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PRINCIPALS'LEADERSHIP STYLES AND THEIR IMPACT

ON SCHOOL CLIMATE: ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS

by

BRUCE R.MCCOLUMN SR.

(Under the Direction of Brenda Marina)

ABSTRACT

The primary focus of this study is to explore the perceptions of assistant principals as to how their principals' leadership styles impact school climate. A school's climate plays a vital role in student achievement and principals are the most important factor in setting a setting a school's climate. Therefore, principals' leadership behaviors warrant investigating.

This qualitative study identified principal leadership styles through the perceptions of their assistant principals. Interactive interviews were conducted with selected assistant principals in the XYZ School System. Their responses were analyzed, themed and coded to draw a connection between principal leadership style and school climate. These findings can be used in leadership training to familiarize current and aspiring principals with leadership attributes that could positively impact school climate as well as student achievement.

Chapter One provided an introduction and summary of the study. Chapter Two provided a background of the relevant literature that is associated with various aspects of leadership and school climate. Chapter Three provided information on methodology procedures used to answer the research questions. Chapter Four provided a report of the data and analysis which includes detailed demographic information. Chapter Five provided a discussion of the findings and implications of the study.

INDEX WORDS: Principal's leadership styles, Leadership behavior, School climate

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Georgia Southern University

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DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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2010

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by

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Electronic Version Approved:
July 2010

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wonderful wife, Yolanda, of twenty-five years. It was your un-compromising love and encouragement that enabled me to accomplish this feat. Thank you for supporting my continued quest to reach this pinnacle. You inspired me with your unselfish demeanor through your faithful support and prayers. You played an important role in each and every success that I've accomplished since our first meeting at college. Thank you for being patient.

I also would like to dedicate this dissertation to my daughter, LaKendra, and my son Bruce Jr. You have been the driving force behind my desire to attain this degree. I would like to challenge both of you to equal and exceed anything that I have accomplished. Knowing that you love me was my strength to endure the rigors of this degree.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents Rev. Harold and Alice Rose McColumn as well as my Parents-in-law, Susie and Rev. Amos Kendrick. Momma, thank you for raising me with Christian values and teaching me how to love unconditionally. Daddy, thank you for your guidance and biblical wisdom that you have given to me. Mother-in-law and Father-in-law, I threw away the in-law title many years ago because you have always treated me as your own. Thank you for loving and supporting me.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The impact of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation on schools across the United States is of critical interest to the public and has been a frequent focus of the media (Robelen, 2004). When President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, one of the primary mandates was to improve student achievement. Since school climate has been found to be positively related to student achievement (Tableman, 2004), the impact of principal leadership styles on school climate should be considered. Moreover, Leithwood (1997) found that principal leadership exercised the strongest independent influence on planning, structure and organization, as well as on school climate. In addition, Witziers, Bosker and Kruger (2003) found that school climate and leadership style are two things that principals can influence. Consequently, school principals find themselves in the spotlight as they are held accountable for student achievement as well as school climate.

School principals and assistant principals are experiencing growing pressure to deliver high quality education in public schools. More so, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) has significantly increased the pressure to improve student achievement. It is the belief of the researcher that many principals may not realize how their leadership style impacts a high quality educational environment. Ultimately, a principals' leadership style sets the tone for the school's environment which may in turn lead to increased student achievement. Witziers, Bosker and Kruger (2003) suggested that the principal's behavior might affect student achievement through school climate and organization. Ultimately, student achievement should be the focus of all schools. Hence, if a principal, through school climate, affects student achievement even indirectly, it is important to identify principal's leadership styles that positively affect a school climate.

In this qualitative study, interactive interviews using open-ended questions were utilized to solicit the perception of eight assistance principals from a school system in the southeast region of the USA. The participants answered the open-ended questions regarding their perceptions of how their principal's leadership style impacts the schools' climate. The data were analyzed using the qualitative method to identify principal leadership styles that affect the schools' climate. The findings in this study may possibly be a tool for training principals as well as assistant principals and teachers who aspire to become principals. Additionally, building principals may use these findings to assess and evaluate their impact on the school's climate.

A schools' climate, the "feel" (Halpin & Croft, 1963) of a school that affects everything that happens within a school setting, has a great influence on the success of the teachers as well as student achievement. No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) has significantly increased the pressure to improve student achievement. School climate, leadership, and quality instruction are frequently associated with effective schools. Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2004) reported that effective school leadership substantially boosts student achievement. Effective leadership increases an organization's ability to meet all challenges, including the need to obtain a competitive advantage, the need to foster ethical behavior, and the need to manage a diverse workforce fairly and equitably (Moorhead & Griffin, 2004). Therefore, it is imperative that principals develop leadership styles that enhance a school's climate, which in turn, helps in meeting the mandates of NCLB. As a result, these leadership styles might ultimately lead to increased student achievement, increased staff job satisfaction, and overall improvement of the schools' climate (Bulach, Malone and Castleman, 1994).

Statement of the Problem

How principals lead has been a topic of discussion, to some degree, in almost every school system in the country. Their leadership is an important determinant of According to

Lussier and Achun (2003), there are several theoretical frameworks that offer possible explanations of how principals lead their schools. Some of these theories may be unknown in leadership training sessions in school systems. Hence, a study that provides a thorough examination of leadership theories and styles may reveal how principals should lead.

There is a correlation between principals' leadership and school climate. Clabough (2006) found that a principals' leadership style has an impact on school climate and plays a critical role in student achievement and employee satisfaction. Other investigations have shown that principal leadership is the strongest influence on changing or enhancing a schools' climate (Schulman, 2002; Kelly and Williamson, 2006; Clabough, 2006). However, some studies on how principal leadership styles impact school climate are based primarily on the perception of teachers, not assistant principals. For example, studies done by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997), Schulman (2002) and Massaro (2000) found that teachers' perceptions were instrumental in identifying those principal leadership styles that impact on school climate, as well as teacher morale and job satisfaction

Even though Massaro (2000) found that principals have a positive effect on school climate from a teachers' perspective, at the time of this study, no known studies have been conducted to investigate how assistant principals perceive their principals' leadership styles' and how those styles influence school climate. Because of the intimate working relationship between principals and their assistants, the assistant principal is privileged to particular demands of principal leadership as it relates to the role of instructional leader and manager (Marshall and Hooley, 2006). Hence, assistant principals' perception of this phenomenon may present a clearer understanding on how principal leadership styles may influence a schools' climate.

Background

It is important that principals, as well as assistant principals, be cognizant of leadership styles or behaviors that enhance a school's climate. Additionally, principals should acknowledge

and embrace those styles or behaviors that assistant principals perceive as a positive influence on school climate. Because principals and their assistant principals are both critical to a schools' leadership process, it is important to consider perceptions of assistant principals because they are confronted with similar issues like those principal.

Management and organizational literature is rich with descriptions of leadership types: formal, informal, assumed, assigned, autocratic, democratic, team, dispersed, shared, collaborative, servant, primal, and contrarian leadership to name a few (Sample, 2002). Regardless of the leadership style, there are universal characteristics that appear when considering qualities of effective leaders: sense of vision, ability to set goals and plan, personal charisma, strong communication skills (particularly verbal and negotiation abilities), strong sense of self and personal convictions, relationship and empathy skills, and the ability to motivate and influence others (Sample, 2002).

A review of scholarly studies on leadership indicates that there are a wide variety of different theoretical approaches to explain the complexities of the leadership process (Bass, 1990; Gardner, 1990). Even though this study will focus on assistant principals' perception of how principal leadership styles impact school climate, it is critical to show if leadership styles are strictly based on theory. Additionally, theoretical perspectives may serve as a guideline for aspiring principals as they develop and seek the knowledge and skills to lead a school.

Theoretical assumptions can inform the practice of leadership. For example, the Trait Theory (McCall and Lombardo, 1983) suggests that people are born with certain leadership qualities that make them great leaders. Also, people who have the right combination of traits make good leaders. The Contingency Theory suggests that a leader's ability to lead is contingent upon various situational factors, including the leader's preferred style, the capabilities and behaviors of followers and also various other situational factors.

Situational leadership suggests that leaders can become effective in many different types of organizational settings involving a wide variety of organizational tasks (Northouse, 2007). Path-Goal Theory helps to explain how leaders motivate their subordinates to develop an appreciation for their work. However, according to Northouse (2007), Path-Goal Theory is contingent on the fit between the leader's behavior and the characteristics of the subordinates and the task.

Transformational Theory is one of the most current leadership theories. This theory addresses how leaders motivate and inspire their followers to achieve greatness (Northouse, 2007, pp 176-177). It involves leaders adapting to the needs of those in their sphere of influence. Transformational leaders are considered agents of change who have a clear vision and wean from the knowledge of those in the organization. Most importantly, transformational leadership depends on one's ability to motivate in order to inspire others. Detailed theoretical influences of leadership will be discussed in Chapter Two.

School climate has been defined by Halpin and Croft (1963) as the "feel" of a school. Norton (1984) states that school climate is the "collective personality" of the school. Just as individuals have personalities, so do schools. In addition, climate is the human environment within which the administrators, teachers, students and staff do their work. Like the air in a room, climate surrounds and affects everything that happens in an organization (Freiberg, 1983). Schools have their own unique personality that is a result of the overall climate.

School climate is a critical component school improvement. With the enactment of No Child Left Behind (NCLB; No Child Left Behind Act, 2002), states have been forced to focus on improved school outcomes. NCLB has brought increased emphasis on state content standards and measurement of school effectiveness. These specific components of NCLB are direct influences upon school climate.

The climate within a school setting is of utmost importance because it has a great influence on the success of the teachers as well as the students. For teachers, one of the benefits of a positive school climate is increased job satisfaction (Ma & MacMillan, 1999). A positive school climate has been found to be positively related to indicators of school success, such as standardized test scores, annual yearly progress, and school report card information (DiStefano et al., 2007).

Characteristics of schools, such as the physical structure of the school building and the interactions between teachers and students, are two diverse factors that both affect and help to define the broad concept of school climate. Additionally, community support and socio-economic status help to define the concept of school climate. Nevertheless, Leithwood (1997) found that principal leadership exercised the strongest independent influence on planning, structure and organization, as well as on school mission and school climate.

Generally, these climates are a result of the leadership style of the principal (Freiberg, 1983). In addition, healthy schools that promote high academic standards, appropriate leadership, and collegiality provide a climate more conducive for student achievement and success (Hoy, Tarter, & Bliss, 1990). Although there is not one commonly accepted definition for school climate, Cohen (2006) suggests that school climate, essentially, reflects subjective experience in school.

Numerous studies document that students in schools with a more positive climate have a higher overall student achievement (Tableman, 2004). For example, Heck (2000) linked school climate and student achievement. Freiberg (1998) found that a positive school climate can enhance staff performance, promote higher morale, and improve student achievement. These findings are critical because student achievement is one of the most important purposes of schools. In order for school climate to impact student achievement, some aspects of school

climates may need to change. According to Tableman (2004), educational reform under the No Child Left Behind Act is a long-term effort to change school climate. Therefore, if a principals' leadership style can directly or indirectly lead to a better school climate, it can be assumed that this study merits further investigation in the proceeding chapter.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant due to the demands set by No Child Left Behind for states and schools to improve student achievement and to close the achievement gaps between children. The results of this study may provide meaningful insight to principals, assistant principals, and teachers as to how a principal's leadership style influences a school's climate. The results from this study may encourage principals to assess their leadership styles in order to enhance school climate. Assistant principals, especially those who aspire to become principals, may use the results from this study to assist them with the development of their leadership styles. Furthermore, teachers, who aspire to become assistant principals, may use these results to familiarize themselves with leadership styles that positively influence school climate. Additionally, identifying the relationship between principal leadership styles and school climate from an assistant principal's perspective will be innovative. Because of the intimate working conditions of principals and their assistants, the assistant principal has first-hand knowledge of principal concerns and areas of need for principal improvement, as they relate to school climate. Assistant principals are a critical component and stake-holders in the schools' decision-making process. They also have benefitted from similar educational training to that of principals. Ultimately, principals and assistant principals must recognize that an administrator's leadership style greatly affects the climate and can create a learning environment that is negative and counter- productive or one that is conducive to optimal student achievement.

Finally, this study is also intended to enhance the leadership skills of the researcher in preparation for a school leadership role. Due to the seemingly unrealistic demands of No Child

Left Behind, it is necessary for future principals to broaden their leadership skills in order implement the components of NCLB as well state mandates to assure that their school consistently maintains AYP status. As a result of increased knowledge of leadership theories and styles as they relate to school climate, it is assumed by the researcher's ability to impact student learning as a building leader.

Research Questions

Principals' leadership styles have an important role in determining the climate of a school. The findings of any investigation of principal leadership styles may aid in preparing aspiring principals. Most importantly, identifying principal leadership styles from assistant principals' perspectives is worthy of investigation due to their close working relationship with principals and their similar training. According to Rosenbach and Taylor (1993), if principals are to have good assistant principals, they must offer them opportunities to shape and participate in the progress of the organization. Furthermore, a principal/assistant principal relationship is one of mutual dependence (Gabarro and Kotter, 1993).

The over-arching question for this research is: What principal leadership styles do assistant principals perceive as influential to school climate? Three additional sub-questions will be used for this study. The first sub-question will seek to determine how principal leadership contributes to the overall learning environment of the school with student achievement as the main focus. The second sub-question will seek to determine how principal leadership contributes to the enhancement of the overall personality of the school. The third sub-question will seek to determine what principal leadership styles correlates to a safe and orderly learning environment.

Research Procedures

For this study, the researcher used a qualitative research design, utilizing interactive interviews with selected participants, assistant principals, to identify and describe their subjective

experience regarding their perception of how their principals' leadership styles impact school climate. The qualitative approach aims to reveal people's feelings and experiences from their own point of view rather than from that of the researcher (Glesne, 2006). Qualitative research also enables the researcher to make sense of phenomena in terms of the meanings based on the experiences of assistant principals.

The XYZ School System is located in the Southeastern region of the United States. It consists of three traditional high, four middle, twelve elementary, and three theme schools. Within these elementary and secondary schools, there are a total of forty-four assistant principals. Each of the schools has as few as one and as many as five assistant principals.

The sample came from the population of forty-four assistant principals who work at elementary and secondary schools in the school system. The participants for this study consisted of eight purposively selected assistant principals from the elementary, secondary schools in the XYZ School System. The study was contingent upon receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the participating school system as well as approval for Georgia Southern University. According to Nardi (2006), purposive sampling is appropriate when there is a specific reason to select a unique sample on purpose because of some characteristics or traits that will be analyzed.

The researcher was the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis. According to Merriam and Associates (2002), since the primary goal of the study was to understand, the human instrument would seem to be the ideal means of collecting and analyzing data, because the human instrument has the ability to be immediately responsive and adaptive. This study utilized interactive interviews composed of open-ended questions that solicited the perceptions of the selected assistant principals regarding their principals' leadership styles. The interview questions were developed by the researcher based on leadership qualities and styles

that emerged from the literature. A reference group of county-level administrators from various departments including curriculum, personnel, student affairs, budget and finance, and community advocacy was used to answer and critique these questions before the participants are interviewed. In addition, a checklist was utilized for probing questions as needed. The checklist consists of the twenty-one leadership behaviors that Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) found to be positively correlated to student achievement.

Each participant answered the opened-ended questions in an interview session with the researcher that last approximately 60 minutes. Participant responses were not limited to their current principals' leadership styles. They may refer to a previous principals' leadership style in the county that they worked with as an assistant principal. These interviews were conducted in a location that is convenient to the participants once the assistant principals agreed to be interviewed.

Polit & Hungler (1999) argue that qualitative data is very intensive activity that requires insight, ingenuity, creativity, conceptual sensitivity and sheer hard work. It is more demanding than quantitative analysis. Due to the demand of collecting qualitative data, data analysis and data collection occurred simultaneously throughout the study. Merriam and Associates (2002) state that simultaneous data collection and analysis is beneficial because it allows the researcher to make adjustments throughout the study and to test emerging concepts, themes, and categories against subsequent data. The researcher coded and categorized reoccurring patterns/themes that emerge from interview transcripts and document analysis.

These themes were compared to the participant's transcriptions to draw connections between principal leadership styles and school climate. The compilation of data was done by using a data chart as a visual guide to make connections between the codes and sub-questions (See Table 4:2). The participant's responses were analyzed based on leadership themes. The

information from the chart was interpreted and summarized in order to answer the research questions.

Limitations/Delimitations

While this study attempted to identify assistant principals' perceptions of leadership behaviors or styles that impact school climate, there are many other behaviors that effective leaders use to influence their school's climate that may not be ascertained in this study. Another limitation is that the results from this study may be generalized only to populations similar to suburban schools in Georgia or other Southeastern states. In addition, an assumption that governs this study is that the perceptions of assistant principals are honest and accurately represents the principal's leadership styles and school climate. The one delimitation of this study is that it only focuses on leadership behaviors of principals at the elementary and secondary schools in one Southeastern school district.

Definition of Terms

The difficulty of defining *school climate* is reflected in the diversity of climate typologies that have evolved, despite their often common roots (Anderson, 1982). For the purpose of this study, *school climate* refers to the feel, atmosphere, tone, ideology and collective personality of a school.

Hoy and Miskel (2000) asserted that "leadership should be defined broadly as a social process in which a member of a group or organization influences the interpretation of internal and external events, the choice of goals or desired outcomes, organization of work activities, goals or desired outcomes".

Leadership style is defined as the process by which a person exerts influence over other people and inspires, motivates, and directs their activities to help achieve the goals of the school (Hoy and Miskel, 2000). However, in this study, principal leadership styles represent the

behaviors and actions principals utilize to direct and influence their staff as well as their school's climate.

Affirmation is defined as the extent to which the leader recognizes and celebrates school accomplishments and acknowledges failures.

Assistant principal perception will be defined as the process by which assistant principals make sense of the leadership styles of the principal based on what is observed.

Theme School is defined as a school that offers a variety of specialized educational opportunities that allow students to focus on special interests or talents.

An *alternative school* is an educational setting designed to accommodate behavioral needs of students that cannot be addressed adequately in the traditional school environment. Generally, these students have caused a substantial disruption in student-learning at the traditional school.

Traditional education refers to long-established customs found in schools that society has traditionally deemed appropriate consisting of Pre- kindergarten to the Twelfth grade.

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). NCLB is an authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, a federal law that affects K–12 education (Georgia Department of Education, 2004).

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). AYP is the minimum level of improvement that states, school districts, and schools must achieve each year as determined under the NCLB Act (Georgia Department of Education, 2004).

Situational Awareness will be defined as awareness of the details and undercurrents in the running of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems.

Summary

Studies on the importance of principal leadership styles and how they impact school climate may be an asset for preparing future administrators. Previously mentioned studies have shown that the style in which a principal leads is a predictor of a schools' climate. It has also been noted that a principal's leadership style may affect student achievement through school climate and organization. Most importantly, a principal's leadership style exercised the strongest independent influence on planning, structure and organization, as well as on school mission and school climate. Yet, these studies are primarily based on the perceptions of teachers.

