Doctoral Dissertations   Graduate School

Fall 2011

The perceptions of teachers and principals in regard to teacher leadership and school improvement

Carolyn Sue Hartwell Barfield
Louisiana Tech University

THE PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

IN REGARD TO TEACHER LEADERSHIP

AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

by

Carolyn Sue Hartwell Barfield, B.S., M.A.

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY

November 2011

UMI Number: 3492482

UMI®

Dissertation Publishing

ProQuest®

LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

We hereby recommend that the dissertation prepared under our supervision

by__Carolyn Sue Hartwell Barfield_____

entitled_____

The Perceptions of Teachers and Principals in Regard to Teacher

Leadership and School Improvement

_____

_____

be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

_____
Supervisor of Dissertation Research

_____
Head of Department

College of Education
_____
Department

Recommendation concurred in:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Advisory Committee

Approved:

_____
Director of Graduate Studies

_____
Dean of the College

Approved:

_____
Dean of the Graduate School

ABSTRACT

While the importance of effective leadership is undisputed, few studies have

addressed what the role teachers have in effective leadership that promotes school

improvement. This study draws on data analyzing survey responses from principals and

teachers to better understand the perceptions of teachers and principals in regard to

teacher leadership and to further examine perceptions of the role teacher leadership plays

in school improvement. Also considered were needs, rewards, and barriers to effective

teacher leadership, as well as the overall interest teachers have in becoming teacher

leaders. The *Teacher Leadership Roles* survey was developed by the researcher and

administered to public school principals (n=72) and teachers (n=144) from the state of

Louisiana. Data for this study were analyzed using single-sample *t*-tests, independent-

samples *t*-tests, paired-samples *t*-tests, and test for significance of difference between two

proportions. According to the data collected in this study, perceptions of principals rated

higher than those of the teachers regarding the frequency of enactment of teacher

leadership roles. Furthermore, the data indicated that principals place more emphasis on

teacher leadership and the role of teacher leadership in school improvement than do

teachers themselves. The findings of this study raise concern that principals and teachers

embrace different notions and assumptions of teacher leadership. Review of current

literature clearly articulates the necessity of principals and teachers working

collaboratively to enhance leadership positions and to institute new leadership roles for

the sake of school improvement and student success.

APPROVAL FOR SCHOLARLY DISSEMINATION

The author grants to the Prescott Memorial Library of Louisiana Tech University the right to reproduce, by appropriate methods, upon request, any or all portions of this Dissertation. It is understood that "proper request" consists of the agreement, on the part of the requesting party, that said reproduction is for his personal use and that subsequent reproduction will not occur without written approval of the author of this Dissertation. Further, any portions of the Dissertation used in books, papers, and other works must be appropriately referenced to this Dissertation.

Finally, the author of this Dissertation reserves the right to publish freely, in the literature, at any time, any or all portions of this Dissertation.

Author _Carolyn Sue Hartwell Barfield_

Date _November 2011_

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved husband, Russell, my dear son Garrett, and precious daughter Caroline. Without your unconditional love and encouragement, this endeavor would not have been possible.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This arduous journey would not have been possible without the longsuffering and encouragement of my dear family. To Russell, my cherished husband, I owe my deepest gratitude for all the love, understanding, and selfless patience you have provided. You will never know the depths of my appreciation for all of your generous sacrifices you offered me these last four years. To my son, Garrett, thank you for all your consideration when I had to miss one of your sporting events for class or research. I am resolute that my perseverance and diligence has inspired you that anything is possible. To my daughter, Caroline, thank you for being enduring with me all those weekends you wanted to play, but I had to work. I also could not have made it without all of your cheerleading and encouragement in the end! Yes, sweetie, I am finished! I am truly blessed and thankful to have each of you! Without you, this effort would have been worthless.

To my loving parents, Alan and Carol Hartwell, thank you both for supporting and believing in me all these years. I am so thankful for your sacrifices to make college a reality for me years ago. To my father and mother in-law, Bart and Sallie Barfield, thank you so much for all of your assistance. I am so grateful my children had their grandparents to help supervise, drive them to events, offer meals, and for the many other loving gestures that were provided. To my cherished Grandmother, Maxine Stoelting, thank you for all of your concern and calls to check on my progress. I love you and happy ninetieth birthday!

To Dr. Lawrence Leonard, the first professor to encourage me to pursue this doctorate, I gratefully acknowledge. I am so indebted for your inspiration and assurance in my ability to complete this journey. I also would like to extend my gratitude to you for your countless suggestions, thoughtful criticism, and time and attention you willingly gave in my development as a scholar.

To my major professor, Dr. Kimberly Kimbell-Lopez, thank you so much for your willingness to guide me through this process. Words seem inadequate for the appreciation I have for the many hours you spent reading revisions and offering your assistance. Thank you for always being available for me. It was such a pleasure and honor to work with you.

To Dr. Jerry Tobacyk, my methodologist, I cannot thank you enough for all of your assistance in making the obscure and ambiguous statistics seem so clear. I learned so much about meaningful interpretation of data and application to research.

To my committee members, Dr. Andolyn Harrision, Dr. Beverly Flowers-Gibson, and Dr. Carrice Cummins, thank you so much for your willingness to read and make thoughtful suggestions. You have all been so wonderful and supportive and I truly appreciate each one of you.

To all the knowledgeable LEC professors at Louisiana Tech University, Grambling State University, and University of Louisiana of Monroe, I extend my gratitude for the rigorous, yet meaningful instruction and the guidance you each provided me through this program.

To my invaluable friends, I am so appreciative for each of you:

Jenny Blalock, my collaborator and chief motivator, thank you for all the supportive talks, allowing me to commiserate, and always reminding me of the end in sight. I am so thankful we were able to share this laborious endeavor and navigate the finale together.

Kelli Worthey, for all your enthusiasm, the numerous trips delivering binders, sundry cards of encouragement, and ALL the other assistance you provided. I thank you so much for being a dear and wonderful confidant!

Beth Craig, for being the sound of reason and offering so much assistance with my "real" day job. Thank you so much and I am looking forward to our girl talks again!

And finally, to Michelle Jimmerson, my editor-in-chief and comrade, many thanks for reading ALL five chapters and offering suggestions. What a true friend!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* was signed into law on January 8, 2002 by

President George W. Bush. This Act was an amendment to the original *Elementary and*

Secondary Education Act of 1965 (1965). The landmark *No Child Left Behind Act*

(NCLB) was primarily intended to provide a framework by which American public

school systems could more precisely define student competency and school effectiveness.

However, because of the mandates of *NCLB*, deliberations of school reform have been

dominated by performance-based accountability. School principals, teachers, and

learners have been required to demonstrate increased academic performance each year or

undergo sanctions connected to federal funding (DeVita, 2009). In addition, *NCLB*

legislation has had serious implications for classroom teachers' qualifications and ability

to improve teaching and learning. DeVita (2009) stated that "a decade ago, teachers were

in the spotlight—and rightly so, given that effective teaching influences student

achievement more than any other aspect of schooling" (p.6). Reform movements in the

last two decades have largely overlooked the role of school leaders in improving the

quality of education and developing high-performing schools (Darling-Hammond,

LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007). With all its good intentions, *No Child Left*

Behind failed to recognize the important role of the school principal in school

improvement.

1

On the other hand, according to the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act Reauthorization: A Blueprint for Reform* (2010), school leadership is finally being considered in school accountability. Federal officials have accepted that school improvement cannot succeed without effective leadership in the schools. State leaders, too, now see the importance of leadership in schools. The U.S. Department of Education has placed improved leadership among its top priorities as evidenced by the requirements for states seeking funding from the Race to The Top program (DeVita, 2009). In the application for funding, states had to demonstrate the development, reward, retention, and equitable distribution of effective principals (U. S. Department of Education, 2010). In the blueprint's research summary, "Great Teachers and Great Leaders," there is a focus on elevating the profession by rewarding effective teachers and leaders with an emphasis on teacher and leader effectiveness in improving student outcomes (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). The summary further details that effective principals are the key to improving teaching and schools. Second only to classroom instruction, school leadership is the most important school-based variable affecting student achievement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). DeVita remarked, "The current administration's push to improve school leadership is an acknowledgement that better leadership is closely tied to better instruction, and that the federal government has neglected this area of school reform in the past" (p. 6). At The Wallace Foundation's National Conference in Washington D.C., the U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, told the audience in his keynote address, "We have dramatically under-invested in principal leadership, from a budget of tens of billions of dollars, we've put relative peanuts into principal leadership" (2009, p. 22).

Furthermore, DeVita stressed:

> The bottom line is that investments in good principals are a particularly cost-effective way to improve teaching and learning. A clear road map for the actions that states, districts, and policy makers can take to spread these more effective practices. (p. 8)

Our nation's children in underperforming schools are unlikely to succeed until there is a serious look at leadership (Darling-Hammond et al.). DeVita (2007) emphasized that it is the principal who is in the position to ensure that ineffective practices are not permitted and that proper teaching and learning occurs beyond single classrooms. School leadership has been identified as a key factor in schools that outperform others with similar students (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). In addition, researchers found that achievement levels were higher in schools where principals undertook and led the school reform process (Darling-Hammond et al.).

However, it is not enough just to insert the term *school leadership* into the dialogue. A clear understanding of what constitutes school leadership, and how to foster and develop effective school leaders, must be plainly understood (DeVita, 2009; Ferrandino, 2001; Leithwood et al., 2004; Tirozzi, 2001). Furthermore, numerous research studies have been conducted to determine characteristics of an effective school leader and actions that can strengthen school leadership.

The principals of the twenty-first century must be instructional leaders who possess the essential skills, capacities, and commitment to lead the accountability parade, not follow it (Tirozzi, 2001). Without leadership, student achievement and improved teaching practices are unlikely. Research suggests that principals must develop team-

oriented cultures by involving all members of their staff working together to reach common goals (Lambert, 2003b; Leithwood et al., 2004). As instructional leaders, principals must establish a strong, achievement-oriented school culture and clear expectations for student achievement (Lambert, 2003b).

The term *instructional leader* has been used to denote the desired model for educational leaders, such as principals, for decades (Leithwood et al., 2004). However, the term is frequently more a catchphrase than a distinct set of management practices. Instructional leaders by definition follow well-developed models of leadership practices and provide evidence of the influence of these practices on both organizations and students (Leithwood et al., 2004). *Distributed leadership* is another term that has commonsense meaning and connotation and administrators agree that contributions from others in the organization are necessary. However, it is more commonly used to refer to division of management responsibilities, rather than a model of practical applications of leadership distribution.

Statement of the Problem

As a result of *No Child Left Behind (2002),* stringent accountability regulations have been forced upon all schools, and documentation of school improvement is mandatory. This current standards-based reform designates that accountability for improved student learning lies specifically within each school and the teachers that work there (Elmore, 2000). However, to generate and sustain school improvement, effective leadership is vital in schools. Yet, with this daunting demand for accountability, the leadership necessary is not from a single principal, but from a school rich with teacher leaders who are encouraged and nurtured by the school administrator. Nevertheless,

many school administrators, school board members, citizens, and even teachers do not interpret the role of teacher leaders in the same manner. This lack of understanding and misinterpretation leads to more obstacles that teachers and principals must address.

With the increasing demand of shared leadership, a better understanding of teacher leadership is necessary. Researchers have explored the importance of principals and teachers working together to create a school culture that is conducive to student learning. Furthermore, teachers' taking on leadership roles with their colleagues is an important step in school reform (Moller & Pankake, 2006). Additionally, school improvement is enhanced by school administrators who establish collegial structures that facilitate dialogue and encourage teachers to have a voice in the development of school goals and visions (Anderson, 2004; Danielson, 2007; Moller & Pankake, 2006).

Further research is required to gain a deeper appreciation of the importance of the interactions between teachers and principals, and how they both work in leadership positions to sustain school improvement. In particular, a clearer understanding of the role of teacher leadership in school improvement is necessary. Specifically, a better understanding of how the two separate leadership roles are parallel, yet significantly interrelated, appears noteworthy for both principals and teachers because the top-down, hierarchical structure of traditional school leadership is out-of-date. Likewise, recent literature points to new and expanding roles for teachers and principals collaboratively working to bring about substantial school improvement (Barth, 2001b).

Purpose of the Study

There is nothing new or controversial about the idea that effective educational leadership does make a difference in improving learning (Leithwood et al., 2004). What

research has yet to conclude after decades of school renewal efforts are the essential ingredients of successful leadership, and how leadership matters in terms of promoting the learning of all children (Leithwood et al., 2004). Therefore, the overall purpose of this study was to add to the current body of knowledge by focusing on the perceptions of teachers and principals concerning teachers as leaders. Specifically, the researcher examined principals' perceptions of behaviors that promoted and encouraged empowerment of teachers in leadership positions. In addition, the researcher investigated the perceptions of teachers regarding whether principals encouraged and supported their individual growth in leadership positions. Teachers' perceptions of their actual involvement versus their preferred level of involvement in leadership roles were also surveyed. Finally, the researcher examined principals' and teachers' perceptions of teacher leadership roles, and the influence these roles had on attributes of school improvement.

Justification of the Study

The ability or inability of a school organization to sustain lasting improvement is dependent upon effective leadership (Barth, 2001a; Yukl, 2006). This leadership can no longer come from a single individual principal, but instead the principal has the necessary role of cultivating the school culture so that teachers embrace leadership opportunities (Barth, 2001a). However, as teachers are urged to assume new leadership roles, a better understanding of the nature of teacher leadership is necessary. Although there are several different educational models concerning effective leadership of both teachers and principals, this study is based upon the premise that successful school improvement may be more effectively achieved when teachers and principals work together in creating a

school culture of teacher leaders. More specifically, this study attempted to glean a better understanding of teacher leadership roles from the points of view of the principals and of teachers. The researcher investigated principals' and teachers' beliefs on various leadership roles and the extent to which they believe these roles are associated with attributes of school improvement.

Never before has the need been so great for principals to establish teacher leaders within their schools (Davies, 2005; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004). Literature reflects that principals need to become leaders of leaders—allowing and encouraging teachers to become agents of change and for teachers to be willing to place themselves into leadership positions within the school to make school improvements. In addition, the literature indicates that schools depend upon leadership to improve academic performance (Davies, 2005).

Nevertheless, it is the school principal who has the vital role of establishing the vision in cultivating a rich teacher-leader environment ready to handle successful school improvement. To succeed in this vision, principals and teachers must work together with trust and collaboration between the two leadership positions (Andrews & Crowther, 2002). In order for such changes to occur and for a truly collaborative working relationship to exist between the two roles, a better understanding of the perceptions of principals and teachers is necessary.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

The reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA): A Blueprint for Reform* challenges the nation to embrace academic standards and re-evaluate accountability systems that focus on teacher and leader effectiveness in

improving student outcomes (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). The conceptual framework for this study is chiefly based on the need for the expansion of teacher leadership roles throughout the educational setting to promote school improvement to foster student achievement (Barth, 2001b; Davies, 2005; Spillane et al., 2004; Yukl, 2006).

This study centered on the reform efforts in educational leadership of principals developing and fostering teachers as leaders for the benefit of overall school improvement. In addition, the concept and value of teacher leadership and the role teacher leaders have in promoting and fostering school improvement for student achievement is discussed. Moreover, the expansive literature review addresses the principal's role in the development of teachers as leaders and the challenges of principals and teachers in regard to teacher leadership. The researcher identified *teacher leadership*, *principal leadership*, and *school improvement* as the three major concepts of this study.

Teacher Leadership

Barth (2001b) maintained, "A school culture hospitable to widespread leadership will be a school culture hospitable to widespread learning" (p. 81). The widespread leadership he refers to is the position of teacher leadership within a school culture. Teacher leaders not only influence their own classrooms, but this leadership also extends throughout the entire school impacting school improvement (Andrews & Crowther, 2002; Childs-Bowen, Moller, & Scrivner, 2000; Danielson, 2006). When teachers take leadership initiative, they become more active learners, and students benefit from the better decisions made (Barth, 2001b). Consequently, researchers (Andrews & Crowther,

2002; Barth, 2001b; Danielson, 2006; Durrant & Holden, 2006) agree that teacher leadership within school cultures is vitally important to school improvement. However, principals must view this leadership as beneficial and not threatening to their own leadership role (Copland, 2001).

Principal Leadership

With the ever expanding expectations of school principals, it is necessary for administrators to establish a system of shared leadership (Andrews & Crowther, 2002; Marks & Printy, 2003). Furthermore, research indicates that schools with shared leadership improve their academic performance better than schools with traditional leadership (Birky, Shelton, & Headley, 2006). Principals, however, must be willing to relinquish power (i.e., give power to teachers) to establish a positive environment to foster teacher leadership. The roles of teacher leaders are seldom effective without support and encouragement from the administrators (Birky et al., 2006).

School Improvement

School improvement, also commonly termed school reform, encompasses several different ideas and concepts. One important area of school reform pertains to the school's culture. Barth stated, "A school's culture has far more influence on life and learning in the schoolhouse than the state department of education, the superintendent, the school board, or even the principal can ever have" (2001a, p. 7). The overall goal of school improvement is to enhance student progress, achievement, and development (Bryk & Schneider, 2002), and such improvement efforts are sustained by school environments which foster teacher leadership (Danielson, 2006).

Research Questions

An initial review of literature concluded that teacher leadership is valuable for students, fellow teachers, administrators, and the entire school structure, especially in light of educational reform (Andrews & Crowther, 2002; Barth, 2001b; Birky et al., 2006; Danielson, 2006). Accountability mandates for schools are requiring major school improvement in relevant student learning and achievement and holding schools responsible for student success. Evaluations of reformed schools have demonstrated that teacher leadership plays a vital role in school improvement (Birky et al., 2006). Therefore, school principals are encouraged to evaluate their leadership styles and consider ways to increase teacher involvement in order to bring about overall school improvement. Appropriate principal actions are necessary for encouraging and promoting teacher leadership (Birky et al., 2006; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). Subsequently, it is important to determine how teachers and principals interpret the position of teacher leadership and to what extent both positions believe teacher leadership plays a role in long-lasting school improvement.

In an attempt to glean a better understanding of teacher leadership roles from the point of view of the principal and of teachers and the extent to which these roles affect school improvement, the following research questions were addressed:

1. Is there a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of how frequently teachers engage in leadership activities?

2. Is there a difference between actual teacher involvement and the preferred level of involvement in teacher leadership roles?

3. Is there a difference between teachers' and principals' beliefs about the influence of teacher leadership on school improvement?

4. Is there a difference between teachers' perceptions and principals' perceptions of the most important factor(s) needed from school administrators to positively impact effective teacher leadership?

5. Is there a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the most effective motivation for teachers in order to encourage teacher leadership?

6. Is there a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of barriers to effective teacher leadership in schools?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in an attempt to answer the research questions:

Null Hypothesis 1. There is no difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of how frequently teachers engage in leadership activities.

Null Hypothesis 2. There is no difference between actual teacher involvement and preferred level of involvement in teacher leadership roles.

Null Hypothesis 3. There is no difference between teachers' and principals' beliefs about the impact of teacher leadership on school improvement.

Null Hypothesis 4. There is no difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the most important factor that teachers need in order to function as teacher leaders.

Null Hypothesis 5. There is no difference between teachers' and principals'

perceptions of which reward for teachers is most important in encouraging

teacher leadership.

Null Hypothesis 6. There is no difference between teachers' and principals'

perceptions of what is the most important barrier to effective teacher

leadership.

Research Hypotheses

For the purpose of this study, the following research hypotheses were

tested.

Research Hypothesis 1. There is a difference between teachers' and principals'

perceptions of how frequently teachers engage in leadership activities.

