ADMINISTRATOR PERCEPTIONS OF HOUSE SYSTEMS, DISTRIBUTED
LEADERSHIP, AND CROSS-GRADE LEVEL RELATIONSHIPS IN CLASSICAL
CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to examine the perceptions of administrators at classical Christin schools who have implemented a house system in their student population, specifically looking at their impact on distributing leadership and cross-grade level relationships. Little research exists on house systems and whether they fulfill the desired goals created to improve the school. The researcher chose a qualitative approach to explore administrator perceptions in this recent resurgence of house systems in classical Christian schools. The researcher interviewed 10 school administrators from schools around the country.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to Nichole, my wife, and best friend. Nichole, your faith in me through this has given me what I need to complete this work. Thank you for all your sacrifice and encouragement along this journey.

Acknowledgements

To Dr. Sheila Hill, who has been a true Godsend for me in this work. Your loving encouragement and clear direction gave me just what I needed each time to move forward. You are a continued blessing in my life.

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Dorothy Sayers' essay entitled *The Lost Tools of Learning* motivated pastor and author Douglas Wilson to start a public school alternative for his daughter in Moscow, Idaho, in 1984 (Council & Cooper, 2011). The school he started was a classical Christian school that combined "a Christian worldview with educational methodologies from the ancient Greeks, ancient Romans, and Middle Ages known as the Trivium" (Dernlan, 2013, p. 14). These types of schools now found all over the country believe that "education is the making of a man," rather than training for future employment (Perrin, 2004, p. 10). Due to this wholistic view that classical Christian schools have on education, many schools have begun instituting house systems within their student population in order to foster this more all-encompassing educational goal (Zoeller, 2018). Thomas (2016) defined school "house systems" as a way of organizing "students into smaller groups within their school, each having its own defined identity, for the purpose of social engagement, distributed leadership among students, and mentorship" (p. 2).

With the trend of classical schools implementing these house systems, Zoeller (2018) noted that there is a lack of data from administrators, teachers, and student perceptions regarding house systems (p. 1). Zoeller also commented that there is "little research and empirical literature" to provide administrators the needed information to consider creating these systems within their schools (p. 1). This lack of research also presents the problem regarding understanding if the house systems fulfill the intended goals that they were created to accomplish (Brennan, 2012, p. 328; Zoeller, 2018, p. 14). Specifically, whether the house system impacts distributed student leadership and cross-grade level relationships is unclear. The scope of this study was to address the variables

of distributed leadership and cross-grade level relationships in classical Christian high schools.

Background, Context, and Framework

In the early 16th century, house systems were created in boarding schools in the areas of England and Wales (Dierenfield, 1975; Marland, 2002; Pounds, 1968). Within these boarding schools, students were assigned a place to live, with each dorm given a name to differentiate them; thus, the concept of a house name was created (Dierenfield, 1975). Administrators of these schools began to see a vision for applying these dorm names in a more extensive way than just grouping students, such as utilizing the groupings for various student interactions, including intramural programs and leadership opportunities within the houses. In the late 1970s, the Board of Education in England saw the benefits of the house system as a way to help students socially and so mandated house systems within all schools (Marland, 2002). This trend of house systems never was instituted within the American high school educational system but instead got its beginning in the late 1900s through the universities (Fleenor, 2009, p. 36). Harvard University was one of the earliest to institute house systems and still to this day has houses within the school culture (Jencks & Riesman, 1962; Harvard College, 2022).

House systems have begun to see a resurgence in pockets of American education. Part of this new interest in house systems can be attributed to the worldwide popularity of the book *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by Rowling and GrandPré (1998), which reintroduced the idea of house systems within an educational system. Not tied to or influenced by these books specifically, classical Christian schools began utilizing house systems to improve various aspects of school culture.

Thomas (2016) discovered in her interviews with school leaders of classical

Christian schools that the major reasons house systems appealed to them was a "desire to

see a stronger connection between grade levels, increased mentoring of students, and

more leadership positions within the school" (p. 104). Zoeller (2018) described the

various functions and goals schools have used in house systems, including "academic

counseling, curriculum development, friendly competitions, social opportunities,

leadership experience, and pastoral care" (p. 5). This resurgence in house systems

highlights a lack of research in recent years to how effective these systems are at

fulfilling the intended goals they were set up to accomplish.

Statement of the Problem

Little research has been done on house systems in classical Christian schools

since it has gained popularity. Often, house systems have been used for *positive public

relations* and have been unable to directly cite specific data and studies to know if the

house system is accomplishing the stated goals (Zoeller, 2018). The current study aimed

to build upon the little data regarding house systems by asking administrators about their

perceptions of how well house systems are helping provide their student body with social

engagement among grade levels and distributed leadership among students. Classical

Christian schools desire deeply to educate the entire student, and house systems are a way

in which classical Christian educators and administrators have sought to fulfill this by

providing areas of opportunities for personal growth and relationships (Wilson, 1991).

In one of the only recent studies on classical Christian house systems, Thomas

(2016) interviewed 10 school administrators, asking why they chose to implement house

systems. Thomas concluded that administrators of these 10 schools chose house systems

to see a "stronger connection between grade levels, increased mentoring, and more leadership positions within the school" (p. 118). Since this study, no other study has covered or explored whether house systems in classical Christian schools are fulfilling these intended goals, creating a gap in the literature that needs to be addressed.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to understand from administrators whether they perceived the house system to be fulfilling the intended goal of increasing distributed leadership and cross-grade peer relationships. This study may contribute to the sparse literature regarding house systems in classical Christian schools and aid the practice of programs within schools intended to increase student leadership opportunities and student relationships. It may provide evidence for administrators to start a house system or transition from a more traditional student council to a house system.

Research Question

This study investigated administrator perceptions of house systems and their impact on distributed student leadership and cross-grade level relationships. Distributed leadership is distinct from heroic leadership, as it provides more individuals the opportunity for a leadership position and spreads the responsibilities to a larger number of participants (Latta, 2019, p. 76). Cross-grade level relationships can be defined as a mixture of students from above and below grade levels aligned to increase opportunities for students to know students beyond their grade level (Zoeller, 2018). The research questions for this study follow:

RQ1: Does the house system method of organization have any impact on student leadership as perceived by school administrators?

RQ2:   Does the house system method of organization have any impact on cross-

grade relationships as perceived by school administrators?

The answers from this qualitative phenomenological study were gathered through interviews with school administrators to answer the research questions. Currently, literature regarding house systems is lacking and needs a more in-depth study to explain the implications of this phenomenon (Zoeller, 2018). This study will possibly address a significant gap in the current literature regarding administrator perceptions of house systems in classical Christian education schools. The participants' answers were beneficial for understanding how house systems are being utilized regarding distributed student leadership and cross-grade level relationships.

Significance of the Study

The findings in this study will potentially address large gaps in the literature regarding house systems in classical Christian schools. Even with the reintroduction of house systems through the Harry Potter book series in recent years, little is known about house systems as they have been implemented within real schools, and significant research is needed (Brennan, 2012; Thomas, 2016). One of the few studies in recent years covered why classical Christian school administrators decided to start house systems, but it did not address whether they were accomplishing the goals they set out to achieve (Thomas, 2016).

Through this study, administrators of classical Christian schools will be better equipped to determine whether house systems will benefit their school with the desired outcomes of distributed leadership and cross-grade level relationships. The concept of house systems is appealing to classical Christian schools because they emphasize older

things that have been forgotten, but this study will help them see if they are effective. Several *feel good* articles have described house systems in schools, but very little research has been done to solidify the perceptions of these programs within schools (Thomas, 2016; Zoeller, 2018).

House systems in classical Christian schools often take the place of a more traditional student leadership model in what is called student councils. Although these models of student councils widely differ, this study may provide insight into a different approach to student leadership and student engagement for a broader population than classical Christian schools (McFarland & Starmanns, 2009).

Nature of the Study

This qualitative phenomenological study collected data to answer the research questions presented within this study. Interviews with classical Christian education administrators were conducted and recorded. This study will possibly help classical Christian school administrators decide whether to introduce and implement a house system within their school. Little is known regarding their effectiveness, and the patterns and insights from this study can equip administrators to make informed decisions for their schools.

Definition of Terms

Classical Christian education school – An approach to Christian education that combines Protestant religion with the ancient curriculum and pedagogy used by the early Greek and Roman civilizations. The Association of Classical Christian Schools (ACCS; n.d.) defined classical Christian education as

an educational category which establishes a biblical worldview (called Paideia) by

incorporating ancient methods of student development. It includes the cultivation

of the seven Christian Virtues, training student reasoning through the Trivium

(Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric), and interacting with the historical Great Books.

(para. 1)

Cross-grade relationships – A mixture of students from above and below grade

levels aligned to increase opportunities for students to know students beyond their grade

level (Zoeller, 2018).

Distributed leadership – A shared leadership approach that spreads opportunities

for leadership to a larger number of students. This form of leadership can be used to

tackle large and complex problems that need the attention of many leaders instead of just

one.

Heroic leadership – The leadership style in which one leader is at the apex of the

organization's hierarchy (Bush, 2020). This style places a large emphasis on the

organization's success and failure solely on the lone leader.

House system – Created initially in the 16th-century English universities, house

systems group high school students vertically for interschool competition, "social

engagement, distributed leadership among students, and mentorship" (Thomas, 2016, p.

2; see also Dierenfield, 1975; Pounds, 1968; Zoeller, 2018). House systems began to take

root in America in the first part of the 20th century at Harvard University.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

This study assumes that all participants provided answers and information about

their school with honesty. It is also assumes that the schools and administrators chosen

for this study had implemented the house system model intending to have it succeed and play an essential role in the school's culture. Each school's house system followed the guidelines of structure and form similar to other schools used in this study. Recognizing that each house system in every school is unique to the school due to the culture and context, each house system in this study had common traits that established them all as similar house systems (Pounds, 1968; Zoeller, 2018, p. 6). O'Hara (2016) stated that modern secondary house systems are "small, permanent, cross-sectional, family-like, co-curricular societies, led by the school's faculty" (para. 7). This description of the modern secondary school house system served as the basis for common traits of house systems in classical Christian schools used in this study.

