

PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT PHILOSOPHIES AND THEIR TENURE

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ABSTRACT

Postmodernism is a philosophical description that encompasses philosophy, the arts, a period of history, and many other aspects of today's existence. This dissertation examines the extent to which Indiana public school superintendents use postmodern philosophy as opposed to modern philosophy to inform their practice. This was accomplished by examining eight leadership concepts through the application of questions with decisions related to either modernism or postmodernism. The study described by this dissertation used a quantitative research method assembling data and determining the correlation of operant philosophy by a superintendent with their tenure.

PREFACE

Modern philosophy dates back approximately to the time periods of Immanuel Kant and Rene Descartes and the periods called the Age of Enlightenment and the Age of Reason. This period influenced the philosophy behind the founding of America and many of the revolutions that occurred throughout the world at this time in history. The foundational standards of education and the modern ideas embraced by educators today are grounded in the law laid down in historical documents such as the United States Constitution and in years of case law and court decisions.

Postmodernism philosophy questions the assumptions and conclusions to questions that are provided by modern philosophical thought and the aforementioned institutions and traditions. Not only does postmodernism revisit earlier periods before the modernist period to examine ideas and philosophical positions to adopt, postmodernism also questions the basic assumptions that support modernist philosophy as it is defined today. Postmodernism is present and can be identified in the contemporary leadership issues and conflicts that many educational leaders face.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Postmodernism by its name is defined as the period of philosophy that follows modernism. Modernism is considered to be the pinnacle of philosophical thought (Hunter, 2002). Many are not convinced that postmodernism represents progress. However, modernism has been said to possess “inherent limitations,” and “repressive inadequacies” (Trifonas, 2004, p. 151). Postmodernism is claimed by philosophers to be the dominant philosophy of the current time (Rorty, 1979).

Some modernists see postmodernism as a destructive philosophy (Burbules, 1995). Burbules (2009) had recently published a paper regarding modernism, insisting that modernism is the philosophy that educators and the world should use.

The contribution of postmodern critiques of these efforts has been to show, not only that they have not succeeded (as any human endeavor might fall short of its ideals), *but that they have consequences that are destructive and counterproductive of their own ends.* The attempted defense put forward by many of these approaches, that despite their failures they can be "self-corrective" over time, is seen from this perspective as simply another mechanism of legitimation: that the solution to a medicine that does not work (that cannot "work") is to take more of it (Burbules 2009 para. 3).

Dobson (2009), a stalwart of the religious right, posted of postmodernism, “postmodernism is a cancer that rots the soul of humanity” (para. 7). Postmodernism initially generated in two individuals with diverse philosophies a similar reaction and initially at least, they both found common cause to reject postmodernism as a destructive influence.

Postmodernism seems to have arrived without much serious thought, structure or consideration. A proposal was put forth by Latour (2008) that we have never been modern. In his book Latour argued convincingly that the majority of the population of the world has never accepted the philosophy of modernism and cited many examples. He asked:

Is it asking too little simply to ratify in public what is already happening? Should we not strive for more glamorous and more revolutionary programmes [*sic*] of action, rather than underlining what is already dimly discernible in the shared practices of scientists, politicians, consumers, industrialists and citizens when they engage in the numerous sociotechnological controversies we read about daily in our newspapers? (p. 144)

Latour (2008) went on to say,

We scarcely have much choice. If we do not change the common dwelling, we shall not absorb in it the other cultures that we can no longer dominate, and we shall be forever incapable of accommodating in it the environment that we can no longer control. (p. 145)

As educators we find ourselves in the center of the debate. Education was said to be *at risk* during the Reagan era (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), and that political opinion seemingly has not changed in the state of Indiana since that time. Philosophy is generally not seen as a visible, apparent guiding force in education by most educators, but nevertheless, education defines a philosophy. Since education must have a philosophy, we should be able to determine that philosophy and its origins.

Johnson (1999) stated in his doctoral dissertation,

I do not agree that the educational leadership in American schools has collapsed. Rather, I believe that the traditional, bureaucratic construction of the public school superintendency and its progeny, the traditional bureaucratic training and certification programs for public school superintendents, may not be addressing the questions about one's location in the organization, about the very nature of the organization, about applying current leadership theories, or about changes in relationships – just a few of the needs of new superintendents. There appears to be a great emphasis on scientific management and bureaucratic models for preparation, at the expense of more individualized and personalized exposures and opportunities for personal constructions of educational administrative positions. I see this devaluing of the phenomenological model for the study of the superintendency to be a critical concern. (p. 7)

Speaking of phenomenological models, Johnson (1999) implied that the superintendency was not informed solely by modernist philosophy. Phenomenology implies that there is more to a superintendent's position than those things that are empirically measurable. Phenomenological considerations are those things that are only discernible by practice including all experience including emotional experiences. The idea that practice is essential and not explained by theory is anti-modern. Anti-modern suppositions are defined as postmodernism. Therefore Johnson (1999) tells us that training programs for the superintendents need to include how to use postmodern theory in practice. He implied that in his practice as superintendent he used postmodern methods that he feels are superior to modern methods.

Gaither (2006) described how common this opinion expressed by Johnson has become in today's society. She stated,

Nearing a decade into the new millennium, there are a few sensibilities emerging that hint at some directions in postmodern thinking. First, there is a suspicion of anyone who has all of the answers, wants to make life into a formula, or attempts to press all things into systems and dogmas. Rather, there is an openness to divergent ideas, philosophies, and approaches, and a willingness to live with paradox and proceed with contradictions unresolved. (p. 56)

Gaither (2006) suggested that society is resistant to recognizing postmodern concepts even though society is consistently demonstrating a strong postmodern influence in behavior. Gaither (2006) went on to state in explicit terms what those postmodern tendencies are and how they are being exhibited.

Carroll (2006) reported her perception of how comparative education demonstrated a shift to postmodernism. "Throughout the 1990s comparativists considered potential effects of implementing postmodern premises and tools in studies in the field" (Carroll 2006 p. 10).

Postmodernism has been recognized by philosophers and educators alike and has been discussed and criticized. It is being utilized as Carroll (2006) illustrated by defining 13 original concepts (OC) of postmodernism and reviewing educational comparative journal works to illustrate and to illuminate her perception of an epistemological shift to postmodernism in comparative education. By classification of journal articles in a grid, Carroll showed her assessment to be valid if one holds her definitions of postmodernism principles as valid. Carroll described what postmodernism is in her writings in a forthright manner stating that the origins of postmodernism arise from the European idealist and romantic philosophy movements which continued into the enlightenment period. Carroll uses several examples of German philosophers from this philosophical movement to define postmodernism. Carroll stated of the origins of

postmodernism and referred to those who use postmodern ideas in comparative education when she said, “Comparative practitioners who have embraced the anti-rationalist, particularist, anti-enlightenment, mystical assumptions of the idealist German theoreticians who originated this direction of belief” (Carroll, 2006, p. 28).

The problem in education that needs to be examined is to what extent postmodernism philosophy is being used to inform the practices of superintendents and what may be the consequences of informing a school superintendents’ practice with postmodernism philosophy in terms of longevity in a particular superintendent role. A complete explanation of the origin of postmodernism and just how it came to represent the seemingly omnipresent underlying philosophy of all contemporary societies, many of whom have never heard of postmodern philosophers and their works, still seems elusive. Turning to Latour (2008) leaves one questioning if the various flavors of modernism could each be construed to be the result of a Hegelian dialectic synthesis. In this process modernism, or a branch of modernism, would become the thesis and un-modern ideas could be the anti-thesis. Postmodernism could then be the name of any anti-thesis of modernism, as suggested by the Hegelian dialectic, and thus still a part of modernism. So, postmodernism is not entirely a new concept when viewed through this lens. A diagram of the Hegelian dialectic is presented as Figure 1.

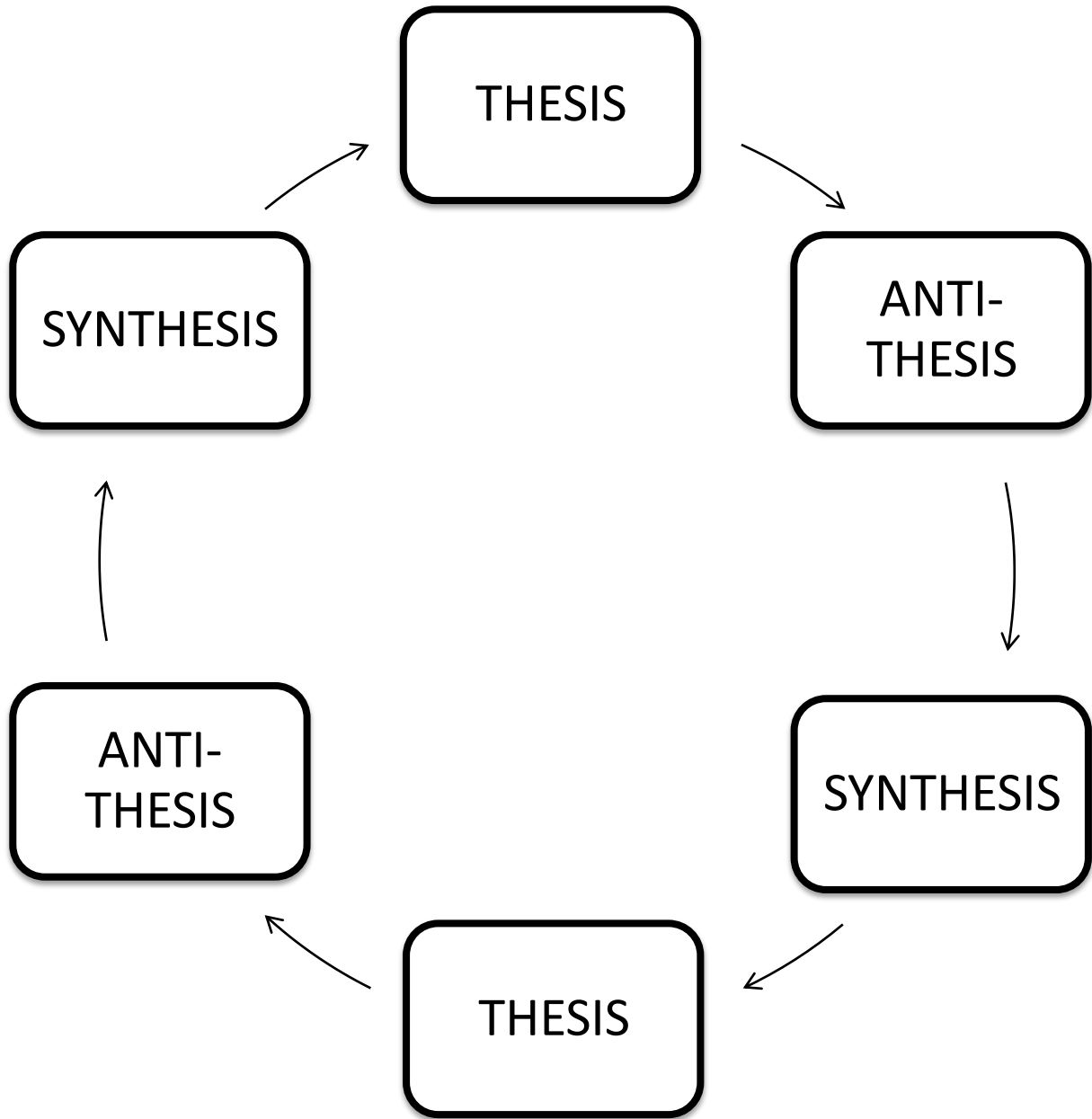


Figure 1. The Hegelian dialectic.

Looking through this lens, modernism may never reach synthesis and postmodernism is not actually a new philosophy, but a redefining of modernism using a Hegelian dialectic process. This could also include the addressing of modernism using tools which are ideas that predate the Age of Enlightenment and the Age of Reason historical periods. This postmodern method revisits that period in a way that is not phobic of those ideas. In the opinion of many, modernism has not approached a uniform, unanimous synthesis that defines the practices of humanity (Aylesworth, 2009). In this lens each synthesis reached becomes yet another branch of philosophy in modernism.

The struggle of humanity to define an all-encompassing philosophy under the banner of modernism continues, and the treadmill of the Hegelian dialectic spins on and on. Could we be seeing a mass psychological fatigue point regarding this treadmill? Could we be seeing a point where postmodernism has arrived and is providing an opportunity to use a new tool to critique modern approaches to the problems in today's world? The resistance to what the most logical processes of modern reasoning yields in philosophical thought is not logical and the resistance by humanity to modernism is now being called postmodernism. However illogical this illogic seems to be guiding a portion of humanity and given a choice a portion of humanity will choose it, at least partially, and its postmodern implications in certain instances over all the logical processes of modernism. We must ask the question, does this problem also exist in the public school superintendency? Do superintendents use postmodern philosophy to inform their practice?

Today many concepts of modernism exist for superintendents to use as a guide in their practice. If superintendents utilize postmodern principles in their practice they must use techniques that are postmodern. Frustration and a perception that something is missing is

commonly and consistently expressed among superintendents (Johnson, 1999). Are superintendents tiring of the treadmill of this Hegelian dialectic and replacing it with what might be called creeping postmodernism? Is this why many old ideas continuously resurface as practice techniques which are not compatible with modernist philosophy taught to superintendents in training programs? Superintendents must deal with these concepts in their formulation of appropriate courses of action and with the presence of these postmodern ideas in society.

It is said by many that there is nothing new under the sun in education (Stein, 2002). If this is true there must be the retooling of old ideas into what may pass for new ideas. These ideas force educational leaders to revisit the attempt at the Hegelian synthesis of the various concepts of modernism time and time again, seemingly chasing a carrot that they can never catch. Instead of the synthesis forming a new hypothesis are we returning to old ideas as they emerged following the enlightenment? Are we spinning off syntheses that suit our time, location and culture so that we may successfully function? Knowingly or unknowingly are superintendents now using this creeping postmodernism method of philosophy as a philosophical tool to underpin their practices?

John Dewey, being called a pragmatist, opposed many of the educational hypotheses of the early modernists of his day and insisted on modifications of educational methods which attempted to be patterned after strict modernist interpretations. A review of the first part of 20th century educational history rapidly becomes a biography of John Dewey. The perception by the public and by the politicians that public education in the world in general and public education in America, in particular, is in a crisis and has been a recurring theme since the 19th century (Kliebard, 2004). This perception is validated, or at least reinforced, by the differences between the various prevalent philosophies among educators strongly steeped in the principles of

modernism (Kliebard, 2004). Presently the common philosophy of the ultraconservative minority which seems to have commandeered public opinion about education today is not part of mainstream American culture as defined by the founding fathers of America (Aspell, 2007). The philosophy of this minority of the public, too, falls under the broad definition of postmodernism. The most potentially disturbing aspect of postmodernism to the reasonable is its definition as a rejection of all aspects of modernism (Hunter, 2002). However, this assessment of postmodernism is not unanimous and certainly not real (Cobb, 2002, p. vii).

In the book *Environmental Ethics* the claim is made that there are two forms of postmodernism (Light & Rolston, 2002). The first is termed *constructive postmodernism* and the second is called *destructive postmodernism* (Light & Rolston, 2002). Constructive postmodernism deconstructs philosophical concepts and then reconstructs them in a modified form. Destructive postmodernism deconstructs philosophical concepts and stops. It is the destructive form of postmodernism that strict modernists commonly use to define postmodernism and it is said that their definitions are *largely political* (Light & Rolston, 2002).

Thus, it is obvious that postmodernism is being used by superintendents. The extent to which it is being used is not clear, nor is the consequences of using postmodernism to inform the practice of a superintendent clear. Superintendents must achieve philosophical congruence with the majority of players in their district while striving for homogeneity of structure with the school board, administrators, teachers, patrons, and all other stakeholders to achieve institutional isomorphism to ensure their success (Holland, 2004). The ability to identify operant philosophies within their district is an extremely important tool for a superintendent to possess, especially if they are not naturally philosophically congruent with the public at-large in their district.

MODERNISM AND POSTMODERNISM IN AMERICA

Modernism in America

For the purpose of this study modernism is defined as those ideas that (at least in principle) follow the philosophy set by traditional educational theory which is supported by the American Declaration of Independence, United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights, in addition to the laws passed to support these documents and the case law which defines these documents and laws.

Postmodernism in America

For the purpose of this study postmodernism is defined as those ideas and principles which attempt to modify the philosophies set by traditional education theory and by the American Declaration of Independence, United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights, in addition to any actions or practices which support these modifications, whether by custom, new legislation or court ruling.

