative sides are both important in guiding a school system that is dedicated to helping each student become a successful, ethical individual (Hoyle, 2002). Conversely, when leaders do not attend to their spiritual side, their leadership and the culture of their school can be affected. Thompson (2005) claimed “a leader who has cultivated spiritual silence (e.g. prayer, meditation, or reflection) is better able to help others to keep the real work in focus” (p. 41). Palmer (1994, p. 25) added that a leader must take special responsibility for what is going on inside his or her own self, inside his or her consciousness, lest the act of leadership create more harm than good.

Furthermore, leaders who are also aware of their spiritual side understand their own imperfections well enough to be merciful and patient with the imperfections of others (Thompson, 2005). Spirituality that promotes compassion, mercy, and trust creates a school culture and environment that fosters connection and innovation. Such an environment and culture is essential to the success of a school.

Empirical research

In order to support, on empirical grounds, the theoretical framework of the role of spirituality in leadership, five research studies were reviewed. A study conducted by Marshall (1992) on school administrators' values revealed that, when school administrators were asked what guided them when they faced ethical dilemmas in their work, they continually referred to religion and family background as providing guidance. Marshall stated, that with no hesitation, one fourth (25%) of her sample of administrators talked about

guidance from God or from moral principles instilled by their church and family. In addition, when faced with difficult situations, administrators relied on religious values, family and personal value systems, their commitment to the ethic of caring, and their respect for the value of community. All of these components may be aspects of spirituality enacted within leadership.

In a study of the role of spirituality in the work of four public school principals, Ramirez (2009) found that the principals' definition of spirituality was heavily impacted by formative elements in the principals' early lives. The meaning of leading through spirituality for these four principals connected their spirituality to different sources; however, one key theme was the recognition, development and utilization of a spiritual filter. All participants stated that they used a spiritual filter as a basis for decision-making and as an informed framework for their leadership.

In another study, Keyes, Hanley-Maxwell, and Capper (1999) conducted research with a principal over a 15-month period to identify the leadership behaviors that were evidenced by the principal to support inclusive schooling efforts. They found that the principal's behaviors were supported by a spirituality grounded in six beliefs: (a) valuing personal struggle; (b) recognizing the dignity of all people; (c) blending the personal and professional; (d) believing people are doing their best; (e) listening; and (f) dreaming.

In a study of African American female principals, Hooper-Atlas (2002) asked participants how spirituality influenced their leadership behaviors or decision-making. Their responses were that spirituality influenced: (a) their choice to become a principal; (b) their work as a principal; (c) their decision-making; (d) the ways they made their spirituality visible in the school; and (e) their views on leadership.

In a study to understand leadership experiences of Black men, McClellan (2006) asked participants in what ways racialized (distinguished by race) and spiritual experiences influenced their leadership. McClellan found that the participants navigated through personal and professional obstacles by relying heavily on spiritual relationships with others and/or a higher power as they led through service. The findings also revealed that the participants exercised their leadership by using spirituality, servanthood, and their identity as Black men.

Although these studies looked at different aspects of the role spirituality plays in leadership, and revealed that spirituality does play an important role for many school administrators, no study considered the role of spirituality for individuals in dual leadership roles in both public and private institutions. More empirical investigation needs to be conducted in the area of the role of African American spirituality in leadership, especially in the lives of those who can speak to how they integrate spirituality in their leadership without violating the Establishment Clause. The current study of African American pastors who are also school administrators in public school will add to this literature.

Values, morals, and ethics: Aspects of leadership

Who school leaders are, what they do, attend to, or seem to appreciate is constantly watched by students, teachers, parents, and members of the community (Deal & Peterson, 1999). School leaders must be attuned to their values, morals, and their spirituality because those qualities are the things that create success in an organization (Dantley, 2005; Deal & Peterson, 1999; Fullan, 2001; Starratt & Guare, 1995). Commitment to the environment and to the broader global community is “moral purpose writ large” (Fullan, 2001). Moral purpose writ large, as defined by Fullan, is “the principled behavior connected to something greater

than ourselves that relates to human and social development” (p. 25). In other words, when leaders demonstrate commitment to their living, they are showing commitment to those with whom they are working and those beyond their community.

Many leadership programs do not include the aspect of spirituality in the curriculum (Starratt & Guare, 1995). Previous research and discussions (Capper, 1993; Greenleaf, 1982; Hafner & Capper, 2005; Palmer, 1998; Shields, 2005; Starratt, 1995; Tisdale, 1999) have made a case that providing opportunities for prospective school leaders to speak about their own positions on the subject of spirituality would be worthwhile. Attention to their own spiritual selves could enable school leaders to see themselves not only as successful leaders but also as ethical, moral, and spiritual leaders. As Fairholm (1997, p. 192) noted, spiritual leaders empower followers to build and live out of a personal belief system that reflects their innate goodness, ethics, and morality. Sergiovanni (1992) called this concept of moral leadership the head, heart, and hand of leadership. What influences a leader is “the heart of leadership,” which means what a person believes, or their internal world. The head of leadership, in contrast, has to do with a leader’s theory of practice. The hand of leadership is a leader’s action. “At the very heart of leadership,” Sergiovanni pointed out, “leadership has to do with what a person believes, values, dreams about, and is committed to. It is the person’s interior world, which becomes the foundation for her or his reality”(p. 7).

Leadership preparation programs need to challenge aspiring administrators more to identify the grounding of their ethical principles and moral values as human beings and as educators.

Administrators’ professional preparation programs and their professional support systems must include experiences that help them articulate values and practice ethical decision-making (Marshall, 1992; Starratt, 2004). “With such values guiding decision

making at the school site,” Marshall argued, “we should expect increased equity, empowerment, and professional development of teachers; parents feeling listened to, and students experiencing school as a nurturing environment” (p. 382). According to Fairholm (1997), “Spiritual values act as a guideline for doing the right thing and [are] the underlying element in decision-making” (p. 53). Since spirituality lies at the core of our values, ethics, and beliefs (Fairholm, 1997), more research needs to be conducted in the area of administrators whose leadership experiences are infused with spirituality to discover what how spirituality relates to leadership experiences.

Sergiovanni (1990) pointed out that the school administrator ministers to the needs of the school and works to serve others so they are better able to perform their responsibilities. Using explicitly religious imagery, he said, “In addition to manager, minister, and servant, the leader functions as a high priest by protecting the values of the school” (p. 24). The role of high priest carries high symbolic weight. Similarly, “administrators who want to lead,” according to Starratt (2004), “have to realize that they are called to a higher standard, something beyond keeping the ship afloat or making do with what they’ve got.” This higher standard specifically refers to “higher moral standard of proactive responsibility” (pp. 61-62). The current study explores how school administrator / ministers who lead integrate spirituality into their leadership.

African American Leadership and Spirituality

Several studies in the literature focus on spirituality and leadership (Capper et al., 2000; Dantley, 2003a, 2003b; Greenleaf, 1970, 2002, 2003; Shield, 2005); spirituality within the African American tradition (Dantley, 2003; Milner, 2006; Pinn, 2002, Stewart, 1999); and

pastoral leadership development (Berman, 1997; Brewster, 1996; Davies, 1998; Groshch & Olsen, 2000; McKenna, Boyd, & Yost, 2007, Meek et al, 2000, 2003; Meloy, 1986; Mines & Anderson, 1995; Ruzicka, 1997; Von Stroh, Laliotis, & Grayson, 1985). However, although the literature on leadership and spirituality has increased in the past thirty years, few studies have been conducted on leadership and spirituality from the vantage point of the African American experience. According to Dantley (2003a) and others, spirituality has served as the very bedrock of African American life. The spirituality of African American people has not been considered to be separate from their everyday experiences. As Lincoln (1974) stated:

Black people have always taken their religion seriously. For them religion is personal—almost tangible; it is never an abstraction disassociated from the here-and-now, the experiences that shape the life situations of real people who are suffering and dying and struggling against forces they don't understand. Black Christians have never learned to rationalize God; rather they personalize Him and include Him in their life situations. (p. 149)

It would be difficult to separate one's spiritual beliefs from what one does on a daily basis, regardless of profession. As Dantley (2003) and Lincoln (1974) argued, spirituality is an important part of the African American community. To understand the implications for leadership, one only needs to look at the roles played by Black ministers in the community beyond the church.

Pastors and churches

Literature that focuses on African American leadership as being rooted in the church is extensive (Dantley, 2003a; Henry, 1990; Milner, 2006; Pinn, 2002; Raboteau, 1999;

Walters & Smith 1999). For many African American leaders their training ground has been the Black church, for it was there, and there alone, that they were allowed ownership of their own organization. Scholars of the African American experience (Billingsley, 1999; Du Boise, 1903; Gilkes, 1998; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990; Mays & Nicholson, 1933; Patillo-McCoy, 1998) have recognized pastoral leadership as critical in the history of African Americans. Black churches historically have served as the centers of African American life and identity (Best, 1998, p. 14). Tribble (2005) pointed to the relationship between the Black church and secular institutions throughout African Americans' history:

Although Black secular organizations created in the twentieth century have lessened the dominance of the Black church, there is still not a complete differentiation among the spheres of religions, education, politics, and economics in the Black community. Hence, clergy and other members of the Black church exercise a great deal of influence in institutions and political processes as they work through the Black secular institutions. (p. 5)

Notwithstanding this interrelatedness of the Black church and various secular spheres, very little has been written on the matter. Specifically, for purposes of the current study, little attention has been given to the influence of Black churches on the educational sphere. It was an assumption of this study that the issue of pastor/school administrator is an example of this overlapping of spheres. As Best (1998) stated, "Leadership of American oppressed groups, especially Black and religious in nature, has seldom received its proper respect in research concerned with models and methods" (p. 21). The research here serves to address that need for more research.

While the church has been the main arena of social life in which Blacks could aspire to become leaders (Frazier, 1974), the political institution is where most clergy have exercised leadership outside of the walls of the church. Many African American religious leaders have played active roles in both protest and electoral politics. In part, ministers were encouraged to assume these roles because of their moral integrity. In addition, they enjoyed certain flexibility in terms of time commitments. They were also trained in the oratorical and organizational skills needed for political leadership. Ministers took an active role in politics during the period of Reconstruction as a matter of course because they were the major profession within the Black community (Raboteau, 1999; Taylor, 2006). During the political Reconstruction period as many as 31 ministers became Representatives in the Congress of the United States, including two who were elected to the United States Senate (Raboteau, 1999). Following their removal from politics after post-Reconstruction, in the South, “Black preachers generally devoted themselves to their church, though in some cases they became heads of Negro schools” (Frazier, 1974, p. 48). In the 18th and 19th centuries, Black clergy were arguably the best-educated group in the Black community (Pinn, 2002). As Du Bois (1903) suggested:

The Negro minister needs to know and do more than preach and pray. He must be possessed of public spirit and have the capacity to cooperate in educational and other social movements which promise present as well as prospective salvation. He must fit himself to preach and also practice the scripture that hath the promise of the life that now is as well as that which is to come. (p. 194)

Du Bois called for Black Christian pastors to be moral, spiritual, intellectual, and practical. Du Bois's vision of the Black ministry was indicative of the historically prominent role of Black Christian pastors in mobilizing people for mission in the public arena as well as in maintaining and developing their congregations (Tribble, 2005). Black pastors have a long history of engaging in more than one occupation. This vision of mission in the public arena appears to be displayed in the life of the bi-vocational pastor and school administrator.

Bi-vocational pastors

A bi-vocational minister is one who has a secular job as well as a paid ministry position in a church. The number of bi-vocational ministers seems to vary in different churches, denominations, and locations (Dorr, 1988; Whitten, 1993). Bi-vocational pastors can be found in the Episcopal Church, the United Church of Christ, the Presbyterian Church, Pentecostal churches, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church and several denominations within the National Baptist Convention, USA Inc., National Baptist Convention of America, Progressive National Baptist Convention, National Missionary Baptist Convention, and Southern Baptist Convention.

A 1983 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) report revealed that the majority of their bi-vocational pastors were concentrated in the central part of the nation, in an area that has boundaries including North Carolina, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, and all states South (Dorr, 1988). In a 1991 research report, Whitten (1993) noted that bi-vocational pastors were located throughout the SBC and are concentrated more heavily in the South and Northwest (p.2). Among the few who have written about bi-vocational ministers are Bickers

and Dorr. In his book, *The Bi-vocational Pastor*, Dorr (1998) suggested "...the total number of bi-vocational pastors could be higher because several hundred small churches usually do not report" (p. 36). According to the (SBC) 1983 Report, a bi-vocational pastor serves almost one out of every four SBC churches. In the 1991 SBC Report, Whitten (1991, p. 2) reported that out of 9,944 churches surveyed, 9,740 actually had bi-vocational pastors.

The Church of Nazarene included in one report that one third of their pastors identified themselves as bi-vocational. According to Bickers, the author of *The Tent Making Pastor: The Joy of Bi-vocational Ministry*, nearly 75% of African-American churches are led by bi-vocational ministers" (personal communication, November 4, 2009).

Bickers (2000, p. 26) also reported that approximately 12% of all Protestant pastors in the United States are bi-vocational. The Southern Baptist Convention has approximately 13,000 bi-vocational pastors, which means that roughly 30% of its churches are led by such pastors. Some researchers believe that, among all the Baptist churches in America, nearly three fourths (73%) are led by bi-vocational ministers.

However, current numbers of bi-vocational ministers nationally are difficult to obtain due to the large number of churches who do not file a report about their church organization. Overall, the bi-vocational numbers continue to be of interest as more pastors recognize that some advantages to working in a secular job are: economic needs, evangelism needs, and personal performance/call fulfillment (Dorr, 1998).

Bi-vocational ministry is not new; on the contrary, it has a rich heritage (Dorr, 1988). In the Old Testament, many of the biblical figures supported themselves through some secular means as they fulfilled their places in God's plans for His people. Adam was a farmer, his son Abel was a shepherd, and Cain was a tiller of the ground. Other servants of

God, such as Abraham, raised cattle; Moses was a shepherd for his father in law. David was a ruler and Daniel was a government official in Babylon.

Historically, the teachers of the law and religious leaders were not allowed to accept payment from those they taught or judged (Bickers, 2006; Dorr, 1988). In the Jewish tradition the rabbis were expected to perform their religious and legal duties without demanding a fee because they were supposed to support themselves. Therefore, it was necessary for them to have some other source of income. Since it was the custom for Jewish boys to have a trade (Dorr, 1988, p. 7), many rabbis took on trades such as farmer, carpenter, merchant trader, shepherd, and tentmaker.

Bi-vocational ministry is sometimes referred to as tent-making ministry because of the apostle Paul, who was the New Testament biblical example of bi-vocational ministry because he supported himself financially by making tents (Bickers, 2006; Dorr, 1999; Tribble, 2005). The foundation for this notion appears in Acts 18:1-4 (NIV), where the Bible stated that Paul made tents as well as preached. These verses indicate that Paul initially had a secular occupation for financial support and, subsequently, he went to the synagogue and began his ministry of preaching the gospel. There are also accounts of Paul's bi-vocational ministry in his letters to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 4:12; 2 Cor. 11:7-9) and Thessalonians (1 Thess. 2:9; 2 Thess. 3:8). Paul reminded readers that he was not a financial burden to them as he ministered in their cities; with his own hands he provided for his physical needs (Bickers, 2006).

Similarly, in African American tradition, most of the slave preachers labored in the fields or worked as artisans and blacksmiths, besides carrying out their duties as preacher (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990). Dual vocations among Black preachers was established among

the Black churches long before the idea of tent-making ministries or the notion of worker-priests holding full-time, secular jobs became a topic in White theological seminaries (Hoekendijk, 1966; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990). Lincoln and Mamiya stated, “Most contemporary Black clergy worked at other occupations out of financial need” (p. 132). In the early church, the legitimacy of the preachers was suspect when a church provided a salary for those who preached (Dorr, 1988, p. 22). According to Bickers (2000), “*Secular* work is a powerful opportunity to be a witness both to employers and to fellow employees” (p. 38). Both the secular and religious jobs are avenues for ministry and are an opportunity to show excellence in the workplace (Bickers, 2000, 2007; Dorr, 1988).

Given the bi-vocational tradition of Black pastors, it is not surprising that some Black pastors would be serving as school administrators. What makes such service distinctive is that the spirituality of African Americans, itself, has distinctive features.

African American Religion and spirituality

Most of the literature that discusses the role of religion in public schools begins with the influence of White Protestantism on the early development of public schools. From their founding over 400 years ago, public schools have tended to reflect the religious heritage of the White Protestant majority (Marshall, 2006; Nord, 1995). Nevertheless, African American Christianity is qualitatively different from White Protestantism.

Wilmore (1998) described African American Christianity as a product of the African traditional religions that slaves brought with them to these shores. It resulted from the experiences of oppression attendant to capture and enslavement, the Black folk religion that developed among slaves in the South, and the White evangelical tradition to which slaves were introduced in the first half of the 1800s. Of particular importance are the residual

features of African Traditional Religions that have endured to the present day, such as a sense of the pervasive spiritual character of the world, a strong emphasis on communalism rather than individualism, and a worldview that does not separate the sacred and the secular. Many African Americans became leaders precisely because their sense of Christian responsibility compelled their involvement in the larger social, political and educational world. According to Stewart (1997), “African American spirituality combines the best of both worlds (Anglo and African cultures) into a framework for human existence” (p. 4).

In the African American experience, spirituality is never seen as something that can be left at the door. African American spirituality is an expression of human freedom and, without over-generalizing, the practice of spirituality as an expression of freedom has created a context in which African Americans can securely be who they are, wherever they go (Stewart, 1997, p. 20). Stewart noted that African American spirituality, in other words, generates a sense of wholeness. School administrators who are also pastors are likely to show this wholeness in the public school setting.

The religion of African Americans has shown a wide range of diversity (Raboteau, 1999), including Protestant and Catholic expressions, Islam, Judaism, and neo-African religion. One of the things that these expressions generally had in common was that their spirituality enabled their survival. Stewart (1999) argued that “the great gift of African American spirituality is its capacity ritually to translate harsh and brutal realities into idioms, rituals, and hermeneutics that create their own survival mechanisms for human existence” (p. 16). There is a positive aspect of African American spirituality that has enabled Black people to develop, translate, and transform the difficult times and adversities of their social condition into a meaningful spiritual culture of survival.

Moreover, as Stewart emphasized, “Compassion, empathy, and human understanding still prevail for our adversaries, and this is one of the great strengths of our spirituality: freedom from soul-consuming hatred and freedom to choose responses to oppression and dehumanization that exemplify positive consciousness and ultimately preserve the integrity of the soul” (p. 2). These are some of the persevering characteristics and qualities that are needed to lead an organization or institution through existing oppressive and devaluating conditions, such as segregated and poor funded schools; unqualified and inexperienced teachers; the large gap between standardized test result of White students and minority students; and the high rates of suspension and dropping out among Black and Hispanic students produced within our public schools and our society today.

The Black church, as the primary conveyor of spirituality, has the potential to encourage and influence other institutions in our society. Spirituality, according to Hill (1971), is one of the most distinctive features of African American culture. Thus, in the African American community the church is more than a religious institution (Billingsby, 1991). Further research on the role that spirituality plays in the leadership of African American school administrators who are pastors will add to the knowledge base of how ministers interact in the public arena. More specifically, this study offers insight into how leadership and spirituality can come together in a public school setting without violating the First Amendment.

Administrators and schools

Historically, African American have been underrepresented in school administration (Brown, 2005). According to *Education Week* (2000), African Americans were principals at

all Black schools before desegregation; however, after the Supreme Court ruling that “separate but equal” was unconstitutional, many African American principals were demoted or lost their job. When school integration finally took place in Southern states, African American principals who were in charge of predominately Black schools were the ones who usually lost their jobs to White administrators (Alston, 2005; Brown, 2005; Ogletree, 2004; McCray, Wright, & Beachum, 2007). In the dismissal of African American school administrators and the increase of White administrators in Black schools, the African American voice in leadership practices was lost. According to Valverde and Brown (1988, p. 149), during the three-year period from 1967 to 1970 in North Carolina, the number of Black principals declined from 670 to 170, in Alabama from 250 to 40, and in Louisiana from 1966 to 1971, the number of Black principals decreased from 512 to 363. After a sharp decline in the number of African American school administrators immediately following *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954), their employment began to stabilize and, by 1982, the percentage of Black principals rose to 7.7%, or approximately 3,320 principals (Brown, 2005). In 1980, the appointment of African Americans to leadership positions had reached a plateau, but in recent years it has regressed (Valverde, 2003). Overall, the decline after *Brown* left a gap in the research on leadership of African American school administrators in general and the impact of spirituality in particular.

Until recently, most research has looked at the effect of culture and community on African American school leadership. These researchers (Lomotey, 1989; Monteiro, 1977; Murtada & Larson, 1999) noted that African American and White leaders appear to lead differently. In the area of education, African American school administrators seem to place a higher priority on community involvement in the educational environment than do their

White colleagues (Lomotey, 1989). Lomotey also noted that African American principals have a strong commitment to African American students and a deep conviction that these students can learn. According to Valverde (1987), African American principals function as role models who encourage positive teacher-student relationships in the classroom.

Furthermore, the African American principal's ethnic identity shapes the social constructs of his or her administrative role and defines his or her mission for schools (Pollard, 1997). The role of community involvement for African American school administrators is a tenet similar to concepts found in the role of spirituality.

As Fairholm (1997) defined it, the root of spirituality is the genuine concern for everything that is living (p. 6). Spirituality at its best prompts individuals to serve others (Greenleaf, 2002). Furthermore, as suggested by Starratt and Guare (1995), spirituality is made evident when a person consistently responds to other people and situations with an openness, acceptance and reverence for the way other people are and the way conditions are.

Social Capital Theory, Spirituality and Leadership in Public Schools

Putman (2000) argued that, whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to the properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals. Like other forms of capital, social capital generally refers to the available resources upon which an individual or a community can draw. Thus, social capital theory suggests the idea that social networks have value and, through these social networks, working together with others can affect the productivity of individuals and groups. In the case of social capital, the current study promotes that spirituality is an available resource upon which an individual or a community can draw.

According to Dantley (2005), administrators with the ability to increase community involvement also consider that the events that take place in schools have a broader significance than merely the mastery of academic achievement. Dantley's thoughts are similar to social capital theory in that schools benefit from a network of social relations characterized by trust, working together for the success of students, parents, and faculty. When schools are perceived by the students as being integral participants in the life of the community, they are more likely to see academic achievement as not only an expectation maintained in the schoolhouse but also in the church, community recreation center, grocery store, bank, and individual homes (Dantley). Dantley also perceived that school administrators must have the ability to motivate students to see beyond academic achievement to their individual identities and towards the broader community.

Research by Coleman, Hoffer, and Kilgore (1982), which compared the success of private school students to that of public school students, revealed that the greater success of students in religious private schools was credited to the overlapping, cross-generational social networks provided by the partnerships among families, church, and school. Research by Bryk, Lee, and Holland (1993) complemented the work of Coleman et al. (1982) on religious schools, with a similar finding that Catholic school students were more successful partly because of the relationships among school, family, and church.

Research on Catholic schools by Bryk et al. (1993) revealed that principals in Catholic schools have an important spiritual dimension in their leadership. This spirituality is manifested in the language of community that principals use to describe their schools, and in their actions as they work to achieve the goal of community: "Academic knowledge and skill is important, but education also concerns shaping the human will to display a sense of craft in

one's work, a commitment to caring in personal relations with others, and a shared sense of responsibility for social welfare" (Bryk et al., p. 322).

Public schools can foster social capital by looking at the leadership of pastors who are school administrators in the public schools. School administrators who are also pastors can be a mediator between both the school network and the church network, which can affect the productivity of both groups. These efforts can increase productivity of students by working together to provide educational resources and support for students within their community. Research on pastors who are public school administrators can provide a model and practical instructions on how different communities (church, schools, and families) can work together to improve the success of the students that they have in common.