Rovai et al. (2014) defined a *limitation* as "a potential weakness of a research study" (p. 558). This research focused on administrator perceptions from classical Christian schools with house systems regarding distributed student leadership and student cross-grade level relationships. The study did not cover all aspects of house systems or all schools running them, but offered several perceptions of administrators from different schools. The trend of house systems in classical Christian schools is growing, but the sample size is still small (Zoeller, 2018, pp. 1-2).

Limited research has been done on house systems in the context of classical Christian schools and, more specifically, on distributed leadership and cross-grade level relationships. This lack of data and literature highlights the need for this study.

Rovai et al. (2014) defined a *delimitation* as "how a study is narrowed in scope" (p. 546). In this study, the researcher focused on classical Christian schools that are members of the ACCS or the Society for Classical Learning.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

Chapter 1 introduced the study of house systems in classical Christian schools.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature and history of house systems in classical Christian

schools. This includes research on distributed leadership and cross-grade relationships.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology for the research of this study. Chapter 4 presents the

qualitative data collected from interviews of 10 classical Christian school administrators

who have house systems currently running in their schools. Chapter 5 summarizes key

themes that emerged from the interviews, describes the conclusions from the study, and

recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This section aims to review the past research and literature to provide context for the topics addressed in this paper. Four sections are covered in this literature review. The first section includes the history of house systems in education. The second section is an overview of the history and mission, vision, and goals of classical Christian education, as it explains why these schools have begun utilizing house systems to accomplish their intended goals. The topic of distributed leadership is surveyed in the third section. Finally, the fourth section includes cross-grade level relationships.

History of House Systems

The Beginning

The history of the house system originates from boarding schools in England and Wales in the early 16th century (Dierenfield, 1975; Marland, 2002; Pounds, 1968). The house system's name is rooted in the concept that students were organized at boarding schools within a specific house while attending school (Dierenfield, 1975). The administration of these boarding schools initially created these houses to organize students but soon saw this as an easy way to have students compete against one another in sports and distribute leadership positions (Fincham, 1991; Marland, 2002; Pounds, 1968).

One of the earliest recordings of house systems being utilized in day schools comes from the Bristol Grammar School in 1892 (Dierenfield, 1975). Subsequently, in the years to follow, King Edward's high school started a house system in 1904 and Bury Grammar School in 1905 (Dierenfield, 1975). In 1937, the Board of Education in

England (as cited in Marland, 2002) stated that "we realize more and more the importance of broadening the aims of education and of placing greater emphasis on the social development of children" (p. 1). Through this new emphasis taken by the Board of Education in England, house systems were recommended throughout the educational system (Marland, 2002, p. 1). Zoeller (2018) noted, "In the late 1970s, a major reorganization took place in the 'old country' British schools as they became state-mandated day schools," which had an impact on how house systems were utilized (p. 20).

Pounds (1968) conducted a study sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education that focused on a comprehensive assessment of the house system. Pounds theorized how these systems within the schools might help solve problems that had arisen in the American schools, specifically "in the city where students become lost in the large impersonal schools" (p. 9). Pounds' conclusions included a list of advantages of house systems: a basis is provided for pupil social affairs, pupils are given a sense of belonging, assignment to houses assists in the mixing of pupils of different backgrounds and social classes, and houses give greater opportunity for pupil leadership and participation (p. 13). The disadvantages of house systems included assignment of pupils to houses separates them from their friends; wasting students' time doing activities they are uninterested in; and, because of its origin related to the *elitist British school*, students can view it as old fashioned and uninteresting.

Dierenfield (1975) followed up on Pounds' (1968) work to examine if British house systems may help American students with a sense of belonging. Dierenfield was concerned about the massive middle of students that received little attention or development of relationships from faculty due to not being the "brilliant students, or

outstanding athletes" or the student population that is in trouble or failing academically (p. 10). Dierenfield also commented that "mass education is likely to result in a loss of attention to personal needs and individual problems" (p. 91). Dierenfield concluded that it would be a good choice for American school systems to adopt house systems to help students have more opportunities and have a better sense of belonging. However, these recommendations never produced a large-scale adoption of house systems within the American educational system.

House System in America

However, the house system made its way into the American educational landscape through the university in the first part of the 20th century (Fleenor, 2009, p. 36). In 1926, the Harvard student council wrote a report that took Woodrow Wilson's idea of residential *quadrangles* and updated it to fit Harvard (Jencks & Riesman, 1962). This report interested Edward Harkness, an affluent Yale graduate who worked in the oil industry (Jencks & Riesman, 1962). Harkness desired to bring about this house system proposal to Yale, and while Yale took time to discuss this proposal, Harkness proposed the idea to Harvard, who instantly hired him to do the job. Yale eventually created house systems but acted too slowly to acquire Harkness to run them (Jencks & Riesman, 1962).

The President of Harvard at the time, A. Lawrence Lowell, wanted to create houses for Harvard to help mitigate the socioeconomic difference between students and created house systems "large enough to give each man a chance to associate closely with a considerable number of his fellows, and not so large as to cause a division into exclusive cliques" (Bunting & Floyd, 1998). These dormitories consisted of around 300 students and were built to provide an academic alternative to social clubs. Students were

not placed in a house at Yale and Harvard until their sophomore year (Weber, 2007).

President Lowell had "hoped to seduce the socialites into meeting and then enjoying

tutors and ideas. The houses were thus an attack on the parochialism of the young, vis-a-

vis their elders, and of the aristocracy vis-a-vis the middle class" (Jencks & Riesman,

1962, p. 739). Students were not grouped together in houses by academic interests,

geographic origins, income, or academic proficiency but instead placed in a similar setup

of the traditional English model of a *college within a college* (Jencks & Riesman, 1962).

Harvard still maintains house systems with many original ideas from its inception

and many changes to fit the current times. Students are still placed in houses during their

sophomore year (Harvard College, 2022). The stated goal of these houses remains similar

to what Harvard started them to do when Harvard stated that "with the goal of forging a

link between learning and living, the House system hosts a diverse assortment of

intellectual activities and traditions" (Harvard College, 2022). Harvard has expanded its

current options to 12 house systems on the campus, all of which still house students in

approximately 300-500 students (Harvard College, 2022).

Modern Resurgence of House Systems in Secondary Education

Unlike the higher educational landscape, house systems in high schools have not

been a part of the American educational system. Until recently, house systems in K-12

schools have become popularized in America due to the book *Harry Potter and the*

Sorcerer's Stone by Rowling and GrandPré (1998), which depicts closely that of

traditional house systems of old (Lavoie, 2003; Repicky, 2011; Thomas, 2016; Tomsett,

2018). Limited research has been conducted around the impact these house systems have

had on the schools they are implemented in, and suggestions for further research have

been proposed (Thomas, 2016). Thomas (2016) interviewed 10 administrators in classical Christian schools and suggested that they have begun implementing house systems for "stronger connection between grade levels, increased mentoring of students, and more leadership positions with the school" (p. 118).

According to Thomas (2016), classical Christian schools have a similar blueprint for constructing the houses within the school. The most common number of houses in a school was four, and the house names differed from school to school. These houses also had unifying colors and symbols tied to the name of their house, much like the traditional English house systems (Pounds, 1968). These symbols, names, and colors have the ability within small groups to produce a more robust climate within the group due to a shared identity (Preble & Gordon, 2011). The schools' administrators chose to distribute students into houses to bring balance to the populations of the houses (Thomas, 2016).

Student leadership was given and handled differently in the 10 schools included in Thomas's (2016) research. However, the standard tasks each student leader had in the house system were planning and overseeing meetings, competitions, and events (Thomas, 2016). The election of students for those leadership positions was reasonably consistent. The process for these schools included applications, interviews, essays, recommendations, and, in some instances, mock meetings (Thomas, 2016). Most of the 10 schools have their houses participating in house competitions and games that award the house points. These competitions included sports and extended into nonathletic competitions such as chess tournaments, drama productions, speech contests, trivia nights, and attendance at school events (Thomas, 2016; Zoeller, 2018). Points earned

through these competitions are tallied, and, at the end of the school year, a house is

awarded the title of house champion (Zoeller, 2018).

One of the house system's perceived negatives is the time it takes to plan these

competitions and activities (Thomas, 2016). Another perceived negative from

administrators is the lack of student involvement in the house system (Thomas, 2016).

Classical Christian Education

The study focused specifically on classical Christian schools. The ACCS (n.d.)

defined classical Christian education as

> an educational category which establishes a biblical worldview (called Paideia) by
>
> incorporating ancient methods of student development. It includes the cultivation
>
> of the seven Christian Virtues, training student reasoning through the Trivium
>
> (Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric), and interacting with the historical Great Books.
>
> (para. 1)

Council and Cooper (2011) commented,

> A new kind of private, religious school has opened in the United States called a
>
> classical Christian school. This type of school is an interesting combination of old
>
> and new educational paradigms. The structure and form of the classical education
>
> model date to the early Greek and Roman civilizations in content and
>
> methodology. The infusion of Protestant religion within the ancient curriculum,
>
> however, represents a relatively new approach. (p. 117)

The term *classical* in this form of education has two defining characteristics. In a

historical sense, classical refers to the Greek and Roman civilizations between the years

600 B.C. to A.D. 476 (Perrin, 2004; Leithhart, 2008, as cited in Thomas, 2016, p. 16).

These civilizations practiced what is now called a classical education and gave us

"classical myths, art and architecture and the classical languages of Greek and Latin"

(Perrin, 2004, p. 6). This form of education was standard during these times, but through

the work and writings of a Roman senator who was born in A.D. 480, classical education

began to be combined with a Christian worldview (Hart, 2006; Wilson, 2003).

