What Are the Leadership Behaviors of Winning Basketball Coaches?

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This dissertation, directed and approved by the candidate’s committee, has been accepted by the College of Graduate and Professional Studies of Abilene Christian University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

Dr. Joey Cope, Dean of the College of Graduate and Professional Studies

Date: March 26, 2018

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What Are the Leadership Behaviors of Winning Basketball Coaches?

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

Joshua Jones

March 2018
Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my beautiful wife, Erin Brooke, who brings the best out of me and makes every day better. Thank you for being my one and only. I love you with all that I am.
Acknowledgments

I would like to take an opportunity to thank my family. My wife Erin has allowed me to follow this dream of earning my doctorate and has taken on a larger load at home so that I could pursue this path; I love you more each day. To my children, Kellen, Bonnie, and Noelle, thank you for allowing your dad to be distracted and busy, but giving me joy beyond measure as each of you grow. I am so proud of each of you and look forward to seeing what the future holds for each of you. To my parents, thank you for always encouraging me to work harder, reach farther, and do what is necessary to reach my goals; I love you. To my father-in-law, Admiral David Maserang, thank you for your support and words of encouragement. To my mother-in-law, Denise Maserang, thank you for remaining positive with me in the moments when I was not able to be positive myself.

To my dear aunt, Dr. Florette Stirman, your assistance has been immeasurable. I am clearly no expert in grammar, but you have provided a keen eye for my errors that I have had great need for. You have also provided timely encouragement; you know the rigors of this journey and have helped me navigate the tough times. Thank you.

To Dr. Irma Harper, my dissertation chair, I knew from the moment I met you that I had hit the jackpot. Your expertise in helping me complete this project has been immeasurable, as has your ability to help me find better ways to get to my end product. I could not have asked for a better chair than you, and I will forever be in your debt. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart.
Abstract

The problem this study addressed was the lack of designation of a leadership style to help coaches perform at their highest level in order to be a positive factor in the lives of their athletes and. The purpose of this study was to identify leadership styles and behaviors of the Texas high school varsity boys’ basketball coaches whose teams reached regional tournament play. This mixed method research study was conducted through quantitative closed response surveys utilizing the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and through qualitative interviews to address the leadership styles and behaviors of high school basketball coaches. The sample population was varsity boys’ basketball coaches in Texas who competed in the 2016-17 regional basketball tournament. The quantitative findings indicated that the successful coaches participating were more likely to utilize transformational and transactional leadership. Findings for the qualitative research indicated a preference for transformational leadership, as well as a powerful desire to instill positive leadership behaviors within the players under the coaches’ influence. The quantitative and qualitative findings indicate that both transformational and transactional leadership styles are valuable in the development of coaching leadership styles and behaviors. The findings suggest coaches should consider implementing transformational and transactional leadership styles into their coaching, in addition to placing an emphasis on positive leadership behaviors focused on communication and intention lessons on leadership in order to help their players achieve more effective outcomes.

*Keywords*: basketball coaches, leadership styles, passive-avoidant leadership, transactional leadership, transformational leadership
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Coaches are considered influential individuals in the lives of athletes (Kavussanu, Boardly, Jutkiewicz, Vincent & Ring, 2008). With over 7.8 million high school students participating in athletic programs (National Federation of State High School Association [NFHS], 2016), the quality of the coaches chosen to lead these high school athletes is critical. Coaches can positively or negatively affect athletes’ performance and behavior as well as their psychological and emotional well-being (Horn, 2002). Coaches’ behaviors and leadership styles are the main avenues through which they apply their positive or negative influence. A coach’s successful leadership changes an athlete’s behavior as a function of the coach’s effort and gets others to operate as the manager-coach intends them to behave (Misasi, Morin, & Kwasnowski, 2016).

In the following pages, I identify the problem of practice and the purpose and research questions of this study. Key definitions are defined and described to clarify the research questions and purposes for this study. Chapter 1 concludes with a summarization of the chapter and an outline of the following chapters.

Background

Created by Naismith in 1891, the game of basketball has grown into one of the most popular sports in the United States in terms of both participation (NFHS, 2016) and revenue generation (Lombardo, 2016). Coaches guide players in technique, strategy, and execution during games and practices (Becker & Wrisberg, 2008) and have traditionally been encouraged to adopt leadership styles that lead to the highest levels of productivity (Kellett, 1999; Bedard, 2017).

A coach’s effective leadership changes an athlete’s behavior as a function of the coach’s
effort and gets others to behave in a way that the coach intends them to behave (Misasi et al., 2016). Unfortunately, not all coach/athlete relationships are productive, and some coaches take negative tactics in their approach to athletes (Stewart, 2013). Due to the impact that a coach has on athletes, it is essential to examine the behavior and leadership styles of coaches and the perceived effect their methods have on their athletes. Horn (2008) stated that a coach's winning percentage or athlete's gain in desirable psychological outcomes is a gauge for research on coaching effectiveness.

Winning results in several positive outcomes. Morgan, Fletcher, and Sarkar (2015) found that winning teams possessed positive psychological results, including resilience and positive emotions. Page and Coates (2017) found that winning in males creates an androgenic feedback loop, which increases testosterone levels, leading to increased opportunities for future wins in a variety of competitions, both within sports and outside of sports.

Effective coaching behaviors and leadership styles are those that result in successful performance and positive psychological outcomes in athletes such as high perceived ability, self-esteem, and enjoyment (Horn, 2002). Therefore, a coach’s behavior has a substantial impact on athletic experience. Leadership styles are affected by many variables, including creating alignment between coach and team goals, developing and implementing a constructive learning environment, and developing a sense of responsibility within and among players on the team (Zaichkowsky, 2006). These coaching behaviors, both positive and negative, directly impact athletes involved in respective athletic endeavors. Horn (2002) stated that effective coaching behaviors result in athletes realizing personal achievements and individual goals. Although many factors help determine outcomes in sports, coaches have a direct influence on players, their attitudes, and athletic performance.
Statement of the Problem

The problem this study addressed was the lack of designation of a leadership style to help coaches perform at their highest level to be a positive factor in the lives of their athletes. Due to the high level of influence that coaches have on their athletes (Kavussanu et al., 2008), it is imperative that successful leadership styles are studied to determine which styles have positive outcomes. Williams et al. (2003) stated that there is little research identifying optimal coaching behaviors and the factors that influence the effectiveness of particular behaviors. Additional studies (Becker & Wrisberg, 2008; Murray, 2006;) have not designated any consistent preferred leadership style in coaching, particularly at the high school level. Coaches have been found to have a strong influence on the performance outcomes of their athletes. Vella and Perlman (2014) found that coaches are in a unique position to create an environment through their leadership in which the athletes are more likely to develop relationships that lead to the achievement of personal and team goals. The lack of a consistent definition of leadership styles in coaching inhibits coaches’ ability to more efficiently promote successful outcomes for their players (Amorose & Nolan-Sellers, 2016).

Purpose of This Study

The purpose of this mixed-method study was to identify leadership styles and behaviors of successful Texas high school varsity boys’ basketball coaches. For the purpose of this study, successful coaches were those that had earned the distinction of championship coaches by leading their teams to reach regional tournament play in the 2016-2017 season. The intent of this study was to use the knowledge gleaned from this research to help coaches analyze their leadership style in order to become effective leaders and have a positive impact on their athletes.
An explanatory sequential mixed-methods study approach was used to determine the leadership styles, behaviors, and best practices of successful coaches. There are approximately 1,300 high school boys’ basketball head coaches in Texas (University Interscholastic League [UIL], n.d.). From this population, 96 coaches qualified for the 2016-17 regional tournament. Those 96 coaches served as the sample population.

The quantitative survey instrument used was the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X Short, which was developed by Bass and Aviolo (1995, 2004). It allows individuals to measure how they perceive themselves in relation to specific leadership behaviors. Participants used www.surveymonkey.com to complete the survey online. The qualitative portion of this study consisted of interviews that aimed to add depth to the data collected in the surveys. Ten participants from the sample population completed interviews.

Research Questions

This study explored leadership styles and coaching behaviors. The following research questions guided this study:

Q1. What is the coaching leadership style of successful high school varsity boys’ basketball coaches in Texas?

Q2. What are the coaching leadership behaviors and best practices of successful high school varsity boys’ basketball coaches in Texas?

Definition of Key Terms

Best practices. Best practices are those activities and methods used by leaders that produce the most ethically sound, progressive, and inclusive outcomes within an organization (Osburn, Caruso, & Wolfensberger, 2011).

Championship coaches. Championship coaches are coaches who led their teams to a
regional or state tournament during postseason play (UIL, n.d.).

**Coaches.** Coaches are individuals who develop people through improving their performance (Crisfield, Cabral, & Carpenter, 1996).

**Effective coaching behaviors.** Effective coaching behaviors are those behaviors that result in successful performance and positive psychological outcomes in athletes such as high perceived ability, self-esteem, and enjoyment (Horn, 2002).

**Effective leadership behaviors.** Effective leadership behaviors are leadership behaviors that increase positive outcomes for organizations and individuals. They include task-oriented practices (such as planning, monitoring, clarifying, and problem-solving); relations-oriented behaviors (including supporting, developing, recognizing, and empowering); and change-oriented behaviors (Yuki, 2012).

**Laissez-faire leadership.** Laissez-faire leadership is characterized by the avoidance of leadership behaviors or the sheer lack of leader presence when subordinates are in need of guidance (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

**Leadership behaviors.** Leadership behaviors are patterns of behavior or behavioral tendencies utilized by leaders that influence the followers’ actions and team function. Leadership behaviors are typically geared toward obtaining positive outcomes (Ceri-Booms, Curşeu, & Oerlemans, 2017).

**Leadership styles.** Leadership styles are “an intentional means by which a leader influences a group of people in an organization to a widely understood future state that is different from the present one” (Gandolfi & Stone, 2017, p. 22).

**Management by exception: passive leadership.** Management by exception: passive leadership is behavior where interventions occur after subordinates have made
mistakes later discovered by leaders (Hater & Bass, 1988).

**Passive-avoidance leadership.** Passive-avoidance leadership is a leadership style marked by a lack of involvement (laissez-faire leadership) or passive approach (management by exception: passive leadership) to leadership (Avolio, 1999).

**Team performance.** Team performance is marked by wins and losses experienced during a competition between athletic programs (Dirks, 2000).

**Transactional leadership.** Transactional leadership is a leadership style marked by interaction between individuals with one individual serving in a leadership capacity to conduct an exchange of items of value (Burns, 1978).

**Transformational leadership.** Transformational leadership is a leadership style marked by interaction between individuals. It includes leaders and followers who work to support one another to achieve a higher level of motivation and personal growth (Burns, 1978).

**University Interscholastic League (UIL).** The University Interscholastic League is a membership of high schools created in 1910 in Texas to provide extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests (UIL, n.d.).

**Summary**

Identifying the leadership styles and behaviors utilized by championship basketball coaches can provide additional information for school boards and school districts as they seek to hire quality coaches to lead their student-athletes. Providing a framework of leadership behaviors could improve coaching across the state and increase opportunities for positive outcomes for students irrespective of location. Producing a list of repeatable leadership
behaviors will provide continued growth opportunities for coaches regardless of their levels of experience in the profession.

This chapter discussed the importance of studying leadership styles utilized by coaches. The roles that coaches fill in the lives of athletes and the importance of these roles to young people were examined. The critical problem this study sought to answer was a lack of designation of a leadership style to help coaches perform at their highest level and to be a positive factor in the lives of their athletes. The purpose of this study was described, and the research questions that were used to guide this study were introduced. Key terms for this study were defined.

This study has been organized into five chapters. Chapter 2 contains an introduction to the research topic and a review of the existing literature on leadership behaviors in sports. Chapter 3 includes the methodology utilized in this study. The results of this study and an analysis of the data obtained from the sequential mixed-methods design are highlighted in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 includes summary of the research, conclusion, and recommendations for future studies.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

A coach's successful leadership changes an athlete's behavior as a function of the coach's effort and gets others to behave as the coach intends for them to act (Misasi et al., 2016). Coaches at different levels of competition may be expected to interact with athletes differently due to athletes’ various levels of athletic ability and possibly, for employment security, the higher pressure to win (Misasi et al., 2016). Leadership styles and behaviors of high school basketball coaches in Texas are not available in the existing literature.

Current literature does not identify leadership styles and behaviors of high school boys' basketball coaches in Texas. The leadership styles of these coaches have not been investigated with any depth. The purpose of this study was to identify the leadership behaviors and styles that are currently utilized by high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in Texas so that the literature may be expanded and the identified behaviors and styles of these leaders in high school varsity basketball coaching may be communicated to other coaches, both in Texas and in other states. The setting for this proposed study is in the areas of competition for high school boys' basketball. While the interactions between coaches and players are not limited to the practice floor and games, this study limits the interactions to be examined to those that occur during practices and games. Competition occurs in elements other than these two settings, but this study will be limited to these settings.

The literature included in this chapter was located utilizing a number of educational search engines and search terms. The OneSearch engine connected to the library of Abilene Christian University was used most often for journal articles, along with ERIC.gov and scholar.google.com. ProQuest was utilized to search for dissertations that might prove to be of
interest for this review of the literature. The search terms used most often include "sports leadership," "transactional leadership," "transformational leadership," "passive-avoidant behaviors," "coaching behaviors," and "coaching styles."

This chapter is organized as follows: theoretical framework, history of leadership styles, and examining leadership in coaching from the past to the present. The chapter includes existing studies about the problem: an exploration of existing literature on leadership behaviors in coaching. It focuses mainly on transactional leadership, transformational leadership, and passive-avoidant behaviors in coaching. The chapter identifies existing gaps in the literature related to coaching leadership, summarizes the current research, and provides a background of the methodology to be utilized in this study and to be discussed at length in Chapter 3.

Theoretical Framework

The rationale for this study centers on leadership theories and their relationship to high school varsity boys' basketball athletic coaches. The leadership theories that formulate the framework for this study are transactional leadership theory, transformational leadership theory, and passive-avoidant leadership theory (Avolio & Bass, 1991). This study focused on the effect these three leadership theories have on high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in the leadership of their teams and players.

Burns (1978) defined transactional leadership theory as a leader-follower relationship in which the follower receives some reward related to lower-level needs in exchange for compliance with the leader's expectations. The application of this theory between coaches and players has been found to lead to successful outcomes for players but has also been found to stifle creativity and free-thinking among followers (Benjamin, n.d.). Players must be able to
follow direction given by coaches, and those players who most closely follow those directions are rewarded with increased playing time (Price & Weiss, 2013).

Burns (1978) definition of transformational theory was later refined by Bass (1985a, 1985b). Transformational leadership behaviors include behaviors designed to assist followers in becoming best versions of themselves. Players often express a desire to play for coaches who exhibit transformational leadership behaviors; coaches who display these behaviors are often referred to as a "player’s coach" (Bonem, 2014) because of their transformational leadership behaviors.

Passive-avoidant leadership has been defined by Skogstad, Hetland, Glaso, and Einarsen (2014) as a follower-centered form of avoidance-based leadership where the needs of followers are met by a non-response from the leader; they may also coincide with active avoidance of subordinates by leaders. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire developed by Bass and Avolio (1995, 2004) places passive-avoidant leadership, characterized by both passive (Management-by-Exception: Passive) and active (laissez-faire) behaviors, in opposition to the types of leadership behaviors exhibited by transactional and transformational leaders.