Public schools are not only social networks but, similar to the church, they are also moral institutions. Greenfield (1993, p. 268) argued that the public school administrator is a moral agent with a specific responsibility to take actions and make decisions in a distinctly moral manner. Furthermore, he stated that the school itself is a moral institution and serves a moral socialization function in our society, which is to contribute to the formation of students' core values and beliefs. Within African American culture, the church is also a moral institution and serves a moral socialization function in African American culture (Billingsley, 1991; Frazier, 1974; Lincoln, 1974; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990; Stewart, 1999). If the church is seen as a moral institution, then the church leader can be seen as a moral agent. Since bi-vocational pastors act in both institutions—the church and the school—it seems beneficial to explore the role that spirituality plays in the leadership of school administrators who are pastors.

Examination of spirituality in the leadership of Black public school administrators who are pastors may provide a model not only for predominately African American schools but also for schools in general. The intention in this study is to explore the role of spirituality in their leadership, in addition it can demonstrate how three critical institutions--the church, the community, and the school--can interact to strengthen the school environment for the benefit of all students, parents, staff, and community members.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Epistemology

The epistemological scope for this study stems from social constructionism. The focus of social constructionism is to uncover the ways in which individuals and groups participate in the creation of their perceived social reality (Crotty, 1998). Social constructionism stands on the idea that meaning is not discovered, but constructed, and that all reality, as meaningful reality, is socially constructed. In the case of social constructionism in this study, those social realities are an individual's culture, family background, and personal experiences. Since the purpose of this study was to understand the meaning of a pastor/school administrator's experience from his perspective, my theoretical perspective was interpretivism. The interpretivist approach seeks the interpretation of the social life world derived culturally and historically (Crotty, 1998). Although this study is not historical research, the historical religious experiences of African Americans were taken into consideration during analysis. So, the interpretivist approach was used to gain a better understanding of the role of spirituality in leadership by looking at both cultural and historical interpretations of these individuals who are pastors and school administrators.

The methodology for this study was phenomenological research and the methods were individual interviews. In conducting phenomenological research, the researcher identifies the "essence" of human experiences concerning a phenomenon, as described by participants in a study (Creswell, 2003; Merriam & Associates, 2002). Phenomenology "involves a return to experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for reflective structural analysis that portrays the essence of the experience"

(Moustakas, 1994, p. 13). The goal of this study was to explore the role of spirituality in the leadership of African American pastors who are public school administrators, thus allowing educational leadership professionals to understand the complexity of including spirituality in leadership in a public school setting. Seidman's (1985, 1991) interview methodology fit this study better than other approaches. According to Seidman, "The method of in-depth, phenomenological interviewing applied to a sample of participants who all experience similar structural and social conditions gives enormous power to the stories of a relatively few participants" (p. 48).

The similar structural and social conditions for the participants in this study were that they were all African American men who were pastors and public school administrators. In addition, the majority of the participants grew up in a religious home environment in the South. Therefore, I made sure that I had enough data to make connections among the experiences of the participants I interviewed. I knew I had reached saturation when I had begun to hear repeated information reported. Lincoln and Guba (1985) referred to this point of saturation as "qualitative informational isomorph," in which "a sample is expanded until redundancy with respect to information is reached, at which point sampling is terminated" (p.233).

Design

The participants in this study explained their experiences of what it was like being a school administrator and a pastor in a public school setting. The goal of qualitative research using in-depth interviews was to explore a topic more openly and to allow interviewees to express their opinions and ideas in their own words (Esterberg, 2002). Therefore, data for

this study were collected through in-person interviews and phone interviews. As previously mentioned, the purpose of this study was to understand the role that spirituality plays in the leadership of individuals who are both school administrator and pastor.

Selection of Participants

The selection of appropriate participants to interview for this study increased the likelihood of collecting relevant and useful data. Therefore, the strategies for selecting participants included purposeful sampling and the snowballing approach. Purposeful sampling is a strategy in which particular settings, persons, or activities are selected deliberately in order to obtain information that can't be retrieved as well from other choices (Maxwell, 2005). For this study, the purposeful sampling for participant selection included the criteria that participants: (a) identify as African-American male; (b) work as both a school administrator/assistant school administrator and a pastor/minister/assistant pastor of a local church; and (c) work in a public K-12 school setting.

I also used the snowballing approach, in which one participant leads to another. For example, I asked the participants if they knew of any other individuals who have similar backgrounds that would fit this study. I used the snowball approach because I was not certain how many individuals would fit the criteria for this study. When I did not find many participants who were active administrators and pastors, I included participants who were central office administrators, assistant school administrators, assistant pastors, or retired.

I searched for participants in four ways. First, I asked pastors I knew if they knew of anyone who was both a pastor and a school principal. Second, I contacted ministerial organizations and administrative organizations to see if they collected any demographics of members with this type of background. Third, I contacted faculty in educational leadership

programs and selected K-12 public school districts to see if they knew of any administrators with a pastoral background. Finally, I searched advertisements on websites, professional myspace pages, Facebook pages and blogs, asking for individuals with this background who were interested in participating to contact me.

After the search was completed, I interviewed seven participants three times, and one participant twice, which made a total of 23 interviews. However, I lost two interviews from two of my participants because of problems I had with my recording equipment. As a back up, I took detailed notes during the first interviews of those two participants and I asked some of the questions from the first interview again during the second interview session. Because I lost contact with one of the participants after the second interview, I was unable to complete his third interview session. Therefore, I completed my interview sessions with a total of 23 interviews.

Methods

The primary method of data collection was audio taped and transcribed, semi-structured interviews that lasted approximately 60 to 90 minutes. Interviewing was the most important means of collecting data because it enabled me an opportunity to collect the thoughts and ideals regarding the role that spirituality played in leadership from the participants' point of view (Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Seidman, 1991), which is key for phenemonological study.

The most significant feature of Seidman's (1991) three interview series used in this study was that it allowed participants to make meaning of their everyday lived experiences. Seidman provided an account of a three-interview mode of in-depth phenomenological

interviewing designed by Dolbeare and Schuman (Schuman, 1982). The three interview series are an interview process: the first interview establishes the context of the participants' experience; the second allows participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within the context in which it occurs; and the third encourages the participants to reflect on the meaning their experience holds for them (Seidman, 1991). Seidman's three interview series was important for this study because the interviews allowed the participants to walk me through their life story to the point of where they were now in their leadership. In addition, Seidman's three interview series were significant for this study because this method of gathering data allowed the participants to reflect on their leadership practices when they may have thought that what they did as leaders was not unique.

It is difficult to explore the meaning of an individual's experience without knowing his or her background. Therefore, a challenge was to stay within the structure of the interviews and maintain a sense of focus for each interview in the series while also being open to new directions of the conversation. For example, some of the participants attempted to give more examples from their leadership in the church instead of their leadership in the school. Therefore, as the researcher, I had to probe for more responses relating their spirituality to their leadership within the school.

Interview questions

The interview questions were divided into categories guided by the research questions (see Appendix A). The first session focused on the participant's life history. For example, one of the questions was: "How did you come to be a principal/pastor?" Or "what life events led up to you becoming a principal/pastor?" The second session focused on the participant's

detailed experiences. In this session, one of the questions was: “Describe your experiences as a principal/pastor working in a public school setting.” Finally, in the third session, I asked participants to reflect on the meaning of their experiences. For example, “How does your spiritual or religious belief help you overcome obstacles?” “What do you believe to be your role as a leader at this school?” The interview questions were developed from previous research articles that were similar to this study. In addition, some of the questions were derived from my interest in this topic and suggestions from my major professor, committee members, and mentors. By asking these types of questions, I sought to expand upon the literature in the areas of leadership and spirituality.

According to Seidman (1991), “In-depth interviewing is not designed to test hypotheses, gather answers to questions, or corroborate opinions but it is designed to ask participants to reconstruct their experiences and to explore their meaning” (p. 77). Interview questions were framed from articles related to spirituality and leadership (Hodge, 2001; Hooper-Atlas, 2002; Marshall, 1992). However, since a limited amount of research has been conducted in this area of study, most of the questions were developed from experiences with individuals with this type of background and from my committee members.

I sent interview questions to my mentor professor who is currently a pastor and an assistant dean in higher education, and asked him for feedback regarding whether the interview would get the data that I needed. As a result of his suggestions, I changed some of the questions and made them more appropriate for the participants I interviewed. The point of this preliminary review was to experience interviewing and to make connections between the three interviewing processes (Seidman, 1991). I received feedback from my mentor who

had a similar background to participants in my study, and his input enabled me to better frame my questions.

One suggestion from my mentor was to be careful not to assume that the participants have matured in their spiritual walk. Following are some of the adjustments that I made to my questions: I *omitted* questions that asked:

- How do you separate your faith and administrative tasks?
- Can you?
- What aspects of your spiritual life give you pleasure?
- What role does your spirituality play in handling life's sorrows?
- Enhancing life's joys?
- Coping with life's pain?
- What does your faith say about personal traits?
- How does your spirituality give you hope for the future?
- Are there particular spiritual rituals or practices that help you deal with life's obstacles?

The questions that I added were:

- How have you changed or matured from those experiences?
- Given what you have said about your life before you became a principal/pastor and what you said about your experiences at work and in the community, how do you understand being both a principal and pastor?

It was my hope that these adjustments would allow the participants to answer from both a personal and a professional perspective instead of only from a personal perspective.

Interview process

The spacing of the interviews in each series depended on the location, time available, and my finances. Ideally, I wanted each interview spaced from three days to a week apart and conducted face-to-face. This time frame would enable the participant to reflect on the first interview and the researcher to maintain a connection between the three interviews (Seidman, 1991). Each interview should last for approximately 90 minutes because “anything less than that allotted time may cause incomplete data” (Seidman, 1991). However, the importance of the participants’ time was taken into consideration. Therefore, the participant and I decided upon the length of time before the interview process began. For this study, the interview times varied anywhere from 45 minutes to 90 minutes. Each participant answered the questions differently. Some of the participants took longer to answer certain questions and other participants were short and precise. On some occasions, participants spoke on certain issues before the questions were asked and so there wasn’t a need to re-ask a question unless for clarification.

In addition, I had to be aware of my participants’ elite status. Elite individuals are considered to be the influential, the prominent, and the well-informed people in an organization or community and are selected for interviews on the basis of their expertise in areas relevant to the research (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 83). The administrators in this study fit the elitist description because they were influential and well-informed people in the schools and churches in which they were leaders. The disadvantage of interviewing

participants who are elite, is that they “will often have last minute breaks in their schedule” (Goldstein, 2002); and “they are usually busy people operating under demanding time constraints and are difficult to reach” (Marshall & Rossman). These elite participants were sometimes difficult to get to commit to three 90-minute interviews. Therefore, alternatives to the structure and process were made. Alternatives to the structure and process included conducting interviews over the weekend, for example Friday, Saturday, and Sunday; completing two interviews in one day; conducting interviews longer than a week apart; and conducting some interviews over the phone. Seidman (1991) suggested alternatives to the three-interview structure are appropriate. “As long as structure is maintained that allows participants to reconstruct and reflect upon their experience within the context of their lives, alterations to the three-interview structure and the duration and spacing of the interviews can certainly be explored” (pp. 21-22). For example, before each interview I summarized the discussion of the previous interview and provided an introduction to the next series of interview questions. For example, I said, “Last time we met, you talked about your past experiences but this time could you talk about your current leadership experiences in more detail?” This process enabled the participants to transition to the next series of interview questions.

For this study, I completed two interviews with participants face-to-face and the third interview over the phone. With two participants I completed one interview face to face and two over the phone and with two participants I completed all three interviews over the phone (see Table 1).

Table 1. Type and number of interviews

Participant (Pseudonym)	Number of Interviews	
	Face-to-face	Over the phone
Smith	3	0
London	2	1
Moulton	2	1
Brown	2	1
Webster	2	1
Parks	0	3
Watkins	0	3
Latham*	2	0

*Did not complete third interview

I was only able to interview one of the participants face-to-face for all three interviews because he was located within driving distance from me. I was only able to conduct two interviews with one of the participants because I lost contact with him after the second interview. Although there were changes to the duration and the spacing of interviews, the three-interview structure was maintained in that the participants were allowed to reconstruct and reflect upon their experience within the context of their lives.

Trustworthiness

Four constructs are assumed in qualitative research. The constructs of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) were addressed throughout this study. The first construct addressed in this study was credibility. Marshall and Rossman (1995) explain that the goal of credibility “is to demonstrate that the inquiry was constructed in such a manner as to ensure that the subject was accurately identified and described” (p.143). Credibility was achieved through the approach of member checks and

peer debriefing. Member checking is “the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on, as well as being an important way of identifying your own biases and misunderstanding of what you observed” (Maxwell, 2000, p. 111). I began member checking by sending each participant a summary of the themes that resulted from my data analysis.

Transferability was reached by rich and thick descriptions of the data. It was very important for this study that the participants’ voices speak loud and clear about their experiences as African American administrators and pastors working in a public school setting. Seidman’s (1991) three interview series allowed intensive interviews that enabled me to collect rich data that was detailed and varied enough to provide a full and revealing picture of what was going on (Maxwell, 2000; Becker, 1970). I conducted and transcribed 23 interviews with eight participants, in which they explained the role of spirituality in their leadership and what it was like to be a principal and a pastor in the public school setting. This set of data provided a rich, detailed foundation for my findings and conclusions. Again, I knew I had reached saturation when I had begun to hear repeated information. For example, each participant began to give similar examples of how they were raised in a religious home and their involvement in church.

In order to generate dependability “the researcher attempts to account for changing conditions in the phenomenon chosen for study as well as changes in the design created by increasingly refined understanding of the setting” (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 145). In this study, the phenomenon was the experiences of African American men who were both principal and pastor in a public school setting. One of the participants was promoted from a

high-school principal position to an assistant superintendent three years prior to my study. Another participant was a retired principal, however, he continued to work for different school districts in his area on a contractual basis. Although these two participants were no longer currently site level building school administrators, they were able to reflect dependability because of their past experiences. Seidman's (1991) three-interview series approach appeared to be helpful for these participants because they were able to give input about each focus of the three interviews.

Confirmability addresses the question, do the data help confirm the general findings and lead to the implication (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p.145). In this study, I presented my findings at a peer-reviewed conference and received feedback on my findings and methods. The feedback I received challenged me as to whether or not my findings addressed school policy. Therefore, I went back and rechecked my data to see if any of my findings addressed school policy and if those findings lined up with previous research on spirituality and leadership. I also used an audit trail to establish confirmability. The audit trail is a detailed account of the methods, procedures, and decision points in carrying out the study (Merriam & Associates, 2000, p. 31). I developed an audit trail by explaining the methods that I used in this study, how the participants were selected, and how the data were collected and analyzed. I created Excel spreadsheets that recorded when each interview was completed, transcribed, sent to participants, and what type of interview was used for each session. I also kept each transcribed interview in a computer folder with the dates of the interview and the dates of changes or modifications to the transcripts.

In addition, I kept a journal that included my personal notes and reflections during the study, which addressed reflexivity on the part of the researcher. Through keeping this

journal, I learned that it was difficult for me to separate myself from the participants' experiences. I found that as I listened to these participants share their stories; I wanted to say, "Amen." The word "Amen" is something that is traditionally heard in African American churches and it means, in the Greek language, "so be it," or to be in agreement, or just simply, "I agree." I was not sure if I made that comment during the interview if it would lead the participants to answer in a certain way, but something on the inside of me wanted to shout, "Amen," or even to laugh out in joy! As an interviewer and researcher, it was difficult for me to attempt to remove myself from the expressions that I would give if I were sitting at church listening to a sermon. Thus, journaling my thoughts helped me to put my biases, prejudices, and disagreements on paper instead of only using my emotions for interpretation. For example, one of the participants had different theological views than I do; however, I was able to understand his views because of previous experiences that he had growing up. In addition, some participants made leadership choices in regards to violating students' religious freedom. However, I did not judge or base my interpretation on how spirituality played in their leadership. Putting my thoughts and opinions in my journaling helped me control my biases and opinions during my interpretation of the data.

Validity

Two additional strategies were used to help validate the findings for this study. These were member checking and peer debriefing. I used member checking by sending the themes that resulted from the interviews back to participants to see whether the participants felt that they were accurate. Member checking serves many purposes. Lincoln and Guba (1985) noted that member checking:

1. Provides the opportunity to assess intentionality-what is it that the respondent intended by acting in a certain way or providing certain information.
2. Gives the respondent an immediate opportunity to correct errors of fact and challenge what are perceived to be wrong interpretations.
3. Provides the respondent the opportunity to volunteer additional information.
4. Puts the respondent on record as having said certain things and having agreed to the correctness of the investigator's recording of them, thereby making it more difficult later for the respondent to claim misunderstanding or investigator error.
5. Provides an opportunity to summarize which is the first step along the way to data analysis.
6. Provides the respondent an opportunity to give an assessment of overall adequacy in addition to confirming individual data points. (p. 314)

As a researcher, it was important to honor the shared stories of my participants by being as accurate as possible in summarizing their responses. To ensure that the interpretation of the data was understood and to enhance validity and reliability, the profiles, summary of the themes, and my interpretations were sent to the participants for member checks. Only one of the participants responded to the data sent and commented that everything seemed okay to him.

I also used peer debriefing to enhance the accuracy of the findings. In order to use peer debriefing, I located two peers who reviewed and asked questions about the data to see whether the themes made sense to them. That “someone,” as Lincoln and Guba suggested (1985), should be someone prepared to take the role seriously and challenge the researchers inquiry. The role of a peer debriefer is to review and ask questions about the qualitative study so that the account will resonate with people other than the researcher (Cresswell, 2003, p. 196). One peer debriefer, a doctoral student, stated that they (participants) appeared to be quite reflexive about how they lead as a principal and seemed intentional about not shooting from the hip. They led out their role at a deeper or more conscientious level and they seemed to all hold their identity as a pastor first/principal second. Everything they do seems to reflect this. Another peer debriefer, a faculty member, critiqued my findings by saying that they didn’t see anything that addressed policy issues. The peer debriefers gave me good feedback, asked challenging questions, and were able to understand my themes. Within my findings, I used the insights from my peer debriefers to pay close attention to how the participants identified themselves and how they expressed their spirituality in regards to school policy issues.

Participants

Most of the participants who fit the criteria for this study were located in the Southeast region of the United States and served in urban, small and large school districts, and communities. Three of the participants were from North Carolina, three participants were from Alabama, one was from Iowa, and one was from Pennsylvania. Two of the participants worked as a school administrator (one high school and one middle school). Three participants

were assistant school administrators (two high school and one middle school), one participant was an assistant superintendent, and one participant was an elementary principal (see Table 2). In addition, the location of the interviews varied and depended on participants' preferences. For example, most of the participants were interviewed at their school or their church. Table 3 provides the frequency of participants according to occupation, district, church size, denomination, background, and years of experience in education and ministry. Of the eight participants, the majority were: secondary educators ($n=5$) and pastors ($n=7$); lived in the suburbs ($n=4$) or the city ($n=3$); pastor of a medium-size church ($n=6$); and had more than 22 years of experience as a pastor ($n=5$).

Table 2. Position, school level and location of each participant

Name (Pseudonym)	Position	School Level	Location
Smith	Principal	Middle School	Iowa
London	Assistant Superintendent	District	North Carolina
Moulton	Contract* Principal	High School	North Carolina
Brown	Assistant Principal	High School	Alabama
Webster	Assistant Principal	Middle School	Alabama
Parks	Assistant Principal	High School	Alabama
Watkins	Assistant Principal	High School	North Carolina
Latham	Principal	Elementary	Pennsylvania

*Retired principal who worked on a contractual basis.

Table 3. Characteristics of the participants

Characteristics	Frequency
Occupation	
Elementary principal	1
Secondary principal	5
Retired principal	1
Assistant superintendent	1
Pastor	7
Assistant Pastor	1
District	
Rural	1
Suburban	4
Urban	3
Church size	
Small (2-150)	2
Medium (250-500)	6
Large (500-1,000)	0
Mega-church (1,000+)	0
Denomination	
Baptist	5
Church of God of Prophecy	1
Church of God	1
Presbyterian	1
Background	
Teaching and coaching	1
Teaching and band	1
Elementary teacher	0
Secondary teacher	8
Years of experience in education	
5 to 10	1
11 to 16	2
17 to 22	1
More than 22	5
Total	

N=8

Recruitment Procedure

After generating a list of participants who were principals and pastors, participants were selected to conduct interviews to get a better understanding of their experiences. The primary means of capturing data in an in-depth interview was through audiotaping; therefore I recorded all interviews with permission and written consent of participants.

The participants were contacted by phone to see if they wanted to participate. A detailed description of the purpose of the study was given during the phone conversation (see Appendix D for phone script). Then a copy of the informed consent form was sent by electronic mail for confirmation of the interview time. A second copy of the informed consent was made available before each interview to ensure that all consent forms were signed.

Data Collection and Analysis

The main method of data collection was by audio-taped, semi-structured interviews. Then the interviews were transcribed and coded, and the data were analyzed by transcript-based analysis. After the audio-tapes were transcribed, the transcriptions were analyzed to identify common themes that were revealed throughout the data. The findings were presented and discussed in a rich, descriptive account that was framed by the literature review. The interpretive qualitative design enabled the participants to share their experiences about being both a school administrator and a pastor in a public K-12 school setting.

The interviewing began in December 2008 and was completed in April 2009. The interviews resulted in approximately 400 single-space pages of verbatim transcript. The interviews were taped, transcribed, coded, and developed into themes. Some researchers

suggest that qualitative coding involves three basic procedures: (a) noticing relevant phenomena; (b) collecting examples of those phenomena; and (c) analyzing those phenomena in order to find commonalities, differences, patterns, and structures (Anfara et al., 2002; Esterberg 2002, Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). After completing the process of reading and highlighting the transcripts, each marked passage was labeled according to themes that began to emerge as the transcripts were studied.

The data were presented best in two ways: (a) profiles were developed of the individual participants, which “allows the researcher to present the participant in context, to clarify his or her intentions, and to convey a sense of process and time, all central components of qualitative analysis” (Seidman, 1998, p. 102), and grouped them into categories that made sense; and (b) then excerpts from the interviews were grouped into categories, which were studied to determine themes within the information gathered. In creating the participants profiles, it was important to be faithful to the words of the participants and to identify in the narrative when words were added (Seidman). Therefore, when there was a need for clarity, I bracketed words that I interjected. I also used ellipses when omitting words, skipping paragraphs or pages from the transcript. I deleted repetitious expressions from the profile, such as “uhms,” “you knows,” or “uh-huhs.” In order to honor the confidentiality of the participants, I used pseudonyms for their names, church, schools, and cities.

Researcher’s Role

The qualitative researcher systematically reflects on who he or she is in the inquiry, and is sensitive to his or her personal biography and how it shapes the study (Creswell,

2003). In reflecting on my personal biography, I realized that I have some biases, which shaped this study.

I became a licensed minister in 2000, which was also the same year that I became a certified teacher. My first job in education was working at an alternative high school as a lead teacher. At this alternative school, I realized the importance of encouraging both the students, who had lost all hope in the educational system, as well as myself and the other teachers with whom I worked.

As an associate pastor and a youth pastor, my responsibilities were to build positive relationships with the youth and their families at the church I attended, and organize Bible studies with the youth and schedules for the Bible study teachers. At the church, I also shared leadership responsibilities with another associate pastor who was also the assistant principal at the school where I worked.