The term *classical* also refers to studying works of enduring excellence (Perrin,

2004). These works of art, literature, and philosophy that have stood the test of time are

central to the study of classical education. Wilson (1991) noted that a "classicist is a

participant in what Mortimer Adler calls the 'great conversation'" (p. 83). Perrin (2004)

defined the word *classical* by saying, "Classical education is the authoritative, traditional

and enduring form of education, begun by the Greeks and Romans, developed through

history and now being renewed and recovered in the 21st century" (p. 6).

Fifteen hundred years ago, Christian educators began taking the classical

approach and teaching it with a Christian worldview. The ACCS (n.d.) commented,

"Classical Christian schools teach all subjects based on the principle that God is the

Creator of all that exists, and therefore all knowledge is interrelated and points back to

Him." During medieval times, classical education canonized the study of the liberal arts,

which included grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music

(Dernlan, 2013; Littlejohn & Evans, 2006). These areas of study were then separated into

two categories by Boethius, a Christian scholar, and were known as the quadrivium

(arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy) and the trivium (grammar, dialectic, and

rhetoric; Joseph & McGlinn, 2002; Littlejohn & Evans, 2006; Veith & Kern, 2001).

Perrin (2004) noted that Christian theology was added to the study of these liberal arts

and was referred to as the queen of the sciences. Littlejohn and Evans (2006) commented, "The trivium provided the emerging scholar with the tools of apprehending God's special and general revelations of himself through the study of the Holy Scriptures and through observation of nature and history" (p. 33).

In the 1800s, classical education began to slowly erode as new ideas for education began to emerge (Perrin, 2004). In the 1940s, education shifted entirely to a progressive education model (Perrin, 2004). Amid a progressive educational landscape, Dorothy Sayers (n.d.) wrote *The Lost Tools of Learning* that made a case for classical education. Sayers critiqued progressive education by asking, "Is it not the great defect of our education today . . . we fail lamentably on the whole in teaching them how to think?" (p. 6). Bortins (2010) agreed: "[B]ut classical educators teach subjects not because they are practical, but because they train people to think clearly about difficult issues" (p. 80). Sayers also defined the stages of the trivium (grammar, logic, rhetoric) as not just subjects, "but as a pedagogical method for learning subjects" (Council & Cooper, 2011, p. 120). Sayers perceived that students' ways of learning corresponded through the elements of the trivium (Wilson, 1991). Wilson (1991) commented, "As the students age and mature, teachers adjust the manner and means by which they teach" (p. 22).

Grammar

The grammar stage of education happens in Kindergarten through sixth grade (Perrin, 2004; Wilson, 1991). The grammar level of classical Christian education is "dedicated to a mastery of knowledge in all subjects and focuses on learning facts" (Dernlan, 2013, p. 21). In this stage, an emphasis on facts, grammar, syntax, vocabulary, reading, and penmanship are taught (Littlejohn & Evans, 2006; Wilson, 1991). Littlejohn

and Evans (2006) remarked that "students should be introduced to the complex structure of language so that their linguistic skills are not handicapped by an inadequate understanding of how we use words to make sense" (p. 95). These subjects are presented to students through chants, songs, discussion, and memorization, which correspond with ways children in these grades enjoy learning (Perrin, 2004; Wilson, 1991). This form of rote learning through repetition is helpful for students, as they do not grow weary of such repetition. Wilson (2003) commented that teachers in the grammar stage should continue with rote learning and remind them that "rote learning is a poor substitute for education when it is applied at the wrong place" (p. 136).

The beginning of Latin instruction is also an aspect of classical Christian education in the grammar stage. Wilson (2006) cited that "about eighty percent of English vocabulary comes from Latin and Greek, with over fifty percent of our vocabulary coming from the Latin" (p. 133). Therefore, this language is not seen as a dead language but can significantly help students master and understand the English language (Dernlan, 2013; Perrin, 2004; Wilson et al., 2007).

Dialectic

Often referred to as the logic phase, this stage of learning in classical Christian education is considered for Grades 7 through 9 (Perrin, 2004). Students in these years of schooling begin to develop a desire to argue and debate (Wilson, 2006). As Sayers recommended to *teach with the grain* of the student, formal logic is taught, equipping students with the tools to argue well (Wilson, 2003, 2006). Merkle (2017) commented that students in this stage are being taught "what cheating looks like in a line of argument" (p. 47). Students in this phase are challenged to advance in critical thinking

and reasoning within all subjects studied during these years (Littlejohn & Evans, 2006). This is done through formal debates in various classrooms (Wilson, 2006).

Rhetoric

Students in Grades 10, 11, and 12 begin to be concerned with who they are and what they look like (Perrin, 2004; Wilson, 2003). This stage of classical Christian education "teaches students how to present themselves" (Wilson, 2003, p. 136). Students have learned the needed facts in the grammar stage; they have then learned how to form and think critically through arguments; and, in the last phase, they learn how to winsomely articulate their positions (Dernlan, 2013; Wilson, 1991). Perrin (2004) commented that "effective and persuasive speaking and writing are emphasized during the high school years." Blake (as cited in Wilson, 1991) added that "rhetoric completes the tools of learning . . . Rhetoric takes the next grand step and brings all these subjects together into one whole" (p. 95). There is an emphasis in this phase on great works of literature and persuasive speaking and writing.

Modern Resurgence

Classical education was replaced with newer models and philosophies of education but has recently made a resurgence in America, attributed to Douglas Wilson's creation of Logos School in Moscow, Idaho (Wilson, 2003). Wilson (2003) commented that this resurgence began with his reading of Sayers' (n.d.) essay (p. 87). Sayers suggested a pedagogical vision for what classical education looks like (Wilson, 2003). This pedagogical method and the desire to train up young men and women in virtue and holiness have created substantial growth in recent years for classical Christian education (Zylstra, 2017). In the early 1990s, around 100 classical Christian schools opened

(Goodwin, 2020). In 1994, with the leadership of Wilson (1991), the Association for Classical Christian Schools was created to begin helping spread classical Christian education around the country. Currently, 290 member schools serve around 30,000 families and, on average, cost families $7,900 for tuition (ACCS, n.d.; Goodwin, 2020).

In 2018, the ACCS and the University of Notre Dame began to compare ACCS alumni to the existing data from the Cardus Education Survey (Goodwin, 2020). The Cardus Education Survey is meant to understand the influence of schools in areas of academic, spiritual, cultural, civic, and relational outcomes. This study is the largest one to date regarding how classical Christian schools are doing regarding these areas of influence with their students. Findings indicated that alumni from classical Christian schools are distinctively different from alumni of public, private, Catholic, and homeschool students.

The report's conclusions are many, but key takeaways include that ACCS students are more trusting and grateful and live life with more of a purpose (Goodwin, 2020, p. 51). Alumni of ACCS schools were 90% above the median on church attendance, spoke with friends about religion more often, and practiced reading their Bibles more than other alumni (Goodwin, 2020, p. 51). It has also been reported that alumni from ACCS were the most conservative when it came to Scripture, government, and traditional views of the church (Goodwin, 2020, p. 51). Moreover, these alumni scored the highest in college and career preparation, independent thought, and influence (Goodwin, 2020, p. 51). Goodwin explained, "These can be thought of as 'impact multipliers.' Adults who score highly on these profiles are likely to influence those around them and lead lives of service outside of their immediate circles" (p. 51). Areas in which data revealed no statistical difference

across all schools include marital satisfaction and tithing (pp. 32, 34). This report

demonstrates the success that ACCS has with influencing students to live out what they

are being taught in their schools.

Distributed Leadership

Distributed leadership can be defined as "the sharing, the spreading, and the

distributing of leadership work across individuals and roles across the school

organization" (Smylie et al., 2007, p. 470). The term *distributed leadership* came from an

Australian psychologist named Cecil Gibb in 1954 (Harris et al., 2007; Serrat, 2010).

Gibb sought to understand the influence process within formal and informal groups,

precisely measuring this influence by separating focused and distributed leadership

(Harris et al., 2007; Serrat, 2010). Gibb defined *focused* as "for the way leadership can

for various reasons be concentrated in or monopolized by one person as the focal point of

a group's other members" (Serrat, 2010, p. 5).

Distributed leadership has become a prominent leadership style for school

administration for many reasons (Torrance, 2013). Two specific reasons for this are the

perception of the failure of the "charismatic hero" related to transformational leadership,

and the growing number of complex tasks and problems school principals are asked to

work on (Hartley, 2007; Tian et al., 2016). Distributed leadership challenges the idea that

there needs to be only one leader for a school or organization (Kilicoglu, 2018; Lashway,

2003). Often used as a synonym for leadership styles such as shared leadership,

democratic leadership, or collaborative leadership, this form of leadership empowers and

invites teachers' participation (Spillane & Orlina, 2005; Torrance, 2013). Research has

suggested that this leadership style also has the ability to affect students. A study jointly

done by the University of Minnesota and the University of Toronto on the effects of distributed leadership in schools revealed that students' achievement is increased (Covey et al., 2014).

Distributed Leadership Among Students

Distributed leadership has primarily been associated with school administration, and little has been studied regarding student distributed leadership within the schools. However, the practice and implementation of student leadership positions are important to many schools (Hine, 2014). In a study of 462 educational leaders and business professionals, Van Velsor and Wright (2012) revealed that they believe all youth should be given leadership opportunities (84%) and that it should also be a part of every student's educational experience (90%). The benefits for students placed in leadership positions and given leadership experience have been cited in various studies. Pedersen et al. (2011) commented that "in order to increase the depth of positive climate and culture within a school community, a distributed leadership framework that includes student-led responsibilities can prove to be beneficial" (p. 24). Studies have also suggested that students who participate in school leadership indicate higher rates of academic success, increased likelihood of college enrollment, positive impact on their development, and positive impact on school-wide climate (Eccles & Barber, 1999; Pedersen et al., 2012).

However, a study done with 215 undergraduate college students asked their perceptions regarding the leadership opportunities they had in high school (Elemen, 2015). Elemen (2015) concluded that "A significant percentage of students appear to be deprived of some impactful developmental school leadership . . . by their high schools not providing ample opportunities for students to participate in organizational leadership

dialogue and decision-making" (p. 100). Covey et al. (2014) commented that schools provide student leadership responsibilities and positions, but it is limited to a select few through either election from peers or students who have previously proven their leadership capabilities.