Two research questions guides this study: (a) What is the coaching leadership style of successful high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in Texas? and (b) What are the coaching leadership behaviors and best practices of successful high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in Texas? Identifying how these three leadership theories are applied, and with what frequency, should provide answers to these questions.

History of Leadership Styles

No discussion of leadership in the 20th century can take place without including and understanding of two significant groups of studies: the Ohio State Leadership studies (Halpin &
Winer, 1957; Hemphill & Coons, 1957) and the University of Michigan studies (Katz, Maccoby, & Morse, 1950; Katz, Maccoby, Gurin, & Floor, 1951). The Halpin and Winer (1957) study helped formalize definitions for leadership behaviors while the Hemphill and Coons (1957) study created questionnaires on leadership behaviors that have been reused and modified in numerous studies since the late 1950s. The University of Michigan studies were geared toward identifying which leadership behaviors contributed most strongly towards group and individual performance. Katz et al. (1951) investigated how leadership behaviors affected the morale of railroad workers while the Katz et al. (1950) study evaluated the perceptions of leaders within high producing sections by their employees and developed a series of generalizations about these leaders. Katz et al. (1950) found that these leaders gave general supervision (as opposed to close monitoring), enjoyed their jobs, and were more employee-oriented (as opposed to production-oriented).

From the studies conducted by the University of Michigan, four categories of leadership were identified: leader support, interaction facilitation, goal emphasis, and work facilitation (Peachey, Zhou, Damon, & Burton, 2015). While these categories were not created with sports leadership in mind, researchers have applied the principles found in these studies within the context of sports organizations and leadership behaviors in sports in particular. Sage (1973) was one of the first researchers to posit that coaches are leaders as defined in the University of Michigan studies and that the behaviors that they utilize can either encourage their players to be more successful or hinder the players in their pursuit of athletic excellence. Sage proposed that as opposed to the authoritarian leadership style prevalent in coaching at the time, coaches should utilize the human relations approach to leadership. Sage defined the human relations approach to leadership as having "emphasis on nonauthoritarian styles of leadership, member participation in
group decision making, and encouragement of organization activities in the service of individual needs” (p. 38). Sage was the first to suggest that a "player-first" approach to coaching leadership, with coaches taking a sensitive approach to the needs of his players, led to players experiencing a maximum level of growth.

Few studies that examine the leadership behaviors and coaching styles of high school basketball coaches exist. In one study conducted by Chelladurai and Quek (1995), high school basketball coaches in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, were surveyed to identify the styles of leadership they preferred in their coworkers. Autocratic leadership was the preferred leadership style, with consultation with two or more people being the least preferred style of leadership. Similar studies have been conducted in collegiate basketball, such as the 1986 Weiss and Freidrichs’ study on the relationship between leadership behaviors exhibited by coaches and team performance and athlete satisfaction. The lack of studies that evaluate the leadership behaviors and leadership styles of high school varsity basketball coaches contribute to the need for this proposed study to be conducted.

Camiré, Trudel, and Forneris (2012) investigated leadership styles and philosophies utilized by model high school coaches in Ontario (individual sports were not identified) and found that transformational leadership was used with these coaches to help their athletes reach personal goals. Sullivan, Paquette, Holt, and Bloom (2012) likewise completed a study in which leadership behaviors were identified in coaches of unspecified sports. They found that coaches exhibiting positive coaching behaviors positively influenced athletic outcomes. These studies were conducted at the high school level, but they did not explore leadership styles.

Similar studies have been conducted using other high school sports. These studies provide some insight regarding the effects of leadership in high school sports. Turman (2003)
surveyed high school wrestling teams (which included both athletes and coaches) at the beginning, middle, and end of the athletic season to determine how coaches' leadership behaviors changed during the season and how athletes and coaches perceived these changes in leadership. He used Chelladuria and Selah's (1978) Multifactor Leadership Theory, which is composed of five dimensions of leadership behaviors (autocratic, democratic, social support, positive feedback, and training and instruction). Turman (2003) found that players preferred more autocratic leadership behaviors as their seasons progressed. However, experienced coaches perceived themselves to be using less autocratic leadership behaviors at the end of the season that at the beginning of the athletic season.

Weaver (2016) studied high school football coaches in Kentucky to determine which of Chelladuria and Selah's (1978) five dimensions of leadership behaviors were most preferred and most utilized. Weaver found that the most valued leadership behavior was positive feedback while autocratic behavior was the least esteemed. However, this study found that as coaches gained experience (concerning years of coaching), autocratic behavior became more and more prevalent, despite such behavior being the least desirable of the five leadership behaviors. The results of this study indicated that coaches' actions influence the outcomes that athletes experience, particularly in relation to motivation and self-perception.

**Leadership Styles**

Numerous leadership theories have been investigated in studies, beginning with the Ohio State Leadership studies (Halpin & Winer, 1957; Hemphill & Coons, 1957) and the University of Michigan studies (Katz et al., 1950; Katz, Maccoby, Gurin, & Floor, 1951). However, based upon the lack of research in the leadership of high school varsity boys' basketball coaches concerning the impact they have on athletes lives, this literature review focuses on the following
three leadership theories: transactional leadership theory, transformational leadership theory, and servant leadership theory. Studies on each of these leadership theories have been conducted both inside and outside of sports organizations; these topics have also been examined in reviews of literature (e.g., Peachey et al., 2015). Current literature provides a basis for the inclusion of these three leadership theories in this study.

**Transactional leadership.** Burns (1978) defined transactional leadership theory as a leader-follower relationship in which the follower receives some reward related to lower-order needs in exchange for compliance with the leader's expectations. Bass (1985b) has further explained that transactional leadership occurs when a leader recognizes what followers must do to achieve some designated outcome, or when the leader acknowledges what followers need. Transactional leaders then either clarify the followers’ roles or specify how the followers’ needs are met in exchange for followers enacting the function designated by the leader designed to reach identified outcomes. Upon this clarification, followers have the confidence that by fulfilling their assigned role, they will receive the desired results, which may involve fulfillment of needs (Bass, 1985b).

Multiple studies (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985a; Bass, 1985b; Khan, 2017) identify the strengths and weaknesses associated with transactional leadership. Bass (1985b) identified transactional leaders as those who recognized the actions necessary for subordinates to take and then clarify roles and task requirements so that followers have confidence in executing efforts to complete required steps. Khan (2017) has stated that by defining follower roles and actions, transactional leaders provide a pathway for subordinates to follow to achieve desired outcomes. Transactional leadership was found to be a powerful motivator because the rewards offered to
followers in response to meeting leaders' expectations often lead to completion of tasks that may result in rewards for followers (Travis, n.d.).

There are numerous weaknesses associated with transactional leadership. Bass (1985b) found that leaders with inadequate training in transactional leadership may quickly abandon this leadership style as a result of time constraints, doubts about rewards systems, or lack of leadership skills. Transactional leadership also does little to motivate followers; outcomes are met either by reward or punishment and do not account for individual differences between followers (Benjamin, n.d.). Leader feedback can be misinterpreted by followers: negative feedback may be interpreted as a personal attack or positive input may be interpreted as condescending or unnecessary (Bass, 1985b). Creativity among followers is not encouraged in transactional leadership (Bass, 1985b; Benjamin, n.d.), which may lead to lack of flexibility within organizations that inhibit leaders’ ability to adequately adapt to changes in the organization (Khan, 2017).

Doherty and Danylchuk (1996) studied collegiate athletic directors’ leadership behaviors by interviewing head coaches and to determine which leadership behaviors were most prevalent. The researchers found that transactional leadership behaviors were preferred in specific settings, particularly those that dealt with budgeting. Transactional leadership behaviors were less frequent and less preferred than transformational leadership behaviors in most interactions. Recent studies show that transactional leadership is often embraced by older leaders yet leads to fewer successful outcomes compared to transformational leadership applications (Burton & Welty Peachey, 2009).

Wells and Welty Peachey (2011) found that while transformational leadership behaviors may be more preferred than transactional leadership behaviors, transactional leadership
behaviors also show a positive relationship in the avoidance of voluntary staff turnover among coaching staffs in non-revenue Division I NCAA sports (such as softball). Weese (1996) established that transactional leadership had been found to have higher levels of organizational success in athletic departments than transformational leadership.

**Transformational leadership.** Burns (1978) has defined transformational leadership as a leader-follower exchange in which the leader utilizes behaviors intended to assist followers in transforming into the best possible versions of themselves. Bass categorized transformational leadership into what he called “the four I’s”: intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, inspirational leadership, and idealized influence (as cited in Weese, 1994). Bass defined intellectual stimulation as being the ability of leaders to "awaken and inspire" intellectual creativity and excitement in their followers. Transformational leaders who excel in intellectual stimulation are not necessarily creative themselves but view problems as challenges and opportunities and empower their followers to do the same (as cited in Weese, 1994). Individual consideration has two components: followers are considered on an individual basis, and leaders develop followers who strengthen themselves on an individual basis. Inspirational leadership is based on leaders who inspire their followers by providing clarity and meaning to the members of the organization (as cited in Weese, 1994). The final "I", idealized influence, differs from inspirational consideration in that it requires transformational leaders to provide influence on their followers to reach their full potential so that both the individual and the organization may reap the benefits. Idealized influence is somewhat related to charisma because charismatic leaders exert influence over followers. However, not all charismatic leaders are interested in the individual development of their followers, and Bass has explained that while charisma is an
essential component of transformational leadership, the leader must use this characteristic to better followers and the organization (as cited in Weese, 1994).

Many of the current contributions to the literature compare and contrast transactional leadership with transformational leadership. Yusof (1998) investigated the relationship between transformational leadership exercised by athletic directors and job satisfaction among head coaches of NCAA Division III programs. The practical results of this study indicated a need for more transformational leaders in sports settings, particularly because transformational leadership was shown to increase organizational performance and effectiveness (Yusof, 1998). Clubb (2012) also explored transformational leadership in how the Drake University Athletics Department contributed to the overall campus culture. The Athletic Department changed its focus to begin utilizing sports as a platform for athletes to practice transformative leadership, particularly in the classroom environment. The Athletic Department emphasized learning leadership skills more than winning to more thoroughly integrate athletics into the mission of the university (Clubb, 2012).

Smith, Arthur, Hardy, Callow, and Williams (2013) completed a study that focused on transformational leadership. The researchers of this quantitative study sought to examine the relationship between selected transformational leadership behaviors, intrateam communication, and team cohesion. The results indicated that transformational leadership traits positively affect both intrateam communication and team cohesion. A weakness of this study stems from the transformational leadership traits identified as the independent variables in the experiment. However, the researchers confirmed that the use of transformational leadership elevated communication and team cohesion.
Cruickshank and Collins examined transformational leadership within elite sports organizations (2013). In this qualitative study, the researchers delved into the processes that drive cultural change within elite sports organizations. The researchers defined elite team culture change as the "management-led establishment of shared and group-regulated values, perceptions, and behaviors across the performance department which facilitate enduring high performance. As an important addendum, this process is also context-dependent, context shaped, and context-specific" (p. 8). The researchers found that transformational leadership techniques, while useful with non-elite individuals, may not lead to the same successful outcomes with elite performers.

In a study of over 300 NCAA basketball players, Dirks (2000) found (from both Division I and Division III) that trust in leadership has a positive effect on team performance. Trust was the effect of a coach utilizing the transformational leadership behaviors identified by Bass (Weese, 1994) and contributed to creating athletes' trust of their coach. Transformational behaviors, especially charismatic influence, were found to produce positive team outcomes for players. Dirks (2000) stated that while talent is the most significant determinant of team success, trust in leadership created by coaches utilizing transformational leadership behaviors also plays a significant role.

**Passive-avoidant leadership.** Avolio (1999) defined passive-avoidant leadership as leadership behavior marked by lack of involvement (laissez-faire) or a passive approach (management-by-exception [passive]) to leadership. Passive-avoidant leadership, particularly laissez-faire leadership, has been determined to exist as an antipole to transactional and transformational leadership styles, which are dependent upon leaders utilizing behaviors that direct follower behaviors (Skogstad et al., 2014). Bass and Avolio (1995, 2004) also identified
passive-avoidant leadership as being oppositional to transactional and transformational leadership theories as demonstrated in their Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

Bass and Avolio (1995) identified two components to passive-avoidant leadership: laissez-faire and management-by-exception: passive. Laissez-faire leadership is marked by an leaders’ active avoidance of subordinates in addition to a refusal to provide guidance to followers (Bass & Avolio, 1995). Management-by-exception (passive) leadership is demonstrated by leaders who look for mistakes to occur and then take steps to correct the errors (Bass, 1998). Passive-avoidant leadership is primarily seen as an ineffective leadership style because of the weak and ineffectual manner in which this leadership style is executed (Bass & Avolio, 2004; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996).

Vidic, Burton, South, Pickering, and Start (2016) compared four leadership styles (transactional, transformational, servant, and passive-avoidant) to determine the importance of emotional intelligence and motivational constructs of leaders. Vidic et al. (2016) conducted their study at a two-year military institute, where leadership is integrated and taught in all courses, and approximately forty percent of the student body participated in some form of competitive athletics. Surveys completed by members of the Corps of Cadets of the military institution identified four leadership profiles (Transformational; Unproductive; Caring, Unassertive, and Unskilled; and Productive), and each of the four leadership styles was assigned a score within each profile. The scores assigned to each leadership style were based on a standard deviation. Passive-avoidant demonstrated the highest negative scores in both the Transformational and Productive leadership profiles and was the only leadership style to earn a negative score in the Productive leadership profile (Vidic et al., 2016). Passive-avoidant was one of the two leadership styles to score positively in Caring, Unassertive, and Unskilled leadership profile
(servant leadership had a score of 0.25 as compared to passive-avoidant's score of 0.5) and was the only leadership style to score positively for Unproductive. Vidic et al. (2016) found that of the four leadership styles studies, passive-avoidant was least likely to develop and encourage emotional intelligence and motivation in both leaders and followers.

Zacher and Bal (2012) found that age may also play some factor in the utilization of passive-avoidant leadership behaviors. Zacher and Bal interviewed research assistants at universities to identify their ratings of the professors they worked with to determine their perceptions of the professors with whom they worked. The surveys indicated a positive correlation between age and usage of passive-avoidant leadership; as age increased, the perception of increased utilization of passive-avoidant leadership improved as well. This study showed that universities might find it beneficial to work with older professors to promote more proactive leadership behaviors and encourage a move away from passive-avoidant leadership (Zacher & Bal, 2012).

**Leadership Behaviors**

A number of studies have explored coaches’ leadership behaviors. Ayers (2011) evaluated the difference in leadership behaviors utilized by physical education teachers (coaches) when they were in the classroom and when they were conducting their athletic duties. Students completed questionnaires that evaluated their coaches on five leadership behaviors: training and instruction, democratic behavior, autocratic behavior, social support, and positive feedback. Ayers found that the students viewed their coaches as using more leadership behaviors during the athletic competition portion of instruction as opposed to during classroom instruction. Coaches were also perceived to be providing more positive feedback during athletic instruction versus
classroom instruction. The implementation of all five leadership behaviors was found to maximize a positive educational environment.