This study investigated assistant principals' perceptions of their principal's leadership styles' impact on school climate. Assistant principals are critical components to the establishment of school climate because their duties are very similar to those of the principal. Additionally, assistant principals have similar administrative training and skills that will enable them to give detailed opinions or perceptions of how they believe principal leadership styles impact school climate. Chapter Two will provide examples of how the literature and leadership theories provide a basic foundation for understanding leadership styles of principals.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

With the following review of literature, it is the intention of the researcher to reveal how theories and previous research studies provide a foundation for understanding principal leadership styles and their impact on school climate. The research findings and theoretical examples yielded critical information that aided the researcher in analyzing various components of principal leadership which includes leadership styles, school climate, relationships, and responsibilities. This review was critical in formulating questions that were used for qualitative research questionnaire that solicits assistant principal's perceptions on how their principals' leadership style impacts school climate. Ultimately, this review may reveal components of leadership that may help in the development of current and future principals.

In this era of accountability, principals are being called upon to exercise strong instructional leadership in their schools. They are faced with the task of increasing student achievement while maintaining order through acceptable student behavior which may requires changing school climate and culture (Tableman, 2004). This new accountability is measured by adequate yearly progress (AYP) requirements, coupled with increasingly stiff sanctions if all student subgroups do not meet established goals (NCLB, 2001). While teachers are ultimately responsible for improving student learning in schools, changing the organizational conditions for improvement across schools is the central task of school leaders (Halverson, Grigg, Pritchett and Thomas, 2005).In Tableman's best practice brief (2004), principal accountability to instructional leadership is related to school climate. She states that "school climate is a significant element in discussions about improving student achievement (pg. 2). Therefore, school climate accountability is also a critical component of the principalship.

Effective leadership and a climate conducive to student's achievement are important to all schools. Effective leadership increases an organization's ability to meet all challenges, including the need to obtain a competitive advantage, the need to foster ethical behavior, and the need to manage a diverse workforce fairly and equitably (Moorhead & Griffin, 2004). Bennis (2003) identifies four characteristics of effective leadership. First, leaders must have the ability to engage others in the formulation of a shared vision. Second, leaders must possess a distinct voice to his followers. Third, a leader must have strong moral codes. Finally, leaders must have the ability to adapt to pressure to change. According to Bennis, these behaviors are critical for leadership in the 21st century.

An important study of the relationships between school climate and student achievement was reported by Brookover et al. (1979). Looking at school climate as a shared social system of both norms and expectations, the viewpoints of students, teachers and administrators were all considered. These researchers found that school climate was good or better at predicting student achievement than were socioeconomic status and ethnicity. Therefore, it can be implied that effective leadership and school climate are related to student achievement.

This study will investigate how principals' leadership styles impact school climate, from the perception of assistant principals. Assistant principals are critical components to the establishment of school climate because their duties are very similar to those of the principal. Additionally, assistant principals have similar administrative training and skills that will enable them to give detailed opinions or perceptions of how they believe principal leadership styles impact school climate.

Leadership Theories

In early studies of leadership theory (Stogdill 1948), researchers tended to focus on the traits and behaviors of leaders that were common to all. Leadership traits that might vary from

culture to culture or school system to school system were infrequently mentioned. Additional investigations of leadership considered leaders as individuals endowed with certain personality traits which constituted their abilities to lead. These studies investigated individual traits such as intelligence, birth order, socioeconomic status, and child-rearing practices (Bass, 1990). More recent authors realized that leadership styles vary from situation to situation (Hershey, Blanchard, and Johnson, 2008), and contingency theories (e.g., Fiedler, 1967) were developed, although these theories still paid little attention to cultural variables (Zepp, Eckstein, Khalid, and Li, 2009).

Leadership theories give possible critical explanations of how leadership behaviors and styles develop (Bass, 1990). Even though this study will focus on assistant principals' perception of how principal leadership styles impact school climate, it is critical to show if leadership styles are strictly based on theory. Additionally, theoretical perspectives may serve as a guideline for aspiring principals as they develop and seek the knowledge and skills to lead a school.

Trait Theory

The Trait Theory emerged from "great man" theories that focused on identifying the innate qualities and characteristics by great leaders (Northouse, 2007). Researchers became interested in trying to determine specific traits of the great man that differentiated leaders from followers. Stodgill (1948) suggested that no consistent set of traits differentiated leaders from non-leaders across a variety of situations. Rather than being a quality that individuals possessed, leadership was re-conceptualized as a relationship between a social

Stodgill, (1974) determined that many of the leadership traits that distinguished leaders from non-leaders were consistent with leadership effectiveness. He states that:

> "The leader is characterized by a strong drive for responsibility and task completion, vigor, and persistence in pursuit of goals venturesomeness and originality in problem

solving, drive to exercise initiative in social situations, self-confidence and sense of personal identity, willingness to accept consequences of decision an action, readiness to absorb, interpersonal stress, willingness to tolerate frustration and delay, ability to influence other persons' behavior, and capacity to structure social interaction systems to the purpose at hand" (p. 81).

There has been increased recent interest in the trait approach that explains how traits and trait variables influence leadership (Bryman, 1992). Lord, DeVader, and Alliger (1991) found that personality traits were strongly associated with individuals' perceptions of leadership. Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991) believed that leaders differ from non-leaders on six traits: drive, the desire to lead, honesty and integrity, self-confidence, cognitive ability, and knowledge of the business. Hoy and Miskel (2000) categorized these traits into three groups: personality, motivation and skills. Personality traits consist of personal characteristics that are inherent in an individual's actions and demeanor such as self-confidence, integrity, energy, stress tolerance, and emotional maturity. Skills associated with effective leadership encompass relevant task knowledge and skills needed to accomplish the goals and objectives set forth by an organization (Hoy and Miskell, 2000).

Trait Theory may not be applicable to all educational leaders. Trait theories often identify particular personality or behavioral characteristics shared by leaders. However, if particular traits are key features of leadership, it may be difficult to explain how people who possess those qualities but still are not leaders (Wagner, 2009). Also, Northouse (2007) found that the trait approach has not adequately linked the traits of leaders with other outcomes such as group and team performance. Northouse also suggests that this approach is not particularly useful for the training and development for leadership because individuals' personal attributes are largely stable and fixed, and therefore their traits are not amenable to change.

Contingency Theory

The Contingency Theory, developed by Fiedler (1964) suggests that a leader's ability to lead is contingent upon various situational factors, including the leader's preferred style, the capabilities and behaviors of followers and also various other situational factors. According to Northouse (2007), Fiedler developed contingency theory by studying the styles of many different leaders who worked in different contexts, primarily military organizations. As a result, Fiedler was able to make empirically grounded generalizations about which style of leadership was best and which styles were worse for a given organizational context (Northouse, 2007). Fiedler categorized leadership as task motivated and relationship motivated. Task motivated leaders are concerned primarily with reaching a goal, whereas relationship motivated leaders are concerned with developing close interpersonal relationships. Fiedler's Contingency Model was used to help determine a leader's level of leader-member relations, task structure and position power (Northouse, 2007).

According to Chance and Chance (2002), contingency theory produces practical application for school leaders. The Chances' believed that understanding contingency theory will help school leaders in several ways. First, this theory helps to identify outside variables that impact a school. Secondly, contingency theory helps to appraise the impact of school's organization structure on responses to external pressures and demands. Most importantly, Contingency theory matches leadership styles with the needs of the school and consider relationships among teachers' personalities and attitudes (2002).

Hanson (1979) applied the Contingency Theory to education by identifying five subsystems of overall school systems as leadership, students, teaching, guidance, and maintenance. Each of these subsystems involves interactions among task, structure, technology, and people. Technical, cultural, political, and economic forces were identified as impacting the

total school system. Hanson (1979) indicated that educational institutions often place tight constraints on various subsystems by applying standard operation procedures that result in responses that ignore turbulent issues.

Situational Leadership

Situational Leadership Theory is partially derived from the work of Hersey and Blanchard (1977). The basic assumption of this theory is that the leader adapts his leadership style to different leadership situations, organizational task (Northouse, 2007), and to followers maturity (Marzano, Waters, and McNulty, 2005). According Northouse, a leader must evaluate his or her employees to assess how committed and competent they are to perform any given task. At this point the leader will know what leadership style is needed.

The situational approach is illustrated in a model developed by Blanchard (1985) called the Situational Leadership II model. This model emerged from an earlier model developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1969). It consists of the behavior pattern of a person who attempts to influence others. It includes both directive (task) behaviors and supportive (relationship) behaviors. The leaderships are classified further into four distinct categories of directive and supportive behaviors. These four styles are high directive – low supportive (directing style, S1), high directive – high supportive style (coaching style, S2), high supportive – low directive, (supportive style, S3), and low supportive – low directive, (delegating, S4).

Blanchard's' and Hersey's' description of the styles as described in Northouse (2007) is as follows:

> High task/low relationship leader behavior (SI) is referred to as "telling" because this style is characterized by one-way communication in which the leader defines the roles of followers and tells them what, how, when, and where to do various tasks.
>
> High task/high relationship leader behavior (S2) is referred to as "selling" because with this style most of the direction is still provided by the leader. The leader also attempts through two-way communication and socio-emotional support to get the followers psychologically to "buy into" decisions that have to be made.

> High relationship/low task leader behavior (S3) is called "participating" because with this style the leader and followers now share in decision making through two-way communication and much facilitating behavior from the leader, since followers have the ability and knowledge to do the task.
>
> Low relationship/low-task leader behavior (S4) is labeled "delegating" because the style involves letting followers "run their own show." The leader delegates since the followers are high in readiness, have the ability, and are both willing and able to take responsibility for directing their own behavior. (pp. 93-94)

According to Northouse (2007), the situational approach is constructed around the idea that employees move forward and backward along the developmental continuum, which represents the relative competence and commitment of subordinates. For leaders to be effective, it is essential that they determine where subordinates are on the developmental continuum and adapt their leadership styles so they directly match their style to that development. However, leaders must be flexible in their leadership styles because subordinates move back and forth along the development continuum.

Path-Goal Theory

The Path-Goal Theory suggests that a subordinate's motivation, satisfaction and work performance are dependent on the leadership style chosen by their superior (House, 1971). According to House and Mitchell (1974), path-goal leadership generates motivation when it increases the number and kinds of payoffs that subordinates receive from their work. Northouse (2007) states that “this theory is designed to explain how leaders can help subordinates along the path to their goals by selecting specific behaviors that are best suited to subordinate’s needs and to the situations in which subordinates are working”.

House and Mitchell’s (1974) description of four styles of leadership that may impact a schools’ climate found in Northouse (2007) is as follows:

> Supportive leadership - Considering the needs of the follower, showing concern for their welfare and creating a friendly working environment. This includes increasing the follower's self-esteem and making the job more interesting. This approach is best when the work is stressful, boring or hazardous.

> Directive Leadership - Telling followers what needs to be done and giving appropriate guidance along the way. This includes giving them schedules of specific work to be done at specific times. Rewards may also be increased as needed and role ambiguity decreased (by telling them what they should be doing).
> This may be used when the task is unstructured and complex and the follower is inexperienced. This increases the follower's sense of security and control and hence is appropriate to the situation.
>
> Participative Leadership - Consulting with followers and taking their ideas into account when making decisions and taking particular actions. This approach is best when the followers are expert and their advice is both needed and they expect to be able to give it.
>
> Achievement-oriented Leadership - Setting challenging goals, both in work and in self-improvement (and often together). High standards are demonstrated and expected. The leader shows faith in the capabilities of the follower to succeed. This approach is best when the task is complex (pp. 129-131).

In response to empirical research, House (1996) did a re-make of the path-goal theory to keep pace with how organizations change. The theory was widened to include the effects of how subordinates' perform and the leaders' to response to their performance. House (1996) increased leadership behaviors from four to ten: path-goal clarifying, achievement oriented, work facilitation, supportive, interaction, group oriented decision process, representation, networking, value based, and shared leadership. Yukl (1998) illustrated the theory to demonstrate this causal relationship by demonstrating the effect of the leader's behavior on subordinate effort, and satisfaction depends upon the intervening and situational variables. The causal relationship serves as a guide directing the type of leadership behaviors that need to be exhibited depending upon the situation and expectations for a desired outcome (1998).

House (1996) updated the perceived motivation of the subordinates' motivation and abilities. Although the reformulated path-goal theory has yet to be tested empirically, House supported this theory by combining current leadership theories and generalizations (1996). He saw that the theory did not address "emergent-informal leadership, leadership as it affects several levels of managers and subordinates in organizations, political behavior of leaders, strategic leadership of organizations, or leadership as it relates to change" (House, 1996, p. 348).

Transformational Theory

Transformational Leadership is the buzz word in educational leadership today. This leadership style evolved from Burns (1978), who proposed a theory of transformational leadership in his book, *Leadership.* Transformational leadership is a process in which "leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation" (1978, p.20). According to Bass (1985) and Burns (1978), Transformational leadership is the favored style of leadership given that it is assumed to produce results beyond expectations. Transformational leaders form a "relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents" (Burns, 1978, p.4). In addition, the transformational leader articulates the vision in a clear and appealing manner, explains how to attain the vision, acts confidently and optimistically, expresses confidence in his followers, emphasizes values with symbolic actions, leads by example, and empowers followers to achieve the vision (Yukl, 2002).

Bass (1985) gives four factors, also referred as the four I's of leadership, which characterize the behavior of transformational leaders: individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence. Individual consideration is characterized by giving "personal attention to members who seem neglected" (Bass, 1990, p. 218). Intellectual stimulation is characterized by enabling "followers to think of old problems in new ways" (Bass, 1990, p. 218). Inspirational motivation is characterized by communicating "high performance expectations" (Bass, 1990, p. 218). Lastly, idealized influence is characterized by modeling behavior through exemplary personal achievements, character, and behavior.

Regarding transformational leadership in education, Leithwood (1994) developed the transformational model of school leadership. He found that the four I's of transformational

leadership identified by Bass and Avolio (1994) are necessary for school principals if they are to meet the challenges of today's schools. Each of the four "I's" of leadership, individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence, might greatly impact a principal in building the foundation for a positive school climate. According to Bass and Avolio (1994), transformational leaders achieve superior results from followers by engaging in one or more of the four I's.

Based on the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, transformational leadership may work well in schools. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), has been used for over a decade to test transformational leadership theory (Bass and Avolio, 1994). Over a time, this instrument has been refined. Analysts such as Bass (1998) and Yukl (1999) have concluded that transformational leaders receive higher ratings, are perceived as leading more effective organizations, and move followers to exceed expected performance further than transactional leaders. Leithwood (1994) led a four-year study of schools undergoing structural change and found that there is "reasonably robust support for the claim that transformational forms of leadership will be of considerable value in the context of a school-restructuring agenda" (p. 515).

Transformational leaders impact a school climate through their concern for subordinates. The leader considers the needs of others over his own, shares risk with followers, is consistent rather than arbitrary, demonstrates high standards of ethical and moral conduct, possesses and uses referent powers, and sets challenging goals for followers (Bass and Avolio, 1994). The leader gets individuals' team spirit and enthusiasm aroused. The leader clearly communicates expectations and personally demonstrates commitment to goals and the shared vision (bass and Avolio, 1994)

Bass and Avolio suggest that it is important for transformational leaders to allow subordinates to become an integral component of the decision-making process in schools.

Followers are included in the process of addressing problems and finding creative solutions, and are encouraged to try new approaches without fear of public criticisms because of mistakes made or due to a different approach from the leaders' (Bass and Avolio, 1994). Under this type of leadership, teachers assume greater leadership roles and expanded authority, engage more in collegial relationships to share information and advice more frequently, and are involved in increased teamwork that serves as an integrative device for the school (Rowan, 1990).

In a compilation of articles on leadership styles by library professionals, Sutton (2005) highlights a conceptual framework for transformational leadership resulting from a meta-ethnographic analysis of the literature. Seven major themes that define a profile of transformational leadership are identified:

1. Creating a Vision.
   Transformational leaders paint an imaginary picture of the organization's potential future and share it with their followers, encouraging them to make it their own. When the vision is elevated to the level of the common good, both leader and led "raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (Burns, 1978, p. 20). Characteristics of shared vision include the ability to provide meaning, to inspire and excite, to inspire individuals to extra effort, to create a common sense of community and to view change as opportunity.
2. Communicating the Vision.
   To be effective, vision must be shared with everyone in the organization through repeated communication. The transformational leader must clearly articulate the shared vision and must do so repeatedly. The vision is clarified and driven home through stories, analogies, symbols, ceremonies, rituals and traditions. Inspirational appeals are effective in persuading people of the importance of the vision. Transformational leaders give life to the spoken word by living the vision. Their actions are examined by followers who demand consistency with the spoken or written word.
3. Building Relationships.
   Transformational leaders are approachable, friendly and informal. They are sincere in their invitation to engage in meaningful dialogue and two-way communication. These leaders frequently act as mentors, coaches and teachers to those with whom they share the vision. They emphasize recognition and reward, both formal and informal. They encourage social functions and professional development opportunities. All of these actions contribute to the development of trust between leader and follower.
4. Developing a Supportive Organizational Culture.
   In order for leadership to thrive, a supportive organizational environment must be cultivated. Transformational leaders do this by treating people of diverse backgrounds with respect, distributing justice, correcting injustice, and acting with

unfailing honesty and integrity. This is accomplished with constant communication and is institutionalized when others in the organization respond in the same way.

5. Guiding Implementation.
   Transformational leaders shape the organization through their own actions and by personally guiding the implementation of the shared vision. They do this through leading strategic planning efforts, team building, innovating and setting high expectations for excellence with continuous quality improvement. They embrace the role of "servant leader" and enrich themselves by serving their own followers.
6. Exhibiting Character.
   Transformational leaders exhibit character of the highest order, demonstrating honesty, integrity and unquestioned nobility of heart and mind. They exude self-confidence, passion, commitment and native intelligence. While they have many characteristics in common with charismatic leaders, they use their leadership more to advance the shared vision than to attract followers for their own sake. These leaders have a broad perspective that they demonstrate with a high degree of tolerance for ambiguity, and a healthy respect for organizational history and cultural sensitivity.
7. Achieving Results.
   Transformational leaders are successful in achieving the shared vision. Those with whom they share the vision are moved to the highest levels of accomplishment and satisfaction. Leader and led are mutually perceived as increased in effectiveness and a higher level of performance (Volume IV, Issue 1).

Kouzes and Posner (1987, 2002) developed another perspective of transformation leadership. They developed this model by soliciting the perceptions of other leaders. According to Northouse (2007), this model consists of five fundamental practices that enable leaders to get extraordinary things accomplished: model the way, inspire the shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. For each of the five practices of exemplary leadership, Kouzes and Posner (2002) also have identified two commitments that serve as strategies for practicing exemplary leadership:

Table 2.1
Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership (Kouzes and Posner, 2002)

Model the way	Be clear about their personal values. Follow through on promises and commitments.
Inspire a Shared Vision	Create visions that help guide behavior. Challenge others to do something for others.
Challenge the Process	Be willing to step into the unknown. Take risks to make things better.

Enable Others to Act	Build trust and allow collaboration. Allow others to make choices and support those choices.
Encourage the Heart	Reward others for their accomplishments. Give authentic praise for accomplishments.