An answer to this lack of student leadership positions for classical Christian schools has been implementing house systems (Pounds, 1968; Thomas, 2016). This is done by replacing the traditional student government structure—with one president and other offices—with placing students in roles called prefects, tutors, or ambassadors who are in charge of each house (Brennan, 2012; Oxley, 2001; Pounds, 1968; Thomas, 2016). A student council can be defined as "the selected body of students in middle and high schools who are officers or representatives of the student government" (Wall, 2016, p. 5).

Wall (2016) conducted a study to determine if there was any correlation between a student's involvement in student government and their corresponding grade point average. From results from questions to high school and middle school students, Wall revealed that students' perceptions on student governments did not benefit a large majority of the students, did not allow for many to serve due to small numbers of leadership positions and overall had a low view of their student government. Zoeller (2018) commented, "House systems are often lauded for their distributive leadership, providing more avenues for faculty or staff to lead within houses" (p. 24). Thomas (2016) said a "house system also incentives students in several groups to resolve issues rather than relying on one group of students to organize the entire student body" (pp. 8-9).

Cross-Grade Level Relationships

Another core characteristic of a house system is the implementation of a socialization structure known as vertical alignment (Zoeller, 2018). This vertical alignment consists of students being put into houses that are a mixture of grade levels, which provides them an opportunity to get to know students outside their academic classes (Marland, 2002). These groupings of cross-grade relationships have helped schools with "breaking larger schools into smaller, more manageable groups" (Zoeller, 2018, p. 25; see also Dierenfield, 1975). Thomas (2016) cited a study that most classical Christian schools implemented house systems with the desire to see students grow in healthy relationships between grades. Fincham (1991) wrioe that "a vertical system may encourage a greater sense of community spirit by contributing to the extension and development of the complexity and richness of relationships within the school" (para. 15).

Pounds (1968) commented that headmasters saw the advantages of house systems to help students feel a sense of belonging within the school and feel a part of the school community. Tangen-Foster and Tangen-Foster (1998) commented, "Children need to feel that they belong and that they have an identity within a group." However, Thomas (2016) cited that this sense of belonging and loyalty to a student's house may take away from the student's view of loyalty and belonging to the school at large. Separating students into houses may also separate students from already established friend groups (Pounds, 1968; Thomas, 2016). Little research has been done on house systems' impact on the desired outcomes that classical Christian schools have concerning cross-grade relationships (Zoeller, 2018).

Schools today are set up in a way that keeps students in the same grade-level groups, "beginning in early childhood care and education programs and continuing in schools and even on sports teams" (Rasmussen, 2005, p. 1). Due to the way schools are grouping students, cross-grade interactions for students in schools are infrequent (Brennan, 2012). In a study conducted on young adolescent students that looked into same-grade and mixed-grade friendships regarding loneliness, Bowker and Spencer (2010) found that 83% of students reported having a friend in a different grade than their own. Of this 83%, only 36% of these friendships were thought to be mutual. Bowker and Spencer suggested that students who have a friend in another grade see this relationship as helping their security and feelings of support. Bowker and Spencer commented, "It is possible that the perception of mixed-grade friendships provides adolescents with a psychological 'safe haven' from the many difficulties inherent in same-grade peer relations during early adolescence" (p. 1326).

Bowker and Spencer (2010) also found that girls who did not have same-grade friendships felt less lonely when making mixed-grade nominations than girls who did not have either same- or mixed-grade friendships. Mutual mixed-grade friendships helped anxious and withdrawn boys feel less victimized and less lonely, even when they already had mutual same-grade friendships (Bowker & Spencer, 2010). Overall, Bowker and Spencer believed that "findings from this investigation strongly suggest that mixed-grade friendships are developmentally significant peer relationships during early adolescence that warrant further investigation" (p. 1326).

CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

Overview

A qualitative research study was used to answer the research questions proposed in this study. Creswell and Poth (2018) explained that qualitative research should be used when "a problem or issue needs to be explored" (p. 45). The gap in the literature surrounding administrator perceptions of house systems in a classical Christian school is the issue that this study explored. Qualitative research empowers "individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimize the power relationships that often exist between and researcher and the participants in the study" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 45).

The purpose of this chapter is to justify the aptness of a qualitative methodology that uses the phenomenological approach. This chapter covers the setting, population, instrumentation, procedures, and timeline. Also covered is the type of study, data analysis, and the threats to validity and reliability.

Phenomenology

The specific qualitative approach that guided this study is the phenomenological approach. Phenomenology can be defined as the "study of the world as it appears to individuals when they lay aside the prevailing understandings of those phenomena and revisit their immediate experience of the phenomena" (Gall et al., 2007, p. 495). Creswell and Poth (2018) described the focus of a phenomenological study as "describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon" (p. 75). A phenomenological study aims to collect the data and derive from the participant's lived experiences into an *essence* (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Creswell and Clark (2007) commented that "It would be important to understand these common experiences in order

to develop practices and policies, or to develop a deeper understanding about the features of the phenomenon" (p. 79). For this reason, this study could inform the classical Christian community of the perceptions that administrators currently have on house systems in their schools. Helping schools better develop policies and practices to better their schools.

Purpose Statement and Research Question

The purpose of this study is to understand from administrators whether they perceive the house system to be fulfilling the intended goal of increasing distributed leadership and cross-grade peer relationships. A house system is defined as a "vertical organization of students into smaller groups within their school, each having its own defined identity, for the purpose of social engagement, distributed leadership among students, and mentorship (Dierenfield, 1975; Pounds, 1968)" (Thomas, 2016, p. 28). The research questions for the study follow:

RQ1: Does the house system method of organization have any impact on student leadership as perceived by school administrators?

RQ2: Does the house system method of organization have any impact on cross-grade relationships as perceived by school administrators?

Setting

The researcher focused on administrators from classical Christian schools that currently have a house system in their schools. Ten schools were located from various geographical locations and had a student population ranging from 160 to 820. Tuition charges from these schools ranged from $3,850 to $17,000. Each school had a K-12 program or a pre-K-12 model.

Population and Sample

Ten school administrators of classical Christian schools located in various regions across the United States participated in the study. Each school was a member of the ACCS or the Society for Classical Learning and implemented a house system in their school for more than 1 year. Previous relationships of classical Christian administrators, classical conference talks, and the ACCS (n.d.) education website was used to identify potential administrators of classical Christian schools with house systems. Invitations were sent to various administrators through email asking for participation in the study. It is unknown exactly how many classical Christian schools have house systems at this moment, but the data from this group of administrators helped the researcher come to conclusions that can be applied to the larger population (Patten & Bruce, 2012).

Instrumentation

The primary instrument for this phenomenological qualitative study was a researcher-developed interview. Data were collected through in-depth interviews using the proposed research questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Peoples, 2021). The purpose of these in-depth interviews was to gain the perspective and experiences the participants have had surrounding the phenomenon being studied. Interviews began by creating a relaxed atmosphere for the study participants (Moustakas, 1994). After a relaxed atmosphere was established, the researcher suggested for the participant to take a few moments to focus on the experience that the study is covering. Once this was done, questions were given to the participant to describe the phenomenon they had experienced (Moustakas, 1994). The interviews continued until it was believed that saturation of the phenomenon had occurred.

Procedures for Data Collection

For this research, data were collected from the participants who have lived experiences of being an administrator of a classical Christian school with a house system. Creswell and Poth stated (2018) data collection in qualitative studies entails "identifying your participants and sites, gain access, determine types of data to collect, develop data collection forms, and administer the process in an ethical manner" (p. 212). The researcher identified participants from classical Christian schools around the country. Access to participants was gained through approval of the Regent University School of Education Human Subjects Review. Personal communication such as phone calls and emails were utilized for communicating with participants and scheduling interview times and dates. The interviews were recorded and transcribed for accuracy. Participants were asked questions about what they have experienced concerning the phenomenon. Interviews lasted 20 to 60 minutes. Collected data were stored on a password-protected computer file. Participants were emailed a copy of the transcript to verify what was correctly said in the interview.

Timeline

Upon approval from Regent University's Human Subject Review in August 2021, an email was sent to potential subjects inquiring about their participation in the study. Interviews began in early September and took 4 weeks to complete. An online digital transcription service was utilized to transcribe the interviews, which were emailed to participants for review.

Procedures for Data Analysis

Moustakas (1994) outlined the steps for data analysis of phenomenological study as horizontaling, meaning units being listed, clustering themes, textural descriptions of the experience, structural descriptions, and essence of the phenomenon. Using this outline, the research began the data analysis with horizontaling by "regarding every horizon or statement relevant to the topic and question as having equal value" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 118). After reviewing the transcripts, commons statements were clustered together under different themes. This was done through a software called NVivo 12 Pro in which the researcher coded the statements to cluster the themes together electronically. Creswell and Poth (2018) commented that Nvivo 12 Pro "helps analyze, manage, shape and analyze qualitative data" (p. 213).

The researcher constructed textual descriptions of the experience from these themes. The structural description show how the classical Christian school administrators have experienced this phenomenon in their current context. Furthermore, the researcher concluded his data analysis by explaining and communicating the phenomenon's essence. This was done by showing the common themes and encompassing the meaning of the phenomenon from participants' experiences. Using this analysis and phenomenological study allow for discovering the lived experiences of the administrators with house systems in their schools.

Epoché

For researchers to distance themselves from the study, they must set aside their experiences and personal views on the phenomenon in a desire not to influence the study (Creswell, 2013). An *epoche* is a Greek to Latin term that means "to stay away from or

abstain" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 85). Bednall (2006) stated that "the challenge for a researcher is to allow the voices of subjectivity to emerge authentically in coming to an understanding of what essentially the research respondents mean in their personal accounts expressed through the data collection services" (Epoch and Bracketing section). The researcher's epoche includes all of the experiences related to the research of this paper.