Sullivan, Whitaker-Campbell, Bloom, and Falcão (2014) conducted a study evaluating the effectiveness of the Coaching Behavior Scale for Sport (CBS-S). The CBS-S is a tool that measures training behaviors of coaches (found in physical training and conditioning, technical skills, and mental preparation), competitive behaviors (seen in competitive strategies), and organizational behaviors (identified in goal setting and personal rapport; Sullivan et al., 2014). Student-athletes completed the CBS-S, with the data then analyzed to determine the validity of the CBS-S as a behavior analysis tool for coaches. Sullivan et al. (2014) concluded that the CBS-S is a valid tool and that the behaviors identified through the tool can be used to assist coaches in disseminating good coaching behaviors that may improve athletic participant outcomes.

**Themes in Leadership Styles**

In reviewing the literature of leadership styles and behavior characteristics of athletic coaches, several themes emerged. These themes included coach-athlete relationships, coaches' leadership behaviors and athlete learning, and mentoring.

**Coach-athlete relationships.** The relationship between coaches and athletes and the impact of this relationship was investigated by Jowett (2017). This review of existing literature sought to explain how the quality of the relationship between coaches and athletes can be used a factor to define the effectiveness of coaching and coaching success. Jowett (2017) posited that neither the coach nor the athlete could exist without the other; athletes requires an individual who provides guidance and expertise in their endeavor to reach their peak potential while coaches requires an outlet through which they can share their knowledge and expertise. The
quality of the relationship between coaches and athletes may provide insight into what happens between them, and how their interactions affect outcomes. Behaviors such as communication play a vital role in the strengthening of the relationship through which leadership can be modeled and taught to the athlete. Jowett (2017) stated that these relationships could empower the coaches to "turn their athletes into leaders themselves" (p. 156).

Athletes’ perception of the coach-athlete relationship also plays a factor in the development and achievement of goals. Adie and Jowett (2010) studied British athletes and their perceptions of their relationship with their coaches and found that athletes with stronger perceived relationships with their coaches were free to pursue their individual goals. Athletes who had coaches who demonstrated a commitment to their athletes were appreciative and felt supported. These athletes were found to have higher numbers of goals that are indicators of intrinsic motivation than athletes whose coaches did not engage in positive leadership behaviors (Adie & Jowett, 2010).

**Coaches’ leadership behaviors and athlete learning.** The leadership styles and behaviors coaches utilize with their athletes affect how athletes learn. Turman and Schrodlt (2004) explored the relationship between coaching leadership styles and behaviors and the effective learning of high school wrestlers. Student-athletes were given surveys that correlated how autocratic, democratic, social support, training and instruction, and positive feedback leadership styles impacted athletes' effective learning. Four of the leadership styles (democratic, social support, training and instruction, and positive feedback) were found to have a positive association with effective learning while autocratic leadership was found to have a negative impact on effective learning. The four leadership styles with a positive correlation to effective learning were each found to correspond to an increase in appreciation for their sport, their
teammates, and their coache. The four leadership styles also increased the likelihood that athletes would use skills and lessons from their sport in life beyond the sport itself (Turman & Schrodt, 2004).

**Mentoring.** The importance of mentoring young coaches has begun to be embraced in the setting of athletics. Jones, Harris, and Miles (2009) identified mentoring as a resource in the education and career progression of sports coaches, especially those coaches who are new to the profession. Coaches were found to actively seek advice from more experienced coaches to learn more about their role, to gain more in-depth understanding of their responsibilities, and to become more aware of the professional culture surrounding coaching (Jones, Armour, & Potrac, 2004; McCullick, Elliott, & Schempp, 2016). White, Schempp, McCullick, and Elliott (2017) studied the impact of mentoring relationships from the perspective of the protégé to identify the most and least effective aspects of mentoring relationships between volleyball coaches. White et al. surveyed two hundred and thirty volleyball coaches who were asked to rate how their mentors had performed and found that those mentoring relationships where the protégé felt as though the mentor was a friend were more meaningful and lasted longer than those relationships without that designation. They also found that mentoring relationships that lasted for a more extended period were perceived to be more effective.

Two functions of a mentoring relationship, psychosocial support and career development, were identified (White et al., 2017). Psychosocial support was defined as mentoring geared toward the improvement of specific skills needed to improve a protégé's coaching ability while career development was identified as being the assistance given by mentors to help the protégé advance professionally. Neither function was found to be more important than the other, but each function was found to be significantly more effective in informal mentoring relationships as
opposed to formal mentoring relationships. This difference was attributed to the length of time spent in the mentoring relationships; formal mentoring relationships typically lasted around one year while informal mentoring relationships may have lasted multiple years (White et al., 2017).

**Summary**

Throughout this chapter, the history of leadership theories, particularly within the field of coaching, has been discussed. Beginning with the landmark the Ohio State Leadership studies (Halpin & Winer, 1957; Hemphill & Coons, 1957) and the University of Michigan studies (Katz et al., 1950; Katz, et al.,1951), existing literature has been examined in order to identify what is currently known about leadership. Peachey et al. (2015) compiled a review of leadership theories in sports organizations that has served as a primary source for this review of the literature. Three major leadership theories have been identified and examined: transactional leadership theory, transformational leadership theory, and passive-avoidant leadership theory. While these are not the only leadership theories that exist, multiple existing studies (Dirks, 2000; Peachey et al., 2015) call for additional research based on these theories, which have been selected to serve as the basis for the proposed study.

Currently, there is a lack of literature exploring leadership behaviors and styles utilized by championship high school boys' varsity basketball coaches in the state of Texas. I have been unable to find a single study that compares transactional, transformational, and passive-avoidant leadership in high school boys' basketball coaches in any state. The proposed study of leadership styles and behaviors would address this gap in the literature. The knowledge of positive leadership styles and behaviors for coaches is critical to developing coaches that have a positive impact on their athletes.
Chapter 3 discusses the research design and method used in this study. The population and setting for each component of the mixed-methods study is identified. Reliability and validity are addressed, and the procedures for data collection and analysis are established.
Chapter 3: Research Method

Coaching leadership is an essential part of athlete development. Coaches are expected to manage, motivate and lead hundreds of athletes across all age groups and from diverse sporting disciplines. Many talented sports stars would be left un-nurtured without coaches applying effective leadership strategies (Ohio University, n.d.). The problem this study addressed was the lack of designation of a specific leadership style that could help coaches perform at their highest level while being a positive factor in the lives of their athletes.

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to determine the leadership styles, behaviors, and best practices of championship high school varsity basketball coaches in Texas. Using a mixed-methods model provides stronger evidence for a conclusion through convergence and corroboration of findings. It also provides additional insights that might be missed when using a single methodological approach; it can also increase the generalizability of the results (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). This study identified the behaviors and characteristics utilized by successful coaches that can then be disseminated to other coaches to strengthen their coaching methods and increase successful outcomes for their players and teams. Two research questions were used to guide this study: (a) What is the coaching leadership style of championship boys' varsity basketball coaches in Texas? and (b) What are the coaching leadership behaviors and best practices of successful high school boys' varsity basketball coaches in Texas?

This chapter presents the methodological procedures followed in this study. It includes the population and setting, research materials used, and the procedures for data collection and analysis. It covers the methods used for establishing trustworthiness, the role of the researcher, ethical considerations, and the limitations and the delimitations of this study. This chapter concludes with a summary.
**Research Design and Method**

This study used a mixed-methods design. A mixed-methods design combines both qualitative and quantitative methods. The quantitative design involved close-ended response surveys that were sent to high school basketball coaches. The qualitative model involved open response interviews that were conducted with high school basketball coaches. Collecting data utilizing both research designs allowed for a more complete study than that which would be possible by using either qualitative or quantitative methods exclusively.

Greene and Caracelli (1997) reported that using mixed-methods model allows the results of precise, instrument-based measurements to be enhanced by contextual, field-based information. The quantitative portion of a study is seen as the most informative and essential portion of a study; the qualitative portion of a study is designed to augment the quantitative data (Hanson et al., 2005). Rudd and Johnson (2010) called for researchers in sports management, which includes leadership behaviors of coaches, to be more open to the use of mixed-methods designs.

The data collection method used was explanatory sequential. An explanatory sequential mixed-methods model is one in which quantitative research is conducted first, and upon analysis of the results, qualitative research is done with more considerable detail to build upon the quantitative results (Creswell, 2014; Rudd & Johnson, 2010). This design was selected because it allowed for a progression of data collection, which added depth to this study in regards to leadership styles that lead to effective behaviors of successful coaches.

The explanatory sequential methodological approach was appropriate for this study because it addressed the research questions by facilitating an in-depth examination of coaching leadership styles and behaviors. A quantitative survey was sent to a sample of a large pool of
participants (coaches in Texas who participated in one of the 24 University Interscholastic League Regional Tournaments). The data obtained from the results of this survey were used to develop interview questions to be posed to coaches with multiple seasons ending in championship competition. The individuals involved in the qualitative portion provided additional insight and depth to the data obtained from the coaches who participated in the quantitative portion of this study. The two collections of data were separate from one another but connected in terms of their connection to the research questions of this study.

**Data collection types and strategies.** Due to the nature of the explanatory sequential mixed-method approach, a closed-ended response survey and open-ended response interviews were used. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) reinforce the advantages of using this combination of data because one database could help explain the other database, and one database could explore different types of questions than the other database.

The data from the quantitative portion of this study was collected first. The survey instrument used was the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X Short developed by Bass and Aviolo (1995). It allowed individuals to measure how they perceived themselves in terms of specific leadership behaviors. This survey tool contained 45 questions and took approximately 15 minutes to complete. Participants were given access to the survey via Survey Monkey.

The second stage of data collection involved interviews. An interview protocol was developed after analyzing the data collected from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X Short survey. The questions were open-ended and allowed for responses that provided insight into coaching leadership styles and behaviors.
Population

The population for this study was high school boys' varsity basketball coaches located throughout the state of Texas. There are approximately 1,300 head varsity coaches in high school boys' basketball (UIL, 2016). These coaches are from high schools with enrollments as small as 55 students and as large as 4,733 students. This provided context and depth to this study because the sample included schools of all sizes and locations within the borders of the state.

Quantitative sample population. Championship boys' varsity basketball coaches in Texas were the participants in the quantitative portion of this study. For this study, a championship coach was defined as one who has led his basketball team to a minimum of three wins during postseason play, which resulted in the team qualifying for participation in the regional tournament following the Texas University Interscholastic League (UIL) season. The championship coaches were chosen based on the results of the UIL public high school boys' basketball post-season playoffs for the 2016-2017 school year.

The sampling design used for this study was single-stage sampling. Single-stage sampling occurs when the researcher has access to names in the population and can sample the people directly (Babbie, 2007). A list of 96 regional basketball tournament participants found on the UIL website (www.uiltexas.org/basketball/playoff-brackets) was used to identify coaches whose teams reached the regional tournament. These 96 coaches were the sample population. Surveys were sent to the sample population. The email addresses of these participants were obtained through the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches (TABC) head coaches’ directory and through publicly available individual school websites.

The potential participants were contacted through email to inform them about the study and the requirements for participation. Those interested in participating responded by phone or
email. Consent forms were then sent to the participants explaining the purpose of the research, the survey process, and the procedures taken for ethical considerations. Participants indicated their consent for participation by answering a question before completing the survey online. Of the 96 coaches who received an invitation to participate, 40 surveys were initiated and 38 surveys were completed and used for analysis.

**Qualitative sample population.** Typically, mixed-methods researchers include the sample of qualitative participants in the more substantial quantitative sample because ultimately, researchers make a comparison between the two sets of data and the more the data are similar, the better the comparison (Creswell, 2014). With this in mind, the participants in the qualitative portion of the study were selected from a pool of participants in the quantitative part of the study. The potential candidate pool was created by asking the surveyed coaches to participate in the interviews. Those that indicated a willingness to be interviewed were added to the pool of possible participants. The interview population was selected from the pool by purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are exceptionally knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

In choosing the number of participants for the qualitative component, it is essential to determine the point of saturation. Data saturation is reached when there is enough information to replicate a study, when the ability to obtain additional new information has been attained, and when further coding is no longer feasible (Fusch & Ness, 2015). The point of saturation is a debatable issue. Burmeister and Aitken (2012) reported that data saturation is not about the numbers *per se*, but about the depth of the data. As a result, the fact that data was retrieved
through a mixed-method approach, the exact number of interviews was determined after the quantitative component of the study was complete and during the actual interview process.

Interview participants selected either an option of a face-to-face interview or a telephone interview. Participant dictated the time and location for the interview. Before the interview, the participants were given an explanation of the research, the interview process, the procedures that would be used to protect confidentiality, and the procedures taken for ethical considerations.

**Quantitative instruments.** The survey instrument used was the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X Short developed by Bass and Aviolo (1995). The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), also known as *MLQ 5X short* or the *standard MLQ*, measures a broad range of leadership types ranging from passive leaders to leaders who give contingent rewards to followers; it also includes leaders who transform their followers into becoming leaders themselves (Bass & Aviolo, 1995). The purpose of this questionnaire was to gain information on participants’ views of their leadership behaviors. This instrument consisted of 45 items answered by leaders regarding their perceptions of their personal leadership styles. The MLQ 5X Short utilizes five scales (idealized influence [attributes], idealized influence [behaviors], inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration) to measure transformational leadership. Two scales (contingent reward and management by exception [active]) measure transactional leadership, and two scales (management by exception [passive] and laissez-faire) measure passive-avoidant leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

The MLQ is an extensively researched and validated instrument used to measure leadership styles. It has been found to be valid as a research tool (Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubramaniam, 2003). The MLQ has been used in thousands of research programs, doctoral dissertations, and master's theses, along with several constructive outcomes for transformational
leadership. In addition, a study conducted by Antonakis, et al. (2003) supported the nine-factor leadership model and its stability in homogeneous situations. Reliability scores for the MLQ subscales ranged from moderate to good (Antonakis et al., 2003).

**Qualitative instruments.** Since an explanatory sequential mixed-method approach was used for this study, the qualitative interview protocol was not developed until the quantitative survey data was collected and analyzed. The interviews included open-ended response questions. This allowed for responses that provided insight into coaching leadership styles and behaviors.

An interview guide was developed for the interviews. This guide had an initial statement of inquiry that explained the nature of this study to the interviewees. It included definitions of transactional, transformational, and passive-avoidance leadership. This allowed the researcher to inform the participant about the leadership styles discussed during the interview. Once these styles were covered, the guide had open-ended questions for the actual interview. The interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed.

To ensure reliability in qualitative research, examination of trustworthiness is essential. Seale (1999) has stated that the "trustworthiness of a research report lies at the heart of issues conventionally discussed as validity and reliability" (p. 266). The use of member checking established trustworthiness. Member checks occur when researchers ask participants to review both, the data collected through the interview and the researchers' interpretation of that interview data (DeVault, 2017). Once each interview was over, the interviewee reviewed the answers and notes that were taken during the interview. Field tests on the questions were conducted using a focus group. Subject matter experts not included in this study provided feedback on the
questions used in the interview protocol. This ensured that all interview questions were appropriate for inclusion in this study.

**Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis Procedures**

This study involved data retrieved and analyzed using quantitative and qualitative means. The data was collected sequentially. Once the data from the surveys was collected and analyzed, the interviews were conducted and interpreted. This sequential collection of data allowed the second phase of data collection and analysis to build on the knowledge gained during the first phase of data collection.