Cited from *Leadership Theory and Practice*, by Northouse, 2007, Thousand Oaks, CA : Sage Publications

Transactional Leadership

In the late 1970s, leadership theory research moved beyond focusing on various types of situational supervision as a way to incrementally improve organizational performance (Behling & McFillen, 1996). Research has shown that many leaders turned to a transactional leadership theory, the most prevalent method of leadership still observed in today's organizations (Avolio, Waldman, & Yammarino, 1991). Transactional leaders lead through specific incentives and motivate through an exchange of one thing for another (Bass, 1990). The underlying theory of this leadership method was that leaders exchange rewards for employees' compliance, a concept based on bureaucratic authority and a leader's legitimacy within an organization (Yukl, 1998).

Avolio, Waldman, and Yammarino (1991) suggest that transactional leadership focuses on ways to manage the status quo and maintain the day-to-day operations of a business, but does not focus on identifying the organization's directional focus and how employees can work toward those goals, increasing their productivity in alignment with these goals, thus increasing organizational profitability. The idea of transactional leadership is nearsighted in that it does not take the entire situation, employee, or future of the organization into account when offering rewards (Crosby, 1996).

The underlying theory of this leadership method is that leaders exchange rewards for employees' compliance, a concept based in bureaucratic authority and a leader's legitimacy within an organization (Yukl, 1998). Examples of this reward exchange included the leader's

ability to fulfill promises of recognition, pay increases, and advancements for employees who perform well (Bass, 1990). Transactional leadership is a theory considered to be value-free; however, Heifetz (1994) contends that the values are simply covert.

Leadership Styles

Leadership style is the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people (Lewin, Lippet and White, 1939). Lewin led this group of researchers to identify different styles of leadership. This early study has been very influential and established three major leadership styles, authoritarian, participative, and delegating. These styles of leadership have broadened over the years. The following studies have incorporated some aspect of these foundational leadership styles in an effort to aid principals in the development of leadership styles conducive to current educational systems.

The literature on leadership styles (Hershey & Blanchard, 1977; Sergiovanni, 1995) provides some important clues on principal leadership styles. These leadership theorists argued that leadership style was a relatively fixed construct for an individual and that while some individuals may have the capacity to lead using more than one style, leadership style flexibility was not characteristic of all leaders (Williams, 2006). While Fiedler & Chemers (1974) and Hershey & Blanchard (1977) believed less in leader's capacity to vary their styles, Sergiovanni (1991) proposed that under certain conditions individuals could adapt their leadership style to differing situations.

Blake and Mouton developed the Managerial Leadership Grid (1964) which was designed to explain how leaders help organizations to reach their purposes through two factors: concern for production and concern for people. Even though concern for production primarily refers to how a leader is concerned with achieving organizational task, it can refer to whatever the organization is seeking to accomplish (Blake and Mouton, 1964). The second factor, concern

for people refers to how a leader attends to the people in an organization who are trying to achieve its goals (Northouse, 2007).

Although many research studies can be categorized under the heading of the leadership style approach, the Ohio State and Michigan studies of the late 1940's, and the studies by Blake Mouton (1964, 1978, and 1985) are strongly representative of this approach (Northouse, (2007). In the Ohio study subordinates completed questionnaires that identified how many times their leaders engaged in certain types of behaviors by using the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire, (Hemphill and Coons, 1957) and a new form of the questionnaire by Stodgill (1963) called the LBDQ-XII. The researchers found that subordinates' clustered around two general types of leadership behaviors: initiating, which were task behaviors, and consideration (Stodgill, 1974), which were relationship behaviors.

The University of Michigan Studies, while focusing on the impact of leaders' behaviors on the performance of small groups, identified two types of leadership behaviors. One, employee orientation, is the behavior of leaders who approach subordinates with a strong human relations emphasis. The second, production orientation, consists of leadership that stresses the technical and production aspects of the job (Northouse, 2007). From this orientation, workers are viewed as means for getting work accomplished (Bowers and Seashore, 1966).

Huffman and Jacobson (2003) conducted a study to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of their schools as professional learning communities and the leadership style of their principals (Williams, 2006). The subjects of the study were eighty-three prospective principals enrolled in an education administration course at a Texas university. Each subject identified his/her principal as having one of three possible leadership styles: a) directive, b) collaborative, or c) non-directive. Participants in the study rated collaborative-style principals as more supportive of two key measures of professional learning communities: a) contribution –

providing a safe environment for diverse ideas, beliefs and strategies, and b) conscience – being an organization guided by positive principles, ethics, and values.

Huffman and Jacobsons' (2003) study draws on research on principals in New Brunswick and uses decision-making as its measure of leadership style (Williams, 2006). The collaborative style is only one of possible leadership approaches. In this study the collaborative style was labeled as the conceptual style. The directive style described by Huffman and Jacobson (2003) was expanded to include a directive and an analytical style. Huffman & Jacobson (2003) described the laissez-faire style that shares some characteristics with the behavioral style in this study. In addition, this particular study helped researchers see that all leaders are not alike. This is an important point because the literature on school reform seldom considers the different leadership styles that principals bring to their positions (Williams, 2006).

After examining 69 studies in a meta-analysis, Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005), found 21 categories of leadership behaviors that were positively correlated to student achievement. According to Marzano et al., these behaviors, referred to as responsibilities, will provide new insights into the nature of school leadership. These 21 behaviors (pp. 42-43) are as follows:

1. Affirmation is the extent to which the leader recognizes and celebrates school accomplishments and acknowledges failures.
2. Change Agent is a willingness to change and actively challenge the status quo.
3. Contingent Rewards is recognizing and rewarding individual accomplishments.
4. Communication is the ability to establish strong lines of communication with and among teachers and students.
5. Culture is fostering shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation.
6. Discipline – protecting teachers from issues and influences that would detract their teaching time or focus.
7. Flexibility – adapts his or her leadership behavior to the needs of the current situation and is comfortable with dissent.
8. Focus – establishes clear goals and keep those goals in the forefront of the schools' attention.
9. Ideals/Beliefs – Communicates and operates from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling.

10. Input – Involves teachers in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies.
11. Intellectual Stimulation – Ensures faculty and staff are aware of the most current theories and practices and makes the discussion of these a regular aspects of the schools' climate.
12. Involvement in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment – Is directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices.
13. Knowledge of curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment – Is knowledgeable about current curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices.
14. Monitoring/ Evaluating – Monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning.
15. Optimizer – Inspires and leads new and challenging innovations.
16. Order – Establishes and sets a standard operating procedures and routines.
17. Outreach – Is an advocate and a spokesperson for all the school stakeholders.
18. Relationships – Demonstrates an awareness of the personal aspects of teachers and staff.
19. Resources – Provides teachers with materials and professional development necessary for the successful execution of their jobs.
20. Situational Awareness – Is aware of the details and undercurrents in the running of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems.
21. Visibility – Has quality contact and interactions with teachers and students. (pp. 42-43).

Every school leader has a style of leadership. One style promoted in the business world and in religious organizations is "servant leadership" (Spears & Lawrence, 2002). Servant leadership emphasizes service to others over self-interest and self-promotion. Servant leaders attempt to enhance the personal growth of organization members and improve the organization through a combination of teamwork, shared decision-making and ethical, caring behavior (Spears, 1995). This leadership style contrasts with traditional conceptions of leadership based on power and authority.

The term servant leadership is attributed to Robert Greenleaf (1970), who believed that effective leadership comes from the desire to serve others. Greenleaf (1991) described servant leadership as a style of leadership that "begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served." (p. 7).

According to Stone and Patterson (2004), the overriding focus of servant leaders is on service to their followers. The extent to which leaders are able to shift the primary focus of their leadership from the organization to the follower is the distinguishing factor in determining whether the leader may be a transformational or servant leader. There is greater emphasis on service of and to followers in the servant leadership paradigm. Servant leaders gain influence in a nontraditional manner that derives from servant hood itself (Russell & Stone, 2002). Leaders, in this case, allow more freedom for their followers to develop and exercise their own abilities. Most importantly, leaders place a high degree of trust in their followers.

Stone and Patterson's (2005) research has led to a servant leadership model encompassing seven virtuous constructs exhibited as behaviors by a servant leader and their interaction. These seven behaviors are agape love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment, and service. These virtues become constructs when activated within the context of servant leadership behaviors (2005).

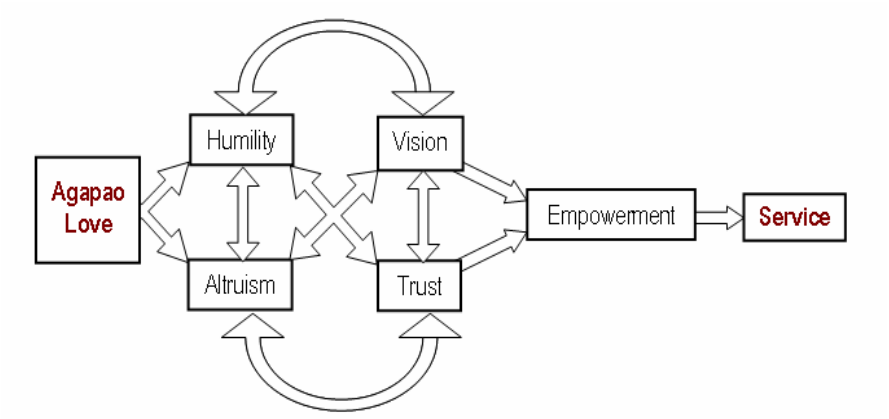

Figure 2.1: Theory of Servant Leadership Model (Patterson and Stone, 2005)

Even though the term servant leadership is attributed to Greenleaf (1970), David Stewart’s (2004) idea on servant leadership comes from a 2000- year old philosophy that appears to be the foundation for this unique type of leadership. A success in building a billion-dollar African-American company in 2000, the author believed that good leadership is serving others

by “placing the needs of his employees above his own” (p. 37). Much of his leadership style is centered on coaching, advising, and coaching subordinates while providing them with related training and development so that their careers can be enhanced. Ultimately, his intention is that his subordinates will “grow and realize their full potential” (p. 37).

Stewart bases this management philosophy on the biblical passage found in Mark 10:43-45, New International Version, which reads:

> “43Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 44and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 45For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (New King James)

These instructions that Jesus gave to his twelve disciples may be used by principals to inspire their subordinates to do their best. Similarly, Shelia Bethel (1990) also believes that servant leadership thrives on serving subordinates. According to Bethel, if leadership serves only the leader, it will fail. She adds that true leadership comes only when service for a common good is the primary purpose. In other words, leaders should understand that good leadership and serving others are synonymous.

Mendel, Watson, and MacGregor (2002) found, based on teacher’s perceptions, that the majority of principals practice a collaborative leadership style. These collaborative principals also contribute to the highest average scores on positive school climate. Based on this study, collaborative leadership is the most desirable style to help contribute to a positive school climate. On the contrary, in study conducted by Bulach, Boothe, and Pickett (1998), one of the major complaints from teachers regarding school climate is about principals who use “I” and “my” too frequently. They communicate the impression that they own the teachers and the building. Some teachers resent this immensely so principals are urged to substitute the pronouns “we” and “our” when talking about their teachers or school (Bulach et al., 1998).

In 2005, Marzano, Waters, and McNulty introduced an interesting type of leadership style that dealt with situational awareness. Situational awareness addresses leaders' awareness of details and the undercurrents regarding the functioning of the school and their use of information to address current and potential problems. Deering, Dilts, and Russell (2003) describe this responsibility as anticipatory leadership. Recommendations are made for principals to identify "clues of coming opportunities and hints about emerging threats. With the openness and mental agility of truly anticipatory leadership throughout the organization, the organization is well positioned to survive and prosper" (p. 33). To illustrate, the principal demonstrates the responsibility of situational awareness when he studies Adequate Yearly Progress data in an attempt to identify problems that may occur with the scheduling of remedial classes.

Learner-centered leadership is another type of leadership style. Learner centered leadership involves a balance between the professional norms and personal dispositions of educators, with the larger good as defined by a learning community (Danzig & Wright, 2002). It involves changing the major source of inspiration for educational leadership away from management and towards education and learning. Murphy (2002) proposes a role for leadership which entails developing a learning community, one in which greater attention is needed to promote an atmosphere of inquiry with greater focus on collaboration and shared decision making.

As more and more women attained positions of leadership, questions as to whether they lead in a different manner than men and whether men or women are more effective as leaders have garnered great attention (Northouse, 2007). According to a study conducted by Zepp, Eckstein, Khalid, and Li (2009) the choice of leadership styles and behaviors in high masculinity cultures should depend on leaders who are dependable, consistent, and broad-minded, while the traits of intelligence and confidence are less important than in more feminine cultures. Likewise behaviors should differ. A leader in a highly masculine culture should focus on showing respect

to subordinates and pushing them to higher performance, while in a feminine culture, the leader should emphasize morality and the well-being of the subordinates (2009).

The findings in a study conducted by Johnson, Busch, and Slate (2008) regarding male and female leadership behavior revealed that males are more directive and authoritative whereas females prefer leadership through suggestion accompanied by a strong democratic style in an agreeable and deferential manner. Both male and female principals prefer to act on a high energy level while working to capacity in an industrious and physically active manner – females prefer an even higher level of activity. Both males and females also seem to consider the well-being of others, emphasizing values and the importance of the team while exhibiting cooperative and well-intentioned behavior (Johnson, Busch and Slate, 2008).

According to Northouse, “empirical research supports small differences in leadership style and effectiveness between men and women. Women experience slight effectiveness disadvantages in masculine leadership roles, whereas more feminine roles offer them some advantages” (pp. 265-268). In addition, Fondas (1997) found that women exceed men in the use of democratic or participatory styles, and they are more likely to use transformational leadership behaviors and contingent reward, styles that are associated with contemporary notions of effective leadership.

Instructional Leadership

Not only does NCLB (2001) demand accountability for student achievement, but also implies that principals become instructional leaders. (Title II, Section 2113 (c), subparts 1–13). Based on the law, academic achievement and instructional leadership are positively linked. Specifically, the law calls for principals to have "the instructional leadership skills to help teachers teach and students learn," and "the instructional leadership skills necessary to help students meet challenging State student academic achievement standards (Title II, Section 2113

(c). Therefore, it is critical for principals to clearly understand instructional leadership. And secondly, if principals can become instructional leaders, will that be sufficient for them to meet new accountability demands. Kotter (1990) argued that the functions management and leadership are quite dissimilar. He believed that the overriding function of management is to provide order and consistency to organizations, whereas the function of leadership is to produce change and movement.

Current research on instructional leadership stresses the role of the school-based leader in setting directions, developing people, and making the organization work (Leithwood et al., 2004). The principal may share the responsibility of instructional leadership with other educational leaders through provision of resources and guidance for teachers, communicating vision and expectations, creating a positive organizational culture and professional learning communities, and exhibiting a visible presence in the school (Leithwood, 2005). Most importantly, the principal's instructional leadership behaviors affect the climate and instructional organization, both of which are linked to student achievement (Bossert, Dwyer, Lee, & Rowan, 1982). Several studies have established links between instructional leadership and the climate of the school (Hoy et al., 1991; Sergiovanni, 1995). Principals' behaviors are related to school climate, such as effective communication, teacher advocacy, participatory decision-making, and equitable evaluation procedures.

According to Yukl (1998), "researchers usually define leadership according to their individual perspectives and the aspects of the phenomenon of most interest to them" (p. 2). Yukl's syntheses of definitions, "reflect [s] the assumption that [leadership] involves a process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person over other people to guide, structure and facilitate activities and relationships in a group or organization"(p.3). Said in another way, Hoy & Miskel (2000) assert that "leadership should be defined broadly as a

social process in which a member of a group or organization influences the interpretation of internal and external events, the choice of goals or desired outcomes, organization of work activities, individual motivation and abilities, power relations, and shared orientations" (p.394).

Instructional leadership differs from that of a school administrator or manager in a number of ways. Principals who pride themselves as administrators are too preoccupied in dealing with strictly administrative duties compared to principals who are instructional leaders. The latter role involves setting clear goals, allocating resources to instruction, managing the curriculum, monitoring lesson plans, and evaluating teachers. In short, instructional leadership is those actions that a principal takes, or delegates to others, to promote growth in student learning (Flath, 1989). The instructional leader makes instructional quality the top priority of the school and attempts to bring that vision to realization.

Teacher perceptions help to understand how principals' instructional leadership impact classroom instruction. Blasé and Blasé (2000) did a in-depth study of teachers' perceptions about characteristics of school principals that influence teachers' classroom instruction have concluded that the behaviors associated with instructional leadership positively influence classroom instruction . They found that when instructional leaders monitor and provide feedback on the teaching and learning process, there were increases in teacher reflection and relatively informed instructional behaviors, a rise in implementing new ideas, greater variety in teaching strategies, more response to student diversity, and more discretion to make changes. The authors also noted that teachers indicated positive effects on motivation, satisfaction, and a sense of security.

More recently, the definition of instructional leadership has shifted in focus toward deeper involvement in teaching and learning. Attention has shifted from teaching to learning, and some have proposed the term "learning leader" over "instructional leader" (Richard DuFour, 2002). The National Association of Elementary School Principals (2001) defines instructional

leadership as "leading learning communities.” In learning communities, staff members meet on a regular basis to discuss their work, work together to problem solve, reflect on their jobs, and take responsibility for what students learn. They operate in networks of shared and complementary expertise rather than in hierarchies or in isolation. People in a learning community “own the problem” and become agents of its solution. Instructional leaders also make adult learning a priority; set high expectations for performance; create a culture of continuous learning for adults and develop community support for school success. Blasé and Blasé, (2000) expressed instructional leadership in specific behaviors such as making suggestions, giving feedback, modeling effective instruction, soliciting opinions, supporting collaboration, providing professional development opportunities, and giving praise for effective teaching

Blasé and Blasé (2000) suggest that learning should be the top priority of an instructional leader with everything else centered on the enhancement of learning. Hence to have credibility as an instructional leader, the principal should also be a practicing teacher. In the United Kingdom, most principals spend an average of 20 percent of their time in a week on teaching (Weindling, 1990). Instructional leaders need to know what is going on in the classroom; an opportunity to walk the halls to see first-hand what is happening in the school as well as the classrooms. Also, a teaching principal strengthens the belief that "the sole purpose of the school is to serve the educational needs of students" (Harden, 1988, p. 88).

Whitaker (1997) identified four skills that are essential for instructional leadership. These four essentials can serve as a guideline to assist principals in positively impacting school climate.

Table 2.2
Four Essentials of Instructional Leadership

Effective instructional leaders need to be to be resource providers. It is not enough for principals to know the strengths and weaknesses of their faculties; they must also recognize teachers’ desires to be acknowledged and appreciated for a job well done.	Effective instructional leaders need to be instructional resources. Teachers count on their principals as resources of information on current trends and effective instructional practices. Instructional leaders are tuned in to issues relating to curriculum, effective pedagogical strategies, and assessment.