Researcher's Epoché

My first position within education was an internship at a high-achieving Christian school. This school was in the suburbs of a large city and educated middle- to upper-class families. The school had a vibrant school climate centered around the school's athletic program success. During my short experience, they did not model a school within a school model or house system arrangement but demonstrated the importance of strong school culture. I left this school as I was offered a job at the laboratory school that the college I graduated from was starting.

While starting my new job with my current employer, I began working as a student life director. In this role, I was responsible for overseeing students' social and emotional health. Our small school consists of lower-income families that are provided free tuition due to the generosity of donors to the college. The school is a laboratory school that is not associated with the education department on the college campus but is educating students in the classical Christian educational philosophy.

In the first few years of the high school, I became familiar with house systems through the classical Christian education conferences we attended. In relationships made at the conferences and in visiting other schools, the idea of house systems began to take

shape at our school. One of my specific responsibilities was overseeing the student council. Each year I grew in frustration with the model and continued to speak about the possibility of instituting a house system. After a significant proposal to the dean of the school that included the desired benefits of increasing meaningful leadership positions that do more than plan student events, it was approved that we would institute a house system at our school. We created five houses—all named after great men of faith in history—and separated students into each house. Student elections were held for each house, and the house system was created.

The first year of the house system was fun and exciting. Reviews after the first year from students and staff believed that it was a step in the right direction for us as a school but needed changes to continue the houses' successes. The following year improved as students better understood the vision of the houses and bought into the competitions between houses that were beginning to develop. However, everything stopped when our school shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Last year with safety concerns and protocols, we decided not to do houses and wait for things to clear up with COVID. However, this school year, we were able to get back to some of the best parts of a house system and started it back up. Overall, the house systems that we have put in our school has been met with excitement for what they will become in the future.

Validity and Reliability

Merriam (1998) commented, "Every researcher wants to contribute results that are believable and trustworthy" (p. 218). To ensure the validity of the findings in this study, validation strategies were utilized that were suggested by Creswell and Poth (2018). A pilot test was issued to a group of five participants and occurred before the full-

scale interviews in order to obtain an assessment of its validity and reliability. Creswell (2013) stated that pilot tests help "establish the content of validity . . . and to improve questions, format, and scales" (p. 161). This pilot test helped understand if the questions and procedures for the interview accomplished what they were intended to do (Gay et al., 2009).

Creswell and Poth (2018) recommended specific strategies for validity and reliability that rely on the researcher and the participants. The researcher chose to clarify researcher bias which entails explaining their "understandings about the biases, values, and experiences that he or she brings to a qualitative research study from the outset of the study" so the reader knows from where the researchers background is (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 261). When relying on the participants, Creswell and Poth recommend member checking (pp. 261-262). Member checking is considered one of the most important techniques for establishing validity (Lincoln et al., 1985). In this technique, the researcher uses the participant's views to check the credibility of the findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This is done by providing the participants with transcripts of the interviews to help confirm the credibility of the data. Creswell and Poth (2018) recommended engaging with at least two techniques to ensure validation.

Summary

In summary, the researcher utilized the phenomenological approach to inquire and answer the research question: What impact do administrators perceive house systems have on distributed leadership opportunities and cross-grade level relationships? Administrators from classical Christian schools from all over the United States were interviewed over an online Google Meeting to gather the needed data. Interviews lasted

20-60 minutes and used an interview protocol. Each interview was recorded and

transcribed using transcription software. After being checked for accurate transcriptions,

the data analysis followed Moustakas's (1994) outline of data analysis by horizontaling,

meaning units being listed, clustering themes, textural descriptions of the experience,

structural descriptions, and essence of the phenomenon. To ensure the validity of the

findings in this study, the researcher utilized the validation strategies suggested by

Creswell and Poth (2018) that rely on the researcher and the participants.

CHAPTER 4 – RESULTS

This study researched administrator perceptions of house systems, specifically looking at cross-grade level relationships and distributed leadership. Research questions were formulated to understand the lived experiences of these administrators in classical Christian schools. A qualitative approach was utilized to set the framework for the research, and a phenomenological examination gathered data from administrators.

Summary of Participants

Participants for this study included 10 administrators from classical Christian schools that were currently running a house system in their high school grades. Interviews were conducted to gather data for this phenomenological study.

The participants for this study were in various states, with more than half coming from the Midwest. In this grouping, eight of the 10 were males. Tuition charged at the schools ranged from $3,850 to $17,000 for a private classical Christian education. The selected participant demographics are represented in Table 1.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Variable	*n*
Sex	
Male	8
Female	2
Years of experience	
1-4	5
5-9	2
10+	3
Age of house system at school	
1-5	2
6-9	4
10+	3

Participant Narratives

Participant 1

Administrator 1 was a Caucasian male working at a classical Christian school on the east coast. He has been an administrator for 4-1/2 years and works at a school with a student K-12 population of 650 students. The school charges $14,000 in tuition and has had a house system running for 15 years.

The administrator's school has four houses that are filled with an equitable amount of students in terms of genders and grade-level representation. Houses are named after early Italian church saints. A student leads the house, who is entitled the house head. A teacher accompanies these students to help them with the leadership responsibilities. All students meet each morning in the gym for a morning meeting led by one of the house heads. However, one day a week, these students meet in a classroom by their houses for a meeting led by the house head. Competitions happen throughout the year between houses for points that can be accumulated in hopes of having the most at the end of the year to win the house cup.

Participant 2

Administrator 2 was a Caucasian male working at a classical Christian school in the south. He had been employed as an administrator for 3 years and in his current role for 1 year. The school had a house system implemented for the past 5 years. With tuition being $17,000, the student population was around 560 students.

His school's house system has four houses named after a city central to the Christian faith. Each house has a male and female captain, with several other leadership positions with each house. Two faculty members are supervisors over each house. Houses

meet weekly during the school day and compete for points to determine a house winner. Houses receive points for competitions, service, or fundraising. Houses are comprised of a mixture of students from Grades 7 to 12.

Participant 3

Administrator 3 was a Caucasian male working at a classical Christian school in the midwest. He has been an administrator at his school for 14 years, and they have had a house system running for the past 10 years. The school has 820 students, and tuition fees are $9,600.

The school has several campuses around the city, and the house system is how they are connected. Each house is given a single creed, color, and crest. The five houses at each campus are named after a church father or mother. Unique to this school, the parent organization is organized through houses. This helps parents get to know other parents in other grades and meet more people. Each house has a student leader entitled the prefect. Each prefect then has an assistant prefect and a regent to help them run and organize the school's house system. Students compete against other houses for points to help declare a winner at the end of the school year.

Participant 4

Administrator 4 was a Caucasian male working at a classical Christian school in the midwest. His school has 391 students, and tuition charges range from $6,900 to $7,700. He has worked at this school for 7 years and currently been in this role for the past 3 years. The school's house system has been in existence for 6 years.

The school's house system is comprised of three houses that are made up of two different grades. Grades 7 and 10 are paired together, Grades 8 and 11 are paired together,

and Grades 9 and 12 are paired together. Houses are named after Nicene fathers, and each house elects a president to lead the house. The school also runs a traditional student government that house systems have often replaced. Houses earn points through competitions of intellect and sport to win a trophy each school year.

Participant 5

Administrator 5 was a male whose school was located in the midwest. With 162 students in the K-12, this school charges $6,500 for tuition. This administrator has worked at this school in this position for 10 years, and the school has had a house system for 7 years.

They have three houses that all have been named after Paladins. When the school grows, they hope to expand to four houses. Each house has a housemaster, a teacher, that helps oversee the houses. Two students are elected to be house captains in each of the houses. House captains help enforce dress code tardiness, plan competitions and run weekly meetings. Houses compete for points that accumulate in a winner at the end of the year for the house cup. Students are assigned a house that is a mixture of students in Grades 7 to 12.

Participant 6

Administrator 6 was a Caucasian male whose school is located in the midwest. He has worked at his current school in an administrator position for 4 years. The school has had a house system for 7 years. He had a significant influence in creating and developing houses at his school. His school has 104 students K-12, and tuition ranges from $5,600 to $11,200.

This administrator's school has four houses, each led by one house captain and vice-captain. Houses meet at the beginning of each day to go over logistics, lunch orders, and attendance. Throughout the year, there are four major competitions that the houses participate in athletic, engineering, academic, and a quad house competition. These competitions award points to the house to help decide which house wins. The school used to use a traditional student government but shifted away from this structure, moving more to a house system structure.

Participant 7

Administrator 7 was a Caucasian female whose school is located in the midwest. She was a part of the school's inception 18 years ago. They have had a house system in place for the last 10 years. With 350 students in her school, they charge $12,000 for yearly tuition.

This school's house system has four different houses named after great men of faith. The school recently transitioned from a traditional student government to a house system structure of student leadership. Students that lead the houses are called prefects. New students are sorted each year into a house comprised of a mixture of students in Grades 9 to 12. Competitions happen each quarter, which include the test of might, the test of service, the test of wit and winsomeness, and the test of creativity. Points are tallied to crown a winner each year at the end of the school year at the house banquet.

Participant 8

Administrator 8 was a Caucasian male whose school is located on the east coast. The school is a K-12 program with 168 students and charges between $8,400 and

$10,750 for tuition. He has worked at his current school for 4 years, and the house system is has been around for 6 years.

The houses system at his school is comprised of four houses. Every other week, the school schedule has a house period on Wednesday afternoons in which they participate in activities such as service projects or competitions. Points are awarded to houses for victories or acts of service, culminating in a winner of the house cup.

Participant 9

Administrator 9 was a Caucasian male whose school was located in the midwest. His school is a K-12 school that has 160 students. Tuition for students in Grades 1 through 12 is $3,850. He has been at the school for 5 years in this role and was unsure how long the house system has been a part of the school as it was implemented before he arrived.

The house system at his school has four houses that have a mixture of students in Grades 7 through 12. Every Friday, one period is called fun Friday, in which all house competitions and activities happen.