When this principal became a head principal and pastor within the same community and school district, I began to see some of the struggles and successes that this principal and pastor experienced in both leadership roles. The principal was later removed from his principal job. Even then I did not realize the uniqueness of his leadership roles until I was introduced to the field of leadership and spirituality. Then I began to ponder if the two leadership roles could be separated.

During one of my educational leadership classes, I read an article (Milne, August 10, 2006) about a high school principal in New York who had been removed from her job following allegations that she engaged in Santeria rituals at the school which involved dripping chicken blood on the floors to cleanse the school of evil presence. Although it was not a form of Christianity, I believe this incident makes a mockery of all religions because

this story gives the impression that all religions are based only on “unusual” practices. How could this principal make it through an entire leadership preparation program and not be trained on what she could or could not do as it related to her religious practice? Is it the leadership preparation program’s responsibility to teach this? Obviously, her resume and interview skills were enough to land her the job of principal of this school, but this act of illegal expression of her religion caused her to lose her job.

Finally, my theoretical lens comes from a Christian perspective. I view the world with a conviction that God created everything that exists in this world and that God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to die for the sins of all humankind. The Christian perspective is grounded in the belief that we are saved by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ and not by rituals or works performed by humankind. From a Christian perspective, “God is Spirit (a Spiritual Being) and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth (reality)” (John 4:24 Amplified Bible). Therefore, as an ordained minister with an administration license, I see events in light of my strong Christian beliefs, as previously mentioned, and my experience as a leader in both school and church. This lens, and having experienced leadership both in school and church, enabled me to interpret the data from both perspectives. In addition, I believe that there may be a chance that I will eventually assume a dual leadership role where I am a principal and a pastor. Therefore, I believe it is wise for me to study the attributes of successful leaders and practice them in these two roles, as well as inform others with similar backgrounds about building for success in leadership.

Insider/Outsider status

As a researcher, I had to be aware of my current status and knowledge of the group that I studied. In order for me to be effective as a researcher I needed to understand my insider/outsider status. Griffith (1998) described the difference between the Insider/Outsider status:

An Insider is someone whose biography (gender, race, class, sexual orientation and so on) gives him or her a lived familiarity with the group being researched--that tacit knowledge informs his or her-research, producing a different knowledge than that available to the Outsider, which is described as a researcher who does not have an intimate knowledge of the group being researched prior to their entry into the group. (p. 362)

I realized that in certain aspects I was an insider because, as previously mentioned, I am an African American male who is an ordained pastor and a licensed school administrator. However, I am also an outsider because I have not held an actual leadership role in either one of my positions, which enables me to be more detached and could be considered an advantage. For example, the participants may see me in more of a mentor/mentee role and may share more as if they see themselves giving advice to an aspiring school administrator or pastor.

As Griffith (1998) noted, “the ‘detachment’ of the outsider allows him/her to see what others take for granted” (p. 364). Nevertheless, there are liabilities and assets to being both an insider and an outsider. One of the liabilities for me was that, because I felt closely connected to these individuals due to our similar backgrounds, I wanted to make sure that I presented

the information that was shared in a positive light. Nevertheless, I was very careful to detach myself from cultural and religious background and try to present the information as a neutral researcher. Although it was very difficult, I tried to think about how those who consider themselves non-spiritual would perceive the data that were being presented. I attempted to maintain this detachment by studying other research on inclusiveness, such as that on social justice. On the other hand, an asset was that I was able to understand both Christian and cultural expressions that were shared during the interview. Thus, I was able to relate immediately to certain stories that participants shared with me.

For my research, my insider/outsider status is closely related to Collins' text, *Black Feminist Thought*. For example, Collins (2008) argued that "racial or ethnic history is not enough to claim insider status" (p. 34). Therefore, as I attempted to contact participants for the study, I realized that, although I am an African American, I was still treated as an outsider by church or school secretaries, the gatekeepers, because I was not a member of the church or the staff within the school district. My African American status was not enough to gain immediate trust from the participants or the gatekeepers; thus, my racial or ethnic background was not enough to claim insider status. However, with my insider status of being a young ordained minister, an aspiring school administrator, and of a similar faith tradition, participants seemed to be willing to share their in-depth experiences with me.

Ethics

Confidentiality was upheld to ensure participants were protected from any harm. All participants of the study and the schools were given pseudonyms, and each participant signed written consent form prior to participating in the study. Furthermore, at the beginning of each

interview I established the importance of confidentiality. Transcribed interviews and tapes were kept in a locked file cabinet. Prior to conducting the study, the research design and methodology were submitted to the Institutional Review Board and approval was granted on September 30, 2008. This application for approval addressed the data collection and analysis procedures, the reporting of the findings and any potential ethical issues that might arise as a result of the study (see Appendix F).

Delimitations

As noted in Chapter 1, this study was delimited to African American school administrators who are pastors in public school settings. Nevertheless, the findings could provide useful information to central office administrators, pastors, school districts, school organizations, community members, professors, educational researchers, and leadership preparation programs about how spiritually guided leadership is included.

Limitations

A limitation of this study was that all of the participants were male. In addition, the purposive and snowball sampling procedures that were used for this study decreased the generalizability of the findings, except in ways in which people identify with stories and depths of human experience.

Another limitation to the study was my ability to gain access to the participants. As mentioned previously, the participants in this study can be considered elites, and were not able to commit to three 90- minute interviews. This limitation caused me to have to change my interview plans. In addition, due to time constraints and the cost of traveling, I had to interview some participants over the phone rather than face-to-face. The concern with this

approach is that, during some phone interviews, the participant and I were sometimes interrupted by other phone calls; thus, it was hard to keep the participant focused, which led to some of the questions appearing choppy. Nevertheless, I was able to guide the participants back to data that I was seeking. Therefore, the data I collected were still useful for the study.

Finally, all of the participants were Christian. Christianity is the majority religion of the United States and of African Americans (Nord, 1995; Kozmin & Lachman, 1993; Marshall, 2006; Frazier & Lincoln, 1974; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990), and it is possible that principals who hold leadership roles in other religious organizations would have a different experience. Furthermore, I realized that I have certain biases about this topic as it relates to my own Christian beliefs and interpretation. Consequently, my questions were directed only toward those beliefs and may not be generalizable to all areas of spirituality and religion. However, it was my hope that my findings can be applied to all forms of religion and spirituality in leadership in order to lay a foundation for further research in this topic, to add to the knowledge pool, and to show transferability between leadership in the private and public institution.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

This chapter presents results from interviews and the emergent themes regarding the role that spirituality plays in participants' leadership. The profiles of the participants suggested three emergent themes: hat switching, code switching, and church as center. As mentioned previously, the purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand the role that spirituality plays in the leadership of African American men who are both pastors and school administrators in public school settings. Information related to the role spirituality plays in their leadership was gathered through face-to-face and telephone interviews using Seidman's three interview series. Throughout Chapters 4 and 5, these participants are referred to as "principal" or by the title "Mr." for those who are not currently building-level principals.

Emergent Themes

In addition to answering the research questions, the transcript data revealed emergent themes. The transcriptions were carefully reviewed, analyzed, and organized into themes (Creswell, 2003) that helped shape the participants' views of the role of spirituality in their leadership. The three themes emerging from the study that address the roles of spirituality in the leadership of African American pastors who are school administrators were: (a) hat switching; (b) code switching; and (c) church as center.

Hat switching

This theme's metaphor of the hat is one way the participants described the role of spirituality in their leadership. "Switch hats" is the language the participants used to describe the uniqueness of their leadership roles. Several of the participants mentioned the role of

spirituality in their leadership and how their bi-vocational backgrounds enabled them to have the ability to “switch hats” from time to time in order to meet a need within their schools. Principals Brown, Parks, Watkins and Mr. London discussed how the ability to “switch hats” was an advantage for them in their leadership. For these school administrators, “hat switching” is the ability to switch titles from school administrator to pastor when someone needs counseling or help in the area of “spiritual” needs within the schools.

Principal Brown, a high school assistant principal, stated that being bi-vocational was probably a plus for him when he first interviewed for the job because of his diverse background and experiences. He discussed how he “switches hats” many times throughout the day:

I switch hats probably 12 times a day. It just depends on what I’m going through. For instance, I’m DHR. That’s the Director of Human Services. So when there’s a DHR case, even though we have counselors, they’ll call me in and on the way they’ll say, “well Principal Brown we need you to come down here and on the way you need to put on your preacher hat”.

Principal Parks explained that his “hat stays on”:

The hat stays on. All the hats stay. I’m a dad. I’m a husband. I’m a pastor. I’m an administrator, and a custodial. I’m a counselor, and a nurse. I’m a coach.

Whatever comes my way, we try to be in a position to deal with it.

Likewise, Principal Watkins stated “they know I wear many hats,” and he used those hats to minister to students who were in need. He explained how those hats were used within the school:

For one, as a principal you sometimes end up being a father or mother figure or a counselor, or confidant and to some extent even a spiritual leader. I know there's teachers who have come to me with spiritual questions and spiritual needs that confided in me about spiritual things.

Mr. London talked about how he switched hats to discipline a teacher who was yelling at students in her class:

I had one teacher who yelled at students and she wanted to yell at them saying, "Y'all sit down and shut up." I took her out of the classroom and brought her to the office and had another teacher go in there and cover the classroom and I told her, I said, "I would not want a teacher to speak to my children that way and nor am I going to allow you to speak to the children I serve as principal that way." This person claimed Christianity, so I used it, I switched hats for a second, I said "And I know you're in the church so therefore you won't find circumstances other than when He cleaned the temple where Jesus got that angry that He yelled and screamed at people." I said, "So if you're going to be saying that you're a Christian, then you got to be a Christian in that classroom, too."

For Mr. London, it was more important for teachers to treat students with care than to just claim a religion or spirituality. To Mr. London, "being a Christian in the classroom" is not yelling and screaming at students, but being a Christian is teaching and serving students with care. It was situations like this that caused Mr. London to step across that line of church and state laws as an administrator and "switch hats" more openly when he knew that person claimed to be a Christian.

These school administrators believed that having different titles and “switching hats” gave them the ability to help students in different ways, and for them those hats caused them to be more effective as school administrators. For example, they felt that at any given moment they had the ability to be counselors, pastors, or school administrators. Although four of the school administrators mentioned the role of “hat switching”, they all agreed that being a pastor is a hat that they wear 24/7. Regardless of the situations these participants encounter on a daily basis, what caused these leaders to reveal that clerical aspect of their spirituality was when a student, parent, or teacher needed extension of care or compassion.

Certainly school administrators who do not have a pastoral background also can switch hats to be a father, coach, counselor, or custodial worker. However, what makes these participants different is that their background as a pastor carries with it a potential conflict of interest (i.e., the separation of church and state laws) in the public schools. For these participants, hat switching enables them to integrate their experience as a pastor into their leadership as a school administrator.

Code switching

Several of the participants discussed the role of spirituality in their leadership as code switching. Mr. London first introduced the term code switching when he was describing what he believed to be a better way to prepare leaders with a background similar to his. Mr. London defined code switching as the ability to switch languages spoken in the community or the church to a different language that can be spoken in the workplace:

I call it code switching. I, Jesus called it, or God called it “being in the world but not of the world.” I think that people don’t know how to operate in their community, there’s a language of the community but there’s a language at the

work place, too. And people don't know how to switch codes. When you're in the church, you got one code, and one way of operating. One language, one lingo and when you're in the workplace you got to know how to switch codes.

Mr. London's viewpoint on the failure of many leadership programs is that they do not teach aspiring leaders about how to code switch:

I think for example, an example of that would be in the church I'll say, "We've got to save the lost." And in the school system I'll say, "We've got to reach the under privileged." It's the same mission, but different words.

As mentioned previously, these leaders felt that working in the school system was an opportunity to help the students be successful both academically and in life. Code switching enabled them to do both by translating the same core belief about helping students from language appropriate to the spiritual realm of the church to language appropriate to the secular realm of the public school. Thus, code switching is a strategy that Mr. London believed can be effective in teaching leaders like him how to lead with spirit without offending others. Although other participants did not use this term, the notion of code switching is discussed in other ways. For example, Principal Webster said:

Sometimes it depends on who I am speaking to. I have to do it in around about way...I have to see how they are going to accept it...If I put it out there and if I get an "amen" or "that's what God said" then I'll know we can take it a little farther.

The way that Principal Webster described how he attempts to bring his spirituality into his leadership was very similar to the way Principal London described code switching; it depended upon who he is speaking to at the time.

Principal Brown described code switching a little differently. He talked about code switching in the sense of what is written in the code of conduct:

I mean everything I do is from the code of conduct. We have a code of conduct book and thank God that whoever wrote that code of conduct book was a Christian.

Principal Brown believed that the writer of the code of conduct book in his school system was a Christian because of certain words and ideologies that the writer used within the book. For example, Principal Brown's school system policy stated: "We expect our students to show courteous concern and respect for others and to observe instructions and rules, punctuality, appearance and faithfulness both inside and outside the classroom." Again, this statement speaks to the idea that there are certain codes or language that these leaders claim that a word or phrase is a Christian or spiritual concept, such as respect, faithfulness, compassion, integrity, or honesty. Principal Brown's view about the code of conduct is another form of how code switching is used to bring spirituality into his leadership.

In addition, Principal Brown talked about how he not only uses perfect questions as a different way to bring spirituality into his leadership, but it also can be seen in how he uses code switching. He explained a situation regarding a very controversial topic:

I'll give you this case in point, public display of affection. It says in there that what you're supposed to do for public display of affection is to tell them to stop, one time. They're supposed to stop, second time you warn them, third time you write them up. Okay, public display of affection when they wrote it, they had in the mindset a boy and a girl. But now we have public display of affection with two females kissing. Now, from the spiritual side, that's Sodom and Gomorrah. But from the book side I can't jump on two girls kissing and

then a girl and a guy tell them to stop. So, I have to say stop just like I told the girl and boy ... then I'm going to talk to them not to judge them but just to say, "Hey you're okay? What you're thinking about? What's going on with your life?"

Although he admitted that he had a problem with the way public affection is written in the code of conduct, these perfect questions, as Principal Brown referred to them, are a different language of asking the right questions to get the students to open up more to what is going in their lives. For Principal Brown, the way he code switches can be found in how he uses the code of conduct book and how he asks "perfect questions".

Answering a different interview question, Principal London described how he does not really have obstacles that get in the way of bringing spirituality into his leadership because he does not tell people that his philosophy is based on Christian scriptures. He stated that he followed the example of Christ who operated by using parables. Mr. Landon explained:

Often times, I'll be using scriptures and people didn't know that I was using scriptures necessarily because of the way I phrased it but it was what the word had to say.

For example, Mr. London mentioned that his email signature includes the quotation "do the right thing," but what he actually means is "do the righteous thing." By doing the righteous thing, Mr. London is saying to do the just, truthful, upright thing, and to be more like Christ. The ability to code switch enables these school administrators to speak an appropriate language, whether it is communicated by words or by actions, in order to integrate their spirituality in how they lead.

Church as center

In the participants' descriptions of the church, the church experience emerged as the center of their families and the communities where they lived. As mentioned previously, the participants' family backgrounds were referred to as influencing their leadership, yet the role of the church as an institution also influenced their leadership. All of the participants mentioned the influence of the church in their upbringings. For these participants, church was not a building or a structure (institution); it was the center of the spiritual and social experience in their everyday lives.

Principal Smith stated:

My mom taught us to respect everyone. Well where did that come from? It's the upbringing that she had instilled in us. And it was always connected to the church.

Mr. London described his church as the guiding principal, the foundation, and the rock of the entire community. Furthermore, he stated that the church was the "interest of the community," where everyone was interested and involved in its functions. Mr. London, an assistant superintendent and pastor, expressed that church was the foundation for the entire community and was attended by everyone. He believed that the experiences that he had growing up in the church and coming from a family of preachers were true connections to his current spirituality.

The connections to spirituality for Mr. London and Principal Moulton stemmed from the ways they did things as church communities and as church families where they grew up.

Mr. London explained:

My father kept us in church and church is what you did and church is what we knew.

When we became old teenagers, even if we went to the club on Saturday, we still gone be in church on Sunday.

For Principal Moulton “the church was the center of the community.” Principal Brown described the church as what set the moral foundation for him as an anchor. Principal Webster explained that his focus growing up was on the church, his family and the Lord. Principal Parks said that it was mandatory that they went to church. Principal Latham, an elementary principal and pastor, said for him, he knew every Sunday meant being in the house of the Lord.

Not only were these participants required to attend church every Sunday, but they were also involved in many church activities at early ages. Principal Watkins explained:

I started preaching when I was 16. I have always had an active ministry even in high school. I would do a speaking engagement and conduct revivals while I was still in high school.

Principal Latham gave list of the activities in which he was involved:

I sang in the choir, on the usher’s board, president of the youth ministry, active in our Christian congress, and active in the national congress of Christian education as a delegate for my church.

Principal Parks discussed how he was very active in the church as a little kid, attended Sunday school and vacation Bible school, participated in Easter and Christmas programs, and sang in the youth choir. Just like Principal Watkins and Principal Parks, Principal Webster described similar experiences growing up in the church:

As a kid I was involved in the Sunbeam Band, the Crusaders, and Sunday School. I was the Sunday school superintendent, and was over the choir.

The church played a significant role in the participants' spiritual upbringings. It was a part of who they were and it connected them to others in their communities. The early involvement of church in these participants' lives speaks to how these school administrators first experienced leadership. To them, they did not see church as something separate from their every day experiences. Therefore, in their leadership roles as pastors and school administrators, they tended to lead by intertwining aspects of the church institution and the public institution.

Principal Latham talked about how he made his friends and met the girls through church activities:

I met my male buddies through church and my life in both spiritual and social were in the church. The church was the center and core of all of that.

As Mr. London noted previously:

On Sunday, everybody is in church; the drunks and the skunks. That's how we came up and that's what you did on Sunday, you were in church.

Likewise, Principal Brown recalled:

We didn't mind going to church. On Sundays we prayed...the community at large was a religious community where everybody got together. It was no murders in my community, but someone would get drunk on Friday night and that was the talk of the town. But yet next Sunday morning they're sitting up there in church like nothing happened.

The church experience for these participants was an experience where nobody was excluded because of their lifestyles. These participants expressed that everyone was accepted at church and church was where everybody “got together”. In addition, for these participants, church was a key component of their emotional and spiritual development.

Although the church was the center for these participants when they were growing up, there were challenges that caused them to lose those connections. However, they found themselves right back at the center—the church. Principal Smith talked about a time when he had stepped away from the church and explained that it was through his wife’s direction that he was led by the Lord to come back to church. He reflected:

Realizing and reflecting on the spiritual orientation and my spiritual growth of how I grew up and all those things that have been invested in me, implanted in me, and embedded in me as I was growing up in a strong spiritual family— That told me it was time for me to start doing what I needed to do...and I went forward then like I said I’ve been there every since.

Although the church was significant to Principal Smith, there were struggles in his life that pulled him away from the center; however, with the help of those who were in the church, he was able to rejoin and reconnect with the church. As Smith and a few of the other participants’ thoughts suggested, it may be difficult for them to leave their spirituality, religion, and pastoral backgrounds at the front door of the school because of their connections to the church as well as what was instilled in them at an early age.

All of the participants described connections with the church even though they each had different experiences and perspectives. Principal Brown expressed how he saw the church as just religion and it was not about personal relationships. However, through his

experiences in the military and being overseas, he sought out to redefine his church experience:

We have a hip-hop service at our church. We wear jeans and shirts out and the youth are coming in because it's real. They do anything except preach and so coming out of the box to make Jesus marketable to the generation that we call X. As a matter of fact they joke about the church and say "yeah I'm going to the club church". You can call it what you want but we're having Jesus up in here.

Principal Brown's comments suggest that church can be refined and modified from the original tradition and become the center to a new generation of people, but with a different look, as long as "Jesus is up in there".

Principal Webster went as far as to redefine the meaning of church. He talked about how he changed the name of his church:

When I grew up in practicing Baptist, we would say let's go down to the church. I don't teach folk that. Now the church, which is not really the way it should be called anyway, this building is not a church, this is just where we meet. That's why we call it Mountaintop Christian Center. We are the church and the church come and meets at this center.

The redefining of the church as the people or the center, and not the building itself or a particular place, as Principal Webster suggested, speaks to the notion of church being more than a place of religion, but a place where spiritual people gather or meet at the center. The center is described as a gathering place of the church, which are the people. This statement explains the concept of how the church and public places can be and have been intermingled.

Individuals who see church as not being a building, but as people, understand the Established Clause differently than those who see the church as only connected to a building or a religion. Principal Latham summarized this idea:

I tell you the truth, if I never step foot in another church building, it wouldn't bother me. That may sound sacrilegious. It wouldn't bother me. I have a church right here in Liberty. It's called the school. And all I try to do every day is to effect lives in a positive way. That's right. I have a church right outside of my house in my neighborhood.

For Principal Latham and many of the other participants, church was not thought of as a building or religion, but church to them was based on their faith and relationships with God.

In addition, the participants did not believe that church and state issues were violated because the center of their spirituality was based on how they expressed their spirituality in their work and toward others, instead of trying to convert people to a specific religious belief. As Principal Latham explained, the school where he is the school administrator was his church because it was the place where he expressed his spirituality by showing love, compassion, respect, and care toward others. It was the rule that he followed.

Findings Based on the Research Questions

The data collected from this study presented interesting findings based on the three research questions:

1. What role does spirituality play in the leadership of African American school administrators who are also pastors?
2. How does spirituality influence their leadership behaviors or decision-making?
3. How do bi-vocational African American school administrators and pastors maintain a balance between church and state issues?

Role of spirituality in leadership

The overall purpose of this research was to understand the role that spirituality plays in the leadership of African American school administrators who are also pastors working in public school settings. After meeting and interviewing the eight participants and analyzing the results, the findings suggested that the role that spirituality played in their leadership was that it connected them to: (a) their family values; (b) the ways they built relationships with teachers, students, and the community; and (c) opportunities to serve.

Family values

There seems to be a connection between these participants' family values and their spirituality. All of the participants noted the importance of their families' values when discussing the role of spirituality in their leadership. When discussing their family values, they all made reference to the significance of their upbringings, families, churches, and communities. People learn from their experiences and their backgrounds, which include these elements of upbringing, family values, and beliefs. In addition, the participants tended to include all of these factors in their leadership. Although the participants grew up to be

parents in their own homes, leaders in their schools, and moved beyond their childhood families' religious traditions, they often reflected back to their families' values and the important roles they played in the development of their spirituality and leadership.

When the participants began to respond to questions about the religious or spiritual traditions in which they were raised, many talked about their families' way of doing things. To these participants, their spirituality stemmed from how they were raised. Participants used words such as "transmitted," "instilled," "foundation," and "together" to describe the influence of spirituality within their families. In this study, it speaks to the idea that an individual's upbringing plays a significant role in who that person is because values are often instilled at an early age.

Principal Smith described how his family, mainly his mother, "transmitted values" to him during his upbringing:

I got three sisters and a brother, a very religious family in terms of transmitting values [such as] respect individuals, respect property, don't steal, and don't do anything that would bring dishonor to family or dishonor to your name.

Principal Smith explained that the most traumatizing year for him was when his mom and dad separated when he was in the sixth grade. He shared how his mom never talked down to them about their dad and, although his mom and dad had differences, they had to visit their dad and they had to respect him. Through this example, Principal Smith expressed "that was the type of love that she had and that's the type of values that she transmitted to us." Even when faced with "traumatizing" experiences, Principal Smith's mother continued to show the importance of transmitting values. He recalled:

My mom kept us together, raised all of us because she had a strong belief in God that no matter what happened God was going to work it out. So we grew up in a household setting that no matter what happened, no matter how bad it got, how bad it looked, God was going to work it out. So that's what we grew up on. So those are the values that she transmitted to us. She showed us and demonstrated to us that the family was more important. [It] was about the family.