Research Hypothesis 2. There is a difference between actual teacher involvement

and preferred level of involvement in teacher leadership roles.

Research Hypothesis 3. There is a difference between teachers' and principals'

beliefs about the impact of teacher leadership on school improvement.

Research Hypothesis 4. There is a difference between teachers' and principals'

perceptions of the most important kind of support that teachers need from

principals impacting effective teacher leadership.

Research Hypothesis 5. There is a difference between teachers' and principals'

perceptions of the most effective reward for teachers that encourages

teacher leadership.

Research Hypothesis 6. There is a difference between teachers' and principals'

perceptions of the most important barrier to effective teacher leadership in

schools.

Definition of Key Terms

The definitions of key terms used in this study are provided to offer clarity and to assist the reader in the comprehension of core concepts of the investigation.

Classroom teacher. For the purpose of this study, classroom teachers are defined as full-time, certified employees who provide direct, daily instruction to students. A full-time teacher works for approximately nine months per school year.

Formal teacher leadership. Formal teacher leaders are teachers who are given titles and positions of formal authority and appointed and identified by the principal and district administrators. These teachers are generally compensated either by additional salary or in exchange for a lighter teaching load. Furthermore, some formal teacher leaders no longer teach in the regular classroom (Birky et al. 2006).

Informal teacher leadership. Informal teacher leadership refers to teachers who continue to teach students in a classroom, but demonstrate leadership abilities and influence colleagues within their own school and possibly the entire district (Danielson, 2006).

Leadership. Leadership pertains to persons in schools that occupy various faculty positions and work with others to provide direction and exert influence on persons and things in order to achieve the school's goals (Barth, 2001b).

Leadership capacity. Leadership capacity is broad-based, skillful participation in the work of leadership that leads to lasting school improvement (Lambert, 2006). Leadership capacity is demonstrated in schools that amplify leadership for all and purposeful learning together in a community.

Principal leadership. Principal leadership is having the knowledge and ability to create a school atmosphere of trust and respect, a shared sense of direction, distributed power, and allowance for individual expression (Andrews & Crowther, 2002). This type of leadership position should value and trust learning from experience and rigorously craft school experiences that yield important personal learning for adults and students alike (Barth, 2001b).

School improvement. School improvement is the result of enhanced teaching and learning processes and school conditions that support students in raising student achievement. This would include an improvement in the capacity of a school to manage change for the betterment of student achievement (Durrant & Holden, 2006).

Teacher leadership. Teacher leadership is the behaviors that are demonstrated by educators that work with colleagues for the purpose of improving teaching and learning, whether in a formal or informal capacity (Patterson & Patterson, 2004).

Summary

Since the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (2002),* schools in the United States are feeling increased pressures for educational reform and higher student achievement on standardized tests. As a result of this increase in accountability, effective leadership plays a critical part in the success of the school and has a substantial effect on the lives of the students (Davies, 2005; Yukl, 2006). In order for school improvement to become embodied in the culture of a school, the traditional roles of both the principals and teachers must undergo change.

Accordingly, the focus of this study was to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of teacher leadership and principal leadership and the effects they had on

school improvement. This study focused on the principals' perceptions of teacher leadership and ways school leaders could encourage and support teachers to become leaders in their schools. Additionally, the study assessed the teachers' perceptions of teacher leadership and ways they felt encouraged or supported by their principals to become leaders.

Chapter Two provides a synthesis of related literature pertaining to teacher leadership, principal leadership, and attributes of school improvement. In Chapter Three, a description of the research design and methodology that was utilized in this study is provided. In Chapter Four, the researcher discusses the results of the research questions and data analyses; and in Chapter Five, the findings and conclusions of the study are described.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

As the United States embarks upon the latest reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), school reform driving student achievement is being scrutized once again. Durrant and Holden (2006) maintain that reform requires both restructuring and re-culturing, during which time the traditional view of the school principal as the sole leader is changed (Yukl, 2006), and teacher leaders are created (Danielson, 2006). Davies (2005) contends that the development of teacher leadership has led to more positive ways in which school improvement can be effected. Furthermore, school improvement is actually enhanced by leaders who establish an organizational culture that embraces teachers' opinions as a means for developing school goals and vision (Davies, 2005). Leithwood et al. (2004) maintain that school leadership provided and shared by the school principal is a key factor in enhancing student achievement and school performance. Therefore, a thorough understanding of the principal's role in developing teacher leaders and the teacher's role in a leadership capacity leading to school improvement warrants a close look. An examination of principals and teachers simultaneously sharing leadership that promotes school improvement also requires further exploration.

The first section of this chapter focuses on literature associated with school improvement, as it is the basis by which success in schools is measured. Next, a discussion of current research on the topic of teachers as leaders and the value and influence of teacher leadership on school improvement efforts is presented. This is followed by a review of the development of teacher leaders and the role of the school building principal. Finally, the topic of principal leadership and ways in which principals develop teacher leaders and the changes that principals must make in order to successfully promote teachers as leaders is explored. An exhaustive review of current research on these essential issues articulates the importance of exploring the perceptions of teacher leadership and principal leadership from the viewpoint of both roles.

School Improvement

Since the inception of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB), performance-based accountability, which drastically changed the way the nation views and evaluates schools, districts, and even entire states, has dominated school reform. Elmore (2000) noted "standards-based reform has a deceptively simple logic" in that "schools, and school systems, should be held accountable for their contributions to student learning" (p. 12). Furthermore, the reauthorization of ESEA calls for states to create accountability systems that measure student growth toward meeting the goal that all children graduate and succeed in college (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). For this reason, a clear explanation of school reform and its implication on school improvement is necessary.

School improvement or reform has been a topic of study by many researchers for several decades. Durrant and Holden (2006) define school improvement as making the teaching and learning process better in order to raise student achievement, while other

researchers take a broader view that includes structural changes as well (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). A holistic definition of school improvement goals includes students, teachers, principals, and school organizations. Therefore, the ultimate objective of overall school improvement is to enhance student progress, achievement, and development (Bryk, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Firestone, 2009).

A look back at the late twentieth century finds that systematic public school reform encompasses standards-based accountability that evaluates schools based on student performance (Elmore, 2000). Elmore argued that the primary element of accountability should be the teaching and learning in schools. As for the importance of school-based reform and the logic of using standardized tests that evaluate student performance and school improvement as the major accountability system, Elmore made this observation:

> Society should communicate its expectations for what students should know and be able to do in the form of standards; both for what should be taught and for what students should be able to demonstrate about their learning. School administrators and policy makers, at the state, district, and school level, should regularly evaluate whether teachers are teaching what they are expected to teach and whether students can demonstrate what they are expected to learn. (2000, p. 4)

However, new reforms are calling for accountability systems to move beyond standardization of test scores and curriculum and take a fresh look at different organizational features of schools that are concerned with student growth and achievement (Gamage, Adams, & McCormack, 2009).

Bryk (2010) contends that the school organization and operation have major effects on classroom instruction, teacher support, and, ultimately, student achievement. Bryk identified and outlined five essential supports for school improvement. First identified is a "coherent instructional guidance system that articulate[s] the *what* and *how* of instruction" (p. 24). Teachers use discretion in how resources, materials, tools, and instructional routines are utilized for student learning tasks and assessments that provide feedback, which subsequently informs instruction. Fullan, Hill, and Crevola (2006) theorize that teachers' personalized instructional practice, coupled with student formative assessments, leads to reflective practice and school improvement. Durrant and Holden (2006) refer to this as the foundation and catalyst for a leadership of learning in school-based inquiry, connecting evidence generated in school with the wider educational discourse. By appealing to the evidence research provides, teachers are able to link their own learning with student learning, thus developing their own and others' capacity as leaders of change (Durrant & Holden, 2006).

Second, Bryk (2010) expounded upon the professional capacity within a school. Because schooling is a "human-resource-intensive enterprise" (p. 24), the faculty, professional development of faculty, and the ability of faculty members to work together to improve instruction are vital for school improvement. Because teachers play an integral role in the leadership of learning (Durrant & Holden, 2006), they must assume ownership for the best interests of the students and be motivated to work collaboratively to make necessary changes for school improvement. Sergiovanni (2000) suggests that "developing a community of practice may be the single most important way to improve a school" (p. 139). He further explained that a "community of practice" is one in which

teachers engage in collaborative work with a shared sense of purpose and decision making, while accepting joint responsibility for all outcomes. Durrant and Holden suggest that through teachers' collaboration, inquiry, and leadership of learning, there is potential to unlock school cultures necessary to create and maintain capacity for school improvement.

The third essential support for school improvement is a visibly strong relationship among parents, school, and community (Bryk, 2010) A strong parent-community-school connection which is directly tied to students' motivation and school participation can offer a significant resource for classrooms.

Bryk's (2010) fourth support for school improvement is a student-centered learning environment in which students are immersed with rigorous academic assignments coupled with peer support in a safe, orderly environment. Durrant and Holden (2006) advised that the core purpose of schools is to engage everyone in strategies that involve collaborative learning. Bruffee (1993) claimed that "collaborative learning ... is something people construct interdependently by talking together" (p. 133). The learner is viewed as a co-creator in the teaching and learning process as well as included in the educational decision-making process (McCombs & Whisler, 1997; Donaldson, 2007).

Bryk's (2010) final organizational feature to support school improvement is leadership that drives changes and improvements by incorporating facilitative leadership. He contends that principals are the key to developing teachers as leaders and building strong relationships across the school community. Bryk (2010) discerns that through these processes, "principals cultivate a growing cadre of leaders (teachers, parents, and

community members) who can help expand the reach of this work and share overall responsibility for improvement" (p. 25). Yukl's (2006) research on leadership styles of principals in which the principal operates as the foreman while teachers are the assembly line workers confirms this leadership style as in the past. Today, principals who desire school improvement go to great lengths to empower teachers as school leaders and foster student leadership opportunities that result in student achievement (Eilers & Camacho, 2007). In addition, principals must understand the importance of creating a school climate where teachers feel trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect toward the leader and feel compelled to do more than the leader expects done (Yukl).

School Culture and Climate

School culture and school climate are terms that have been used interchangeably for years, yet for school leaders to create a school climate that fosters student and teacher leadership, an understanding of the differences between these concepts is desirable. Moreover, "Understanding the differences and similarities between culture and climate gives us a more precise instrument by which we might improve our schools" (Gruenert, 2008, p. 59).

School climate is thought to represent the attitude of an organization or the collective mood, or morale, of a group of people (Gruenert, 2008). In contrast, Gruenert (2008) explained that "culture is the common set of expectations or unwritten rules by which group members conform in order to remain in good standing with their colleagues" (p. 57). In the same manner as an organization's culture dictates its collective personality, a school's climate can be viewed as the organization's attitude. Furthermore, "it is much easier to change an organization's attitude (i.e., climate) than it is to change

its personality (i.e., culture)" (Gruenert, 2008, p. 58). Climate is the undertone for any

culture, so leaders who wish to make changes to the organization's culture should

evaluate the climate. Culture influences a person's belief system and determines

preferences, dislikes, and even influences in which one may place trust. An

understanding of an organization's culture provides individuals with information about

customs, how to react to situations, and helps determine courses of action with respect to

students' behavior. Understanding the school's culture helps the school's environment to

be able to respond to the needs of the organization (Yukl, 2006). In addition, Sergiovanni

(2000) acknowledged:

> Changing a culture requires that people, both individually and collectively, move
>
> from something familiar and important into an empty space. And then, once they
>
> are in this empty space, they are obliged to build a new set of meanings and
>
> norms and a new cultural order to fill up the space. (p. 148)

Ultimately, fostering teacher leadership demands a culture in which teacher

empowerment is valued, and creating such a school culture determines the degree to

which teachers will be able to attain and implement skills of leadership (Danielson,

2006).

Teacher Leadership

As U.S. political and educational leaders embark upon the reauthorization of the

Elementary and *Secondary Education Act* (*ESEA*), it is necessary that careful reflection

of the changes that *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* created in the name of school reform

and student achievement be evaluated in depth. Packer (2007) noted that "a major flaw

with *NCLB* is that it was developed with little input from educators on the frontline"

(2007, p. 267). According to Ingersoll (2007), "Since the seminal *A Nation at Risk* report in 1983, a seemingly endless stream of studies, commissions, and national reports have targeted low teacher quality as one of the central problems facing schools" (p. 20). Furthermore, Starratt (1995) indicates that there is growing evidence that involvement by teachers in educational reform is critical in order to move education towards excellence. Consequently, research in the area of teacher leadership has focused increasingly on the significance that teacher leaders have for students, fellow teachers, and administrators (Andrews & Crowther, 2002; Birky et al., 2006; Danielson, 2006; Leithwood et al., 2004). Moreover, if schools are going to improve, they need the leadership of teachers (Barth, 2001b). As a result, the importance of the role of teacher leaders and contributions teacher leaders may provide for school reform need additional research. Educational leadership has been called the "bridge" that can bring together the many different reform efforts (DeVita , 2007).

Value of Teacher Leadership

Resoundingly, many researchers agree that one of the major flaws in NCLB is the absent voice of the classroom teacher. Authors of NCLB had the notion that one way to ensure teacher quality was to dictate standardized curriculums and increase teacher accountability using punitive measures. Ingersoll asserted, "Underlying this perspective is the assumption that the primary source of the teacher-quality problem lies in deficits in teachers themselves-in their preparation, knowledge, commitment, engagement, effort, and ability" (2007, p. 21).

In the last decade, top-down accountability reforms have not been beneficial in improving student achievement. Top-down reforms deny teachers the very power and

flexibility they need to do an effective job by undermining their motivation and neglecting to acknowledge their high commitment to the teaching profession (Ingersoll, 2007). Likewise, it seems unreasonable to hold people accountable for something they do not have control over or to give people control over things for which they are not held accountable (Ingersoll, 2007). For true school reform to take place, teachers need to be leaders, not just in their classrooms, but within their schools as well.

The notion of teacher as leader or teacher leaders is not a new concept. However, "Teacher leadership has been shackled by archaic definitions of leadership and timeworn assumptions about who can lead" (Lambert, 2003b, p. 421). Little (2003) stated, "Designated teacher leadership roles have become heavily weighted toward institutional agendas over which teachers have little direct control and over which teachers themselves are divided" (p. 416). Furthermore, the concept of teacher leadership can often be better defined simply as a division of managerial labor (Little). Lambert suggested that old assumptions bind and confine as to the reasons teacher leadership is considered a difficult concept. She continued:

> The philosophy of leadership situates leadership work within formal authority roles, a hierarchical view of authority and power, and an insistence that if we find the right 'carrot', the right incentive package, we can coax teachers to take on leadership roles. Such attitudes produce short term, shallow and unsustainable results. (p. 421)

Many studies support the notion that effective leadership makes a difference in improving learning. As a matter of fact, it turns out that leadership not only matters, it is second

only to teaching among school-related factors in its impact on student learning

(Leithwood et al., 2004).

Today, more than ever, with the unprecedented demands being placed on schools,

the need for teacher leadership is necessary at every level. Danielson (2007) argues that

because teaching is a "flat" profession in which teachers, unlike most professionals, do

not have the opportunity to exercise more responsibility and assume more significant

challenges year after year, usually the only way for teachers to take on leadership roles is

to become administrators. However, many teachers do not want to leave the classroom,

but instead wish to extend their influence and gain more leadership opportunities within

their own school setting. Additionally, Danielson (2007) contends that teachers' tenure

in schools is longer than that of most administrators, and districts would be wise in

investing in these veterans. Danielson further emphasized that these teachers "hold the

institutional memory; they are the custodians of the school culture and are in a position to

take the long view and carry out long-range projects" (p. 15).

Furthermore, the demands of the modern principalship are near impossible to

meet. Danielson (2007) affirmed, "Principals today are expected to be visionaries (i.e.,

instilling a sense of purpose in their staff) and competent managers (i.e., maintaining the

physical plant, submitting budgets on time), as well as instructional leaders (i.e., coaching

teachers in the nuances of classroom practice)" (p. 15). Moreover, legislation of NCLB

holds school principals responsible for accountability requirements and it is the school

principal who must answer to all the various stakeholders. With so many hats to wear,

principals of schools today simply cannot devote enough time and energy to school

improvement. Likewise, principals have limited expertise and cannot be expected to be

experts in all areas of content and curriculum. However, a group of teacher leaders can provide principals with a variety of professional knowledge that could be beneficial in school improvement (Danielson). Understanding that school principals cannot do all that is required of them and be successful in school improvement gains, more than ever before, school reform depends on dynamic contribution of teacher leaders (Danielson).

As Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) asserted:

Within every school, there is a sleeping giant of teacher leadership that can be a catalyst to push school reform … by using the energy of teacher leaders as agents of school change, the reform of public education stands a better chance to succeed. (p. 2)

Teacher leadership is not about power, but shared in decision-making structures. Empowering teachers at all levels (a) the classroom, (b) school, and (c) district, can have substantial potential to improve schools.

Durrant and Frost (2003) point out four arguments for teacher leadership: (a) the school effectiveness argument, (b) the school improvement argument, (c) the teacher morale and retention argument, and (d) the democratic values argument. According to these authors, "Effective schools are ones which have achieved a high level of consistency in practice and coherence in values but this cannot be achieved by the imposition of a single vision from the leadership team within a hierarchical organization" (p. 175). Rather, lasting school improvement relies upon a shared vision in which people's personal values are reflected and are truly committed.

School improvement also entails improvement in professional practice and essential specialized learning for teachers. However, demanding teachers to change

practices entails questions about values, beliefs and understanding; therefore, without teacher support, implementations or initiations never develop into sustainable improvements (Durrant & Frost, 2003). When teachers have a choice and a voice in determining professional development learning opportunities, they typically assume responsibility for their professional growth. A powerful relationship exists between learning and leading; hence, teachers model for students their own willingness to learn through professional development opportunities. As Barth (2001b) emphasized, "Only when teachers learn will their students learn" (p. 445).

In addition, past national reforms have undermined the teaching profession by limiting teachers' voices in making differences in their professional lives, thereby affecting morale and retention (Durrant & Frost, 2003). The more educators feel a part of the decision making, the higher their morale and greater their involvement and dedication in carrying out the goals of the entire school. Studies have linked high-performing schools with schools in which teachers take ownership of their portion of the entire organization and are given the latitude to demonstrate leadership capacity (Barth, 2001b). Barth charged:

> When decision making is dispersed, when many minds are brought to bear on the knotty, recurring problems of the schoolhouse, better decisions get made. None of us is as smart as all of us. The better the quality of the decisions, the better the school; when many lead, the school wins. (p. 445)

Another argument for teacher leadership rests in democratic and educational values. A need exists to develop schools as learning communities in which all members have a voice and are encouraged to fulfill their leadership potential (Barth, 2001b).

Schools as learning communities represent the very underpinning values of a democratic way of life and model citizenship and behavior principles. Mitchell and Sackney (2000) alleged:

> In a learning community, individuals feel a deep sense of empowerment and autonomy and a deep personal commitment to the work of the school. This implies that people in the school form not just a community of learners but also a community of leaders. (p. 93)

Traditionally, very few schools operate democratically, so when teachers take on school-wide responsibilities the first steps in changing the culture of the school begin. When teachers are more involved in decision making and influential in establishing discipline, democratic principles are modeled for students. This, in turn, causes rippling effects that are passed on to student leadership, which often equates to fewer discipline problems and high pupil achievement (Barth).

In summary, studies suggest that all teachers have leadership potential and can benefit from that potential (Barth, 2001b; Leithwood et al., 2004) Teachers become more active learners in environments where they are given leadership opportunities. When teachers become leaders, principals are able to extend their own authority, students' learning thrives, and the school becomes a successful democratic community (Barth, 2001b).