Participant 10

Administrator 10 was a Caucasian male whose school was located in the south. The school has 350 students, and tuition fees are an average of $12,000. He has been at the school for 4 years, and the school has had a house system for 3 years.

Students are chosen to leadership positions called prefects that the teachers in the rhetoric school vote on. The school administration did not like the popularity contest that they felt occurred in the previous student council structure, so they transitioned to a house system, among many other reasons. All the prefects are seniors and have other student

positions beneath them to help run the house. Houses in this school are named after great poets, and they have four of them. Each house is commissioned and charged to exult a virtue assigned to their house. This virtue will then be expressed throughout the year by the leadership and the service projects. Two faculty help oversee each house to serve as models and mentors to the prefects.

Research Questions

The results are presented in the order of the original research questions:

RQ1: Does the house system method of organization have any impact on student distributed leadership as perceived by school administrators?

RQ2: Does the house system method of organization have any impact on cross-grade relationships as perceived by school administrators?

Research Question 1

RQ1: Does the house system method of organization have any impact on student distributed leadership as perceived by school administrators?

The two overarching themes that emerged from the interviews were (a) more positions and (b) increased student responsibilities. When participants were asked about the perceived impact that house systems had on distributing leadership positions, many believed it had a positive impact. Eight of the 10 administrators stated they believed that the house system implemented in their school had a positive effect on distributing student leadership positions (see Figure 1). The other two administrators did not believe it had a negative effect on distributing leadership positions; instead, it did not increase them.

Figure 1

Administrators' Perceived Impact of House Systems on Distributed Student Leadership
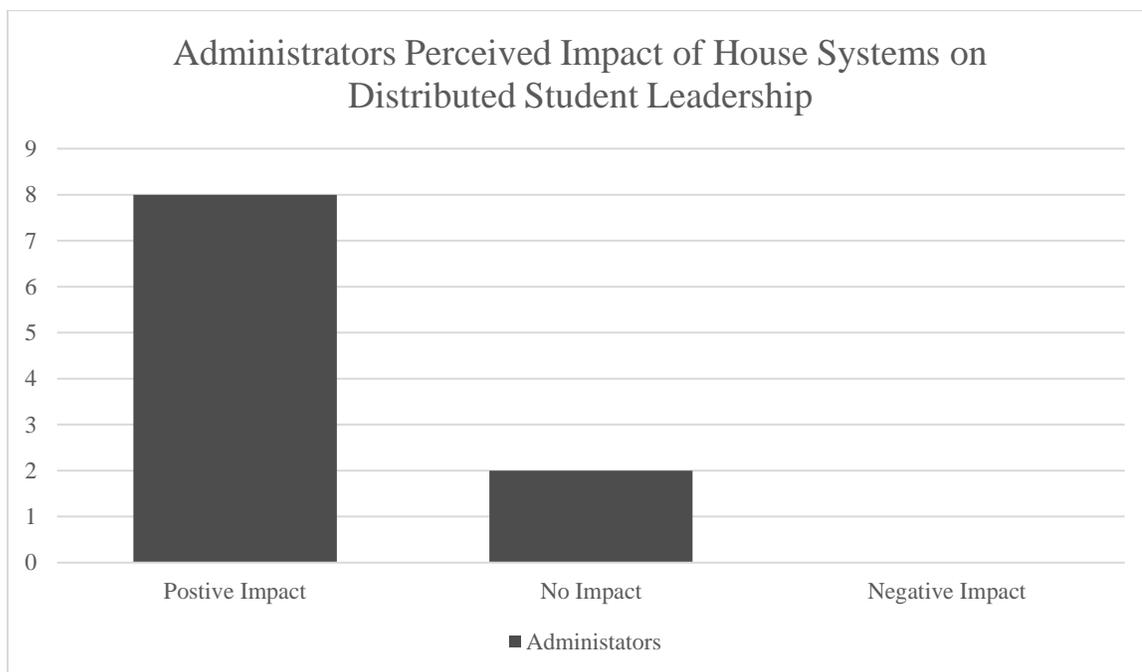
More Positions of Leadership

One of the themes that emerged from the interviews was how house systems created more positions for students to be placed into leadership. Two participants directly compared the number of leadership positions to the more traditional student government set up in a school. Participant 10 said this about comparing the number of positions in a student government to house systems:

> There's more since there's not just a president and a vice president, a treasurer, and a secretary; each house has three key leaders. So instead of now being 4, you're looking at 12; we have 12 students, who take on the mantle of leadership within the school.

Participant 6 also stated this about some differences between the two structures:

So before, it felt like basically, the president of STUCO and vice president were

doing 90% of the work, and the rest of the officers were doing 5%. And the reps,

we're doing 5%. And with house counsel, it feels much more distributed, like

spread out across the eight.

Several schools had varying numbers of leadership positions in their house systems, but

they all had student leaders in charge of the houses they created. Participants mentioned

several times how the structure with the houses created positions for students to be

nominated either by their peers or by the school's faculty to lead their respective houses.

Participant 2 stated,

I think that the house system is really our main conduit for students to have

opportunities to express leadership gifts in the school right now. And I mean,

there are a few other things that we have, you know, well athletics and musical

groups and drama and things like that, but you know, kind of student body-wide, I

think that the house system presents the most opportunities for our students to

have leadership roles in the school.

Participant 3 noted some other positions that have come from having house systems at

their school:

They also are starting to have just what's broadly called student leaders. Where

certain students with a particular rubric that the principal uses are moved into a

position of leadership for whatever assistance with clean-up of lunch or direction

at a particular competitive piece of tracking Field Day anyway. And then

sometimes that's used to see or to coach up to a full-blown, prefect position.

Participant 5 spoke at length about one of the great things they see with house systems: house prefects learning to distribute leasership roles and responsibilities to other students with their house team. He expanded,

> I think the encouragement is there are so many more opportunities to lead. So, it is not just the house captains, although they are the primary leaders in their house. In every competition, every kind of activity, you'll see that they will be leaders assigned, right? Or, you know, say it is the musical competition, the house captains are going to find the people who would get them the victory and work with them to lead the house into what they are doing, and if they do not do it that way, they are not going to win it. It has to be distributed, and same with other things like, you know, the snow castles are the snow forts are a big deal. Someone has to have a vision for it and instruct people what to do. And it is not always the house captains that have that idea.

Increased Student Responsibilities

The other theme that arose from interviews was the increased level of responsibility that house systems produce for students. Participant 1, when asked about what impact house systems have on distributed leadership, stated, "In my experience, they have encouraged it by actually having leadership positions of any consequence." Participant 2 mentioned the administrator directly over their house program

> has really made a point of letting the students lead, really lead, kind of giving them as much rope as possible in terms of having them make decisions and be able to have real leadership responsibilities and have the real opportunity to fail as well.

With more roles for student leadership, administrators spoke about the increase in the workload and level of responsibility. Participant 1 stated,

> I heard someone say one time, talking about just what a school requires of its students. That many times, schools do not require anything of their students, and the students know it. And so, they do not care. So, a house system allows you to give kids real responsibilities and, therefore, real positions of leadership. If you lean into that as a school and then some sense, take the risk of it because the kid could mess up. The kids could fail; they do not, they might not do what they are supposed to do. But if you give them real responsibilities, that allows them to see what they are doing, again, real opportunities for leadership. So that they realize, hey, if I don't do this, it doesn't get done, and that's bad, that's on me, that's on my house. That is on my friends.

Participant 6 spoke directly to comparing a student council structure: "Before house system, we had student council, and student council was mostly the party planning committee. Mostly social events out of school." Participants mentioned several different responsibilities that house leaders were in charge of during the school day. One of the most talked-about roles was leading competitions between the houses. Participant 1 mentioned,

> Well, someone's got a figure out how to run the competition. Someone's got to figure out how to get ready for that competition. Someone's got to figure out how we are going to feed everybody that day. So even you know if you have an event that you're deciding as a school, this is going to matter, we are going to spend a whole day on this, whether it is on-campus or some kind of off-campus retreat or

service projects. These are real events that need to be planned and executed, and

so that alone gives you a need. Then for someone to actually pull off the work.

And so, if you've got, for instance, in a house system, you know your house head,

but you also have people from each house who make up say, like a field day

committee, you want to have someone lead that for your house. Or, if your house

does anything with money, you might want a treasurer. Or if your house does

anything by way of, we have got to communicate out to all the families in this

house, you might have someone who is over communications. So now you've got

real positions of leadership. And I say real, and I just mean like the these are

positions that actually need someone to do stuff or else the event doesn't happen.

They are not; it is kind of made-up titles. They are just kind of there for show or

something, or they are just there because we think we should have them, but they

don't really do anything. So, in that way, the houses allow for real positions of

leadership, especially if you get traction in your house with, hey, we do these

events every year.

Student Enculturation

One of the responsibilities that participants mentioned was the expectation of

house leadership to help enculturate younger and new students. Participant 1 spoke about

this:

Where it helps us tremendously is the enculturation of 7th- and 8th-graders,

because, with a bigger upper school, the risk is your 7th- and 8th-graders come in,

and if we are not paying attention to them in the student body, they are not being

paid enough attention to in the right way, they will sort of bring their own

immaturity here in a way that is distracting to our goals. Or in a way that is subversive to those goals. And so what you want then is this sense of as a new 7th-grader, I realize there is already a structure here. There is already a hierarchy here; there is already something here that I need to get in line with.

Participant 10 also stated this about enculturation:

I think as the houses have the ability to form these social groups, and to the degree, that social groups can help inculcate certain values and ideas and certain dispositions. And to use Tocqueville's phrase, certain habits of the heart to the degree that social groups can order affections, houses are as good as any.

Participant 3 also talked about this passing along a culture:

But now, you aspire to carry forward the very legacy that has bought you into a spiritual community through the rights, rituals, and daily patterns that create a culture. I mean, that is absolutely happening to my daughter's life. And now she's a senior in high school, and now she's a prefect. And her whole goal is to pass on a particular set of practices and cultures that make that made her long-term buy-in.