In his leadership role, Principal Smith tried to create a family atmosphere within his school. He expressed how he related to his staff as a family:

When teachers come to me and they have some personal problems, they feel comfortable about bringing those personal problems to me.....if a teacher comes to me and say "I got a sick kid or my mother is dying" ...and they don't have a day or so and they ask, "is there anyway that I can leave early or is there anything that you can do to help me get there?" And the answer is always "absolutely". I try to make sure that they understand that for me family is always the most important.

Principal Smith reiterated that showing concerns for teachers' personal problems and making sure that they take care of themselves and their families was a way that he instilled in his staff that they are family. He commented, "we don't always agree but we're still family.

Like Principal Smith, most of the participants discussed spirituality as it relates to being a family. Principal Webster said:

We were probably open spiritually. My father would share with anybody, anywhere, and anytime. My mother would have us pray together and made sure we knew how to

pray and study the Bible; we were always together....we were close and to me it just felt like a family.

Principal Parks shared how his dad's sermons helped shape his character; that character helped him persevere and set him in a place to deal with the stresses of his life and current role as a school administrator and a pastor. Although Principal Watkins was not active in church at a young age (prior to age 15), his paternal grandmother played a profound influence on his life because she was of a different denomination than his immediate family's traditional background.

For many of these participants, spirituality was explained and modeled to them through their families' values as something that was a part of them and as a part of their everyday life. Family values for these participants spoke to how they experienced relationships within family and the community. Family values consisted of praying together, going to church together, and respecting self, family, and others in the community.

When asked about the religious or spiritual traditions in which he was raised, Principal Smith replied:

I grew up in a very religious family in terms of transmitting values such as respecting individuals, respecting property, don't steal, and don't do anything that would bring dishonor to family or dishonor to your name.

In a similar response, Principal Parks connected his current spirituality to his family, his church, and his community in which he grew up: "It was mandatory that we go to church. I had no choice."

Principal Parks reflected on his church participation and growing up during his era:

We had to observe praying before meals and we had to observe not doing chores on Sundays, not playing ball, and these kinds of things. It was growing up in the 60s, 70s, the traditional, southern, Black approach to spirituality. Well one of the things was of course with the church going and with the observance of all the Christians holidays and of course believing in the totalities of the scriptures and practicing that daily from grace, praying as a family in the morning, saying prayers before you go to bed...and that was a daily observance from the home to the recreation ground to school.

Principal Parks credited his approach to spirituality to his tradition, race, and region in which he was raised. The connection of his spirituality was found in the way his family taught him at home (e.g., following biblical principles, being an example of how a Christian should live, and going to church). Principal Parks explained, “that was a daily observance from the home to the recreation ground to school.”

Mr. London described his home as “a home of spirituality where they believed in that stern hand and had wholesome family values.” This particular statement is an example of the role that spirituality played in who these men were, and how their spirituality connected them to their families’ values. Principal Parks also talked about how his dad often challenged him and his siblings to live according to their beliefs:

My dad often challenged us that if you’re going to talk the talk you need to walk it.

Let it be real not to be phony.

The idea of walking the walk and not just talking the talk is how Principal Parks explained the role of spirituality in his family’s values, and many of those values were taught by his parents and were learned in the home.

Principal Brown, an assistant high school principal, grew up in a religious tradition different from some of the other participants. Principal Brown saw the religion in which he was raised as more about an emotional expression (singing and dancing) and the traditional (as he called it) Baptist experience of just going to church, and less about following everything in the Bible, such as the experience of the Holy Spirit and living a changed life. He explained that praying over meals was a great value to have, but for him, growing up in a religious home and church “wasn’t about a personal relationship with Jesus.” However, it did provide a foundation on which he could reflect:

The church wasn’t about personal relationship with Jesus but what it did do, it set a foundation So I believe that foundation showed me that ‘hey you’re blessed because look at what you have come from....But the foundation was there. We know we can pull ourselves up by the bootstrap and so that showed foundation for me in error but yet by God’s grace.... And I guess it ties in to what I was saying earlier because my foundation we always have to have something to reflect back on. So when I reflect back on those traits and moral values that I grew up with, it would keep me from going astray.

Principal Brown expressed how the church was a foundation for him and how it connected him to the way in which he was trained. Furthermore, he stated:

When I reflect back and say now a lot of people would say what would Jesus do, but I would reflect back and say what would my mom and dad say.

Although Principal Brown had a slightly different perspective on his upbringing, and a lack of personal relationships from the church, he still gave credit to his family’s values as the experiences he would reflect back on as an adult. For Principal Brown, his spirituality is

influenced by family values; however, he described his current spirituality as about being in relationship with God (the Father), Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and others.

All of the participants grew up in the Bible belt, and many of them discussed the influence growing up in the South had on their family values. Principal Parks talked about how there was prayer in school when he was growing up; it was allowed under the Constitution, and the teachers would do the prayers. He described the environment:

I mean you had to pray and had to try at your very best to be perfect; that was the Bible belt approach living in the south.

All of the participants' families' values connected them to their spirituality and those values transmitted to who they became and how they lead as school administrators and pastors. Each participant spoke about the significance of his church, his community, his family, and the values transmitted through those resources.

Although participants talked about the influence of their families' values, many of them expressed how they have matured and refined the traditions they learned from their families. Thus, while they are school administrator-pastors whose spirituality build on their backgrounds, they are still trying to improve or learn. Their spirituality is adaptable. Principal Moulton stated:

I've grown over the years and I've taken that foundation that I gained when I was young when I was growing up and I've added on to that. I've refined it and I've grown to understand what it's saying. I've used that as a foundation to kind of grow. I'm not in the same point now that I was when I was growing up.

Principal Webster expressed that he was "a carbon copy [of his parents' spiritual tradition] with some added stuff and he understands better now." He went on to explain that

“everything in the past is not good for every time frame because kids don’t always understand things that went on in the past.” What Principal Webster seemed to be saying is that although things were done differently when he was growing up, students these days have different experiences in which church may not be the foundation; therefore, students do not understand when references are made about family traditions and values.

Although these participants viewed spirituality as connecting them to their families’ values, there seems to be a disconnection when relating to students and their parents who may have different family values than the participants experienced when being raised. For example, Principal Smith described the notion of students not understanding who God is:

The thing that I think that’s missed more than anything else with kids that I come in contact with is they have no God reference perhaps. You have to have a God reference to be successful in anything that you do. You may not be able to have success and large measures of success but at some point you have to have a God reference.

Principal Smith defined “God reference” as the individual’s ability to understand that he or she is not doing these things (succeeding in life, school, or work), but rather it is God helping him or her to be successful. Principal Smith exclaimed: “I’m blessed and I’m highly favored and where I am today is not because of who I am but whose I am.”

To Principal Smith, having a God reference is not based on who you are (e.g., your race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status), but it is knowing whose I am (a child a God). According to Principal Smith, having a God reference was directly related to family values. For him, a God reference was instilled in him by his mom and “it was always connected to the church and the church was always connected to a God reference.” Principal Smith’s view

on having a God reference of “knowing whose I am” can play a significant role in encouraging today’s students, because so many of today’s students are known only by their grade point averages or standardized test results. God reference defines a person’s success not by what they know, but by who they know.

Principal Smith summed up the role that spirituality plays in his leadership with the explanation that when the students or parents with whom he comes in contact do not have that God-reference or family values, it is difficult for them to understand where he (Principal Smith) comes from and, therefore, it is difficult for them to understand his leadership. For example, Principal Smith said that he tries to teach the kids he deals with today about the importance of taking advantage of what’s offered to them:

A lot of our kids don’t connect with us very well because they don’t see the relevance of what we (the schools) give. This is a very instant or microwave society of kids that we deal with. I know I’m generalizing but they don’t understand the importance of work every day. They don’t understand the importance of what it means to take advantage of what’s provided for you right now....A lot of what I see and hear today has to do with excuses rather than fulfillment.

Principal Smith also stated that he tries to instill in the students that it does not really matter where you come from and what is happening to you; you can always do better. Principal Smith expressed that this outlook is what his mom instilled in him when he was young, and that is what he tries to instill in the students he works with today.

Principals Brown, London and Webster respected the traditions in which they were raised, and they all talked about the influence of the Bible, and doing what it actually says,

now in their lives as adults. When asked how they have changed or matured from their familial traditions and experiences and the influence of following what the Bible says, all of the participants talked about studying more of what God would have them to do and the importance of “knowing better in order to do better”. Principal Webster, an assistant middle school principal explained:

As I said, I grew up a Baptist. I am a Baptist probably ‘til I die but I like the precepts and concepts of the way we do things as Baptist but in this day and age...you have to change because once you learn better, you ought to do better.and at every level there should be a greater understanding of what’s going on....and once you learn better you ought to do better.

Principal Webster’s family’s values and beliefs were important to him, but he believed that “you still have to learn better to do better”. Learning better for Principal Webster was applying to his life what the Bible actually said:

In the Baptist tradition, we believe in the whole Bible but we still don’t like to practice what’s in the Bible”.

He believed in “being spirit filled and spirit led”.

Principal Webster remembered that when he was growing up, the adults did not explain much to the kids: “They tell you don’t do this, or don’t do that and they didn’t go into any details of why you shouldn’t.” However, he explained that as an adult, he spent more time explaining to students, in general “because kids need to know because they are lot more inquisitive”. This statement is an example of how he understood as a school administrator that, although he had certain family values growing up, he still had to learn a better way to effectively use those family values in today’s schools.

Another interesting example of the family values in which these school administrators were raised and how their spirituality was connected to their work was the manner in which they learned the importance of being together and sharing common ground and experiences with others. As mentioned previously, Mr. London expressed how “the skunks and the drunks” grew up in the same community and all attended the same church. In his role as an assistant superintendent, and even when he was a principal, he saw the importance of working together and sharing common ground and experiences with others, even those unlike himself:

As a principal I had to make sure that the students who were achieving were supported but also the students who were lower achieving were supported.

And the two schools I served were schools that had high concentration of at-risk students and high concentration of students who had disabilities because that was my passion, helping the needy.

Growing up in a church where everyone was welcomed and supported, regardless of their conditions, and shared common ground, transferred over to his work in the school system and gave Mr. London a foundation where he intentionally looked for schools where he could support those who were in need.

Principal Parks recalled how the living arrangement of his community was very apparent during the time when he was growing up:

All the Blacks whether you were middle class or regardless of your socioeconomic status; you all were in the same neighborhood. You had the preacher, you had the lady doing the moonshine living next door, you had the funeral director, you had the teacher, and you had the guy that’s working

down at the foundry. We all lived right there and everybody seemed to be happy playing together because we were all in the same boat.

This idea of being “in the same boat” and “playing together” is an example of how Principal Parks’ leadership approach to spirituality connected him to his family’s values, and this approach connected him to building relationships among those with whom he works.

Principal Parks’ experiences growing up with others with different socioeconomic statuses sounded very similar to his response to the interview question about what it is like to lead in a public school setting:

In a public school you take whoever comes through the front door and you don’t necessarily know; you’re not always able to screen out those kids [with problems]. They come with a lot of baggage, of course we know private schools you can screen people; you don’t have to accept them. But public school is more realistic of what society is about and you have to deal with that each and every day.

Principal Parks’ choice to work in a public school instead of a Christian or private school allows him to be in an environment similar to the one in which he was raised. He did not get to choose who lived in his neighborhood or where he wanted to live, nor did he get to choose what students arrived at the school at which he worked. However, he chose the place where he wanted to lead and, just like when he was growing up, he had to learn how to work together and play together regardless of who came in the front door. Accepting others around him, regardless of whether they sold moonshine or came with a lot of baggage, was a value that he saw within his family and within his community then and now.

It was evident from these participants' interviews that their spirituality connected them to their families' values and the people they are today. These family values were transmitted, instilled, and became foundational for them, and they transferred over to their leadership and how they built relationships with those with whom they worked. However, the participants were also able to modify those family-instilled values as appropriate to their current educational positions.

Relationships with teachers, students, and community

The participants all noted the role of spirituality as a connector to building relationships. The school administrators understood that those with whom they worked were important to the success of the school, and they believed their spirituality helped them to build good relationships with those with whom they worked. Principal Smith said:

I can't think of a better profession to be in as a teacher or a principal and to be in the ministry. I mean it's about people. It's about leadership, but it's about people. You can't be a teacher or a principal without being a people person. There's no way. You have to be able to establish meaningful and strong relationships.

For example, Principal Smith talked about how he has a lot of veteran staff in his building, and he has been trying to work with them to connect them to the younger generation (the students) within the school. Principal Smith spoke about the challenges of building those relationships between students and staff:

Another challenge that we have is to make sure that our teachers are really supporting our students in a very positive way. We have a tendency as teachers to come in to our rooms, close our door and then think that this is my domain and that I can do or say or teach anyway I want to and what we're

trying to get them to do is open that back up and to be more flexible, more knowledgeable about what they're teaching. Make those connections between the new kid and the old kid.

Principal Smith knew that in order for staff to be more effective as teachers, it was important for veteran teachers of an older generation to understand the current generation of students. He believed that in order to do that, he had to help teachers make those connections with students by understanding how students communicate today. For example, Principal Smith talked about how today's students communicate more through technology, such as cell phones and computers, and it is important for teachers to know how to communicate with students using those methods.

When asked how their spirituality influences their work as principals, all of the participants made references to spirituality as helping them deal with people. Many of the participants used the phrase "dealing with people" within their leadership instead of using the words "building relationships within their leadership."

Each participant had his own way of dealing with students and staff who they served. Principal Smith shared that "a lot of spirituality stuff" that he has available to share with people occurs when he deals with people. He stated:

I deal with them a little bit different than perhaps some of my counterparts because I have a different way of looking at things.

Principal Smith saw himself as a little more tolerant and more compassionate with people who struggle in certain areas. For example, he said that it is difficult for him to terminate people, and some of his colleagues may not have the patience to work with staff through failures. Instead of quickly terminating an employee, Principal Smith believed that if he

worked with people long enough, he might be able to get them to move from one point to another and then help them turn themselves around. He explained his viewpoint:

That's kind of what that looks like from a religious standpoint for me and some people have a difficult time dealing with that but some can respect that and some can deal with that.

Principal Smith's viewpoint is a spiritual one because one of the tenets of spirituality is the ability to show compassion, and care toward others.

In order to keep a caring work environment among those with whom he works, Principal Smith reflected back to when he was wrongfully terminated and remembered how it felt:

I just feel like my God-reference and where I'm coming from and my past experience of being eliminated and cut off the bottom line lends me to perhaps being more compassionate than my colleagues.

Principal Smith believed that he builds relationship with staff by the connection he has with them through his spirituality and his past experiences of knowing what it felt like to be terminated without a reason.

When asked how he thinks the staff at school sees him, Principal Webster responded that a lot of his colleagues call him "pastor" at school. The majority of the participants responded to this question in a similar way. Principal Parks described that he is the staff members' "pastor on one hand and their supervisor on another." Principal Latham said that his staff does not know that he's a pastor, but he believed that they would say he has pastoral qualities:

When you think pastor and a counselor, you think of a great listener. For instance, here are things they may say about me—”He’s a good listener. He’s sensitive and one who is warm.”

These are qualities that Principal Latham saw as pastoral qualities, and he believed that those with whom he worked saw those qualities in him.

Principal London thought that his staff, specifically those who knew he was a pastor, saw that the way he led as a school administrator came from the fact that he was a pastor:

I think some of them [staff] attributed my style of leadership to the fact that I am a minister and all my staff always felt...that I cared about them as people and I did because that was my heart. So I lead from the heart.

Leading from the heart was how Principal London described how he built relationships within his school. Principal Smith said that there are a lot of students at his school who attend his church, where he is an assistant pastor, but there are also many students and parents who are unaware of what he does on Sundays.

Many of the school administrators mentioned how their spirituality and being ministers helped them in building positive relationships with staff when their staff members are going through tough times in school and personally. For example, Principal Webster talked about how he has had teachers share personal problems with him that would make him uncomfortable:

They might be irate coming in to my office, but when they leave out, they are hugging me and crying saying ”thank you sir”.

Because of Principal Webster’s abilities to listen, to show care, honesty, and concern, and to treat people with respect, he felt that those who entered his office appreciated his treatment of

them. The participants discussed how they understood that the teachers and staff with whom they worked were human beings and had other concerns besides what went on in the school, and they felt that it was important to be sensitive to those concerns. Principal Latham talked about his school and how he has a few teachers who have gone through divorce, others who have new babies, and some who have some family health issues:

I found myself being the principal/pastor/counselor and they'll close that door and tell me all kinds of stuff about themselves.

Principal Latham said that he always tries to remember to ask staff about specific situations as they relate to staff members' personal lives. He recalled:

I have one staff member whose mother is having serious eye problems. She has lost sight and I asked her, "How is your mother?" And it has given her an opportunity to just vent and let it out. Then when I ask her just last week, she says, "You know Mr. Latham, I appreciate you asking me about what I am going through. You didn't forget did you?" "[I responded] No, I didn't forget." That means something when you can touch the heart of people and I think when you touch the heart and you're sensitive towards them then you can really challenge them in a very purposeful way to be sensitive to others.

Principal Latham believed modeling sensitivity toward staff and connecting with them in their personal lives motivated staff to remain sensitive to students and, to him, that is being a leader.

Principal Latham further explained his leadership:

I think part of it is to motivate staff to remain sensitive to students. I try to model sensitivity by being connected with them, questions about how they're

doing and how their family members are doing. I tell them “if something is wrong with you, if you’re sick, you’re having trouble, you’re going through some relationship issues that’s really tearing at you and if you need some time off, take it; because you do us no good, if you’re not whole. As a matter of fact you are a detriment to community and your students. Your health first and your families health are important to me.” That’s a leader.

Principal Latham also described a leader as someone who cares about the wholeness of his staff. To him, caring about his staff “wholeness” at work involved making sure that they were healthy and that their family members were healthy. Principal Latham saw building relationship with his staff as ensuring that they had time off from work to take care of themselves and their families.

It is important to note that these school administrators saw themselves first as school administrators, and not as pastors in the schools. Although many of them stated that they never intentionally tried to display their pastoral backgrounds, several of the people with whom they worked would request prayer from them, and staff members who related to them in that role were thankful. Principal Latham, an elementary principal, gave another example of how he connected and built relationships in his school through a story about a little boy he noticed crying as he entered the school. He said that the little boy was upset because his mother was mad at him, told him he was acting like a girl, and dropped him off at school without saying that she loved him:

I said, “she loves you John.” [The boy replied] “No she didn’t tell me she loved me.” That tore me up. So, I grabbed a few people and told them throughout the day I want you to tell John how much he means to you. So it

became a community effort of sharing, support, and hope. When I saw John later that day he was full of smiles because he received those words of affirmation. That's so important to everybody. Everybody needs to know that they are cared for, respected, and that they count.

That is what Principal Latham believed, and it is how he built relationships and established community within his school. He stated:

I don't go for people bad mouthing [e.g., speaking negatively to] children and we can't be a part of a community that does that. That's not support and that doesn't feed the spirit.

To Principal Latham, building relationships with students and staff created a supportive community; having a community effort of sharing, support, and hope is what fed the spirit.

Principal Smith believed that having a pastoral background helped him bring people together at both church and school. He noticed that conflicts at church and school were very similar, and he resolved issues the same way on the job as an administrator. For example, he talked about how he had conflicts with people in the community because he invited speakers to the school to talk about the Iditarod, which is a dog sled race that is held every year in Alaska. So he brought the two conflicting sides together and used it as a teaching opportunity. He explained:

Knowing how to do that and doing it in a spiritual way for me helps me realize that I have some valuable skills that I bring that are transferrable that I bring from my pastoral background to this background and vice versa.

The skill sets that Principal Smith referred to are skills such as being a good listener, bringing two opposing sides together to resolve an issue, and using those conflicts as

opportunities to teach and facilitate discussion. This statement is another interesting point about the role of spirituality and the connection that it can have to building relationships. Many of Principal Smith's leadership skills, such as conflict resolution, which he described as a way he brought spirituality into his leadership, can very well be transferred between settings.

Principal Watkins explained how his spirituality enhanced his leadership in terms of his effectiveness in how he dealt with people:

I know how I want to deal with people. I know how I would like people to deal with me. They don't always deal with me that way when they're upset. They don't always deal with me but I have the necessary skills to then get them from a spiritual standpoint to back away just for a little bit...because I do it in a non combative way, which is a part of my spiritual growth. I try to work with them. I don't give them any scriptures. I don't do any of that stuff.

Principal Watkins described the best way to handle things was confront issues head-on, and sit down and talk with individuals. The spiritual part of his leadership has nothing to do with giving scriptures to people; it is more about dealing with the situation placed before him and listening to people's concerns.

The golden rule. Many of the participants expressed that spirituality influences their leadership behaviors by how they treat others. Each of the participants talked about the importance of treating people like they would want to be treated, or the phrase "do unto others, as you would have them do unto you." This phrase, located in the Bible (Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31) and also used by other world religions, is known as the Golden Rule; it was referred to several times, whether the participants were talking about the manner in which

spirituality influenced their decision-making processes or how they brought spirituality into their leadership. For example, when Principal Webster was asked to what extent he makes his spirituality visible as a principal, he stated:

You have to treat everybody the way you want to be treated and then they [the students] know I'm going to treat them right.

Principal Brown did not use the phrase known as the Golden Rule, but he talked about treating people fairly in terms of leadership; "Leadership is about treating people fairly and justly not judging". Principal Brown said that being a Christian, for him, made him look at things in a different light and that caused him to realize that he had to treat people right because "God is a God of another chance and not just a second chance." Principal Brown's comments suggested that, for him, there is a direct relationship between leadership and the Golden Rule, and that is a part of the role of spirituality in his leadership in school and in the church.

Prayer. Principal Brown's way of "dealing with" students was that he spent time talking with them, praying with them, guiding them, and counseling them. However, he expressed that one of the concerns that he has about connecting with students has to do with when they go home. Although praying with students in school is questionable in its legality, Principal Brown saw prayer as appropriate if a student or parent asked him to pray, or as he said, "a door was open." He said many of the students with whom he worked went back to bad home situations and different things would pull them in the wrong direction. Principal Brown continued to build positive relationships with those students by not giving up hope: "I just keep up hope because they're always success stories." Although many of the students went back to bad home situations, he never gave up hope that these students could succeed in

school. He saw success as when students continued to come to school although they had people in their families or community persuading them that school was a waste of their time. To Principal Brown, seeing a student walk through the front doors every day was a success story.

A perfect question. Despite the fact that students have other things pulling them away from being successful when they are at home, Principal Brown continues to have hope that his influence and the way he deals with them can make a difference in their lives. Principal Brown used what he called “a perfect question” to get to know more about the students. His perfect questions were questions that got students to talk about themselves or things in which they were interested. For example:

- What did you do last night?
- How’s your momma doing?
- How’s your dad?
- Who is your favorite musical artist?

Principal Brown explained the value of the perfect question: “This is a back door approach to building that relationship with students so they won’t perceive me as holier than thou.” As Principal Brown mentioned previously, many of his students know that he is a pastor in the community; therefore, he tries different approaches to get the students to communicate with him.

Principal Watkins stated that his approach to dealing with students is to be “fair, firm, and friendly.” Although being fair, firm, and friendly may not be seen as spiritual, it is how he described the manner in which he showed care that would eventually lead to building relationships with students. He added:

You always have challenges where somebody don't care but most of the time students, although they may disagree or may not, don't want to listen but they know you've been fair to them but you've been firm and also you're friendly in the sense that you don't talk at them, you talk to them. They got feelings too and they know when a lot of times that you're talking down to them.

Principal Watkins admitted that dealing with students can be a challenge, but he has to build a relationship with students.