Concept of Teachers as Leaders

Many studies have linked school reform and benefits of teacher leadership to school improvement (Birky et al., 2006). Furthermore, many national reform reports have recommended widespread teacher leadership with phrases like "empowerment of

teachers," "faculty participation in management," "authority of teachers," and "consensus management" (Barth, 2001b, p. 444). However, with all the available literature and studies concerning leaders and leadership, disagreement exists as to the definition of a teacher leader. Danielson (2006) refers to teacher leadership as a "set of skills demonstrated by teachers who continue to teach students but also have an influence that extends beyond their own classrooms to others within their own school and elsewhere" (p. 12). Patterson and Patterson (2004) define a teacher leader as "someone who works with colleagues for the purpose of improving teaching and learning, whether in a formal or informal capacity" (p. 74). Andrews and Crowther (2002) state simply that teacher leadership is "the power of teaching to shape meaning for children, youth, and adults" (p. 154). Childs-Bowen et al. (2000) declared, "We believe teachers are leaders when they function in professional learning communities to affect student learning; contribute to school improvement; inspire excellence in practice; and empower stakeholders to participate in educational improvement" (p. 28). Lambert (2003b) defines leadership capacity as "broad-based, skillful participation in the work of leadership" (p. 425). Though definitions of teacher leadership differ slightly, researchers agree that influence from teacher leaders is not strictly contained within the confines of classrooms, but extends out to include all those impacted by innovative leadership skills and recognizes ways to improve schools (Andrew & Crowther, 2002; Childs-Bowen et al., 2000; Danielson, 2006). The many definitions of the concept of teacher leadership form a systematic framework for school improvement by inviting, supporting, and appreciating teacher leadership capacity (Lambert, 2003b).

Additionally, the concept of teacher leadership is often linked to distributive leadership (Lambert, 2003a). At the center of distributed leadership is the attempt to engage participants in leadership opportunities that enhance collegiality and develop school effectiveness (Harris, 2005). Elmore (2000) pointed out, "The purpose of leadership is the improvement of instructional practice and performance, regardless of role" (p. 20). Gronn (2003) also discussed the need to rethink roles and their relationships. He postulated, "This duality of differentiation-integration inherent in a division of labor is the source of emerging new forms of role interdependence and coordination which have resulted in distributed patterns of leadership" (p. 428). In distributed leadership, teacher and principal roles often overlap or are complimentary. Spillane et al. (2004) focused on analysis of leadership tasks, but also emphasized interdependence when they argued, "A distributed perspective presses us to consider the enactment of leadership tasks as potentially stretched over the practice of two or more leaders and followers" (p. 16).

However, the total idea of teacher leadership is narrower than distributive leadership since it deals solely with leadership roles of the teaching staff, yet broader than distributive leadership as it does not focus entirely on the formal positional roles (Harris, 2005). Gronn (2003) defined leadership as collaborative work that is fluid and emergent, rather than just a fixed phenomenon. He suggested three implications:

Initially, it implies a different power relationship within the school where the distinctions between followers and leaders tend to blur; secondly, it has implications for the division of labor within a school, particularly when the tasks

facing the organization are shared more widely; and thirdly, it opens up the

possibility of all teachers becoming leaders at various times. (p. 333)

Because this third feature is structured upon collaboration among teachers and the idea

that those teachers will assume leadership roles at different times, this construct has the

most power and potential for school improvement.

Development of Teacher Leadership

Historically, teacher leaders serve in two fundamental types of roles: (a) formal

and (b) informal (Danielson, 2007). In a formal role, teacher leaders may serve as

department chairs, master teachers, or instructional coaches. Individuals serving in a

formal capacity usually have applied for the position, been chosen through a selection

process, and then trained for the responsibility. Teacher leaders in formal capacities play

a vital role in schools as they manage curriculum projects, facilitate teacher study groups,

provide workshops, evaluate other teachers, and order instructional materials (Danielson,

2006).

In contrast, informal teacher leaders have no positional authority, and their

influence with other colleagues is a direct result of respect and command they receive due

to their knowledge and practice. Informal teacher leaders emerge unexpectedly and often

just take the initiative to establish a new program or curriculum or use their influence and

expertise to address a problem. To illustrate, Mulford, Silins, and Leithwood (2004)

defined informal teacher leadership in this way:

> Informal teacher leaders are those that define success in terms of what happens in
>
> the entire school, not just their classrooms. These teachers are recognized by their
>
> peers and administrators as those staff members, who are always volunteering to

head new projects, mentor and support other teachers, accept responsibility for their own professional growth, introduce new ideas, and promote the mission of the school. (p. 447)

Lambert (2003b) suggests that educators have been using the wrong lenses and looking in the wrong places for teacher leaders. She purported, "Timeworn assumptions have persuaded us that leader and leadership are one and the same" (p. 423). Individuals assume wrongly that leadership rests within certain individuals with assigned power and that certain skills and dispositions make these leaders effective. Further, when leadership is defined as a person in a specific assigned formal authority role, teachers and other support staff will not be encouraged to participate in the work of leadership (Lambert). Therefore, having closely analyzed the value and influence of teacher leaders in schools, a closer look at the development of teacher leaders and the role which principals play in this process must be examined.

Role of the Principal in Development of Teacher Leadership

One of the most consistent findings from current studies of effective leadership is that authority to lead should not be limited to the person of the leader of a school, but rather should be effectively dispersed within the school among others (Gronn, 2003; Harris, 2002). In other words, the imperative is that school leaders give authority to others and empower them to take initiative to lead. The think-tank report published by the National College for School Leadership (NCSL), which proposes that school leadership is a function that needs to be distributed throughout the school community, claimed, "Successful school leadership is not invested in hierarchical status but experience is valued and structures are established to encourage all to be drawn in and

regarded for their contribution" (2001, p. 11). Therefore, in promoting teacher leadership, the role of the school principal is paramount in creating the infrastructures to support these roles" (Childs-Bowen et al., 2000, p. 30). Lambert (1998) emphasized that "a school must build its own teacher leaders if it is to stay afloat, assume internal responsibility for reform, and maintain a momentum for self-renewal" (p. 3). Childs-Bowen et al. explained, "Principals who desire school reform invest energy to build leadership capacity around key issues regarding student achievement, rather than the managerial and operational tasks of running the school" (2000, p. 29). Effective leaders have a vision for their school and recognize the importance of collaborating with teachers to build a school community that is inclusive and values individual development and achievement (Elmore, 2000; Harris, 2002; Leithwood and Louis, 2000). In order for teachers to interact more confidently and assertively, principals must construct meaningful relationships and professional confidence with teachers by building democratic, professional learning communities. Harris (2005) contends that "for teacher leadership to be most effective it has to engage all those within the organization in a reciprocal learning process that leads to collective action and meaningful change" (p. 23).

Research has identified elements necessary and strategies that principals must utilize in order to transform leadership in their schools. Leithwood et al. (2004) begins with identifying the four *I*s of school leadership: (a) individual consideration, (b) intellectual stimulation, (c) inspirational motivation, and (d) idealized influence. Administrators must not continue to be the sole persons responsible in decision-making, but must build instructional capacity by incorporating every member of the staff in

offering solutions to problems in the school. In addition, the principal must create an environment in which teachers feel comfortable offering suggestions, asking questions, and providing feedback. Brown asserted (2008), "The atmosphere must be conducive to teachers sharing the responsibility of identifying problems, offering viable solutions, and working collaboratively to create a plan to implement agreed upon solutions" (p. 29). A strong and purposeful leadership cadre of teacher leaders, who are creative, systematic thinkers and learners, can achieve amazing feats of school improvement (Brown, 2008). Gabriel (2005) writes that teacher leadership "can transform schools from houses of detention to houses of attention—for both student and teacher" (p. 32).

However, before principals can become authentic "leaders of leaders" they must take time to thoughtfully reflect on their personal views of sharing authority and empowering teachers to take leadership roles within the school. Bolman and Deal (2003) commented, "If principals can move past the 'I' in leadership and embrace the collaborative 'we,' they can learn with teachers or even step aside to let others lead; they lead with soul" (p. 30). Childs-Bowen et al. (2000) suggested four strategies principals can incorporate to help transform teacher leaders in their schools: (a) create opportunities for teachers to lead, (b) build professional learning communities, (c) provide quality professional development, and (d) celebrate teacher expertise. When principals create opportunities for teachers to lead, autonomy is encouraged, restrictions diminish, and teacher leadership engages.

The second strategy for principals to embrace in the quest for teacher leadership is to create professional learning communities within their schools. Professional learning communities are not just schools in which teachers are all congenial and demonstrate

camaraderie. Professional learning communities reflect the organizational structure of the faculty and consist of five dimensions: (a) supportive and shared leadership, (b) shared values and vision, (c) collective learning and application of learning, (d) supportive conditions, and (e) shared personal practice (Gabriel, 2005). In professional learning communities, teachers and principals participate as co-learners in how to improve their schools by consistent practice of thoughtful reflection of the teaching and learning.

Another essential strategy is the importance of principals' knowledge of quality, results-driven professional development in the schools. Professional development is a catalyst for instituting teacher quality through teacher leadership. According to Childs-Bowen et al., "Quality professional development can be further enhanced when principals invite teacher leaders to examine school improvement data, develop school goals, and establish standards to select the most appropriate content and model of professional development" (2000, p. 32).

The final strategy suggested by Childs-Bowen et al. (2000) is for principals to celebrate innovation and teacher expertise by simply recognizing teachers who break new ground in quality instruction and leadership. Principals are in the best position to create opportunities to distinguish teacher leaders and must be the ones to create this culture. Although there is an unsubstantiated balance between giving praise and maintaining appropriate support for teacher leaders, "a simple but powerful strategy is genuine praise, which is more important to most people than money" (p. 33).

In addition to strategies, principals can incorporate a system of shared governance to build leadership capacity in their schools. Lambert (2005) conducted research for

lasting leadership reform. The study found that principals usually cycle through three different phases in their development as transformational leaders. The first phase is identified as the instructive phase in which principals have to initiate new collaborative processes relating to the school norms, vision, and shared expectations. In the instructive phase, the principal's roles are to (a) insist on attention to results, (b) start conversations, (c) solve difficult problems, (d) challenge assumptions, (e) confront incompetence, (f) focus work, (g) establish structures and processes that engage colleagues, (h) teach about new practices, and (i) articulate beliefs that eventually get woven into the fabric of the school (Lambert).

Lambert (2005) identified the second phase as the transitional phase during which the principal's role is the gradual release of some control and authority, while also providing support and coaching as more teachers step forward and accept some of the responsibilities. During this phase the principal provides support by (a) continuing the conversations, (b) keeping a hand in the process (rather than accepting quick fixes), (c) coaching, and (d) problem solving within an atmosphere of trust and safety. It is noteworthy that the principal must be cognizant of the school culture and be aware of when to pull back as teachers emerge as leaders. Consequently, the most challenging aspect of this phase is breaking the "dependent culture" in which teachers are accustomed to asking permission or expecting the principal to make decisions; rather the principal must release more authority and support teacher efficacy (Lambert).

The third and final phase Lambert (2005) recognized is the high leadership capacity phase. During this phase, teachers are encouraged to accept more prominent leadership roles as the principal takes a lower profile of dominance. As teachers begin to

take responsibility, the principal facilitates and takes the role of a co-participant. Moreover, the teachers and principals often become more alike than different in this final phase as they begin to share the same concerns and work toward the same goals. A leveling of relationships occurs as reciprocity develops between the principal and the teachers. In addition, teachers (a) find their voices, (b) grow confident in their beliefs, and (c) become more open to feedback (Lambert).

In addition to the three phases, Lambert (2005) found several common characteristics in principals who cycled through the stages of developing teacher leaders in their schools. Most principals in the study maintained a clear understanding of self and personal values, held a strong belief in the democratic process, had a clear plan of school improvement and knowledge of teaching and learning, and advocated a vulnerable personality that could develop capacity in the teachers within the organization.

Lattimer (2007) conducted a study of teacher leaders and found several essential qualities in schools where teachers are most likely to grow as leaders. At the top of the list is respect for teacher knowledge. Teacher leaders thrive in environments in which the school principal has a clear understanding of the importance of the classroom teacher and encourages faculty to work together to find best practices to serve student needs. Conversely, environments and reform efforts in which teachers perceive that their expertise is devalued lead to frustration and resistance.

A second component for developing effective teacher leaders is the existence of a strong professional teacher community (Caine & Caine, 2000). When teachers regularly discuss issues of curriculum or student achievement data, colleagues recognize their peers' strengths and teacher leaders arise organically from within the community

(Lattimer, 2007). Conversely, when those outside the ranks of teachers appoint or show favoritism and try to persuade individuals into leadership positions, the community may be placed at enmity with one another and become a negative environment among colleagues. Sergiovanni (2000) argued that "if we are interested in community building, then we, along with other members of the proposed community, are going to have to invent our own practice of community" (p. 22). Creating professional learning communities in schools implies inter-dependence rather than dependence and a process of transformation from a collection of individuals to a community with shared goals and understanding (Harris, 2002). A myth surrounding school improvement is that change only results from discomfort or pressure; however, in communities that foster teacher leadership, "change seems to be a natural result of constructing meaning and knowledge together" (Lambert, 1995, p. 52).

When teachers believe that school reform efforts reflect a clear understanding of student needs and are presented with opportunities to reflect critically on their knowledge and practices, they are more willing to take on leadership roles. Moreover, Anderson (2004) discusses the importance of leadership reciprocity as the mutual and interactive influence of teacher leadership on principals as well as a reciprocal influence of principal leadership on teachers. It is important for principals to nurture these leadership tendencies in teachers, even at the expense of losing those teachers to other challenging roles (Brandt, 1989). Under the right circumstances, even teachers who are not seeking leadership opportunities, if encouraged and supported, can become instrumental leaders in their learning communities (Lattimer, 2007).

Challenges of Teacher Leadership

The greatest influence on teacher leadership, and consequently the largest obstacle to teacher leadership, is the principal (Blegen & Kennedy, 2000). Principals must be secure in their own abilities to lead in order to relinquish some control to teachers. In addition, principals must set the tone and climate to encourage teachers to emerge as leaders and be willing to allow staff members who disagree to have a voice. In contrast, principals who are not confident in their leadership abilities will stifle and not grow from the diversity of ideas that may come from teachers who desire a leadership role (Blegen & Kennedy). Ash and Persall (2000) believe that creating an organizational culture and infrastructure that supports leadership opportunities for everyone requires principals to have an altogether different set of leadership skills than have previously been necessary. The existing administrative structures in place today are often configured in bureaucratic and hierarchical fashion. The current administrative training programs conflict with the demands of change that is necessary to promote teacher leaders (Ash & Persall). Because of the many different studies and information available concerning the topic of teachers as leaders, another obstacle in promoting teacher leaders is that teachers are not able to put a specific definition on the term *teacher leadership* (Anderson, 2004; Muijs & Harris, 2006). Many educators are under the assumption that in order to be a teacher leader, one must have a formal title. Furthermore, many teachers with formal titles have important leadership positions; however, these are not the only teacher leaders. Birky et al. (2006) alleged, "formal teacher leaders are those given familiar titles, and the positions are generally identified by the principal and compensated either by additional salary or in exchange for a lighter teaching load" (p. 88). Teachers in this type of

leadership role are viewed by colleagues as "quasi-administrators" (Danielson, 2006), thus losing their credibility with other instructional team members. Moreover, Anderson surmised in a study that "formal teacher leadership roles actually impeded some forms of teacher leadership" (2004, p. 110).

In contrast, a case study by Hatch, White, and Faigenbaum (2005) found that teacher leaders emerge as they are provided opportunities to share their expertise and influence of classroom activities with their coworkers. These teacher leaders earned the distinction as a leader not due to their formal position or title, but rather as informal teacher leaders willing to share their expertise, develop inquiry skills, and share with other teachers. With informal teacher leaders, "the focus is more on the learning and improvement of school and student performance than on leading" (Birky et al., 2006, p. 88). Furthermore, research by Moller and Pankake (2006) found that informal teacher leaders have several undefined leadership roles and are very beneficial to other teachers with professional and personal situations. These researchers also assert:

> We believe that the most powerful influence for improved teaching and learning
> often comes from informal teacher leadership. In fact, when teachers are asked to
> identify teacher leaders based on who is *competent, credible, and approachable*,
> they frequently name those teachers in the school who do not have formal roles or
> titles. (p. 28)

The research addresses the importance of building leadership capacity in schools and further notes the positive influence teachers as leaders have upon individual teachers, student achievement, and school improvement (Andrews & Crowther, 2002; Ash & Persall, 2000; Barth, 2001b; Blegen & Kennedy, 2000; Birky et al., 2006; Danielson,

2006; Durrant & Holden, 2006; Hatch et al., 2005; Moller & Pankake, 2006; Muijs & Harris, 2006). However, although extensive research exists on teacher leadership, the aspect of teachers' perceptions on leadership roles and the principals' obligations in developing teachers as leaders warrants future investigation.

Principal Leadership

The issue of "school leadership" has become an increasingly important factor in accountability in schools today. Research on school improvement demonstrates that without effective leadership, school improvement cannot succeed (DeVita, 2009). Likewise, the words *principal* or *principals* appear more than 100 times in the Federal Register notice of the Race to the Top education reform program. Finally, with leadership on the school reform agenda, the connection between teaching and leadership, and the interdependence of the two, represents enormous innovation in not only developing great teachers, but great principals as well (DeVita, 2009).

Changes to Expectations of Principal Leadership

With the new idea of principals' developing teachers as leaders, principal leadership has undergone a change in perspective. Principals today are not able to be "Lone Rangers" who come in to save the day, then ride off into the sunset. The traditional view of the principal being the sole leader, making all the decisions of a school, will no longer work with the demands and requirements of school improvement and accountability (Bossi, 2009). In 2000, Elmore described the tasks of principals:

> Reading the literature on the principalship can be overwhelming, because it suggests that principals should embody all the traits and skills that remedy all the defects of the schools in which they work. They should be in close touch with

their communities, inside and outside the school; they should, above all, be masters of human relations, attending to all the conflicts and disagreements that might arise among students, among teachers, and among anyone else who chooses to create a conflict in the school; they should be both respectful of the authority of district administrators and crafty at deflecting administrative intrusions that disrupt the autonomy of teachers; they should keep an orderly school; and so on. Somewhere on the list one usually finds a reference to instruction. (p. 14)

Since most principals struggle to meet the ever-expanding expectations of the position, the importance of shared leadership has been explored by a number of researchers (e.g., Andrews & Crowther, 2002; Marks & Printy, 2003; Yukl, 2006). In addition, the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL), which has been investigating and reporting for almost a decade on ways to improve leadership for student learning has called for the "re-invention of the principalship" and the "re-defining of teachers as leaders" (2008, p. 3). This report emphasized that "teacher leadership is not about 'teacher power;' rather it is about mobilizing the still largely untapped attributes of teachers to strengthen student performance at the ground level" (p. 3). The report also pointed out that this kind of leadership can happen through "real collaboration—a locally tailored kind of shared leadership—in the daily life of the school" (p. 3).

Concept of Principal Leadership

At The Wallace Foundation National Conference, President M. Christine DeVita, in a keynote address, professed, "The bottom line is that investments in good principals are a particularly cost-effective way to improve teaching and learning" (2009, p. 3). However, even gifted and committed principals cannot alone bring about the changes in

schools today to make improvements and sustain gains. Lambert (2006) suggested that during the development and implementation of teacher leadership, the principal must assume a different role than the historical role of the school leader as a "one-man-show." In the re-design of principals today, the school leader must be willing to relinquish power to establish a positive environment for teacher leaders to cultivate and grow. Lambert also advocated that principals should hold fast to their own values while letting go of power and authority which will empower teachers to explore new leadership roles, allowing leadership to be distributed throughout the school rather than situated in one position.