Congruence

Holland (2004) defined congruence as “When the dominant approach to leadership matches or fits the dominant attributes of the culture, the organization is said to be congruent” (p. 67). Three kinds of congruence exist. They are procedural, instructional, and philosophical (Walp & Walmsley, 1989). Congruence in this study is defined as the alignment of the philosophy of the superintendent with the dominant philosophy of the schools and the public which they serve and which informs their practice. Since it is being claimed that the dominant culture in America is postmodern but the traditions set down in founding of America are modern one would expect to see congruence to be high when a mix of both philosophies is present in an

educational leader. The mix of modern and postmodern philosophy of the superintendent should be congruent with the mix of modern and postmodern philosophy of the stakeholders that they lead. Otherwise, there may be conflict.

Statement of the Problem

What is the extent to which the superintendent's philosophy is congruent with the philosophy of their district? Does philosophical congruence affect a superintendent's career by affecting superintendent tenure?

Purpose of the Study

It is the purpose of this study to evaluate the extent to which American educators use the philosophical ideas and methods of modernism and postmodernism in their professional practice and to draw inferences with an individual superintendent's career. In American schools modernist traditions set forth in the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights are ideas which are important to the preservation of the foundational principles of modernism that are truly indispensable to the American way of life. These principles were informed by philosophical ideas that arose during the Age of Enlightenment and the Age of Reason. Public education in what has been called the postmodern world is under increasing pressure by those publics which seek to usurp or at least modify certain modernist principles supporting the foundations of American public education to fit their own agendas. It is up to the superintendents of these public institutions to recognize these people, their groups, and their minority status. Superintendents must, with a thorough knowledge of existing American law and such groups previously mentioned, seek a consensus and achieve an acceptable level of congruence with their patrons. This congruence must preserve the fundamental foundations of America established by America's founding fathers. These

foundations have made America great and are also established in existing case law which is based in modernist philosophy. Superintendents must do this while simultaneously demonstrating a level of postmodern philosophy as described by prominent philosophers that is congruent to that being exhibited by the public. Is this achievable? Certain postmodern ideas and practices have been embraced by the public at-large which are diverse and local in nature. To achieve longevity of tenure, superintendents must demonstrate philosophical congruence with the public they serve and achieve a sufficient level of institutional isomorphism. Thus, the superintendent must balance compliance with a body of laws which define a government bureaucracy and are modern in practice, simultaneously satisfy stakeholder needs and control stakeholder mandates that because of the diversity of localities, tends to be postmodern by practice and in definition.

Research Question

It has been suggested in the introduction by evidence and example that postmodernism is present in educational leadership and leadership theory. It has also been demonstrated that postmodernism is present in the public at-large. The question this study sought to answer was:

1. How does a public school superintendent's philosophy align with their tenure?

It is important for educational practitioners to realize whether they have embraced postmodernism or modernism so they may deliberately separate their personal emotions and beliefs from best practice as it is defined today. This will allow individual decisions to be made which will better benefit those whom educators are charged to serve. It will also facilitate greater effectiveness as an educational leader. It is imperative in the greater task of using postmodernism to critique modernism that practitioners have the ability to consciously preserve the modernist principles upon which America was founded to be effective and compliant with

the laws and traditions set forth in the United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, and the prevalent body of case law. They must keep in the philosophy that will remain as a result of this ongoing process the principles upon which America was founded. They must therefore lead in a manner which will be consistent to the parts of the philosophy of modernism foundational to the American way of life. If superintendents can manage to achieve philosophical congruence with their district, they should enjoy wide acceptance in the superintendent role and this should generate longer tenures in their position.

Null Hypothesis

H₀1. Public school superintendents' philosophies do not correlate with their tenure.

A Quantitative Study

The method of this study was quantitative. Educational leaders were surveyed and classified by tendencies to modernism and postmodernism philosophy using an instrument designed from historical and current philosophical and educational theory. The assumption was made that superintendents will give a response which indicates a tendency to modern or postmodern philosophy for each item on the survey. The years the superintendent has spent with their current school district as superintendent was tested for correlation with a survey of the strength of modernity or postmodernity. The personal satisfaction of individual educational leaders regarding their practice also was correlated with the survey. It was expected that those who demonstrate a balance of postmodern and modern philosophy will have longer tenures than those who demonstrate a tendency to use a preponderance of either modernism or postmodernism in their practice. Multiple tests of correlation of data were conducted to identify unexpected areas of correlation of the survey data.

Study Limitations

This study was limited by the sampling of respondents from Indiana which is truly representative of all superintendents. Limitations also include all of the standard statistical pitfalls inherent in statistics applied to empirical evidence, standard distributions, and studies that are evaluated statistically. The study could be limited by the failure to obtain a group of respondents which were representative of superintendents. The study could also be limited by the ability of the researcher to define the difference between postmodernism and modernism as operant philosophies. The study could be limited by the ability of the respondents, leaders in educational practice, to feel they can freely respond to questions as they would desire to respond. That is, if postmodernism is not found among the respondents in the survey, there could be no effect of postmodernism in educational practice.

Definition of Terms

Comparatism or Comparativism. Developmental comparatism implies that international organizations explicitly produce and use inter-country statistical comparisons for political purposes. By globalization comparativism we mean that organizations define and use statistical comparison not only to implement tighter monitoring of education reform but also to support the modification of the way international political decisions are taken, i.e. more power is currently given to experts and technicians when defining the mission of international statistical programs than to an intergovernmental assembly. This is partly explained by the fact that production of international figures is deemed a technical activity essentially concerned by the definition of quality standards (Comparatism, para. 4 p. 2).

Note that in this study comparatism is defined as the method being used by the state of Indiana to regulate high stakes testing for political purposes. Comparativism shall be the

establishment of diagnostic testing and standards for educational purposes to further standards to benefit students.

Idealism. Idealism is the concept that existence can only exist in thought (Idealism n.d., 2010).

Institutional isomorphism. Institutional isomorphism is defined by DiMaggio & Powell (1983), as where the structure of organizations which was traditionally dictated from consumers of goods and services is structured and controlled by laws arising from political activity, state law and the political influence of the professions. The attempt by local social structures to deal with the resultant social changes and to negotiate rationality that is acceptable to them cause homogeneity of structure that should lead to Institutional Isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell 1983, p. 2, para. 4).

Hegelian dialectic. In this process a thesis is opposed by an antithesis and the reconciliation of the two results in a synthesis. The synthesis becomes the new thesis that is opposed by a new antithesis. The synthesis that results starts the cycle again until perfection is achieved into a synthesis that cannot generate an antithesis. Dialectics preceded Hegel and are in themselves the antithesis of fundamentalism (Hegelian Dialectic, 2009, para. 1).

Pragmatism. Pragmatism is the branch of the philosophy of Modernism that recognizes that the acceptance, meaning and value of thoughts or courses of action suggested by Modern philosophy depend upon the final results of that course of action or thought (Dictionary.com, 2009).

Realism. Realism is the idea that existence depends upon empirical evidence obtained from experience that dated back to Aristotle (Realism n.d., 2010).

Relativism. Relativism is the philosophy that was best expressed by a line in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Act 2, Scene 2, "For there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so." In Relativism moral principles are determined by social context (Relativism n.d., 2010).

Scientism. Scientism is the philosophical assertion that existence can only be empirical. Therefore, anything without empirical evidence cannot actually exist. All problems are solvable only with science and scientific methods. Scientism is a pillar of Modernism (Scientism n.d., 2010).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

It has been said that education in America has been under siege (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1987). Society and government have teamed up against traditional education since the publication of *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). During the first term of President Ronald Reagan and during the eight years of President William J. Clinton's administration, the policy of reform continued to be pressed upon public education by government under the influence of political interest groups (Clinton, 1993). As this reform evolved the implementation of accountability laws that forced testing cycles in public schools in many states and in Indiana was seen. This practice is now common and similar testing has been required for students to progress through public school systems and to graduate from high school. This is being called high-stakes testing. In addition, home schooling, vouchers, and charter schools seem to be eroding the population base of public education removing students from the public schools (Shapiro, 2000). This has created a double-blow to public educational funding. As the average age of the population of America increased decreasing school enrollments and per capita funding decreased school support (Cheesman-Day, 2008). Certain vocal public groups influenced these changes. There has been a sharp swing to the conservative right in the political spectrum in the U.S. when dealing with public education because of the general tendencies of the conservative mind-set (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, &

Suloway, 2003). The philosophy of education in America has almost simultaneously with the development of postmodernism undergone rapid and considerable mandated legislative changes at the same time funding has been decreasing, especially in Indiana. These changes have not been favorable to public education but are part of the larger Postmodernist movement (Beck, 1993).

The modernist philosophical movement has done much to influence the institution of education (Counts, 1932). If postmodernism indeed is occurring throughout the world people must be choosing it as an operant philosophy (Beyer & Liston, 1992). It is not the chronological sequence of philosophy that facilitates the understanding of philosophy but instead it is the philosophical framework of ideas that allows understanding of philosophy (Morrison, 1997). Philosophical ideas when presented one at a time allow a frame of reference to be constructed on which viewpoints might be formulated and upon which a philosophy is defined. Therefore, postmodernism may be understood as a development that has resulted from the philosophies that preceded it seemingly by popular demand or at least by significant influence (Paranjape, 1990). As postmodern philosophy expresses itself to ever-increasing levels of prominence in the world, a weakening of the tenants of modernist philosophy is perceived, especially by individuals who consider themselves as modernists (Paranjape, 1990). However, Paranjape illustrates the distrust postmodernism generates to Modernists in India,

Postmodernism has thus been reduced to the status of the handmaiden of these power-seekers, an esoteric doctrine of which they are the high priests. As in all priestocracies, there are jealously guarded hierarchies within the ranks of the converted, with those at the top having to continuously retain their dominance through a combination of quick

promotions, more foreign publications, and extensive networking within the already incestuous and inbred academic community.

Surely, we would be naive to suppose that a doctrine (in this case a non-doctrine) is more powerful than its practitioners. If so, the religions of the world would have worked and we would have been saved long back. This does not mean that all has been in vain, that the human race is accursed, but that the need for criticism and vigilance is never over. (Paranjape, 1990, Sect. IV, para. 4-5)

POSTMODERNISM FROM THE PAST

Compared to the historical schools of philosophy, the philosophy of postmodernism may be considered as new, however some see connections to the past in postmodernism. Beck (1993) states,

There is of course something odd about seeing Hegel, Nietzsche, or even Dewey as *postmodernists*, given that they wrote within the modern era and in many ways expressed its spirit. Some writers prefer a more chronologically correct definition of postmodernism. John McGowan, for example, sides with Frederick Jameson in expressing the view that postmodernism as a temporal term designates a (very recent) historical period that is to be identified by a set of characteristics that operate across the whole historical terrain. However, despite the awkwardness, I prefer to interpret postmodernism as embracing many approaches and insights which were around before the last few decades and even before the present century. (Sec. 2, para. 5)

This may also be true in other schools of philosophy. According to Roberts (1998), Jean-Francois Lyotard defines Postmodernism to such a precise point that, “No major work on postmodernism is 'complete' without reference to it...” (Roberts, 1998 para. 2). If

postmodernism and its apparently spontaneous emergence in the world scene of philosophy is the re-visiting of old philosophies, not to re-adopt parts of those philosophies, but to settle questions that have remained problematic for many years, is the realigning of modernism with prior human experience what Postmodernism seeks to accomplish?

Belief and Science

What is Postmodernism? In the terms of Burbules (1995), Postmodernism can be reduced to “an inability to believe” (para. 5). Burbules (1995) uses the term *postmodern doubt* to describe the cynicism he sees in the world. Belief can hardly be a construct of the empiricism demanded by modernism. Modernism embraces scientism. Scientism demands experimental proof to illustrate a valid application to construct an empirical description of reality (Merriam-Webster, 2010e). Belief therefore, has nothing to do with science.

Destructive Postmodernism

Destructive postmodernism is the deconstruction of any philosophical theory. Mostly, the deconstruction of modernism is raised as a primary concern. Destructive postmodernism is defined by Anderson (1990).

It is more a seed of discontent. It fills our daily lives with uncertainty and anxiety, renders us vulnerable to tyrants and cults, shakes religious faith, and divides society into groups contending with one another in a strange and unfamiliar kind of ideological conflict: not merely conflict *between* beliefs, but conflict *about* belief itself. (p. 3, para. 2)

Modernism is a product of the Age of Reason or The Age of Enlightenment and was considered by some to be a reaction to the prevalent philosophy of the Middle Ages.

Rempel (2009) describes the conditions of society during the rise of Modernism.

It was an age of reason based on faith, not an age of faith based on reason. The enlightenment spiritualized the principle of religious authority, humanized theological systems, and emancipated individuals from physical coercion.... By emancipating science from the trammels of theological tradition the Enlightenment rendered possible the autonomous evolution of modern culture. (Rempel, 2009 IV. Enlightenment and Religion, para. 1)

Thus, the technological age in which we live that is based upon science would not have been possible without the rise of modernism during the Age of Enlightenment and the Age of Reason.

Constructive Postmodernism

Constructive postmodernism uses postmodern deconstruction to critique the relevancy of the metanarratives of modernism to answer the important questions of humanity, to solve problems, and to attempt to build a philosophical consensus that will serve humanity by social context. Relativism follows a hierarchy in constructive postmodernism. Relativism must be tempered by the knowledge that problems are never of equal importance. It has been said of postmodernism,

It seeks to overcome the modern worldview not by eliminating the possibility of worldviews (or metanarratives) as such, but by constructing a postmodern worldview through a revision of modern premises and traditional concepts in the light of inescapable presuppositions of our various modes of practice. That is, it agrees with deconstructive postmodernists that a massive deconstruction of many received concepts is needed (Griffin, 2004, pp. x-xi).

Reconceptualizing the Enlightenment Project

Using constructive postmodernism to discover a new world view involves destructive postmodernism to a point, but beyond that point emerges new philosophical viewpoints which are a product of the unique set of views of those who define them. The importance of specific philosophical questions and reaching a universal consensus is de-emphasized. Using a postmodern lens to further define the modern tradition of the enlightenment period is not necessarily destructive to modernism.

Current educational practice that could be examined through a philosophical lens of postmodernism is the adoption of so-called standards that are arbitrarily set by committees chosen by political factions from within the state department of education of each individual state. These are not generally related to the population mandated to be subjected to them. Standards of best practices and school improvement formulas set by state law, criteria for effective schools and effective leadership formulated by legislators and educators who retain state-paid positions by political patronage cannot provide contextual philosophical input relevant to public education. The unfortunate result is that the promises education holds for the public are lost in an ineffective bureaucracy with little hope for providing effective educational leadership (Murphy, 1999).

Taylor (1911) roughly outlined the application of scientific principles to manufacturing. Also, arising from it are many of the philosophical principles embraced by business and to a lesser extent by public education even to this day. Taylor (1911) wrote, "In the past man has been first; in the future the system must be first" (p. 7). In today's world, especially in America that has a tradition of respect of the rights of individuals, some ideas of the enlightenment can conflict with personal beliefs that may be grounded in religion or there may be conflict with

other firmly held beliefs not be grounded in religion or science. This, too, fuels the postmodern movement. Further explanation of postmodern concepts comes from the following quote,

Another form of postmodern politics also rejects utopian visions of liberation, global politics, and attempts at large-scale social transformation but eschews the nihilism of Baudrillard in favor of an emphasis on piecemeal reforms and local strategies. This is the position of Foucault, Lyotard, and Rorty, all of whom reject a global politics of systematic change in favor of a politics of modifications at the local level designed to enhance individual freedom. Foucault and Lyotard reject utopian thought and the category of ‘totality’ as terroristic while searching for new ‘styles’ of life ‘as different as possible from each other’ (Foucault) and for a proliferation of ‘language games’ in ‘agnostic’ opposition to one another (Lyotard). Rorty merely – and meekly – seeks ‘new descriptions’ of reality that pluralize the voices in the social ‘conversation,’ as he replaces normative critique with ‘irony’ and restricts philosophy to a limited role in private life. This form of postmodern politics, consequently, is but a refurbished liberal reformism that fails to break with the logic of the bourgeois individualism and subverts attempts to construct bold visions of a new reality to be shaped by a radical alliance politics (Best, 1997, p. 272).

The Relationship of the Superintendent and the School Board

The relationship of a superintendent and the school board is critical (Richard, 2006). This study examines the congruence of the superintendent with the school board by correlation of superintendent longevity with philosophy. Leadership methodology and contemporary issue positions are examined by grounding them in the philosophy that informs them, namely modernism or postmodernism through addressing contemporary leadership styles.