Participant 1 added,

It's the best way we have for formalizing students, not just student leadership in terms of a position but just the leadership of the older students and where that bears itself out. In that way, the house systems are highly valuable because it helps us as faculty and admin properly govern our upper school using older students in the student culture, using the atmosphere of the student culture that we want to perpetuate itself. So in that way, it's highly valuable.

Research Question 2

      RQ2:   Does the house system method of organization have any impact on cross-

              grade relationships as perceived by school administrators?

      When participants were asked about the impact house systems have on cross-

grade relationships, nine out of 10 stated that they contributed to helping students get to

know other students outside their grade level (see Figure 2). Many participants mentioned

that the original reason they started house systems was to encourage cross-grade level

relationships.

Figure 2

Administrators' Perceived Impact of House Systems on Cross-Grade-Level Relationships
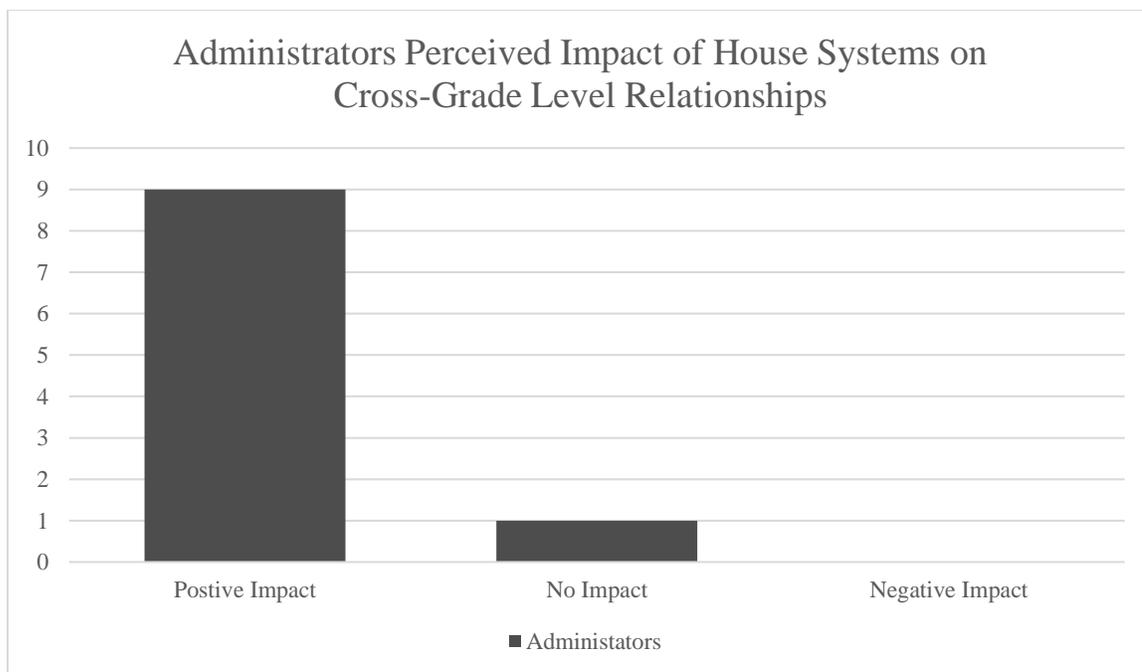
      The two overarching themes that emerged from the interviews were (a)

mechanism for student relationships and (b) increased sense of belonging.

A Mechanism for Student Relationships

Participants commented many times about how house systems help structure the school day and events to impact cross-grade level relationships positively. Participant 10 stated,

Where before would be students who would only know, you know, five or six guys in their grade, now they know several guys across the rhetoric school. The young ladies, you know, would only interact with two or three girls in their grade. Now they have their member of the house, and they have got a dozen girls that they are encouraged to interact with you.

Participant 2 mentioned,

I think that having the house system has been good in a kind of helping there to be a vertical interaction in the school rather than just kind of horizontal per class. And so, I think that it has enhanced relationships, the inter-grade relationships.

Participant 6 said,

And so, I think, you know, if we didn't have the house system, my biggest fear would be that students would feel sort of trapped within their individual grade level, and at a small school, that can be a really miserable experience if that is not good if that social scenario is not a very healthy one or a good one. And so, you know, I think when students leave our school, most of the time, they leave our school, because we're too small, and that's what they say. And so, one of the purposes of the house system for us is to make our small school feel a little bit bigger.

Other participants spoke about this idea of helping a smaller school feel bigger by having the house system expand possible friend groups. Participant 2 spoke about his school size playing a part in the advantages of house systems:

I think that in high school, it is easy for grade levels, especially a school kind of our size, grade levels to be self-contained. And to be mostly worried about themselves. And so you just, you do not get to know students in other grades very often because you are in classes with your own grade and most of the time and if you have any classes with anybody from another grade, it's usually you know, just a few kids. And so, I think this, this gives students an opportunity to get to know each other.

One of the more prominent ways that houses set up students to get to know each other was through competitions. Participant 6 said,

And I think the competitions are a major mechanism whereby the grades that they, you students have to collaborate across grades. They can't just sit in their house next to the students that are in the same grade. They are going to have to work with others to accomplish the goal.

Participant 1 provided a story to back this point:

I remember years ago in Memphis on a particular field day, and this kid ended up being the only kid left on his dodgeball game, like he was the only guy left. I think he was in. I think the kid was in 8th grade, and he might have been brand new to the school. He ended up winning. I mean, he was the only guy standing on his team, and he ended up knocking down the other team's pens or whatever; he was the hero. And so, of course, by the end of that day, every kid in his house

knew his name, was celebrating him, lifting him over their shoulders and all that, all that sort of cliché stuff.

Participant 5 shared a story of one upper-grade student who got connected with a younger student and helped her out in a time of need:

So, I had a; we had a family who went through a divorce when the oldest daughter was in sixth grade. And, you know, feeling it in essence, the I don't know stigma or what have you, her daughter was very concerned about, we're in a broken home and is this an odd thing. And so, the house captain and her house; one of the girls there happens also be from a broken home or her parents are had divorced and lives with her mom and remarried, right? And so, I don't think she realized that her house captain was that, but knowing where she was, she came and basically helped her in dealing with that. And that it did not, and the mom just was so thrilled, like, why would a senior girl come and talk to my 7th-grader and do that? And it is like, well, because that is your house captain, and she just thought it was the greatest thing.

These stories demonstrate some of the positive effects that house systems can create in helping students get to know each other outside their grade level.

Increased Sense of Belonging

One of the big themes discussed was the sense of belonging that house system created for students. Participant 2 succinctly stated that "to be part of a house is to belong." Participant 10 noted,

It's also contributed to a sense of belonging that some of these students didn't have before. I mean, in the rhetoric school, if you, it does not matter what grade

you are in, you are also in a house, and you were selected to be in that house and you; there is house pride. There is a sense of belonging in the community with the houses.

Participant 1 added,

And so now, as a younger student in the upper school, you know, I know a handful of upperclassmen by name. And, you know, I see him all the time and, and I feel known by them. And you know, that allows me to feel connected. It also allows me to feel like I'm accountable to something. And that I'm needed for something.

Participant 2 continued this same theme:

I know that there are younger students who have benefited from that, just in the kind of sense of belonging, you know, kind of feeling like somebody cares, you know. Somebody says, you know, if an upperclassman says hello to you and your seventh grader, that's a pretty big deal.

Other participants added this same effect that the house system structure has had on helping students feel more connected to the school. When asked what would be lost if the participant's house system no longer continued, Participant 7 stated, "Oh, that's a really sad thought. Oh, yeah, the camaraderie, the family feel would be lost. I think it would be harder to drum that up with the high schoolers." Participants perceive houses as having a strong impact on creating a community that the students enjoy being a part of.

Participant 3 detailed what happened when he tried mixing this house community:

There is a house cup, this whole thing. And so, to spread it out, I decided to just peel some people out of green house and reshuffle the deck. And I was about to

run out of Oklahoma City. The angry and very upset parents. And I think

justifiably, I don't think that they were being irrational, but just saying you cannot

disrupt this community, and I just thought like so long as you're in a house who

cares. But the power of the thing, I realized at that moment there was the

membership.

Participants believe this sense of membership and community is fostered through house

systems was mentioned several other times. Participant 1 spoke on this:

So, the idea there was that the house system would just bring our kids together

more, and then they would know each other better, feel like they were actually

part of the same community. Not just siloed off in communities.

Summary

This chapter discussed the findings that explored the lived experiences of

administrators of classical Christian schools who have a house system. Participants

engaged in the interview and were able to share with clarity the lived experiences they

had with house systems. The questions given to the participants helped explore ideas and

experiences with their house systems. Transcripts of these answers were coded and

revealed four themes in response to the two research questions. Those themes are (a)

more positions of leadership, (b) increased student responsibilities, (c) a mechanism for

student relationships, and (d) a sense of belonging.

The first theme, more positions of leadership, described how administrators

believed that the structure of house systems in their schools created more opportunities

for students to step into a role of leadership at the school. The second theme, increased

student responsibilities, revealed that house systems provided new areas for students to

lead in and leadership tasks with more consequences. The third theme, a mechanism for student relationships, described how house systems had created avenues for students to get to know students in different grades. The fourth theme, sense of belonging, revealed that participants perceived that house systems helped their students connect deeper with the school and classmates. Chapter 5 discusses the overview of the data, findings, and implications for further research based on these findings.

CHAPTER 5 – DISCUSSION

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences and perceptions that classical Christian administrators had on house systems within their schools. Ten administrators from several states were interviewed, and the data from these interviews were interpreted to explain the essence of this phenomenon. The research questions that were used to guide this study follow:

RQ1:   Does the house system method of organization have any impact on student leadership as perceived by school administrators?

RQ2:   Does the house system method of organization have any impact on cross-grade relationships as perceived by school administrators?

This chapter covers the statement of the problem, reviews the nature of the study, explains the significance of the study, and presents the summary of the findings. Finally, recommendations for further research are included, along with the conclusion.