The two major constructs of shared or collaborative school leadership that is inclusive of both formal and informal leaders is *formative leadership* (Ash & Persall, 2000) and *distributed leadership* (Harris, 2005). These forms of collaborative leadership emphasize an equal partnership in school leadership, which replace the hierarchical notions of traditional leadership (Eilers & Camacho, 2007).

Formative Leadership

The Formative Leadership Theory, developed by Ash and Persall (2000) is based upon the belief that many leadership opportunities and various leaders can be found within the school. Furthermore, this theory posits that leadership is not role-specific or reserved for the school administrator, rather it is the responsibility of the school leader to promote and develop the school staff to become school leaders. According to Ash and Persall, "The formative leader must possess a high level of facilitation skills; team inquiry, learning, and collaborative problem solving are essential ingredients of this

leadership approach" (p. 16). These researchers postulated ten leadership principles to support this new paradigm for quality leadership:

1. Team learning, productive thinking, and collaborative problem solving should replace control mechanisms, top-down decision making, and enforcement of conformity.

2. Teachers should be viewed as leaders and school principals as leaders of leaders.

3. Trust should drive working relationships.

4. Leaders should move from demanding conformity and compliance to encouraging and supporting innovation and creativity.

5. Leaders should focus on people and processes, rather than on paperwork and administrative *minutiae*.

6. Leaders should be customer-focused and servant-based. Faculty and staff members are the direct customers of the principal, and the most important function of the principal is to serve his or her customers.

7. Leaders should create networks that foster two-way communication rather than channels that direct the flow of information in only one direction.

8. Formative leadership requires proximity, visibility, and being close to the customer.

9. Formative leadership should empower the people within the school to do the work and protect them from unwarranted outside interference.

10. Formative leadership requires the ability to operate in an environment of

uncertainty, constantly learning how to exploit system wide change, rather than

maintaining the status quo.

By using the formative leadership theory, the principal establishes the belief that the

teacher is a leader and the principal is the leader of the leaders (Ash & Persall, 2000).

Distributive Leadership

The other construct of teacher leadership is *distributive leadership*, which has

subtle differences to formative leadership. Distributed leadership has its roots in the

notion of empowerment. Harris (2005) observes that distributed leadership centers on the

notion about who can exert influence over colleagues and in what domains. Short and

Greer (1997) describe two basic types of empowerment: (a) power is a finite—for one

person to gain power, someone else must give up a measure of power; and (b) power is

infinite and should be spread over many to help accomplish the goals and mission of the

organization. The infinite power theory, according to Short and Greer, leads to

participative leadership. Yukl (2006) described participative leadership as "efforts by a

leader to encourage and facilitate participation by others in making important decisions"

(p. 81). Although participative leadership is a form of empowerment, its focus is on

decision-making. With participative leadership, the other responsibilities of a leader are

still left to the single leader. However, Yukl (2006) claimed, "An alternative perspective

that is slowly gaining more adherents is to define leadership as a shared process of

enhancing the capability of people to accomplish collective work effectively" (p. 449).

This approach to leadership described by Yukl is more encompassing than participative

leadership and involves distributing these responsibilities across the organization.

Leithwood et al. (2004) suggested that "it entails the exercise of influence over the beliefs, actions and values of others... as is the case with leadership from any source" (p. 60). Accordingly, in contrast to traditional leadership norms, distributed leadership is characterized as a form of collective leadership in which teachers develop expertise by working together and are provided greater opportunities to learn from one another (Harris, 2005; Leithwood et al., 2004).

Furthermore, Elmore (2000) insisted that due to the overwhelming and rapidly escalating responsibilities of principals, there is a need for distributed leadership. However, he pointed out that distributed leadership goes beyond simply reshuffling assignments; rather it requires a fundamental shift in the thinking of the organization and redefines leadership as the responsibility of everyone is the school (Harris, 2005).

Harris (2005) elucidated that distributed leadership theory is helpful in providing greater conceptual clarity around the terrain of teacher leadership for several reasons. First, it "incorporates the activities of multiple groups of individuals in a school who work at guiding and mobilizing staff in the instructional change process" (Spillane et al., 2004, p. 20). Second, "it implies a social distribution of leadership where the leadership function is stretched over the work of a number of individuals where the leadership task is accomplished through the interaction of multiple leaders" (Spillane et al., p. 20). Third, distributed leadership "implies interdependency rather than dependency embracing how leaders of various kinds and in various roles share responsibility" (Spillane et al., p. 20).

Connections between Teacher Leadership and Principal Leadership

The principals of tomorrow's schools must be instructional leaders who possess the requisite skills, capacities, and commitment to lead the accountability parade, not follow it (Tirozzi, 2001). Excellence in school leadership should be recognized as the most important component of school reform. Tirozzi declared, "Without leadership, the chances for systematic improvement in teaching and learning are nil" (p. 438). Therefore, within each school, there must be a continuity of purpose and a commitment of excellence. Tirozzi explained, "Establishing this climate and preparing teachers for the 'age of accountability' requires enlightened leadership" (p. 438). To succeed in this vision, principals and teachers need to work together, creating a full, rich culture of trust and collaboration between the two leadership positions (Andrew & Crowther, 2002). Furthermore, Andrew and Crowther concluded:

> In exploring the dynamics of teachers' leadership roles in successful school
> projects in phase two of the research, it became evident that the relationship in
> question could not be fully understood or appreciated in isolation from the work
> of principals. Indeed, in none of our phase two case studies was teacher
> leadership found to flourish independently of the principal. (p.154)

In addition, these researchers affirmed a new educational concept known as parallelism, which placed equal value on principal leadership and teacher leadership. Further, they found that three distinct qualities were necessary between principals and teachers (a) mutual trust and respect, (b) a sense of shared directionality, and (c) allowance for individual expression (Andrew & Crowther).

The report on *Educational Leadership: A Bridge to School Reform* revealed that:

There are virtually no documented instances of troubled schools being turned

around in the absence of intervention by talented leaders. While other factors

within the school also contribute to such turnarounds, leadership is the catalyst.

In other words, there are no 'leader-proof' reforms- and no effective reforms

without good leadership (DeVita, 2007, pp. 4-5).

Furthermore, research suggests that principals, in turn, cannot succeed without accepting

the fact that they must depend on their staffs. DeVita (2009) stressed that, "In many of

the studies of successful schools, the most successful principals developed team-oriented

cultures where everyone was expected to do their part as members of one or more teams

working together toward the same goals" (p. 16).

Although schools depend upon the principal to establish the achievement-oriented

school culture and the agenda for school improvement, teacher leaders should be

involved in crafting the agenda, so that it is communicated to other teachers and

evidenced in their classrooms (DeVita, 2009). Donaldson (2007) maintained that, "great

schools grow when educators understand that the power of their leadership lies in the

strength of their relationships" (p. 29). Strong leadership in schools results from

everyone participating in the same goal, but each leading in his or her own way.

Administrators and both formal and informal teacher leaders "all contribute to the

leadership mix and they hold the power to improve student learning in the hands they

extend to one another" (Donaldson, 2007, p. 29). Donaldson advised, real leadership

challenges the leader before it challenges others.

Relationship between Teacher Leaders and School Performance

In 1977, in a call to answer Louisiana's first accountability mandate, the legislature requested that the State Department of Education comprehensively scrutinize conditions that related to school achievement among Louisiana's elementary school children. The long-term study, officially titled *The Louisiana School Effectiveness Study*, conducted by Stringfield and Teddlie, began in 1981 with a pilot study, then continued throughout 1990, and included phases of investigation and reports. The study focused on data pertaining to socioeconomic levels of students and teacher and principal attitudes about school climate (Stringfield & Teddlie, 1988). At the heart of the findings was leadership by groups of teachers within each school. This leadership proved to be one of the main factors present in the effective schools within the study. The teacher leadership groups worked closely with the school principal, valued individual teachers' practical specialties, and often spent time in each other's classrooms because they valued and viewed one another as resources for professional growth (Stringfield & Teddlie).

Another interpretive study in Louisiana that attempted to link student performance improvement to teacher leadership was a study that investigated teacher collaboration in learning communities (Leonard & Leonard, 2003). Attempts at school improvement require a clear school vision, collaborative involvement between principals and teachers, and instructional practices that address the needs of the students. Proessional collaboration requires principals to view themselves as team leaders, as opposed to principals who envision the job responsibilities as bureaucratic. Leonard and Leonard confirmed, "School principals who continue to personify traditional leader traits in the

currently emerging education environment not only minimize professional growth, they may also optimize student mediocrity" (p. 10).

During Louisiana's school reform and improvement efforts, several pilot projects were commissioned to evaluate teacher leadership and school improvement. The St. Charles Teacher Leader Institute (TLI) pilot project focused on distributed school leadership and school improvement and was used to implement and evaluate higher education teacher-leader curriculum (Bauer, Haydel, & Cody, 2003).

Another study involved the four lowest performing schools in West Carroll Parish (School Improvement Network, 2007). During the 2006-2007 school year, teachers from these schools participated in School Improvement Network's (SINET) *Leadership and Learning Framework* and reported closing the achievement gap in both math and English Language Arts as well as improvement in students' attitudes (School Improvement Network). In addition, the study revealed that the participating teachers' attitudes, confidence, and skills demonstrated marked improvement. Though this framework provided teachers with comprehensive onsite training of research-based instructional strategies, the framework also focused on building internal capacity among the teachers in each school which established effective educational leaders in professional learning communities (School Improvement Network, 2007).

Teacher leadership effects on school improvement have served as the catalyst for changes in the way in which school principals and public officials view leadership in schools. Ann Duffy, the director of policy for Georgia's Leadership Institute for School Improvement, asserted, "there's a very clear need for building-level principals to recognize that leadership is more than just one person; there's a need to codify, as well as

create, incentives to help distribute leadership" (as cited in Olson, 2007, p. 1). In May, 2007, Louisiana became one of the first states to add endorsements to the state licensing system that formally recognize teachers who have taken on leadership roles outside their own classrooms. The Teacher Leader Endorsement recognizes that the role of teacher leadership has expanded and is no longer limited to school administrators and professionals with non-teaching assignments. Classroom teachers are encouraged to collaborate with colleagues, mentor, coach curriculum, and facilitate professional development activities which in turn create more powerful learning experiences and better performance of students (Louisiana Department of Education Teacher Leader Endorsement Standards, 2009).

Summary

In summary, though there are many facets to school improvement, this literature review has focused on the climate and culture of a school, teacher leadership, and principal leadership. Although many factors affect teachers as leaders, the basis for effective teacher leadership rests in the governance of the school principal.

DeVita (2009) affirmed:

Leadership is an essential ingredient for ensuring that every child in America gets the education they need to succeed. Indeed, education leadership has been called the 'bridge' that can bring together the many different reform efforts in ways that practically nothing else can. (p. 2)

Even though teachers are on the front lines of learning, principals are also uniquely positioned to provide the climate of high expectations and ensure that all stakeholders embrace the school vision of excellence in teaching and learning.

Therefore, there is nothing new or controversial about the notion that effective education leadership makes a difference in improving learning. However, productive leadership ultimately depends upon how school administrators define and view leadership, and how leadership is regarded in the context of teachers as leaders (Lambert, 2003b). In the book, *Leadership Is An Art*, Max De Pree affirmed, "Leadership is much more of an art, a belief, a condition of the heart, than a set of things to do and the visible signs of artful leadership are expressed ultimately in its practice" (1989, p. 11).

This review of current literature articulates the importance of principals and teachers working collaboratively to enhance leadership positions currently prevalent in schools and strongly suggests the need to initiate new leadership roles for the sake of school improvement and student achievement.

Chapter Three provides a description of the research design and methodology. Also discussed are the population and sample, methods of data collection, and data analysis. The rationale for selecting the design of the study is also described.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Problem and Purpose Overview

Current standards-based reform designates that accountability for improved student learning lies specifically within each school and the teachers who work there (Elmore, 2000). However, to sustain school improvement, it is vital that schools have effective leadership. There is nothing new or controversial about the idea that effective educational leadership does make a difference in improving learning (Leithwood et al., 2004). However, research has yet to conclude just how leadership matters in terms of promoting the learning of all children, and the essential ingredients of successful leadership (Leithwood et al., 2004). Further research is required to gain a better understanding of the importance of the interactions between teachers and principals, and how they both work in leadership positions to build and sustain school improvement.

Therefore, the overall purpose of this study was to add to the current body of knowledge by focusing on the perceptions of teachers and principals concerning teachers as leaders. Specifically, the researcher examined principals' perceptions of behaviors that promoted and encouraged empowerment of teachers in leadership positions. In addition, the researcher investigated the perceptions of teachers regarding whether principals encouraged and supported their individual growth in leadership positions. Teachers' perceptions of their actual involvement versus their preferred level of

involvement in leadership roles were also surveyed. Finally, the researcher examined principals' and teachers' perceptions of teacher leadership roles, and the influence these roles had on attributes of school improvement.

Research Design

Methodology utilized for this descriptive research study was designed to investigate the perceptions of teachers and principals about teacher leadership, and their beliefs about the role which teacher leadership plays regarding attributes of school improvement. A survey was selected as a quantitative measure to evaluate the perceptions of teacher leadership in school settings. One advantage of surveys is that inferences based on samples potentially can be generalized to populations (Thomas & Brubaker, 2000). In general, the larger and more representative the sample is, the more valid the results of the analysis (Field, 2009; Shaffer & Serlin, 2004). It is important to obtain a sample that validly represents the characteristics being studied. Therefore, a sample was selected to accurately represent the school district populations in Louisiana.

Population and Sample

The population for this study consisted of principals and teachers from 289 public schools in Louisiana. To select the sample, the researcher obtained a list of all the schools in Louisiana categorized by school performance scores (SPS) as reported by the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) 2009-2010. To achieve a representative sample, the researcher used a random number table to select randomly 20% of schools in each of the five SPS categories- five stars, four stars, three stars, two stars, and one star. From this population, the initial stratified random sample established by the researcher included a total of 208 schools. The final sample was contingent upon the number of

schools responding. The sample size of 208 school sites was chosen because it was large enough to allow for diversification and representativeness and also to meet the requirements of statistical procedures appropriate for this study (Cherry, 2000; Gay, 1996). According to Cherry (2000), "a sample between 90 and 150 participants who are representative of the larger population is an adequate sample size for most studies where parametric statistical procedures are included" (p. 89). The resultant sample of principals and the teachers would allow for the statistical procedures appropriate for this study. Because many survey studies report a response rate of only 50% (Creswell, 2008), the researcher of this study selected a larger sample expecting only 50% or less to respond.

This sampling procedure allowed for a high level of external validity, thereby providing for valid generalization to the entire population of schools in Louisiana. The goal of such a quantitative data collection method is to determine whether the effects seen in the sample reflected "true effects" (Shaffer & Serlin, 2004) and not merely chance happenings. If deemed true effects, a generalization could then be validly made to the larger population.

Instrumentation

This study utilized a cross-sectional survey design in which the researcher collected data at one point in time through an electronic survey. The researcher chose this survey research design because the purpose of the study was to gain insight into principals' and teachers' perceptions of teacher leadership and the influence teacher leadership has on school improvement. Surveys are widely used by those in education, as well as government and state officials, because they do not involve the additional difficulties of treatments given to participants as in experimental studies (Creswell,

2008). Surveys are useful in identifying opinions, beliefs, and attitudes of individuals and can allow for the examination of trends or provide program evaluation information. In addition, survey research has been a widely-used design in education for many years (Creswell). One such use of an early educational survey dates back to the 1890s, when G. Stanley Hall surveyed children. Hall invited parents and teachers to participate in child-study research and sent out hundreds of questionnaires to collect observations of children. Hall used the results of this research to provide arguments for educational reform (Creswell).

Beginning from the period of World War I to World War II, surveys like those used today began to emerge, and they continue to be utilized by agencies to correlate variables or offer explanations for educational issues (Creswell, 2008). Additionally, the popularity of electronic survey use has grown tremendously, because it provides an easy, quick form of data collection (Creswell).

The researcher obtained permission to adapt a teacher leadership survey that was used first in a 1990 Carnegie Foundation study, and then more recently in 2006 by Birky, Shelton, and Headley, to examine administrators' challenges to encourage teachers to be leaders (see Appendix A). Though the original survey used a 4-point Likert-type scale, the researcher added a fifth response category, so that the choices would be more normally distributed and to establish theoretical equal intervals among responses (Blaikie, 2003). In addition, adding the fifth response category increased variation in responses and allowed participants to make neutral responses instead of forcing choices. Though there are several benefits of using a Likert-type scale, the researcher chose this

type of scale because survey responses are standardized and amenable to parametric statistical testing (Jamieson, 2004).

The *Teacher Leadership Survey* was administered to both teachers and principals, with slight variations in the two surveys for the two different participant roles. For example, the first question on the principal survey asked, "Do you consider yourself to be an administrator that encourages teachers to be leaders?" The first question on the teacher survey asked, "Do you consider yourself to be a teacher leader?" The perceptions of both the principals and teachers were measured in the surveys and provided the primary data for this study. Human use consent was obtained from each teacher or principal before the participant was able to respond to the survey questions. Both teacher and principal survey consent forms—as well as the research project itself— were approved by the Human Use Committee of Louisiana Tech University (see Appendix B).

The first part of the *Teacher Leadership Survey* for principals (see Appendix C) briefly described the study and required participants to consent with the terms of the survey. Next, the participants provided demographic information pertaining to the name of their school and district, gender, and years of administrative experience. After responding to questions about their personal view of teacher leadership, the participants rated 10 items that assessed perceptions of principals regarding how involved they believed teachers were in various teacher leadership roles or activities. This portion of the survey used a 5-point rating scale which allowed principals to rate perceived involvement as (5) almost always, (4) often, (3) occasionally, (2) seldom, and (1) almost never. The second portion of the principal survey contained three questions that assessed factors, rewards, and barriers that the principal believed made teacher leadership difficult in

schools. The third portion of the survey also used a 5-point rating scale that ranged from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. This portion of the survey instrument was created for this study to assess beliefs of the principal in regard to the importance of teacher leadership roles on overall student achievement. The 10 belief statements were based on important attributes of school improvement identified in the literature review.

Although the survey that was administered to the teachers (see Appendix D) was similar to the principal survey, the wording was adjusted to represent the perspective of the teacher. The first part of the *Teacher Leadership Survey* for teachers briefly described the study and required participants to consent with the terms of the survey. Next, the participants provided demographic information pertaining to the name of their school and district, gender, and years of teaching experience. After responding to questions about their personal view of teacher leadership, the participants rated 10 items that assessed perceptions of teachers regarding how involved they believed they were in various teacher leadership roles or activities. This portion of the survey used a 5-point rating scale which allowed teachers to rate perceived involvement as (5) almost always, (4) often, (3) occasionally, (2) seldom, and (1) almost never. The next portion of the teacher survey contained three questions that assessed factors, rewards, and barriers that the teacher believed made teacher leadership difficult in schools. The final portion of the survey also used a 5-point rating scale that ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. This portion of the survey instrument was created for this study to assess beliefs of the teacher in regard to the importance of teacher leadership roles on overall student achievement. The 10 belief statements were based on important attributes of school improvement identified in the literature review.