Parents and Community. School administrators also mentioned that students were not the only ones who were a challenge—parents were as well. Mr. London explained the struggles that he had trying to get parents involved and also described himself as “one of those principals who will knock on your momma’s door”:

I was one of those principals that would call your grandmamma and say, “I want you to come up to this school” and “I want you to see how your child is acting. You’ll be surprised and you’ll be disappointed because I’m disappointed.” I was really the families’ principal because I knew the kids, I knew their siblings, I knew their mommas and their daddies as best I could. It’s a large school but I had a strong connection with the community. I would visit their churches and the White and the Black kids and so I knew who the pastors were and then sometimes I say when I saw them at such and such Baptist church the other week, “I’m gone call your pastor.” Of course that just set them aside. They didn’t know how to deal with that, how you know my pastor? I say, “I know your pastor.” I used that a lot in my role as a pastor and as a principal.

Mr. London explained that his role as a pastor connected him to students and enabled him to have a strong connection to the community in his school district. His example showed the school, church, and community as intertwined. Although policy may separate the three institutions, they carry within them people who are connected and each institution affects the other.

Four of the eight school administrators had students in their schools who attended their churches. These administrators perceived this attendance as an advantage in building relationships not only within the schools, but also within the community. Although the other two school administrators did not have students in their schools who attended their churches, they had opportunities to connect with other students through their pastors.

These participants knew the importance of building relationships with students, staff, parents, and community. They tried to show respect, compassion, and care toward those with whom they worked. Their abilities to deal with and build positive relationships with students, staff, parents, and the community were grounded in their spirituality. When these participants were asked how they saw the two roles of school administrator and pastor, seven of the eight participants said they saw the roles as the same. They each described themselves as compassionate leaders who were called to serve in the church, school and, ultimately, the community—all stakeholders.

Opportunity for service

The participants described the role of spirituality as a connector to service in the school by using terms such as “open the door,” “ministry opportunities,” “doing God’s will,” and “service.” As defined in Chapter 1, to minister means to help or assist, and these participants felt that working in the schools was an opportunity to assist those in need. The

participants saw their roles as school administrators and pastors as opportunities to serve as ministry itself. Principal Parks noted:

God gave me the job that I have and I look at working in schools as a ministry.

There's a field there with many souls that need harvesting and so I have a better approach each and every day with students.

For Principal Parks, the better approach included pushing students to do their very best not only academically, socially, and humanitarianly, but also spiritually. The inclusion of encouraging students to do their very best spiritually was the better approach for Principal Parks, and working in that way was ministry to him. Principal Watkins further explained the similarities of ministry as a school administrator and pastor within the school. To him, they worked hand-in-hand:

What you do on a daily basis, is you're trying to help somebody and make life better for somebody. So in that sense, it's a ministry in itself. I think they go hand in hand. So that's the way I see it. I haven't always seen it that way but here lately I've come to understand that they (school administrator and pastor) kind of do work hand in hand in a sense. Where you're preparing for life, the ministry is more spirituality, the spiritual role and you're preparing for eternity. So that's the way I see it. I think the thing is in all that you do there is a belief that first of all what you're doing is to better help someone make life better, and to equip someone.

Principal Watkins came to understand that there were more similarities than differences between being a school administrator and a pastor. He saw that being both

worked hand-in-hand and served very similar purposes, which was to help those who were in need. He further explained:

As a pastor, you want to equip someone spiritually and as an instructional leader or principal, you want to equip someone to function and to succeed in life. ...By the same token as a shepherd or a pastor one of the things that you want to do is help equip saints. Now I believe that the scripture says the decisions that God gave pastors and teachers and other facets of the ministry to equip the saints, to build up and edify the church. So I think they [the roles of school administrator and pastor] work hand in hand.

It is important to note that for Principal Watkins, being both a school administrator and a pastor served the same purpose; therefore, he saw no need to separate the two roles or leave one at the door. If spirituality is the motivator that drives these participants to serve or minister, then the role of spirituality can be included in every aspect of one's leadership.

Mr. London also expressed that every aspect of his life represented a life of service: I think it's a life of service. Before I became a principal, I was in the military, which is a life of service before I became a minister. I became a minister very early in life and I was always involved in service organizations. I was involved in the fraternity Alpha Phi Alpha, which is a service organization. I was involved in 4H as a youth, as a young person, which is service and so I've always been service oriented serving the needs of others even as a young person. But then when I received an additional call to the pastorate, it was about serving. So, I think my character has been of one of service and helping people and that has shaped who I've become.

Mr. London continued to talk about a life of serving others as a principal and as a pastor:

As a principal, if you don't have the attitude of serving people, serving your staff, serving your customers, serving your community, or your school community, and serving the students, you won't be successful. As a pastor, if you don't have a servant mentality you won't be successful. I've been in my role as assistant superintendent and it's about service. You sort of got to come to the table to serve and not be served. That's who I was even before I became a principal or a pastor, I just looked at service. When I was an associate minister, I looked at serving the people and serving my pastor.

Mr. London concluded in his viewpoint of his role as a school administrator and as a pastor:

The role as a principal and the role as a pastor is the roles come together by helping those who are less fortunate. In other words, ministry merges over to the workplace is that in my job as assistant superintendent and as a principal I was to help those who are less fortunate and help those who couldn't help themselves in some cases. That is what student services is all about; supporting students who need help and who needs support.

These participants expressed the importance of service within the school to meet the needs of their staff, students, and parents. They all discussed how being a school administrator and a pastor worked hand in hand in order to equip others spiritually and academically to be successful.

Principal Watkins talked about how going into the field of education was “a way to give back to the community.” After being a pastor for a while, he saw the education field “as a second career.” He reflected:

I was able to put it together that what I'm doing as an educator is a part of ministry itself. I look at it as ministry. So now they do work hand in hand and in my experience as an educator and being in education, it's been tremendous.

Principal Watkins further explained:

I'm very proud of the fact that I have had the opportunity to be an educator where I really get down at the grassroots where the rubber meets the road; where you deal everyday with children who comes from various walks of life regardless of their ethnicity and especially African Americans who have some issues and dysfunctional homes and all kind of stuff. You're there to try to minister to those kids, so in many ways they need you. In other words, you get out of those ivory towers of the church and get out there where the nitty gritty is and it needs to be done. In that sense, I'm still doing God's will and it's been rewarding.

While several of the administrators saw the school as an opportunity to serve, some had concrete examples of ways in which they had been able to serve. Some of the administrators were able to serve students, parents, and staff by listening to their personal concerns whether it was school related or not, or by praying for them.

As a school administrator, Principal Brown looked for an open door to discuss spiritual matters with students and for an opportunity to serve. He explained that, when a student comes in with a referral that speaks to discipline he perceives that the student needs ministry "through the spirit or discernment." Principal Brown understood "through the [Holy] Spirit" some students need ministry and not discipline. Ministry to Principal Brown meant that the student needed help whether it was emotional, mental, or spiritual. He felt that

discipline, such as suspension as a physical discipline, was not helpful for the student.

Principal Brown believed that some problems that students have in school can be solved by spiritual means, such as prayer and listening, whereas other problems can be solved by physical means, such as in-school suspension.

While some people might be concerned if a principal takes a pastoral role in interaction with students, Principal Webster mentioned that he knew that “God was in control” when he helped students and, therefore, he was not concerned about getting fired, even if he was sharing the scriptures and praying with students. Even before he became an assistant principal, Principal Webster used opportunities to serve as a way to help a hurting student. He recalled:

When I was a band director, I use to have a Bible class (during class). And in those days, when they were acting crazy, I’ll have my Bible. Somebody would ask me about something, and then we’ll start having Bible class and somebody would say, “but you don’t suppose to be doing that here, do you?” I said, “I sure don’t but let’s go to Matthew such and such.” On some days we’d be in band class and somebody would say, “I’m going through something, can you pray for me”? I’d say, “all true believers that want to pray with each other let’s go to my office.” We go in there and have about 16 or 17 linking hands and we’ll pray.

Although, this situation was in jeopardy of violating church and state laws, Principal Webster made no apologies for what he viewed as being present in the school to serve and meet the needs of his students because he saw it as an opportunity to serve. Newspapers advertise situations like this all the time as poor decisions made by teachers or school administrators.

However, it is possible that the passion they have to serve or help ends up in getting them into a lot of trouble. Principal Webster knew that this approach could have gotten him fired or in trouble, but he made no apologies for seeing it as an opportunity to help a student. For Principal Webster, his viewpoint was directly related to his failure to maintain a balance between church and state. His view was not based on his lack of knowledge of the Establishment Clause; rather, it was that he saw helping a student as outweighing the consequences of being named in a lawsuit or being fired.

In addition, Principal Webster, an assistant middle school principal, talked about how the teachers called him “our pastor at school.” He perceived that being in the school was an opportunity to serve the teachers. He reflected on how he serves teachers and his principal:

So they have all types of problems, and they bring me their personal problems, they bring me problems they have with kids. They already know that I’m going to tell them the truth. I am not going to sugar coat it. I’m going to tell them what thus says the Lord and how to give a biblical references and things of that nature. Also, the same with the principal, he would come and he’s had hard a day, he can’t figure out why such and such. I have to give him encouragement and then make sure that everything works for him.

Principal Webster said that his role as the assistant principal was to help the principal run the school because principals have paid their dues. Principal Webster mentioned that his principal was out of the school building a lot and he did not see anything wrong with that because, to him, an assistant principal is there to do the work and serve the principal, the teacher, and the students. He felt that in the role of the assistant principal, it was easier for him to serve and help students because he worked more directly with them. Thus his

spirituality played an important part in his willingness to serve his principal and not just fulfill the job description. His spirituality also helped him to see the value in serving the teachers and students in his school.

In addition to helping the principal run the school, Mr. London knew the importance of what it means to do what is right. He explained that it was his spirituality that influenced him to do what is right for students, staff, and families. He described how he saw his role to serve in the school:

I look at my role as God has placed me in the school system to help the less fortunate. In my role as assistant superintendent, I'm the assistant superintendent for student support services, which is to help students who are not meeting with success in the school system whether academically or behaviorally. So I look at that as an extension of my ministry and so therefore that's what I focus on is helping people to leave with success.

Ministry for these school administrators did not mean to just get these students "into heaven"; rather, ministry to these participants meant helping student to be successful academically. Helping these students by listening, encouraging, and even praying with them about home situations were ways these participants saw the opportunity to serve. Several understood their roles as school administrators to be instructional leaders, but they also felt that praying for their students and staff helped them to be successful in school. The participants' roles as school administrators and pastors was unique because their spirituality was used as a leadership resource to influence others both academically and spiritually, and the participants seemed to have found ways to intertwine their spirituality with their leadership.

Spirituality influences leadership behaviors or decision-making

The participants gave a variety of responses related to the influence of spirituality on their decision-making processes. Their responses included praying for wisdom, following the Golden Rule, being guided by the Holy Spirit, the ability to show mercy and compassion, and being guided by the code of conduct or school policies.

Many of the participants stated that, when it comes to making a decision in light of the school policy, they just simply “let good principles [as laid out in the school policy] guide them” and just treat people right. Principal Watkins said:

Often times in a lot of areas, your spirituality does impact your thinking or your decision-making. However, I’ve found that sometimes you think from your heart but there are times you have to think from your head. You can’t allow your emotions to guide you without the benefit of your intellect. So it goes both ways but the real you is your spirituality.

The participants expressed that the “real them” plays a part in their decision-making and in their leadership behaviors. The “real you” for these participants, which is made up of both the intellect and the emotion, is what Principal Watkins saw as a part of their spirituality and fortifies the belief that who people are, how they think, and their behaviors are inseparable.

Two interview questions were asked of the participants that relate to the influence of spirituality on their leadership behaviors and decision-making.

Making tough decisions. In response to the question about what guides them in making tough decisions, three of the participants said that they pray. Principal Smith said that he does not go into any meeting or resolve any employee relations or any major challenges without praying first:

I feel the power of prayer will provide me with the tools that I need. It will give me the words to say. It will give me the resolution that I need.

Principal Smith believed that, once he has prayed, the outcomes have already been determined. What he believes is that God has already determined the outcome, so he prays that he is able to accept the outcome. He admitted that he worries about being able to understand and accept the outcomes.

Likewise, Principal Parks said that he constantly prays for wisdom. He discussed what guides him in making tough decisions:

Something I learned early on in my life is to seek God in HIS wisdom and of course my study of the word gives me insight and I often ask myself, “what would Jesus do?”...I try to use the wisdom of Solomon in dealing with matters. But I just pray and ask God to direct me and then let the Holy Spirit be my guide.

To Principal Parks, praying for wisdom is essential to guide him when making tough decisions. For example, he said a situation between a teacher and a student is one of the occasions in which he might need the help of the Holy Spirit to make a tough decision.

Principal Parks explained:

When I have a teacher that writes up a student she tells me one story and I have a kid who comes in and he tells me another. I wasn't there I don't know who's telling the truth. The kid could be like the kid that cried wolf. He may have a bad reputation but this one instance he could be telling the truth. One approach I take is that my teachers are not always right ...and kids are not always wrong...So it gets to be very tough because I see myself as a judge and I'm making a decision and that's a powerful spot

because the decision I make could make or break a kid's life or it could ruin a teacher's career or livelihood.

Thus, for Principal Parks, asking God for wisdom and letting the Holy Spirit be his guide helps him to make decisions that are practical, show respect for the students and staff, and have the students' best interest in mind.

Principal Parks also mentioned the guidance of the "Holy Spirit." In Christianity, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, or one of the persons of God (God the Father in Heaven, Jesus the Christ—God in the Flesh, and the Holy Spirit—God's Presence on Earth). Therefore, the role of spirituality in Principal Parks' leadership appears to focus on how he uses wisdom from God as well as the guidance of the Holy Spirit to make decisions.

While Principal Webster stated that prayer was important, he also said that he talks to his wife about situations or goes shopping at the flea market. For Principal Webster, going to the flea market is a way for him to simply release the pressure of the day—just walking around enables him to clear his mind before making decisions.

Other school administrators had different ways of making tough decisions. Principal Brown said that he is likely to seek more background information regarding the situation before making a tough decision. Principal Watkins spoke about how he uses many approaches in making tough decisions in these terms:

There are school board rules that you certainly have to adhere to and follow and even at that, sometimes you have a decision that you can make that when you weigh everything sometimes they're gut decisions and you hope that you make the right one.

This principal's experience suggests that, in order to make tough decisions, there has to be more than one approach to making decisions. Principal Watkins' response stemmed from his understanding that he is a school administrator first, and when he is at work he uses the resources that are available to him at that moment. He focuses on the school board policies and his "gut feelings". Principal Watkins described a gut feeling in his example as that feeling of knowing the right thing to do.

Principal Watkins felt that spirituality impacted his decision-making in a lot of areas. He explained:

Sometimes, though, you think from your heart and there are other times you think from your head....there are some decisions you got to go according to the rule or the law, what's right or wrong....but there are some things clear cut that spirituality might tell you to show mercy.

He gave the following example concerning making a decision according to the rule, or law, and where his spirituality told him to show mercy:

For example, we may have a kid that I can send home five days; sometimes I may make a decision to send them home for two or three days or even sometimes I can put them in in-school suspension. What I usually try to do is recognize that if a kid is going to be successful he can't be successful academically being at home. He needs to be at school.

For most school administrators, out-of-school suspension is generally a clear-cut policy. However, for Principal Watkins, when it comes to making a decision such as out-of-school suspension, his spirituality, which he described as thinking from the heart and the head, is the deciding factor that causes him to show mercy over what the rules or law would

say. From a Christian perspective, God is a spiritual being and He is the one who gives us mercy (Ephesians 2:4; Psalm 103:10). Mercy is when you do not receive punishment that you deserve. As Principal Watkins explained, sometimes he runs into cases where students have broken the school law or policy and, according to the policy, the student deserves out-of-school suspension. However, Principal Watkins believed that the role of spirituality in his leadership may tell him to make a decision from his heart; therefore, may show mercy by giving the student in-school suspension or no suspension to keep that student in school.

Mr. London, however, had a direct explanation of the way he determines how to make a decision:

When I had to make that tough decision to suspend that child especially if it was for the rest of the school year, I had to do what board policy called for me to do. And I had to often remind myself what Jesus said, “render unto Caesar that which is Caesar and unto God that was of God.” And Caesar said if a student brings drugs in school, he got to be suspended. Regardless, I know what condition his home is in and his environment issues. I got to work through all of that in my mind but that was an internal conflict. I knew that what was best for that kid was not to send him home but the board policy and state law required it.

Although Mr. London had internal conflict regarding doing what the school policy said and showing mercy because of the student’s home situation, he felt he had to go by what the board policy and state law required. At the point of decision-making, there needs to be a clear approach to how administrators use their spirituality to make the best decision for the

student. However, not all administrators come to the conclusion of showing mercy because it depends primarily on how the individual processes that internal struggle.

Mr. London explained that he always used two guiding principles to guide him when making tough decisions. The first principle was that if he was at peace with God with the decision that he had made, then he knew that he had made the right decision. The second gauge that he used was to ask himself how would his decision read in the newspaper the following morning? Mr. London's considered these two guiding principles to be leadership techniques. The variety of responses about decision-making processes used by these school administrators revealed that the decision-making process was complex and unique for each individual.

The influence of spirituality on decision-making

The next question asked participants about the ways spirituality influenced their decision-making. As mentioned previously, all of the participants mentioned that the influence of their spirituality on their decision-making was based on the Golden Rule regarding how to treat people. Principal Parks' response to this question with an explanation:

I just don't want to mistreat anybody and I don't want anybody to mistreat me or mistreat my child. It goes back to the treat others as you want them to treat you.

How someone is being treated is how spirituality influenced his decision-making.

Principal Smith stated that the way spirituality influences his decision-making is that it causes him to be "a little bit more liberal." Spirituality for him causes him to take more time and be more methodical before making a decision. If there were a decision to be made to suspend a student, Principal Smith would ask himself, "What will this suspension do for this kid and this family?" or "Does this kid deserve to be suspended?" These questions take

into consideration how this student and this family will be treated in the end. Mr. London summed up his response:

I try to do unto others, as I would have them do unto me and or unto my child. My own children went through the school system and so that Golden Rule, doing unto others as I would have them do unto me, guided me in my decision-making. How do I want to be treated as an employee or how I'd want some principal to treat my own children or my grandchildren; that scripture guided me in my decision-making and how I dealt with people.

To Mr. London, his spirituality leads him to make decisions to treat people like he would want to be treated, or how he would want his child to be treated. The Golden Rule is one of the frameworks, according to these school administrators, in which spirituality is used to guide them in their decision-making. For these participants, the Golden Rule is seen as an aspect of their spirituality. Determining how to intertwine the Golden Rule, the school policy, and what is in the best interest of students is a very complex process; however, some of the participants in this study found successful ways to use process in their decision-making.

As he mentioned previously, Principal Smith stated that he would lend more compassion to decision-making because he is a little more tolerant in certain areas than his colleagues. Principal Webster explained that by being a pastor and a Christian, there are certain things that he will not do if he is going to be Christ-like. To be more like Jesus Christ, Principal Webster believed that he should follow the Commandments of God: do not steal or kill, and to be humble and love your neighbor. For example, he explained that, as a Christian, pastor, and a principal, he did not want to be a liar, a thief, or manipulate the truth to get credit for something that he did not do:

God rules say that we're not under the law but we're under grace... You can be a principal that leads with a iron fist or with a strong hand with no compassion for the folk that you are over.

Rather than leading with an iron fist or strong hand with no compassion, Principal Webster saw that it was best to "have more compassion, more love, and more care about people". Principals Smith and Webster both believed the influence that being a pastor and a principal have on decision-making was that they understood, sympathized, and had compassion for what people are experiencing.

In addition to being compassionate, Principal Parks mentioned that there are other check lists that he uses to ensure that has made good decisions:

Well, first of all it makes me check myself [and the] decisions that I make with my spiritual background in making sure that I'm in line with the word, that I'm being fair, I'm being compassionate so the decision that I make there is a check list that I go by I guess. Is this in the framework of what God's word is about? Is this within what I am preaching and teaching and what I'm role modeling? And so that helps me in my decision making process.

Principal Parks saw that compassion is an integral part of his decision-making process; however, he also included the Bible, which he called God's word, as a framework to help him in his decision-making process.

Likewise, Principal Brown not only used the Bible as a framework to guide his decisions, but he also understood the process of using other resources as well to arrive at the best results. He added:

So in the decision-making process, I have to take all of that and blend it together with the code of conduct and my core values and beliefs. I have to put all of that together and try to come out with the best decision that's number one, is going to be advantageous to the student; two my concern for the school system; and three what [does] the Bible say? I have to take all of those things and put them in one collective fix. Then see what is the best answer that's most advantageous for student one, number two for the board of education, and number three what is going to be the most advantageous event for this student long term?

Principal Brown's spirituality was not his only tool when it came to the role of spirituality in decision-making. His spirituality caused him to look at the individual case and apply all of his resources in order to come out with the best decision for all stakeholders.

In summary, spirituality has a great deal to do with how the participants have been able to approach certain situations as administrators. The role of spirituality for these participants guided them in everything they did, and they felt that it helped them as school administrators. The role of spirituality in leadership is not a sprinkling of magic dust or the sweeping a magic wand over any situation; nevertheless, the school administrators expressed that it is essential because their spirituality is a part of who they are and is what they use within their leadership.

In addition, the process of applying spirituality in leadership had considerable variation among participants. Even though all of them identified spirituality as key parts of their leadership, the administrators expressed different ways in which spirituality influenced their decision-making. For these participants, being effective leaders in the school was

important and they wanted to use all of the resources available to them to make the best possible decision for all stakeholders. They felt that their spirituality was one of the resources that they could use to help make the best decisions. Therefore, the decision-making process that incorporated spirituality for these participants included their core values and beliefs, applying the Golden Rule or compassion, following the ways of the Bible, and including school policies.

Maintain a balance between church and state issues

Many of the participants expressed that they had no problems maintaining balance between church and state issues. Three of the participants talked about small situations in which they were involved that were related to conflicts with church and state issues. One of the participants recalled an issue dealing with a student who told her parent that the principal called her a “devil worshipper”:

She had on all this black stuff. She was into this Goth thing. So I said, “Why do you have black polish on your finger nails and all this other black stuff?” And of course we encounter everything what kids do. They’re cutting themselves some of them mutilate their bodies, got these safety pins through their arms and all of this ol’ stuff. So with this particular girl I said, “Explain to me what it is.” And she responded about some devil worshippers and stuff like that. Now when they come talking about that then that opens up an opportunity for me to talk about Christ. So, I say, “But let me ask you a question? Have you heard of a different alternative?” “Oh you mean a Christian and stuff like that?” she said. So, I said “Yeah what’s wrong with that?” She said, “Well, I grew up a Christian and stuff.” I said, “That Goth

stuff, what is it? Do you know what you're doing?" She said, "Well my friends they..." and so she was saying some stuff like that.

In this situation, the administrator was the authority figure in the room and felt as though he had the responsibility to suggest an alternative to her. Although he perceived he had given her good advice, his suggestion offended the student and she felt it was a violation of the Establishment Clause. The lead principal was called, but no charges were made against the assistant principal.

Another participant shared an issue that his school experienced regarding showing the movie *Facing the Giants*, which was produced by a Christian organization and had a Christian theme:

We have a child whose dad is an atheist and they showed the movie in his class and somehow the child went I guess and told the dad about it. So the dad tried to make a big issue out of it and it went federal. It wasn't anything wrong with the movie but they pulled the movie and developed a policy that no movies would be shown without prior approval from the central office and that kind of stuff. It angered a lot of people in the school because again you took a great piece of literary work that had a powerful message and basically had it silenced.