**Operational definition of variables.** The independent variables of this study were the full-range leadership model. This model measures transformational, transactional, and passive-avoidant leadership. These leadership styles are defined as follows:

*Transformational leadership.* Transformational leadership is a leadership style marked by an interaction between individuals; leaders and followers work together to raise one another to achieve a higher level of motivation and personal growth (Burns, 1978).

*Transactional leadership.* Transactional leadership is a leadership style marked by interaction between individuals; one individual serves in a leadership capacity to conduct an exchange of items of value (Burns, 1978).

*Passive-avoidant leadership.* Passive-avoidance leadership is a leadership style marked by lack of involvement (laissez-faire leadership) or a passive approach (management by exception: passive leadership) to leadership (Avolio, 1999).

Five scales measure transformational leadership: (idealized influence [attributes], idealized influence [behaviors], inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration). Two scales measure transactional leadership (contingent reward and
management by exception [active]), and two scales measure passive-avoidant leadership (management by exception [passive] and laissez-faire). The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 5X Short) is composed of forty-five questions, thirty-six of which address the nine scales (four questions for each scale) of the full-range leadership model (Bass & Avolio, 1995, 2004). The remaining nine questions found on the MLQ 5X Short measure three leadership outcome scales (extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction; Bass & Avolio, 1995, 2004). A Likert-style scale was used to answer each of the forty-five questions, and participants chose from 0 (not at all) to 4 (frequently, if not always).

Dependent variables are those variables that depend on the independent variables. They are the outcomes of the influence of the independent variables (Creswell, 2014). The dependent variable for this study was successful performance and positive outcomes. This research investigated what leadership style successful coaches have, which may affect their performance as a coach.

**Data collection and analysis.** Data were collected by surveying successful coaches whose teams reached the 2016-17 Texas boys high school regional tournament. The following steps were followed in this process:

1) The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 5X Short) survey was sent via email to 96 coaches whose teams reached a regional basketball tournament at the conclusion of the 2016-2017 season on November 18, 2017. The email (see Appendix C) contained an explanation of the study as well as a link to the MLQ 5X Short, which was hosted on www.surveymonkey.com.

2) Responses were collected daily from the Survey Monkey site for six weeks. This process involved sending two more emails to participants to encourage participation.
3) Completed survey responses were entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. This was used to tabulate the results for each question on the MLQ 5X Short.

4) I entered responses into the spreadsheet and started data analysis. The questions in the survey were grouped according to each of the nine scales of the full-scale leadership model as well as the three scales that measured outcomes of leadership.

5) The mean score for each question for each scale was calculated along with the median, mode, and standard deviation.

6) The mean scores for each question were then used to find the mean score for each of the nine scales.

7) The mean score for each scale was then compared to scores on the US Percentiles for Individual Scores Based on Self Ratings (Bass & Avolio, 2004) to categorize participants as more or less transformational, transactional, or passive-avoidant than leaders in the United States.

Reliability and validity. It was critical to ensure that this study had validity and reliability. A study's reliability and validity are two technical properties that indicate the quality and usefulness of the test (Loyal, 2016). Reliability is the consistency of results when the experiment is replicated under the same conditions. Validity refers to what characteristic a study measures and how well a study measures that characteristic (Marczyk, Dematteo & Festinger, 2005). Reliability and validity in a study are essential to ensure the results can be used efficiently.

The validity of the quantitative results has been addressed. Care was taken during this study to ensure that all options were investigated following the analysis of the quantitative results. Validity concerns have been minimized by ensuring that all participants in this study fit
within the definition established for successful coaches, which helped to prevent minimization of the importance of the quantitative or qualitative side of the study (Creswell, 2013).

**Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis Procedures**

Since this mixed-method study has a sequential explanatory approach, the data collection and analysis for the qualitative portion of this study began after the quantitative data were collected and analyzed. This data collection process involved interviews. The data analysis included an open coding process that generated common themes derived from the interviews.

**Data collection.** At the conclusion of the online survey, participants were asked to contact the researcher by phone or email if they were interested in participating in an interview. Fifteen coaches contacted the researcher to indicate their willingness to participate in an interview. These individuals were contacted by phone and email. Ten of these individuals responded to email or phone contacts to participate in the interview portion of this study; five of the coaches who previously indicated a willingness to participate in an interview did not respond to the attempts made to schedule an interview. Interviews were held at a time most convenient for the participants. Four of the interviews took place in person.

Before the interviews, the participants were informed about the expectations and process of the interviews. Participants were informed of their rights and their choice to leave the interview at any time if they felt uncomfortable. The participants were allowed to ask questions. Once this introduction and orientation was over, the interviews began.

An interview protocol was used to serve as a guide for the researcher as well as to ensure that all interviews were consistently administered among all participants (See Interview Protocol in Appendix E). All interviews were audio recorded; field notes were also taken. At the end of each interview, the field notes were shared with the interviewee to ensure that written responses
to each question were, in fact, the intended responses, which was a form of member checking. Upon completion of all the interviews, the interview recordings were transcribed, and the field notes were collected and reviewed.

**Data analysis.** I used the Framework Method to achieve consistency in data analysis. This framework, a seven-step procedure for the analysis of qualitative data, was used to analyze the data obtained from the interviews. Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid, and Redwood (2013) identified the Framework Method as a suitable tool for analysis of interview data; it is used to generate themes by making comparisons within and between cases. The following steps were used in this process:

1. Interviews were transcribed. Each interview was audio recorded. Transcription Star, a transcription service, was used to create a transcription of each interview.

2. I familiarized myself with the interviews. I read over the transcripts of each interview once they were returned from the transcription service. I also listened to the audio recordings while reading the transcriptions to ensure that the words transcribed on the page were an accurate reflection of the interview as it took place. Field notes taken during the interviews were compared to the transcriptions during this process.

3. Data was coded. After familiarization, I carefully read the transcript and field notes line-by-line. Codes were created for any pieces of data deemed essential. This process used open coding. Open coding is defined as breaking down the data into central concepts and secondary concepts (Biddix, 2016). Highlighting and the use of coded symbols were used to help label and identify the primary and secondary concepts. Specific codes were created for particular behaviors, phrases, structures, values and beliefs, and emotional or impressionable elements. This coding process was undertaken
with the intent to classify the data in such a way that it could be compared systematically with other parts of the data set.

4. A working analytical framework was developed. After coding the first three transcripts, the codes were grouped into categories, which formed the working analytical framework. This framework was not considered final until the final transcript had been coded.

5. The analytical framework was applied to the data. The working analytical framework was then applied to the seven remaining transcriptions using the existing categories and codes. Highlighters were used to identify each existing code for easy identification of data. This application process was continued with all transcripts until a saturation point was reached.

6. Data was charted into the framework matrix. This process involved the summarization of data by category from each transcript into a chart.

7. The data were interpreted. Characteristics of the data were identified, with connections between categories explored. The themes for the data were developed from the results of this process.

The constant comparative method was used to analyze the data obtained from the interview process. Glaser and Strauss (1967) have described the constant comparative method as a data analysis process by which the data collected through open-ended questioning is broken down into key concepts or categories. These concepts or categories were referred to as incidents (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) or units (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As Taylor and Bogdan (1984) have explained:

In the constant comparative method, the researcher simultaneously codes and analyses data to develop concepts; by continually comparing specific incidents in the data, the
researcher refines these concepts, identifies their properties, explores their relationships to one another, and integrates them into a coherent explanatory model. (p. 126)

When utilizing the constant comparative method, categories that emerge constantly change as understandings of the data and the relationships between the concepts and categories are refined. The constant comparative method was also appropriate for this study because the application of this method signaled when the saturation point in the data had been reached (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).

Strauss and Corbin (1990) have described processes that may be taken when utilizing the constant comparative method, which may include open coding, axial coding, or selective coding. Open coding was the first step in the analysis process. In this form of coding, I read the transcripts of the interviews and identified the main points from the responses of the participants. By breaking down the data into major ideas, I was able to identify categories that made the data easier to understand. The transcripts and field notes were constantly compared to one another to ensure that the data was placed into the appropriate categories. A coding chart was established to identify emergent themes and the comments associated with those themes (see Appendix F).

Methods for establishing trustworthiness. To secure trustworthiness in this mixed-methods study, credibility was determined through triangulation. Patton (2002) has advocated the use of triangulation by stating "triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods. This can mean using several kinds of methods or data, including using both quantitative and qualitative approaches" (p. 247). The opinions cultivated from the interviews were cross-validated with the data from the MLQ survey. Credibility was achieved through member-checking and a thick description of data. Member checks occurred when I asked participants to review both the data collected b and the my interpretation of that interview data (DeVault, 2017).
Transferability and dependability are essential in establishing trustworthiness in a study. Transferability is the process of showing that the findings can be applied to other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The conclusions of this study can be relevant to other investigators who research another comparable topic and other researchers will be able to utilize specific concepts initially developed in this study. Dependability is the process of showing that the findings of this study are consistent and could be repeated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This dependability was achieved through the in-depth description of the methodology to allow this study to be replicated.

Trustworthiness involves establishing confirmability. Confirmability is the degree of neutrality or the extent to which the respondents rather than researcher bias, motivation, or interest shape the findings of a study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I was careful not to allow my own biases to enter any influence in the data collection or data analysis. This was accomplished by the use of member checking, where the participants of the qualitative portion of the study were asked to review the field notes I took during the interviews to ensure their thoughts and beliefs were interpreted correctly. The recording of each interview, along with the use of a transcription service for the production of transcripts, also contributed to the elimination of bias. I read each transcript while listening to the recordings and compared the transcripts to the field notes before any coding took place.

Role of the Researcher

I am a male with 16 years of experience as a coach in public schools in Texas. I have participated in the UIL playoffs at the conclusion of six seasons, reaching the third round of the playoffs on two occasions but never reaching a regional tournament. I have a professional relationship with approximately 25% of the survey participants and a professional relationship
with 90% of the interview participants. Since I have been a coach and I know some of the participants, I am keenly aware of some of the daily leadership behaviors and characteristics utilized by the coaches who participated in the study.

Through the study of existing literature, professional contacts, and personal experiences, I am aware of the leadership difficulties faced by coaches in Texas and other parts of the United States. I have been personally affected by the leadership behaviors of coaches, both as a player and as a coach, and I have an interest in understanding which leadership behaviors and characteristics are most prevalent in the field. During the seasons where I lead teams to postseason play and postseason wins, I found that I utilized different leadership behaviors based mainly on three different leadership theories (transactional leadership theory, transformational leadership theory, and servant leadership theory) and that my utilization of these behaviors varied based on the situation. By better understanding how other coaches also utilize various leadership behaviors, I will be able to communicate these behaviors to other coaches and hopefully help other coaches improve their coaching and increase their successful outcomes.

**Ethical Considerations**

This study was approved by the Abilene Christian University Institutional Review Board (See Appendix A). Participants received an informed consent form with information about this study and the anonymity and confidentiality of their identity and responses. Participants were given a choice to participate in this study. The participants had no known risks or costs to participate in this study and could withdraw without penalty at any time.

**Assumptions**

This study was based on several assumptions:
• Participants would answer survey and interview questions honestly and candidly. The anonymity and confidentiality of each participant was preserved to help justify this assumption.

• The participants volunteered for this study and were able to withdraw from this study at any time and with no ramifications.

• By utilizing the UIL list of regional basketball tournament coaches, the participants chosen for this study were appropriate; this approach to selection assured that the participants had all experienced the same or similar phenomenon of this study.

• Participants had a sincere interest in participating in this research and did not have any other motives. This assumption was justified by making sure that the participants know that their participation is voluntary and that there would not be any compensation for specific answers or ramifications for their withdrawal from this study.

Limitations and Delimitations

This study had limitations and delimitations. Limitations are potential weaknesses in a study. These limitations cannot be eliminated; they can only be minimized (Simon & Goes, 2013). Delimitations are those characteristics that limit the scope and define the boundaries of a study. Unlike limitations, delimitations result from specific choices made by the researcher (Simon & Goes, 2013).

One limitation of this study is the method of data collection. The surveys were delivered through electronic means, and it was possible that the surveys may not have been completed by the individuals for whom the survey was intended. It was possible that assistant coaches or
others completed the survey as opposed to the head coach of that particular school. It was also possible that the link to the survey could have been caught in the spam filter of the recipient’s email, which prevented the individual from completing the survey.

Some of the interviews completed during the qualitative portion of this study were conducted over the phone. Phone interviews may serve as a limitation due to the lack of face-to-face interaction between the researcher and the participant, which prevented the researcher from observing the participant during this stage.

This study was focused on transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and passive-avoidant leadership, and did not include other leadership theories that could have an impact on successful outcomes.

**Summary**

Understanding how to approach the study of a problem is as important as recognizing the problem to be studied. The selection of a practical approach to the design of a study prevents researchers from wasting time by asking the wrong questions. An effective research design not only assists a researcher in selecting appropriate methods to study the problem, but also helps her set the logic used to make interpretations of the data at the conclusion of a study (Ivankova, 2014). An explanatory sequential mixed-methods design provided the most appropriate research approach to the problem of practice in this study because it addressed the research questions by allowing for an in-depth examination of coaching leadership styles and behaviors.

The closed-ended nature of the survey questions used in the initial quantitative portion of this study allowed individuals to measure how they perceived themselves concerning specific leadership behaviors. The open-ended questioning strategy used in the qualitative part of this study facilitated responses that provided insight into coaching leadership styles and behaviors.
Chapter 3 began with a detailed description of the population and setting as well as the research instruments used. It covered the methods used for establishing trustworthiness, the role of the researcher, ethical considerations and the limitations, and the delimitations of this study. The data collection methods were described, and an outline of this study's design was discussed in detail.

Chapter 4 provides the results of this study and includes a description of the research focus and processes. Analysis of the survey data, along with a discussion of the major themes arising from the interview data, are included. Chapter 4 also includes a discussion of how the data obtained from the mixed-methods design answer the research questions.
Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this research was to identify coaching leadership behaviors of high school varsity boys’ basketball coaches in Texas and to investigate their coaching leadership style. An explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach was used to collect and analyze data from successful Texas high school boys’ basketball coaches to answer the following research questions: (a) What is the coaching leadership style of successful high school varsity boys’ basketball coaches in Texas? (b) What are the coaching leadership behaviors of successful high school varsity boys’ basketball coaches in Texas?

The purpose of this chapter is to report results of the analysis of the data obtained from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X Short coaches surveys and subsequent interviews with 10 coaches. The chapter is organized as follows: introduction, a review of research focus and processes, analysis of the survey data, interview questions, themes arising from interview data, and a summary of the chapter. The chapter reports data collected from surveys and interviews and discusses how this data answers the study’s research questions.

Summary of Research Focus and Processes

This study used an explanatory sequential mixed-method approach. The quantitative portion of this study used a Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 5X Short) to measure the leadership styles of successful high school varsity boys’ basketball coaches in Texas. The qualitative portion of this study used an interview process involving ten participants.

The MLQ 5X Short has been used by many researchers (DeGroot, Kiker, & Cross, 2000; Dumdum, Lowe, & Avolio, 2002; Lowe et al., 1996) around the world and in a variety of cultural contexts. Its validity has been confirmed (Antonakis et al, 2003). The MLQ 5X Short
consists of 45 survey questions and allows a comparison of the leadership style of individual leaders against the norm (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

I sent the surveys to 96 successful coaches. Successful coaches were chosen from a group of coaches who made an appearance in 2016-17 school year regional basketball tournament conducted by the University Interscholastic League (UIL) in Texas during post-season play. The coaches’ contact information was obtained from the UIL website and collected through the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches (TABC) head coaches’ directory. Contact information for coaches who were not members of TABC during the 2016-2017 season was gathered from school websites. Coaches from every region of Texas were selected for the survey.