A continuum of board types which includes a micromanaging board, a supportive board, a wait-and-see board, and a mature board has been described (Domenech, 2005). The leadership styles as described are the tools that superintendents use in their practices. The responses to questions indicated by a respondent depends upon their choice of management style, the philosophy they choose to inform that style and on their ability to apply their philosophy to successfully deal with their individual school boards to forge congruence. Their philosophy is defined as either modern or postmodern.

TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP DISCOURSES

Traditional Leadership Discourses are common to education and business and may be described in terms from various philosophical schools. Traditional leadership discourses considered includes a variety of leadership theories and combinations of theories (Straker, 2008).

Constructionism as Leadership Theory

Constructionism may be considered a traditional leadership discourse. Constructionism is the modernist philosophy that informs the building of educational systems by scientific method. Postmodern doubt may be exhibited in educational practice, theory and scientific educational research methods (Allan, 1998). The question on the survey regarding this subject assesses trust in scientific educational methods as the best way to inform school educational practice. Administrative structures are important to traditionalist leadership. The survey examines administrative structures informed by modernism which considers the management style of school corporations (Allan, 1998).

Contingency Leadership and Servant Leadership Theory

Contingency leadership theory claims that leadership is contingent upon circumstances. All possible variables are considered to affect the ability of one to lead. Therefore, leadership

abilities vary by situation, population to be led, goals to be met, individual leadership styles, and individual qualities of each leader (Straker, 2008). Although relativism is embraced by some modernist philosophers, Relativism is contrary to the Modernist values which look to the principles of Modernism alone as being the preferred philosophy to inform education.

Embracing relativism and adopting any other philosophy whether it is modernism or not is a hallmark of the postmodern world. “Postmodernists renounce closed structure, fixed meaning, and rigid order in favor of play, indeterminacy, incompleteness, uncertainty, ambiguity, contingency and chaos” (Best, 1997, p. 265). Contingency theory corresponds closely with postmodern philosophy as does servant leadership. In servant leadership the leader is considered a servant of the community and exists to facilitate the philosophy within the community he or she serves (Greenleaf, 1977). The statement, leaders are more effective when leading followers where they want to go rather than leading them where they need to go would be answered yes by a postmodernist and no by a modernist.

Situational Leadership Theory

Situational leaders are able to alter their leadership methods to match the needs of the leadership position. Leaders rely on a methodology of leadership they assess as being the most likely to be accepted by followers and result in accomplishing the task or goal. Leaders using situational leadership theory are less likely to rely on a single leadership method and are more likely to rely on observed behaviors, group culture, and self-assessment to come up with a unique combination of styles to apply to what they see as leadership needs to achieve goals and objectives (Straker, 2008). While superintendents may use a business approach in aspects of their leadership, decisions do not have to be made in this manner. Modern philosophy uses scientific methodologies to inform educational administration. Rejection of these principles is

analogous to rejection of the scientific method. This is indicative of postmodernism and deconstructionism (Hansen, 2003). The tendency of a leader to abandon modernist values for postmodern thinking may be demonstrated by abandonment of the scientific method as a decision guide (Best 1997). This leadership tendency fits with Situational Leadership Theory. Best (1997) offered that further support of the Postmodern connection of this item comes from,

Another form of postmodern politics also rejects utopian visions of liberation, global politics, and attempts at large-scale social transformation but eschews the nihilism of Baudrillard in favor of an emphasis on piecemeal reforms and local strategies. This is the position of Foucault, Lyotard, and Rorty, all of whom reject a global politics of systematic change in favor of a politics of modifications at the local level designed to enhance individual freedom. Foucault and Lyotard reject utopian thought and the category of ‘totality’ as terroristic while searching for new ‘styles’ of life ‘as different as possible from each other’ (Foucault) and for a proliferation of ‘language games’ in ‘agnostic’ opposition to one another (Lyotard). Rorty merely – and meekly – seeks ‘new descriptions’ of reality that pluralize the voices in the social ‘conversation,’ as he replaces normative critique with ‘irony’ and restricts philosophy to a limited role in private life. This form of postmodern politics, consequently, is but a refurbished liberal reformism that fails to break with the logic of the bourgeois individualism and subverts attempts to construct bold visions of a new reality to be shaped by a radical alliance politics (Best, 1997 p. 272).

Situational leadership would suggest an identical response direct from the preceding quote to provide an affirmation of the following statement. Data-driven decisions are superior to theory-driven decisions or decisions taking into account religious beliefs, intuition, or custom. It

is reasonable to compromise a traditional educational value to obtain a needed consensus. A postmodernist would agree and a modernist would not agree. It is reasonable to compromise a personal value to obtain a needed consensus. A Postmodernist would agree and a Modernist would not agree. It is reasonable to undermine a legal guideline to obtain a needed consensus. A postmodernist would agree and a modernist would not agree.

Normative Leadership Theory

It is the responsibility of a leader to make decisions. Normative leadership theory places a value or importance on a goal or objective and a value or importance on the manner in which those who are lead accept the goal or objective in question. Generally, the value or importance falls in one of three styles of decision making: (a) authoritative, in which the leader dictates the goals or objectives; (b) delegation, in which those being led set their own goals; and (c) objectives or joint, in which both the leader and followers agree on goals and objectives (Kent, 2010). Normative leadership is a technique which may be informed by modernist philosophy. Lyotard (1984) explained that the reasoning for this response is “Simplifying to the extreme, I define postmodernism as incredulity toward metanarratives” (Lyotard, 1984 p. 24).

Burbules (1995) offered further support for the response,

Nearly everyone focuses here on the idea of metanarratives, our attempts to offer general and encompassing accounts of truth, value, and reality. Postmodernism seems to be about denying the possibility of these, and rejecting as monolithic and hegemonic the ones that Western traditions have embraced. But the key term in this phrase (in translation, at least) is ‘incredulity’ – a fascinating and unexpected word. Incredulity is not denial or rejection or refutation; it is an inability to believe. In this difference I think

we see what is most distinctive and penetrating in the postmodern insight (Burbules, 1995 para. 5)

A leader using Normative Leadership Theory would make the decisions and then use one of the three described styles of Normative Leadership Theory to control a process.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory proposes that leaders must inspire those whom they lead. The population being led must associate their own value system into the proposed goals and objectives to be accomplished. Charisma is an essential characteristic for a transformational leader to possess, but it must be accompanied by the ability to generate trust, respect and admiration of those whom he or she leads. The task to be accomplished must have value and importance to the follower, the followers must sacrifice their own interests for those objectives to be accomplished and the appeal to the goals must be to the higher order needs of Maslow's hierarchy. This is sometimes referred to as a selling style (Straker, 2008). Hartsfield (2010) stated,

While it is widely accepted that a spiritual dimension exists beyond the realm of mind and body, a clear definition of this spirituality is not as widely accepted. Definitions of spirituality fall into two categories: (a) those with religious or faith-based connotations and (b) those with secular connotations. (p. 8)

Scientific reductionism contends there is no existence other than that which is empirically observable. Supernatural concepts have long been rejected by modernists. An example of this principle is defined by modernists as "The dogma of the ghost in the machine" (Ryle, 2002, p. 11). The purest forms of scientism follow scientific reductionist principles which routinely

denies the existence of a supernatural soul and embraces either agnosticism or atheism (Light & Rolston, 2002).

Path–Goal Leadership Theory

Path– Goal leaders serve as facilitators by determining the goal to be achieved and the path to be taken to reach that goal. They also ensure that rewards are given to encourage followers taking the directed path to the chosen goal. The four methods used in Path – Goal leadership are supportive leadership, directive leadership, participative leadership and achievement oriented leadership. Generally path–goal leadership styles uses methods of team playing, nurturing and high expectations of achievement by leaders (Straker, 2008). Path–Goal leadership works well with a question which examines scientism and scientific reductionism as a postmodern metanarrative that informs science curriculum. Rejection of scientism for the sake of social capital is indicative of a Postmodernist.

Scientific reductionism is a metanarrative of modernism. Scientific reductionism reduces any process to an empirically observable sequence that follows empirically verifiable scientific laws or theories. Hence, all life is reduced to chemical processes and all biological processes follow knowable rules of chemistry. The implication is that there is no soul or supernatural existence after death. Physics follows laws that are verifiable experimentally and all science follows mathematical patterns. *Intelligent design* implies creationism (Aspel, 2007).

“Postmodernists renounce closed structure, fixed meaning, and rigid order in favor of play, indeterminacy, incompleteness, uncertainty, ambiguity, contingency and chaos” (Best, 1997, p. 256).

Transactional Leadership Theory

Transactional leadership theory relies on a manager to oversee the accomplishment of objectives using a reward / punishment system. Those who are being led are considered subordinates and the goals and objectives to be accomplished are to be clearly defined and understood by all. Subordinates are considered to be responsible for the goals and objectives to be realized whether or not they have the ability and / or resources to realize the goals and objectives (Straker, 2008). Rewards and punishments are part of this system. Performance is expected and praise occurs only when performance exceeds expectations. If performance is below expectation then punishment or corrective action is used. This is sometimes referred to as a “telling” style (Straker, 2008).

Scientific reductionism is a metanarrative of modernism. Scientific reductionism reduces all process to empirically observable sequences that follow empirically verifiable scientific laws or theories. Hence, all life is reduced to chemical processes and all biological processes follow knowable rules of chemistry. Physics follows laws that are verifiable experimentally and all science follows mathematical patterns. In education, scientism reduces the educational process to a predictable, scientific process. Bobbitt proposed scientism as a guide to curriculum and instruction (Kliebard, 2004). In addition to introducing scientific analysis into business, Frederick Winslow Taylor applied his personal views and his interpretation of the nature of workers (Kliebard, 2004). Taylor (1911) claimed that the same methods of scientific management were directly applicable to business, universities and many other human activities.

CURRENT ISSUES IN EDUCATION

Charter Schools

Educational week blogs makes the claim that 83% of Washington, DC insiders involved with education when surveyed claimed that legislative rules regarding the establishment of

charter schools will be agreed upon by legislators passing federal legislation which will financially reward the establishment of charter schools (Klein, 2010). Sanchez (2010) discussed the replacement of public schools with charter schools in New Orleans after the disaster of Hurricane Katrina and a politically motivated change to charter schools in Chicago.

Concerning replacing public schools with charter schools in Chicago Sanchez (2010) stated, "Renaissance 2010 targeted schools that failed to meet Chicago's accountability standards as defined by high-stakes standardized tests and turned them over to non-profit and often for-profit charters" (Sanchez, para. 4-5). Regarding charter schools in Chicago there was also the following statement,

Another integral part of the plan is to hand control of schools away from teachers, their unions, and community residents and into the hands of the business sector. At least two-thirds of the newly opened schools will be nonunion. The Commercial Club raised \$25 million from the corporate sector to close public schools and reopen them under the governance of an unelected board called the New Schools for Chicago (NSC) organization.

The effect of eliminating much of the Chicago teacher's union as happened in New Orleans is a practice of business that is directly applicable to education. Further and more recent support for charter schools is found in the Top 10 Higher Education Issues State Policy Issues for 2010 by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities which states:

At the state level, Louisiana has been a leader in linking student achievement data with teacher preparation programs. As the first state in the nation to use student test scores to evaluate teachers and then teacher education programs, the state is now working out the

details on policies to guide improvements in postsecondary teacher education programs. Several other states are closely studying what is happening in Louisiana and considering similar efforts. (Hurley, McBain, Harnisch, & Russell, 2010, p. 6)

The replacement of public schools that must operate under the guidelines applied to education established by constitutional law and case law with performance standards that may not be generally enforced in Charter Schools is contrary to comparativism. Postmodernism and deconstructionism would deconstruct the traditional public school systems and replace them with charter schools that would not have to abide by court rulings affecting public schools (Best, 1997). Charter schools can avoid the principles of comparativism by simply not requiring students to do high stakes testing or by manipulating the statistical results of high stakes testing using comparitism and by choosing their student body academically through admission practices.

Merit Pay

Toch (2009) claims there are “5 Myths About Merit Pay for Teachers,” and proceeds by using these to discuss merit pay for teachers. Five statements were described as myths regarding merit pay. Those statements were: (a) merit pay has a strong track record, (b) teachers unions are the biggest barrier to merit pay, (c) principals are good judges of teacher talent, (d) student test scores offer a simple solution to the evaluation problem, and (e) teachers are most motivated by money (Toch, 2009). Fox News (2010) reported that merit pay for teachers has no effect upon student performance despite the fact that President Obama’s administration has included it as part of their “Race to the Top” program for improving education in America.

The Daytona Beach News Journal offered the following clarification of the results of the Tennessee study that was the subject of the story. It said, “A simplistic approach that offers teachers cash bonuses for short-term test score gains isn’t going to change the culture of

teaching” (Rice, 2010, para. 5). The issue concerning merit pay is it is possible and fair to assess or gauge teaching effectiveness with a student achievement test that measures universal standards and to pay teachers accordingly. A postmodernist would deconstruct this kind of system due to its reliance on comparativism upon which the testing system is constructed and deconstructionism upon which these types of systems are built (Best, 1997; Carroll, 2006). A modernist would approve of this practice due to upholding the concept of constructionism, fundamental grounding in Taylorism and almost 100 years of accepted scientific American business practices (Taylor, 1911).

Standardized Testing and National Curriculum

For many years colleges and universities throughout the nation have used Scholastic Aptitude Tests in addition to High School grade point averages (GPA) to screen student admissions and to provide admission standards. In Europe, a system of education traditionally tracked students from the beginning of their educational experience into a profession that educators decided upon. In 2002, President George W. Bush and Congress enacted No Child Left Behind (NCLB). This program legislation relies upon testing to determine the progress of schools, mandating states to adopt rules that reward schools that perform well and punish poor performing schools (Nichols, Glass, & Berliner, 2005). A study by the University of Arizona found, “It appears that more empirical studies are needed to determine whether high-stakes testing has the intended effect of increasing student learning” (Nichols et al., 2005, p. 10). Other research indicates that family background is a significant indicator of student success and achievement (McIntosh, 2005). The same study reported that, “Male respondents who reported liking school were 62% less likely to be in the bottom attainment category than the respondents

who were either indifferent or disliked school. Unlike test scores, this variable is almost independent of household background variables” (McIntosh, 2005, p. 18).

Attitude is not mentioned in either NCLB or Race to the Top. Other research reports exist regarding high stakes testing that attach consequences to poor performance scores increases scores (Rosenshine, 2003). It has been reported that wealth which differs from income is a predictor of completion of college (Conley, 2001). Respondents shall agree or disagree with the following statement. As a superintendent I feel that it is possible or fair to test students to assess their educational or achievement level with a test that is gauged by universal standards or national curriculum. A postmodernist position would deny that this is possible, since postmodernism deconstructs global comparativism (Carroll, 2006). A modernist sees comparativism as a viable, universal method of assessing all educational systems (Carroll, 2006).

Instructional Technology and Electronics in the Classroom

Computer access for instruction in the classroom is widespread throughout America. A 2008 survey reported that 97% of districts had local area networks in all schools (United States Department of Education, 2009). Eighty-one percent had district area networks and 100% of those networks were connected to the Internet (USDOE, 2009). The survey reported 54% of those districts had high bandwidth connections featuring T-1 lines with the capacity of 1.5 Megabytes per second and T-3 lines with the capacity of 44.6 Megabytes per second (USDOE, 2009). Fiber optic connections are found more often in metropolitan areas and copper lines were more common in rural with the majority of districts reporting high speed Internet connections (USDOE, 2009). It was also reported that the majority of districts provided programs to keep equipment current and in good repair. Ninety-five percent reported offering teacher professional

development in topics such as integrating technology into instruction and 51% reported having an employee whose only duty was to maintain computer systems (USDOE, 2009).

We may conclude computers are firmly established in American public education as a resource. Research holds that teachers express a need for professional development in the operation of this technology (Rodriguez & Knuth, 2000). Supporting teacher professional development in a technology is indicative of scientism, and indicates modernism as a philosophical base.

Discipline

Research establishes discipline as a necessary ingredient to the establishment of a culture and climate that is conducive to learning and principals need to possess strong leadership qualities (Daly & Fowler, 1988). It is necessary to control curriculum to generate such a culture and climate (Hallam, Rogers, & Rhamie, 2010). Participation of adult community shareholders from outside of the school as volunteer mentors enhances the engagement and the success of the student and establishes in the student better behaviors resulting from a feeling of support from and belonging to the school (Holt, Bry, & Johnson, 2008). A Modernist would embrace these actions arising from research which are firmly entrenched in Scientism and are Modernism. A Postmodernist would see the research results as metanarratives, not necessarily applicable to every circumstance, lacking a complete commitment to the concept of comparative education, and by applying Postmodern doubt to the conceptual structure of the supportive research and would therefore reject it. Postmodernists would also see the research as inapplicable because part of it occurred in the United Kingdom under different cultural conditions.