Although the administrator stated that he was not directly involved in the conflict, school administrators oftentimes find themselves in the middle of conflicts between the community, family, and school, and they must understand how to keep peace within the school and maintain that balance between church and state.

Another principal talked about a situation in which a parent accused him of asking her son if he was a Christian:

I had a parent to come back and her son was a total different case. I had a resource officer in the room with me and she said that I asked her son if he was a Christian, which I did not do. And so she tried to spin off that. That was something because we both were questioned separately. I left the room and the resource officer came in with the exact same story (that I did not call him a Christian). So we squashed that.

In a case like this, how an individual maintains the balance between church and state depends on the perspective of the parent. Fortunately, for this administrator, there was a third party in the room who verified that he did not ask the student if he was a Christian. This administrator protected himself from accusation of violation of any laws by ensuring he had a witness in the room with him when counseling a student or parent. Other school administrators, in general, have used this approach and it has appeared to be successful in a situation like this.

None of these church-state situations led to job termination or lawsuits. However, the church-state situations provided examples attesting to why there is a need for school administrators to realize that the Establishment Clause needs to be upheld in their leadership. Whether or not the leaders would have been terminated or involved in lawsuits was not as important to these administrators as doing what they thought was best for the student and parent. These participants also have to recognize the need for inclusiveness. When interacting with the school administrator, students should feel welcomed and must leave their encounter with the person of authority affirmed and informed with their integrity and dignity intact. The goal must not only be to maintain a balance between church and state issues but to ensure an

open and welcoming environment where all feel accepted regardless of background, sexual orientation, gender, religious beliefs, or lack of religious beliefs.

When participants were asked about how they maintain the balance between separation of church and state issues, many of them made reference to the scriptures, honoring God, and honoring the law of the land. The participants explained that following this scripture is how they maintained a balance between church and state. They felt that they honored God by honoring the law of the land, and by coming to work and doing their jobs. They expressed that they did not have problems maintaining balance because they had an understanding of the law. However, their understanding of the law and application of it appeared to be dependent upon how they interpreted the law.

One of the participants, Mr. London, an assistant superintendent, talked about how he created a partnership between the churches in his school district and the schools. He stated, “the Constitution doesn’t say that government and church can’t partner together.” As a part of his leadership, Mr. London made sure that people first understood what the Constitution said. He said he teaches this concept by providing brochures and leading workshops on church and government roles at school districts and churches. Mr. London further explained how he maintained a balance between church and state issues:

We actually have a strong partnership between churches and the department of Health and Human Services, something that we call social services. The director of social services, he’s a Christian, he knows as I do that the Constitution never said we couldn’t have a partnership. It says that we could not establish a religion. Thus you’ve seen that’s how the White House is able to do faith-based initiatives office because they clarified what the

establishment clause meant. A vote to have a faith-based initiative office was not a violation of the constitution.

What this statement implies is that some pastors perceive there must be ways that schools and churches can work together to help a student succeed. Having an understanding of “what the Establishment Clause meant” was a way that helped Mr. London maintain a balance between church and state. Thus, for his leadership, by establishing a partnership with other houses of worship in the community, he had to embrace individuals of other faiths and Christian denominations, such as Muslims, Jehovah Witnesses, Jews, and the Greek Orthodox.

One of the participants made an interesting point when answering the interview question about how to maintain a balance between church and state:

Well people want to say separation of church and state. Sometimes it depends on who I am speaking to and a lot of times I had to do it in an around-about way. If it's Black folk then being on the average, it's nope, it's not hard because I'm Black. Whites I have to do it in a different way because I have to see how they're going to accept it. So I would kind of sugar coat it a little bit and if I put it out there and if I get an “amen” or “that's what God said”, or something like that, then I'll know we can take it a little farther. Other than that, you have to know how to do it. You just have to hear and see how the reaction is going to be.

Just like Mr. London mentioned the importance of understanding what the Establishment Clause means, Principal Webster made reference to “knowing how to do it” within the school in order to maintain that balance.

Principal Parks responded to the question about this balance as well:

First of all you got to know the law. And you got to know what you can do and what you can't do and how far to tread up to that fence and know when you got to let it go.

To these participants, maintaining a balance of church and state is not dependent upon what is written, but is based on knowing the law, knowing what one can do, and understanding how religious expressions are perceived by others. This statement suggests that a lack of knowing the law, what to do, or understanding the perceptions of others may place an individual in jeopardy of violating the Establishment Clause. Many of the participants expressed the importance of being sensitive to the person to whom one is talking, and whether that person is a Christian, not whether that person is Black or White, although the participants expressed being more comfortable sharing their faiths with others who are African American.

Other participants noted that they do not have any problems maintaining the balance between church and state in their roles as school administrators because their spirituality is embedded in the way they live. Principal Moulton said that "it's just a lifestyle" for him. He explained:

I have incorporated the spiritual values that I have and the spiritual teachings that I've absorbed over the years I have incorporated them into my life and so I just live it and I don't have to speak it. I don't carry a Bible around in the school and quote a lot of Bible verses. But I think through my lifestyle and through my living, I think that's what's incorporated in what I use.

For Principal Moulton, his spirituality is not a document or biblical principles; rather it is the way that he treats people and the way he loves his neighbor. He credited his success in

maintaining a balance between church and state to his lifestyle. Principal Moulton felt that the way he lived his life, by respecting others, loving them, and being honest and walking with integrity, caused him to live in a way that honored the law; therefore, he did not worry about violating the law. Principal Watkins stated that the greatest thing in terms of maintaining a balance between church and state is how one lives as well as being a role model.

Principal Parks explained that he does not try to separate his spirituality:

I'm a preacher that happens to be a principal....I'm not a principal that happens to be a preacher.

Principal Parks expressed that he was a preacher first, one who preaches and teaches God's word, and his job was being a principal. His statement pointed to the impact of his bi-vocational background. To these participants, maintaining a balance was not difficult because their spirituality is based on the way they carry themselves in their leadership in the community, church, and school.

Overall, the men who are bi-vocational school administrators and pastors expressed the importance of their spirituality in their leadership. Thus, for these school administrators, the role of spirituality in their leadership provided them with compassion for their students and staff and opportunities to be role models of the Golden Rule—to do to others as you would have them to do to you. The role that spirituality played in their decision-making included their core values and beliefs, applying the Golden Rule or compassion, following the ways of the Bible, and following school policy. Finally, they understood the importance of maintaining a balance between church and state, and tried to base their decisions on what

was best for the students, the school in which they worked, and on what the Bible would have them to do.

Summary

This chapter presented the results of the study related to answering the research questions. Three themes were identified that emerged from the data: hat switching, code switching, and church as center. When observed as a whole, the themes reflect an understanding of the role that spirituality plays in the leadership of African American school administrators who are pastors.

Chapter 5 provides a summary of the study, presents the findings related to the research questions, and discusses the findings as they relate to the literature review. The chapter also includes implications and recommendations for leadership preparation programs and practical applications for school administrators with spiritual backgrounds who are currently working in public schools.

CHAPTER 5. SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In Chapter 4, the study results were discussed relative to the role of spirituality in the participants' leadership, and emergent themes were identified. This chapter discusses the theoretical significance and the three themes as they relate to the literature review. Following is a discussion of the findings within the context of the research questions and practical significance. Then implications of the findings are summarized. Finally, recommendations are made for practice and future research.

Theoretical Significance

The findings of the study revealed that the role of spirituality took on many forms in leadership for these African American school administrators who were also pastors. The different forms of the role of spirituality in leadership can be used as models within educational leadership that illustrate how to integrate spirituality in a public school setting. The role of spirituality identified in this study can be used as a guide for school leaders who desire to understand how they can bring their spirituality into their leadership.

In this study, spirituality was comprised of many different aspects that affected these leaders' behaviors, how they made decisions, and the ways they integrated their spirituality into their leadership. The findings suggest that the role that spirituality played in their leadership was that their spirituality connected them to their family values and to their relationships with teachers, students, parents and the community, and presented opportunities to serve others through leadership. The findings of this study illuminate tools individuals can

use to integrate spirituality into their leadership, such as through decision-making and leading with care, compassion, and trust, which this research posited are aspects of spirituality.

Religion and spirituality

The definition of spirituality does not depend on universal agreement. Spirituality is personal and is defined by how the individual perceives and uses it. Leadership is spirituality in action when school leaders recognize the importance of applying their spiritual selves in their leadership. Those who would practice this action within their leadership, whether in organized religions or public institutions, connect spirituality to relating with people with whom they come in contact each day.

While religion and spirituality are not always one and the same, they are interconnected. That is, for these participants, religion was one particular way that they acted out their spirituality. As pastors in Black churches, all of the participants in this study were acting out their spirituality through their African American Protestant Christian religion. The role of their spirituality was a significant aspect of their self-identities in their leadership as well as the ways in which they connected with others.

In this study, the participants suggested that not only is spirituality an expression that connects individuals to a higher power, but it also guides their everyday actions and worldviews. Seeing spirituality as an expression attests that spirituality *is* an action. Thus, spirituality helps answer questions related to who we are and the meaning of life, but more importantly, the role that spirituality plays in what we do. The manner in which the

participants described their spirituality could not be relegated to an isolated event or be compartmentalized.

For these participants, religion served as a conductor or manager of the way people give devotion individually or corporately to a higher Being. Spirituality, on the other hand, is that connectedness that one has with a higher Being to whom one gives devotion. Thus, for these participants spirituality is a way of connecting with God and others. Spirituality connected these participants to their family values (values transmitted from home and family, church, community, and upbringing), to relationships with others, as well as to providing service to others. Personal spirituality in this study was seen as a connector and not a divider.

While spirituality was defined in previous research as “reflections of our inner self” (Starratt & Guare, 1995), lessons learned from this study revealed that the inner self includes values that are transmitted from family, organized church religion (if any), and the community or environment in which an individual is raised. Although Starratt and Guare defined spirituality as the reflection of the individual’s inner self, each of the participants in this study developed his spirituality not in isolation, but in community with others. Spirituality was a connector in the sense that these participants found ways to integrate values transmitted from home, such as respecting others and lessons learned from Bible verses into their leadership (e.g., the Golden Rule: do to others as you would have them do to you). In order to make decisions as school leaders, the participants’ spirituality was blended together with school policies, vision statements, missions, and prayer to bring holistic views to their leadership. The school administrators’ abilities to use spirituality as another resource to motivate themselves and those with whom they worked to be successful in schools can be

used by other educational leaders who are looking for ways to include spirituality in their work.

Leadership and spirituality in the public school

Leadership and spirituality can be expressed in public schools without proselytizing or violating church and state laws. The findings gained from this study provide examples for school leaders and school employees that can lead to better understandings of spirituality in dealing with challenges in some of the mundane routines of leading within schools.

Participants rarely spoke about what they could not do related to bringing their spirituality with them to do their jobs. They understood that, although they were pastors, when they entered their schools they were school administrators and they were going to “render to Caesar what was Caesars.” In other words, they were going to follow public school laws as related to their spirituality and religion. A challenge, as Shields (2005) explained, is for educational leaders who practice spirituality in their leadership to gain understandings of the roles of religion and spirituality established within the public school systems. The participants found ways to incorporate their pastoral roles into their administrative roles by counseling and showing compassion toward those whom they lead.

The leadership practices of several of these participants revealed they had an understanding of their spiritual selves as well as church and state laws. Based on the findings of this study, integrating spirituality in leadership can assist leaders to move beyond mediocre routines and practices of leadership to respond to others with respect, acceptance, and openness.

How does one integrate spirituality in leadership in schools? First, leaders must recognize that they have spiritual sides. Educational leaders who do not recognize themselves

as having spiritual sides might have difficulties understanding the importance of spirituality in leadership. Second, there must be a clear understanding of what school leaders can and cannot do or say related to church and state laws. For example, a school administrator cannot ask students or their parents if they are Christians. This question would violate the church and state laws. Other examples may not be so clear-cut. For example, if a student's school administrator is the pastor at the church the student attends, can the student ask her principal, "Will there be Bible study tonight?"

Based on the findings of this study, school administrators must have confidence in their spirituality and knowledge of church and state laws to respond in ways that respect, build trust, and provide environments of acceptance for those they lead. This statement addresses why it is important for school administrators not only to integrate their spirituality in their leadership, but to also have awareness of the cultural, identity, and spiritual context of those whom they lead.

African American leadership and spirituality

African American spirituality provides a model of importance for spirituality integrated in leadership, especially in schools with students who are predominately of color. This study revealed there are close ties among culture, identity, relationships, and spirituality, and these ties can be used to inspire students to succeed regardless of socioeconomic status or current situations. Spirituality has been a source of survival for African Americans in the U.S. and abroad, and should be included in studying leadership experience in public schools in general (Dantley, 2003, 2005; West, 1993). Historically, the influence of African American spirituality has been embedded with a sense of identity, relationships with others, and cultures working together to move beyond the lack of resources available.

Although many of the participants grew up before and during the civil rights movement, and remembered being separated from Whites, the experience of segregation was not a major factor in their decision-making or their leadership behaviors. However, a few important points should be highlighted. The participants did not talk about the role of their Black identities because the interview questions did not focus on their racial identities. However, some of the participants' reflections on the Golden Rule seemed to be rooted in their experience of racism. Principals Moulton, Smith, and Parks recalled being separated from Whites and remembered going to separate schools.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, a strong emphasis on communalism rather than individualism, which was described when participants talked about the Golden rule, echoes Wilmore's (1998) finding that African American Christianity includes residuals of African tradition religions and the experience of oppression. Several participants stated that as part of their decision-making processes, they often thought about how particular decisions would make other people feel. Thus, when they entered the point of decision-making, they took into consideration the persons that would be affected by their decisions to ensure that no one would be treated unfairly. As Principal Parks stated:

I just don't want to mistreat anybody and I don't want anybody to mistreat me or mistreat my child. It goes back to the treat others as you want them to treat you.

This statement is encouraging for parents and students because of the increased diversity among students who are entering the schoolhouse. Many students are attending schools with peers of very diverse ethnicities and cultural backgrounds, and they need school administrators to model compassion and fairness regardless of their personal identities and viewpoints.

The Golden Rule

The use of the Golden Rule by these participants in decision-making confirms the viewpoint expressed in Stewart's (1999) description of the elements of African American spirituality and its uniqueness. According to Stewart, the ability of a group of people to endure slavery and yet exhibit compassion, empathy, and human understanding toward those who oppressed them is one of the greatest strengths of African American spirituality. Leadership grounded in this spiritual dimension of struggle and conflict, as Dantley (2005) suggested, can flourish in public schools, especially those with students who are predominately of color. One of the ways this spiritual dimension of struggle and conflict can be used in the school is to motivate students of color in the critical thinking related to how they view life beyond academics. When students are taught the wisdom, provided with examples of courage, and understand the role of spirituality from African American historical figures, and they are encouraged to use these examples as models to overcome their own struggles (Dantley year?), they will begin to critically examine current societal situations to the point where Bloom's Taxonomy of higher order thinking is not just for academic pursuits, but serves a higher purpose in how they live their lives after graduation. Spirituality in African American leadership has been that model.

The use of the Golden Rule revealed the importance of how spirituality and the participants' experiences as African Americans influenced their decision-making. This influence of spirituality was a unique aspect of their leadership because the Golden Rule contained for them an essential element that historically shaped the African American experience and consciousness into positive experiences for spiritual and social change. Each

of the participants used certain aspects of the Golden Rule as part of how their spirituality influenced their decision- making processes.

Spirituality is an integral part of African American leadership. As discussed in previous research (e.g., Dantley, 2005; Frazier, 1974; Lincoln, 1974; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990; Milner, 2001; Stewart, 1997), African American leadership is rooted in the Black church. All of the participants, as school administrators and pastors, spoke about their involvement from a young age with leadership experiences in their churches. This study does not suggest that African American spirituality is better than any other spirituality, but it is unique in the fact that, historically, the spirituality of African Americans inspired the participants to look beyond their current circumstances to achieve whatever opportunities life presented them, and provided them with connections to their community from an early age.

African American pastors and churches

Although the leadership of the participants in this study represented the church (pastors) on one side, and the state (school administrators) on the other side, the role of spirituality was evident in their daily lives and work as educational leaders. Their backgrounds as pastors were not as important as the roles of their spirituality in their leadership. They saw their backgrounds as pastors working together or overlapping with their positions as school administrators. However, one of the advantages of their pastoral backgrounds in their leadership as school administrators was that it gave them other avenues through which to build relationships in the community

Based on the findings of this study, pastors can be a go-between for churches and public school systems partnering together to help students both academically and socially.

Thus, their positions as school administrators and pastors allowed them to provide open communication between the school, the church, and the community. For example, one of the participants talked about how he was able to answer questions that community members had about standardized tests and students' achievements. This mediation provided opportunities for these participants to build positive relationships between schools, the church, and the community.

Emergent Themes

The theoretical significance for this study is that the role of spirituality in the leadership of African American pastors who are public school administrators is shown in service through hat switching, language such as code switching, and the concept of church as the center: the three themes that emerged from this study.

Hat switching

The first theme, hat switching, emerged when all of the participants talked about how significant their bi-vocational backgrounds as both school administrators and pastors helped them to integrate spirituality into their leadership and gave them the abilities to observe situations within the public schools from different perspectives. For example, when a school administrator is approached with a situation in the school, he can address the situation from the perspective as a school administrator, a counselor, or a pastor. Although these participants' roles switched, their identities (who they are) did not switch. They used their pastoral and school administrator backgrounds as leadership resources or tools to be able to adapt to the many complex situations with which school administrators deal on a daily basis. Some of the ways these participants adapted to the many complex situations was by using

their experiences as pastors to handle personal or social situations that did not necessarily have anything to do with academics in particular. They tended to function in their roles morally and ethically as leaders by recognizing the importance of interpersonal relationships within the school environment.

Some of the moral leadership literature has discussed the role of spirituality as it relates to the responsibilities of educational administrators within the school environment. In previous research on moral leadership (e.g., Greenfield, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1990, 1992; Starratt, 2004), the focus tended to be more on the growing concerns about how practitioners functioned morally and ethically in educational administration. However, the participants in this study spoke about “hat switching” as a moral and spiritual perspective to describe whatever the need was within the school. For all of these participants, their spirituality allowed them to “switch hats,” but did not require them to switch their moral perspectives as school leaders.

School administrators are typically concerned about the management and organizational structures of the school, which was an important part of these participants’ roles as leaders; however, these participants were more often concerned about issues of care, personal relationships, and not hurting individuals. They tended to avoid the traditional model of leadership and focused instead on being engaged in bringing every aspect of their backgrounds into their leadership in order to meet the needs of teachers, staff, students and parents within their school communities.

The findings from this study on hat switching revealed that the participants’ moral perspectives of caring for individuals tied directly to how they felt as leaders, and that their roles within the school were to meet the needs of those with whom they worked. That moral

perspective was consistent for them as educational administrators and was very closely related to how they saw their spirituality working in their leadership. One of the definitions of spirituality, discussed in Chapter 2, is the acceptance of universal values that individuals believe guide their everyday actions and by which they judge those actions. The participants' spirituality was made up of their moral and ethical values. Hence, regardless of whether they were suspending students or sitting in on meetings to decide the welfare of students' home situations, they were intentional about creating school environments in which their spirituality guided their actions.

The concept of hat switching is similar to what Sergiovanni (1992) called the head, heart, and hand of leadership. Sergiovanni believed that what influences a leader is the heart of leadership, meaning what a person believes, and the head of leadership, a leader's theories of practice. The hand of leadership is their action. These participants went beyond cleaning cafeteria tables or picking up trash in the hallways to functioning in the roles of pastor, administrator, or counselor. If a teacher needed someone to pray for a sick parent, these participants prayed; if a student needed someone with whom to talk, these participants were willing to listen. They felt that at any given moment, they had the abilities necessary to be counselors, pastors, or school administrators, which they believed was influenced by their spirituality.

All school administrators switch hats, but for these school administrators their spiritual hat was important. For these participants, the pastor hat they wore enabled them to integrate their experience as a pastor into their leadership as a school administrator and gave them a position of influence with those students, teachers, and parents in the religious community. Furthermore, as previously mentioned in Chapter 2, what makes these

participants different from other school administrators is that their background as a pastor carries with it a potential conflict of interest in the public schools.

School administrators address many complex situations daily and have the responsibility of creating suitable learning environments for all students. School administrators have to know how to adapt to the constant change of events during their workdays. They have a multitude of roles to which they must adjust in order to meet the needs of their teachers, staff, students, and parents. Based on the findings from this study, the role of spirituality in leadership can help school leaders adjust and be flexible in serving their schools.

School administrators should not overlook the role of spirituality to cultivate nurturing and supportive school environments. Leadership requires the wearing of many hats: manager, cheerleader, coach, counselor, encourager, head learner, and planner. Based on these findings, school administrators who display the ability to infuse spirituality into leadership become the connectors in the school culture that link instructional leadership and pastoral dimension of leadership. The participants in this study exhibited care for their teachers, staff, students, and parents by being visible in the academic and personal lives of those within their schools.

These school administrators believed that having these different roles and “switching hats” gave them the abilities to help students, parents, teachers, and staff in different ways; and for them those “hats” caused them to be more adaptable as school administrators. For example, one participant reflected:

Even though we have counselors in the school, they would call me in and on the way they would say ... we need you to come down here and on the way you need to put on your preacher hat.

Through hat switching, these participants were not bound or compartmentalized into one role as school administrator.

The findings of this study contribute to the literature on moral leadership in that the Holy Spirit is a motivator, inspirer, authority, and sometimes a guide for leadership. The participants in this study talked in terms of the Holy Spirit influencing their leadership, and they did not specifically use the words “moral” or “ethical leadership,” unlike the standards for school leaders: Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLCC) standard five. Spirituality for these participants guided their actions and they intentionally expressed that side of their leadership when meeting the needs of the school.

Code switching

The second theme, code switching played an important role in how the school administrators brought their spirituality into their leadership. Participants explained that code switching, which was a term framed by one of the participants, was a different way for them to communicate their spirituality or scriptures within their workplaces without *intentionally* offending anyone. Participants asserted that code switching was a way for them to bring spirituality into leadership. The concept of code switching understands that every community has its own language. The participants in this study recognized that there is a difference between the language spoken in the church and the language spoken in the workplace. They changed or switched their language to provide more welcoming conversations that others

may perceive as encouraging while simultaneously striving toward meeting the same goal of helping students become successful both academically and personally.

Code switching is similar to Dantley's (2000) argument about discourse in educational leadership. According to Dantley, "a language must be used to describe the moral and ethical situations as well as describe the meaning for the excess amount of different events that administrators deal with daily" (p. 20). Perceptions are expressed through language, and through the use of the participants' language, they created a cultural storage of meanings about the school environment and themselves.

"The educational leadership discourse," as Dantley noted, "is that negotiated practice that defines the activities that are performed on a regular basis" (p. 11). Thus, in this study the discourse for educational leaders can be found in code switching. The discourse establishes what Dantley (2000) called the parameters of "righteousness" within some social construction (p. 11). As discourse relates to this study, code switching is the parameters of "righteousness" created by these participants to express their realities of daily events in their work. That is, code switching helped these participants shape and reshape the cultures in which core values and beliefs are expressed in their schools. School leaders must be good listeners and understand the core values of those who they lead in order to express in their own words what is going on in the schools.

Many of the participants in this study talked about how they switched languages that would usually be spoken at church or in the community and spoke in different ways in the workplace to get the same point out to staff, students, or parents. For example, as mentioned in Chapter 4, one of the participants described code switching as "in the church I'll say 'we got to save the lost' and in the school system, I'll say 'we got to reach the underprivileged'".