Emails with information about this study and a link to an online version of the survey, which was hosted by surveymonkey.com, were first sent on November 18, 2017. Emails were resent on November 28, 2017, and on December 12, 2017. After six weeks of data collection, 40 surveys had been attempted, which signified a 40% completion rate. Of the 40 responses, two were found to be incomplete and were not included in the analysis of the surveys. Version 1.0.1 of PSPP, a version of a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, was used for data analysis along with Microsoft Excel and the MLQ Manual (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

The qualitative process involved interviewing 10 coaches who participated in the survey. These participants were chosen by purposeful sampling. In the quantitative recruitment email, coaches were asked to consider participating in the interview portion of this study. Fifteen coaches responded by email stating they were interested in partaking in the interview process. Of the 15 respondents, 10 coaches completed the interview. Interview questions were developed based on the results of the survey, and they were designed to address the second research
question: What are the coaching leadership behaviors and best practices of successful high school varsity boys’ basketball coaches in Texas? Field tests on the questions were conducted using a focus group. The focus group consisted of winning coaches who did not participate in this study. These subject matter experts provided feedback on the questions used in the interview protocol. Field testing ensured that all interview questions were appropriate for inclusion in this study.

**Presentation of the Findings**

This study was an explanatory sequential mixed-methods study. An explanatory sequential mixed-methods study allows for a progression of data collection, which can increase the depth of studies using this model. Greene and Caracelli (1997) reported that using mixed-methods model leads to precise results because instrument-based measurements are enhanced by contextual, field-based information. The quantitative portion of a study is the most informative and important portion of the study because it generates the initial bulk of the data while the qualitative section is designed to augment the quantitative data (Hanson et al., 2005). Quantitative research was conducted first by sending out surveys. A 40% response rate was achieved. The surveys were analyzed. Upon analysis of the results, qualitative research in the form of interviews was conducted. After field testing the interview questions, 10 participants were interviewed.

**Quantitative findings.** Quantitative research was used to answer the first research question: What is the coaching leadership style of successful high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in Texas? Calculation of the results began after the 40th response was received. The MLQ 5X Short utilized five scales (idealized influence [attributes], idealized influence [behaviors], inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration) to
measure transformational leadership. Two scales (contingent reward and management by exception [active]) measure transactional leadership, and two scales (management by exception [passive] and laissez-faire) measure passive-avoidant leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Each of these scales was composed of four items (questions on the survey). Bass and Avolio (2004) have defined outcomes of leadership as measures of the consequences or results of leadership behavior; these measures are composed of three scales: extra effort (three items), effectiveness (four items), and satisfaction (two items).

The MLQ 5X Short used a Likert type scale with five answer choices: Not at all (0 points); Once in a while (1 point); Sometimes (2 points); Fairly often (3 points); and Frequently, if not always (4 points). The mean, median, mode and standard deviation were analyzed. The mean was calculated to provide a comparison of how much more or less transformational, transactional, or passive-avoidant the participants of this study were compared to the norm. The median and mode were calculated to demonstrate the most commonly given responses for each scale, while the standard deviation was calculated to show how the data is dispersed from the mean. The averages for each of the scales were calculated using Microsoft Excel, while the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation were calculated using PSPP version 1.0.1.

Table 1 provides a summary of the survey responses for the five scales used to measure transformational leadership. Those five scales are (a) idealized influence (attributes), (b) idealized influence (behaviors), (c) inspirational motivation, (d) intellectual stimulation, and (e) individual consideration. The mean for these scales ranged from 2.84 to 3.43. The median for the range was 2.875 to 3.50. The mode of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation was 3.00. Idealized influence was 4.00 while individual consideration was 3.25. The range for standard deviation was 0.30 to 0.50.
Table 1

*Mean and Standard Deviation for Transformational Leadership Scales*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Scale</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idealized Influence (Attributes)</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idealized Influence (Behaviors)</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspirational Motivation</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Stimulation</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Consideration</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 describes the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation for transactional leadership scales. It provides a summary of the survey responses for the two scales used to measure transactional leadership. The two scales are contingent reward and management by exception (active). The mean for contingent reward is 3.18 and the mean for management by exception is 2.12. The median for the range was 2.00 to 3.25. The mode of contingent reward was 3.00 while the mode for management by exception (active) was 1.75. The standard deviation for contingent reward is 0.50 while the one for management by exception is 0.60.

Table 2

*Mean and Standard Deviation for Transactional Leadership Scales*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Scale</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contingent Reward</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management by Exception (Active)</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 provides a summary of the survey responses for the two scales used to measure passive-avoidant leadership. The two scales are management by exception (passive) and laissez-faire. The mean for these scales ranged from 0.22 to 0.90. The median for the range was 0.25 to 0.75. The mode of management by exception (passive) was 0.75 while the mode for laissez-faire was 0.00. The standard deviation ranged from 0.30 to 0.40.
Table 3

Mean and Standard Deviation for Passive-Avoidant Leadership Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Scale</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management by Exception (Passive)</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laissez-Faire</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 illustrates the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation for the outcomes of the leadership scales. It provides a summary of the survey responses for the three scales used to measure the outcomes of leadership. The three scales are extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction. The mean for these scales ranged from 3.14 to 3.18. The median ranged from 3.00 to 3.25. The mode for both extra effort and satisfaction was 3.00 while the mode for effectiveness was 3.50. The standard deviation for these scales ranged from 0.40 to 0.60.

Table 4

Mean and Standard Deviation for Outcomes of Leadership Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Scale</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extra Effort</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following the calculation of the means for each of the leadership scales, the means were used to categorize the participants as either more or less transformational, transactional, or passive-avoidant than typical leaders. The mean scores were compared with the Percentiles for Individual Scores Based on Self Ratings (US) from Bass and Avolio (2004); sample percentiles are found in Table 5. These percentiles were taken from the 2003 Normative Samples analysis, which were used by Bass and Avolio to validate the MLQ 5X Short and provide a point of comparison for researchers for each of the leadership scales that compose the MLQ. These percentiles allowed me to compare the results for the participants in this study to the norms.
established by Bass and Avolio for leadership in the United States to identify the participants as being more or less transformational, transactional, or passive-avoidant than the leaders.
Table 5

Percentiles for Individual Scores Based on Self Ratings (US)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N =</th>
<th>II(A)</th>
<th>II(B)</th>
<th>IM</th>
<th>IS</th>
<th>IC</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>MBEA</th>
<th>MBEP</th>
<th>LF</th>
<th>EE</th>
<th>EFF</th>
<th>SAT</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When compared to percentiles in Individual Scores Based on Self Ratings (US), the coaches who participated in this study were found to have a mean of 3.17, which ranks the participants between the 60th and 70th percentile for idealized influence (attributes), between the 70th and 80th percentiles for idealized influence (behaviors; mean score of 3.43), between the 60th and 70th percentiles for inspirational motivation (mean score of 3.32), between the 40th and 50th percentile for intellectual stimulation (mean score of 2.84), and between the 40th and 50th percentile for individual consideration (mean score of 3.28). Each of these scales can be used to code for transformational leadership and show that these coaches are well above the norm (with the norm identified as the 50th percentile) for idealized influence (attributes), idealized influence (behaviors), and inspirational motivation. The coaches who participated in this portion of the study were slightly below the norm for intellectual stimulation and individual consideration. These results indicate that the coaches who participated in the survey are more transformational than what is considered average for leadership in the United States.

For the transactional scales, the coaches were between the 50th and 60th percentiles for contingent reward (mean score of 3.18), and between the 70th and 80th percentile for management by exception (active; mean score of 2.12). These results place the participants slightly above the norm for contingent reward and well above the norm for management by exception (active). The findings indicate that successful Texas high school boys' basketball coaches are more transactional in their leadership than the average leader in the United States.

In the category of passive-avoidant scales, the participants were slightly below the norm for management by exception (passive) with a mean of 0.90 (between the 40th and 50th percentiles); they were well below the norm for laissez-faire with a mean of 0.22 (between the 10th and 20th percentiles). These results indicate that the coaches who participated in this
survey are less likely to utilize passive-avoidance leadership as a leadership style than what is considered to be the average for leadership in the United States.

The final 9 items on the MLQ 5X Short were used to measure the outcomes of leadership. These items measure how the transformational and transactional behaviors that leaders exhibit lead to successful organizational outcomes (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Table 5 indicates the percentiles for each of the scales for outcomes of leadership as determined by Bass and Avolio (2004). For the scale measuring extra effort, the coaches' mean of 3.16 fell between the 70th and 80th percentiles. The mean score for effectiveness was a 3.18, which placed the coaches between the 40th and 50th percentiles. A mean score of 3.14 for the satisfaction of leadership scale fell between the 60th and 70th percentiles. These coaches measured well above the norm for extra effort and satisfaction and slightly below the norm for effectiveness.

Survey results suggest that the leadership style utilized most often by successful varsity boys' basketball coaches in Texas was transformational leadership; the second most used style was transactional leadership. Each of these two leadership styles are used by coaches in Texas at a rate that exceeds the average for the United States. The results also suggest that successful boys' basketball coaches in Texas rarely utilize passive-avoidant leadership; the results suggest that they use passive-avoidant behaviors at a considerably lower rate than what is considered average in the United States. Accordingly, it seems that the leadership style of successful high school varsity boys' basketball coaches is a combination of transformational and transactional leadership styles.

**Qualitative process.** While data from the quantitative portion of this study could only be used to answer the first research question (What is the coaching leadership style of successful high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in Texas?), data from the qualitative research were
needed to provide greater detail in regards to the first research question and also to address the second research question: What are the coaching leadership behaviors and best practices of successful high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in Texas?

In the recruitment email sent with the survey participants were asked to contact me via either phone or email if they were interested in participating in an interview. Fifteen individuals responded stating their interest in being interviewed. I contacted these individuals by phone or email. Five of these potential participants did not respond to contact by phone and email, so they were excluded from the interviews. Ten participants positively responded to the request to participate in the interview. Interviews were scheduled at a specific time and location based on participant preference. Participants were given the choice of an interview in person or by telephone. Four interviews were conducted in person and six were conducted over the phone.

Ten interviews were conducted. Initially, I asked each participant for permission to record the interview. This recording would help generate a transcript of the interview and ensure accuracy in representing the participants' responses. Before the interview questions were asked, the participants were given the definitions of transactional leadership, transformational leadership, and passive-avoidant leadership.

Participants were asked five guiding questions the answers to which were used to develop follow-up questions used to probe deeper into the topics identified in the guiding questions. The interview questions aimed to help coaches reflect on their leadership styles and leadership behaviors. The interview questions focused on the leadership styles most often utilized by the coaches, the effects of the most commonly used leadership styles on their players, the leadership styles used least often, the source of the coaches’ learned leadership style, and the manner in which the coaches’ leadership behaviors have evolved through the years. Coaches were asked to
identify specific behaviors they used while providing leadership to their players. Before the interviews concluded, I shared the field notes with the interviewees to ensure that their responses were recorded accurately. The interviews lasted between 18 and 31 minutes; the average length of the interviews was 24 minutes.

Following the collection of data from the interviews, the analysis process began. The following steps were followed during interviews:

1) Interviews were transcribed. Each interview was audio recorded. These electronic audio files were sent to a transcription service (Transcription Star) that created a transcript for each interview.

2) Transcripts were reviewed. Once transcripts were received from the transcription service, I read each of them while listening to the audio recordings and reviewing my field notes. This process was done to ensure that the transcripts were accurate and to evaluate the data found within each of the interviews. This process was completed for each of the 10 interviews.

3) Data were coded. Following the review of the transcripts and field notes, I began the coding process. I utilized the constant comparative method: I identified a phenomenon (such as the leadership styles and behaviors of coaches), I identified a few fundamental concepts or principals of the phenomenon of interest, and I engaged in theoretical sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This process involved an organization process. I coded according to certain detectable commonalities and patterns. I started this process by asking myself the following questions:

- What is this saying?
- What does it represent?
• What is this an example of?
• What do I see is going on here?
• What is happening?
• What kind of events are at issue here?
• What is trying to be conveyed?

I read the responses to the first three transcripts and started to underline each essential keyword that conveyed the participant’s message. Then, as I immersed myself in the data; I began to analyze patterns and categories and subcategories. I coded these patterns and categories using colored highlights and informal symbols.

4) A working analytical framework was developed. After I coded the first three transcripts, I began to group the codes from these first transcripts into categories; the working theoretical framework was formed from these codes and categories. New codes that emerged in the remaining seven transcripts were added as necessary.

5) The analytical framework was applied to the data. I then used the working analytical framework to work through the remaining seven transcripts using the existing codes and categories. I used highlighters and informal symbols to indicate the codes that I identified. Each transcript was coded.

6) Data was charted into the coding matrix. As a part of the coding process, I created a matrix to illustrate the data process. I compiled a list of all the coded words/word phrases and grouped them according to commonalities. I tallied the frequency for each code. This process helped me generate categories and sub-categories for the codes. The coding matrix started with the guiding research question: What are the coaching leadership behaviors and best practices of successful high school varsity
boys' basketball coaches in Texas? The first column indicated the four themes discovered through the data analysis. The next column was the category that had been discovered. The third column was a description and an indicator of the category, and the final column was Evidence and Sub-Categories. This column had direct quotes from the interviews. These direct quotes were examples from the transcripts that were evidence of the coding process which led to the themes. Within these quotes were underline subcategories which helped generate the categories and eventually the themes. This chart is found in Appendix F.

7) Data was interpreted. Once the coding matrix had been created, I explored the characteristics of the categories and sub-categories from the data. The themes from the data were developed as a result of this process.

The constant comparative method was used to identify the concepts generated during the analysis of the data. Glaser and Strauss (1967) have described the constant comparative method and its appropriateness for inclusion in studies much like this one, stating that it can be beneficial in studies of any size. The constant comparative method involves the identification of a phenomenon (such as the leadership styles and behaviors of coaches), the identification of a few fundamental concepts or principals of the phenomenon of interest, and engagement in theoretical sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Data from each interview was compared to the data from other interviews that were similarly labeled or categorized before a new code was created. As these data were compared, new categories or relationships between the data were discovered. This process of comparison was continued until no further insights were gained from them for the development of concepts or categories, and data saturation was reached (Schwandt, 2001).
Strauss and Corbin (1990) have identified open coding as one of the procedures that may be used by researchers utilizing the constant comparative method. Open coding is a line-by-line investigation of the data, where the researcher asks a series of questions about the data:

"What is this data a study of?", "What category does this incident indicate?", "What is actually happening in the data?", "What is the main concern being faced by the participants?", and "What accounts for the continual resolving of this concern?" (Glaser, 1998, p. 140)

The questions, "What category does this incident indicate?", "What is actually happening in the data?", and "What is the main concern being faced by the participants?" were the guiding questions I used when starting the coding process.