Summary

The leadership theories and current issues in education in the literature review are used to form a framework. Utilizing this framework a questionnaire in a survey format was formulated to examine the philosophy of the superintendent respondent.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study used a quantitative method utilizing survey administration as the source of data collection. All survey questions used a Likert-type scale of response. Survey questions were formulated from the review of leadership theory and issues discussed in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2. The sources of the information were selected to obtain items for the construction of the questions for the survey to evaluate postmodern concepts. These items came from educational theory, modern leadership techniques, philosophy as applied in educational leadership practice, situated within contemporary problems that face superintendents.

Philosophical Roots of Popular Leadership Methods

The 13 Postmodern indicators used to guide the review of comparative educational journals, to demonstrate a postmodern shift by Carroll (2006), were considered to confirm indicators of postmodern philosophy. The 13 postmodern items are:

- Anti-rationalism/anti-Enlightenment/anti-Cartesianism
- Contestation of “knowability”
- The insistence on the non-existence of a priori
- The untenability of “universal” ideas

- The assertion that the individual does not exist—his/her significance is only as part of a collective entity frequently termed “organic” (i.e., race, nation, state, community of interest)
- The assertion that groups are ineffable, unique, incommensurable (“diversity”, as termed by Herder, Carroll, 2006)
- The view of language/grammar as a means for power
- The view that language/grammar expresses a group’s or nation’s “essence”
- The view that language/grammar obstruct accessing genuine knowledge of “Being” (i.e., Dilthey and Heidegger’s “is-prediction”)
- The assertion of the existence/presence/detectibility of concealed “Being”
- The position that Eleatics “knew” “Being”
- Hermeneutical approaches of Schleiermacher and Dilthey (Carroll, 2006)
- Research approaches based on *Einführung*, emphasizing a pre-reflective, *intuitus* method (Carroll, 2006, pp. 57-58)

Concepts introduced in the introduction and the literature review helped to define the concept of the questions in the survey which are to be asked of the respondent. The list of leadership theories and contemporary issues are not exhaustive but instead are a general sampling intended to keep the survey as parsimonious as possible. Responses from participants were classified as one that either indicates a postmodern or modern philosophy, using a Likert scale to define strength of response. The survey was intended to weigh the degree of postmodern verses modern philosophy at work in the educational practice of the respondents. The last four questions of the survey obtained information to be used in the correlation of the respondent philosophy score and tenure. The survey was administered via e-mail.

Statistical Methods and Hypothesis

Indiana superintendents were provided an opportunity to respond to an electronic survey which sought to capture the degree to which they tend to exhibit a modern or postmodern philosophy. A score for postmodernism and modernism as an operant philosophy was determined from questions of the survey utilizing Likert scores. The expectation was that respondents will demonstrate both modern and postmodern philosophies to varying degrees. The professional philosophy as a superintendent was also correlated with longevity of tenure. The length of tenure and the philosophy of superintendents are to be examined for correlation. Philosophy will also be correlated with respondent satisfaction as an educator.

Population

The population surveyed was current Indiana school superintendents. Each received an e-mail asking them to participate along with a link to the survey. Those who participated implied permission relative to IRB risks and benefits which were described within the e-mail invitation.

Research Question

The research question and null hypothesis are concerned with the prevalence of postmodernism in educational leadership today. The research question guiding this study was:

1. How does a public school superintendent's philosophy align with their tenure?

Null Hypothesis

1. **H₀1.** Public school superintendent's philosophy does not align with their tenure.

The Survey

The survey questions were intended to demonstrate whether the respondent uses modern or postmodern philosophy to inform their practice of school leadership. Each question has its application of a leadership method or theory of leadership principle(s) indicated in parentheses.

1. Scientific solutions are the best way to solve problems. (Traditional Theory)
2. General scientific principles are more difficult to master because they are at a higher level than the technologies derived from them. (Traditional Theory)
3. Leaders are more effective when leading followers where they want to go rather than leading them where they need to go. (Contingency Theory)
4. There exists in the world just one reality about life, one set of valid all-encompassing values for humanity, only one truth regarding all issues and no other viewpoint is valid. (Normative Theory)
5. Data-driven decisions are superior to theory-driven decisions or decisions taking into account religious beliefs, intuition or custom. (Situational)
6. It is reasonable to compromise a traditional educational value to obtain a needed consensus. (Situational)
7. It is reasonable to compromise a personal value to obtain a needed consensus. (Situational)
8. It is reasonable to undermine a legal guideline to obtain a needed consensus. (Situational)
9. There is a spiritual aspect to leadership. (Transformational)
10. Intelligent Design is just as likely as Evolution to be the origin of humanity. (Path-Goal)

11. Evidence-driven action is superior to action guided by a theory. (Transactional Leadership)
12. Business practices are easily adapted to any goal. (Transactional Leadership)
13. Goals are easier to reach when the organization is run like a business. (Transactional Leadership)
14. Charter Schools are a viable solution to correct many problems with public schools. (Comparitivism, Comparatism and Scientism)
15. It is fair to evaluate teachers by the results of high stakes testing of their students. (Comparitivism, Comparatism and Scientism)
16. It is fair to test student achievement levels with a test that is based on a national curriculum. (Comparitivism, Comparatism and Scientism)
17. Teachers' competence in computer technology is essential. (Comparitivism, Comparatism and Scientism)
18. Discipline is always best established in schools using methods that are supported by research. (Comparitivism, Comparatism and Scientism)
19. How many years have you been a superintendent?
 - a. 0 – 2 years
 - b. 3 – 5 years
 - c. 5 – 10 years
 - d. 11 – 15 years
 - e. 15 – 20 years
 - f. 21 – 25 years
 - g. more than 26 years
20. How many years have you been in a superintendent role in your present district?
 - a. 0 – 2 years
 - b. 3 – 5 years
 - c. 5 – 10 years
 - d. 11 – 15 years
 - e. 15 – 20 years
 - f. 21 – 25 years

g. more than 26 years

21. How many years have you been an educator?

- a. 0 – 2 years
- b. 3 – 5 years
- c. 5 – 10 years
- d. 11 – 15 years
- e. 15 – 20 years
- f. 21 – 25 years
- g. more than 26 years

22. I am satisfied with where I am as an educational leader.

The Likert Scale

The following Likert scale was used for questions 1 through 18 and question 22 to obtain an ordinate scale. The Likert scale shown below forces a commitment and shows strength of response.

Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

DISCUSSION AND CLARIFICATION OF THE SURVEY ITEMS

If one wishes to consider philosophy as a motivator, one might first consider philosophy as a method of describing the survey questions. Discussion of other subjects does not clarify the applicable philosophy that the survey is constructed to evaluate. The management techniques will be classified according to underlying philosophy. Therefore, this discussion used philosophy to ground the survey questions. An ordinal scale was used to record respondent responses to all survey items since recording exact years of experience could reveal the identity of individual respondents.

The First Survey Item

The first item, scientific solutions are the best way to solve problems is grounded in traditionalist theory (Straker, 2008). Modernism embraces scientism and constructionism by its steadfast entrenchment in science and the scientific method and justifying positions or truths with empirical evidence and the scientific method. Postmodern philosophy deconstructs scientism by embracing postmodern doubt in place of science and the scientific method, replacing it with a belief or faith in an anti-modern premise. Thus, agreement with the statement item aligns the respondent's philosophy with modernism. Then, by applying a Likert scale the strength of the respondent's response is measured statistically.

The Second Survey Item

The Second survey item, general scientific principles are more difficult to master because they are at a higher level than the technologies derived from them is also grounded in traditionalist theory (Straker, 2008). Science is structured by constructionism where technology is derived from sound scientific theory. However, to use a technology, one does not have to understand the scientific intricacies involved in the derivation of the technology. As in the first item, postmodern philosophy deconstructs scientism by embracing postmodern doubt in place of science and the scientific method, replacing it with a belief or faith in an anti-modern premise that has to do with the superiority of a technology to the science that spawned it. Thus, agreement with the statement item aligns the respondent's philosophy with Modernism.

The Third Survey Item

The third item, leaders are more effective when leading followers where they want to go rather than leading them where they need to go, is grounded in contingency theory. Contingency leadership theory considers each leadership problem to be dependent upon unique factors

assigned to a leadership problem (Straker, 2008). Modernism embraces comparativism simultaneously denying the existence of any factors that are unique in education and claiming that all items thought to be unique have identical and measurable counterparts in any leadership situation. Therefore, considering problems insurmountable because of unique positions and circumstances and allowing self-governance to a group that needs leadership represents a two-fold problem. The first problem is ineffective leadership and the second is allowing the possibility of modernist principles to be replaced with postmodern principles. Thus, agreement with the statement item aligns the respondent's philosophy with postmodernism.

The Fourth Survey Item

The fourth survey item, there exists in the world just one reality about life, one set of valid all-encompassing values for humanity, only one truth regarding all issues and no other viewpoint is valid, is grounded in normative leadership theory (Kent, 2010). Even though normative leadership theory employs three methods, the leader is charged with framing the defining of the goal and controlling the progress to a solution regardless of which one of the three options is chosen by leadership and with getting the stakeholders to embrace the goal. The modernist sees modernism as their preferred philosophy and the only one that is correct to inform humanity. Therefore, this would always be how a modernist would lead.

Postmodernists, however do not see conflict and various ideas that may or may not be in conflict as a problem (Lyotard 1984).

The Fifth Survey Item

The fifth survey item, data-driven decisions are superior to theory-driven decisions or decisions taking into account religious beliefs, intuition or custom, is derived from situational leadership theory. Leaders using situational leadership theory are less likely to rely on a single

leadership method and are more likely to rely on observed behaviors, group culture, and self-assessment to come up with a unique combination of styles to apply to what they see as leadership needs to achieve goals and objectives (Straker, 2008). However, informing decisions with a philosophy based in scientism using empirical data and the scientific method is a mainstay of modernism. Leading using a variety of methods, using intuitive methods to inform decisions, basing decisions on religious beliefs or allowing local customs to shape decisions is anti-modern and employs postmodern philosophy methodologies on the part of the educational leader.

The Sixth Survey Item

The sixth survey item, it is reasonable to compromise a traditional educational value to obtain a needed consensus, embraces situational leadership theory by measuring how likely an educational leader might be to abandon a modernist narrative to assume a postmodern attitude to obtain consensus in another area. This is related to Situational leadership in a circumstance where an educational leader decides to abandon his own philosophy regarding education to accept the philosophy of his stakeholders to achieve progress in some other area. A modernist will not embrace a postmodern action that is inconsistent with modernism.

The Seventh Survey Item

The seventh survey item, it is reasonable to compromise a personal value to obtain a needed consensus, again looks at situational leadership and how flexible an educational leader may be in their methods of leadership from a philosophical standpoint. Postmodern doubt exhibited by an educational leader contributes to the ability of an educational leader to justify this action.

The Eighth Survey Item

The eighth survey item, it is reasonable to undermine a legal guideline to obtain a needed consensus, uses situational leadership theory as a frame to ascertain if Postmodern doubt could be used by a leader to deconstruct a legal framework upon which the American legal system is founded and to deconstruct the modern ideas of the American founding fathers that dictate how laws in America are made. More simply stated it implies deconstruction of a modern legal system. A postmodernist philosophy lends itself to this sort of leadership.

The Ninth Survey Item

The ninth survey item has a spiritual aspect to leadership is grounded in transformational leadership theory. Transformational leadership theory holds that there is a spiritual or perhaps secular influence that certain leaders have over those whom they lead. A modernist does not recognize existence other than that which is empirical. Spiritual aspects of existence are not recognized by modernists. Since recognizing spiritual aspects forces a modernist to use postmodern doubt or the deconstruction of modernist principles, affirming this statement indicates postmodernism.

The Tenth Survey Item

The tenth survey item states that intelligent design is just as likely as evolution to be the origin of humanity. According to path-goal leadership the leader chooses the goal and the path taken to the goal. The rejection of scientism and the constructionist principle of modernism must be taken to reject the principles of science if an educational leader is to influence the use intelligent design instead of conventional science that embraces evolution as science. An educational leader who demonstrates this path of action has embraced postmodernism as and informing philosophy.

The Eleventh Survey Item

The eleventh survey item, empirically obtained data driven courses of action are superior to courses of action data formulated from decisions guided by theoretical interpretation, or, more simply stated, evidence-driven action is superior to action guided by a theory embraces scientific principles and the scientific method to inform educational leadership and practice. In Transactional leadership the goals and objectives to be accomplished are to be clearly defined and understood by all. Subordinates are considered to be responsible for the goals and objectives to be realized whether or not they have the ability and / or resources to realize the goals and objectives (Straker, 2008). Frederick Winslow Taylor used scientific methodologies to assess and to evaluate human performance and to form expectations and goals (Taylor, 1911). Taylor used empirical data both to establish goals and to evaluate performance. Taylor's techniques and methods were consistent with modernism. Rejection of the scientific method for the use of other philosophical ideas and methods is consistent with postmodern philosophy.

The Twelfth Survey Item

The twelfth survey item business practices are easily adapted to any goal is based upon transactional leadership and seeks to find if respondents follow the techniques described in modern philosophy that are embraced by business. The empiricism and profit-driven techniques of business performance are implied in the educational methods embraced by modern educators. Business leadership techniques are taught in educational leadership programs. A modernist would agree that business practices are easily adapted to education. A postmodernist would exhibit doubt that this is universally true.

The Thirteenth Survey Item

The thirteenth survey item, goals are easier to reach when the organization is run like a business, is a principle of modernism. Doubting that this is universally true is postmodernism. transactional leadership is a widely accepted principle upon which business operates.

The Fourteenth Survey Item

The fourteenth survey item, charter schools are a viable solution to correct many problems with public schools, is a principle modernists could not abide. This course of action a Modernist would see as unacceptable. The replacement of public schools that must operate under the guidelines applied to education established by Constitutional law with charter schools where performance standards established by comparativism are not enforceable is contrary to scientism and compatativism. This atmosphere embraces different standards for schools based upon the establishment of conflicting or dissimilar educational objectives and dissimilar philosophies or comparatism that may or may not be based upon modernist philosophic principles. This is inconsistent and such conflicts are commonly described as acceptable in postmodern theory. Postmodernism and deconstructionism would deconstruct the traditional public school systems and replace them with charter schools that would not have to abide by court rulings affecting public schools (Best, 1997).

The Fifteenth Survey Item

The fifteenth survey item, it is fair to evaluate teachers by the results of high stakes testing of their students, is consistent with modernist principles established by scientism and comparativism. A modernist would agree with this practice but a postmodernist would disagree. Postmodernists see each educational situation as unique and feel that it is not possible to classify all education using these methods.

The Sixteenth Survey Item

The sixteenth survey item; It is fair to test student achievement levels with a test that is based on a national curriculum, is a principle that is soundly based scientism and comparativism. Modernists would agree that such assessments are both possible and fair. Postmodernists would deconstruct the science that is used construct any such high stakes testing while simultaneously doubting that such comparisons of different groups is valid or even possible. Postmodernists could not agree philosophically to this practice, but use may use it strategically by way of comparativism to achieve political advantage and abandoning it after their goals are achieved.

The Seventeenth Survey Item

The seventeenth survey item holds teachers' competence in computer technology as essential. Research holds that teachers express a need for professional development in the operation of this technology (Rodriguez & Knuth, 2000). Supporting teacher professional development in a technology is indicative of scientism and indicates modernism as a philosophical base. Postmodernists could reject technology as an application of science that is based upon scientism which postmodernism sees as not always the best solution to educational issues.

The Eighteenth Survey Item

The eighteenth survey item makes the statement that discipline is always best established in schools using methods that are supported by research. Modernists would agree and postmodernists would not agree. Postmodernists look for unique solutions to issues that they hold to be unique to each educational situation while modernists see comparativism as a foundation upon which to build discipline methods that are universally consistent and do not see unique discipline problems as a viable premise.

Survey Items Nineteen through Twenty-one

These survey items are demographic in nature and were used to correlate statistical facts.

These survey items consist of ordinal empirical information.

Survey Item Twenty-two

Survey item twenty-two is a respondent self-rating of satisfaction using an ordinal scale.

CHAPTER 4

THE DATA

Only 259 of the intended respondents received the initial e-mail requesting them to participate as respondents. Seventy-eight superintendents who received the e-mail started the survey and 76 completed the survey. Seventy completed every item on the survey. If a respondent responded to a question, the overall response to that question was calculated from the sum total of respondents that responded to the question, whether or not that particular respondent completed the survey or every item on the survey. In calculating the total scores of modernism and postmodernism only the scores of the 70 who completed the survey were used. Of all the respondents, only two stopped taking the survey after the first several questions. The remaining six who did not complete the survey merely left some of the survey items with no response. With only eight missing from the total number of respondents, the total response rate drops from 30% to 27%.