Effective instructional leaders need to be good communicators. They need to communicate essential beliefs regarding learning, such as the conviction that all children can learn.	Effective instructional leaders need to create a visible presence. This includes focusing on learning objectives, modeling behaviors of learning, and designing programs and activities on instruction.

Instructional leadership theory focuses on the leader's influence on student achievement: how he/she positively affects teachers, the outcomes of teaching, and raises student performance (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). Current research on instructional leadership stresses the role of the site-based leader in setting directions, developing people, and making the organization work (Leithwood et al., 2004). Research also shows that principals who demonstrate instructional behaviors extract more commitment and satisfaction from teachers, as well as establish a climate that encourages trust, risk, and collaboration (Blasé & Blasé, 1999). The principal may share the responsibility of instructional leadership with other educational leaders through provision of resources and guidance for teachers, communicating vision and expectations, creating a positive organizational culture and professional learning communities, and exhibiting a visible presence in the school (Leithwood, 2005; Waters et al., 2003).

Principals can no longer be administrators and managers. They must be instructional leaders focused on improving student achievement through knowledge of the curriculum. Fullan (2001) attests to the importance of the responsibility by explaining that a principal's knowledge of effective practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment is necessary to provide guidance to teachers on the day-to-day tasks of teaching and learning. Elmore (2000) adds that "leadership is the guidance and direction of instructional improvement" (p. 13). Most importantly, the principal's instructional leadership behaviors affect the climate and instructional organization,

both of which are linked to student achievement (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982). Several studies have established links between instructional leadership and the climate of the school (Hoy et al., 1991; Sergiovanni, 1995).

Andrews, Basom, and Basom (1991) state, “Traditionally, we have thought of supervision of teachers as a managerial function, with emphasis on ‘doing things right’. . .” In 1991, Andrew et al. presented supervision of teachers as an act of instructional leadership. “As an instructional leader, the principal focuses less on doing things right and more on ‘doing the right things,’ the things we know can help improve student achievement” (Andrew et al., 1991, p. 97). According to Page (2004), the changing conditions and rising expectations for student achievement, driven by state education reform and the national *No Child Left Behind* mandate, have changed the work of principals. The days when principals managed the school building, dealt with discipline, balanced budgets, and monitored schedules while the teachers handled instruction are gone (Page, 2004).

Leadership and School Climate

Researchers have different definitions for climate; Hoy, Tarter, and Kottkamp (1991, p. 10) stated that "school climate is the relatively enduring quality of the school environment that is experienced by participants, affects their behavior and is based on their collective perception of behavior in schools."Hoy and Miskel (2005, p. 185) defined school climate as "the set of internal characteristics that distinguish one school from another and influence the behaviors of each school's members." Kottkamp (1984) suggested that climate consists of shared values, interpretations of social activities, and commonly held definitions of purpose. However, because values, attitudes, beliefs, and communications are adult focused behaviors, researchers primarily rely on participants' perceptions to measure school climate and sometimes aggregate the participants' response to the level of interest, such as classroom or school (Griffith, 2000).

According to Tableman (2004), there is no consistent agreement in the literature on the components of school climate or their importance; most writers emphasize caring as a core element. However, some place safety foremost, defining school climate as an orderly environment in which the school family feels valued and able to pursue the school's mission free from concerns about disruptions and safety. Within each building, the principal plays a primary role, providing leadership, articulating goals and behavioral expectations of teachers, and supporting staff in developing an effective school as well as assuring that the climate is an orderly environment (Gonder and Hymes, 1994).

However, some authors do not support Tableman's views. A positive school climate can enhance staff performance, promote higher morale, and improve student achievement (Freiberg, 1998). Heck (2000) and Goddard et al. (2000) linked school climate and student achievement. "School climate may be one of the most important ingredients of a successful instructional program. Without a climate that creates a harmonious and well functioning school, a high degree of academic achievement is difficult, if not downright impossible to obtain" (Hoyle, English, & Steffy, 1985, p. 15). Bulach, Malone, and Castleman (1995) found a significant relationship between student achievement and school climate. In addition, Bulach and Malone (1994) concluded that school climate is a significant factor in successful school reform.

Urban (1999) stated, "Unless students experience a positive and supportive climate, some may never achieve the most minimum standards or realize their full potential" (p. 69). Hoy, Tarter, and Bliss (1990) found that long-term improvement in academic achievement was related to schools with strong academic emphasis within the context of healthy and open climates. Blanchard (1991) found strong positive correlations between effectiveness scores and selected climate variables. The effective school movement recognized the importance of quality leadership by consistently identifying strong instructional leadership as instrumental in creating a school climate conducive to student success (Grubbs et al., 2002).

Principal leadership styles can be linked to the climate of the buildings. Hence, effective principal leadership is critical. Researchers have related principal behaviors to school climate (Bulach, Boothe, & Pickett); indeed, the climate of a school can be shaped by the actions and behaviors of the building principal (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998). Bulach et al. (1998) found that teachers' views of teacher-principal interactions were related to school climate. Principal's behaviors such as effective communication, teacher advocacy, and participatory decision-making and equitable evaluation procedures, are related to school climate. The effective school movement recognized the importance of quality leadership by consistently identifying strong instructional leadership as instrumental in creating a school climate conducive to student success (Grubbs, Leech, Gibbs, & Green 2002).

A principals' leadership style may also contribute to a disorderly school climate. According to Welsh (2000), disorderly school climates have largely been ignored and insufficient attention has been given to this dilemma. Welsh discusses the effects of school climate (such as clarity and fairness of rules) and individual student characteristics (such as age, sex, race, and dimensions of bonding) on different measures of school disorder, including victimization, avoidance, perceptions of safety, misconduct, and offending. He concluded that school climate offers significant potential for enhancing both the understanding and the prevention of school violence Welsh (2000).

The Organizational Climate Index (OCI) is a short organizational climate descriptive measure for schools. The index has four dimensions —principal leadership, teacher professionalism, achievement press for students to perform academically, and vulnerability to the community (Hoy, Smith, and Sweetland, 2002). In this index, the collegial leadership dimension helps to identify how a principals' leadership style impacts the school climate. Even though each of the 30 statements in the index reveals character traits of school climate, eight of the statements specifically delineate traits most associated with principal leadership styles.

Table 2.3
Eight Principal Character Traits of School Climate (Hoy et al., 2002)

1. The principal explores all sides of topics and admits that other opinions exist.
2. The principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal.
3. The principal is friendly and approachable.
4. The principal responds to pressure from parents.
5. The principal lets faculty know what is expected of them.
6. The principal maintains definite standards of performance.
7. The principal puts suggestions made by the faculty into operation.
8. The principal is willing to make changes.

The subsection of the OCI focuses on leadership attributes were labeled as Collegial Leadership. Collegial leadership is directed toward both meeting the social needs of the faculty and achieving the goals of the school. The principal treats teachers as professional colleagues, is open, egalitarian, and friendly, but at the same time sets clear teacher expectations and standards of performance (Hoy et al., 2002).

The other subsections of the OCI were also dependent on the leadership style of the principal. Professional Teacher Behavior is marked by respect for colleague competence, commitment to students, autonomous judgment, and mutual cooperation and support. Another subsection, Achievement Press, describes a school that sets high but achievable academic standards and goals. Students persist, strive to achieve, and are respected by each other and teachers for their academic success. Parents, teachers, and the principal exert pressure for high standards and school improvement. The final subsection, Institutional Vulnerability, is the extent to which the school is susceptible to a few vocal parents and citizen groups. High vulnerability suggests that both teachers and principals are unprotected and put on the defensive (Hoy et al., 2002).

Still, other researchers have made connections between principal leadership and school climate. According to Sergiovanni (2001), “to encourage a school culture and climate that

promotes individuals who are bonded together by natural will, and who are together bound to a set of shared ideas, and ideals then principals must strengthen their efforts towards improving connections, coherence, capacity, commitment, and collaboration among their members". Stover (2005) points out the importance of the role of the principal: "In the final analysis, researchers say, any serious look at school climate and culture should lead policymakers to a simple -- and challenging -- conclusion: Almost everything depends on leadership. Forget about fancy programs or interventions. Attitudes and behaviors in a school are not going to change unless the principal understands how to work with the existing culture -- and knows how to help it evolve into a healthier one."

The abstract of a study done by Clabough (2006) regarding the effects of male and female leadership style on school climate indicated that males' and females' perceptions of principal leadership style and school climate are very similar, differing only in the amount of individual support each group perceived as coming from his/her principals. Results indicated that first year staff perceptions of both principal leadership style and school climate differ from those of more experienced staff. Findings revealed a significant correlation in regard to the relationship between principal leadership style and school climate. Findings regarding the number of violence-related occurrences indicated no statistically significant correlation to either transformational principal leadership style or positive school climate (Clabough, 2006).

Leadership Responsibilities

The educational reform efforts of the 1980s and the accountability movements of the 1990s helped pave the way for the most recent accountability movement being implemented under the No Child Left Behind Act. Unfortunately, Cooley and Shen (2003) found that the role of the principal in this era of reform continues to be more demanding than "is reasonably possible," and can be "described as unrealistic" (p. 12). Although it has been suggested that

principals should spend about one-third of their time in the classrooms developing effective teachers, few are able to find the time (Cooley & Shen, 2003). An average workweek for principals is upwards of 62 hours with little of that time allotted to the actual development of teachers (Cooley & Shen, 2003).

Although individual leadership styles derive from different sources, there are a number of assumptions that leadership styles are influenced by leadership roles. In educational organizations there is an assumption that leaders should be both leaders and managers. "We expect both leadership and management from the same individual" (Manasse, 1986, p. 153). This idea may arise from districts' and schools' structures where superintendents and principals are the primary administrator. Nevertheless, "while we can distinguish management from leadership conceptually, in reality we often find the two roles coexisting in the same positions and the same person" (Manasse, 1986, p. 153). In other words, principals have dual roles and responsibilities. Similar responsibilities fall on teachers. Traditional teacher leadership roles, such as department heads and textbook adoption committee chairpersons, are performed by teachers who are responsible for teaching as well as providing leadership (Bellon & Beaudry, 1992).

There are times when principals have a myriad of responsibilities and often roles that conflict. Hartzell, Williams, and Nelson, (1995) gives the following examples: First, an academic and social conflict is apparent when a principal tries to spread too few dollars among too many worthy programs: does he support chemistry or chemical dependency? Second, how can a principal always support teachers when teachers refer a student to the office and the student is right? Another inherent conflict in found in serving as both employee facilitator and evaluator, trying to be a sounding board or confidant for staff members, while being responsible for their evaluation (1995).

Principal and Assistant Principal Relationship

Power in any organization is grounded in the ability to control resources and the access to resources (Pfeffer, 1992). These resources include people, relationships, authority, and information. The principal is responsible for governing these resources. Because the assistant principal is a part of the principals' authority base, they have the advantages of having a clear understanding of decision-making regarding these resources. Furthermore, because of the intimate working relationship between principals and their assistants, the assistant principal is privy to particular demands of principal leadership as it relates to the role of instructional leader and manager (Marshall and Hooley, 2006).

According to Hartzell, Williams, and Nelson (1995), authority and power are relationship entities. Also, every relationship has two sides. The quality of the relationship between the principal and assistant principal depends on the actions of both parties. To have a strong relationship, the principal and the assistant principal need to have clarity related to each others' strengths and weaknesses , and the characteristics of personal styles (1995).

As management and personnel researchers John Gabarro and John Kotter (1992) suggest that, subordinates and bosses have individual personality structures, values, and ways of working that have been built over time, and neither assistant principals nor the principal can change. However, what can change is how both parties identify what things in those structures and systems either facilitate or impeded their abilities to work together. Once assistant principals are aware of these things, actions can be taken to enhance the relationship.

There are times when the relationship between principals and assistant principals become adversarial. This occurs when the principal seems to consistently give attention, priority, resources, and recognition to school functions and needs other than those of the assistant principal (Hartzell, Williams, and Nelson, 1995). A fundamental tenet of psychology is that we

react to our perceptions, and self-fulfilling prophesies do exist (Eden, 1984). In other words, if an assistant principal perceive the principal as an adversary, he will behave differently than if he perceives the principal as a potential partner in helping to achieve certain goals. The principal/assistant principal relationship became one of allies (1995).

Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX) helps to explain the interactions between principals and assistant principals. It makes "the dyadic relationship between leaders and followers the focal point of the leadership process" (Northouse, p 151). The premise of the dyadic relationship is that there are two types of relationships. One is the relationship that is based on expanded responsibilities, or the in-group. The other is relationships that are based on defined roles or the out-group. Figure 2.2 gives an illustration of the components of the LMX Theory which may apply to how principals and assistant principals develop their relationships. It may also aid in determining who has the implied designation of the "in group" or the "out group".

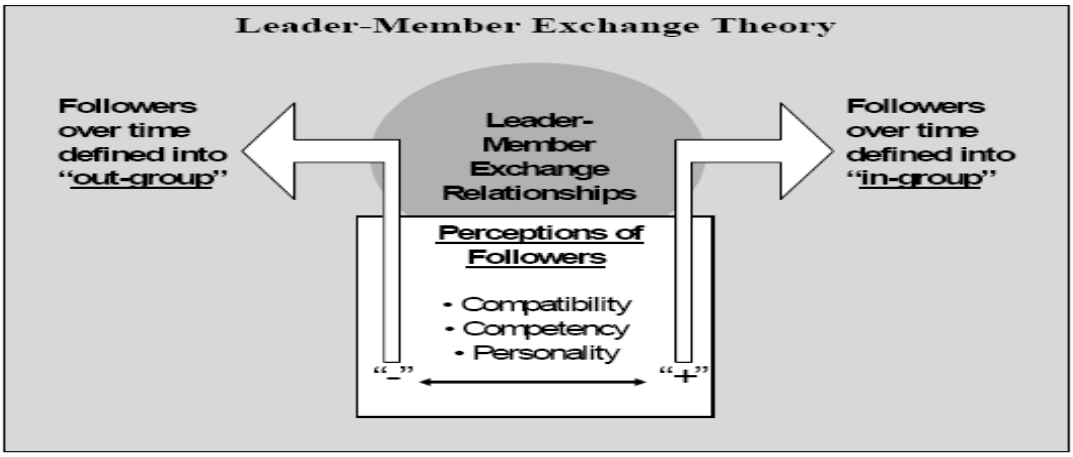

Figure 2.2: The Leader-Member Exchange Theory (http:higeredbcs.wiley.com).

In schools that have multiple assistant principals, it is possible that these subordinates will become a part of the in-group or the out-group based on how well they work with the principal or vice-versa. Membership in one group or the other is based on how the subordinates

involve themselves in expanding their role responsibilities with the leader (Graen, 1976). Some subordinates may become more competitive. For instance, assistant principals may compete with one another by going beyond the call of duty in order to secure a place in the in-group. Those assistant principals who are complacent and work only for a pay-check will most likely be in the out-group.

According to Northouse (2007), LMX theory works in two ways: It describes leadership, and it prescribes leadership with the central concept as dyadic relationships. LMX theory makes the suggestion that it is important for principals to recognize the existence of in-groups or the out-groups. Principals can accomplish more tasks in an effective manner with an in-group. "In-group members are willing to do more than is required in their job description and look for innovative ways o advance the group's goals" (p. 158). This will enable principals to determine how to delegate critical assignments.

On the other hand, the out-group will most likely receive less attention from the principal. They generally do just enough to satisfy the job description and operate within their administrative roles. "Leaders treat out-group members fairly and according to the formal contract, but they do not give them special attention" (Northouse, p. 158). Based on their efforts, the out-group receives the standard benefits of the job.

Summary

The opinion of the researcher in this study is consistent with most existing literature that suggests a principal's leadership style impacts school climate. For instance, the levels of trust and the way decisions are made, the failure to empower subordinates, and deal with conflict are major influences on a schools' climate. It is important that schools become places where teachers are engaged in school reform or renewal efforts for improving the schools and where supervisory support encourages the entire staff to model behaviors that foster collegiality and a

professional environment (Bullach et al., 2006, Northouse, 2007, Tableman, 2004). Additionally, the strong relationship between the way principals interact with teachers and the overall climate of the school impacts the way in which proactive leadership develops. More importantly, the research shows that school climate plays a major role in student achievement.

Because there are very few known studies that show how assistant principals' perceive their principals' leadership styles' and their impact on school climate, the literature review focuses on leadership styles, instructional leadership, school climate, leadership responsibilities, principal and assistant principal relationships. According to Bullach (2004), leadership styles definitely impact school climate and are critical in giving possible explanations how leadership behaviors and styles develop (Bass, 1990; Mumford, 2006). Past and current leadership theories lend a hand in build basic foundation of leadership development and adaptation.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore assistant principals' perceptions of how their principal's leadership styles impact the schools' climate. The study is qualitative in design and will include eight assistant principals from a suburban school system in the northeastern portion of Georgia. The timeline for the study was 12 weeks. Recorded interviews with each selected assistant principal were utilized to aid the researcher in understanding their perceptions of principal leadership styles. Even though ten interview questions were used for the interviews, fifteen questions were constructed using the findings from the literature review (see table 3.2). A group of county-level administrators from the curriculum, professional development, student affairs and the finance departments assisted the researcher in the selection of the ten questions, based on their expertise in educational leadership, that were used for the interviews.

The qualitative data from the interview audio recordings were carefully and meticulously transcribed to garner perceptions from the participants. Polit & Hunglar (1999) argue that qualitative data is very intensive activity that requires insight, ingenuity, creativity, conceptual sensitivity and sheer hard work. The researcher organized the data into a chart (see Table 4.2) that can be sorted by research sub-questions and codes. Also, a chart describing the demographics of the participants and the schools of XYZ is included in Table 4.1. In addition, the researcher coded and categorized reoccurring themes that emerged from the transcripts. This information was analyzed, interpreted and summarized at the conclusion of the interviews in order to answer the research questions of the study. At no time was the opinion of the researcher interjected into this study.

Research Design

Description of Research Design and Approach

This qualitative study was used to explore assistant principals' perception of how their principals' leadership styles impact school climate. Qualitative research methods are used to understand some social phenomena from the perspectives of those that are involved (Glesne, 2006). Qualitative researchers seek to understand and interpret how the participants in a social setting construct the world around them. According to Creswell (2003), qualitative research takes place in the natural setting, uses multiple methods of data collections that are interactive and humanistic, generates theories and hypotheses from data that emerges, and requires researchers to make an interpretation of the data .This approach will be used for this study to gain the essential truths of the lived experiences of assistant principals (Glesne, 2006).

Justification of Research Design and Approach

Of the three research design approaches, qualitative, quantitative and mixed-method, the qualitative approach was used for this research. Qualitative research was used because the chosen topic is a relatively new area of research. There is limited literature to be used as a guide for determining how assistant principals perceive principals' leadership styles and their influence school on climate. Qualitative research can allow perceptions as the guide that helps to determine the impact of leadership styles on school climate.

Research Questions

Principals' leadership styles have an important role in determining the climate of a school. The conclusions of any investigation of principal leadership styles may aid in preparing aspiring principals. Most importantly, identifying principal leadership styles from assistant principals' perspectives is worthy of investigation due to their close working relationship with principals and their similar training. According to Rosenbach and Taylor (1993), if principals are

to have good assistant principals, they must offer them opportunities to shape and participate in the progress of the organization. Furthermore, a principal/assistant principal relationship is one of mutual dependence (Gabarro and Kotter, 1993).