**Qualitative findings.** The first interview question was "Which leadership style do you use most frequently?" This question gave the participants the opportunity to self-identify their most commonly used leadership style and thereby affirm or reject the results of the quantitative portion of this study. Eight of the participants indicated that transformational leadership was their most commonly utilized leadership style while two participants stated that transactional leadership was their most frequently used leadership style. There were no participants who selected passive-avoidant leadership as the leadership style they used most often.

The responses to the first interview question mirrored the results found during the quantitative part of this study, where the participants of the survey were found to be more transformational and transactional in their leadership than what is considered the norm. The participants’ responses confirmed my belief that successful high school varsity boys’ basketball coaches in Texas mostly exhibit transformational and transactional leadership behaviors and avoid passive-avoidant behaviors during their interactions with athletes.

Participant 102 stated that he stresses the importance of listening and employs activities that require active communication. He felt that by providing opportunities for his players to
practice active communication, he was preparing them to be effective leaders in their future. This individual also indicated that by teaching his players that it is more important to do what is right than to be right he showed that it does not matter from whom leadership comes. His behaviors were indicative of transformational leadership.

The responses to interview question 2 were varied. The question asked: "What are the effects of most frequently used leadership style on your players?" The most common answer was that their players were successfully prepared to become leaders in the future because of the coaches’ use of their preferred leadership style. Each of the participants identified the importance of communication and how effective communication indicated effective leadership.

Three participants responded that the leadership style they used most often helped their players develop a more profound sense of ownership with fellow players. Two participants identified self-discovery as being the most common effect on their players while one participant identified a lessened burden of effort (mentally and physically) on his players by the utilization of his most commonly used leadership style. Participant 101 stated how asking his players questions and then acting based on their answers prepared his players for the future more efficiently than any other behavior. This particular behavior, active questioning, was also mentioned by participants 104 and 107.

In responding to guiding question 3, participants were asked to discuss their least frequently utilized leadership style. The question was worded as follows: "You have identified your most frequently used leadership style. Which style do you utilize least frequently?" All 10 participants chose passive-avoidant leadership. Each of the coaches who participated in the interviews assigned a negative connotation to passive-avoidant leadership, and three participants (104, 106, 110) stated that passive-avoidant leadership was not leadership at all. Participant 107
stated, "The kids need to know who he is in charge and who is most accountable, and to me that [passive-avoidant] just takes away that ability to kids." When asked about their most used leadership style, most of the participants took a few moments to consider their response; there was no pause for any of the ten participants when considering their answer for interview question 3.

Interview question 4 asked, "Where did you learn your leadership style?" Multiple participants identified more than one source for their leadership style. All of the ten participants identified at least one mentor-coach who had helped them develop their leadership style. The next most common response was from their high school coaches. Four individuals gave this response. Two of the participants identified their high school coaches as having a positive influence on them while two participants indicated a negative view of the leadership style they learned from their high school coaches. Two participants felt that their parents had helped them develop their leadership style. Participant 110 stated, "My father was the biggest influence on my life not just as a father, of learning how to grow and to be a man but also as a great coach." Participant 104 said, "I grew up in a household with a dad who's a coach." Two participants stated that former administrators played a role in the development of their leadership.

Some participants credited courses in college for their leadership style. For example, Participant 103 stated, "I was a leadership minor in college." Formal leadership courses such as Capturing Kids’ Hearts were also mentioned as being formative. One participant said he felt that age and maturity played a significant role in the development of his leadership style.

The fifth and final guiding question was: "How have your leadership behaviors evolved, and has this evolution changed your leadership style?" Seven participants mentioned how change from a transactional approach to a more transformational approach had caused a shift in
their leadership style, which necessitated an adjustment in their leadership behaviors. For instance, Participant 103 stated, "When I was younger, I was more of a transactional guy."

Two participants identified an increase in their organization as part of their evolution. Participant 106 self-identified with this change of behavior, saying, "I wasn't organized...And I hope I can say I'm 100% different." Participant 106 also indicated how his leadership changed by increasing the amount of knowledge he had gained on how to lead a program; "It took me seven (years) to feel confident that I can go out and be not just a head coach but a difference-maker head coach or feel like I was." Another participant (102) spoke about learning on the job through a trial and error approach that evolved his leadership style. One of the coaches (103) spoke about how he employed a passive-avoidant approach early in his career and now utilizes a transformational approach to leadership.

Themes From the Findings

This study relied heavily on the constant-comparative method to generate themes that reflect the collective voices of participants. As a result, several themes emerged to answer the research question: What are the coaching leadership behaviors and best practices of successful high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in Texas? These themes were leadership development for players away from the court, usage of multiple leadership styles, improving oneself, and the importance of mentors for young coaches. This section begins with an overview of these themes generated from the interviews.

Theme 1: Leadership development and communication for players away from the court. Each of the ten participants in the interview portion of this study spoke about the importance of players’ leadership development away from the court. This theme was the most prevalently reviewed theme that arose during this portion of this study. The idea that coaches are
responsible for growth in their players is not a new one (Lumpkin, 2010; Jowett, 2017; Zaichkowsky, 2006; Vella & Perlman, 2014), and the data obtained from the interviews confirmed that this concept is still valid. Categories that were discovered and found to repeat during this process included:

- Captains
- Coaches responsibility to teach leadership
- Communication (coach to player and player to player)
- Family environment
- Husbands/fathers
- In the future
- Lessons on leadership
- Peer coaching
- Player input into practice planning
- Role assignment

These categories repeated numerous times throughout the interviews and formed the basis of Theme 1: Leadership development and communication for players away from the court. The majority of respondents vocalized a perceived responsibility that they had toward their players to help them identify, develop, and exercise leadership behaviors that would allow their players to be positive leaders. Participant 102 stated that by utilizing transformational leadership with his players, he was equipping them with the ability and permission to change. He declared that "[transformational leadership] gives them the freedom to learn. It is okay to step out on that limb and try." While the coaches interviewed spoke of developing leadership in their players as a method to achieve successful outcomes (winning games) now, the tone and conviction that
they spoke of belied a higher purpose. Participant 101 spoke of how he evolved from identifying success with wins and losses to a viewpoint that sees success from players experiencing personal growth.

I'm also seeing that when I was young it was all about the wins and losses… and now I'm not really concerned about [that]. Over time, it wasn't just my passion for winning, it was my passion for developing people.

Participant 110 spoke of the pride he experienced when seeing his players demonstrate growth in their lives away from basketball, and how that has become his priority with his players. Each of the participants expressed a desire to use their position as basketball coaches to teach young men the leadership skills they felt were essential to help their players become successful citizens, husbands, and fathers after high school.

Effective communication was indicated as one of the keys to success when teaching leadership. When asked to show how they knew their leadership style had been effective, all participants spoke of some form of communication from their players: player to coach, player to player, and coach to player. This emphasis on communication led to participants identifying multiple behaviors that helped their players experience growth in leadership: allowing designated team leaders to have input in practice design, conducting weekly lessons on leadership, assigning roles to players based on their strengths, and providing opportunities for players to "coach" their peers. Participant 102 stated:

I want my players speaking out to coaches and coaching each other. I just think that that is part of that transformational process, teaching those guys how to become leaders and how to be receptive to, you know, peers leading them.

Coach 102 also shared his beliefs on communication:

When I'll see guys coaching each other, when I – you know, one of the toughest things to do as a basketball coach is to get your kids talk on the court. You know, they'll talk everywhere but the court sometimes. And when you have a very vocal practice going or you see guys communicating very well during the game situation, you know, in the heat
of the moment where you're battling somebody that is in your district or in a tournament
or something like that, and your guys are coaching each other and listening to each other,
you can tell it by facial expressions. You can tell it by the, you know, head nod or wink
or something like that that those kids are talking and those guys are working with each
other. That to me, that is proof right there which is not even questionable. It is
unquestioned proof right there that it [the coach's leadership style] is working.

The participants identified strategies that were effective for them and their players, often
noting that the feedback proving the effectiveness of their behaviors often came years later when
former players returned to thank them for how they had instructed them and had helped them
develop their leadership skills. Participant 110 recounted a conversation he had with a former
player:

I got a phone call from a player that played for me 10 years ago and said, "Coach, this is
actually one of the things that happened. Coach, you saved my life. You got me
straightened out, and you taught me how to do this, and now I am being the same to my
children."

The majority of participants spoke about having team captains and the leadership
expected from these players. Each participant discussed his philosophy for team captains and
identified how being in this role allowed players to practice exercising leadership with others.
The methods for selecting the captains were diverse. Two coaches spoke of rotating the team
captains between all players on a game by game basis while two other coaches spoke of allowing
the players themselves to select team captains. Two respondents identified that they selected the
team captains. The remaining four coaches did not specify exactly how they chose captains but
noted they had senior captains on their teams, indicating that older players were expected to fill
that role on the team. The roles that captains were allowed to take also varied. One of the
coaches (105) spoke of how he delegated specific responsibilities to his team captains, including
relatively minor decisions such as what the team would wear during games. Another coach (103)
spoke of using his captains to make more critical decisions such as when to give the team time off from practice during the season.

Seven of the respondents spoke of their desire to create a family environment within their program, and how the development of such an environment allowed them as coaches to more effectively teach leadership to their players. Participant 101 spoke of the importance of showing his players how much he cared for them:

I don't think students or athletes really care how much you know until they know how much you care. And that is one of the things I always was driven to do so that I really had a deep concern and a deep love for each individual player in our squad, even managers, and coaches.

These coaches spoke of using the idea of a family to develop relationships, which in turn created an atmosphere in which the players were more receptive to their coaches’ attempts to teach them how to be leaders. Two of the participants said that was important to them was that the players were gentlemen away from the court. They stated that as coaches, they were intent on providing learning opportunities for their players that facilitated the development of leadership skills apart from basketball.

**Theme 2: Usage of multiple leadership styles.** While none of the participants had difficulty quickly identifying their least used leadership style (passive-avoidant), the majority of the participants had some difficulty quickly identifying which leadership style they used most often. This difficulty arose from the need to use different leadership styles based on specific scenarios and player requirements. As Participant 104 explained, "[I'm] probably a mixture of transactional and transformational. I can't say that I'm definitely either one of those 100%.

Boies, Fiset, and Gill (2015) analyzed the importance of utilizing different leadership styles based on the situation in which leaders find themselves. Key categories that arose to formulate this theme include:
• Careful use of passive-avoidant;
• Passive everywhere else, transactional in coaching;
• Mostly transformational, but some transactional;
• Both transformational and transactional;
• Making a point with passive-avoidant leadership.

While eight of the 10 participants identified transformational leadership as their most utilized style, each of these individuals also spoke of how specific leadership scenarios may require a transactional or even a passive-avoidant approach. The ability of a coach to exercise situational awareness and then implement a strategy based on one of the leadership styles was identified as a critical component of coaching leadership. Each of the 10 participants discussed the need to use both transformational and transactional leadership styles at various times while leading their teams, and seven of the 10 also said that passive-avoidant leadership had a role (albeit a small one that was used carefully) in how they led their teams. Participant 105 summarized this line of thinking by stating, "If you're totally passive with [leadership], then the kids aren't going to have that confidence in a situation I don't think. I wouldn't think any successful coach is a passive leader very often." Three participants could not identify a scenario in which passive-avoidant leadership behaviors would be appropriate; Participant 106 stated, "Passive-avoidant leadership isn't leadership."

During the interview with Participant 101, I observed a physical response when I asked him about passive-avoidant leadership. His body language changed to include what I deemed to be an extremely negative facial expression paired with a defensive body position. During the member checking process, I asked him about this visceral reaction to passive-avoidant
leadership, and he was quite clear with his explanation: passive-avoidant leadership behaviors were unacceptable to him and had no place in his leadership style.

An interesting development from this theme was how the leadership that these coaches use while coaching might be utterly different from the leadership they utilize in other aspects of their lives. One of the participants self-identified as being a very passive person in most aspects of his life, but he said that he employed a mostly transactional approach to his coaching. This participant’s awareness of the importance of being able to utilize multiple leadership styles based on the needs of his players illustrates the significance of using more than one leadership style. The ability to compartmentalize situations, select an appropriate leadership approach, and apply that style to assist players in becoming more successful was identified as an essential component of leadership by multiple participants.

Theme 3: Self-improvement. Another theme that developed as a result of this portion of the study was the importance of improving oneself as a coach to more effectively lead one’s program. Key categories included:

- Coaching clinics
- College courses
- Showing players how to learn
- Talking to other coaches
- Spending time with mentors
- Evolution of leadership

Participants were asked to identify behaviors they used to lead effectively. The majority recognized the importance of continuing to learn as part of a behavior they use with their players. Coaching clinics, time spent with mentors (both within and outside coaching ranks), and
collegiate courses were identified as tools the coaches used to improve themselves. Participant 105 declared his attempts at continual growth with the following statement, "I always go out and try to educate myself reading books and watching videos or just to have a simple discussion with other coaches, going to coaches' clinics to try to make myself better." Each participant spoke of a strong intrinsic and extrinsic expectation that coaches should be on a constant quest for improvement. Much of this improvement centers around the actual coaching abilities that the coaches possess (drill work, set plays, how to handle specific situations, and so on). Coaches clinics, time spent talking with fellow coaches, and reading books were all strategies utilized by coaches to improve their craft. Participant 103 spoke of his perceived importance of self-improvement, stating, "If I'm not improving as a coach, I can't lead my players like I should."

One participant spoke of the perceived importance of allowing his players to see the steps and strategies he uses to improve. He hoped that by seeing their leader in a constant quest for improvement, players would seek to develop a similar expectation of improvement for themselves.

Improving one's leadership also emerged as a critical component in this theme. The participants expressed how they continued to find ways to improve themselves as leaders. Identified steps included continuing their education, volunteering in professional organizations (such as the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches), participating in church activities designed to increase leadership, and reading books on leadership. As Participant 103 mentioned, "I think reading books is going to be something to always consider, something to deal with leadership." Three participants spoke of a personal yearning to learn more and more as their careers advanced; by learning how to become a better leader, they hoped to become more effective leaders for their players.
One of the more interesting responses came from Participant 104 after the recorder had been turned off. While he and I were engaging in the member checking process, he stated that his participation in this study and knowing that he was going to be asked questions about his leadership made him think deeply about how he exercised leadership. He said that the survey had been difficult for him because the questions forced him to examine the leadership behaviors he utilized with his players and caused him to reflect on whether or not those behaviors were leading to his intended outcomes. Participant 104 told me that this study was causing him to examine if the leadership styles and behaviors he used were teaching players how to lead, so he became motivated to improve for the sake of his players.

**Theme 4: The importance of mentors, especially for younger coaches.** During the interview process, the participants mentioned the importance of finding mentors, especially for young coaches. Jones, Harris, and Miles (2009) have identified mentoring as a significant resource in the education and career progression of sports coaches. Despite over 25 years of average experience, all participants said that they continue to seek mentors. Each of the coaches who participated spoke of individuals who have played (and continue to play) an instrumental role in their growth as leaders. Some of the more common categories that emerged during this study include:

- My administrator;
- A coach I respect;
- My dad (as coach);
- My first head coach;
- Mentoring (assistant coaches, younger coaches, and self);
- My high school coach(es).
A prevailing theme that emerged during this study dealt with the belief that younger coaches need to find older, more experienced mentors to help them with their individual growth. Participant 102 said, "I would say one [mentor coach] that has probably had a big impact on things I do was [name redacted]." Participant 107 offered his thoughts on this subject, saying, "I think it is really important for young coaches to have good mentors and not be put out on an island or expected to do too much without leadership." The mentors do not necessarily need to come from the coaching ranks; Participant 104 stated that at least two of the schools where he served as head coach, the mentor who provided the most meaningful relationship was not a member of the coaching staff, but an administrator or another non-coaching figure. He described this relationship by stating,

I heard … my principal at [redacted] … tell a kid, "Hey, if you're not going to be able to handle, you know, the way we do things here, we'll help you find somewhere to be more successful." I've used that many times since.