Regarding the Data

The data from survey was first examined under Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) obtaining a descriptive analysis regarding the trends of the respondents as a group. Each question was examined for levels of response agreement. Qualtrics assigns values to Likert scales in numerical order. The survey items were not composed so that either postmodernism or modernism would consistently result in a higher score on the Likert scale.

The survey items were phrased in a random manner such that sometimes agreement with them became the response of a modernist and at other times agreement with them would be the response of a postmodernist. For the first part of the descriptive evaluation the scores were not reversed. It was not necessary initially to reverse certain scores to ascertain levels of postmodern agreement for respondents in the survey to merely look at central tendencies.

The Likert Scale Scoring for Postmodernism

The scale was scored in the following manner. Strongly agree was assigned '1'. Agree was assigned '2'. Slightly agree was assigned '3'. Slightly disagree was assigned '4'. Disagree was assigned '5'. Strongly disagree was assigned '6'. In Table 1 no scores are reversed.

Beginning with Table 2 in their turn the items 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 14 were reverse scored in the following manner so that a higher numerical score represented Postmodernism. Strongly agree was assigned '6'. Agree was assigned '5'. Slightly agree was assigned '4'. Slightly disagree was assigned '3'. Disagree was assigned '2'. Strongly disagree was assigned '1'.

Tenure Scoring

The length of tenure was set on an increasing ordinal scale so that the shortest tenure was assigned '1' and the longest was assigned '7'.

Satisfaction Scoring

Item 22, "I am satisfied with where I am as an educational leader" was scored as follows. Strongly agree was assigned '1'. Agree was assigned '2'. Slightly agree was assigned '3'. Slightly disagree was assigned '4'. Disagree was assigned '5'. Strongly disagree was assigned '6'.

Table 1

Mean and Standard Margin of Error for Items Q1 through Q18 and Q22

Item	Mean	S. Error	Response
Q1	2.8974	0.10417	Modern
Q2	3.1667	0.12024	Modern
Q3	3.9091	0.16962	Modern
Q4	5.0800	0.13119	Postmodern
Q5	3.2800	0.15603	Modern
Q6	3.9067	0.13843	Modern
Q7	4.2133	0.14862	Modern
Q8	5.1316	0.13024	Modern
Q9	2.2632	0.12336	Postmodern
Q10	3.6164	0.19175	Borderline
Q11	2.5658	0.10486	Modern
Q12	4.1579	0.13252	Postmodern
Q13	4.1053	0.12784	Postmodern
Q14	5.0933	0.10768	Modern
Q15	4.0000	0.14704	Postmodern
Q16	3.4342	0.14184	Borderline
Q17	2.0263	0.11390	Modern
Q18	2.6053	0.09926	Modern
Q22 (All un-reversed)	1.9868	0.10841	Satisfaction demonstrated

Overall Descriptive Analysis

Each question was subjected to a descriptive analysis. Levels of agreement of the respondents are revealed and discussed briefly. Data from the respondents were put into SPSS for the descriptive analysis. Table 1 includes the mean score and the standard error of the data for each question from the respondent. Each survey item from 1 to 18 is listed with the overall tendency to modernism or postmodernism for each question by the respondents as a group. The lower or higher the mean the stronger the response of modernism or postmodernism as indicated on a scale of 1 to 6 as provided by the 6 item scale. Each item is numbered in order Q1 through Q18. No scores are reversed in Table 1 to provide the continuity of high scores consistent with postmodernism and low scores consistent with modernism. Q22 demonstrates respondent satisfaction. Thus, some scores above 3.50 indicate postmodernism and others do not on Table 1.

Of questions 1 through 18, two items were not definitively classified as having a modern or a postmodern response. Those two items were 10 and 16. Item 10 states; intelligent design is just as likely as evolution to be the origin of humanity. This statement examines directly if a postmodern philosophy is held by the respondent without seeking the respondents knowledge of the illegality of teaching intelligent design which a federal court has ruled is teaching creationism (Aspell, 2007). The response of the respondents to question 10 was clearly in the modernist category for question 10, (3.61, mean) but subtracting the margin of error (0.191) from the mean would place the response into the postmodern category, (3.42). Question 16 states it is fair to test student achievement levels with a test that is based on a national curriculum. In principle, it is scientifically possible to adopt a national curriculum and accurately test for the curriculum but in practice the curriculum is chosen by each state and is being driven by testing programs that

comply with NCLB. The response of the respondents to question 16 was clearly in the Modernist category for question 16, (3.43, mean) but adding the margin of error (0.14) to the mean would place the response into the Postmodern category, (3.57). Only the responses of the respondents as a group to question 10 and 16 in the survey had borderline responses. That is, the margin of error when either added or subtracted from the mean did not cross the critical number (3.50) that divided modernist from postmodernist responses on the Likert scale used for the rest of the items. Questions 10 and 16 did not suggest a reason to the respondent response regarding their philosophical choice.

For question 16 it might be argued that a respondent replying that given the circumstances that exist now, the high stakes testing is not fair because of the way that national curricula exist. This researcher feels that the respondents are evenly divided on the question of fairness of high stakes testing to students.

Regarding question 10 it is true that knowledge of case law may influence the manner of asking the question thus it was not asked if the respondent would allow intelligent design to be taught in his or her district, the question merely addressed the respondent's philosophy.

Question 22 assessed the satisfaction of the respondent with his or her career in education (5.01) margin of error (0.108). Respondents as a group exhibited satisfaction with their careers as educators.

The overall responses to the survey indicated that the respondents as a group chose the modern response 11 times, the postmodern response five times. The borderline response occurred two times in the survey. This will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

Reversing the Scoring to Obtain Uniformity

Regarding the remaining data evaluation it was necessary to reverse the scoring of the data for some of the questions so that a high score would consistently indicate a postmodern response. This data reversal allows for higher scores consistently to indicate postmodernism for the purpose of statistical calculation and for positive correlations of postmodernism. Those questions that required reverse scoring in the SPSS statistical software used for data evaluation so that higher numbers indicated postmodernism were questions 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 14. This facilitates the handling of the data in a more consistent manner. All of the data were recorded in ordinal scales.

Next, the first 18 questionnaire questions are grouped by educational theory and scientism to obtain eight composite variables. Respondent responses to these composite variables are examined using statistical tools.

Kurtosis and Skew

The graphical representations in Histogram form are presented. Kurtosis and skew are used to examine how the strength of response of data corresponds to what might be expected from the appropriate application of rules gleaned from mathematical probability as applied to the data points by the SPSS program (Croarkin & Tobias, 2010).

Skew is the term that applies to how the data points are distributed in terms of distance from the Y axis in a histogram and kurtosis applies to how the data points are distributed with respect to the normal bell curve (Croarkin & Tobias, 2010). In the graphical histograms produced in SPSS the entire histogram is given in terms of quadrant I of the Cartesian coordinate system, that is, all X values and all Y values exist as ordered pairs for data points are expressed in positive values. The probability of the data point pairs occurring as lying on a standard bell

shaped curve with a mean given in the center of the curve on the X axis which is expressed as 3.50 for this study because of the six possible responses in the Likert scale used.

Skew concerns the shape of the tails of the bell curve to the left and right of the mean and how much they differ in shape from a standard bell curve. If the tail is thinner to the left of the mean than it is to the right of the mean, the skew is termed as negative. If the tail is thinner to the right of the mean than to the left of the mean then the skew is termed positive.

Kurtosis is the distance of the curve from data to the standard bell curve up or down, that is in the positive or the negative Y axis direction. The kurtosis is said to be platykurtic if the data forms a curve that is below the standard bell curve. The kurtosis is said to be leptokurtic if the data forms a curve that is above the standard bell curve.

The SPSS program calculates the standard error of the skew and the kurtosis as numerical values and these numbers are reported in Table 4 as 'Sk. Error' and 'Ku. Error'. Calculation of error, skew and kurtosis is dependent upon sample size. For the purposes of this study any value in kurtosis or skew that is twice the standard error is considered significant. The exception to this occurs when the histogram is bimodal or possesses more than one significant data peak.

Table 2.

Items by Management Theory and Item Responses by Philosophy.

Question	Leadership Theory	Philosophy
1	Traditional	Modern
2	Traditional	Modern
3	Contingency	Modern
4	Normative	Postmodern
5	Situational	Modern
6	Situational	Modern
7	Situational	Modern
8	Situational	Modern
9	Transformational	Postmodern
10	Path–Goal	Borderline
11	Transactional	Modern
12	Transactional	Postmodern
13	Transactional	Postmodern
14	Comparitivism, Comparatism and Scientism	Modern
15	Comparitivism, Comparatism and Scientism	Postmodern
16	Comparitivism, Comparatism and Scientism	Borderline
17	Comparitivism, Comparatism and Scientism	Modern
18	Comparitivism, Comparatism and Scientism	Modern

Note: Data in Table 1 were evaluated before the scores were reversed for consistency.

Strength of Postmodern Responses

Although the respondents indicated a majority of modern responses, the strength of those responses was not as statistically strong as the postmodern responses.

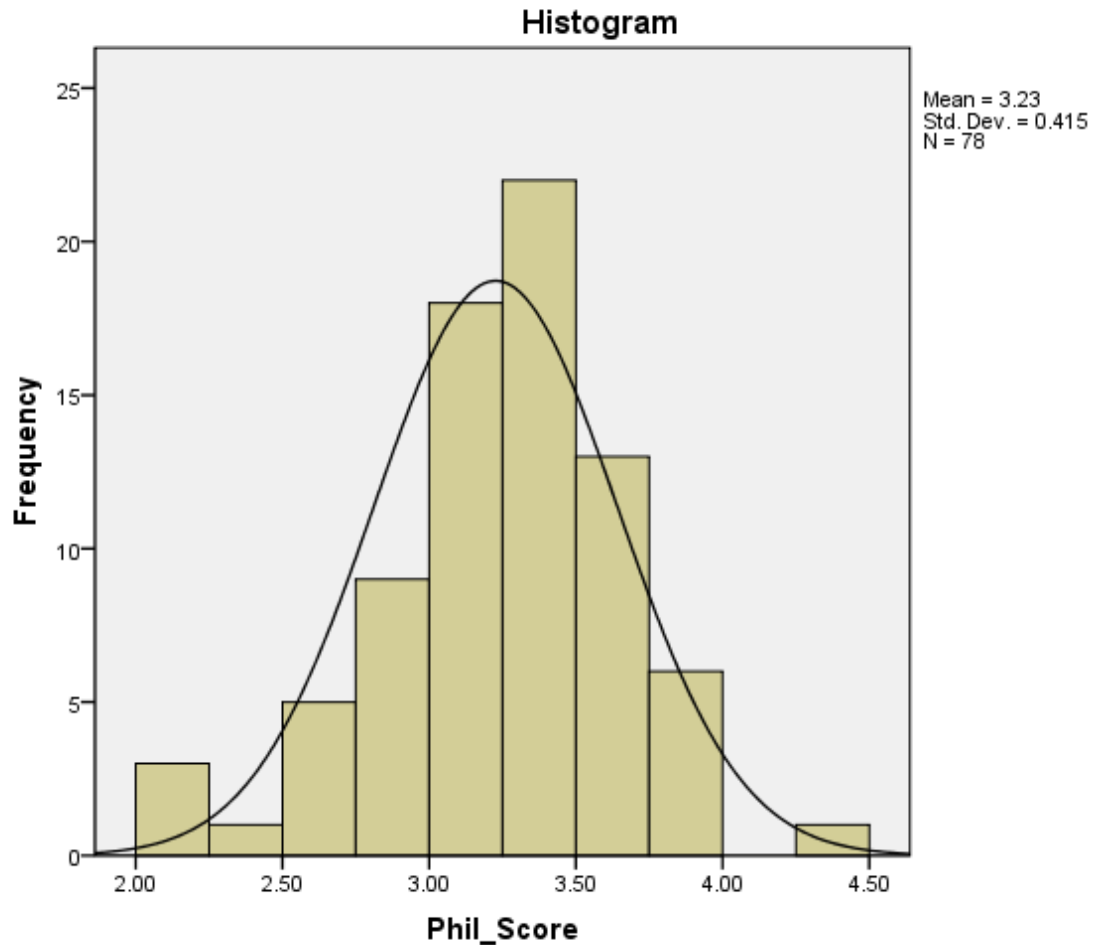


Figure 2. The Strength of Postmodern Responses.

The graph in Figure 2 was created in SPSS using the reversed data scores for selected questions as previously mentioned so that a response above 3.50 indicated a postmodern response and a response below 3.50 indicated a modern response. The mean of the scores of the respondent responses was 3.22. This statistic reveals that there were a majority of modern

responses and the strength of the postmodern and modern responses were closer in magnitude than would be expected as is illustrated in Figure 2 and from the majority of modern responses. Skew was reported as -0.483 with a standard error of 0.27. Kurtosis was reported as 0.88 with a standard error of 0.53. Neither met the significance criteria established for this study. Since there were 11 modern responses and only five postmodern responses one would not expect the mean to reside so close to 3.50. This signifies the strength of the postmodern responses. In the introduction it was mentioned that the postmodern relied on not on empirical evidence but instead relied upon intuition, belief or feelings. This presents empirical evidence that the respondents as a group are stronger in the small amount of postmodern philosophy that composes their personal philosophy than they are in the larger amount of modern philosophy that composes the majority of their personal philosophy. The skew though not significant was negative indicating a postmodern response that was stronger than the modern response throughout the data.

The philosophy that informs the answers to the survey along with the leadership theory classification is included in Table 2, Items by Management Theory and Responses by Philosophy. The survey questions are sorted by management/leadership style into eight categories. Those are, in order in the survey, traditional, contingency, normative, situational, transformational, path–goal, transactional and a final category of comparitivism, comparatism and scientism. The respondents’ responses from the data in those eight management leadership style categories found three to be postmodern, four were modern and one borderline response. If more than one question was used in a category, the respondents’ mean response was used to indicate a preference for management/leadership style which indicated modern or postmodern choices.

Table 3

Grouping of the Items by Management Theory and Responses by Philosophy

Leadership – Theory	Survey Questions	Philosophy
Traditional	1,2	Modern
Contingency	3(q3r)	Modern
Normative	4	Postmodern
Situational	5,6(q6r),7(q7r),8(q8r)	Modern
Transformational	9(q9r)	Postmodern
Path – Goal	10(q10r)	Borderline
Transactional	11,12,13	Postmodern
Comparitivism – Comparatism and Scientism	14(q14r),15,16,17,18	Modern

Note: (qXr) indicates that the scoring was reversed so that Postmodernism scores are above 3.50.

Note that in Table 3 questions 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 14 used the SPSS reversed statistic scale to ensure that the postmodern response is above 3.50 and the modern response is below 3.50.

Leadership Theory and Postmodernism

SPSS is used to report statistical and graphical relationships between leadership theory and postmodernism. Again, note that because of the verbal composition of the question the reversed values for the data from questions 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 14 are used so that the postmodern response provided an ordinal value above 3.50 and the modern response yields an ordinal value below 3.50. This result is reflected in the statistics composing in Table 4. The questions are grouped into the various leadership theory categories that they fit the best. For example, questions 1 and 2 are used to gauge the respondent group's response to traditional leadership theory but question three was reverse scored (q3r) and is used alone for contingency theory. Similar groupings are made for all eight categories of leadership theory by which questions applied to that theory. Note that in this grouping of responses by leadership theory that postmodernism is chosen to inform leadership methodologies three times and modernism is chosen four times with one borderline response. In all but one case adding or subtracting the statistical standard mean error does not change the response classification, that is, the mean of 3.50 is not crossed.

Table 4

Respondent's Philosophical Responses to Leadership Theory Grouped Items

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
N	78	77	75	75	76	73	76	74
Missing	0	1	3	3	2	5	2	4
Mean	3.032	3.090	5.080	2.736	4.736	3.382	3.609	2.794
Mean Error	0.086	0.169	0.131	0.087	0.123	0.191	0.081	0.069
Skew	0.001	0.479	-1.865	0.172	-0.970	0.076	-0.193	0.059
Sk. Error	0.272	0.274	0.277	0.276	0.276	0.281	0.276	0.276
Kurtosis	0.298	-0.969	3.940	-0.252	1.270	-1.202	0.131	0.084
Ku. Error	0.538	0.541	0.548	0.545	0.545	0.555	0.545	0.545
Philosophy	Modern	Modern	PostMod.	Modern	PostMod.	Borderline	PostMod.	Modern

Groupings; 1=Traditional, 2= Contingency, 3 = Normative, 4= Situational, 5=Transformational, 6=Path – Goal, 7=Transactional, 8 = Comparitivism – Comparatism and Scientism.