The over-arching question for this research was: What principal leadership styles do assistant principals perceive as influential to school climate? Three additional sub-questions were used for this study. The first sub-question sought to determine how principal leadership contributes to the overall learning environment of the school with student achievement as the main focus. The second sub-question sought to determine how principal leadership contributes to the enhancement of the overall personality of the school. The third sub-question sought to determine what principal leadership styles correlates most strongly with school climate.

Population Sample

The XYZ School System is located in the Southeastern region of the United States. The location of the XYZ System was once considered a rural mill-town. Today, it is considered to be a part of the seven to nine counties that make up a major Southeastern metropolitan area. The XYZ School System serves 19,000 students (approximately 50% African American, 45% White, and 4% Hispanic) in the county including the five municipalities located within the county. There are 2,100 school and system level instructional support and administrative staff (teachers, paraprofessional, media specialist, psychologist, social workers, counselor, nurses, and administrative staff members) employed in the school district. Approximately 50-51% of the total student body is categorized as economically disadvantaged, as defined by students who participate in the free or reduced lunch program. The 24 schools are organized into:

- Thirteen elementary schools (grades PreK-5)
- Four middle schools (grades 6-8)
- Three high schools (grades 9-12)
- Two theme schools (grades K-3 & grades 4-8)
- One alternative school (grades 7-12)

Over the last eight years, nine new schools and 57 additional classrooms have been constructed. During that time period, massive renovations have been made to the existing schools. The school system has also constructed a new Board of Education building and a Service Center to house the maintenance, warehouse and transportation departments at one central location (www.XYZcountyschools.org)

XYZ residents are proud of their growing school system. All XYZ schools meet the standards of the State Department of Education and are fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (www.XYZschools.com). XYZ students are recognized at the state and national level for excellence in academics, athletics, the arts and extra-curricular activities. All schools offer a wide array of programs, including services for both academically gifted students as well as students with disabilities.

The participants were selected from the population of 44 assistant principals who work at elementary and secondary schools in the system. Each school has one to five assistant principals. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants that would best assist the researcher in understanding assistant principals' perceptions of their principals' leadership styles. According to Nardi (2006), purposive sampling is appropriate when there is a specific reason to select a unique sample on purpose because of some characteristics or traits that will be analyzed.

Eight participants were chosen from the population of 44 assistant principals in the XYZ School System to be interviewed upon IRB approval. Participants were chosen based on the following criteria:

1. The participant has served with his/her current principal for at least one year.
2. The participant has been an assistant principal for two years.
3. The participants' school has at least two assistant principals.
4. The participant has been in the educational profession for at least six years.

Fifteen of the forty-four assistant principals in the XYZ School System met all of the pre-determined criteria. Initially, the researcher proposed to use ten participants. However, at the time of the research, the schools system was in the midst of standardized testing. Therefore, the assistant superintendent agreed to allow six-eight assistant principals. Eight of the assistant principals were chosen from the fifteen who met the criteria based on their availability and their work-load at their individual schools. By meeting these criteria, the researcher was able to acquire a source of data from these participants.

Table 3.1
Study Participants

School	Principal	Assistant Principal
Eagle High	Principal Red	A.P. Blue
Dodgers High	Principal Brown	A.P. Green
Saint High	Principal Orange	A.P. White
Mustang Middle	Principal Black	A.P. Yellow
Packers Middle	Principal Lexus	A.P. Ford
Falcon Middle	Principal Mercedes	A.P. Nova
Colts Elem.	Principal Accord	A.P. Saturn
Braves Elem.	Principal Porsche	A.P. Hummer

Instrumentation

The researcher was the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis. According to Merriam and Associates (2002), since the primary goal of the study is to understand, the human instrument would seem to be the ideal means of collecting and analyzing data, because the human instrument has the ability to be immediately responsive and adaptive. This study utilized interactive interviews composed of open-ended questions that solicited the perceptions of the selected assistant principals regarding their principals' leadership styles. These questions were developed by the researcher extracting leadership themes form the review of

literature in Chapter Two (see Appendix C). Participant response was not limited to his/her current principals' leadership styles. He/she may refer to a previous principals' leadership style in the county that he/she worked with as an assistant principal.

County-level administrators from various departments including curriculum, personnel, student affairs, budget and finance, and community advocacy were used to assist the researcher in critiquing these questions before the participants are interviewed (see Appendix D). In addition, the researcher used the leadership behaviors from a leadership guide that consisted of the twenty-one leadership behaviors coined by Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005), to be utilized for additional probing questions. These behaviors were found to be positively correlated to student achievement.

During the interactive, one-on-one interviews, each participant answered the opened-ended questions in a session no longer than 60 minutes with the researcher. Creswell (2005) suggests that one-on-one interviews are ideal for participants who are comfortable sharing ideas. The interview protocol (Appendix C) describes how the interview process was conducted. The interviews were conducted in a location that is convenient to the participants once the assistant principals have agreed to be interviewed. The interview questions were constructed by the researcher by utilizing leadership behaviors from the literature.

Data Collection

Polit & Hunglar (1999) argue that collecting qualitative data is very intensive activity that requires insight, ingenuity, creativity, conceptual sensitivity and sheer hard work. It is more demanding than quantitative analysis. Due to the demand of collecting qualitative data, data analysis and data collection occurred simultaneously throughout the study. Merriam and Associates (2002) state that simultaneous data collection and analysis is beneficial because it allows the researcher to make adjustments throughout the study and to test emerging concepts, themes, and categories against subsequent data.

The data collection process began after receiving IRB approval (see Appendix A). After IRB approval, a participant request form was sent electronically to the Assistant Superintendent of the XYZ School System for approval. A confirmation letter was emailed to the researcher from the Assistant superintendent. A principal and participant consent form was sent electronically to the selected assistant principals and their principal for their approval. Participants had a three to five day window to return their consent forms. After all of the signed consent forms were received by the researcher electronically or by school courier, a designated time and place for the interviews was agreed upon based on the convenience of the participant. The interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes.

For this study, the researcher utilized individual interviews as the instrument to produce narrative data in the form of word-for-word transcripts. The data collection process included the audio recording of the interviews and the verbatim transcription each interview. Appendix C gives the interview protocol.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using several strategies. First, the interviews were conducted at the participant's school where they were recorded with an audio device and transcribed (verbatim) by the researcher. Next, the interview transcripts were read and reviewed for a general understanding of the content. Next, the data was organized or grouped to correspond with the research questions in order to make the process more manageable. The researcher developed codes to categorize reoccurring themes, or common trends that appeared repeatedly throughout from the transcripts. Codes were assigned to single words as well as phrases that reoccur throughout the interview transcriptions. According to Maxwell (1996), themes come from reviewing the literature, of course. Themes come from the characteristics of the phenomena being studied. Themes may also come from already-agreed-upon professional definitions, from

local common-sense constructs, and from researchers' values, theoretical orientation, and personal experience with the subject matter (Maxwell, 1996).

In regards to this study's' validity, Maxwell (1996) identifies three validity types that were originally developed for qualitative research: 1) Descriptive validity refers to the factual accuracy of an account as reported by the researcher. To enhance the validity, direct quotes were utilized in the study. 2) Interpretive validity refers to the degree to which the researcher accurately portrays the participants' meanings about what is being studied. To enhance the interpretive validity in this study, the use of tables was utilized, as suggested by Maxwell (1996).

In order to interpret or make sense of the data, the first iteration of coding was the reading process. During the reading process, different themes emerged from principal leadership behaviors. On the second level of iteration, leadership codes were developed and extracted from the participant's transcriptions to draw connections between principal leadership styles and school climate. By organizing the data onto a chart listing the research sub-questions beside to the themes, the researcher was able to write a narrative of the findings. In the third level of iteration, findings were sorted by respondent, interview question, participant response, and relationship to the research sub-question with a summary at the end of each sub-question. The findings, listed in chapter four, were interpreted and summarized in order to answer the three sub-questions.

Summary

Chapter 3 presented an overview and discussion of the methodology that was used in this dissertation study. The methodology used a qualitative research design to understand how assistant principal's perceptions of their principals' leadership styles and how those styles impacted student achievement. The researcher used a purposive sample consisting of eight assistant principals from elementary and secondary schools in the XYZ School District in the

Southeastern section of the United States. The researcher conducted interactive interviews to understand the perceptions of the assistant principals. Chapter four will reveal the findings of the study.

Chapter 4

REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand how assistant principals' perceptions of their principals' leadership style impact school climate. To accomplish the purpose of this study, the researcher analyzed the interview responses from eight assistant principals in XYZ School System regarding their perceptions of their principals' leadership styles. Using the basic interpretive approach, the researcher identified common themes that emerged from the analysis and interpretation of the collected data.

The common themes that emerged from the analysis were used to answer the research questions. The over-arching question for this research was: What principal leadership styles do assistant principals perceive as positively influencing school climate? Three additional sub-questions were used for this study. The first sub-question sought to determine how principal leadership contributes to the overall learning environment of the school with student achievement as the main focus. The second sub-question sought to determine how principal leadership contributes to the enhancement of the overall personality of the school. The third sub-question sought to determine what principal leadership styles correlates most strongly with school climate.

The researcher used interactive interviews and general field notes as the means to collect data for the study. The data from the interviews and field notes were sorted in relation to the research question and sub-questions. Coded data, trends, and patterns gathered from transcribed interviews were analyzed by the researcher to develop an understanding of assistant principals' perceptions of how their principals' leadership style impact school climate.

This chapter begins with detailed demographic information on the selected participants and the schools that they currently serve in as assistant principals. Next, the codes that emerged

from the findings from the participant's responses will be revealed. Finally, those codes were utilized to correlate the detailed accounts of the participant's responses as they relate to the research question and sub-questions.

Participant's Schools

The study took place in a school district located in the northeastern section of the state. The school district, XYZ School District (pseudonym), is located in close proximity of a major city. This area is a fast-growing suburban area that is considered to a part of a major metropolitan area. In the district, there were thirteen elementary schools, three traditional high schools, four traditional middle schools, one themed middle school, and one alternative school that are comprised of the high school, middle schools and elementary levels. Participants from ten schools (all pseudonyms), Eagle, Dodgers and, Saint High schools, Mustang, Packers, and Falcon Middle schools, and Braves, Seminole, and Bear Elementary schools, in this district participated in the study.

Eagle High School opened in 1994 as a transitional school and became an official high school in 1998 when it had its first graduating class. Of the 1366 students, six races are represented with whites (60%) and blacks (35%) having the higher number of students. There are a total 642 males and 724 females. There are 155 faculty and staff members which includes media specialists, custodians, dieticians, administrators, teachers, and secretaries. This school was the first high school to have the Block Schedule. Additionally, Eagle High was a 2008 National School of Excellence and achieved Average Yearly Progress (AYP) for the 2009 school year. Eagle has three assistant principals. Forty-two percent of the students participate in the free or reduced lunch program.

Dodger High is the largest and oldest school in the county with over 1964 students. The school has a population of 70% African American, 23% White, 4% Hispanic, 2% Multi-racial

and 1% Asian students. 50% of the students are female and 50% are male. Approximately 33 percent of the students participate in the free or reduced lunch program. This school achieved AYP status for the 2009 school year. Dodger High had been on Traditional Scheduling since its inception but transitioned to Block Scheduling for the 2009-2010 school year. Dodger High was the only high school in the district until 2003. Since that time Dodger High has experienced a decline in enrollment due to the addition of two new schools. Dodger has a total 6 assistant principals.

Saint High School is the newest high school in the county. It is located in one of the fastest growing areas in the school district. It's doors opened in 2006 and currently has 1662 students. Recently, Saint High had twenty-five additional rooms to allow for projected increase capacity to 2500. Saint is comprised of 48% Black, 48% White, 3% Hispanic, 1% Asian, and 1% American Indian students. Saint made AYP for the 2009 school year and will graduate its' first class of students that began there in the 9th grade. Approximately 41 percent of the students participate in the free or reduced lunch program. Saint has five assistant principals.

Mustang Middle School has 717 students and 52 teachers. It is the smallest middle school in the district. This schools diversified population consists of 55% White, 34% Black, 6% Hispanic, 2% Asian, and 2% Others. In 2008, Mustang increased its' size with the addition of 10 new classrooms. Mustang has two assistant principals. Approximately 52 percent of the students at this school participate in the free and reduced lunch program.

Packer Middle is the newest of the county's' middle schools. It opened at the beginning of the 2009-2010 school years with over 1100 students. The students were transferred from two other middle schools in the county due to population growth. The majority of the students came from Gator Middle School which was re-organized as a themed school. Packer is considered to be a Needs Improvement school because it assumed the status of Gator Middle. Packer has two assistant principals and provides free or reduced lunch for 52 percent of the students.

Falcon Middle is one of the larger middle schools in the county with a student population of approximately 1100 students. Of these students, 66% are White, 31% Black, and 9% Hispanic. Falcon was built in 1996 to relieve over-crowding from the two existing middle schools at the time. About 41 percent of the students participate in the free lunch or reduced lunch program. Fifty percent of the students are male and 50% are female. Falcon has 65 teachers and three assistant principals.

Colt Elementary is the newest elementary school in the county. Its doors were opened to students in 2008 with 630 students and have grown to 845 students for the current school year. The population is comprised of 52% Black, 33% White, 10% Hispanic, and 5% Other students. Seventy percent of the students participate in the free or reduced lunch program. The schools AYP status was not available at the time of this study. Colt has two assistant principals.

Brave Elementary was built in 1997 and drew their student population from five other elementary schools in the district. Brave has 582 students that are comprised of 56% Black, 34% White, & 7% Multi-racial and 3% Hispanic students. Approximately 89% of the students are economically disadvantaged. The school made AYP for the 2009 school years but still remains in Needs Improvement Status due to the previous year's scores. Brave has two assistant principals. Fifty percent of the students participate in the free or reduced lunch program.

Demographic Profile of the Participants

The participants in this study are currently employed in a school district that has consistently promoted its assistant principals to the rank of principal. The eight assistant principals for this study had been provided leadership training opportunities by the school district similar to that of principals. Each of the participants, as well as all of the assistant principals in the school system, is afforded professional development opportunities to enhance their leadership skills. Table 4.1 below represents the participants' profiles. Following is a detailed account of each assistant principal's profile.

Assistant Principal Blue had an outstanding educational start as a high school math instructor. He was chosen to be an assistant principal at a middle school in the district after seven years of teaching. He voluntarily transferred to Eagle High, where he had previously served as a Math instructor, to become assistant principal over athletics. Mr. Blue has an Educational Specialist degree in leadership. He is the newest assistant principal on the staff at Eagle.

Assistant Principal Green has twenty-one years of experience in public school, K-12 education. Dr. Green has four years of administrative experience, two at the middle school level and two at the high school level. She is National Board Certified by achieving advanced teaching credentials through the successful completion of a voluntary assessment program designed to recognize effective teachers. In addition, she completed her doctorate of Educational Leadership in 2009. Before becoming an administrator Mrs. Green taught middle school Math and Social Studies. Dr. Green has also held various leadership positions at the previous schools before she became an administrator.

Assistant Principal White has been in public school education for over 20 years. She has an Educational Specialist degree in Educational Leadership. She is a former Language Arts. department chair at Eagle High. She was selected to serve as Assistant principal for curriculum at a neighboring school system. After her first tenure as an assistant principal, she was chosen as assistant principal for curriculum at her current school, Saint High. Mrs. White has 17 years of experience in education while serving four of those years as an assistant principal. This is her first year serving with the principal of Saint High.

Mr. Yellow has been an assistant principal at Mustang Middle School for five years. He has several roles at his school. He serves as disciplinarian, athletic director, and assists with curriculum and instruction. All of his ten years of educational experience has been at the middle school level. He came to this school district from an urban school setting near Atlanta. Mr.

Yellow has an L6 certificate and is currently enrolled in a Doctorate program in Educational Administration. This is his fifth consecutive year with his current principal.

Mrs. Ford is an assistant principal at Packer Middle where she serves as the curriculum leader. Along with her curriculum duties, she coordinates all testing activities at the school. She is a veteran educator of 17 years. She previously served as assistant principal at another school in the district for four years before transferring to Packer. Mrs. Ford has an Educational Specialist degree in Educational Leadership and has been working with her current principal for one year.

Mr. Nova, a sixteen year veteran in education, is an assistant principal at Falcon Middle. He came to the school system from an inter-city alternative school where he served as an administrator of discipline. His previously served in the United States Marines Corp. Currently he serves as assistant principal for curriculum. He has been in this position for one year. He has two previous years of experience as an assistant principal experience at another middle school in the district and has a total of eight years of experience in administration. Mr. Nova is currently completing a doctorate program in Educational Administration.

Dr. Saturn is a fifth-year administrator who currently serves as an assistant principal at Colt Elementary. She has eleven years of experience in education with six of those years working as an elementary teacher. She has been an administrator for five years and has served with her current principal for 2 years. Dr. Saturn completed her doctorate degree in Educational Administration in the spring of 2009.

Assistant principal Hummer has been in K-12 education for nine years with three of those years as an elementary teacher. He had two years of experience as an assistant principal in a school district in the northeastern section of the state. He has one year of administrative experience at another school in the district and two years with his current principal at Brave Elementary.

Table 4.1
Assistant Principal's Profiles

	A. P. Blue	A. P. Green	A. P. White	A. P. Yellow	A. P. Ford	A. P. Nova	A. P. Saturn	A. P. Hummer
Gender	Male	Female	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Race	White	White	White	Black	White	Black	Black	Black
Years of Educational Experience	11	21	17	10	17	16	11	9
Years of Administrative Experience	3	4	4	5	5	8	5	6
Years in Current Position	1	2	2	5	5	2	2	1
Years with Current Principal	1	2	1		1	2	2	1
Degree Level	L6	L7	L6	L6	L6	L7	L7	L6

L5 – Masters Degree
L6 – Specialists Degree
L7 – Doctorate Degree

Data Analysis

The data for this study was obtained from the eight participants utilizing open-ended semi-formal interviews. Each of the interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes and were conducted at the agreed upon site. In most cases, the interviews were held at the participant's work site for his/her convenience. The researcher assured that the interview environment was an environment which encouraged the participant to feel comfortable enough to speak candidly about their perceptions (See Appendix C). Each question given by the researcher during the interview was repeated as needed to assure that the participant fully understood. There was no time limit on answering a particular question and the participants were given an opportunity to re-visit any of the previously asked questions. There was no limit on additional probing questions related to the principal leadership styles.

To analyze the data extracted from the assistant principal interviews, the researcher used a basic interpretive strategy with several methods to get a greater understanding of the

participant's perceptions. First, during the interview process, the researcher allowed the participants to give additional comments regarding principal leadership questions in order to get a better understanding of the participant perceptions. Secondly, all audio interviews were meticulously transcribed and read by the researcher. During the third phase of data analysis, the researcher constructed a list of general impressions which were developed into codes by utilizing terminology from the leadership behaviors (See table 4.2). Copies of the transcript interviews were highlighted with colors and labeled with the codes according to specific questions. To draw connections between principal leadership styles and school climate, this data was organized onto a chart (see table 4.2) listing the research sub-questions next to the codes. This chart was utilized as a visual to assist the researcher in writing the narrative of the findings in chapter five. After reading, transcribing, and making notes, the researcher was convinced that the quality of the data was appropriate to answer the research questions.