Procedural Details

The researcher obtained written permission from each parish school system superintendent to send electronic surveys to all the school principals and teachers in the district (see Appendix E). Once permission was granted, all school principals were contacted through an e-mail that explained the study and enclosed a request for their participation in the electronic survey (see Appendix F). In addition, the principals were sent an attachment to the teacher survey link and asked to forward the teacher survey link to all the teachers within their school (see Appendix G). The researcher allowed two weeks for all teachers from each school to respond. After a week, if the researcher had not heard from some teachers, a reminder e-mail was sent to the principal. After four weeks it was determined that a total of 13 out of 20 districts responded to the surveys, and the electronic survey was disabled.

Data Analysis

The data from the *Teacher Leadership Survey* that was derived from selected principals and teachers were tabulated and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0. The sample consisted of 50 schools from a population of 208 schools in Louisiana. Although 72 principals and 144 teachers responded to the surveys, only 68 principals and 142 teachers actually completed all scales within the surveys.

Research Question 1. To determine if there were significant differences between perceptions of principals and teachers in regard to teacher involvement in teacher leadership roles, t-tests for independent means were conducted (see Appendix D, Teacher Survey, part 3, question 8 and Appendix C, Principal Survey, part 3, question 8). Mean

scores for each of the 10 statements were determined by averaging the scores given by principals and also by teachers. Then, t-tests were calculated to determine if significant differences existed between the ratings given by principals and ratings given by teachers. A two-tailed .05 level of significance was used in order to reject or accept the null hypothesis for this research question. Because this research question yielded two sample means that had to be tested for statistical significance for each of the 10 items, the t-test for the difference between two sample means was used (Pyrczak, 2003).

Research Question 2. A paired t-test was used to determine if there were significant differences between the ratings of involvement of the teachers in teacher leadership roles compared to the ratings of how involved they would like to be. Again, mean scores for each of the 10 statements were determined by averaging the score given by the teachers for how involved they were and also for how involved they would like to be. The mean scores were compared for each of the paired items. A two-tailed .05 level of significance was used to test the null hypothesis for research question two.

Research Question 3. To determine if there were significant differences between teachers and principals on the perceived influence of teacher leadership roles on school improvement, t-tests for independent means were conducted. Mean scores for each of the 10 statements (see Appendix D-Teacher Survey, questions 16-17; and Appendix C, Principal Survey, questions 13-14) were determined by averaging the scores given by principals and also by teachers. Then, t-tests were calculated to determine if significant differences existed between the ratings given by principals and ratings given by teachers. A two-tailed .05 level of significance was used in order to test the null hypothesis for research question three.

Research Questions 4. To determine if there were differences between teachers'
and principals' perceptions of needs that impact effective leadership, data from question
13 from the teacher survey and question 10 from the principal survey were collected and
a test for the significance of the difference was used to examine if there were differences
in the proportion between two proportions of responses to each category. A two-tailed .05
level of significance was used in order to reject or accept the null hypothesis for research
question four (Bruning & Kintz, 1968).

Research Question 5. To determine if there were differences between teachers'
and principals' perceptions of rewards that would encourage teacher leadership, data
from question 14 from the teacher survey and question 11 from the principal survey were
collected, and a test for the significance of the difference between two proportions was
used to examine if there were differences in the proportions of responses to each
category. A two-tailed .05 level of significance was used in order to test the null
hypothesis for research question five.

Research Question 6. To determine is there were differences between teachers'
and principals' perceptions of barriers that impact effective leadership, data from
question 15 from the teacher survey and question 12 from the principal survey were
collected and a test for the significance of the difference between two proportions was
used to examine if there were differences in the proportion of responses to each category.
A two-tailed .05 level of significance was used in order to test the null hypothesis for
research question six.

Limitations and Assumptions

Heppner and Heppner (2004), who point out that all studies have limitations and assumptions, define an assumption as, "Something that is thought to be fact but that may have limited evidence to support it" (p. 48). However, limitations "always exist about the extent to which you can generalize your findings" (Heppner & Heppner, 2004, p. 340). It is imperative that a well designed study clearly define limitations so that the reader is aware of the potential lack of generalization of findings to other samples. The researcher has identified the following typical and standard limitations and assumptions of survey research that may be important in this study:

1. The study sample was limited to public schools in Louisiana.

2. The validity of the quantitative data was limited by the degree of reliability and validity of the survey instrument.

3. It was assumed that participants were forthright in their responses and interpreted the content of the survey instruments in the way in which they were intended.

4. This study was limited by the amount of experience of the researcher in survey analysis skills.

5. The researcher assumed the sample chosen for this study was representative of schools throughout Louisiana.

6. Because the survey was online, some teachers or principals may not have participated due to limited computer access or knowledge of electronic surveys.

7. The self-report nature of the survey and possible response biases of the teachers or principals in trying to respond favorably may have confounded the results.

Summary

Chapter Three contained the information related to the design and methodology the researcher utilized to carry out this investigation of the perceptions of principals and teachers in regard to teacher leadership activities and attributes of school improvement. The population and sample were described, along with a description of the data collection and instrumentation, in ample detail to support understanding and facilitate replication. Furthermore, sampling procedure and data collection were grounded in established research techniques.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

The overall purpose of this study was to add to the current body of knowledge by focusing on the perceptions of teachers and principals concerning teachers as leaders. Specifically, the researcher examined principals' perceptions of behaviors that promoted and encouraged empowerment of teachers in leadership positions. In addition, the researcher investigated the perceptions of teachers regarding whether principals encouraged and supported their individual growth in leadership positions. Teachers' perceptions of their actual involvement versus their preferred level of involvement in leadership roles were also surveyed. Finally, the researcher examined principals' and teachers' perceptions of teacher leadership roles and the influence these roles had on attributes of school improvement.

Current research in the area of teacher leadership has heavily concentrated on the value that teacher leaders afford students, other teachers, and administrators (Andrews & Crowther, 2002; Barth, 2001; Birky et al., 2006; Childs-Bowen et al., 2000; Danielson, 2006; Moller & Pankake, 2006; Patterson & Patterson, 2004). In addition, growing evidence has indicated that in order to move education forward and make essential reforms in education, teacher input is necessary (Barth, 2001; Danielson, 2006; Durrant & Holden, 2006; Muijs & Harris, 2006; Starratt, 1995). Research further indicates that

relatively few teachers are able to succinctly define the term "teacher leadership" (Anderson, 2004; Muijs & Harris, 2006), thus creating ambiguity between formal and informal teacher leadership roles. Because of the necessity of understanding the value of informal teacher leadership and the many different roles it plays in school improvement (Barth, 2001a; Birky et al., 2006; Hatch et al., 2005; Moller & Pankake, 2006), further research to investigate the factors that encourage or discourage teachers as leaders is desirable.

Data for this study were gathered through the researcher-created *Teacher Leadership Roles Surveys,* which measured the perceptions of both the principals and teachers in regard to teacher leadership roles and their beliefs of the importance of teacher leadership roles in school improvement. Superintendent consent was secured for each district that participated in the study. Principals in each district were sent an e-mail that contained pertinent information about the research and an address to the principal survey link. In addition, an attachment containing the teacher survey link and information was included, and each school principal was requested to send the attachment to all teachers in his or her school. In order to facilitate analysis of SPS and survey results, the survey links were coded according to each school's SPS label.

Statistical differences between perceptions of principals and teachers in regard to teacher involvement in teacher leadership roles were analyzed using *t*-tests for independent means. Mean scores for each of the 10 statements were determined by averaging the scores for each of the 10 items by principals and by teachers. Then, *t*-tests for independent samples were calculated to determine if significant differences existed

between the mean ratings of items reported by principals and the mean ratings of these same items reported by teachers.

A paired t-test was used to determine if there were significant differences between the ratings of actual involvement of the teachers in teacher leadership roles compared to the ratings of how involved these same teachers would like to be. Again, mean scores for each of the 10 items were determined by averaging the score given by the teachers for how involved they were and also for how involved they would like to be. The mean scores were then compared overall and for each of the paired items.

To determine if there were significant differences between teachers and principals on the perceived impact of teacher leadership roles on attributes of school improvement, t-tests for independent means were again conducted. Mean scores for each of the 10 statements were determined by averaging the scores given by principals and also by teachers. Then, t-tests for independent samples were calculated to determine if significant differences existed between the ratings given by principals and ratings given by teachers both overall and on these 10 items.

To determine if there were differences between teachers' and principals' perceptions of needs that impact effective leadership, data from item 13 from the teacher survey and item 10 from the principal survey were collected, and tests for the significance of the difference between proportions were used to examine if there were significant differences in the frequency of responses by principals and by teachers to each category.

To determine if there were differences between teachers' and principals' perceptions of rewards that would encourage teacher leadership, data from item 14 from

the teacher survey and item 11 from the principal survey were compared and tests for the significance of the difference between proportions were used to examine if there were differences in the frequency of principal and teacher responses to each category.

To determine if there were differences between teachers' and principals' perceptions of barriers that influence effective leadership, data from item 15 from the teacher survey and item 12 from the principal survey were compared, and tests for the significance of the difference between proportions were used to examine if there were differences in the frequency of principal and teacher responses to each category.

All statistical tests reported used an alpha-level of $p < .05$. To ensure that Type I error was not inflated due to multiple tests, the alpha-level for hypotheses tests for sets of survey items were each evaluated at $p < .008$. In all cases, care was used in the interpretation and evaluation of the significance level of all statistical tests.

The research questions critical to this study focused on possible differences between the perceptions of teachers and the perceptions of the principals in regard to teacher leadership roles and the extent to which teachers and principals believed that leadership roles influenced attributes of school improvement. Furthermore, research questions examined actual teacher involvement in leadership roles versus the preferred level of involvement in leadership roles, as well as factors, rewards, and barriers concerning teacher leadership roles. The data were used to answer the following research questions:

1. Is there a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of how frequently teachers engaged in leadership activities?

2. Is there a difference between actual teacher involvement and the preferred level of involvement in teacher leadership roles?

3. Is there a difference between teachers' and principals' beliefs about the influence of teacher leadership on school improvement?

4. Is there a difference between teachers' perceptions and principals' perceptions of the most important factor needed from school administrators to influence effective teacher leadership positively?

5. Is there a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the most effective reward for teachers in order to encourage teacher leadership?

6. Is there a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of barriers to effective teacher leadership in schools?

A description of the sample population, including demographic data, and the data collection instruments is presented in this chapter. Furthermore, analysis of the research questions and hypotheses are included, followed by a summary of the findings.

Population and Sample

The target population in this study consisted of principals and teachers throughout public schools in Louisiana. The researcher obtained a list of all the schools in Louisiana categorized by school performance scores (SPS) as reported by the Louisiana State Department of Education (LDOE) 2009-2010. To achieve a representative sample, the researcher used a random number table to select 20% of schools in each of the five SPS categories- five stars, four stars, three stars, two stars, and one star- which resulted in a total of 208 schools. However, due to practical constraints, modification to the sampling procedure was required. The superintendent of the randomly selected school districts

was asked to grant the researcher permission to involve principals and teachers in the study. Due to lack of response from several superintendents, the original target sample was not sufficiently large. Therefore, in an attempt to obtain an adequate sample, the researcher requested permission from all 64 districts in the population. A total of 20 superintendents granted the researcher permission to involve the principals and teachers in his or her district. All school principals within the 20 districts were sent an e-mail that explained the study and included a request for their participation in the electronic survey. In addition, the principals were sent an attachment to the teacher survey link and asked to forward the teacher survey link to all the teachers within their school. The survey links sent to each principal were coded according to the school's performance score. A total of 13 districts responded to the surveys, which resulted in a 65% response rate (13 out of 20 districts). Table 1 shows the demographics for the principals that participated in the survey.

Table 1

Demographic Information of Principals Responding to Survey (N=72)

Demographic	Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	24	66.7
	Female	48	33.3
Years of Administrative	0-5 years	26	36.1
Experience	6-10 years	16	22.2
	11-15 years	15	20.8
	16-20 years	5	6.9
	20+ years	10	13.9

A sample of 68 principals completed the principal survey. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics and correlations for all the variables in the study for principals. The correlations between pairs of variables were similar to those previously reported. Pearson product-moment correlations were used for all pairs of variables, except for those involving gender, which used point-biserial correlations. The correlations among the surveyed items showed that they were related in ways theoretically consistent with the intention of the scale. The correlations are in the expected direction, which supports the validity of the survey.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Principals Responding to Survey

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. School performance score category	2.38	.82	-						
2. Gender	.34	.47	-.030	-					
3. Years of administrative experience	2.41	1.38	-.08	.28*	-				
4. Do you encourage teacher leadership?	.93	.26	.06	-.03	.002	-			
5. Do teachers believe you encourage teacher leadership?	.93	.26	.06	-.03	.002	.1.00**	-		
6. Ratings of beliefs of teacher involvement	4.57	.44	.07	-.03	-.04	.42**	.42**	-	
7. Ratings of actual involvement	3.32	.71	.25*	.25	.12	.32**	.32**	.39**	-

Note. $N_{Principals}=68$.
*Correlation is significant at $p<.05$. **Correlation is significant at $p<.01$.

An electronic link to the teachers' surveys was sent out via e-mail to the

principals, who in turn directed it to all of the classroom teachers within their school.

Table 3 shows the demographics for the teachers that participated in the survey.

A total 142 teachers completed the survey. Table 4 shows the descriptive statistics and

correlations for all the variables in the study for teachers. Pearson product-moment

correlations were computed for all pairs of variables, except for those involving gender

which use point-biserial correlations. As with the principal scale, the variables were

correlated in ways consistent with theoretical expectations and with findings from

previous research.

Table 3

Demographic Information of Teachers Responding to Survey (N=144)

Demographic	Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	20	13.9
	Female	124	86.1
Years of Teaching Experience	0-5 years	31	21.5
	6-10 years	15	10.4
	11-15 years	31	21.5
	16-20 years	22	15.3
	20+ years	45	31.2

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Teachers Responding to Survey

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. School performance score category	2.65	1.06	-							
2. Gender	.13	.34	-.02	-						
3. Years of experience	3.25	1.53	.09	-.10	-					
4. Do you consider self a teacher leader?	.68	.47	.08	-.21	.27**	-				
5. Do other teachers consider you a teacher leader?	.68	.46	.12	-.17	.20*.	.82**	-			
6. Ratings of beliefs of teacher involvement	4.16	.42	.01	-.09	-.003	.33**	.28*	-		
7. Ratings of actual involvement	2.40	.81	.11	-.09	.17*	.46**	.43**	.43**	-	
8. Ratings of ideal teacher involvement	3.45	.84	-.09	-.18	-.07	.30**	.34**	.33**	.52**	-

Note. $N_{Teachers}$=142.
*Correlation is significant at $p<.05$. **Correlation is significant at $p<.01$.

Instrumentation

The *Teacher Leadership Survey* was used to measure the perceptions of principals

and teachers regarding the concept of teacher leadership and school improvement. A

portion of the survey was adapted with permission from Birky et al. (see Appendix B),

with the remainder of the survey being constructed by the researcher based upon

information learned from the review of the related literature (e.g., Andrews & Crowther,

2002; Barth, 2001; Birky et al., 2006; Childs-Bowen, et al., 2000; Danielson, 2006;

Durrant & Holden, 2006; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lambert, 2006; Marks & Printy,

2003). The first part of the survey used a 5-point Likert-type rating to rate teacher

involvement in different leadership roles or activities. The teachers had an additional

portion on their survey in which they also rated how involved they would like to be in

selected leadership roles or activities. This portion of the teacher survey used the same

5-point Likert-type scale. The next part of the survey used a similar 5-point Likert-type

rating and required the principals and teachers to rate their beliefs in the importance of

teacher leadership activities on school improvement and student achievement. The last

section of the survey consisted of three statements pertaining to factors, rewards, and

barriers to teachers as leaders. The participants had to choose from the given statements

one factor, one reward, and one barrier that they believed influenced teacher leadership.

Research Questions and Data Analysis

Responses from the *Teacher Leadership Survey* were entered into an SPSS 16.0

database. Data were analyzed using independent *t*-tests, paired *t*-tests, and tests for the

significance of the difference between proportions as appropriate. Statistical significance

was set at the .05 level of confidence except for sets of survey items, which were

evaluated at $p<.008$ in order to control for possible Incremental Type I Error. Results of statistical tests were used to answer the following research questions.

Research Question 1. Is there a significant difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of how frequently teachers engage in leadership activities?

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine whether there were significant differences between the ratings of principals and teachers in regard to actual teacher involvement in teacher leadership activities or roles. The mean total score for principals across the ten teacher involvement items was 3.30 (SD=.71), whereas the mean score for the teachers across these same 10 items was 2.40 (SD=.81). Equal variances were assumed for each test based on Levene's test for Equality of Variances, $p=.49$ (Field, 2009). The t-test showed a significant difference between the mean score of the principals and teachers, $t(210)=7.84, p<.001$. Thus, there were significant differences between the perceptions of principals and teachers concerning how frequently teachers engaged in leadership activities. The principals reported the teachers as engaging in leadership activities significantly more frequently (M=3.27, SD=.73) than the teachers themselves reported engaging in these same leadership activities (M= 2.39, SD=.81). The overall mean score for the principals fell within the range of *occasionally* (3.0), whereas the overall mean score for the teachers fell within the range of *seldom* (2.0). The results of the t-test are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

Comparison of Principals' Versus Teachers' Ratings of Teachers' Involvement in Teacher Leadership Activities/Roles

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	*t*	*df*	Sig (2-tailed)
Principal	72	3.27	.73	7.70	214	.001
Teacher	144	2.39	.81			

Further analysis of the mean scores for individual items yielded information of interest relating to the perceptions of the role of teacher leadership in specific areas surveyed. Table 6 displays the mean scores and results of *t*-tests of the 10 items comprising the teacher involvement scale of the principals and the teachers. A comparison of the mean scores of each individual scale showed significant differences for nine of the 10 scale items. In addition, an inspection of the mean scores for the items indicated that the perceptions of the principals were higher than the perceptions of the teachers in regard to teacher involvement in leadership roles. Principals and teachers shared a similar mean score and ranked *selecting new administrators* as *occasionally*. However, the other nine scales showed significant differences with the principals rating each of the remaining nine items higher than the teachers rating of the items. The largest differences in the mean scores concerned *designing staff development/in-service*. The principals' scale ranked *often* (M=3.72, SD= .84) whereas the teachers' scale ranked *seldom* (M=1.99, SD=1.14). Another substantial difference in rank was the item *selecting new teachers*. Principals' ranked this item as *occasionally* (M=2.78, SD=1.30), whereas the teachers' ranked this item as *almost never* (M=1.26, SD=.71).

Table 6

Principals' and Teachers' Mean Scores for Each of the Ten Items Concerning Actual Teacher Involvement in Teacher Leadership Roles

Statements	Principal Mean	Teacher Mean	*t*	*p*
1. Choosing textbooks/instructional materials	4.33	3.15	6.15	.001
2. Shaping the curriculum	4.00	3.12	4.71	.001
3. Setting standards for student behavior	4.43	3.71	4.52	.001
4. Selecting new administrators	2.64	2.82	-.90	.36
5. Designing staff development/in-service	3.72	1.99	10.99	.001
6. Setting promotion and retention policies	2.63	1.52	6.77	.001
7. Deciding school budgets	2.15	1.77	2.18	.03
8. Evaluating teacher performance	2.60	1.73	4.77	.001
9. Selecting new teachers	2.78	1.26	10.76	.001
10.Tracking students into special classes	3.57	2.81	3.86	.001

Note. $N_{Principals}= 67$. $N_{Teachers}= 136$. $df=201$.

Research Question 2. Is there a difference between actual teacher involvement and the preferred level of involvement in teacher leadership roles?