Traditional Leadership Theory and Postmodernism

The mean value of 3.03 places the respondent response in the modern category. The respondents as a group used modernist principles to respond to traditional leadership theory. The data from questions 1 and 2 were used to assess traditional leadership theory.

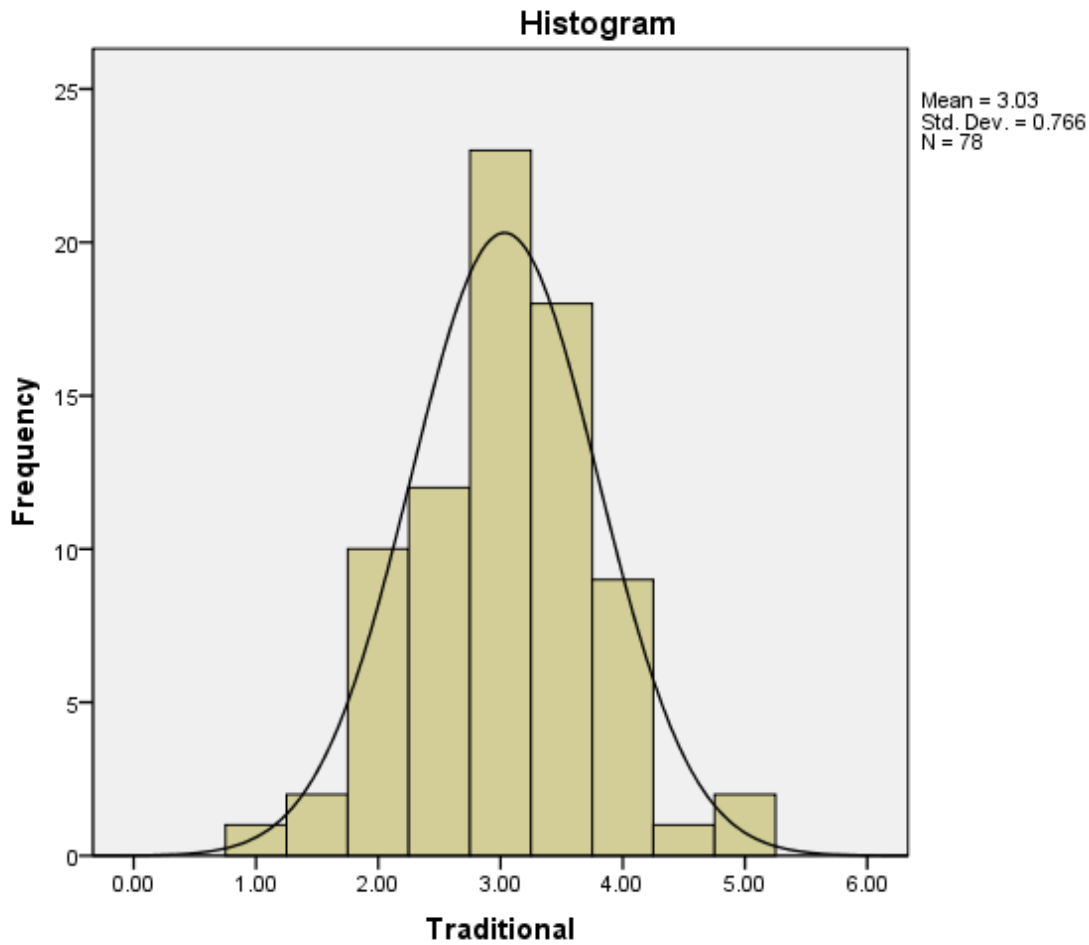


Figure 3. Traditional Leadership Theory and Postmodernism.

Skew was reported as 0.001 with a standard error of 0.272. Kurtosis was reported as 0.298 with a standard error of 0.538. Regarding traditional leadership theory neither met the significance criteria established for this study.

Contingency Leadership Theory and Postmodernism

Contingency leadership theory assessment uses only survey question 3 to assess the respondent group philosophical response. SPSS yields the following statistic and graphical relationship from the data.

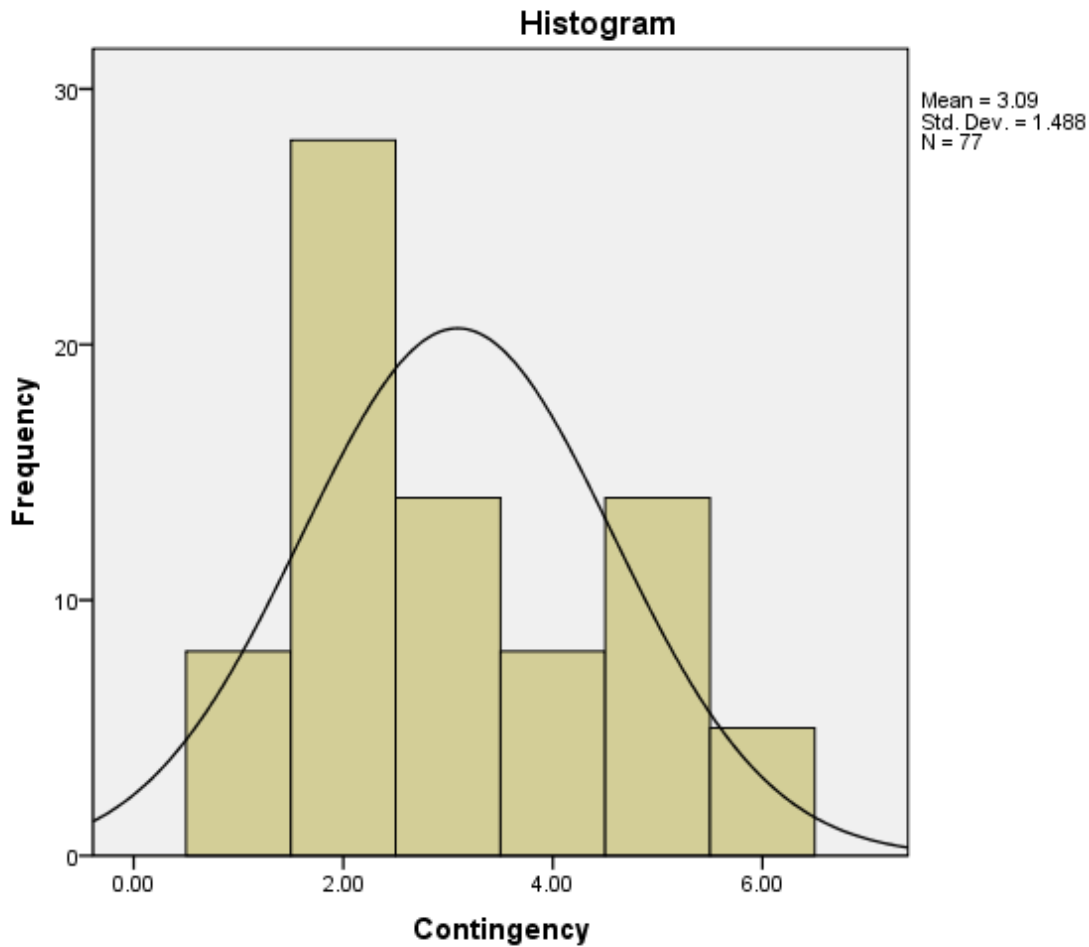


Figure 4. Contingency Leadership and Postmodernism.

These results were obtained for contingency leadership theory using the respondent data in the SPSS program. The statistic of 3.09 and the graph reports a modern philosophical response to the 3rd question on the questionnaire regarding contingency. Skew was 0.479 with a standard error of 0.274. Kurtosis was -0.969 with a standard error of 0.541. Neither skew nor kurtosis are significant for contingency. The histogram appears to be bimodal.

Normative Leadership Theory and Postmodernism

Normative leadership theory yields are presented in Figure 5.

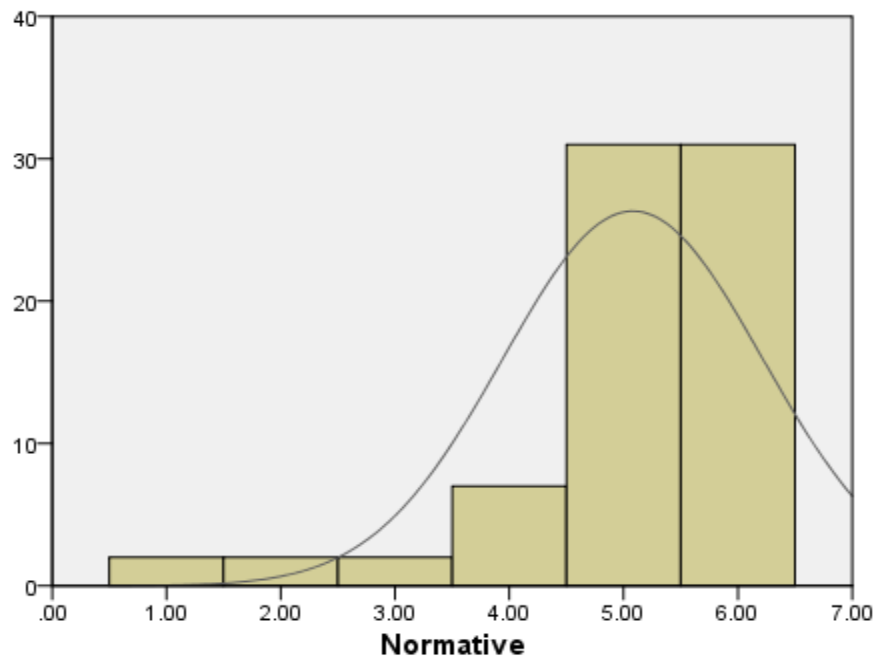


Figure 5. Normative Leadership Theory and Postmodernism.

The respondent data yielded a postmodern response mean of 5.080. SPSS created a graph from the data that demonstrates a strong postmodern response. Skew was -1.865 with a standard error of 0.277. Kurtosis was 3.940 with a standard error of 0.548. Both skew and kurtosis were significant for normative leadership theory.

Situational Leadership Theory and Postmodernism

Situational leadership theory is assessed for postmodernism by the respondent data.

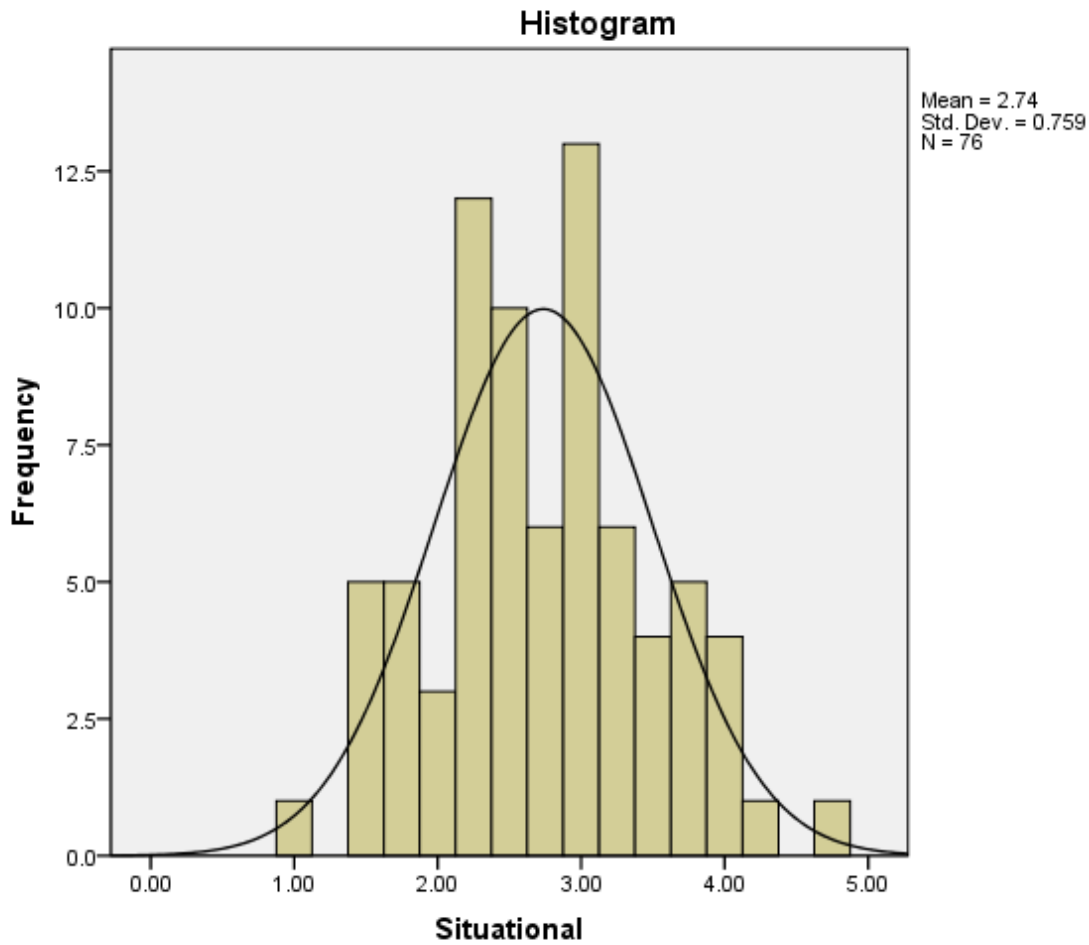


Figure 6. Situational Leadership Theory and Postmodernism Graph.

Situational leadership theory yields a mean of 2.73 indicating modernist philosophy as a mean response. Skew was 0.172 with a standard error of 0.276. -0.252 was the score of kurtosis with a standard error of 0.545. Neither skew nor kurtosis was significant for situational leadership theory and the graph appears to be bi-modal.

Transformational Leadership Theory and Postmodernism

Transformational leadership theory is subjected to the statistical test by application of the respondent data to SPSS.

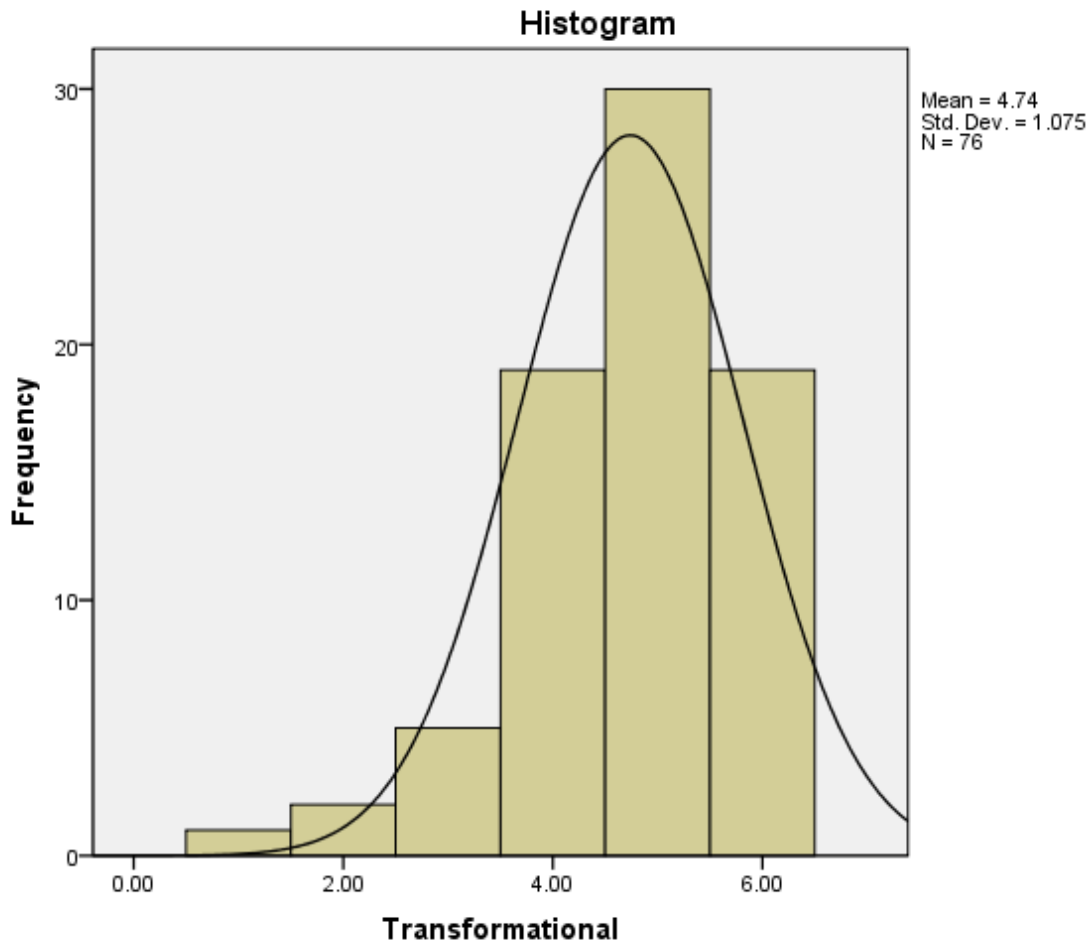


Figure 7. Transformational Leadership Theory and Postmodernism Graph.