The importance of a mentor comes not from the position the mentor occupies, but from the relationship that develops and the growth that occurs as a result of that relationship.

An interesting aspect that emerged during this study was how not all mentor relationships led to positive outcomes. Participant 110 stated, "The coach that I felt like was the worst coach I've ever seen in my life, you can learn from that too. You learn how not to do things."

Mentoring relationships are normally identified in positive terms (Jones, Harris, & Miles, 2009; White, Schempp, McCullick, & Elliott, 2017), but this coach was adamant in his negative description of the relationship he had with another individual. However, this coach utilized his experience to identify behaviors that he knew he should avoid.

Nine of the participants touched on the role that his high school basketball coach had played in his development. None of these nine coaches talked about learning about the game of
basketball and how to be more successful in the physical components of the game; each of them spoke of the life lessons that they learned, and in two cases, continue to learn from their mentors. These men spoke of the importance of the relationship that had developed between them and their mentors and how the lessons they learned when they were teenagers continue to resound and exert influence over them well into adulthood. The voice of Participant 107 broke slightly when he described his high school coaches, saying,

You know, even in high school, our coach always made us feel like we are part of it. And not just players are playing under him, but we are, you know, members of his family. We were always, always a part of the plan. Always made you feel like you were part of the plan. But I don’t know. My high school coaches have been a huge part of it. I thank God I had great coaches.

The participants also expressed that as a head coach, they were responsible for mentoring their assistants. Seven participants said that when they were assistants, their coaches were their mentors. Four of the participants said they felt responsible to serve as mentors to their assistants in the same manner in which they had been served. Participant 101 identified the importance of mentoring his assistants not only to benefit the assistant as an individual, but also to benefit the program as a whole:

Ask them what they want to do. What are your strengths and weaknesses that you feel like are a benefit to this program and where do you see you helping this program be better? Then help them grow. Let them make some choices, and therefore you have more buy-in that way.

Participant 106 spoke of his failure in this aspect as a head coach, saying, "I'm not near as effective teaching my assistant to be more effective as he (this coach's mentor) was with me, and I need to be better." A coach (Participant 107) expressed a desire for his sons, each of whom is in college studying to become coaches, to learn more about leadership styles and how to make themselves more effective by spending time with older, more experienced leaders. Another participant (103) lamented the fact that no formal mentoring program for leadership existed
when he first began his coaching career. He had been forced to seek out a mentor, an individual who, “…taught me how to be a better leader than I ever could have become on my own. He didn’t have to do that; he just did.” He believed that the development of a formalized program to teach young coaches about leadership and how to exert it would be of great benefit to young coaches entering the profession.

Summary

This chapter began with an introduction to this study and the research questions that were investigated. Then, a review of the research focus and processes that were utilized was articulated along with an analysis of the survey data and the interview questions. Major themes that arose from the interview data were investigated and discussed, including how the collected data answered the research questions. The following chapter includes a discussion of the summary of the findings, implications for practice, recommendations for future research, and conclusion.
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The leadership styles and behaviors of youth coaches, including high school basketball coaches, have been a matter of concern for researchers particularly in the past 50 years (Misasi et al., 2016). This concern lies mainly in how coaches have been found to have significant influence over the young people they oversee (Misasi et al., 2016). The purpose of this study was to identify the leadership styles and behaviors used by successful high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in Texas. This study was designed to identify which of the three leadership behaviors (transactional leadership, transformational leadership, and passive-avoidant leadership) were utilized by these coaches most often, and which leadership behaviors these coaches used to implement their leadership behaviours effectively. Two research questions guided this study: (a) What is the coaching leadership style of successful high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in Texas? (b) What are the coaching leadership behaviors and best practices of successful high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in Texas? Surveys were sent to coaches located throughout the state of Texas, and interviews were conducted with 10 of the survey participants to explore the subject in depth.

This explanatory sequential mixed-methods study included analysis of data collected from successful Texas high school boys' basketball coaches. The data were collected through surveys and interviews. Both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed and interpreted. Quantitative data were collected using a 5-point Likert-type scale to measure successful Texas high school varsity boys' basketball coaches preferred styles of leadership. The survey instrument used was the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) 5X-Short, which was developed by Bass and Avolio (1995; see Appendix D). Data were analyzed using descriptive
The data allowed me to identify the leadership styles used most often as well as the leadership behaviors used most commonly by successful Texas high school varsity boys' basketball coaches. Qualitative data was collected through interviews. The qualitative data were analyzed using open coding to determine emerging themes.

Chapter 5 focuses on the interpretation of research findings and related recommendations. The specific implications of each of the major themes are addressed, and recommendations for action within coaching and future study are identified. The chapter ends with reflections and conclusions.

**Interpretation of the Findings**

**Research question 1: What is the coaching leadership style of successful high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in Texas?** This question was answered in the quantitative portion of the study. Coaches preferred transformational and transactional leadership styles. Passive-avoidant leadership was not a preferred leadership style compared to the average for United States. Coaches identified with transactional leadership at a higher rate than the average leader in the United States. The responses from the survey indicated that successful high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in Texas use both transformational and transactional leadership styles while avoiding passive-avoidant leadership.

The qualitative portion of this study also addressed the first research question. Eight of the 10 coaches indicated that transformational leadership was their most commonly used leadership style while the other two participants identified transactional leadership as their most frequently used leadership style.
There were several commonalities between the quantitative and qualitative portions of this study. Multiple coaches recognized the need to utilize both transformational and transactional leadership styles rather than using only one leadership style. Almost all (90%) of the coaches who participated in the qualitative portion of the study expressed a negative view of passive-avoidant leadership; three of the coaches were unable to identify a single positive use of passive-avoidant leadership. One of the coaches, Participant 106, stated that "passive-avoidant leadership isn't leadership."

Theme 2 (usage of multiple leadership styles) provided an explanation to research question 1. Participants in the qualitative portion of the study indicated a need for coaches to utilize numerous leadership styles while working with their players. When dealing with teenagers, not every situation is the same, so a single approach to leadership is foolhardy at best and negligent at worst. The young men who play for these coaches deserve to be given the best possible opportunity to be successful, which requires their coaches to be flexible enough to adjust how they lead based on the scenario at hand. All 10 participants expressed their agreement with the idea of using multiple leadership styles; Participant 110 indicated that coaches being open to change allows players "to understand, buy in if you will. And then by doing that, then they can become a part of the process." None of the coaches demonstrated a preference for passive-avoidant leadership; however, it retains the potential to be a productive component of a leadership framework for high school coaches along with both transformational and transactional leadership.

Theme 4 (the importance of mentors, especially for young coaches) addressed the importance of mentors. White, et al. (2017) have identified two functions of a mentoring
relationship: psychosocial support and career development. These functions are crucial to the successful growth of an individual. Burns (1978) has defined transformational leadership as a leadership style marked by an interaction between individuals; leaders and followers work to raise one another to achieve a higher level of motivation and personal growth. The connection between transformational leadership and mentorship is plain; mentors who seek opportunities to help others grow to reach their full potential are transformational in their leadership. Data from quantitative as well as qualitative parts of this study indicated that successful high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in Texas are more transformational than the average leaders in the United States. Data from the interviews also confirmed that to achieve their full potential, young or inexperienced coaches could benefit from mentorship.

**Research question 2: What are the coaching leadership behaviors successful high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in Texas?** This research question was answered by the data obtained from the qualitative portion of this study. In Theme 1 (Leadership development and communication for players away from the court), the coaches pinpointed a perceived responsibility to their players to assist them in identifying, developing, and exercising leadership behaviors that would lead to the development of these young men as confident leaders. This responsibility manifested itself in a variety of coaching leadership behaviors, which included assigning players team roles that capitalized on their strengths, allowing players to provide input during practice planning and design, and providing opportunities to coach their peers. For many of the interview participants, the feedback that indicated that their coaching leadership behaviors were beneficial came years after a player had graduated; former players returned to thank their
coaches for the lessons they had learned during the opportunities to develop their leadership abilities.

The participants identified communication as a leadership behavior critical to the leadership development described in Theme 1. Participants directed their players' communication with a variety of techniques. All 10 coaches aimed to teach players to communicate openly and effectively. Participant 102 spoke of developing a leadership culture in which his players were expected to coach one another:

And, you know again, I think it is - when you hear your head coach say, "If we're the only ones leading, if we're the only one's coaching, we're not near as good as we can be. You guys have got to coach each other. There has to be more than just one voice or more than two or three coaches' voices here for us to be as good we can be." And that - to me, that gives them the, I don't know, permission or freedom or whatever terms you want to use to go ahead and step into that role.

This coach indicated that he correlated his players' willingness to communicate with one another and their coach with leadership growth.

Seven of the participants spoke of their intention to develop a family environment within their program, and how such an environment allowed coaches to more effectively teach and model leadership to their players. Coaches used basketball as a tool to build relationships with players and then leverage those relationships to instill leadership behaviors in their players.

Multiple coaches discussed intentional leadership sessions with their players, both on a team and individual basis, as a practice that assisted them in fulfilling their obligation to develop their players into effective husbands, fathers, and employees. The coaches identified these positions as leadership roles away from the court.

In Theme 3 (self-improvement), the interview participants identified their personal need to continue learning as a crucial component of effective leadership. Behaviors that were singled
out included attending coaching clinics, spending time with mentors and peers, and continuing their education. These were all described as best practices for effective leadership. The importance of allowing players to see how a coach was constantly and consistently seeking growth opportunities was integral to players’ leadership development. Observing their coaches in an on-going quest for improvement might encourage players to also explore growth opportunities.

Findings discussed in Theme 4 (the importance of mentors, especially for young coaches) confirmed the importance of finding mentors for coaches’ leadership development and improvement. This concept was given particular emphasis in the leadership development of young coaches. The coaches spoke of how they continue to seek mentoring relationships within and outside coaching ranks in order to grow as leaders. The data indicated how mentoring relationships might be used to assist younger coaches in gaining a complete understanding of their leadership styles, thereby making them more effective leaders.

Multiple participants identified the guidance they had received from their high school coaches as a crucial factor in their growth and success as adults. The relationships intentionally built with their coaches led to a desire to serve in the same role with their players. Theme 4 explored the importance of high school coaches to the leadership development of their players, with the lessons learned to continue to serve these men years after they were taught.

Previous research has failed to identify optimal coaching behaviors and those factors that may influence the effectiveness of particular leadership behaviors (Williams et al., 2003). Additional studies have not designated any consistent preferred leadership style in coaching, particularly at the high school level (Murray, 2006; Becker & Wrisberg, 2008). The findings of
this study provide positive responses to previous studies by identifying transformational and transactional leadership as effective leadership styles.

**Implications in Coaching**

The findings of this study have the following implications for change in the coaching of high school basketball players and programs. First, coaches need to be aware of their leadership styles and how the application of these styles may impact their players. Multiple coaches in the qualitative portion of this study stated that their participation in this study had forced them to think about how they exercised leadership and caused them to examine whether or not their leadership behaviors were leading to their expected results. Athletic directors and athletic departments may need to provide their coaches with the opportunity to complete a self-inventory such as the MLQ 5X Short to better understand their leadership styles.

Second, coaches need to seek out mentoring relationships; they need to be both mentees and mentors. Younger coaches would benefit from the knowledge gained from a mentor, becoming more effective as leaders as they observe their mentors and how their leadership style and leadership behaviors lead to successful outcomes for their players. Younger coaches would benefit from the opportunity to find leadership styles and behaviors they may wish to emulate as well as leadership styles and behaviors they may want to avoid. The time spent as a mentor would force more experienced coaches to constantly evaluate their leadership style and behaviors. Time spent as a mentee would allow coaches the opportunity to continue their personal growth and education as leaders.

Third, coaches must purposefully use communication to teach leadership to their players. Players must be encouraged to communicate openly and actively with others; they must be given
opportunities to practice leadership with their peers. Coaches should provide players both academic and practical examples of what effective leadership looks like and how it is wielded in a variety of settings. Coaches must learn to be more effective communicators. They should use both transformational and transactional leadership strategies to teach their players the importance of leading others with strength and decency.

**Recommendations for Action and Further Study**

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, there are a number of recommendations for additional research. First, researchers should expand this study to investigate the leadership styles and behaviors of coaches in other sports. This expansion should include coaches of female team sports such as volleyball, girls' basketball, and softball. Such a study would give coaches, athletic directors, and athletic departments the opportunity to identify the leadership styles that successful coaches in those sports utilize. This could help them hire coaches with leadership styles and leadership behaviors that could provide players with the most opportunities to experience growth and success. Opportunities like these have guided my passion for this topic and my desire to see it carried further in the future.

Second, researchers might wish to expand this particular study on a regional or national basis. The findings of this study indicate that successful high school varsity boys' basketball coaches in the state of Texas prefer to utilize transformational and transactional leadership, but coaches in other areas of the country may find another combination of leadership styles to be more effective. Exploring this topic in regions of the United States outside of Texas would increase the understanding of the leadership styles and leadership behaviors that lead to
successful outcomes for players thereby improving the overall efficiency of coaching leadership throughout the country.

My third recommendation is that researchers explore the relationship that exists between coaches’ successes as coaches and classroom teachers. In examining the interview responses, I noticed a strong emphasis on coaches being leaders in all areas of the school, including in the classroom. This initiated an interest in developing a greater understanding of any links that may exist between successful coaching behaviors and successful teaching behaviors.

Finally, researchers might want to explore the role of mentorship in developing a coaches’ leadership style. All of the coaches who participated in the qualitative portion of this study identified the importance of mentors in the development of their leadership style and their implementation of leadership behaviors. A more in-depth exploration of exactly how mentors influence their mentees’ leadership styles may provide a framework for the expansion of professional development opportunities designed to promote effective leadership styles and leadership behaviors. I feel strongly that giving coaches a chance to improve their coaching leadership behaviors would be welcomed, and many more young people would be positively impacted by coaches who recognize how to best use their leadership styles and leadership behaviors.

Reflections

Throughout my profession as a coach, I have observed many coaches who have both positively and negatively used their leadership styles and leadership behaviors to impact young people. My love for young people, coupled with my love of the game of basketball, compelled me to grasp a more complete understanding of how the best coaches in my profession use their
leadership to impact their players. I spent hours in dialogue with some of the best high school boys' basketball coaches the state of Texas in the attempt to gain insight into how they have maintained high levels of success. All of the coaches I spoke with conveyed an overwhelming sense of responsibility to help their players not only become the best players they could be, but more importantly, to become the best men they could be. Regardless of whether these coaches utilized transformational or transactional leadership, they all had a common goal: to create men out of boys. Their passion in achieving this noble calling, in turn, fuels my passion to help coaches across my state, and hopefully one day my country, to be more completely prepared to positively impact their players in the same way.