A paired *t*-test was used to determine if there were significant differences between the teacher ratings of actual versus the preferred level of involvement in teacher leadership roles compared to the ratings of how involved they would like to be. Again, mean scores for each of the 10 scales were computed by averaging the score given by the

teachers for how involved they were and also for how involved they would like to be in each of the leadership roles. First, an overall total mean score was computed for the teachers and for the principals. The paired samples *t*-test indicated that there was a significant difference, *t* (141) = -15.41, p<.001 between ratings of involvement of teachers in leadership roles when compared to the ratings of how involved they would like to be in those same leadership roles. As indicated in Table 5, the mean score for the teachers' perceived actual involvement in leadership roles was 2.40 (SD=.81), whereas the mean score for how involved teachers would ideally like to be in leadership roles or activities was 3.45 (SD=.84). Thus, teachers indicated that they would like to be more involved in leadership roles, particularly when the roles involved *selecting new teachers* or *evaluating teachers*. Table 7 displays the teachers' means and *t*-test results of each of the 10 items surveyed. Furthermore, Table 8 reveals statistically significant differences for each of the 10 teacher leadership items, with teachers reporting, in all cases, a preference for greater involvement in leadership roles. As indicated in Table 8, teachers reported the greatest preferred involvement (compared to their actual involvement) for items concerning: *selecting new teachers* and *evaluating teacher performance*.

Table 7

Comparison of Teacher Actual and Preferred Level of Involvement in Leadership Roles

Teacher Involvement	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	*t*	*df*	Sig (2-tailed)
Actual	142	2.40	.81	-15.41	141	.001
Preferred	142	3.45	.84			

Table 8

Teachers' Mean Scores for Actual Involvement Versus Preferred Level of Involvement in Leadership Roles

Statements	Actual Involvement	Preferred Involvement	t	p
1. Choosing textbooks/instructional materials	3.16	3.96	-8.24	.001
2. Shaping the curriculum	3.12	3.92	-8.45	.001
3. Setting standards for student behavior	3.71	4.26	-5.67	.001
4. Selecting new administrators	2.82	3.60	-8.34	.001
5. Designing staff development/in-service	1.99	3.30	-10.86	.001
6. Setting promotion and retention policies	1.52	2.70	-10.93	.001
7. Deciding school budgets	1.77	2.89	-10.30	.001
8. Evaluating teacher performance	1.73	3.09	-12.52	.001
9. Selecting new teachers	1.26	3.22	-16.51	.001
10.Tracking students into special classes	2.81	3.60	-7.31	.001

Note. $N_{Teachers} = 142$. $df=141$.

Research Question 3. Is there a difference between teachers' and principals' beliefs about the influence of teacher leadership on school improvement?

To determine if there was a significant difference between teachers' and principals' beliefs concerning the influence of teacher leadership roles on attributes of school improvement, *t*-tests for independent means were conducted. Mean scores for

each of the 10 scales (see Appendix D-Teacher Survey, questions 16-17; and Appendix C, Principal Survey, questions 13-14) were determined by averaging the scores reported by principals and also by teachers. *T*-tests were calculated to determine if significant differences existed between the ratings given by principals and ratings given by teachers. Table 9 displays the teachers' mean scores and principals' mean scores as well as the results of the *t*-test. Independent samples *t*-tests indicated there was a significant difference between the overall mean score of the principals and the overall mean score of the teachers on the perceived impact of teacher leadership roles on school improvement.

The mean score for the principals was 4.57 (SD=.44), whereas the mean score for the teachers was 4.16 (SD=.42). Equal variances were assumed for each test based on results of Levene's test for equality of variances. The *t*-test for independent groups showed a significant difference between the two groups, $t (210) = 6.50, p <.05$, as reported in Table 9. Thus, the principals reported significantly greater belief that the impact of teacher leadership roles would result in school improvement than what was reported by the teachers.

Table 9

Mean Scores and Results of t-Test on Teachers' and Principals' Beliefs of the Effect of Teacher Leadership on Attributes of School Improvement

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)
Principals	70	4.57	.44	6.50	210	.001
Teachers	142	4.16	.42			

Overall, the principals ranked the scales closer to *strongly agree,* whereas the teachers ranked the scales closer to *agree.* Thus, the principals reported greater belief that teachers' leadership roles positively influence attributes of school improvement. In all cases, the principals reported significantly greater belief that implementation of teacher leadership roles would result in attributes of school improvement than the teachers. As indicated in Table 10, the two items showing the greatest differences were *teachers should include community input in establishing expectations and standards* (principal M=6.47, SD=.50; teacher M=3.81, SD=.86) and *students are more successful if teacher is a leader* (principal M= 4.60, SD=.65; teacher M=3.98, SD=.81).

As indicated in Table 10, *t*-tests comparing the mean scores for each of the 10 items on the principals' belief scales to each of the corresponding 10 items on the teachers' belief scales found significant differences on each of the scales. Furthermore, Table 10 displays the principals' and teachers' means and *t*-test results for each of the 10 items.

Table 10

Perceived Impact of Teacher Leadership on Attributes of School Improvement

Belief Statements	Principal Mean	t	p	Teacher Mean
1. Students are more successful if teacher is a leader	4.60	5.42	.000	3.98
2. Teacher collaboration is important to student success	4.78	2.96	.003	4.49
3. Teachers modeling leadership skills is important for student success	4.73	2.06	.041	4.57
4. School improvement requires teachers to lead	4.58	2.56	.011	4.32
5. Teacher networks improve teaching	4.63	5.01	.001	4.09
6. Teacher Leadership should reach the entire school community	4.45	4.72	.001	3.91
7. Teachers should include community input in establishing expectations and standards	4.55	6.47	.001	3.81
8. School has a clear vision and goals	4.54	2.45	.015	4.25
9. Staff builds trust throughout school	4.40	3.49	.001	3.90
10.Student outcomes depend primarily on classroom atmosphere	4.58	2.24	.026	4.33
Mean Total	4.57			4.16

Note. $N=$principals67. $N=$teachers138. $df=$203.

Research Question 4. Is there a difference between teachers' perceptions and principals' perceptions of the most important factor needed from school administrators to positively impact effective teacher leadership?

Data from question 13 from the teacher survey and question 10 from the principal survey were compared and tests for differences between two proportions were used to examine if there were differences in the frequency of responses to each category by principals and the teachers. A two-tailed .05 level of significance was used in order to test the null hypothesis for research question four. When teachers and principals were asked to rate the one factor needed most from administrators in order to become more effective teacher leaders, over 50% of the responses of both teachers and principals chose either *release time out of the classroom* (33.3% of principals, 23.6% of teachers) or *additional training on teacher leadership* (27.8% of principals, 27.1% of teachers).

Table 11 lists the frequencies of each of the teacher and principal responses. A test for the significance of difference between two proportions was used in order to test directly whether, for example, the proportion of teachers and principals that chose release time out of the classroom was significantly different. However, the test for the significance of the differences between two proportions showed no significant differences between the scales rated most important by the teachers and those rated most important by the principals. More specifically, although the factor chosen most frequently by the principals was *release time out of classroom* (33.3%), whereas the factor chosen most frequently by the teachers was *additional teacher leadership training* (27.1%), the differences in teacher versus principal proportions for these factors were not significant. Thus, the teachers and the principals rated two factors, *release time out of classroom* and *additional teacher leadership training* as similarly important.

Table 11

Principals' and Teachers' Frequencies of Factors That Teachers Need From Administrators for Effective Teacher Leadership

Needs	Principal Frequency	Percent	Teacher Frequency	Percent	$z*$
1. Encouragement from principal	13	18.3	26	18.4	.01
2. Release time out of classroom	24	33.8	34	24.1	1.11
3. Additional teacher leadership training	20	28.2	39	27.7	.05
4. Additional training in content area	6	8.5	7	5.0	.36
5. Additional resources	8	11.3	25	17.7	-.46
6. No desire to become Teacher Leader	0		10	7.1	
Total	71	100	141	100	

Note. N Principals= 71. N teachers=141.
*For the test for significance of the difference between two proportions, any $z >1.96$ or <-1.96 is significant at $p. <.05$.

Research Question 5. Is there a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the most effective reward for teachers in order to encourage teacher leadership?

To determine if there was a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of rewards that would encourage teacher leadership, data from question 14 from the teacher survey and question 11 from the principal survey were collected and a test for the significance of the difference between two proportions was used to examine if there were overall differences in the percentages of responses of the teachers and the principals to the various rewards. More specifically, a test for the significance of the

differences between two proportions using a two-tailed .05 level of significance was used in order to test whether there was a significant difference in the proportions of teachers and principals selecting the most effective rewards.

Teachers and principals were both asked to choose the one reward that would be most effective at encouraging teacher leadership in schools. Forty-seven percent of the teachers choose *additional compensation as the most effective reward,* compared to 33.3% of the principals who chose this reward. For the principals, 44 % choose *release time from classroom responsibilities* whereas 29.2% of the teachers chose this reward. Consequently, although the principals and the teachers selected different rewards, (i.e., release time and additional compensation, respectively) the test for significance of difference between two proportions showed that the difference in choices of rewards was not statistically significant. Table 12 lists the frequencies of each of the teacher and principal responses and the results of the tests of proportions.

Table 12

Frequencies of Rewards Teachers Need for Effective Teacher Leadership

Rewards	Principal Frequency	Percentage	Teacher Frequency	Percentage	$z*$
1. Release time from the classroom	32	45.1	42	29.8	1.47
2. Administrator words of praise	15	21.1	32	22.7	0.11
3. Additional compensation	24	33.8	67	47.5	-1.13
Total	71	100	141	100	

Note. $N_{principals}$=71. $N_{teachers}$=141.
*For the test for the significance of the difference between two proportions, any $z>1.96$ or $<$-1.96 is statistically significant.

Research Question 6. Is there a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of barriers to effective teacher leadership in schools?

To determine if there was a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of barriers that influence effective leadership, data from question 15 from the teacher survey and question 12 from the principal survey were collected. Tests for the significance of the difference between two proportions were used to test whether there was a significant difference in the percent of principals and teachers selecting each barrier. Teachers and principals were both asked to choose the one barrier that makes teacher leadership difficult in schools. There was overwhelming agreement between the principals and the teachers concerning the most important barrier. As indicated in Table 13, 79.4% of the principals and 81.6% of the teachers selected *teachers do not have enough time to teach and lead beyond the classroom* as the most important barrier. Table

13 displays the frequencies and percentages of the teachers' and principals' ratings of barriers that make teacher leadership difficult in schools. The test for significance of the difference between two proportions was not statistically significant for any of the five barriers.

Table 13

Frequencies of Barriers That Prevent Effective Teacher Leadership in Schools

Barriers	Principal Frequency	Percentage	Teacher Frequency	Percentage	z^*
1. Administrator does not provide opportunities	8	11.8	3	2.1	0.47
2. Administrator does not encourage	1	1.5	10	7.1	0.22
3. Lack of teacher/colleague collaboration	3	4.4	12	8.5	0.17
4. Teachers do not have enough time to teach and lead beyond classroom	54	79.4	115	81.6	-.99
5. Teachers lack leadership skills	2	2.9	1	.7	.017
Total	68	100.0	141	100.0	

Note. $N_{principals}$=68. $N_{teachers}$=141.
*For the test for the significance of the difference between two proportions, any z>1.96 or <-1.96 is statistically significant.

Statement of Research Hypotheses

Research Hypothesis 1. There is a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of how frequently teachers engage in leadership activities.

Based on the analysis and data presented in Tables 3 and 4, the null hypothesis of no difference was rejected at the .05 level of significance. Therefore, the research

hypothesis (i.e., of a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of how frequently teachers engage in leadership activities) was supported. Significant differences were found in how principals and teachers perceive teachers' involvement in teacher leadership roles and activities.

Research Hypothesis 2. There is a difference between actual teacher involvement and the preferred level of involvement in teacher leadership roles.

Based on the analysis and data presented in Tables 5 and 6, the null hypothesis of no difference was rejected at the .05 level of significance. Therefore, the research hypothesis (i.e., there is a difference between actual teacher involvement and preferred level of involvement in teacher leadership roles.) was supported. Statistical differences were found in the mean statistics for the ratings of actual involvement compared to the rating of how involved teachers would like to be in leadership roles.

Research Hypothesis 3. There is a difference between teachers' and principals' beliefs about the influence of teacher leadership on school improvement.

Based upon the analysis and data presented in Tables 7 and 8, the null hypothesis of no difference was rejected at the .05 level of significance. Therefore, the research hypothesis (i.e., there is a difference between teachers' and principals' beliefs about the impact of teacher leadership on school improvement.) was supported. Statistical differences were found in the mean statistics for the perceived impact of teacher leadership on school improvement.

Research Hypothesis 4. There is a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the most important kind of support that teachers need from principals impacting effective teacher leadership.

Based upon the frequencies reported and presented in Table 9, there were no significant differences in the perceptions of the most important factor teachers needed from administrators to become more effective leaders. The highest frequency on the teacher survey was *additional teacher leadership training* and the highest frequency on the principal survey was *release time out of the classroom*. However, there were not significant differences in the proportion of teachers and principals who chose either *additional teacher leadership training* or *release time out of the classroom*.

Research Hypothesis 5. There is a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the most effective reward for teachers that encourages teacher leadership.

Based on the frequencies reported and presented in Table 10, there were no significant differences in the perceptions of the most effective reward teachers needed from administrators to become more effective leaders. The highest frequency on the teacher survey was *additional compensation* and the highest frequency on the principal survey was *release time out of the classroom*. However, there were not significant differences in the proportion of teachers and principals who chose either *additional compensation* or *release time out of the classroom*.

Research Hypothesis 6. There is a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the most important barrier to effective teacher leadership in schools.

Based on the frequencies reported and displayed in Table 13, there was not a significant difference in the perceptions of the most important barrier teachers encountered that prevented them from becoming more effective leaders. The highest frequency on both the teacher and principal survey was *teachers do not have time to work*

with students AND lead beyond the classroom. The test for the significance of difference between proportions was not statistically significant.

Summary

Analysis of the data collected from the *Teacher Leadership Survey* provided findings pertinent to the research questions. From the data, significant differences between perceptions of teachers and principals in regard to teacher leadership roles on attributes of school improvement were distinguished. In addition, differences in teachers' and principals' perceptions of teacher involvement in leadership capacities, as well as teachers' desires to be more involved with leadership roles, were duly noted. In the final chapter, an overview of the design and procedures employed for this study are described. A discussion of the findings of the study with limitations and design control are included. Furthermore, implications for practice and recommendations for further research are presented.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

In this investigation the researcher examined teachers' and principals' perceptions in regard to teacher leadership roles, as well as beliefs about the influence of teacher leadership roles on attributes of school improvement. In addition, the researcher observed differences between points of view of teachers and principals concerning teacher leadership. The methods in which administrators encouraged, discouraged, and rewarded teachers who desired to become active leaders was also thoroughly explored. Furthermore, teachers completed a scale which allowed the researcher to examine leadership roles in which they desired more active involvement and perceptions about the extent these roles affected attributes of school improvement. This chapter provides the purpose of the study and reviews the design and procedures utilized throughout the study. Hypotheses, findings and limitations are discussed, as well as implications for practice and recommendations for future research.

Purpose of the Study

The overall purpose of this study was to add to the current body of knowledge by focusing on the perceptions of teachers and principals concerning teachers as leaders. Specifically, the researcher examined principals' perceptions of behaviors that promoted and encouraged empowerment of teachers in leadership positions. In addition, the

researcher investigated the perceptions of teachers regarding whether principals encouraged and supported their individual growth in leadership positions. Teachers' perceptions of their actual involvement versus their preferred level of involvement in leadership roles were also surveyed. Finally, the researcher examined principals' and teachers' perceptions of teacher leadership roles and the influence these roles had on attributes of school improvement. Research questions were formulated based upon a review of current literature on teacher leadership and the positive effects teachers as leaders have upon overall school improvement (Barth, 2001a; Yukl, 2006).

The need for the study emerged after an extensive review of literature revealed the necessity of teacher leaders supporting and fostering student achievement in schools today (Davies, 2005; Spillane et al., 2004). However, because the school principal has the vital role of cultivating and establishing the school climate that creates teacher leadership opportunities, an examination of principals' beliefs about teachers as leaders also required scrutiny (Andrews & Crowther, 2002). Additionally, if teachers are favored to take on more leadership roles, barriers, rewards, and prerequisites should be addressed so that teachers can function more effectively as leaders (Durrant & Holden, 2006). Although extensive research supports the notion that leadership is associated with teacher leaders and school improvement, few studies exist that examine the overall concept of teacher leadership from teachers' or principals' perspectives. Therefore, this study was conducted to fill the gap in the literature.

Consequently, in an attempt to glean a better understanding of teacher leadership roles from the points of view of the principal and of the teachers, and to examine the

extent to which these roles affected attributes of school improvement, the following

research questions were addressed:

1. Is there a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of how

frequently teachers engaged in leadership activities?

2. Is there a difference between actual teacher involvement and the preferred

level of involvement in teacher leadership roles?

3. Is there a difference between teachers' and principals' beliefs about the impact

of teacher leadership on attributes of school improvement?

4. Is there a difference between teachers' perceptions and principals' perceptions

of the most important factor(s) needed from school administrators to influence

effective teacher leadership positively?

5. Is there a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the most

effective reward for teachers in order to encourage teacher leadership?

6. Is there a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of barriers to

effective teacher leadership in schools?

Tests of the Hypotheses

Research Hypothesis 1 stated that there is a difference between teachers' and

principals' perceptions of how frequently teachers engage in leadership activities. The

Null Hypothesis 1 stated there is no difference between teachers' and principals'

perceptions of how frequently teachers engage in leadership activities. This hypothesis

was tested by conducting *t*-tests for independent means to determine if significant

differences existed between the ratings given by principals and the ratings given by

teachers. Data analysis revealed that there were significant differences in the perceptions of principals and teachers, thus the researcher rejected the null hypothesis.

Research Hypothesis 2 stated there is a difference between actual teacher involvement and preferred level of involvement in teacher leadership roles. Null Hypothesis 2 stated there is no difference between actual teacher involvement and preferred level of involvement in teacher leadership roles. This hypothesis was tested by comparing the means of the ratings for each of the 10 items from question 8 (i.e., actual involvement) and question 9 (i.e., preferred level of involvement) on the teacher survey. Data analysis revealed that there were significant differences between teachers' actual involvement in leadership roles and preferred level of involvement in leadership roles, and the null hypothesis for research question 2 was rejected.

Research Hypothesis 3 stated there is a difference between teachers' and principals' beliefs about the impact of teacher leadership on school improvement. Null Hypothesis 3 stated there is no difference between teachers' and principals' beliefs about the impact of teacher leadership on school improvement. This hypothesis was tested by conducting t-tests for independent means using the ratings given by the principals and the ratings given by the teachers on 10 items concerning the perceived impact of teacher leadership on school improvement. Data analysis revealed significant differences in the overall mean scores of the principals and teachers and the null hypothesis for research question 3 was rejected.

Research Hypothesis 4 stated there is a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the most important kind of support that teachers need from principals impacting effective teacher leadership. Null Hypothesis 4 stated there is no

difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the most important kind of support that teachers need from principals impacting effective teacher leadership. This hypothesis was tested using a test for the significance of the difference between two proportions to examine if there were differences in the percentage of responses to each support factor. Although the teachers and principals selected different support factors, the tests for significance of difference between proportions were not statistically significant. So the null hypothesis was not rejected and the research hypothesis was not supported. The most important support reported by the principals was *release time of out of the classroom* (33.3%), whereas *release time out of the classroom* was the second most important support reported by the teachers (23.5%). The most important support reported by the teachers was *additional teacher leadership training* (27.1%). *Additional teacher leadership training* was the second most important factor reported by the principals (27.8%). Tests for the significance of the difference between proportions showed no significant differences in the proportion of teachers versus principals selecting release time as the most important support. Also, tests for significance of the difference between proportions showed no significant differences in the proportion of teachers versus principals selecting leadership training as the most important support.