Transformational leadership theory determined by the data yields a postmodern response with the mean of 4.7368. This is indicative of postmodern philosophy as a response by the respondents to the question. Skew was -0.970 with a standard error of 0.276. Kurtosis was 1.270 with a standard error of 0.545. Both skew and kurtosis were significant for transformational leadership theory.

Path–Goal Leadership Theory and Postmodernism

Path–Goal leadership theory as assessed by question 10 yields the following graph from the respondent data through SPSS.

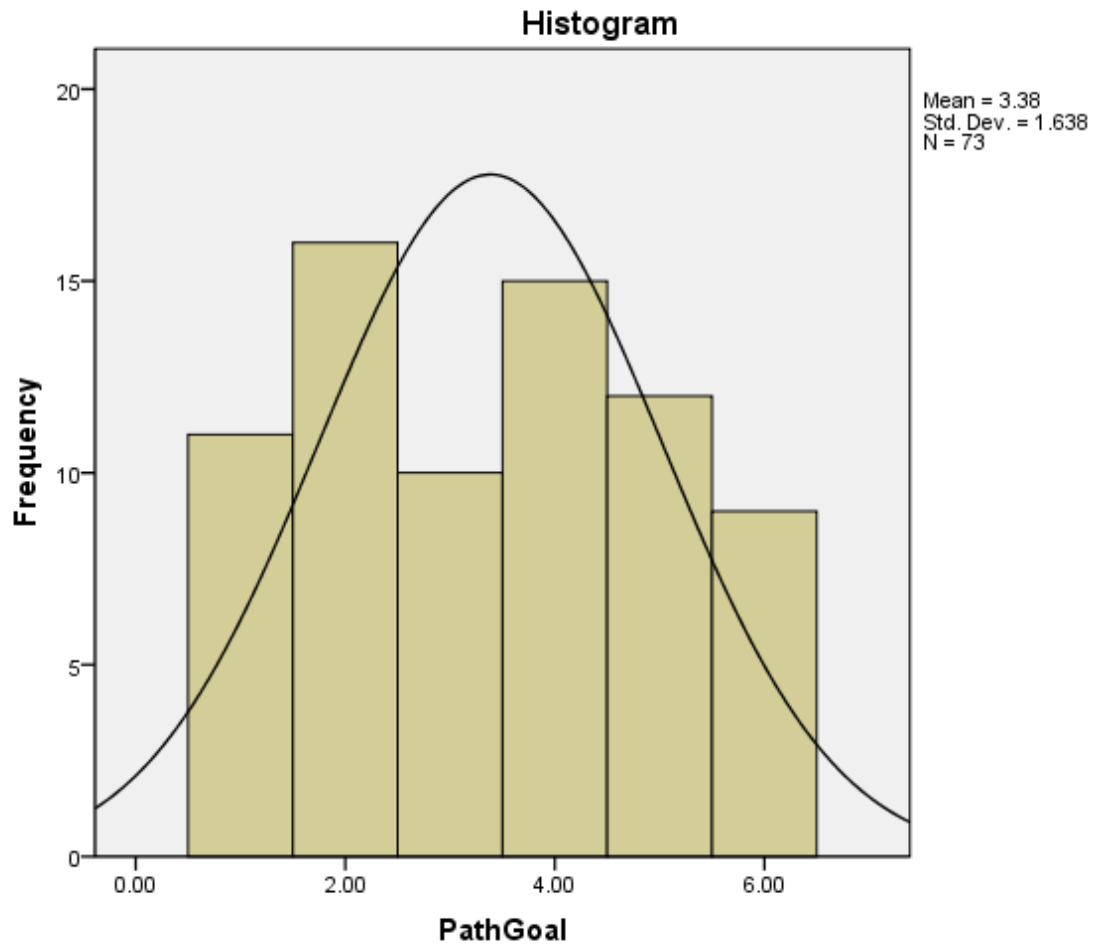


Figure 8. Path–Goal Leadership Theory and Postmodernism.

The data yielded a mean of 3.38 indicating that Modernism was the preferred philosophy chosen by respondents as a response to path–goal methods of leadership. However, since the standard error of the mean was 0.191 adding the error to the mean would make the response postmodern. Therefore, this is not a sound modern response. Skew was 0.076 with a standard error of 0.281. Kurtosis was -1.202 with a standard error of 0.555. Skew was not significant and kurtosis was significant for path–goal Leadership Theory. The graph is platykurtic.

Transactional Leadership Theory and Postmodernism

Transactional leadership is assessed in the survey by SPSS which is used to analyze the respondent data yielding the following statistics and graphical data.

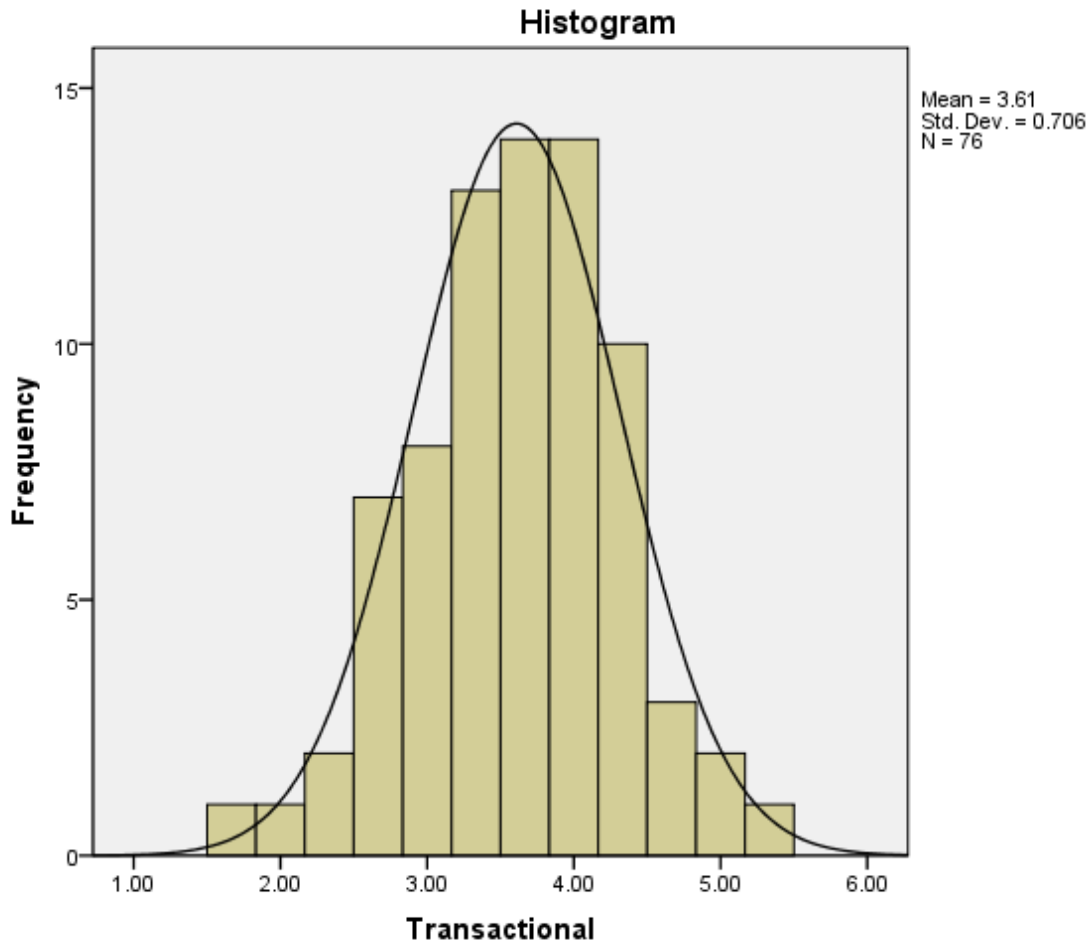


Figure 9. Transactional Leadership Theory and Postmodernism.

The statistical mean of 3.60 indicates a Postmodern philosophical response to questions used in the questionnaire to assess the respondent's response as a group to Transactional Leadership Theory. Skew was -0.193 with a standard error of 0.276. Kurtosis was 0.131 with a

standard error of 0.545. Neither skew nor kurtosis was significant for transactional leadership theory.

Comparitivism, Comparatism, Scientism and Postmodernism

Questions 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 are used to assess how the respondents as a group utilize contemporary concepts and if postmodernism philosophy is making inroads into the entrenchment of modernism in educational theory.

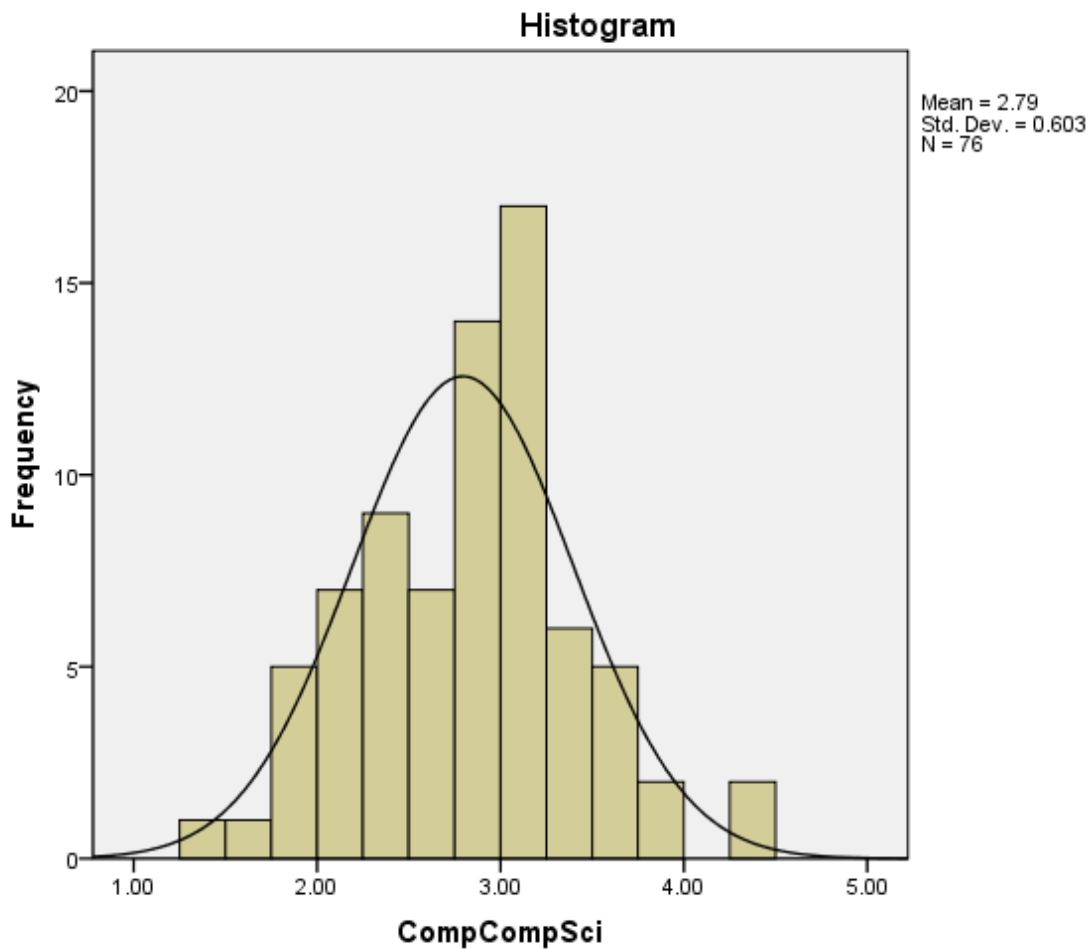


Figure 10. Comparitivism, Comparatism, Scientism and Postmodernism.

The respondents as a group chose modernism as a response to issues categorized under comparitivism, comparatism and scientism and contemporary educational methods. A mean of 2.794 indicated an overall response modernism as an operant philosophy by the respondents as a group to answer the problems posed in the questionnaire in this category. Skew was 0.059 with a standard error of 0.276. Kurtosis was 0.084 with a standard error of 0.545. Neither skew nor kurtosis were significant for the category of comparitivism, comparatism and scientism.

Inferential Analysis – Failure to Reject the Null Hypothesis

The Spearman correlation was chosen to evaluate the question regarding the relationship between Postmodernism and null hypothesis. The Spearman correlation was used to evaluate the question via the null hypothesis, using the data because the data was in an ordinal form. The Spearman correlation was applied to the individual scores on the survey indicating postmodernism with the respondents' lengths of tenure. The three categories given to the respondents were years as an educator, years as a superintendent and years in your present district. The null hypothesis H_{01} , "There is no significant relationship between postmodernism and length of superintendent tenure" fails to be rejected by the statistics obtained from the survey data for all three descriptions of superintendent tenure. No statistically significant correlations were found between postmodernism and tenure. Years as a superintendent ($r_s(74) = .101, P = .386$), Years as superintendent at present district ($r_s(74) = .039, P = .741$), and Years as an Educator ($r_s(74) = .025, P = .826$). This result will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Career Satisfaction and Length of Tenure

Multiple correlations were completed using SPSS on all of the data searching for patterns of correlation that could reveal insights into the subject of Postmodernism and superintendent Tenure. A Spearman's rho correlation was used to accommodate ordinal data.

A most interesting correlation was found between category of years as an educator and career satisfaction ($r_s(74) = .373, P = .001$). That is, the longer the respondent had been an educator, the more satisfied they were in their role of educational leader. To check the results and to verify that a correlation actually exists in the data the correlation was ran a second time using the Pearson product which produced the following result ($r_p(74) = .459, P = .001$). Thus both methods yielded a significant correlation. That is, as length of superintendent tenure increased satisfaction as a superintendent also increased. Please notice that SPSS initially flagged this correlation as a negative correlation due to the assignment of ordinal values on the satisfaction scores. This is in fact a positive correlation, i.e., the longer the tenure the greater the satisfaction of the respondents. The signs on the report statistic are positive to indicate this.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter a discussion of the data and the conclusions of the researcher based on the strength of the data and the current educational environment in Indiana are presented.

Regarding the Strength of Postmodern Responses

The overall strength of the postmodern response on postmodern choices is shown by the data to be much stronger than that of the modern response on modern choices. The mean score of the postmodern strength of response to the data is 3.22. Figure 3 illustrates the strength of the responses given by the data fits a bell curve. Skew and kurtosis were not significantly different from that of a normal bell-shaped curve. Although modernism was chosen over postmodernism to inform the questions of practice at a ratio of almost two-to-one, the strength of that response illustrates that they are closer in total strength than would be expected, with a breaking point of 3.50. This tells us that postmodernism may be a strong force in the superintendents decision making, according to this study. Even though educators may be under the impression they have a modern educational system one could question why postmodernism is so strong. While it is apparent that modernism may be more of an influence from a majority standpoint, the data shows a potential strong undercurrent of postmodernism which may be influencing educational leadership in Indiana. Thus, we can state postmodernism does exist in public education leadership in Indiana. Due to failure to reject the null, there is no correlation between postmodernism and length of superintendent tenure. This suggests that community philosophy is

not demanded by the patrons of a school corporation to the extent that this demand affects superintendent tenure or superintendents in Indiana tend to demonstrate congruence with their districts. Those who would seek to replace modernism with something else are using postmodern ideas and philosophy and although it apparently does not affect their length of tenure from a statistical standpoint as this study shows there may be something else that the choice between modernism and postmodernism could be influencing public school superintendents in Indiana, as was revealed in correlations.

This researcher feels that what we see today in Indiana due to recent legislation is the placing of high-stakes testing is decidedly comparatism as opposed to comparativism. This is to accomplish Postmodern purposes and goals that are primarily political and based in destructive anti-modern philosophy rather than constructive postmodern philosophical principles. This may be an attempt to replace public schools with charter schools in Indiana as was done in New Orleans and in Chicago.