Statement of the Problem

A recent trend in classical Christian schools has been the implantation and utilization of house systems for its student body. Thomas (2016) interviewed 10 administrators of classical Christian schools and asked them why they chose to implement house systems; she revealed that they wanted a "stronger connection between grade levels, increased mentoring, and more leadership positions within the school" (p. 118). With the reasons why administrators chose house systems being defined, no empirical evidence has since suggested that house systems have fulfilled these intended goals. Zoeller (2018) mentioned that house systems have been used for *positive public relations* and has yet to point to empirical data to suggest what impact these houses have

on student distributed leadership, cross-grade level relationships, and mentoring. The lack of data present problems for other classical Christian school administrators who have contemplated instituting a house system for their schools.

Nature of the Study

This qualitative phenomenological study interviewed 10 administrators from various classical Christian schools to answer questions that would address the research questions. Interviews were done through Google Meet online. Each session was recorded and transcribed. This study provides other classical Christian school administrators data on whether they are fulfilling the intended goals of distributing student leadership and cross-grade level relationships. This data can better equip administrators to decide whether or not to implement a house system within their school.

Significance of the Study

This study potentially addresses the significant gaps in the literature regarding house systems in classical Christian schools. Even though many classical Christian schools have begun using them, little research has been done to uncover their impact on the desired goals they were implemented to achieve. Significant research is needed to better understand the perceptions of house systems in schools.

Through this study, administrators, school boards, and teachers can have empirical data to help in their decisions as to start a house system within their school, specifically if a school desires to see it grow in distributing student leadership and increasing cross-grade level relationships. This study presents data to help them make more informed decisions. It can also provide administrators and school leaders with a different approach to the more traditional student government or student council models

that are popular in schools. The data may help administrators see new ways to structure student leadership positions.

Summary of Findings

Using the research questions, the major themes of the study can be further explained. Each question of the study is examined for additional insights on the major and minor themes.

Research Question 1

RQ1:   Does the house system method of organization have any impact on student leadership as perceived by school administrators?

The two major themes that arose from this question were (a) house systems provided more positions of leadership for students and increased student responsibilities and (b) that house systems had a positive impact and influence in distributing leadership across the school for students.

The theme of more positions for leadership was identified through a large volume of participants explaining how house systems created more leadership opportunities for students. Participant 3 said it well when he commented that "there's so many more opportunities to lead. So, It's not just the house captains, although they are the primary leaders in their house. In every competition, every kind of activity, you'll see that they will be leaders assigned." Through the structure of creating houses for the student body and having these houses compete against one another, more roles for leadership were created, allowing students to step into them.

For the theme of increased student responsibility, the study found that not only did more student leadership roles occur when house systems were implemented but that what

was being asked of the students increased. House administration was asking the students leading these houses to have a larger responsibility in the house's leadership. Students led weekly meetings with their houses, made school announcements, supervised cleaning crews, planned and executed competitions days, and delegated leadership positions to other students. Participant 1 stated, "So, a house system allows you to give kids real responsibilities and, therefore, real positions of leadership."

One of the minor themes that arose from increased student responsibility was the emphasis that participants placed on the role of student enculturation. Students in these leadership roles in their houses were being encouraged to run events and meetings but, more importantly, begin passing along the school's culture onto the younger students. Participants pointed this out to be one of the best ways they had found to help new or young students grasp the school's culture.

Research Question 2

RQ2: Does the house system method of organization have any impact on cross-grade relationships as perceived by school administrators?

The two major themes from the study for Research Question 2 were the mechanism for student relationships and an increased sense of belonging. Participants overwhelmingly believed that house systems positively impacted cross-grade level relationships.

The first major theme found through the study was a mechanism for student relationships. Participants believed that house systems set up a system for students to get to know each other in varying grades, increasing their ability to know and be known by students outside their grade level. This was especially a theme emphasized by participants

of smaller schools, as it was a way for students to develop friendships outside their classroom that only consisted of a few students. Participant 2 commented,

> I think that having the house system has been good in a kind of helping there to be a vertical interaction in the school rather than just kind of horizontal per class. And so, I think that it has enhanced relationships, the inter-grade relationships.

Participants had positive perceptions of the house system's ability to help students get to know others outside their class grade.

The second major theme, a sense of belonging, was discovered through the study. Participant 10 stated,

> It's also contributed to a sense of belonging that some of these students didn't have before. I mean, in the rhetoric school, if you, it does not matter what grade you are in, you are also in a house, and you were selected to be in that house and you; there is house pride. There is a sense of belonging in the community with the houses.

Participants suggested that students' affiliation to the school houses provided them a sense of belonging to a group. Participants mentioned that this helped with student retention at times and was a way in which younger students felt accepted by older students within the school.

Recommendations for Future Research

With little research and large gaps in the data, many areas of future research can occur on the topic of house systems. Future research on these topics that are recommended follow:

- Quantitative and qualitative research on the perceptions of house systems from teachers at classical Christian schools.

- Quantitative and qualitative research on the perceptions of house systems from students at classical Christian schools.

- A longitudinal study on students in house systems at classical Christian schools exploring cross-grade level relationships that could demonstrate its long-term impact.

- Quantitative research on the resources allocated to house systems compared to satisfaction levels of students.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the statement of the problem, the nature of the study, the significance of the study, the summary of the findings, and, finally, the recommendations for future research. This phenomenological study aimed to explore the perceptions of administrators of classical Christian schools on house systems. Specifically, what impact did they perceive house systems have on distributed leadership and cross-grade level relationships? Interviews were done through online video conferencing and used an interview protocol that consisted of 10 open-ended questions for the participants. The participants' responses were gathered, organized, coded, and analyzed. Findings for this study came out of these data.

The study's overall findings emphasized the perceptions and lived experiences of administrators of classical Christian schools who have a house system within their schools. The findings from these participants produced four themes: more student leadership positions, increased student responsibility, a mechanism for student

relationships, and a sense of belonging. Administrators expressed their perceptions that house systems had a positive impact on giving students more positions of leadership and larger roles of responsibility. Administrators also expressed their perception that house systems positively impacted cross-grade level relationships. Students now had a structure in the school day to get to know students in other grades and produced a deeper sense of belonging in the school.

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Appendix A – Interview Questions

Administrator Perceptions of House Systems, Distributed Leadership, and Cross-Grade Level Relationships in Classical Christian Schools

Time of interview:

Date:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Description of the project:

Questions:

1.   What motivated your school to start a house system?
2.   What activities are a part of your school's house system?
3.   In what ways have house systems contributed or detracted from encouraging the school to distribute student leadership positions?
4.   In what ways have house systems contribute or detract from encouraging cross-grade level relationships?
5.   How would you describe the experience of house systems in terms of value at your school?
6.   What would be lost in the school if house systems no longer continued at your school?
7.   What do you perceive students think about house systems?
8.   How do you perceive faculty/staff feel about house systems?
9.   Is there a particular activity that stands out to you about house systems in your school?
10.   Is there anything relevant to the study that you would like to add that had not been covered yet?

Appendix B – Email of Intent

Dear_____,

My name is Scott McElvain. I am a doctoral candidate at Regent University in the School of Education, K-12 Educational Leadership. My research study topic is entitled Administrator Perceptions of House Systems, Distributed Leadership, and Cross-Grade Level Relationships in Classical Christian Schools.

The purpose of this study is to understand from administrators whether they perceive the house system to be fulfilling the intended goal of increasing distributed leadership and cross-grade peer relationships.

This study will require you to be available for an interview on your thoughts about house systems in the school that you work. This interview will either be in person or over the phone and will cover distributed leadership and cross-grade peer relationships within house systems.

All participation in this study will be voluntary and responses will be kept confidential. Your personal identifiable information will be protected to the maximum extent. No personal identifiable information will be published in the research documentation. Research identification codes will be used in the analysis of the collected data. I will store data securely. The contact list and research data will be destroyed within a year of the completion of this study.

I have received approval and permission from the Human Subject Review Board at Regent University to conduct this study and it will be conducted with the utmost professionalism and integrity.

If there are any questions, I can be contacted at scotmce@mail.regent.edu or at 870-688-2240.

If you are interested, please reply yes to this email, and I will send you a demographic survey to complete in Google Forms.

Blessings,

Scott McElvain

Appendix C – Administrator Participant Questionnaire

Name_____

Email_____

Phone #_____

How many years have you been an administrator? _____

Where is your school located? _____

What does your school charge in tuition? _____

How many students are in your K-12 school? _____

How many years has your school had a house system? _____

Sex: male or female

Select one or more of the following racial/ethnic categories to describe yourself:

_ American Indian or Alaska Native _ Asian American

_Black or African American _ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

_White/ Caucasian _ Hispanic/ Latino

Appendix D – School of Education Human Subjects Approval Letter

August 6, 2021

Dear Scott McElvain:

Your revised application for dissertation research entitled *Administrator Perceptions on House Systems, Distributed Leadership, and Cross-Grade Level Relationships in Classical Christian Schools* has been approved by the Regent University School of Education Human Subjects Review process with ID# 202108061. Accordingly, you are welcome to proceed with data collection as specified in your application and under the supervision of your dissertation chair, subject to regulations and approval by participating organizations and people (e.g., classical Christian schools, as required, and participant consent) and any additional external approvals as appropriate.

Please note that this approval is conditioned on the parameters outlined in your application. If your research substantively changes and you plan to conduct research outside of the approved scope, you will need to submit a revision for review.

Approval is good for one year from the date of this approval letter. If you will be *collecting data* after the one-year anniversary of your approval, you will be required to submit a renewal application and status report to secure an additional twelve-month extension.

You are expected to comply with the university policy as outlined in the Faculty & Academic Policy Handbook and the Code of Federal Regulations, Protection of Human Subjects 45 CFR 46 to ensure that the rights and welfare of human participants in your research project are properly protected.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at 757-352-4205 or jpittman@regent.edu.

Jeffrey S. Pittman, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, School of Education