Table 4.2
Leadership Codes and Sub-questions

How does the principal's leadership contributes to the overall environment of the school, focusing on student achievement?	• Involvement in Curriculum & Instruction • Providing resources • Monitoring & evaluating
How does the principal's leadership contribute to the enhancement of the overall personality of the school?	• Communicating • Building Relationships • Using Situational Awareness • Growing leaders
What principal leadership styles correlate to a safe and orderly environment?	• Maintaining a safe & orderly environment • Being visible

Simultaneous data analysis and data collection occurred as the researcher observed facial expression during the interviews, recorded and analyzed data at the same time. This enabled the

researcher to better understand the common patterns and themes. Many of these patterns and themes reoccurred throughout the transcription and the reading of the data. These pattern and themes were coded and organized focusing on the over-arching researcher question. Each sub-question will be analyzed with the appropriate data from the participant's responses. Finally, the coded data were compared to the following post-interview leadership table that consists of 21 leadership behaviors found to be positively correlated to student achievement.

Table 4.3
Leadership Behaviors

1. Affirmation - The extent to which the leader recognizes and celebrates school accomplishments and acknowledge failures.
2. Change Agent - A willingness to change and actively challenge the status quo.
3. Contingent Rewards - Recognizing and rewarding individual accomplishments.
4. Communication - The ability to establish strong lines of communication with and among teachers And students.
5. Culture - Fostering shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation.
6. Discipline - Protecting teachers from issues and influences that would detract their teaching time or focus.
7. Flexibility - Adapts his or her leadership behavior to the needs of the current situation and is comfortable with dissent.
8. Focus - Establishes clear goals and keeps those goals in the forefront of the school's attention.
9. Ideals/Beliefs - Communicates and operates from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling.
10. Input - Involves teachers in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies.
11. Intellectual Stimulation - Ensures faculty and staff are aware of the most current theories and practices.
    and makes the discussion of these regular aspects of the school's climate.
12. Involvement in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment - Is directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices.
13. Knowledge of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment - Is knowledgeable about current curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices.
14. Monitoring/Evaluation - Monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning
15. Optimizer - Inspires and leads new and challenging innovations.
16. Order - Establishes and sets standard operating procedures and routines.
17. Outreach - is an advocate and a spokesperson for all the school stakeholders.
18. Relationships - Demonstrates an awareness of the personal aspects of teachers and staff.

19. Resources - Provides teachers with materials and professional development necessary for the successful execution of their jobs.

20. Situational Awareness - Is aware of the details and undercurrents in the running of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems.

21. Visibility - Has quality contact and interactions with teachers and students.

Discussion Preview

During the interview process, each assistant principal was candid about his/ her perceptions of their principals' leadership styles and gave detailed accounts of the leadership behaviors that he/she perceived to be influential to the school's climate. Although the study focused on the leadership styles of the principals, all participants used the word "we", at some time during the interview process, to refer to the principals' leadership actions. They were all convinced that they were a contributing part of the decision-making process as it related to the leadership of their schools. Most importantly, each of the participants believed that his/her principal's leadership style and behavior would in some way influence their future leadership behaviors.

The findings from this research, discussed later in this section, are correlated to the three sub-questions of the study that were guided by the over-arching question: What principal leadership styles do assistant principals perceive as influential to a schools' climate?; Sub-question 1: How does the principal's leadership contribute to the overall learning environment of the school, focusing on student achievement?; Sub-question 2: How does the principal's leadership contribute to the enhancement of the overall personality of the school?; Sub-question 3: How does the principal's leadership contribute to a safe and orderly learning environment?

Discussion

Sub-question 1: How does the principal's leadership contribute to the overall learning environment of the school, focusing on student achievement?

The purpose of this question was to solicit principal leadership styles that focused specifically on student achievement. Each participant answered the ten questions from the interview protocol (see Appendix C). Their responses varied based on the number of years that they have served with their current principal. Several respondents believed that "hiring the best, qualified teachers" was the most critical action a principal could take to impact student achievement. Dr. Saturn went further by stating that her principal "places the most emphasis on student achievement and assures that the students receive high quality instruction". Selecting a team that that will work with the principal by assuring that the students have the most opportunities to excel" was the perception of Dr. Nova. Other participants believed that their principals' knowledge of curriculum practices was critical to student achievement.

After examining the data that were transcribed from the interviews, three codes emerged that were similar to the twenty-one leadership behaviors that Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) found to be positively correlated to the principal's involvement in curriculum and instruction.. Those themes were: involvement in curriculum and instruction, providing resources, and monitoring/evaluation.

Involvement in Curriculum and Instruction. Within the leadership styles revealed in the research of Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005), involvement in curriculum and instruction was described how the principal is directly involved in the design and implementation of the curriculum and instruction practices. The majority of the respondents perceived that their principals were the instructional leader of their schools, not only because they actually understood all aspects of curriculum and instruction, but they delegated and assisted others in the implementation of curriculum and instruction activities. For example, one assistant principal exerts that "I'm amazed how much my principal knows about the curriculum". However, others delegated the majority of curriculum and instruction matters to a specified assistant principal. Conversely, elementary principals handled the bulk of these matters. Dr.

Ford, assistant principal at Mustang Middle stated that “my principal is new to the middle school, so I am the curriculum AP and all my experience has been in middle school. He will sit down as I work through something as we introduce a new program that I need to help him explain to the staff”. This example helps in understanding how principals can be confident enough to allow his assistant principals to lead without fear or intimidation.

Elementary schools in XYZ School System have fewer assistant principals than secondary schools, so principals play a more critical role in curriculum and instruction matters. “My principal takes the lead on being the main facilitator for curriculum needs in our school”, says Mr. Hummer at Braves Elementary. He adds, “My principal comes to the table being familiar with all curricula because he has taught at high, middle, and elementary schools”. Mr. Hummer believes that his principals’ experience with each level of school enables him to make curriculum decisions in the elementary school that may impact their students’ future achievement in middle and high school.

Although the school system’s elementary principals are actively involved in curriculum matters, they tend to depend on their assistant principals and leadership teams just as secondary principals. Assistant principals receive the bulk of the delegated curriculum duties. According to Dr. Saturn, her elementary principal shares a portion of the curriculum duties with the assistant principals and “delegates other duties through our leadership team and grade level chairs”. Also, her principal allows “both assistant principals work together to make curriculum decisions based on the principals leadership styles”.

Based on the perceptions of this study’s participants, principals utilized various leadership styles when dealing with curriculum and instruction matters as they relate to student achievement. For example, the principals were collectively perceived as visionaries, who placed emphasis on a curriculum where their students should get quality instruction by utilizing technology. Additionally, principals emphasized differentiated instruction, utilizing

disaggregated data to achieve curriculum objectives and conducting professionally learning sessions to maximize student achievement.

Providing Resources. Responses from the assistant principal interviews also suggest that when principals are dedicated in adequately providing resources to teachers as well as students, quality learning will exist. According to Dr. Saturn a school's climate and student achievement is dependent on "the teachers having the resources that they need". Mr. Yellow states that "my principal places emphasis on making sure we have the resources to make sure that our teachers are prepared to prepare our students". To assist teachers who are not performing at an acceptable level, principals provided resources such as peer mentorships, professional development plans, professional collaboration, conference training sessions as well as assistant principal mentorships. Dr. Green stated,

> He makes sure that if the teachers that we (assistant principals) observe are struggling, they are put on a professional development plan. He makes sure that we are not just doing a blanket PDP for every teacher. We must first determine what their weaknesses are. We then have to make sure that we are addressing those teacher's specific needs when we develop the professional development plan. Programs were put into place to address high-achievers as well as low-achievers. To assist high-achieving students, the interview data revealed that principals provide clubs such as national beta, national honor, and debate teams. Nova-net, a grade recovery program is a resource provided by the principal to assist the under-achieving students.

Principals also provided resources (incentives) to motivate teachers and students. Principals provided incentives such as jean days, teacher-of-the-month, student of the month, calling cards, t-shirts and academic pep-rallies. Dr. White's statement best describes the overall belief of the assistant principals' regarding principals providing resources as incentives. He

states, “People like to have visible rewards and some of them like to know that they are appreciated”.

Monitoring and Evaluating Teachers. In many cases, principals are not afforded the opportunity to hire many of their teachers. Because quality teachers play such a critical role in student achievement, principals must rigorously monitor and evaluate their teachers in order to assure that students are receiving quality instruction. The interview data in this study revealed that principals evaluate and monitor by utilizing walk-throughs, Georgia Teacher Observation Instrument (GTOI), principal-teacher conferences, peer observations, other types of informal observations, and Annual Evaluations. Mrs. Ford and her principal conduct “regular classroom observations. We also do the walk-through observations”. In some situations, the principals meet with the assist principal to assign teachers to be evaluated. The assistant principals are given certain expectations to look for when evaluating their assigned teachers. For example, according to Dr. Green, her principal “works with each assistant principal because each is assigned so many teachers to evaluate”. Each principal trusts that assistant principals are capable of evaluating and monitoring their assigned teachers. When the AP’s conducts teacher evaluations, the principal “does not change one of his AP’s decisions”, according to Mrs. Ford.

In summary, based on the perceptions of this study’s participants, principal utilized various leadership styles or behaviors such as being involved in curriculum and instruction matters, providing resources and evaluating/monitoring teachers. Each of the previously mentioned leadership style or behavior is perceived as important to a schools’ climate as well as student achievement.

Sub-question 2: How does the principal leadership contribute to the enhancement of the overall personality of the school?

The purpose of this question was to identify principal leadership styles that could enhance the overall personality of a school. Responses to this question may be critical in

maintaining proper teacher-morale, teacher-retention, and continued student achievement. Based on the transcribed data, four themes emerged that are related to sub-question number two. Communication is the establishment of strong lines of communication with and among teachers and students. Relationships are referred to the principals' ability to demonstrate an awareness of the personal aspects of teachers and staff. Situational awareness is when the principal is aware of the details in the running of the school and then uses this information to address current and potential problems. Finally, growing leaders enhances the personality of the school by created buy-in.

Communicating. According to the interview data, communication is a critical component of school leadership and climate. This data revealed that formal and informal communication by principal's aids in stakeholder buy-in. Seven of the eight assistant principal interviewees mentioned how important it was for their principal to communicate their vision as well as their consistent expectations. Mr. Blue at Eagle High stated that "even though our setting may change, his styles and expectations remain the same. That all starts from the principal setting the vision for the school". Mr. Blue also believed that his principal's vision is based on the good of the stakeholders. Dr. Green believes that a principal "got to have a path and a vision". Her statement, "he is very big on sharing his vision, what he wants for school, what he wants for the students", implies that communicating the school vision is important.

The respondents all agreed that their principal leadership styles include formal as well as informal communication that aided in building relationships. There were several instances where

examples were given to describe informal communication. For example, Dr. Nova explained that, "you can have a conversation with my principal that doesn't pertain directly to the students, but the conversation in essence allows relationship building". Another example is a statement by Mr. Blue, "there is an informal aspect of principal communication, the principal is the human

resources director for the school and has an open-door policy so that when a person comes in they can have a conversation that is informal". Additionally, he believed that the open-door policy encouraged communication with those teachers that were reluctant to converse with the principal. However, Dr. Saturn admitted that her principal is informal, yet, "she is not very informal where teachers think that they are talking to a buddy. She is informal, but she is not too personal and getting into folks business".

Based on the assistant principals' perceptions, most of the communication between the principal and the staff can be characterized as formal. For example, Mr. Yellow describes his principal as a master communicator. He articulated, "I mean he's an excellent speaker. It's interesting to hear different things he tells the teacher. He not only motivates, but challenges teachers to step up to a higher level". Dr. Green voiced that her principal formally "addresses, all different kinds of learning styles and intelligences in professional learning sessions. He is so formal that he addresses all teachers and administrators by titles, not first names". However, all assistant principals declared that their principals communicated their expectations as they related to teachers providing quality instruction. For example, Mrs. Ford asserts that,

> He consistently communicates that teachers must provide quality instruction. If not, the principal and administrators behaviors that needs to be refocused. If somebody's hand needs to be slapped, then he will do that. He takes on that uncomfortable job, but that has been his primary focus.

In situations where teachers become ineffective, the principals utilized different methods of formal communication. One important aspect of formal communication to be used for ineffective teachers is documentation. It is imperative that proper step by step documentation is provided by the principal in order to take corrective measures for teachers or staff members who are not effective. For instance, Mrs. White articulated that,

> The first step, the principal, we, generally meets with the teacher to discuss issues. It is

> Is not a form of reprimand, but you know we are having this issue that keeps coming up, this is what the problem has been. Then we will ask what we can do to assist you with this problem. If it continues to be a problem, we will call the teacher back in. This time it becomes more formal and it will also be documented in written format where the teacher will have to sign it. We continue to provide assistance to help them improve. Our goal is not to get rid of a teacher, but to help them improve but we must document, document, document!

Other examples of corrective measures taken by principals to address staff members who are not effective are: writing letters of reprimand for teachers who consistently display poor classroom management, document cases of inappropriate behavior by staff members, and writing memos to those staff members who are consistently tardy to work. Specifically, one respondent stated that "my principal terminated a custodian for regularly taking naps and using teacher's computers during the night shift".

This section has presented various forms of principal communication that aids in the development of a school climate that is conducive to learning. Principals voiced formal as well as informal communication. In addition, the principal utilized written communication to assure that there was continuity among the staff.

Building Relationships. The assistant principal interviews revealed several instances of principal leadership styles that embraced relationship building. In these cases, the principal demonstrated an awareness of personal aspects of teachers and students. In some cases, relationship building was initiated by the principal showing concern for the staff. Dr. Green explained how her principals' acts of concern helped build relationships in their building. She revealed "he always provides a Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner for the staff. This year he bought presents for every teacher". Mr. Nova described another example of how his principals' acts of concern aided in building relationships. He articulated that,

If a teacher has a family member that has been gravely sick or injured, she will invite that particular teacher into her office to discuss what is going on and how that particular situation is progressing. She will ask the teacher is there anything that she can do from a leaders standpoint to assist the teacher as she copes with the personal situation. Making herself approachable and continuing to build relationships by allowing them to come and meet with her to talk about personal issues that may impact their ability to do their jobs.

Mrs. White's perception was that her principal was all about relationships. She declared, "its' all about relationships. It's all about knowing your staff. They need to feel that the principal value what they feel and what they have to say". Relationship building can be a simple task as in the case at Mrs. Ford's school. She makes reference to one of her principals' styles of building relationships. "It is unusual to me how well he can remember our personal names and what's going on in our lives". In addition, Mrs. Ford voiced how well her principal relates to the students. "He has a personal relationship with the students. He is out and about in the school, shakes hands with them and talks to them so they can get to know him on a personal basis.

All respondents revealed some instance of relationship building with their principals and staff. Some pointed out how principals build relationships with the students. Furthermore, all participants agreed that they have good working relationships with their principal.

Utilizing Situational Awareness. This section describes assistant principals' perception of the degree of how aware their principals are of the details and undercurrents in the running of the school and how they use that information to address current and potential problems. Brave Elementary School is on the state's Needs Improvement list based on previous years test scores. Their special education population deficit scores resulted in the school's needs improvement status. The assistant principal, Mr. Hummer, gives an account of how his principals' situational awareness is helping the school to improve their special education test scores. He asserted that,

> Adequate Yearly Progress is my principal's primary objective, because we are a school in needs improvement. My principal came in, being his first year this year, realizing that our special education subgroup issues us a challenge. His background is a special education teacher and county-level special education coordinator. He brings to the table a solid emphasis on making that the students in special education get everything that their Individual Education Plans (IEP) requires them to get as well as making sure he get outstanding teachers teaching them in those subgroups.

One assistant principal reported that her principal curtails certain problems pertaining to assistant principal-teacher quarrels by supporting his administrator. "He trusts us to make good decisions. He does not change one of his assistant principal's decisions just because somebody comes to him. If we make bad decisions, he talks to us behind closed doors".

Examining data was another example of situational awareness that was mentioned. Dr. Nova explained how his principal helps teachers evaluate data. "She shows teachers how to discuss their common assessments to determine the learning patterns of the students". Mr. Yellow states that "my principal uses the students' achievement data to plan future goals and activities. We sit down at the beginning of the year and look at the data from previous years to determine our direction". Dr. Saturn described her principal's role as instructional leader. "She will lead professional learning. She sits down with the teachers to analyze test scores and to look at data". At Dodger High, Dr. Green revealed that "my principal has the teachers disaggregating data to see how our students are performing and what their weak areas are. Mrs. White, at Saint High, articulates that "we provide the teachers with data so that they can evaluate the weaknesses in the students in order to improve instruction and target their weak areas.

This section described how assistant principals perceived their principals' situational awareness as it relates to student achievement. These examples were primarily related to student

learning and achievement. A component of situational awareness as it relates to a safe and orderly environment will be discussed in the findings related to sub-question three.

Growing Leaders. In this study, assistant principals gave instances of their perception on leadership building in their perspective schools. Mr. Blue, of Eagle High, gave an account of how his principal grew leaders from within the school. He articulated that, "I see the principal as a coach of the team. He assigns position based on strengths. I also believe that my principal nurtures leaders by allowing them to expand their responsibilities". Dr. Green states that her principal "he gives opportunities for people to get into leadership positions and he does not micro-manage". Mr. Yellow states that his principal "designates teacher leaders based on their abilities and expertise". Mr. Hummer feels that with his principal, he is in a situation where he "is being groomed to become a principal". Mrs. Ford revealed that "my principal delegates. He gives the team leaders and department chairs the autonomy to do their work".

In summary, each of these cases revealed how principals in the XYZ School System influenced the overall personality of their schools. Growing leaders within county is the going trend of the school system. This is evident by the number of free professional development leadership courses offered to assistant principals by the county leaders. Most of the principals mimic what is done on the county level by delegating more critical roles to assistant principals as well as initiating teachers-as-leaders group in an effort to grow leaders.

Sub-question 3: How does the principal's leadership style correlate to a safe and orderly learning environment?

The purpose of this question was to seek leadership styles that contributed to a safe and orderly environment. Two themes emerged that answered sub-question number two. These two themes were safe and orderly schools, and visibility. Most schools in the XYZ school system place high value on curriculum matters and student achievement goals, yet, the administrators

realize that curriculum and student achievement goals won't be met if the climate is not conducive to learning. A safe and orderly school where administrators and teachers are highly visible in the classrooms, hallways, and throughout the buildings will influence student achievement. It may also play a role in community perception. Furthermore, several participants voiced a belief that a welcoming school environment for students and teachers enhances the schools' climate.