Postmodernism in America relies on emotional reactions as described and individual belief systems as opposed to modern philosophies that look to science and modern educational techniques to formulate and to confirm empirical fact. When science is abandoned, the void left may be filled with emotion. This may be why we see in the data of this study such a strong influence of postmodernism in educational choices; choices that seem to be driven by emotion and not by science or modernism. In fact, it is well known that recently a bill was introduced into the Indiana legislature to sanction teaching creationism in place of, or as science.

Regarding Superintendent Satisfaction and Tenure

The findings revealed through Spearman's rho a strong correlation between superintendent job satisfaction and length of tenure in the role of superintendent ($r_s(74) = .373, P$

= .001). Pearson's r confirms this result ($r_p(74) = .459, P = .000$). If education is to remain a battleground between political ideologies and clashing cultures we might expect this correlation to become less significant as time goes passes. Professional educators are constantly maligned by both the business world and by the politicians looking for easy targets to criticize, thus gaining political favor in popular culture. In Indiana as in all of America, public education has been regularly blamed for the ills of society when it is instead a mere reflection of those ills.

Traditional Leadership Conclusions

In Chapter 4 it was demonstrated that traditional leadership theory was the preference of superintendents in Indiana, preferring empirical evidence and the principles of science over custom, faith, or belief. The preference was with a mean value 3.032 and there was no significant kurtosis or skew. Skew was 0.001 with a standard error of 0.272 and kurtosis was 0.298 with a standard error 0.538. This result demonstrates there was no unusual strength of preference of modernism over postmodernism demonstrated by a histogram which conforms to a normal curve. There were no high numbers of responses in any area, rather the number and the strength of the response seemed to be normally distributed with a mean indicating a Modern choice.

Items 1 and 2 in the survey looked at traditional leadership and indicated that the respondents as a group used constructionism and scientific principles to manage and to lead in their practices. Traditional leadership methodologies are based in modernism. The traditional leadership methodologies that we find today seem to have evolved from modernist principles that have been taught in schools of education for nearly a century (Kliebard, 2004). These traditional leadership methods hope to create a modern society based upon modern principles such as those laid down as law in the documents of the founding of America.

Contingency Leadership Conclusions

It was demonstrated by the data that the respondents preferred Postmodernism to answer the questions related to contingency leadership theory. A mean of 3.09 placed the response in the modern category. Thus, the respondents as a group did not think that leadership was more effective when they were leading groups where they wanted to go rather than leading them where they needed to go. This finding does support modernist principles of philosophy. Skew was 0.479 with a standard error of 0.274. The strength of the choice of modernism indicates more respondents are looking to modernism regarding contingency. Kurtosis was -0.969 with a standard error of 0.541. The histogram was platykurtic, but not significantly platykurtic.

Normative Leadership Conclusions

It was demonstrated in the normative leadership category on the survey that respondents again chose a postmodern response over a modern response to the questions. The mean of 5.080 shows a strong response of postmodernism over modernism. Skew was -1.865 with a standard error of 0.277. Kurtosis was 3.940 with a standard error of 0.548. The graph is clearly leptokurtic and skewed from the strength of the postmodern responses. The amount of skew clearly shows a very strong postmodern response. The fourth survey item indicates that postmodernism is the philosophy that the majority of respondents chose to inform normative leadership theory. In normative leadership the value or importance falls in one of three styles of decision making, authoritative, in which the leader dictates the goals or objectives, delegation in which those being led set their own goals and objectives, or joint, in which both the leader and followers agree on goals and objectives (Oxford University Press, 2010). Postmodernists do not see conflict and various ideas that may be in conflict as a problem (Lyotard, 1984).

Situational Leadership Conclusions

The group of survey items that defined situational leadership yielded a mean response of 2.73 which is a strong Modernist response. Skew was 0.172 with a standard error of 0.276. Kurtosis was -0.252 with a standard error of 0.545. The graph was bi-modal in that it had two peaks. A bimodal graph is subject to errors in kurtosis and skew but since there were no indications of significant skew or kurtosis that discussion is moot. The questions that informed the modern result, 5 through 8, regard data-based decisions, the ability to abandon the modern for the postmodern, and the tendency to abandon the dictates of case law that are based upon the U. S. Constitution and other legal precedents that are firmly rooted in the modernist traditions of American government. Looking at Table 1, all of these questions were ones in which the majority of respondents chose modernism. This result is consistent with expectations.

Transformational Leadership Conclusions

The respondent data shows a strong postmodern reaction with a mean of 4.73. Both skew and kurtosis were significant with skew at -0.970 with a standard error of 0.276 and kurtosis at 1.270 with a standard error of 0.545. The leptokurtic graph with skew indicating a strong postmodern response shows that a majority of respondents chose postmodernism and that the Postmodern response was stronger than when modernism was chosen in other survey items. This Postmodern choice is stronger than that which would conform to a normal curve response as indicated by skew. This indicates that a large number of respondents chose the postmodern response and the graph is leptokurtic which indicates that respondents strongly chose this postmodern response. Question nine involves spirituality and belief in supernatural influences upon superintendents, thus, clearly an anti-modern reaction is shown which demonstrates a

majority of the respondents have serious reservations with the modernist and may have difficulty only accepting evidence that is empirical when making important choices.

Path–Goal Leadership Conclusions

The data yields a mean of 3.38 showing a modern response. However, the standard error of the mean, 0.191, when added to the mean pushes the mean over 3.50 indicating a postmodern response. This is a borderline response. Skew was not significant, with a score of 0.076 with a standard error of 0.281. Kurtosis of -1.202 is significant with a kurtosis standard error of 0.555 indicating that the histogram is significantly platykurtic indicating a wide range in strength of response. Since in path–goal leadership the educational leader chooses the goal and the path taken to achieve that goal, this indicates a wide variety of strategies are being used with a majority of those strategies being informed by choices that could be postmodern or modern philosophy. The item in the survey is one that tests a specific goal of the teaching of science, *exempli gratia*, evolution, and asking the respondent what they thought about undermining the teaching of science with a postmodern concept as a contemporary issue, one that has already been decided in court (Aspell, 2007). More specifically, the respondent was asked how they felt personally about upholding the teaching of science by inquiring about Intelligent Design. Despite the specifics of *Kitzmiller vs. Dover* (Aspell, 2007) being well publicized either Indiana superintendents are not knowledgeable about this million-dollar decision or they are demonstrating congruence with those who would applaud the teaching Intelligent Design side by side with Evolution as science.

Although a majority chose modernist philosophy to inform the teaching of science, unexpectedly, the majority choice is not a strong choice. Respondents seemed reluctant to uphold the decision that supports the modernist ideals brought forth in the U.S. Constitution, and

chose a response that still causes controversy. By choosing a borderline response to this question respondents indicate a reluctance to enforce the teaching of science. Clearly in Indiana this suggests issues with the choosing of goals by superintendents and the path taken to achieve those goals which may be related to postmodernism. In an area where Indiana is supposed to be behind the knowledge curve, we see the tendency of these leaders to cave to dichotomous political pressure to undermine science with individual supernatural belief systems. Thus, some may succumb to the politically charged accusations that public schools are not adequate in the teaching of science for a legitimate reason.

Transactional Leadership Conclusions

Transactional leadership is all about goals, achievements and rewards. It is the application of business-like ideas and procedures to educational leadership. It is rooted in modernism and the production of empirical results. The respondents chose postmodernism to inform this type of leadership theory. The items 11, 12, and 13 in the survey were used to interpret the respondents' response to this kind of leadership theory. The 11th question made a direct statement about empirical results which respondents recognized as a necessity in education with a modern philosophical response as may be seen in Table 1. However, item 12 directly addressed adopting business practices and organizational structures to education that elicited a postmodern response as seen in Table 1. Likewise, item 13 directly addressed using business methods to achieve goals and again a heavy postmodern response is presented in Table 1. The mean of the three items used to assess Transactional Leadership is 3.60 with a standard error of 0.081. Subtracting the error of the mean from the mean still results in a postmodern response but this cannot be called a strong postmodern response.

Looking again at Table 1, neither of the two Postmodern responses are large enough in magnitude to overcome the strong modern score of item 11 in the survey. Data for transactional leadership revealed that skew was -0.193 with a standard error of 0.276 and kurtosis was 0.131 with a standard error of 0.545. Neither met the test of significance as was established for this study.

Part of a strong educator leadership program includes a curriculum of study that addresses late 1800s to early 1900s business leaders and the theories they employed. To this day what is called Taylorism and Frederick Winslow Taylor's poor attitudes toward workers influences the application of science to business and education (Kliebard, 2004). Henri Fayol's organizational methodologies (Hanson, 2003) that many have argued ignores humanity, seem to be reluctantly embraced by educators teaching our children. Max Weber's world bureaucracy (Hanson, 2003) has come to mean bloated, overweight management structures that are the hobgoblin of common contemporary Western societies' assessment of management practices. If educators are to use these kinds of management ideas and techniques then the instruction needs to include contemporary management techniques that are more favorable for education and educators that are modern, scientific and that use efficient models of management. Then, the postmodern philosophy expressed by respondents in regard to this category could change.

Conclusions Regarding Comparitivism, Comparatism and Scientism

Item 14 addressed charter schools, item 15 concerned teacher evaluation by high stakes student testing and item 16 addressed student evaluation by high stakes student testing. Item 17 addressed teacher use of technology based upon science, namely computers, and item 18 addressed using scientific methodologies in the establishment of classroom discipline. These five items are part of the constructivist tool box used to establish modern educational

environments. While it is true that high stakes testing and the interpretation of its results are problematic, there are no unsolvable problems using tests and their interpretation to evaluate individuals or the evaluation of groups, according to modernism. Scientific practitioners of all disciplines practice evaluation through scientific testing. All arguments used to oppose any of these five items are practice based, phenomenological in nature, and can therefore assume to be rooted in postmodern philosophy. However, nothing prevents the adopting of the practices of comparatism to achieve political goals and then the scrapping all high stakes accountability testing once those goals have been accomplished.

Final Conclusions

This study examined the effect of postmodern philosophy on public school superintendent tenure in the state of Indiana. Although the null hypothesis was not rejected by the strength of the data and no effect of postmodern philosophy on superintendent tenure was found, the study has demonstrated that postmodern philosophy is present in Indiana Public School superintendents who participated in this study. The strength of postmodern philosophy in the respondent group which was indicated by the respondents' strength of response was unanticipated. The majority modern response by the respondents as a group is weak compared to the minority postmodern response and is a reflection of American society. The descriptive examination of the data reveals that although modernism was chosen as a response to the questions posed in the questionnaire eleven times, and postmodernism was chosen only five, and with two items judged to be borderline or basically a tie, the strength of the postmodern responses was more significant per question when compared to the strength of the modern responses.

This result could be explained by the nature of postmodernist philosophy.

Postmodernism is associated with beliefs, traditions, customs and emotional expressions. Modernism, however, is supported by science, reason and empirical evidence. One would expect that much emotion would be associated with postmodern choices and customs, thus it seems the data confirms this to be the case. One may conclude that although modernism dominates their philosophical positions as a group, their postmodern positions are anchored in strongly held beliefs that they have not relinquished in spite of professional education and experience as educators.

The modernist traditions and customs are firmly entrenched in the Constitution of America. This can offer a dilemma as expressed by Johnson (1999) in the introductory statement claiming that (there is a) “phenomenological model for the study of the superintendency” (Johnson, 1999 p. 7). Expecting the programs that train educators to be public school superintendents to tailor every superintendent for every assumed superintendent position is problematic at best. Even though we have comparativism to offer us a guide to classify each respective position as to its philosophical nuances and postmodern tendencies, the practicality of this is questionable. There are postmodern ideas being used to implement educational law in Indiana.

Science can provide answers from empirical data using comparativism as a guide. However, then Indiana politicians make decisions that are informed by Postmodernism, based upon the techniques of comparativism. Using data that is designed to provide a specific outcome that is not educational, denying educational diplomas and providing certificates of completion on the basis of testing designed for exclusion are more for the political benefit of political groups rather than for educational benefit of Indiana’s students. If questionable data yields questionable

conclusions, what might decisions rendered with no data or with manipulated data informed by postmodernism yield? Moreover, how will this foster respect for education and generate a desire for education when students are classified by testing designed to accomplish political goals?

The educators of educators face a dilemma. It is difficult to build social capital that fosters higher performance when testing for political purposes is tearing it down. Comparative education claims that it is theoretically possible to do testing justly and to achieve positive results using comparativism, however, no widely accepted methods of achieving this are in wide-spread use in Indiana in this researcher's opinion because punitive methods are being put into place that use comparativism to achieve political ends, some of which are clearly unconstitutional. There is no practical way to tailor a superintendent's education with the position that it proposes to match under such conditions especially when politics is dictating what education is and how it should occur. If modernism is abandoned for the variable and emotional postmodernism as it is dictated by politicians, how are the important principles of empiricism in education going to prevail?

It is important that superintendents are aware when they are using postmodern philosophy and when they are using modern philosophy to inform their practices. Also, the public should be made aware when politicians are basing courses of action upon comparativism and malevolence instead of comparativism and sound, modern, scientific educational practice. We must be very cautious as educational leaders when we base courses of action upon postmodernism instead of modernism. Modernism uses a dispassionate, scientific process. Postmodernism uses an emotional process. The pragmatic reasoning methods of John Dewey do not come into play when one takes courses of action based upon beliefs. Could this be what we are seeing in the data when it shows as a stronger, yet a minority influence upon educational leadership in Indiana?

For some leaders wanting to see progress and the survival of education it may be less important to stand by what you believe to be true than it is to stand by what you can prove scientifically to be factual, regardless of the strength of your personal beliefs. It is encouraging that the data from respondents show that modernism is still used more often to influence practice. It is discouraging to discover the degree of strength of the postmodern influence. If we hope to see the progress of education as educational leaders we need to embrace more scientific, modern reasoning to make decisions without personal opinions or beliefs instead of struggling with emotional belief-based postmodern reasoning. The data from this study could imply educators seem to be more satisfied as they approach the end of their careers in education because they may not see progress, but rather they may see an end to their personal anguish from being pulled in one direction by personal beliefs and politics and in another by science. Nothing gives us permission to let things like emotion and intuition influence our decision making. Or, perhaps as we age do we find battles less satisfying and thus as leaders do we keep the peace by any means necessary?

As educators, it is important to uphold the sound science behind what we do, and it is important that we retain the ability to separate our emotions from our use of the sound practice principles informed by modernism. The ability to separate beliefs from facts and to act only upon facts is a priority if public education is to survive and America is to survive as a nation while maintaining freedom for its citizens.

Additional Research

Additional research could be conducted to discover if scientific methods of decision making are preferred over other methods. Or, an assessment of the prevalence of intuitive or

methodologies or methodologies not based in the scientific method might be conducted to further examine postmodern methodologies used in education in Indiana.

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APPENDIX

The Respondent E-mail

The initial contact e-mail for the superintendents was addressed to the researcher and the 'blind carbon copy' feature or 'bcc' was used so that a copy of all of the superintendents' e-mail addresses was not sent to each e-mail recipient, The e-mails were sent using the researchers' ISU e-mail account over ISU Internet servers. The survey was set to close in Qualtrics on September 15th, 2011. The e-mail document sent to prospective respondents, the public school superintendents of Indiana is included.

August 1, 2011

Dear Respondent,

I am a PhD candidate in the Bayh College of Education at Indiana State University. I am conducting a survey that will examine if there may be a correlation between Superintendent Tenure and operant philosophy. I will be conducting the study under the supervision of Dr. Steven Gruenert my dissertation committee chair.

The survey is to be conducted by way of computer and responses will be kept confidential. I.P. addresses will not be collected. There are no known risks if you decide to participate in this research study. There are no costs to you for participating in the study. The information you provide will be used to compose a statistical model to examine if a correlation exists between Superintendent tenure and operant philosophy. The questionnaire should take approximately 5 minutes to complete. The information collected may not benefit you directly, but the information learned in this study should provide more general benefits. Individuals from Indiana State University and the Institutional Review Board may inspect these records. Should the data be published, no individual information will be disclosed.

Please go to the following website and complete the questionnaire.

https://indstate.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_e2Ok1G4FVvHTMhu

Your participation in this study is voluntary. By completing the survey and clicking submit you are voluntarily agreeing to participate. If you have any questions about the study, please contact Dr. Steven Gruenert at the Bayh College of Education at 812-237-2900 or John Garner.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject or if you feel you've been placed at risk, you may contact the Indiana State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) by mail at Indiana State University, Office of Sponsored Programs, Terre Haute, IN, 47809, by phone at (812) 237-8217, or by e-mail at irb@indstate.edu. Thank you.

Sincerely,

John Garner, PhD Candidate
2111 Leeland Ave
Terre Haute, IN 47802
812-234-5878