The participants' language contains hints of deeper meanings of their spirituality with words such as hope, faith, and love. In this study, code switching is seen as that language Dantley (2000) described that can bring "articulation of morality and ethical urgency" in how school administrators lead on a daily basis. Code switching should be a tool that educational leaders use to integrate spirituality into their leadership to improve their leadership practices and communication. A tool such as code switching would be valuable to leadership preparation programs to help those in public schools have senses of their spiritual selves in their leadership.

Code switching, for these participants, was not only found in what was spoken, but also in what was written. One participant said that he uses code switching in his email signature: it says "do the right thing," but actually what he means is "do the righteous thing". Everyone who reads his email may not understand exactly what he intends to convey or the meaning of "do the right thing," but through code switching he feels as though he is expressing a spiritual point.

The example of code switching in this study contributes to Dantley's theoretical argument on discourse, which challenges the prospect of incorporating a language of spirituality into theoretical models of educational leadership. Code switching in this context reveals more practical ways of including the voice of spirituality in educational leadership. There should be more practice of discourse in the field of educational leadership (Dantley, 2000), and code switching in this study provides more examples. Other school administrators need to determine what codes are in place in their buildings. For example, codes may exist in subtle ways in school slogans or mottos like "we believe" or shared stories that inspire, motivate and encourage staff and students to work toward success in what they do. This

study revealed that the role of spirituality in leadership through code switching provides a model that can be transferred from how African American school administrators include spirituality in their leadership to other settings. Perhaps this model of code switching will help other school administrators understand how to integrate spirituality in their leadership.

The participants were also careful in how and to whom they expressed their “spiritual” languages. One participant stated that if he was speaking to a Black person, it was not hard to express himself because he is Black. However, if the person was White, he felt that he had to express himself in a different way. His comments illuminate the cultural and racial contexts of how individuals choose to express their spirituality through language. In this study, the participants showed a certain comfort talking to those who had similar cultural or racial backgrounds. There is a connection that African Americans have with each other through common and shared experiences of their cultures and identities. The findings of this study fits with Stewart (1999) and Dantley’s (2005) work that suggest that spirituality creates the capacity for African Americans to connect with one another through their culture and how they identify with one another.

The findings of this study recognize that there are close ties between culture, identity, relationships, and spirituality. Again, communities of color are deeply grounded in religious or spiritual contexts (e.g., Dantley, 2003; Stewart, 1999) and the African American culture or “Blackness,” as Stewart would call it, have created ways to speak the language of spirituality whereby the thoughts, feelings, and expression are developed in different ways. The participants tended to switch their languages depending on the situation. For example, if a parent responded, “Amen” or “that’s what the Bible says” to something the participants said, they would see that type of response as an opportunity to express more of their spiritual

beliefs. This kind of “church talk,” such as “tell it brother/sister” or “can I get a witness,” may be offensive to some who are not within the cultural, racial, or spiritual contexts, but these participants created unique ways to express their beliefs without using “church talk”. Code switching was not some type of secret code to put religion back in school; rather, it was how these participants chose to express themselves through their leadership.

The role of spirituality in these participants’ leadership positions offered through code switching was very similar to how, historically, the slaves preserved their native languages. Any attempt on the part of the slaves to do so was discouraged or prohibited, according to Frazier (1974). These slaves, in turn, found other forms of language to express themselves, such as dancing and singing. As such, the African American school administrators’ ways of bringing the totality of their spiritual selves to their work contexts were found in code switching.

Although these participants did not indicate that they themselves felt restricted in any way from expressing their spirituality, it is possible that there was a sense of enslavement of words because of the assumption that a certain language could not be used in a public school out of fear of violating the law. There could be a sense of enslavement of certain words used within the public schools based on how spirituality is expressed through language (e.g., Dantley, 2000, 2005; Foster, 2005; Stewart, 1999). However, historically African Americans have found liberation through their expressions of culture, such as language. Likewise, these participants tended to find unique ways to bring that “spiritual” language or “church” language into the schools through code switching.

Furthermore, this theme of code switching is consistent with the findings of research conducted by Bryk, Lee, and Holland (1993) on Catholic principals wherein they pointed out

that an important spiritual dimension to leadership is manifested in the language of community as they worked to achieve the goal of building community in their schools. The participants' spirituality spoke a language of commonality that attempted to build community in their schools. Instead of quoting Bible verses, they created different ways to express the values and missions of their schools through code switching. People who identify themselves as members of a social group such as religious institutions or ethnic affiliations have their own ways of exchanging ideas, common beliefs, and values through the languages they use. Shared visions, values, and beliefs are all aspects of community, and those aspects are expressed through language.

The role of spirituality in the participants' leadership was expressed through creative language that they considered to be Christian or had spiritual concepts, such as respect, faithfulness, compassion, integrity, or honesty. Thus, the participants in this study found ways to integrate spirituality in their leadership through code switching from silent, isolated, dormant, potentially offensive, or exclusive language to expressive, incorporated, and vibrant, inclusive language. Thus, code switching is the language these school leaders used to integrate their spirituality into their leadership.

Church as center

In order for educational leaders to understand the role of spirituality in leadership, and understand the influence of the church in spirituality, the definition of "church" must be refined. The Black church has historically played an integral part in the liberation of African Americans. The Black church has always been concerned about two modes of liberation: liberating African Americans 1) through education and 2) teaching and preaching the Gospel.

Historically, African American leadership has been the voice that promoted these grounds of liberation. Within the leadership of those individuals who are school administrators and pastors, public schools and churches can find that common ground, which is liberation through education.

All of the participants talked about how they were heavily involved in church activities and took on leadership roles at young ages. To many of these participants, being part of a church was always very important to them. This third theme, church as center, adds to the literature that speaks about the role of African American leadership being rooted in the church. As mentioned in Chapter 2, a lot of the literature pointed to the fact that historically most African American leadership can find its roots in the church (e.g., Dantley, 2003a; Henry, 1990; Milner, 2006; Pinn, 2002; Raboteau, 1999; Walters & Smith 1999), as was the case with these participants. This finding agrees with the literature on African American spirituality that asserts that the Black church is one of the largest institutions that nurture spirituality in the lives of individuals they reach (e.g., Billingsley & Caldwell, 1991; Dantley, 2005; Frazier, 1974; Lincoln, 1974; Milner, 2006; Stewart, 1999).

It is possible that this idea of church as center can help to better explain how, within the African American experience, including spirituality in leadership is important, and that spirituality is fluid in the everyday lives of most African Americans. The re-defining of church explores the idea that historically, it was never the church building or an organized institution that accomplished anything; rather, it was the people, the community, and their culture (the church) that influenced change and leadership.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, church was the center of the spiritual and social experience in these participants' everyday lives. Church for these participants is the way you

conduct yourselves and your relationship with others. Participants asserted that church is a part of who they are, and the “church” in them was how they saw spirituality being brought into their leadership in public schools. To them, church was a part of their identities and was not considered a religion; church was how they lived and what was instilled in them through their upbringings. You do not just go to church—the church goes with you wherever you go. How these participants define church adds a different perspective to the existing literature on how researchers define church. Researchers can no longer see church as only the place of organized religion. Church as an identity enables an individual to live how they desire and to lead beyond the boundaries of the schoolhouse gates.

For many of the participants, the church played a significant role in their spiritual upbringings. It was a part of who they were and it connected them to others in their communities. This finding fits with Billingsley and Caldwell’s (1991) assertion that the church is more than a religious institution and that it is still a major source of social support in the African American community. One of the participants in this study even went as far as redefining the meaning of church: “we, the people are the church and the church comes and meets at the center.” It is possible that individuals who see church not as a building, but as an identity, might interpret the meaning of separation of church and state differently than those who consider the church as only connected to a building or a religion.

Church, for these participants, was seen as a part of their spiritual identities, the place where the Holy Spirit lives and is given by God. For them church has less to do with religion or proselytizing, and more with modeling the role of spirituality in their leadership and behaviors. As mentioned previously, church for these participants is the way you conduct yourselves and your relationships with others. As one of the participants believed:

The separation of church and state clearly understood is that the government shall not establish a church or affirm one church over another, the Constitution doesn't say that government and church can't partner together.

Thus, there is a possibility that the church and the school can partner together to reach a common goal of helping students be successful in school. Bi-vocational pastors (school administrators) can co-exist in the school and can be a model of how the role of spirituality in leadership can be used to support, encourage, and motivate the individuals with whom they work in the public schools. Educational leaders with this background can act as mediators between the church and the school, creating better communication and building positive relationships between the public institution and the church.

Discussion Based on the Research Questions

Role of spirituality as a connector

Before the role of spirituality is considered, it is helpful to review how spirituality was defined in this study: that which involves connectedness with ourselves, with one another, and often, though not always, with a higher or transcendent power beyond ourselves. The findings suggested that the role that spirituality played in leadership of these participants was that their spirituality connected them to: (a) their family values; (b) the way they built relationships with teachers, students, and the community; and (c) opportunities to serve.

The leadership of these African American pastors who are school administrators suggested that their spirituality connected them to their family values, to their stakeholders, and to how they served those stakeholders. All of the participants talked about how their spirituality was instilled in them from their parents, grandparents, and by the example their

elders showed at home praying together and going to church together. They all felt that spirituality was something that was instilled in them to show care, compassion, respect toward others, and to honor God. Thus this study finds that the role of spirituality in the leadership of African American school administrator is a connector. That is, the role that spirituality plays in leadership connects administrators to those with whom they work, their behaviors, and their decisions.

Shields' (2005) argument was that it is necessary that educational leaders understand their own spirituality (what it is they are present to) and how their desire for connectedness helps them understand their work in terms of their dependence and interdependence on one another and on the rest of creation. Participants in this study understood that their family values and their upbringings were part of their own spirituality, and their spirituality enhanced their leadership in terms of how they dealt with people. Although previous research mentioned that leadership is about what we do and spirituality is about being (e.g., Blackaby & Blackaby, 2001; Fairholm, 1997; Maxwell, 1998; Shields, 2006; Starratt & Guare, 1995), this study recognizes that spirituality is about connecting what we do (leadership) with who we are. Therefore, this concept of the role of spirituality as a connector helps to see how leadership integrates with spirituality.

In addition, spirituality leads to action. The role of spirituality in leadership is that it inspires leaders to serve those with whom they work. These participants did not hesitate to say their jobs are to help students, parents, teachers, and those in the community. That is why many of the participants saw their roles as pastors overlapping with their roles as school administrators. To these participants, the concept of serving included instilling spiritual values into students, teachers, and parents when "the door was open" to do that.

As such, this type of leadership complements Dantley (2003) when he said this leadership occurs only as the transformative leader embraces the need to make meaning or to work within a context of knowing that what she or he does as an educational leader is actually providing fulfillment or a sense of personal satisfaction or contribution to something higher than her or himself. The participants in this study viewed their jobs as service to God and to others. In addition, these research findings were similar to Greenleaf's (1977) theoretical description of servant-leader, and yet these participants saw service as their identities and ministry, and not as a leadership function or strategy. Service overflowed out of their devotion to God and service was what they brought to their relationships with God and with others.

The role of spirituality as creating an opportunity to serve is an idea that can be added to servant leadership literature. Greenleaf's (1977) discussion of servant leadership was that the main idea for spiritual expression at work and in life is service for others. Educational leaders who integrate spirituality in their leadership prompts leaders to go beyond their job description duties to reach the spiritual side of people. This study found that the way to connect to people's spiritual sides is through caring about their academics as well as their moral and ethical values and beliefs.

Servant leadership talks in terms of a leader who is willing to serve the teachers, the students, and the parents. Leaders serve these stakeholders in their schools by having empathy, listening, maintaining commitment to the growth of others, and building community within the school. However, the difference is that these leaders also described serving in terms of ministry in the sense that there are opportunities to pass on spiritual and moral values like compassion, care, and trust. These participants not only desired to see those

in their care succeed academically and in their jobs, but they also hoped to see them grow spiritually; this demonstrated an understanding that there is a higher and deeper purpose to life than academics, such as living with integrity and showing care toward others.

School administrators must take an interest in both the professional and personal well-being of their teachers and students. Like the literature on the ethics of caring (e.g., Noddings, 1984; Starratt, 1991), where care is not from a job description standpoint, but from the viewpoint of absolute care, these leaders showed a sense of concern for how the individuals they led lived their lives. Thus, the role of spirituality in leadership is to connect leaders to a holistic way of leadership that considers all of their human qualities, experiences, and interests that can help others succeed academically, professionally, socially, and spiritually.

When attempting to understand the role that spirituality plays in the leadership of African American school administrators who are pastors in public school settings, the findings suggest that spirituality connects these participants to their family values, to building relationships with teachers, staff, and the community where they work, and to ministry. These individuals use their spirituality to enhance their influence as school leaders. They seem to understand that their pasts play important roles in their spirituality and leadership; building strong positive relationships with others is important when leading; and leadership is about meeting the needs of others. Spirituality like this is not divisive. Although these leaders' backgrounds are connected to a religious tradition that is denominational in nature, one of the main aspects of their spirituality is that it builds relationships.

The role of spirituality for these participants was not a strategy that they added to their leadership toolboxes; spirituality was part of their identities and relationships to others

and God. Spirituality that is embedded in leadership is not just about the bottom line or getting results. When leaders recognize spirituality as a part of their identities, they lead with genuine and sincere care, and are not motivated just to get something in return. For example, leaders who only care about students so that they can do well on tests or so their schools can get award recognition uses spirituality as a tool. Although test scores were important to these participants, test score results were not the bottom line. When spirituality in leadership is recognized as an identity, leadership goes beyond test scores and what happens within the school to genuine care about how the teacher, the student, and the parent live their lives inside and outside the school doors.

Although these participants were pastors, they did not use their pastoral positions as religious platforms to convert others to specific religions or denominations. Their pastoral backgrounds were avenues for them to express their spirituality and continue in their ministries to God and to others. The role of spirituality in these participants' leadership was a part of their identities and it followed them into the gates of the public school in the role of service/ministry to God and to others. Spirituality took the role of service, which was caring for and meeting the need of all stakeholders within the school.

Influence of spirituality on decision-making

At the point of decision-making, there needs to be a clear approach to how administrators use their spirituality to make the best decisions for students. However, not all administrators come to the same conclusion of what is best for students because it all depends on how individual school administrators process those internal struggles. For all of these participants, spirituality influenced their decision-making in a variety of ways. The

findings in this study continued to show that the decision-making process can be very complex. Therefore, educational leaders who recognize the importance of spirituality in their leadership need a clear understanding of the influence of spirituality in their decision-making.

The variety of responses about decision-making from these school administrators reveals that the decision-making process is complex and unique for each individual. The role of these participants' spirituality contributes to the decision-making literature by recognizing the importance of values, beliefs, practical realities of their work, and past experiences. People's spirituality is comprised of their identity, values and beliefs, and their past and personal experiences. Based on the findings of this study, the influence of spirituality in the decision-making process for these participants included their core values and beliefs, the Golden Rule or compassion, and the Bible.

The influence of spirituality in decision-making helps school leaders understand the situation, sympathize, and have compassion of what people are going through. The influence of spirituality can cause someone to feel the need to pray for guidance, see what the Bible says, or apply the Golden Rule before making a decision. Educational leaders who bring their spirituality into their decision-making understand the importance of applying compassion in the decision-making process. Although the decision-making process is a mental process, the findings in this study suggest that it can also be a spiritual process. For these participants, the decision-making process included asking such questions as, "Was God pleased with the decision that was made?" and "Was compassion shown toward the person involved?"

Some of the educational leadership literature relating to spirituality has discussed the role of organized religion and of family values in the spiritual lives of administrators. Similar

to Keyes, Hanley-Maxwell, and Capper (1999), these participants' spirituality was at the core of their leadership and a motivating factor in their actions as administrators. However, unlike the study by Keyes et al., the participants in this study did not suggest that spirituality for them was totally dependent on organized religion; they explained that their spirituality and beliefs were "refined" from those experiences. Thus, the findings in this study suggest that the role of spirituality is adaptable.

Families' traditional religious values can be seen as foundational in the lives of the participants, but the influence of spirituality promotes the idea of knowing better and doing better. The participants explained that their spirituality caused them to take what they had learned growing up and make those beliefs and values personal in every aspect of their lives. Spirituality was instilled in them as an everyday lifestyle and not just the structure of religion. Therefore, when tough times arrived or hard decisions occurred, these school administrators reached back to the way it was done when they were growing up and filtered their actions through their current spirituality. Spirituality is indivisible, especially for those who recognize the importance of their spiritual selves in their leadership. When it comes to making decisions, those who see spirituality as a part of who they are include their spiritual selves in those decisions.

Unlike C. Marshall's (1992) findings where administrators talked about the intertwining of religion and family upbringing on influencing their decision-making, these participants talked about the *current* guidance of the Holy Spirit. However, their reliance on the values instilled by their families was similar to Marshall's work. Spirituality was instilled from their family values, the Bible, prayer, and the Golden Rule, and each played a significant part in their leadership and decision-making. Therefore, the findings from this

study suggest that for these participants, decision-making was processed through their spirituality, which included their upbringing, prayer, the Bible, the Holy Spirit, the Golden Rule, and compassion, and then blended together with school board policies, state laws, and what is best for students.

A different decision-making model that includes the influence of spirituality on the decision maker needs to be considered. Although how one arrives at a decision is different for each individual, a process can be realized when spiritual and mental processes are integrated together. There has to be more than one approach to making a decision. Based on the findings of this study, before a school leader who is influenced by his spirituality makes a decision, he analyzes the current situation in light of his values and beliefs, prayer (is it pleasing to God?), extending compassion through the Golden Rule, and processing that through what the school policy says, then makes a decision. Although there are management and leadership mindscapes or the head of leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992) that lead school administrators to interpret situations differently, spirituality plays an integral part in constructing an administrators' decision-making process. The influence of spirituality in leadership compels educational leaders to respond to a decision from within.

Church and state issues

Tension between what is acceptable and not acceptable regarding the expression of spirituality and religion in the public schools is not new. The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which established freedom of speech, assembly, press and religion, is of particular interest for the field of education, especially since the public schools are growing more diverse in the area of spiritual expression and religious background. As mentioned in Chapter 1, spirituality leads to action, and those actions become a statement of our spiritual

values and worldviews. Religion, which is very similar to the law, is a set of rules, rituals, and practices that sometimes constricts behavior. The First Amendment set the boundaries, the rules, and the practices also sometimes constricts behaviors, however the wall of separation between church and state is very important for public institutions and the church. In this study, the school administrators let their spirituality guide them in their leadership in conjunction with the First Amendment because they believed that how they expressed their spirituality is fluid and adaptable.

Not all of the participants maintained that balance between church and state because perhaps there were assumptions that those they worked with had similar cultural context of spirituality as they did and therefore their actions was seen as out of line. It is possible that those who struggle with maintaining that balance recognized that students and families live in communities that include their spiritual realities that, as mentioned earlier, are connected to their cultural and spiritual identities. School administrators, teachers, staff, students, and families still need that affirmation of their right to express their spiritual identities in ways that are not hurtful to others. Thus, these findings express the need for leadership programs to become more intentional about teaching aspiring administrators with strong faith backgrounds about more effective ways to integrate spirituality into leadership while maintaining that balance between church and state.

None of the previous literature discussed maintaining a balance between church and state in terms of recognizing if the student, parent, staff, or principal has similar beliefs as each other. The idea of recognizing the close ties among identity, relationships, and spirituality means that public schools must realize that generally speaking, people of color's spirituality is directly connected to cultural contexts and can be used as a resource to

encourage student progress. This study agrees with Dantley's findings (2003) that leaders who work in schools populated by urban youth must embrace the fact that very often communities of color are deeply religious or spiritual. For example, if the administrator knows that spirituality is part of the person's cultural context, and the administrator is trying to communicate with that person, the administrator will go ahead and use that spiritual language. School administrators need to understand the influence and advantage of being connected to students' identities, cultures, and spirituality. The participants in this study recognized the value of their own spiritual selves and respected the spirituality embedded in the schools in which they worked.

Since public schools are becoming more racially and religiously diverse (Baer, & Carper, 1998; Brown, 2005; Capper, 1993; Dantley, 2005; Frattura & Capper, 2007; Greenfield, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Normone & Jean-Marie, 2008; Riehl, 2000; Tillman, 2008) and many of the urban educational demands are shaped by ongoing social and cultural issues for addressing the needs of African American students (Dantley), perhaps the role of spirituality in these participants' leadership can answer some of those demands. Schools can no longer afford to ignore the spiritual and cultural contexts in which African American students live. In spite of church and state issues, spiritual leaders in the community and within the family can work together with schools to inspire hope and motivate students to achieve in school.

This study revealed that many of the participants were go-betweens for parents, the community, and the schools. The advantage they had by being school administrators and pastors was communication. School administrators who are connected to the community and culture as pastors can communicate information about testing, assessments, graduation

requirements, instructional requirements, and events occurring in the school with community and church members. Just the same, school administrators who bring their spiritual selves with them in leadership must also realize that the wall of separation of church and state is a sensitive issue, and they must recognize the connection they have and provide opportunities for open communication and dialogue with those in the community to advocate for the schools. It is possible that many school administrators who acknowledge their spiritual selves in their work attend some of the same churches, temples, and mosques as the people they serve. However, school administrators must not assume that they all have the same beliefs. The purpose of communication and dialogue must focus on the success of the student.

Churches, as Billingsy and Caldwell (2001) suggested, can offer a wide variety of types of educational programs in the community, such as tutoring, and can also provide financial support for students with scholarships. These participants represented both institutions (churches and schools), and it would be easier for them to promote this type of collaboration within their communities. All of these school leaders who were also pastors learned how to be part of the public system and to use their pastoral backgrounds as bridges through which the school and the community could communicate with one another to work toward the same goal of student achievement. Although the participants in this study were a small population, the role of spirituality in their leadership could be a model to other school leaders with strong faith backgrounds on how spirituality is leadership in action. It is important that leaders with this sort of background acknowledge/recognize their tendencies to promote their own faiths that isolate or outcast others. That tendency towards exclusion is what must be left at the gate. They must begin to practice or express their spirituality in such

a way that the potential conflict between church and state does not become an ethical or legal issue in how they lead their schools. As administrators, they are morally and professionally responsible for ensuring that they create an inclusive school climate and uphold the Establishment Clause. And as pastors, they are spiritually responsible to honor God, honor the law of the land, serve their local congregation, and meet the needs of those who need help within the community they serve.

Practical Significance

The role of spirituality in leadership can no longer be integrated in public schools on a trial and error basis. Educational leaders who are interested in leadership and spirituality should not assume that who a person is personally is separated from what a person does publicly. Our trouble in dealing with the “cannot” of the wall of separation of church and state may have created a rigid working environment where perhaps it is difficult to see the “how to” as it relates to integrating our spiritual or non-spiritual selves in leadership. Remember that this study intentionally focused on school administrators who were atypical—school administrators who were also pastors leading in public school settings. This study does not claim generalizability to all administrators.

The practical significance of this study is that the African American pastors who are also school administrators provided a model of how spirituality is included in leadership. One of the findings suggested that these individuals saw themselves as the church because it was a part of their upbringing. They are the church, and their spiritual practices are a part of who they are and go beyond church boundaries. Their spirituality was inseparable because it was a part of who they are and they applied those spiritual practices such as respect, compassion,

and care to their decision-making. Spirituality is not a cultural or racial aspect, however; within the African American community spirituality has been a resource that many have used to overcome barriers.

Dantley (2005) advised that “spirituality is the tool of connection and identity,” and it is this spirituality that inspires leadership like servant leadership. All individuals can use this same spirituality that was used to encourage, inspire and motivate any group of people to achieve as an aspect of leadership. Leadership preparation programs have to recognize spirituality to aspiring administrators as a tool of connection and identity that can be used in leadership. Spirituality is not a doctrine or concept— it is action expressed through how some people identify themselves and live their lives—and leadership preparation programs should look at ways to include spirituality in relevant discussions and curricula.