Maintaining a Safe and Orderly School. Classroom instruction and school climates throughout the school system are impacted by major and minor interruptions within the school day. These interruptions may present themselves in the form of violent and non-violent acts. In this study, the participants gave their accounts of non-violent interruptions and what was done by the principal to eliminate them. To keep the school orderly, Mr. Yellow, an assistant principal at Mustang Middle School, gave his account of what his principal implements,

> Well, one thing is that we don't have a bell schedule which is a good thing in a sense the bell is constantly ringing for students to go places or change classes. We want to make sure there are no disruptions of class. He wants them to have the right amount of time for classes. We don't do announcement during the day. They are done in the afternoon. This also prevents interruptions.

Adjusting the master schedule so that interruptions will be minimized, is a common tactic used by the principals in the school system. Mr. Hummer asserts that "we have a master schedule that has to be tweaked to the point where it's a pretty solid schedule. We don't interrupt classes unless the teachers buzz us". Dr. Green declared that her principal "is very big on hardly any interruptions. We value that time. He protects instructional before and after school".

The participants also revealed tactics that were used by their principal to keep the schools safe. Mr. Yellow asserts that "the principal supports his teacher in disciplinary matters. I mean he fully supports them. He takes students away from the classroom if they are a disruption". In the

secondary schools, an assistant principal is usually designated as a disciplinary principal whose primary duty is to assure that the school is safe and orderly. According to Dr. Green, “one of my principal’s primary objectives is to have a safe learning environment, because without that you won’t have any learning”. Mr. Hummer explained how his principal supervised parents that come to the school to visit their child “He specifies times that parents can come sit down in the back and observe. But we assure that they are not going to have any type of craziness!”

BeingVisible. Based on the transcribed interviews, assistant principals believed that being visible was a component of their principals’ leadership style. Principal visibility was achieved through teacher-observations, walking the halls, or by county mandated walk-throughs. Mrs. White gave an account on the visibility of her principal. In answering interview question number eight, what actions taken by your principal make her an instructional leader? , She replied,

> Being visible, visiting the classrooms and letting the teachers know that they are supported. You want to see them providing top-notch instruction and utilizing their time wisely. It’s important to see learning that’s going on in the classroom. Also, let the teachers know that you value that classroom and instructional time. You are checking what you expect.

Dr. Saturn stated that “my principal does a lot of walk-throughs and observations. When she is in the classroom, she is not only looking for busy work, she is looking to see if students are engaged in meaningful work”. Mrs. Ford affirmed that “we do regular classroom observations. We also do walk-through observations. Mr. Blue stated that “all of our administrators take rotations walking the halls. Students and teachers never know when we will show up”. This method of visibility is appropriate for student behavior as well as assuring that teachers are providing adequate instruction.

Summary

In summary, this section revealed principal leadership styles that the assistant principal respondents saw in their principals. Emphasizing safety and assuring that authority figures are visible were principal behaviors that aided in keeping the schools' climate focused on learning. These leadership styles are also utilized in the XYZ School System to maintain a safe and orderly overall environment.

In chapter four, the demographic profile of the participants revealed that all had an Educational Specialist or Educational Doctorate degree. Each of the participants had four or more years of administrative experience in K-12 education. Also, the demographic profile of the participants' school revealed a racially-balanced student population and the general school population ranged from 582 students in the smallest elementary building to 1964 students in the largest school. In addition, this chapter disclosed procedures for data analysis, discussion and findings that were attained from the participant's responses to the interview questions.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to identify those principal leadership styles that their assistant principals perceived as influential to school climate. This qualitative study solicited assistant principals to share their perceptions of their principals' leadership styles. The over-arching question for this study is: What principal leadership styles do assistant principals perceive as influential to school climate? Three sub-questions served as a guide throughout the process: (1) How does the principal's leadership contribute to the overall learning environment of the school, focusing on student achievement? (2) How does the principal's leadership contribute to the overall personality of the school? (3) What principal leadership styles correlate to a safe and orderly learning environment? For this study, principal leadership styles represent the behaviors and actions principals utilize to direct and influence their staff as well as their school's climate. This chapter will present a discussion, make recommendations and consider implications for the future. A brief summary of the study is also included.

National and state mandates for improved student achievement have influenced how principals lead their school. Principal leadership styles must reflect behaviors that positively impact school climate. Since school climate has been found to be positively related to student achievement (Tableman, 2004), the impact of principal leadership styles on school climate was considered. Additionally, Clabough (2006) found that a principals' leadership style has an impact on school climate and plays a critical role in student achievement and employee satisfaction. With this study, the researcher intention was to discover how principals' leadership styles impact school climate. This discovery was done by soliciting the perceptions of their assistant principals.

The participants in this study were elementary, middle, and high school assistant principals in a school district in the Southeastern section of the United States that thrives on student achievement. The XYZ School System (pseudonym) is located in the Atlanta Metropolitan Area. Purposive sampling was used to select eight assistant principals from three high, three middle, and two elementary schools within the XYZ School District.

This qualitative study was completed by conducting individual interviews with each participant at an agreed upon location. None of the interviews were in conflict with the participants' regular scheduled duties at their schools. A checklist of leadership behaviors that Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) found to be positively correlated to student achievement was used along with the transcribed interviews to develop themes. The checklist was also used when needed for probing questions. The interviews were conducted by using a structured approach. The researcher developed a list of fifteen interview questions. By utilizing the expertise assistance of a group of county-level administrators, ten questions were selected to be used for the interviews. All interviews were audio taped and transcribed by the researcher. The identity of all participants, principals, and schools were protected by the use of pseudonyms.

By organizing the findings onto a chart listing the research sub-questions next to the themes, the researcher was able to draw the following conclusions. In these conclusions, information was sorted by the participant's responses and the sub-questions. Additionally, relative literature was utilized to aid in connecting the findings for each sub-question in order to answer the over-arching question. The results of this thematic analysis revealed how principal leadership styles impact school climate from the perceptions of assistant principals who intimately worked on a daily basis with their principals. The summary will give the methods by which the researcher connected the findings of the study and literature review from chapter three.

Discussion

The findings in this study were identified in chapter four. In this chapter, the researcher connected the findings of the research with the review of literature presented in chapter three. The researcher found that there was a noticeable connection between the findings and the review of literature. From the findings of the study yielded nine dominant principal leadership styles identified by the participants that were used to answer the research question and sub-questions were: (1) involvement in curriculum and instruction (2) providing resources (3) monitoring and evaluating (4) communicating (5) building relationships (6) utilizing situational awareness (7) maintaining a safe and orderly environment (8) being visible and (9) growing leaders. The findings will be discussed in the following sections according to the sub-questions.

How does the principal's leadership contribute to the overall learning environment of the school, focusing on student achievement?

The NCLB Act Title II, Section 2113 (c) reads "the principal must have the instructional leadership skills necessary to help students meet challenging State student academic achievement standards". Principals in XYZ County Schools are perceived to have leadership styles that promote student achievement. It is the belief of the researcher that when the participants' principals actively participate in curriculum and instruction of their school, academic achievement will be elevated. Both female and male respondents overwhelmingly perceived that their principals were the instructional leader of their schools, not because they actually headed all aspects of curriculum and instruction, but they delegated and assisted others in the implementation of curriculum and instruction activities. According to Leithwood (2005), the principal may share the responsibility of instructional leadership with other educational leaders. Blasé and Blasé (2000) expressed instructional leadership is specific behaviors such as modeling effective instruction and soliciting opinions of others. Most importantly, principals who

demonstrate instructional leadership styles extract more commitment and satisfaction from teachers, as well as establish a climate that encourages trust, risk, and collaboration (Blasé and Blasé, 1999).

The participants believed that their principals were providers of resources. Providing resources is a leadership style that may be used to answer sub-question one. The summary of the research suggested that school climate and student achievement are heavily dependent on teachers having the resources that they need. This study provided evidence that leadership behaviors such as peer monitoring, conference training, professional development, and mentoring were critical when establishing a climate of achievement. For example, Mr. Blue, at Eagle High, stated that "my principal is adamant about providing instructional materials that may enhance our test scores". Dr. Saturn expressed how her principal "provided pamphlets for the faculty that explained ways to differentiate lessons. However, in a study conducted by Marzano et al. (2005), it was suggested that materials such as equipment and supplies would be "automatic". Marzano et al. listed resources, providing teachers with materials and professional development necessary for the successful execution of their jobs, as one of their leadership responsibilities. Some participants revealed that their principals provided materials and resources as incentives as a form of resources. This type of leadership style pertains to Bass's (1990) assertion "this type of transactional leader leads through specific incentives through exchange of one thing or another. Yukl (1998) declared that the underlying theory of this leadership method was that exchange rewards for employees' compliance.

A leadership style that includes monitoring and evaluating was also identified in this study. The participants gave varied accounts of the methods used by their principals to monitor and evaluate their staffs and how important they are to student achievement. Some of the examples given were walk-throughs, Georgia Teacher Observation Instrument (GTOI), and

general hallway monitoring. It is apparent that the participants believed that monitoring and evaluation were important leadership traits. Northouse (2007) affirmed that a leader must evaluate his/hers employees to assess how committed and competent they are to perform any given task. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) define this leadership style as "monitoring the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on students learning. In addition, Harden (1988) believed that instructional leaders need to know what is going on in the classroom and should make opportunities to walk the halls to see firsthand what is happening in the schools.

How does the principal's leadership contribute to the overall personality of the school?

Communication was an important principal leadership behavior that may be used to answer sub-question two. In their meta-analysis study, Marzano, Waters, and McNulty described communication as the ability to establish strong lines of communication with and among teachers. This study revealed how principal's formal and informal communication skills play a major role in the school setting by assuring that the assistant principals, teachers, as well as the students understand the school's vision and expectations. Principals' utilization of formal communication was affirmed by the participant's perception of how their leaders' communicated high expectations and how they solicited input on how to attain or maintain Adequtae Yearly Progress (AYP). This two-way communication is similar to Hersey and Blanchard's (1977) high relationship, low task leader behavior. High relationship, low task is called "participating" because with this style of the leader and the followers share in decision-making through two-way communication and much facilitating behavior from the leader. The principals seemed to recognize the ability and the knowledge of their assistant principals and teachers. Similarly, the principals exhibited "participative leadership" (House and Mitchell, 1974), where the leader consults with followers and takes their ideas into account when making decisions and taking particular actions.

This study also presented examples of informal principal communication such as, making jokes with teachers or custodians, discussing football with the coaches, participating in a jovial act at an assembly or coaching at a faculty-student basketball game. In most cases this type of informal communication was possible due the fact that the assistant principals perceived that their principals' were approachable and sociable. One subsection of the Organizational Climate Index (OCI) focuses on leadership attributes. The subsection, collegial leadership, is directed toward both meeting the social needs of the faculty and achieving the goals of the school. The principal treats teachers as professional colleagues, is open and friendly, but at the same time sets clear teacher expectations and standards of performance (Hoy et al., 2002).

Establishing relationships was an additional principal leadership style that correlates to sub-question two. All respondents revealed some instance of relationship building with their principals and staff. According to this study, principals maintaining a genuine open-door policy played an enormous role in relationship building. This open-door policy served as an informal invitation that led to professional and personal conversation. Fielders' Contingency Model (1964) helps to explain a leader's level of leader-member relations. He categorized leadership as relationship motivated where leaders are concerned with developing close interpersonal relationships. Sutton (2005) reported that this type of leadership style is considered to be transformational. He revealed that these leaders are approachable, friendly and informal. These relation building acts contribute to the development of trust between leader and follower.

Data input from assistant principals suggest that the relationships between the principals and their staffs were professional, cordial and collegial because they shared ideas, authority and power. According to Hartzell, Williams, and Nelson (1995), authority and power are relationship entities. Yet, the quality of the relationship between the principal and assistant principal depends on the actions of both parties. To have a strong relationship, the principal and assistant principal

need to have a pretty clear idea of each other's strengths and weaknesses. In the Leader-Member Exchange Theory, a dyadic relationship can be used to describe this type of relationship between principals and assistant principals. According to Northouse (2005), the premise of the dyadic relationship is that there are two components of relationships. One is based on expanded responsibilities and the other is based on defined roles. In this study, the assistant principals provided evidence of principal leadership styles that included a mixture of expanded roles such as coordinating PTA activities and defined roles such as coordinating all school assessments.

A principal leadership style known as situational awareness assists in the development of a school's personality. Situational awareness, coined by Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005) is an awareness of the details and the undercurrents in the running of the school and using this information to address current and potential problems. Deering, Dilts, and Russell (2003) describe this responsibility as anticipatory leadership. One of the most critical principal leadership styles perceived by the assistant principals related to situational awareness was recognizing the need to utilize data. In this study, the principals realized that the use of data was positively correlated to improved test scores, better teacher preparation, setting school improvement goals, and overall student achievement. When principals understood that the knowledge of certain data aids in identifying clues of coming instructional opportunities and hints about future threats, they made data collaboration a mandatory facet of professional development.

Principal leadership styles that include situational awareness, can contribute to the creation of the vision for a school. The participants in the study affirmed that their principals were responsible for setting the school's vision based on the organizations' future potential. The participants who worked at their present school for more than one year reported that their principal solicited their input in the creation of the school's vision. Sutton (2005) refers to this

type of principal as transformational. He reported that these leaders shape the organization through their own actions and by personally guiding the implementation of the shared vision. They do this through leading strategic planning efforts, team building, motivating, and setting high expectations for excellence with continued quality improvement (2005). Kouze and Posner (2002) revealed a practice of exemplary leadership that creates visions that help guide future behavior of teachers and students.

Principals in XYZ School System were surprisingly aware of trivial details of their schools that could have possibly led to problems. One assistant principal reported that her principal curtails potential problems pertaining to teachers challenging the authority of assistant principals. In anticipation of this potential problem, the principal communicated to the teachers that he supports the decisions of the assistant principals. If the assistant principals make bad decisions, the principal will meet privately with that assistant principal. This type of awareness aids in reducing personal tensions and conflicts, therefore enhancing school climate. According to Hoyle, English, and Heffy (1985), school climate may be one of the most important ingredients of a successful instructional program. Without a climate that creates a harmonious and well-functioning school, a high degree of academic achievement is difficult to obtain. Therefore, it is important that principals are capable of anticipating potential problems related to the school's climate.

Growing leaders was another principal leadership style identified by the participants which corresponds to sub-question two. There was a consensus with participant's responses regarding the principal's leadership styles as they relate to growing leaders. Based on their responses, principals groomed leaders by giving leadership roles, mentoring, and delegating. Many assistant principals, as well as teachers, took advantage of this opportunity for leadership growth. This type of leadership style is linked to several research studies. According to

Blanchard's (1985) Situational Leadership Model consist of the behavior pattern of a person who attempts to influence others. Blanchard's behavior pattern labeled as low- relationship/ low-task leader is similar to the principals in this study. According to Blanchard, this behavior is labeled "delegating" because the style involves letting followers run their own show. The leader delegates since the followers since the followers are high in readiness, have the ability, and are both willing and able to take responsibility for directing their own behavior. Bass and Avolio (1994) believed that followers should be included in the process of addressing problems and finding creative solutions. Under this type of leadership, assistant principals and teachers assume greater leadership roles and expanded authority, engage more on collegial relationships to share information and advice more frequently.

Although the principal is considered to be the instructional leader, it is necessary that others are groomed to assist in leading instruction. Leithwood (2005) suggested that the principal may share the responsibility of instructional leadership with other educational leaders through provisions of resources and guidance for teachers, communicating the vision and expectations, creating a positive organizational culture and professional learning communities, and exhibiting a visible presence in the school. In this study, assistant perceived that principals that effective instructional leadership requires the utilization of others abilities and expertise in the building. They also recognized that their assistant principals and several of their teachers have similar leadership training and education that may be used to enhance the schools' climate.

In XYZ School District, the principals made a special effort to groom assistant principals. This study presented several examples of how principals groomed their assistants. Assistant principals were entrusted to observe teachers, faculty meetings, supervise learning communities, and to attend leadership training in the district as well as outside of the district. Most of the principals delegated leadership roles without reservation since the assistant principals are a part

of the principal's authority base, they have had the advantages of having a clear understanding of decision-making procedures. In addition, Marshall and Hooley (2006) affirmed that the assistant principals are privy, due their intimate relationship with the principal, to particular demands of principal leadership. Furthermore, according to Cooley and Shen (2003), an average work week for principals is upwards of 62 hours. It behooves a principal to surround him/herself with quality people who are prepared to take on immediate leadership roles.

What principal leadership styles correlate to a safe and orderly learning environment?

This study provided evidence that the principal plays an important leadership role in establishing school discipline, both by effective administration and by personal example. Principals of well-disciplined students are usually highly visible role-models. They engage in walking about greeting students and teachers and informally monitoring possible problem areas. Effective principals are liked and respected, rather than feared, and communicate caring for students as well as willingness to impose punishment if necessary (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1983). According to Tableman (2004), some educational research place safety foremost, defining school climate as an orderly environment in which the school family feels valued and able to pursue the school's mission free from concerns about disruptions and safety.

A principal leadership behavior that involved maintaining a safe and orderly school environment corresponded well with sub-question three. According to the participants, a safe and orderly school is a major focus for their principals. Evidence in the study revealed that some principals in the county are forced to spend more time and effort on safety order than others. For instance, secondary principals had more frequent episodes of violence, weapons, and fights than the elementary principals. This may be a possible explanation why secondary school principals delegate specific discipline duties to their assistant principals. Designating an assistant principal

for discipline is the accepted practice for the system. The principals very seldom get involved in disciplinary unless the behavior situation escalated. At that time the principals made the decision to accept, modify or reject dispositions given by the assistant principals. In most cases, the principals fully support the dispositions given by the assistant principals. On the other hand, the elementary principals are more involved in discipline. This is due partly to fewer assistant principals assigned to elementary schools.

XYZ Principals used various means to assure that their schools would be safe and orderly. As previously mentioned, principals designate an assistant principal for disciplinary matters. Secondly, principals participate in walk-throughs. These walk-throughs assist teachers with discipline, assure students that administrators are near, keep teachers and students focused, and aids in assuring bell-to-bell instruction. Also, principals assigned mandated before and after school stations for all faculty members. In addition to the county-wide student discipline manual, principals use administrative discretion to increase or decrease disposition. In order to utilize this discretion fairly, the principals make every effort to be consistent.

Within each of the schools represented in this study, the principal's leadership played an important role in assuring safety and order. This was done by communicating expectations, participating in walk-throughs, monitoring hallways, assigning duty-stations, and delegating disciplinary duties. Additionally, the participants in this study gave accounts of how their principals supported the disciplinary decisions of the assistant principals and the teachers in order to assure that the school climate was a safe and orderly environment. Finally, all principals related to this study took actions to assure that the schools were orderly by limiting classroom interruptions, assuring that the master schedule reflects optimal instructional time, and that the bell schedule is conducive to instruction.

Visibility was the final principal leadership style that materialized from this study. The participants believed that the mere presence of the principal influenced the safety and order of

the schools. Visibility exhibited by the system's principals included quality contact and interactions with teachers and students, hallway presence, and monitoring extra-curricular activities. A principal's visibility assures students that there is someone in charge, someone to whom they can go to if they are experiencing difficulty, someone they can trust. Being less than highly visible erodes a school's climate and may have students wondering if the school really has a principal (Ruder, 2006).