Research Hypothesis 5 stated there is a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the most effective reward for teachers that encourages teacher leadership. Null Hypothesis 5 stated there is no difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of which reward for teachers is most important in encouraging teacher leadership. The null hypothesis for research question 5 was not rejected. The proportion of teachers versus principals selecting each reward was assessed by tests for

the significance of the difference between two proportions. When principals were asked to choose the one reward they believed would be most effective at encouraging teacher leadership, 44% chose *release time from the classroom* and 33% chose *additional compensation*. When teachers were asked the same question, 46% chose *additional compensation* and 29% chose *release time from the classroom.*

Research Hypothesis 6 stated there is a difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the most important barrier to effective teacher leadership in schools. Null Hypothesis 6 stated there is no difference between teachers' and principals' perceptions of what is the most important barrier to effective teacher leadership. Tests of the significance of the difference between two proportions were used to compare whether there were significant differences in the proportion of teachers and principals who selected each barrier. Teachers and principals were both asked to choose the one barrier that makes teacher leadership difficult in schools. Both groups, 79% of principals and 81% of teachers, overwhelmingly chose *teachers do not have enough time to work with students AND lead beyond the classroom.*

<div align="center">

Principals' and Teachers' Perception Differences

</div>

There were both similarities and differences between teachers and principals in the perceptions of teacher leadership. The general findings, according to data collected throughout this study, indicated a mismatch between principals' and teachers' perceptions of teacher leadership. Principals reported that teachers engaged in leadership activities significantly more often than the teachers themselves reported engaging in leadership activities. Also, principals reported significantly greater belief that teacher leadership would positively influence student performance than what was reported by the

teachers. Most principals considered themselves administrators who encouraged teachers to be leaders, and most felt that the teachers would agree that they encouraged teacher leadership. However, though the data indicated that teachers were mostly satisfied with leadership opportunities afforded to them by their principal, they indicated they would like to be more involved, more often, with leadership roles that primarily affected the classroom.

The survey results indicated that the principals and teachers viewed teacher leadership as unreasonably time-consuming and reserved only for teachers in formal leadership positions. Both teachers and principals in this study demonstrated that they were embracing "the archaic definition of leadership and timeworn assumptions of who can lead" (Lambert, 2003b, p. 421). The very concept of teacher leadership is not new; however, many still viewed teacher leadership as a sector of formal, administrative responsibilities. Furthermore, the old assumption that effective leadership may only evolve from the school principal may be the reason as to why teacher leadership is considered a difficult concept to implement (Lambert, 1998; Little, 2003). Moreover, Barth (2001b) contends that when decision making is dispersed, the quality of the decision is better because "None of us is as smart as all of us" (p. 445). However, in order for teachers to become willing participants in leadership roles, the principal must move past the *I* in leadership and embrace the collaborative *we* (Bolman & Deal, 2003). When principals create professional learning communities within the school by supporting and sharing leadership and gradually release some control and authority, teachers emerge as leaders (Childs-Bowen et al., 2000; Gabriel, 2005; Lambert, 2005).

Needs, Rewards, and Barriers to Teacher Leadership

Furthermore, frequencies from the data analysis concluded that perceptions of teachers and principals reflected some similarities and some differences when asked to choose one need, reward, and barrier to teacher leadership. Principals and teachers agreed that *release time out of the classroom* and *additional training in teacher leadership* were the most common needs for teachers. As for rewards that would be effective in encouraging teacher leadership, again, many principals rated *release time from the classroom*, but most teachers chose *additional compensation.* However, when principals and teachers were asked to rate the one barrier that makes teacher leadership difficult, almost all surveyed participants choose *teachers do not have enough time to fulfill classroom obligations AND lead beyond the classroom.*

Principals' and Teachers' Misconceptions of Teacher Leadership

Results of this study indicated that both principals and teachers revealed misconceptions of teacher leadership. For example, many principals and teachers alike held the belief that teacher leadership activities required substantial amounts of time that may distract from their classroom duties. In addition, many principals and teachers viewed teacher leadership roles as extra time spent outside of the classroom. Barth (2001b) cautions that obstacles may abound for teachers who wish to become teacher leaders; however, time constraints and heavy classroom responsibilities are often the main reasons cited for lack of teacher leadership. Therefore, Barth suggested that having a clearly defined school vision was one way to operate within these constraints. Embracing a clear school vision makes it easier to focus on the most important factors for school improvement, and distractions are less evident.

Teacher Leadership Roles

Additionally, data from this study indicated that principals and teachers need a clearer understanding of the definition, as well as the roles, of teacher leaders. Gabriel (2005) explains that teacher leadership may be viewed as formal or informal, and having three layers. As for formal leadership, there are those who are assigned and those who volunteer. Whereas, the third layer of teacher leadership is informal, consisting of teachers who lead within the framework of their own classrooms. These informal teacher leaders display excellent classroom management and often have successful students. Their roles affect several broad areas: (a) influencing the school culture, (b) productive collaboration with peers, (c) supporting other teacher leaders, and (d) enhancing or aiding in the improvement of school improvement (Gabriel).

Further data analysis from this study revealed a discrepancy in teachers' perceptions and principals' perceptions concerning teacher involvement in leadership roles. Teachers indicated that they were not as involved as the principals perceived, and the teachers indicated a desire for a much greater level of involvement in teacher leadership roles. Consequently, principals require a better understanding of their responsibility in developing and nurturing teacher leaders. Additionally, it is necessary that principals acknowledge a school culture and climate conducive for teacher leadership. According to research studies, the leading obstacle to teacher leadership and the source of the greatest influence is the school principal (Barth, 2001b; Blegen & Kennedy, 2000; Gabriel, 2005). Creating an organizational culture that supports leadership opportunities for everyone requires principals to have a drastically different set of leadership skills than were once necessary (Ash & Persall, 2000). Most administrative

structures in place today are configured in bureaucratic and hierarchical fashion and teachers are convinced that to be a teacher leader, one must have a formal title (Anderson, 2004; Muijs & Harris, 2006).

Teacher Leadership Roles and Attributes of School Improvement

Finally, when principals and teachers were asked to rate teacher leadership roles on attributes of school improvement, the majority either *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that teacher leadership roles did have a positive effect on overall school improvement. This notion is in alignment with research studies that declare that effective leadership makes a dramatic difference in improving learning and is considered second only to teaching among school-related factors that affect student learning (Leithwood et al., 2004).

Limitations

Although the researcher of this investigation took several steps to minimize effects of limitations, as with any research study, there were limitations and assumptions pertinent to this investigation (Heppner & Heppner, 2004).

1. The sample was not randomly selected.

2. The study sample was limited to public schools in Louisiana.

3. The validity of the quantitative data was limited by the degree of reliability and validity of the survey instrument.

4. The researcher assumed that participants were forthright in their responses and interpreted the content of the survey instruments in the way in which they were intended.

5. This study was limited by the amount of experience of the researcher in survey analysis skills.

6. The researcher assumed the sample chosen for this study was representative of schools throughout Louisiana.

7. Because the survey was on-line, some teachers or principals may not have participated due to limited computer access or knowledge of electronic surveys.

8. The self-report nature of the survey and possible response biases of the teachers or principals in trying to respond favorably may have confounded the results.

Implications

Teacher leadership that supports school improvement requires district personnel, school administrators, and teachers to view leadership through fresh lenses. Historically, top-down reform efforts have not been beneficial in improving student achievement because top-down efforts deny teachers a voice and undermines their commitment to education (Ingersoll, 2007). Furthermore, many individuals view *leader* and *leadership* as the same thing, which, consequently, discourages teachers from participating in leadership activities (Lambert, 2003b). True teacher leadership is not about power, but is about shared decision-making structures (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). In addition, the purpose of teacher leadership is the improvement of instructional practices, which lead to school improvement (Elmore, 2000).

Therefore, for teacher leadership to flourish, principals must be informed of the benefits of teacher leaders in overall school improvement. Principals need to recognize that they have limited expertise and cannot be expected to be specialists in all areas of content and curriculum. Consequently, teacher leaders within a school can provide

principals with a greater variety of professional knowledge that can be beneficial to student success and school improvement. Next, principals must embrace the notion of teachers as leaders by thoughtfully reflecting on their own views of sharing authority and empowering teachers to take on leadership roles within the school (Bolman & Deal, 2003). By incorporating a system of shared governance to build leadership capacity and gradually releasing some control and authority, teachers will emerge as leaders. Durrant and Frost (2003) point out that the more teachers feel a part of the decision making process, the higher their morale, and the greater their involvement and dedication to overall school improvement. When principals create a school culture and environment that is conducive to teachers sharing in the governance and decision making, great schools can grow (Brown, 2008; Childs-Bowen et al., 2000; Gabriel, 2005; Lambert, 2003b; Leithwood et al., 2004).

Equally important to school reform is the dynamic contribution of teacher leaders (Lambert, 2003b). Teachers need to understand the difference in formal and informal leadership roles (Gabriel, 2005). Many teachers seem to be under the assumption that becoming a teacher leader would require one to abandon the classroom for a formal leadership title. In contrast, teacher leaders have no positional authority, but are recognized by their peers for their expertise and willingness to collaborate with colleagues for the betterment of the school mission (Lambert, 2003b). Becoming a teacher leader does require teachers to take ownership of their own careers and exploit opportunities for professional growth (Kurtz, 2009). In addition, teachers as leaders have a vested interest in what they do and how it affects student learning. They are aware of the norms of their colleagues and understand their community's values and attitudes.

Strong teacher leaders reveal to others new and better ways of instructional practices, aspire for the best in themselves and their colleagues, and assist coworkers in problem solving (Kurtz, 2009; Leithwood et al., 2004).

Recommendations for Future Research

Many studies have linked school reform and benefits of teacher leadership to school improvement (e.g., Birky et al., 2006; Bolman & Deal, 2003; Brown, 2008; Childs-Bowen et al., 2000; Gabriel, 2005; Lambert, 2003b; Leithwood et al., 2004). National reform efforts have recommended widespread teacher leadership with phrases like *empowerment of teachers, faculty participation in management, authority of teachers, and consensus management* (Barth, 2001b). However, to reach a consensus as to what defines a teacher leader and the role teacher leadership plays in school improvement, more research studies should be conducted to analyze the degree to which successful schools and districts have identifiable teacher leadership. If districts are identified as having teacher leadership, what characterizes the leadership as being effective? More importantly, how does the effective leadership influence school improvement? Further, how can other districts employ these strategies successfully?

Additionally, a replication of this study utilizing individual schools should be conducted to compare perceptions of the school's principal and teachers concerning teacher leadership and the School Performance Score (SPS). If the SPS of the school is high, how does it compare to the perceptions of the teachers and principals in regard to teacher leadership? Research that compares actual student achievement data from schools with identified active teacher leadership should furthermore be conducted to determine effectiveness of teacher leadership on student achievement.

This particular study was restricted to building level principals and teachers. If this study was replicated utilizing entire school districts, would the same results emerge? How much effect does a superintendent have on a principal's ability to promote teacher leadership in a school? Research should be conducted to determine if the leadership style of a district administrator affects principals' leadership style.

Moreover, research studies have demonstrated that the success of teacher leadership is reliant upon the principal's leadership and willingness to foster teacher leadership (Barth, 2001b; Danielson, 2007; Durrant & Frost, 2003; Lambert, 2003b). Therefore, questions should be raised to determine if higher education is addressing teacher leadership concepts in the training of administrators. Similarly, do new teacher training programs include preparation about teachers as leaders? Research should be conducted to evaluate how equipped teachers and principals are for leadership positions after formal training.

Summary

The overall purpose of this study was to add to the current body of knowledge by focusing on the perceptions of teachers and principals concerning teachers as leaders. Specifically, the researcher examined principals' perceptions of behaviors that promoted and encouraged empowerment of teachers in leadership positions. In addition, the researcher investigated the perceptions of teachers regarding whether principals encouraged and supported their individual growth in leadership positions. Teachers' perceptions of their actual involvement versus their preferred level of involvement in leadership roles were also surveyed. Finally, the researcher examined principals' and teachers' perceptions of teacher leadership roles and the influence these roles had on

attributes of school improvement. According to the results of this study, perceptions of principals rated higher than the perceptions of teachers regarding the frequency and effectiveness of teacher leadership roles. That is, in general, principals reported that teachers engaged in leadership activities significantly more often than teachers reported engaging in these same leadership activities. The differences in the perceptions of teacher leadership held by the teachers and principals should be further investigated and perhaps clarified. Furthermore, the data indicated that principals, not teachers, placed more emphasis on teacher leadership and the role of teacher leadership concerning attributes of school improvement. Conversely, teachers indicated a significantly greater desire to become more involved in leadership roles and indicated the *need for additional training* and *lack of time* as barriers to effective teacher leadership.

The findings of this study raise concern that principals and teachers embrace different notions and assumptions of teacher leadership. Review of current literature clearly articulates the necessity of principals and teachers working collaboratively to enhance leadership positions and to institute new leadership roles for the sake of overall school improvement and student success.

REFERENCES

Anderson, K. D. (2004). The nature of teacher leadership in schools as reciprocal influences between teacher leaders and principals. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 15*(1), 97-113.

Andrews, D., & Crowther, F. (2002). Parallel leadership: A clue to the contents of the "black box" of school reform. *The International Journal of Educational Management, 16*(4), 152-159.

Ash, R. C., & Persall, J. M. (2000). The principal as chief learning officer: Developing teacher leaders. *NASSP Bulletin, 5,* 15-22.

Barth, R. S. (2001a). *Learning by heart.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Barth, R. S. (2001b). Teacher leader. *Phi Delta Kappan, 2,* 443-449.

Bauer, S., Haydel, J., & Cody, C. (2005, November). *Teaching teachers to lead: Some lessons.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association, Biloxi, MS. Retrieved from http://rapidintellect.com/AEQweb/5sep301215.htm

Birky, V. D., Shelton, M., & Headley, S. (2006). An administrator's challenge: Encouraging teachers to be leaders. *NASSP Bulletin, 90*(2), 87-101.

Blaikie, N. (2003). *Analysing quantitative data: From description to explanation.* London, England: Sage.

Blegen, M.B., & Kennedy, C. (2000). Principals and teachers, leading together. *NASSP Bulletin, 84,* 1-6. doi: 10.1177/019263650008461602

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2003). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership* (3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bossi, M. (2009). Developing lion leaders. *Leadership, 9*, 24-27.

Brandt, R. (1989). On teacher empowerment: A conversation with Ann Lieberman. *Educational Leadership, 5*, 23-26.

Bruffee, K. A. (1993). *Collaborative learning: Higher education, interdependence, and the authority of knowledge*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Bruning, J., & Kintz, B. (1968). Computation Handbook of Statistics. Glenview: Scott, Foresman & Company.

Brown, L. (2008). The case for teacher-led school improvement. *Principal, 87*(4), 28-31.

Bryk, A. S. (2010). Organizing schools for improvement. *Kappan, 91*(7), 23-30.

Bryk, A. S., & Schneider, B. (2002). *Trust in schools: A core resource for improvement.* New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Caine, G., & Caine, R.N. (2000). The learning community as a foundation for developing leaders. *NASSP Bulletin, 84*(616), 7-14.

Cherry, A. L. (2000). *A research primer for the helping professions: Methods, statistics, and writing.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Brooks/Cole.

Childs-Bowen, D., Moller, G., & Scrivner, J. (2000). Principals: Leaders of leaders. *National Association of Secondary School Principals, 5*, 27-34.

Copland, M. A. (2001). The myth of the superprincipal. *Phi Delta Kappan, 82*(7), 528-533.

Creswell, J.W. (2008). *Educational research.* Upper Saddle River, N J: Pearson

    Prentice Hall.

Danielson, C. (2006). *Teacher leadership that strengthens professional practice.*

    Alexandria,VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Danielson, C. (2007). The many faces of leadership. *Educational Leadership, 9,* 14-19.

Darling-Hammond, L., LaPointe, M., Meyerson, D., Orr. M. T., & Cohen, C. (2007).

    Preparing School Leaders for a changing world: Lesson from exemplary

    leadership development programs. [Stanford Educational Leadership Institute].

    Stanford, CA: Stanford University.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). Restoring our schools. *The Nation, 6,* 14-20.

Davies, B. (2005). *The essentials of school leadership.* Thousand Oaks, CA:Sage.

DePree, M. (1989). *Leadership is an art.* New York, NY: Dell.

DeVita, M.C. (2007, October). Leadership: The bridge to better learning. *Education*

    Leadership: A Bridge to School Reform. The Wallace Foundation's National

    Conference, New York, NY.

DeVita, M.C. (2009, October). Four big lessons from a decade of work. *Education*

    Leadership: An agenda for school improvement. The Wallace Foundation's

    National Conference, Washington, D.C.

Donaldson, G.A. (2007). What do teachers bring to leadership? *Educational Leadership,*

    9, 26-29.

Duncan, A. (2009, October). If our 95,000 schools each had a great principal, this thing would take care of itself. *Education Leadership: An agenda for school improvement.* The Wallace Foundation's National Conference, Washington, D.C.

Durrant, J., & Frost, D. (2003). Teacher leadership: Rationale, strategy and impact. *School Leadership & Management 23*(2), 173-186. doi: 10.1080/1363243032000091940

Durrant, J., & Holden, G. (2006). *Teachers leading change: Doing research for school improvement.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Eilers, A. M., & Camacho, A. (2007). School culture change in the making: Leadership factors that matter. Urban Education 42(6), 616-637.

Elmore, R. F. (2000, Winter). *Building a new structure for school leadership.* Paper presented for the The Albert Shanker Institute.

Ferrandino, V.L. (2001). Challenges for 21st-century elementary school principals. *Phi Delta Kappan, 2,* 440-442.

Field, A. (2009). *Discovering statistics using SPSS.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Firestone, W.A. (2009). Accountability nudges districts into changes in culture. *Phi Delta Kappan, 5,* 670-676.

Fullan, M., Hill, P., & Crevola, C. (2006). *Breakthrough.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Gamage, D., Adams, D., & McCormack, A. (2009). How does a school leader's role

Influence student achievements? A review of research findings and best

practices. *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*,

4(1), 1-16.

Gabriel, J.G. (2005). *How to thrive as a teacher leader*. Alexandria, VA: Association

For Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Gay, L. R. (1996). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and application* (5th

ed.). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Gronn, P. (2000). Distributed properties: A new architecture for leadership. *Educational

Management and Administration, 28*(3), 317-338.

Gruenert, S. (2008). School culture, school climate: They are not the same thing.

Principal, 87(4), 56-59.

Harris, A. (2002). *School Improvement: What's in it for schools?* London: Routledge.

Harris, A. (2005). *Distributed leadership*. In Davies, B. (Ed), *The essentials of school

leadership* (pp. 160-172). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Hatch, T., White, M., & Faigenbaum, D. (2005). Expertise, credibility, and influence:

How teachers can influence policy, advance research, and improve performance.

Teachers College Record, 107(5), 1004-1035.

Heppner, P. P., & Heppner, M. J. (2004). *Writing and publishing your thesis,

dissertation, and research*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole-Thomson Learning.

Ingersoll, R.M. (2007). Short on power, long on responsibility. *Educational Leadership*,

9, 20-25.