The findings from this study present the role of spirituality in the leadership of African American pastors who are also school administrators in public school settings and lead to various practical significances for educational administration programs.: (a) develop professional development workshops; (b) include a course on spirituality and leadership as a choice within the leadership preparation classes; (c) teach the method of code switching; and (d) create partnerships between community and church organizations.

Professional development workshops

School administrators working in public schools need to look closely at creating professional development workshops within professional organizations like the American Association for School Administrators so that they may have a better understanding of school law as it relates to the Establishment Clause and government employees. Although school

law is a part of the leadership preparation curriculum, there are hardly any strategies such as code switching provided on how to maintain a balance between church and state issues. Furthermore, school law courses cover such a wide variety of issues that relate to the operation of schools, that discussions on the proper way to include spirituality in leadership is given limited time.

Professional development workshops can help supplement leadership preparation programs and provide opportunities for more in-depth exploration of how to integrate spirituality into leadership with strategies to improve students' academic achievements. In addition, these professional workshops can teach aspiring administrators how to operate in the public school setting using their spirituality in their leadership without violating the Establishment Clause. It is important for aspiring school administrators to understand how to protect their rights as state employees as well as the rights of the students they serve. Providing professional development workshops may be able to address those needs. The topics of workshops could include how to lead spiritually without proselytizing, understanding the Establishment Clause for public schools, and incorporating theories and strategies to improve leadership.

In addition, workshops can provide opportunities for school administrators to collaborate with community pastors on how to help students achieve in school and life. The spiritual values that these leaders bring with them to use in developing administrative philosophy and style would be useful to the field of educational administration. There also needs to be professional workshops where school administrators who are pastors can connect with others with different religious and spiritual backgrounds, regardless of religion or denomination, and have information, resources, and networking opportunities that would

focus attention on their challenges as school leaders to enhance their leadership skills both in the school building and in the church.

Professional workshops of this magnitude can connect with other organizations like the National Association for Elementary and Secondary School Principals and the University Council for Educational Administration. Finally, these professional workshops could provide opportunities for open and honest dialogue that would challenge values and beliefs that guide leaders' decision-making. Assuming that school administrators already know what to do in public schools will not be enough.

Course option on spirituality and leadership

As mentioned previously, spirituality is a tool of connection and identity (Dantley, 2005) and can be used as a resource to help school leaders adapt to the challenging daily events they experience as school administrators. Educational leaders who understand their own spiritual selves, respect the spirituality or lack thereof of others, and embrace the role of spirituality in their leadership are better able to serve teachers, students, parents, and community members in their schools. In addition, the role of spirituality in leadership inspires action leading to service. Educational leaders who integrate spirituality in their leadership are prompted to go beyond their job description duties of leadership to reach the spiritual side of people.

Given the finding that the role of spirituality is connected to family values (identity), to building relationships with teachers, staff, and community, and to ministry (service), leadership preparation programs need to include courses that discuss how to integrate spirituality and leadership. This study found that spirituality plays a very important role in decision-making and leadership behaviors. Most classes in leadership preparation programs

include some topics related to spirituality, such as morals and ethics; however, conversations and dialogue about spirituality and religion are not explicitly included.

As previously mentioned, schools are becoming more diverse and are constantly changing from old views of religion and spirituality in schools. Common journeys toward spirituality or religion can no longer be assumed. All students and staff are not religious or confess to be spiritual, nor are they all native-born Americans or heterosexual. Educational leaders need to be able to understand their own spiritual selves and have an appreciation of others to be able to better build positive relationships and create more welcoming environments. The participants in this study suggested that aspiring administrators need to have practical experiences in the public schools so that they can have “real” experiences of integrating their spirituality in their leadership. For example, one of the participants suggested that aspiring leaders should be placed in alternative schools or poor urban schools where they may have to deal with more situations where care and compassion are needed most, and that they spend less time in schools that already have that sort of support. In such courses, school administrators would be assigned to those schools for a term or year as a servant leadership opportunity. After they have had that experience, they could write reflection papers or keep journals of their experiences, decision-making, and the role of spirituality in their leadership.

Courses can become more intentional about getting aspiring administrators to explore their own spirituality or non-spiritual practices in their leadership. For example, Dr. Colleen Capper, a professor in the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, created a seminar on Spiritually Centered Leadership that is designed as an opportunity to explore the intertwining of personal spirituality, epistemology, life work,

and leadership. Within this seminar, there is an opportunity for college students to engage in a regular spiritual practice or non-practice—what she calls “ownwork”—where students can make time for regular spiritual or non-spiritual practice. Courses like this may provide intentional opportunities for aspiring school administrators to include practical ideas for using spirituality as a way to lead consciously. More of these types of seminars and courses can be developed to better help aspiring leaders discuss the role of spirituality in their leadership. Given the findings from this study, seminars and courses that challenge educational leaders to put their spirituality into action, to be inclusive, and not just discuss ideals and theories would prove to be more useful for those they lead.

It is important to acknowledge that if one defines spirituality as being connected to something outside one’s self, than being spiritual is a condition of being human. Although the participants of this study defined their spirituality in terms of their Christian faith, every administrator, regardless of his or her religious or non-religious belief, connects in some way with his or her school and community. One does not need to be religious, or even need to acknowledge one’s spirituality, to be a good administrator or to be a person who acts with integrity, morality, and fairness. Courses in preparation programs can help future administrators identify their own connectedness and practices.

Teach the method of code switching

When I asked the participants what suggestions they would provide principal leadership preparation programs regarding how to better prepare leaders with backgrounds similar to theirs to lead in a public school setting, one of the participants suggested that they teach leaders the concept of code switching. Again, the concept of code switching understands that every community has its own language. As it relates to this study, in the

church a pastor may say, “we got to save the lost,” but as a school administrator he or she may say, “we got to reach the under privileged.” Aspiring school leaders need to be taught the difference between the language in the church and the language in the workplace.

There are languages that may be used in the church community that may be deemed inappropriate in the school community, such as Bible scriptures in email messages. However, such words as faith, hope, and love can be used and applied within the workplace and still carry the same spiritual relevance without the religious undertone. School administrators often use language to describe their schools’ missions and visions. From school slogans, letters to parents, and even every day conversations, they must be able to take complicated technical terms and express them from their hearts without alienating their spiritual selves or those who hear them. If school leaders are poets (Deal & Peterson, 1999), they need to understand the complex cultural codes in order to maintain a welcoming school environment for all.

Creating partnership with community, church organization

Since schools are becoming more diverse, school communities should take closer looks at figuring out ways to create partnerships with community and church organizations to support all students within the schools. In this study, school administrators who are also pastors were able to be involved in the school, the church, and the community. These men’s roles as school administrators and pastors provided an example of how partnerships between schools and church organizations can be used to support and help students succeed both academically and socially. They understood the importance of building positive relationships and positive learning cultures within the school by showing care of the personal and social lives of their staff, teachers, students, and parents. They developed a communication style

within the school through code switching by being aware of words they used in an effort to not offend others while integrating their spirituality in their leadership.

Creating partnerships between the school community and church organizations may provide opportunities for educational programs and assistance for the students of the communities in which they are located. Since one of the educational goals has been to prepare students for citizenship in a democratic and pluralistic society, schools, church organization, and communities can partner to provide community service opportunities, such as students volunteering for building projects, and the beautification of the schools and communities.

Although many community and church organizations already take advantage of using the school building, creating partnerships with discussions of ways to work together may be more beneficial to all stakeholders. These efforts would follow the example of Catholic school education, which has extensive networks provided by the partnerships among families, church, and school (Billingsley & Caldwell, 1991; Bryk et al., 1993). These efforts would be valuable to school districts and leaders who are struggling to connect with their students and parents to meet their academic and social needs.

Recommendations for Further Research

This research was conducted to gain a better understanding of the role that spirituality plays in the leadership of African American pastors who are school administrators in public school settings. It was my desire that this study be a foundation on which other researchers with similar interests may build. This study has built on the work of Dantley (2003, 2005) regarding African American spirituality and critical spirituality, Greenleaf (2002, 2003)

regarding servant leadership, and Hooper-Atlas (2002) and McClellan (2006) regarding the role of spirituality in African American educational leadership. However, it introduces a new phase of research on dual leadership in the area of school administrators with pastoral leadership backgrounds.

Based on the findings from this study, three areas are recommended for further study. More research needs to consider the similarities and differences between pastors and school administrators and their leadership responsibilities because both leadership responsibilities are transferable and can work together to improve leadership in public schools. This research suggested many similarities and overlaps in the leadership responsibilities of these participants. For example, one of the similarities is that both roles are considered models and symbols of their organizations. They are the ones who set the examples for their organizations. Another similarity between a school administrator and a pastor is the importance of building relationships and interacting with people in order to improve success in the organization in which they lead. In addition, both have to communicate a vision that will motivate the group to follow.

However, the main difference between the responsibility of a school administrator and a pastor is the approach in leading an organization spiritually. Pastors may be more direct than other organizational leaders with their religious beliefs and the teaching of the Bible as a guide in order to save the lost, which is in direct conflict with the Establishment Clause. Therefore, the Establishment Clause should not be the focus of further research, but studying the leadership responsibilities of each position separately and then highlighting their similarities would be valuable. This type of study should be conducted by using more of a quantitative or mixed method research approach rather than solely a qualitative research

approach. A quantitative approach has the potential to provide more generalizability for a larger population.

Further research needs to be conducted in the schools of the participants to see if the role of spirituality in these individuals' leadership increased student achievement and if their leadership created better school environments and/or higher teacher morale. Participants suggested interviewing the teachers, staff, parents, and students in the school to see if the school administrators "are who they say they are." It seems to be difficult to measure an individuals' spirituality, however; it may be easier to look at the roles of vision, care, and social justice and their impact on student achievement (e.g., Hoy, Tarter, & Hoy, 2006; Noddings, 1984; Riehl, 2000; Riester, Pursch, & Skrla, 2002; Scheurich, 1998; Starratt, 1991), which indicate that creating a more trusting and caring school environment positively affects student achievement.

Finally, since these participants played significant leadership roles in the church and possibly in their communities, further research needs to be conducted regarding the role of their spirituality and the relationships of social justice, social gospel, and moral courage in their leadership practices. There is not much research on the similarity of attitudes of those who would support social justice and their spiritual beliefs and practices. Not much research is done on making the connection between social justice, moral courage, the social gospel, and spirituality. However, some work has been done with liberation theology, specifically with the Catholic church where the church is urged to take a more active role in helping the poor meet social and economic needs and liberate the oppressed (e.g., Berryman, 1987; Levine, 1988).

Many researchers in the field of leadership tend to separate the meaning of social justice and spirituality without making a connection between the two. In future research, a framework needs to be developed that relates more to educational leadership regarding social justice, social gospel, and spirituality. As researchers narrow down the definitions of these terms, significant findings will surface in respect to the relationship between social justice and spirituality.

Conclusion

If understood more clearly, spirituality in leadership can be an additional leadership resource for individuals who carry this bi-vocational background as well as those who have strong faith backgrounds. This kind of leadership requires positive traits such as compassion, care, integrity, faith, patience and trust, which can inspire and improve the school culture. Spirituality affects personal and work relationships, and provides meaning in one's work and connection to community. If spirituality is integrated within leadership, it can inspire moral and ethical leadership which, in turn, cultivates the morale and motivation of teachers and can engender a more supportive and inclusive environment for students and parents (Sergiovanni, 1992; Thousand & Villa, 1995). School administrators can learn by experience how to better prepare themselves spiritually and improve their leadership.

In this study, the participants revealed a unique and creative, yet very practical way of connecting their spirituality to their leadership. One of the suggestions of this research is that school administrators are intentionally taught how to bring all of their strengths (leading with care and compassion) and experiences (decision-making and conflict resolutions as pastors) to work with them. What is needed in the field of educational leadership are more practical

ways to include conversations about spirituality as a connector and not a divider in the curriculum of leadership practices, and less theory about the inclusion of spiritual leadership. Creating partnerships with churches and other community organizations may provide additional resources and more practical ways to improve student success. The role of spirituality in these participants' leadership can be seen as a wheel wherein spirituality is the center connecting all stakeholders in the community to do what is best for students.

One of the surprising revelations in this study was the number of challenges and conflicts that these participants faced that did not include their religious or spiritual beliefs. They had fewer conflicts regarding church and state issues than with other issues, such as trying to help students achieve academically, which are the same issues that other school administrators face. For example, they faced issues such as trying to close the achievement gap, motivating staff to be more collaborative with each other, meeting district standards, and meeting the needs of students with low socioeconomic status. However, this research suggests that the reason for conflicts regarding church and state issues had more to do with these participants' perceptions and perspectives on the law and was not based on intentionally violating the law. In addition, the participants had a great amount of knowledge, experience and compassion as leaders, which helped them focus more on those they were leading. Thus, the role of spirituality in their leadership can be a resource to shape decisions, actions, and relationships.

Spirituality for these participants functioned as a part of their leadership. Spirituality led and guided these participants in many areas of their lives. Bi-vocational pastors are characterized by having various jobs along with their pastoral positions. However, it does not change how they lead because of their spirituality, and their backgrounds (upbringings) do

not change; therefore, they have the ability to adapt because it is what they do as pastors and as leaders in whatever their other jobs may be. What these statements add to the leadership literature is that the role of spirituality can be a resource for leaders to help them to be flexible and adapt to different needs within the school, especially schools that are predominately African American and Latino. Finally, it is hoped that African American spirituality will have a voice in the spirituality and educational leadership conversation to provide more insight from a different perspective on ways to integrate spirituality into leadership.

APPENDIX A. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Leadership and Spirituality: The Indivisible Leadership of Principals as Pastors

Session 1: Focused Life History

1. Describe the religious/spiritual tradition you grew up in.
2. How did your family express its spirituality in your family? How about your extended family?
 - a. Practices?
 - b. Beliefs?
3. What sort of personal experiences (practices) stand out to you during your years at home?
 - a. What made these experiences special? Probe: What did these experiences mean to you?
4. How have these practices informed your later life?
5. How have you changed or matured from those experiences?
6. How would you describe your current spiritual or religious orientation?
 - a. Current practices?
7. How did you come to be a principal?
8. How did you come to be a pastor?
9. Which position were you first? *Probe: Were you a principal or a pastor first?*

Session 2: Details of Experience

1. Tell me about a typical day for you.
2. What are the most challenging aspects of your job?
 - a. How do you handle them?
 - b. What guides you in making tough decisions?
3. What conflicts, if any, have you experienced as it relate to your spiritual beliefs?
4. How do you manage when pressing concerns conflict with your spiritual beliefs? (For example, school mascot; homecoming activity; teachers personal issues; community issues)
5. What is it like to lead in a public school setting?
6. How do you think people see you in the community? *Probe: as principal or as a pastor?*
7. How do you think your staff and students see you in the school?
8. In what ways does your spirituality influence your work as a principal? Give an example.
9. In what ways does your spirituality influence your decision-making? Give an example
10. To what extent do you make your spirituality visible as a principal?
11. How much of a role does your pastoral background play in your leadership as a principal?

12. What are the obstacles that get in the way of bringing spirituality into your leadership?
13. How do you maintain a balance between separation of church and state issues?

Session 3: Reflection on the Meaning

1. How would you describe yourself as a principal?
2. How would you describe yourself as a pastor?
3. What do you believe to be your role as a leader at this school?
 - a. How do you see the roles?
 - b. Separate or the same?
4. What beliefs do you find particularly meaningful?
5. How does your spiritual or religious belief help you overcome obstacles?
6. How would you define religion?
7. How would you define spirituality?
8. How does being a principal and a pastor influence your leadership practices or decision-making?
9. Given what you have said about your life before you became a principal/pastor and what you said about your experiences at work and in the community, how do you understand being both a principal and pastor?
 - a. How would you define leadership?
 - b. How would you define the leadership responsibilities of a principal?
 - c. How would you define the leadership responsibilities of a pastor?
 - d. Where do you see them overlap? Conflict? *Probe: How do the roles work together?*
10. What suggestions would you give to leadership preparation programs of principals on how to better prepare leaders with your similar background to lead in a public school setting?

APPENDIX B. INFORMED CONSENT

Iowa State University
 Department of Educational Leadership Policy and Studies
 Lagomarcino
 Ames, Iowa 50010

Dear :

You are invited to participate in a research study designed to explore the role that spirituality plays in the lives of African American principals who are also pastors. I am conducting this research study as a candidate for the Ph.D. at Iowa State University.

The Department of Educational Leadership Policy and Studies supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided so that you may decide whether you wish to participate in this study. If you agree to participate, you have the right to withdraw at any time without consequences. Also, you have the right to not answer or skip any questions that I may ask you. Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your participation or your decision not to participate will in no way affect future interactions with me or with Iowa State University Department of Educational Administration. The study presents no risk to you as a participant. If you have question, you may contact my adviser Joanne Marshall at (515) 294-9995 or jmars@iastate.edu or you can contact me at (515) 451-1786 and signet5@iastate.edu. Please be advised that this study may be published.

I will interview you three times for no more than 90 minutes in length. I may contact you by telephone with brief follow-up questions, if needed, to help clarify comments you make during the interviews. The individual interview will be conducted at a location and at a time that is most convenient for you. Also, the interviews will be audio taped to provide me with a record of our visit so that I can analyze in detail the information from our meetings. I am the only one who will have access to tapes. Neither your name nor your institution affiliation will appear in any reports of this research. Your comments will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. This study will only include general conclusions based on group analysis of the study and I will not identify the names of the individual participants or their institutional affiliations.

If you agree to participate, please sign in the appropriate place on the attached form and provide the requested information. Please include you phone number and email address so that I can contact you. Thank you for your assistance. Also, if you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator at (515) 294-4566.

Sincerely,
 Anthony Jones

Yes, I will participate in the research project on the role of spirituality in the lives of African American principals who are also pastors. Also, I give my permission for the audio taping of my interview. I understand that I may withdraw from participating at any time with no negative consequences.

Signature:

Today's Date:

Full Name:

Mailing Address:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

APPENDIX C. FOLLOW-UP LETTER**Follow-up Letter (for participant)**

Dear

Let me take this opportunity to thank you for your willingness to participate in this study share about the role that spirituality play in your life as an African American principal and pastor. This project is a great opportunity for you to express your views and give your input.

I am attaching a consent form that will give you some background information about the study. You will benefit most by reading the consent form before the interview session. The consent form will include your rights as participants and information about the purpose of this study.

We will have three interview sessions. Each interview session will last for no more than 90 minutes in length. The time we agreed to meet was on (insert date here) at (insert time here) at the (insert location here). Please let me know if you have any last minute schedule changes or if we need to re-schedule. Also, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me at (515) 451-1786 or contact my major professor Joanne Marshall at (515) 294-9995.

Again, I appreciate your willingness to participate in this study. I am looking forward to meeting you and hearing your story. I am confident that we can work productively and achieve the desired outcome in a timely manner. Most importantly, I believe that this study will result in a better understanding of the role that spirituality plays in dual leadership of African Americans.

Sincerely,

Anthony Jones

APPENDIX D. PHONE SCRIPT

Hello, my name is **Anthony Jones**, a graduate student at Iowa State University, and I'm calling because I am conducting my dissertation study as a requirement for my PhD. The purpose of this study is to understand the role that spirituality play in the lives of African American principals who are also pastors.

Your participation in this study is very important because you have valuable input into experiences of individuals who carry this dual leadership role. Also, your involvement with this study will help other leaders such as yourself understand the role that spirituality play in everyday life experiences. Participation is completely voluntary and your name and input in this study will be kept confidential.

I will interview you three times for no more than 90 minutes each interview session. The individual interview will be conducted at a location and at a time that is most convenient for you.

If you agree to participate, I will mail you a consent form explaining in more details the purpose of the study.

So, would you like to be a participant in this study?

If No

Thank you for your time. (Maybe ask do you know anyone else who would be willing to participate in this study. It will really be a big help.) Thanks.
Again thank you for you time and goodbye.

If Yes

Thank you. I will be sending you a letter in a few days to confirm our meeting time. If you need to cancel for any reason, please call me at 515-451-1786. Thanks again and good-bye.

APPENDIX E. RESEARCH AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Research Questions	Interview Questions	
What roles does spirituality play in the leadership of African American school administrators who are also pastors?	<p>How much of a role does your pastoral background play in your leadership as a principal?</p> <p>How do you manage when pressing concerns conflict with your spiritual beliefs? (For example, school mascot; homecoming activity; teachers personal issues; community issues)</p>	
	<p>What do you believe to be your role as a leader at this school?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How do you see the roles? Separate or the same? <p>To what extent do you make your spirituality visible as a principal?</p>	
How does spirituality influence their leadership behaviors or decision-making?	<p>In what ways does your spirituality influence your work as a principal? Give an example.</p> <p>In what ways does your spirituality influence your decision-making? Give an example?</p> <p>What are the most challenging aspects of your job?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How do you handle them? What guides you in making tough decisions? <p>How does being a principal and a pastor influence your leadership practices or decision-making?</p>	

Research Questions	Interview Questions	
<p>How do bi-vocational African American school administrators and pastors maintain a balance between church and state issues?</p>	<p>How do you maintain a balance between separation of church and state issues?</p> <p>What are the obstacles that get in the way of bringing spirituality into your leadership?</p> <p>What conflicts, if any, have you experienced as it relate to your spiritual beliefs?</p> <p>How do you manage when pressing concerns conflict with your spiritual beliefs? (For example, school mascot; homecoming activity; teachers personal issues; community issues)</p> <p>How do you think people see you in the community? Probe: as principal or as a pastor?</p> <p>How do you think your staff and students see you in the school?</p> <p>How do you manage when pressing concerns conflict with your spiritual beliefs?</p>	

APPENDIX F. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Institutional Review Board
Office for Responsible Research
Vice Provost for Research
1138 Pearson Hall
Ames, Iowa 50011-2207
515 294-4267
FAX 515 294-4566

DATE: January 11, 2010
TO: Anthony D. Jones
1220 Walton Drive Unit 202 Street
Ames, IA 50013
CC: Joanne Marshall
N29 Lagomarcino
FROM: Office for Responsible Research
TITLE: **Leadership and Spirituality: The indivisible leadership of African American administrators and pastors**
IRB ID: **08-333**

Approval Date: 8 January 2010

Date for Continuing Review: 29 September 2009

Submission Type: Continuing Review and Modification

Review Type: Expedited

The project referenced above has received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Iowa State University. Please refer to the IRB ID number shown above in all correspondence regarding this study.

Your study has been approved according to the dates shown above. To ensure compliance with federal regulations (45 CFR 46 & 21 CFR 56), please be sure to:

- **Use only the approved study materials** in your research, including the recruitment materials **and informed consent documents that have the IRB approval stamp.**
- **Obtain IRB approval prior to implementing any changes** to the study by submitting the “Continuing Review and/or Modification” form.
- **Immediately inform the IRB of (1) all serious and/or unexpected adverse experiences** involving risks to subjects or others; and (2) **any other unanticipated problems involving risks** to subjects or others.
- **Stop all research activity if IRB approval lapses**, unless continuation is necessary to prevent harm to research participants. Research activity can resume once IRB approval is reestablished.
- **Complete a new continuing review form** at least three to four weeks prior to the **date for continuing review** as noted above to provide sufficient time for the IRB to review and approve continuation of the study. We will send a courtesy reminder as this date approaches.

Research investigators are expected to comply with the principles of the Belmont Report, and state and federal regulations regarding the involvement of humans in research. These documents are located on the Office of Research Assurances website [www.compliance.iastate.edu] or available by calling (515) 294-4566.

Upon completion of the project, please submit a Project Closure Form to the Office of Research Assurances, 1138 Pearson Hall, to officially close the project.

ORA 06/07

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