Visibility has a value to educational leaders similar to walk-throughs. When principals are visible in the classrooms their presence encourages proper student behavior as well as well assure that teachers are performing at an acceptable level. Students are less likely to be involved in any type of altercation when the principal is visible in the hallway, cafeteria, or at an extra-curricular activity. When teachers or students are conducting scientific experiments, oral presentations, or a social studies project, they enjoy the presence of a principal or assistant principal. They want and expect teacher, as well as the principal, to take notice of their accomplishments.

Conclusions

The leadership styles that principals adopt play a critical role in the achievement of the numberless mandates passed down by the national, state, and county entities. More importantly, principal leadership styles are influential to the overall climate of their schools. Based on the findings of this study, the leadership styles and behaviors identified by the assistant principals regarding their principals, did in fact answer the over-arching research question, "What principal leadership styles do assistant principals perceive as influential to school climate?" The findings in this study revealed that the principals' leadership styles identified by their assistant principals greatly influenced school climate. These leadership styles impacted curriculum implementation, the creation of a safe and orderly school, relationship building, improving student achievement, and the grooming of future leaders.

Various principal behaviors such as taking the lead in implementing the curriculum and taking on the responsibility as instructional leader were to the overall climate of the schools. Most principals in this study exhibited instructional leadership behaviors by having knowledge of the curriculum and assessment practices and by being directly involved in the implementation of the curriculum. On the other hand, some of the principals utilized the expertise of their assistant principals to assure that instructional leadership was in place. Even though instructional leadership activities were sometimes delegated to assistant principals, the principals took the lead in directing these activities.

The participants believed that school climate and student achievement were dependent on the staff having the resources they need. Each principal was perceived as a provider of resources such as providing quality personnel, teaching materials, general school materials, rewards/ incentives, teacher mentorship, and professional development. Although the preceding resources are delineated as resources for teachers, the assistant principals believed that they too reaped the benefits of resources provided by the principal.

The varied accounts of monitoring and evaluation included county-mandated, five minute walk-throughs, Georgia Teacher Observation Instrument (GTOI), evaluation of assistant principals, and evaluating disaggregated data to assure that all students are taught. Each of these monitoring and evaluating leadership practices were perceived as critical to establishing a climate that is conducive to learning, assuring that data is utilized as a road map for reaching all students, and establishing the competence of the staff all staff members.

Principal exhibited leadership styles such as communicating, relationship building, being aware of school situations, and growing leaders. The first style, communication, heavily contributed to the personality of the schools. Both formal and informal principal communication eased tensions throughout the buildings because staff members understood that the principal was

approachable. Approachability encouraged all staff members to establish a type of rapport with the principal in order to understand his/hers expectations. The principals' ability and willingness to establish formal communication aided the staff in understanding the importance of their roles in student achievement and improving instruction. Informal communication exhibited by the principals helped the faculty and staff understands that it was alright to smile and make jokes. The staff recognized the leadership aspects of the principals, however, through informal conversations, they were able to see the principals as persons.

The principals, as a result of their open door policy and their approachability, were perceived as builders of interpersonal relationships. This leadership style correlates to relationship building behaviors similar to those of transformational leadership. Specifically, the relationships between principals and assistant principals were professional, cordial, and collegial to a point where ideas, power, and authority were shared. The principals recognized and acknowledged the expertise and skills of their assistant principals. This acknowledgement lead to the establishment of a dual relationship which encompasses expanded responsibilities as well as defined roles.

Situational awareness, the principals' ability to understand the details in running the school and applying that understanding to resolving present and future problems, contributed to the personality of the schools in XYZ based on the findings. One example of this type of principal leadership style reported by the assistant principals was utilizing data to improve test scores, teacher instruction, and overall student achievement. Another example was the way principals set the school vision based on the school's future potential. Finally, principals anticipated potential problems with teachers acknowledging the authority of assistant principals. The principals communicated to the staff that they will support the decisions of the assistant principals along with supporting the decisions that teachers make in their classrooms.

The personalities of the schools in XYZ were enhanced by principal leadership behaviors such as delegating duties to assistant principals and teachers based on their expertise and abilities. Under this type of leadership style, assistant principals and teachers assumed greater leadership roles and expanded authority which provides experience as well as confidence that is necessary for future leadership positions. Several examples were list in the findings that revealed how the principals made a special effort to surround themselves with potential leaderships. In addition, principals were able to recommend their assistant principals to participate in the Rising Stars program that helps to prepare assistant principals for future principal openings within the school system.

Maintaining safety and order was more of a priority in the secondary schools compared to the elementary schools. All secondary principals designated one or more of their assistance to handle the bulk of disciplinary matters, yet, all administrators exhibited leadership behaviors that pertains to keeping the students and the school safe. In instances where a student's discipline was escalated, then the principal made the final disposition. Elementary principals were more active in student discipline because they had fewer assistant principals. However, both elementary and secondary principals exercised a proactive leadership style by stressing school expectations and by utilizing a discipline plan.

Being visible was perceived to be a critical component of principal leadership that assured the school environment would be safe and orderly. The mere presence of the principals made an impact on perception of the school as safe and orderly. Assistant principals believed that when principals (administrative team) were visible in the hallways, the students appeared to be secure. Also, the assistant principals believed that the utilization of administrative walk-throughs partially aided in school safety. Although sub-question three focused on a safe and orderly school environment, the principals' visibility was extended to the locations of extra-curricular activities.

The participating assistant principals in XYZ School System identified various principal leadership styles that they perceived to be influential to school climate. The leaderships activities identified in this research were important to building a school climate conducive to student achievement. This study supports other studies that suggest that these activities contributed to the overall learning environment, focusing on student achievement. They contributed to the overall personality of the school, and they were positively correlated to a safe and orderly learning environment. The researcher concluded that the following principal leadership styles were influential on school climate and student achievement:

1. Taking on the role of instructional leader by : (a) leading curriculum implementation and assessment, (b) utilizing the curriculum expertise of the assistant principals, as well as teachers, (c) providing the resources necessary to improve student achievement, and (d) monitoring and evaluating the staff to assure that the vision and the goals of the school are being met. Most importantly, monitoring and evaluating should be done to assure that the overall school climate is conducive to learning.
2. Enhancing the personality of the school by: (a) establishing formal and informal communication with the staff to assure that the school's vision is clear and allow the staff to know you as a person, (b) building relationships with the faculty, staff, and students in order create a family atmosphere, (c) understanding the details and the undercurrents of the school and using that understanding to resolve present and future problems, and (d) building and grooming leadership amongst the assistant principals and the teachers in the school to encourage buy-in through shared leadership and shared decision-making.
3. Maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment by: (a) being confident in designating the appropriate personnel to attend to student discipline while supporting

their decisions, (b) being proactive to possible events that can disrupt the learning environment by minimizing classroom disruptions and maximizing class time, and (c) being visible throughout the school as a show of support to teachers and students and supporting extra-curricular activities with your presence.

Implications

Becoming familiar with principal leadership styles that influence school climate is important to those assistant principals and teachers who aspire to become principals. Moreover, it is valuable when these principal leadership styles are identified from the perception of assistant principals. Assistant principals work hand in hand with principals on a daily basis, they perform similar duties, they have an educational background similar to the principal, and they are privy to the undercurrents dealing with the running of the school.

Principal leadership styles indentified by assistant principals are credible. Assistant principals perceive that the leadership styles presented in this study impact school climate and student achievement. However, principals utilize many leadership styles not mentioned in this study. Other principal leadership styles can be influenced by other variables such as the location of the school, the staff that he or she inherits, the climate of the school, and the current academic standings of the school. The leadership styles indentified in this study can serve as base-line data to inform future principals about behaviors that may be useful in developing basic foundations for leading their schools.

Even though this study was designed to focus on the leadership behaviors of the principals, it also inadvertently revealed leadership behaviors of the assistant principals as well. During the process of interviewing the assistant principals, at some point, each of the participants referred to the word “we” to describe most of the leadership activities of their principal. These references led the researcher to believe that the principals’ leadership styles are influential to the assistant principals and may possibly become a part of their leadership behaviors.

Finally, the findings from this study will be beneficial to the XYZ School System because it could serve as a professional learning tool to familiarize aspiring principals with leadership styles that currently exist in the system. The findings may also provide a valuable insight for principals to help shape their future actions as principals. Principals will be able to adjust their leadership styles based on the successes of other principals within the school system. Most importantly, the findings can serve as a leadership reference that may enable principals, whose schools are experiencing a decline in test scores, to make the necessary adjustments for school improvement.

Recommendations for Further Study

The purpose of this study was to identify principal leadership styles, from the perception of their assistant principals, which influences school climate. The researcher makes the following recommendations for future studies based on information that emerged from the findings.

1. Conduct a study comparing the influence of male and female principal leadership styles on school climate and student achievement. This recommendation was influenced by the assertion of Johnson, Busch, and Slate (2008) that male leadership is more directive and authoritative, while females practiced leadership through suggestion accompanied by a strong democratic style.
2. Conduct a comparative study to compare the differences and similarities of the leadership styles of elementary and secondary principals and why those differences and similarities exist. Generally, elementary schools have fewer assistant principals. This may impact the leadership styles of elementary principals.
3. Conduct a study that solicits how teachers perceive the leadership styles of their assistant principals. Teachers' perceptions of their assistant principal's leadership styles may aid in the training of aspiring administrators.

Concluding Thoughts

National, state, and county mandates stress the importance of improved student achievement in America's schools. If the climate of a school is an indicator of how well students perform and if the manner in which a principal leads greatly influences the climate of the school, a study which identifies principal leadership styles that influences school climate can be a source of improving student achievement. Most importantly, identifying those principal leadership styles from the perception of their assistant principals is credible. Assistant principals have similar educational backgrounds as principals, they work hand in hand with principals on a daily basis, and they are privy to the undercurrents of the schools. If a principal, through school climate, affects student achievement even indirectly, it is important that the identification of those leadership styles that positively influence a school climate be acknowledged.

This study impacts the researcher, an assistant principal in the XYZ School System, by providing leadership styles that can be utilized when a principal's position is attained. The leadership styles that were revealed from this study may also be used to enhance the researcher's leadership behaviors in the current position as an assistant principal. Finally, the results from this study aid the researcher in mentoring teachers who aspire to become administrators.

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Appendix A
Institutional Review Board Approval

Georgia Southern University
Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Phone: 912-478-0843 | Veazey Hall 2021
P.O. Box 8005
Fax: 912-478-0719 | IRB@GeorgiaSouthern.edu | Statesboro, GA 30460

To: Bruce R. McColumn, Sr.
4863 Rock Springs Rd
Lithonia, GA 30038

CC: Charles E. Patterson
Associate Vice President for Research

From: Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs
Administrative Support Office for Research Oversight Committees
(IACUC/IBC/IRB)

Date: March 1, 2010

Subject: Status of Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects in Research

After a review of your proposed research project numbered **H10232** and titled "**Principals' Leadership Styles and Its Impact on School Climate: Assistant Principals' Perceptions**", it appears that (1) the research subjects are at minimal risk, (2) appropriate safeguards are planned, and (3) the research activities involve only procedures which are allowable. You are authorized to enroll up to **10** subjects.

Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that the Institutional Review Board has approved your proposed research.

This IRB approval is in effect for one year from the date of this letter. If at the end of that time, there have been no changes to the research protocol; you may request an extension of the approval period for an additional year. In the interim, please provide the IRB with any information concerning any significant adverse event, **whether or not it is believed to be related to the study**, within five working days of the event. In addition, if a change or modification of the approved methodology becomes necessary, you must notify the IRB Coordinator **prior** to initiating any such changes or modifications. At that time, an amended application for IRB approval may be submitted. Upon completion of your data collection, you are required to complete a *Research Study Termination* form to notify the IRB Coordinator, so your file may be closed.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Haynes
Compliance Officer

Appendix B
Informed Consent

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF LEADERSHIP, TECHNOLOGY & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPANTS

Mr. Bruce R. McColumn Sr., Doctoral Candidate at Georgia Southern University, is conducting this study entitled *"Principals' Leadership Styles and Their Impact on School Climate: Assistant Principals' Perception".* I would greatly appreciate your participation in this research as your input will valuable as I seek to identify principal leadership styles that may improve school climate.

Participation in this research will include completion of an interview that will last approximately 45 to 60 minutes at a time and location that is convenient to you. All interviews will be recorded and transcribed verbatim. There are minimal discomforts and risks involved in this study and every effort to all me made to make each participant as comfortable as possible.

Potential benefits for participation in this study are as follows. This study will provide each participant an opportunity to give an accurate, information-rich accounting of their perception of how principals' leadership styles impact school climate. This valuable insight is critical for increasing the general knowledge base of present and aspiring educational leaders. The benefits to society are that your input is essential in identifying those leadership styles that accurately improve school climate and gaining an understanding school leadership for the 21st Century.

The duration of this study is approximately 31/2 months. Data collection will begin in February 2010 and will be completed by May 2010. The information gathered will be kept strictly confidential. The name of each participant, school, principal, and school district will be assigned a pseudonym on the transcriptions and the research report. Only the researcher and the participants will have access to the data. The audio tapes and transcriptions will be destroyed at the completion of the study and before publication. You have the right to ask questions and have those questions answered. If you have any questions regarding the study, please feel free to contact the researcher. For questions regarding your rights as a participant, contact Georgia Southern University Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at 912-478-0843.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may end participation at any time without penalty or retribution. During the interview, you also have the right not to answer any question you do not wish to. You must be 18 years or older to consent to participate in this research study. If you consent to participate in this study and to the terms above, please sign your name and indicate the date below.

You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep for your records.

Title of Project: *Principals' Leadership Styles and Their Impact on School Climate: Assistant Principals' Perception*

Principal Investigator: Bruce R. McColumn Sr.
4863 Rock Springs Rd.
Lithonia, Georgia 30038
brmykm@bellsouth.net

_____ _____

Investigator Signature (above) Date

I, the undersigned, verify that the above informed consent procedure has been followed.

Participant Signature (below) Date

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Appendix C
Interview Protocol

Participant: _____

Place: _____

Date: _____ Time of Interview _____

Introductory Comments: I would like to thank you for taking the time to participate in this study. The purpose of this interview is to identify principal leadership styles that impact school climate. The interview will last approximately 60 minutes and will be taped for accuracy. Your participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time. Your responses will remain confidential as well as your identity, school, principal, and school district. Please elaborate on specific details during the course of the interview. Please be candid, honest and accurate in your responses. Are there any questions?

Interview Questions:

Ql: How does the principal promote student achievement?

Q2: What are the principal's primary objectives? What does he/she place most emphasis on?

Q3: How formal/informal is the principal?

Q4: How does the principal delegate? What tasks does the principal delegate?

Q5: What strategies are used by the principal to assist teachers who are not performing at an acceptable level?

Q6: In what ways do the principal show concern for the faculty and staff?

Q7: How does the principal assure that instructional time is maximized for student learning?

Q8: What actions taken by the principal makes him/her an instructional leader?

Q9: How does the principal build leaders throughout the building?

QI 0: How does the principal motivate the staff?

Appendix D

Interview Questions and Related Literature Matrix

Research Question	Interview Question	Related Literature
3	How does the principal promote student achievement?	Marzano et al., 2005 Freiberg, 1998 Tarter & Bliss, 1994
3	What are the principal's primary objectives? What does he/she place real emphasis?	Williams, 2007 Stogdill, 1963 Leithwood, 2005 Path Goal Theory Situational Leadership
2	How formal/informal is the principal?	Grubbs et al., 2002 Williams, 20006 Lord et al., 1991 Yukl,1998 Hoy and Miskell, 2000
1	How does the principal delegate? What tasks does the principal delegate?	Bass and Avolio, 1994 Hersey and Blanchard, 1969 Transformational Leadership
1	What strategies are used by the principal to assist teachers who are not performing at an acceptable level?	Burns, 1978 Bass & Avolio , 1994 Gonder, 1994 Cooley & Shen, 2003 Foster, 2002
2	In what ways do the principal show concern for the faculty and staff?	Greenleaf, 1970 Boothe et al., Grubbs et al., 2002 Marshall & Hooley, 2006 Burns, 1978 Yukl, 1998
1	How does the principal assure that instructional time is maximized for student learning?	Sergiovanni, 1991 Danzig & Wright, 2002 Marzano et al., 2005 Flath, 1989 Blasé & Blasé, 1 1999
1	What makes the principal an instructional leader?	Whitaker, 1977 Danzig & Wright, 2002 Sergiovanni, 1991 Leithwood et al., 2004 Marzano, 2005 Flath, 1989

1,2	How does the principal build leaders throughout the building?	Leithwood et al., 2004 Greenleaf, 1970 Northouse, 2007 Bass & Avoiio, 1994 Transformational Leadership
1	How does the principal motivate the faculty and staff?	Gonder, 1994 Hoy & Miskell, 2000 House, 1971 Trait Theory Transformational Leadership

Appendix E

Research Questions, Interview Questions, and Codes Correlation

Sub-questions	Interview Questions	Codes
Sub-question # 1 How does the principal's leadership contribute to the overall environment, focusing on student achievement?	How does the principal promote student achievement? How does the principal assure that instructional time is maximized fro student learning? What makes the principal an instructional leader? How does the principal motivate the staff?	Involvement in Curriculum & Instruction Providing Resources Monitoring and Evaluating
Sub-question # 2 How does the principal's leadership contribute to the enhancement of the overall personality of the school?	What are the principal's primary objectives? What does he/she place real emphasis? How formal/informal is your principal? How does the principal delegate? What does the principal delegate? In what ways does the principal show concern?	Communication Relationships Situational Awareness Growing Leaders
Sub-question #3 What principal leadership styles correlate to a safe learning environment?	How does the principal assure that instructional time is maximized for student learning? What are the principal's primary objectives? What does he/she place real emphasis? How does the principal motivate the staff?	Maintaining a safe and orderly environment Visibility

Appendix F

LETTER OF PARTICIPATION

Dear Assistant Principal:
I am a doctoral student at Georgia Southern University. I will be conducting a dissertation study in the XYZ County School System for partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Educational Leadership at Georgia Southern University. The purpose of the study will be to understand assistant principals' perception of how their principals' leadership style influences school climate.

The purpose of this letter is to request your help in gathering data for this study. This will be a qualitative study in which assistant principal interviews will be used as the means to collect data. There is no penalty should you decide not to participate in the study. However, your participation in this study would provide valuable information on how principal leadership styles impact school climate. Your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

If you agree to participate, you will assist the researcher by agreeing to a 45-60 minute interview. Participation in all aspects of the study will be voluntary. Pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity and the identity of the school district and school. All information collected will be kept secure and confidential.

I would like to begin this process in February, 2010. If you have questions regarding this research project, please contact me or my faculty advisor, Dr. Brenda Marina. The contact information is located at the end of the informed consent. For questions concerning your rights as a research participant, contact Georgia Southern University Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at 912-681-0843.

If you are willing to participant, please sign and return this consent form to me. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,
Bruce McColumn Sr., Ed.D Candidate
Georgia Southern University
You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep for your records.