I appreciate the honesty with which these coaches shared their experiences with leadership and coaching. Their willingness to open up and respond to my questions with honesty was enlightening and provided me the opportunity to inspect precisely what makes these coaches more successful than their peers. Each of the interview participants had coached in at least one state championship game. As a group, the coaches have collectively won over 10 state championships.

Qualitative research, by its very nature, carries with it the possibility of the researcher's biases (e.g., values and beliefs) affecting the tone of the interview and the subsequent interpretation of results. While I have striven to minimize these biases, I cannot completely rule them out. The coaches whom I interviewed are members of the same professional organization to which I belong (Texas Association of Basketball Coaches) and may share many of the same beliefs and values that I do. It is possible that the manner in which the participants of the qualitative portion of this study responded to me represents a form of bias. However, I found the
interview experience to be an enlightening learning experience that both challenged and confirmed my previously held conceptions on this research topic. Conducting this research study was a compelling learning experience for me and has proven to be well worth the time I have spent attempting to gain a deeper and more complete understanding of this topic.

**Conclusion**

This study sought to contribute to the broader literature on the leadership styles and leadership behaviors used by successful Texas high school varsity boys' basketball coaches. Using an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, this study has illuminated the leadership styles, leadership behaviors, and best practices utilized by championship high school varsity boys' basketball coaches. The quantitative findings indicated reliance upon both transformational leadership and transactional leadership styles. Findings for the qualitative research indicated a pronounced preference for transformational leadership as well as a powerful desire to instill positive leadership behaviors within the players under the coaches' influence.

Viewed together, the quantitative and qualitative findings indicate that both transformational and transactional leadership styles are valuable in the development of coaching leadership styles and behaviors that have the potential to positively impact players’ outcomes. This study suggests that coaches, athletic directors, and athletic departments should strive to increase coaches’ level of awareness of their leadership styles, leadership behaviors, and best practices to more effectively achieve positive outcomes for their players and programs.
References


Appendix A: IRB Approval

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
Educating Students for Christian Service and Leadership Throughout the World
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
320 Hardin Administration Building, ACU Box 29103, Abilene, Texas 79699-9103
325-674-2883
11/9/2017

Joshua Jones
Department of Educational Leadership
Abilene Christian University

Dear Mr. Jones,

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board, I am pleased to inform you that your project titled "What are the leadership behaviors of championship basketball coaches?" (IRB# 17-081) is exempt from review under Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46.101(b)(2)).

If at any time the details of this project change, please resubmit to the IRB so the committee can determine whether or not the exempt status is still applicable.

I wish you well with your work.

Sincerely,

Megan Roth
Megan Roth, Ph.D.
Director of Research and Sponsored Programs
Appendix B: Permission to Use Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

For use by Joshua Jones only. Received from Mind Garden, Inc. on October 23, 2017

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to grant permission for the above named person to use the following copyright material for his/her research:

Instrument: Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

Authors: Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass

Copyright: 1995 by Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass

Five sample items from this instrument may be reproduced for inclusion in a proposal, thesis, or dissertation.

The entire instrument may not be included or reproduced at any time in any published material.

Sincerely,

Robert Most
Mind Garden, Inc.
www.mindgarden.com
Appendix C: Sample Recruitment Email

Coaches--

My name is Josh Jones, and I am a doctoral candidate at Abilene Christian University. I am conducting a study entitled, *What are the leadership behaviors of high school basketball coaches?* and seek your participation. For the past 16 years, I have coached basketball, serving as the head coach at Liberty High School and Millsap High School, and serving as an assistant at Weatherford, A&M Consolidated, and Granbury High Schools.

You have been invited to participate in this study because you have coached a team to the regional tournament at some point in your career, which is a characteristic that marks you as a successful coach. I am seeking your participation in completing an online survey (which may be accessed at the following link: [redacted]) that will take you approximately 15 minutes to complete. The survey is mobile-friendly, and may be completed on your phone or by computer. I will also be seeking twelve coaches to participate in an additional interview; if you are interested in doing so, please contact me by email (redacted) or phone (redacted).

It is my hope, once all research has been completed, to share the findings with coaches so that we can all become more successful in how we shape young people into the best that they can become. I have seen first-hand how willing coaches are to share information with one another, and I hope you will share your knowledge with me by participating in this study.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Yours in basketball,

Josh Jones
Appendix D: Samples From the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

MLQ 5X

Name of Instrument: Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Form 5X-Short)

Authors: Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass

Sample Items:

Forty-five descriptive statements are listed on the following pages. Judge how frequently each statement fits you. The word “others” may mean your peers, clients, direct reports, supervisors, and/all of these individuals.

1. I seek differing perspectives when solving problems.

2. I make clear what one can expect to receive when performance goals are achieved.

3. I consider an individual as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others.

4. I show that I am a firm believer in “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.”

5. I heighten others’ desire to succeed.

For use by Joshua Jones only. Received from Mind Garden, Inc. on October 23, 2017

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Appendix E: Interview Protocol

**Interview Guide**

**Background Information on Interviewee**
Date: __________________________
Name: __________________________
School: _________________________

**Review of Participant Rights Related to This Interview**

Initial Statement of Inquiry: Before we begin with the interview questions, I would like to tell you about my study:

The purpose of this mixed-method study is to identify leadership styles and behaviors of the Texas high school varsity boys’ basketball coaches whose teams reached regional tournament play, with emphasis given to those coaches who reached a regional tournament at the conclusion of the 2016-2017 season, thereby earning them the distinction of championship coaches. It is the intent of this study to use the knowledge gleaned from the research to help coaches analyze their own leadership style with the hopes of becoming effective leaders and have a positive impact on their athletes. Participation is voluntary, and participants are free to end their participation in this study at any time. There are no risks associated with participating in this study.

To provide clarity of my topic, I would like to define transactional leadership, transformational leadership, and passive-avoidant leadership.

**Transactional leadership.** Leadership behavior is marked by interaction between individuals, with one individual serving in a leadership capacity, to conduct an exchange of items of value.

**Transformational leadership.** Leadership behavior is marked by interaction between individuals, with leaders and followers who work to raise one another to achieve a higher level of motivation and personal growth.

**Passive-avoidance leadership.** Leadership behavior marked by a lack of involvement (laissez-faire leadership) or passive approach (management by exception: passive leadership) to leadership.

Tell me about your leadership.

**Follow Up Questions**

1: **Which leadership style do you use most frequently?**
   - What evidence can you think of that makes you feel this is your most frequently used leadership style?
   - Why do you think this is?
2: What are the effects of your most frequently used leadership style on your players?
   • What behaviors do you utilize that would make you think this leadership style is effective for your players?
   • How do you communicate this leadership style to your players?
   • How do you know this style and the behaviors that correspond to this leadership style are effective?

3: You have identified your most frequently used leadership style. Which style do you utilize least frequently?
   • What evidence can you think of that shows this is your least frequently used leadership style?
   • What is it about this leadership style that leads you to utilize it the least?
   • Are there times when you might find the use of this leadership style effective? If no, please explain why not. If yes, please give some examples of times it might be effective to use this leadership style.

4: Where did you learn your leadership style?
   • Did your leadership style come from another coach/mentor? If yes, please explain how this coach influenced your leadership style. If no, what behaviors have you seen expressed in other coaches/mentors that you have tried to avoid?
   • What leadership behaviors mark your leadership style?

5: Think back to your early years in coaching. How have your leadership behaviors evolved, and has this evolution changed your leadership style?
   • Have you ever utilized a different leadership style from what you use more frequently now? If no, why do you think this is? If yes, what led you to make a change?
   • If you answered no to the previous question, do you foresee a scenario in which you might change? Explain your answer.
   • Have you ever been asked by a supervisor (principal, athletic director, superintendent, etc.) to change your leadership style or leadership behaviors? If no, why do you this is? If yes, what was the result?

Thank you very much for taking the time to participate in this interview.
## Appendix F: Coding Matrix

Research Question #2: What are the coaching leadership behaviors and best practices of successful high school varsity boys’ basketball coaches in Texas?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
<th>Evidence &amp; Sub-Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1. Leadership development for players away from the court</td>
<td>Captains</td>
<td>Student leaders within a basketball program.</td>
<td>“You would have captains’ meetings and discuss before practice would begin, what your intent, your goals were concerned with as far as the overall expectations within practice and then those captains would take it out on the court and do those types of things that we’re demanding in championship-type situations.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach’s responsibility to teach leadership</td>
<td>Responsibility self-identified by participants to intentionally teach leadership to players.</td>
<td>“And so overall, as I coached for 25 years, that was one of my main interests, was to help make people better leaders.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication – coach to player</td>
<td>Interviewees referring to how they spoke to their players.</td>
<td>“I think with today’s players, coaches are one of the few entities that actually interact with them on a face-to-face basis.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication – player to player</td>
<td>Interviewees referring to how their players spoke to one another.</td>
<td>“When I see guys coaching each other, when you have a very vocal practice going or you see guys communicating very well during the game situation, you know, in the heat of the moment where you’re battling somebody that is in your district or in a tournament or something like that, and your guys are coaching each other and listening to each other.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Family environment                 | Culture within the basketball program where all participants feel supported and important. | “I want it to be a family environment. I think most coaches see that as a very important piece to the puzzle that you’re trying to put together every season is, you want this team to be as close as it can be. And when in putting all the effort that you put in, the hard work you
<table>
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<th>Subhead</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quotes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Husbands and fathers</td>
<td>Roles interviewees identified for their players to assume in the future.</td>
<td>“What will they become as men and did you have a part in helping them become the leader that you feel like you are as a coach and that you’re putting forth to them?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the future</td>
<td>Time period after high school.</td>
<td>“I’m trying to build leaders for the future, trying to get kids to learn how to be a leader when they get out of high school.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership lesson</td>
<td>Intentional instruction given by coaches to players to help them learn leadership skills and techniques.</td>
<td>“I meet with my kids every Wednesday and we do a little lesson. It could have to do with scripture. Sometimes, most of the times, it is what we call our leadership study, and so we’re talking about leadership and understanding that, you know, the most important way to lead is not from the front but always look behind or within the group as much as possible.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer coaching</td>
<td>Athletes taking the initiative to speak out and instruct their peers.</td>
<td>“I want my players speaking out to coaches and coaching each other.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Player input</td>
<td>Allowing players a stake and a voice into planning; typically associated with practice planning.</td>
<td>“And then there are times, you know, where as we get further along with season or I feel like they’re kind of getting that way, I’ll let them design some practice stuff. ‘Hey, what do we need to work on after this game? What do you think?’”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role assignment</td>
<td>Identified roles for players to assume with the team.</td>
<td>“Of course, we have our team captains but we also will make you know, each week we rotate our kids out with making a kid that will be a leader. So we try to make you know, different kids have different type of roles that were there.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2. Usage of multiple leadership styles</td>
<td>Careful use of passive-avoidant situations where passive-</td>
<td>“So I guess in that instance for those five minutes, I took myself totally out in this passive and...”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
avoidant leadership might be used to prove a point.  

**Passive in life, transactional in coaching**  
Using two different leadership styles in different aspects of their lives.  

“I had to learn how to be transactional because my personality was passive avoidance and I’m still passive avoidance in a lot of other areas of my life.”

**Transformational and transactional**  
Using both transformational and transactional leadership styles in their leadership.

“I’m probably a mixture of transactional and transformational, probably. I can’t say that I’m definitely either one of those 100%.”

**Using multiple styles**  
Interviewees indicated the need to be comfortable with multiple leadership styles in order to select styles to go with situations.

“I don’t think it is black and white, first of all. You have to be able to see what the situation needs and change accordingly.”

**#3. Improving yourself**  
Coaching clinics  
Instructional learning times attended by coaches; intended to be used for professional growth.

“I always go out and try to educate myself … going to coaches’ clinics to try to make myself better.”

**College/ instructional courses**  
Leadership specific courses; may be at the university level or organization-sponsored (Capturing Kids Hearts).

“The Capturing Kids’ Heart Training really kind of changed my look on just how I interact with my students in class, my players in – on the court and do my own thing, you know, kind of stuff.”

**Continue to learn**  
Mindset marked a desire to continue to learn throughout life.

“If I’m not improving as a coach, I can’t lead my players like I should.”

**Evolution of leadership**  
The concept that an individual’s leadership changes over time.

“I think [my leadership] has changed and if anybody says that their leadership style doesn’t change especially when you’ve been here as long as I have, 38 years; I think they’re not telling you the truth. If you don’t change, you will not be successful.”
| Mentor | A more experienced individual serving as an advisor. | “He was always been a mentor for me and he has been retired for about 15 years, but he is at all of our games.” |
| Showing players how to learn | The idea from the interviewees that they as coaches need to purposefully show their players how they themselves continue to learn. | “The more the guys have seen me try to learn, the more they’re willing to learn themselves. When they see me searching for answers, they aren’t as afraid to ask about things they don’t know.” |
| Talking to other coaches | Strategy used by coaches to improve their personal coaching. | “He let me go to his practices. So I’d go to his practices. Then we just had conversations, we kept going and we’ve got a great relationship. I mean I’m definitely the coach I am today because he took the time and interest and helped me out along the way as a young coach.” |
| Time with mentors | Leadership learned from time spent with mentors. | “But my two coaches in high school were just fantastic. We’re still great friends today. My high school coach is retired but he comes and watches our games. At least once a month we touch base.” |

#4. The importance of mentors

| Administrator | Individual serving as a school leader. | “He’s currently a superintendent of a big school district.” |
| Coach I respect | Fellow coach worthy of respect. | “You know, I’ve learned from a lot of guys that I’ve coached with. I would say one that is probably had a big impact on things to do was [name redacted]. He is the ultimate optimist and it doesn’t matter what the situation is on the court or off the court, his glass was always half full. And I’ve always been really impressed with that. I’ve always admired that about him.” |

| Dad as coach | Male parent who also served as a basketball coach during his/her coaching career. | “My father was the biggest influence on my life not just as a father, of learning how to grow” |
| First head coach | The first coach the participant worked under as a basketball coach. | “The guy I worked for 15 years. He’s very successful. I learned from him you can’t do the same thing every time because you got to know the situation and get to know the kid.” |
| Mentor | A more experienced individual serving as an advisor. | “He was always been a mentor for me and he has been retired for about 15 years, but he is at all of our games.” |
| Mentoring – Assistant Coaches | The need for the head coach to engage in mentoring activities with the assistant coaches as the recipients. | “You’ve got to make those assistants feel like they’re part of it, that they’re not just a person that is, you know, filling the position or title or so forth. They’ve got to feel like they are needed. And let them take that and run with it, whatever they want to do.” |
| Mentoring – Self | The need for the coach to participate as the recipient of mentorship activities. | “When I came to him, I’d only coached one year and I was really bad at it. I have no idea how to coach. He showed me how to do all that.” |
| Mentoring – Younger Coaches | Represents the need for coaches new to the profession to be on the receiving end of a mentoring relationship. | “Sometimes as kids I think – as young coaches, they might not want to feel like they don’t know or that they need help. I would just suggest that young coaches beginning are very open to reaching out and asking questions and getting help and not being afraid of that.” |
| My high school coaches | The individuals the participants played for while they were in high school. | “My high school coaches have been a huge part of it. And thank God I had great coaches.” |
| Time with mentors | Leadership learned from time spent with mentors. | “But my two coaches in high school were just fantastic. We’re still great friends today. My high school coach is retired but he comes and watches our games. At least once a month we touch base.” |