Institute for Educational Leadership. (2008). Report of *Teacher Leadership in High*

Schools: How Principals Encourage, It How Teachers Practice It. Washington,

D.C.: MetLife Foundation.

Jamieson, S. (2004). Likert scales: How to (ab)use them. *Medical Education, 38,*

1212-1218.

Katzenmeyer, M., & Moller, G. (2001). *Awakening the sleeping giant: Helping teachers*

develop as leaders. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Kurtz, S. (2009). Teacher Leadership. *Leadership, 9,* 12-14.

Lambert, L. (1995). *The Constructivist Leader.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Lambert, L. (1998). *Building leadership capacity in schools.* Alexandria,

VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Lambert, L. (2003a). *Leadership capacity for lasting school improvement.* Alexandria,

VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Lambert, L. (2003b). Leadership redefined: An evocative context for teacher leadership.

School Leadership & Management, 23(4), 421-430.

doi: 10.1080/1363243032000150953

Lambert, L. (2005). Leadership for lasting reform. *Educational Leadership, 2,* 62-65.

Lambert, L. (2006). Lasting leadership: A study of high leadership capacity schools.

Educational Forum 70(3), 238-254.

Lattimer, H. (2007). To help and not hinder. *Association for Supervision and*

Curriculum Development, 9, 70-73.

Leithwood, K., & Louis, K. S. (2000). *Organizational learning in schools.* Lissse,

Netherlands: Swets and Zeitling.

Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2008). Linking leadership to student learning: the contributions of leader efficacy. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 44*(4), 496-528. doi:10.1177/0013161X08321501

Leithwood, K., Louis, K.S., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). *Review of Research: How leadership influences student learning.* Retrieved from The Wallace Foundation website: http://www.wallacefoundation.org.

Leonard, L., & Leonard, P. (September, 2003). The continuing trouble with collaboration: Teachers talk. *Current Issues in Education, 6*(15). Retrieved from http://cie.asu.edu/volume6/number15/

Little, J. W. (2003). Constructions of teacher leadership in three periods of policy and reform activism. *School Leadership & Management, 23*(4), 401-419.

Louisiana Department of Education. 2009. *Teacher Leader Endorsement.* Retrieved from https://www.teachlouisiana.net/pdf/teacherleader_proposal.pdf

Louisiana Department of Education. 2009-2010. *School Performance Scores.* Retrieved from http://www.louisianaschools.net/data/district_accountability_reports.aspx

Marks, H. M., & Printy, S. M. (2003). Principal leadership and school performance: An integration of transformational and instructional leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly 39*(3), 370-397.

Mitchell, C., & Sackney, L. (2000). *Profound improvement: Building capacity for a learning community.* Lisse, Netherlands: Swets & Zeitlinger.

McCombs, B. L., & Whisler, J. S. (1997). *The learner-centered classroom and school: Strategies for increasing student motivation and achievement.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Moller, G., & Pankake, A. (2006). *Lead with me: A principal's guide to teacher leadership.* New York, NY: Eye on Education.

Mulford, W., Silins, H., & Leithwood, K. (2004). *Educational leadership for organizational learning and improved student outcomes.* Lisse, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Muijs, D., & Harris, A. (2006). Teacher led school improvement: Teacher leadership in the UK. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 22*(96), 961-972.

National College for School Leadership. (2001). *Think Tank Report to Governing Council,* National College for School Leadership. Retrieved from http://www.davidhopkins.co.uk/articles/ldfthinktank.pdf

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L. No. 107-110, 115 Stat. 1425 (2002).

Olson, L. (2007). Leadership by teachers gains notice. *Education Week, 26*(36), 1.

Packer, J. (2007). The NEA supports substantial overhaul, not repeal, of NCLB. *Phi Delta Kappan, 89*(4) 265-269.

Patterson, J., & Patterson, J. (2004). Sharing the lead. *Educational Leadership 61*(7), 74-78.

Pyrczak, F. (2003). *Making sense of statistics.* Los Angeles, CA: Pyrczak Publishing.

School Improvement Network. (September, 2007). *School Improvement Network's Learning Framework eliminates achievement gap in a Louisiana school district* (Web Report No. 9). Salt Lake City, UT: Author.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (2000). *The lifeworld of leadership: Creating culture, community, and personal meaning in our schools.* San Francisco, CA: Josey-Bass.

Shaffer, D.W., & Serlin, S.C. (2004, December). What good are statistics that don't generalize? *Educational Researcher, 33*(9), 14-25.

Short, P., & Greer, J. (1997). *Leadership in empowered schools: Themes from innovative efforts.* Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Merrill.

Spillane, J., Halverson, R., & Diamond, J. (2004). Towards a theory of leadership practice: A distributed perspective. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 36*(1), 3-34.

Starratt, R. J. (1995). Leaders with vision: The quest for school renewal. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Stringfield, S., & Teddlie, C. (1988). A time to summarize: The Louisiana School Effectiveness Study. *Educational Leadership, 46*(2), 43-49.

Tirozzi, G. N. (2001). The artistry of leadership. *Phi Delta Kappan, 2,* 434-439.

Thomas, R. M., & Brubaker, D. L. (2000). *Theses and dissertations: A guide to planning, research, and writing.* Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.

U. S. Department of Education. (2004). No child left behind: A toolkit for teachers. Retrieved from: http://www.ed.gov/teachers/nclbguide/nclb-teachers-toolkit.pdf

U. S. Department of Education. (2010). *Elementary and Secondary Education Act Reauthorization: A Blueprint for Reform.* Retrieved from: http://www.2.ed.gov/print/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/index.html

Yukl, G. (2006). *Leadership in organizations.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Publications.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY PERMISSION

Mon, Jan 24, 2011 at 10:00 **PM**

sue barfield <sbarfield4@gmail.com>   To: mshelton
<mshelton@georgefox.edu>

Dr. Shelton,
I am a doctoral student at Louisiana Tech University. My dissertation research focuses on Teacher
Leadership. I found your article published in the NASSP Bulletin titled "An Administrator's Challenge:
Encouraging Teachers to Be Leaders" very helpful. I am interested in using the survey from the article
listed as Table 1. I have contacted your colleague, Dr. Birky, but she explained that I would need to
speak with you concerning the survey. I am wondering if you can send me information concerning this
survey? I really appreciate your assistance.

Sincerely,

Sue Barfield
A.E.Phillips
Laboratory
School
Lousiana
Tech
University
Ruston, LA 71270

Tue, Jan 25, 2011 at 6:01 **PM**

Marc Shelton <mshelton@georgefox.edu>   To: sue barfield
<sbarfield4@gmail.com>

Hi Sue, sorry for my delay and apologize for the missed email on the 15th. You have permission to use the
survey of leadership roles from our article that you cite. The roles were adapted from the Carnegie
Foundation's 1990 study, but feel free to adapt them to your specific situation - all we ask is that you send
us an electronic copy of your surveyor full project, if you choose to use the survey.

Thanks, Marc

Marc Shelton, EdD
Director of
Administrative
Licensure
George Fox
University
414 N Meridian #V124
Newberg, OR 97132
503 554.2869

NAS
SP
Table
1.doc

Tue, Jan 25, 2011 at 6:23 **PM**

sue barfield <sbarfield4@gmail.com>   To: mshelton
<mshelton@georgefox.edu>

Dr. Shelton,
Oh, thank you so much. The article was fabulous and I cited several ideas from within. I appreciate you
taking the time to respond and allowing me to use the survey. I will forward my surveys to you as soon as
they are approved by my committee. Again, I thank you so much for your assistance.
Sue Barfield

APPENDIX B

HUMAN USE COMMITTEE REVIEW

LOUISIANA TECH
U N I V E R S I T Y

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Kimberly Kimbell-Lopez and Ms. Sue Barfield

FROM: Barbara Talbot, University Research

SUBJECT: HUMAN USE COMMITTEE REVIEW

DATE: March 29, 2011

In order to facilitate your project, an EXPEDITED REVIEW has been done for your proposed study entitled:

"Perceptions of Teachers and Principals in Regard to Teacher Leadership and School Improvement"

HUC 850

The proposed study's revised procedures were found to provide reasonable and adequate safeguards against possible risks involving human subjects. The information to be collected may be personal in nature or implication. Therefore, diligent care needs to be taken to protect the privacy of the participants and to assure that the data are kept confidential. Informed consent is a critical part of the research process. The subjects must be informed that their participation is voluntary. It is important that consent materials be presented in a language understandable to every participant. If you have participants in your study whose first language is not English, be sure that informed consent materials are adequately explained or translated. Since your reviewed project appears to do no damage to the participants, the Human Use Committee grants approval of the involvement of human subjects as outlined.

Projects should be renewed annually. *This approval was finalized on March 29, 2011 and this project will need to receive a continuation review by the IRB if the project, including data analysis, continues beyond March 29, 2012.* Any discrepancies in procedure or changes that have been made including approved changes should be noted in the review application. Projects involving NIH funds require annual education training to be documented. For more information regarding this, contact the Office of University Research.

You are requested to maintain written records of your procedures, data collected, and subjects involved. These records will need to be available upon request during the conduct of the study and retained by the university for three years after the conclusion of the study. If changes occur in recruiting of subjects, informed consent process or in your research protocol, or if unanticipated problems should arise it is the Researchers responsibility to notify the Office of Research or IRB in writing. The project should be discontinued until modifications can be reviewed and approved.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Mary Livingston at 257-4315.

Do you plan to publish this study?	X YES □ NO
Will this study be published by a national organization?	□ YES X NO
Are copyrighted materials involved?	□ YES X NO
Do you have written permission to use copyrighted materials?	□ YES □ NO
COMMENTS: The participants will complete the Human Subjects Consent Form before being allowed to answer any survey questions.	

STUDY/PROJECT INFORMATION FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE

Describe your study/project in detail for the Human Subjects Committee. Please include the following information.

TITLE: *Perceptions of Teachers and Principals in Regard to Teacher Leadership and School Improvement*

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S): Dr. Kimberly Kimbell-Lopez and Sue Barfield

EMAIL: kklopez@latech.edu or barfield@aep.latech.edu

PHONE: (318) 257-2982 (Dr. Kimbell-Lopez's office) or (318) 285-9376 (Sue Barfield)

DEPARTMENT(S): College of Education

PURPOSE OF STUDY/PROJECT: The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of principals and teachers on the role of teacher leadership and the influence it has on attributes of school improvement.

SUBJECTS: Approximately 208 Louisiana school principals and their faculty will voluntarily complete an on-line survey.

PROCEDURE: After permission o district superintendent, selected principals and their staff will be asked to complete an on-line survey.

INSTRUMENTS AND MEASURES TO INSURE PROTECTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY, ANONYMITY: The on-line survey consists of 25 items for each participant to rate. All names of schools and districts will remain confidential. Responses will be grouped for statistical analysis and the data will only be reported in aggregate form.

RISKS/ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS: This project does not involve any risks greater than those encountered in everyday life.

BENEFITS/COMPENSATION: The participant understands that Louisiana Tech is not able to offer financial compensation nor to absorb the costs of medical treatment should injury occur as a result of participating in this research study.

SAFEGUARDS OF PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING: This study involves no treatment or physical contact. All information collected from the survey will be held strictly confidential. No one will be allowed access to the survey other than the researchers.

APPENDIX C

PRINCIPAL SURVEY

.

Teacher Leadership: Principal Survey

1. TEACHER LEADERSHIP SURVEY

The following survey is being conducted by Sue Barfield, a doctoral student at Louisiana Tech University. The research focus is on teacher leadership. Please take a few moments to complete this survey. All responses are confidential and will only be viewed by the principal investigator. Responses will be used for statistical analysis and will only be reported in aggregate form.

HUMAN SUBJECTS CONSENT FORM

The following is a brief summary of the project in which you are asked to participate. Please read this information before checking the box below.

TITLE OF PROJECT: Perceptions of Teachers and Principals in Regard to Teacher Leadership and School Improvement

PURPOSE OF STUDY/PROJECT: The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of principals and teachers on the role of teacher leadership and the role it plays in school improvement.

PROCEDURE: After permission of district superintendent, selected principals and their staff will be asked to complete an on-line survey. All names of individuals and school districts will remain confidential as code numbers will be assigned to each participant. Responses will be grouped for statistical analysis and the data will only be reported in aggregate form.

INSTRUMENTS: An on-line survey for principals and an on-line survey for teachers

RISKS/ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS: The participant understands that Louisiana Tech is not able to offer financial compensation nor to absorb the costs of medical treatment should you be injured as a result of participating in this research.

The following disclosure applies to all participants using online survey tools: This server may collect information and your IP address indirectly and automatically via "cookies"

BENEFITS/COMPENSATION: The participant understands that Louisiana Tech is not able to offer financial compensation nor to absorb the costs of medical treatment should injury occur as a result of participating in this research study.

CONTACT INFORMATION: The principal experimenter listed below may be reached to answer questions about the research, subjects' rights, or related matters.

Sue Barfield--(318) 285-9376 or (318) 245-3832 email: barfield@aep.latech.edu

The experimenter is working under the direction of major professor, Dr. Kimberly Kimbell-Lopez. She may be reached at (318) 257- 2982 or email: kklopez@latech.edu

Members of the Human Use Committee of Louisiana Tech University may also be contacted if a problem cannot be discussed with the experimenters:
Dr. Les Guice (257-3056)
Dr. Mary M. Livingston (257-2292 or 257-4315)

Teacher Leadership: Principal Survey

1. By checking the circle below, I attest that I have read and understood the following description of the study, "Perceptions of Teachers and Principals in Regard to Teacher Leadership", and its purposes and methods. I understand that my participation in this research is strictly voluntary and my participation or refusal to participate in this study will not affect my relationship with Louisiana Tech University or my grades in any way. Further, I understand that I may withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any questions without penalty. Upon completion of the study, I understand that the results will be freely available to me upon request. I understand that the results of my survey will be confidential, accessible only to the principal investigators, myself, or a legally appointed representative. I have not been requested to waive nor do I waive any of my rights related to participating in this study.

◯ If you agree with the terms listed above, please check this circle to begin the survey.

Teacher Leadership: Principal Survey

2. Demographic Information

The information listed on this page is for sorting data purposes only. No district or school names will be used or published in this study.

2. Please type the name of your school district:

[   ]

3. Please type the name of your school:

[   ]

4. What is your gender?

◯ Male

◯ Female

5. How many years of administrative experience do you have?

◯ 0-5 years

◯ 6-10 years

◯ 11-15 years

◯ 16-20 years

◯ 20+ years

124

Teacher Leadership: Principal Survey

3. TEACHER LEADERSHIP- PRINCIPAL SURVEY

For the purposes of this survey, the researcher is using the definition of a "Teacher Leader" as an educator that continues to teach students, but also has influence and works with fellow colleagues for the purposes of improving teaching and learning (Danielson, 2006).

Please answer all of the questions to the best of your estimation.

6. Do you consider yourself to be an administrator that encourages teachers to be leaders?

O Yes

O No

7. Do you believe that teachers in your school consider you to be an administrator that encourages teacher leaders?

O Yes

O No

8. Please rate how involved your teachers ACTUALLY ARE in each leadership role or activity:

	Almost Always	Often	Occasionally	Seldom	Almost Never
1. Choosing textbooks and instructional materials	O	O	O	O	O
2. Shaping the curriculum	O	O	O	O	O
3. Setting standards for student behavior	O	O	O	O	O
4. Selecting new administrators	O	O	O	O	O
5. Designing staff development/in-service	O	O	O	O	O
6. Setting promotion and retention policies	O	O	O	O	O
7. Deciding school budgets	O	O	O	O	O
8. Evaluating teacher performance	O	O	O	O	O
9. Selecting new teachers	O	O	O	O	O
10. Tracking students into special classes	O	O	O	O	O

9. Do you feel that teachers in your school value teacher leadership?

O Yes

O No

Teacher Leadership: Principal Survey

10. Which ONE factor do you feel your teachers would need from you, the administrator, in order to function more effectively as teacher leaders?

◯ Encouragement from school principal

◯ Release time out of the classroom

◯ Additional training in teacher leadership

◯ Additional training in their content area

◯ Additional resources- books, dollars, professional development opportunities

◯ The teachers in my school do not desire to be teacher leaders.

11. Which ONE reward would be the most effective at encouraging teacher leadership in schools?

◯ Release time from classroom responsibilities

◯ Informal words of thanks and praise from the principal

◯ Additional compensation

12. Which ONE barrier do you feel makes teacher leadership difficult in your school?

◯ You do not provide enough opportunities for teachers to lead.

◯ You do not encourage teacher leadership.

◯ The teachers in your school will not allow other teachers to influence them.

◯ Teachers do not have enough time to work with students AND lead beyond the classroom.

◯ Teachers do not have the correct skills to be leaders beyond the classroom.

Teacher Leadership: Principal Survey

13. Use the following 5-point scale to rate your beliefs in the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Students are more successful in classrooms that have teachers that view themselves as a leaders.	O	O	O	O	O
2. Teachers collaborating together is important to students' overall achievement.	O	O	O	O	O
3. Teachers which model leadership skills are important for students.	O	O	O	O	O
4. Lasting school improvement depends on teachers stepping outside of their traditional roles.	O	O	O	O	O
5. It is important for teachers to join with networks of other schools and programs, both inside and outside the district, to improve their teaching.	O	O	O	O	O

14. Use the following 5-point scale to rate your beliefs in the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6. It is important that teachers express their leadership by attending to the learning of the entire school community.	O	O	O	O	O
7. Teachers should work with members of the school community to establish and implement expectations and standards.	O	O	O	O	O
8. Our school has a clear vision and established goals.	O	O	O	O	O
9. Our staff works together to establish a feeling of trust not only in the individual classrooms, but in the entire building.	O	O	O	O	O
10. The outcomes of students depend mainly on the atmosphere provided for them in the classroom.	O	O	O	O	O

APPENDIX D

TEACHER SURVEY

Teacher Leadership: Teacher Survey

1. TEACHER LEADERSHIP SURVEY

The following survey is being conducted by Sue Barfield, a doctoral student at Louisiana Tech University. The research focus is on teacher leadership. Please take a few moments to complete this survey. All responses are confidential and will only be viewed by the principal investigator. Responses will be used for statistical analysis and will only be reported in aggregate form.

HUMAN SUBJECTS CONSENT FORM

The following is a brief summary of the project in which you are asked to participate. Please read this information before clicking on the consent statement below.

TITLE OF PROJECT: Perceptions of Teachers and Principals in Regard to Teacher Leadership and School Improvement

PURPOSE OF STUDY/PROJECT: The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of principals and teachers on the role of teacher leadership and the role it plays in school improvement.

PROCEDURE: Principals and their staff will be asked to complete an on-line survey. All names of schools and districts will remain confidential as code numbers will be assigned to each. Responses will be grouped for statistical analysis and the data will only be reported in aggregate form.

INSTRUMENTS: An on-line survey for principals and an on-line survey for teachers

RISKS/ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS: The participant understands that Louisiana Tech is not able to offer financial compensation nor to absorb the costs of medical treatment should you be injured as a result of participating in this research.

The following disclosure applies to all participants using online survey tools: This server may collect information and your IP address indirectly and automatically via "cookies".

BENEFITS/COMPENSATION: The participant understands that Louisiana Tech is not able to offer financial compensation nor to absorb the costs of medical treatment should injury occur as a result of participating in this research study.

CONTACT INFORMATION: The principal experimenter listed below may be reached to answer questions about the research, subjects' rights, or related matters.

Sue Barfield- (318) 285-9376 or (318) 245-3832 email: barfield@aep.latech.edu

The experimenter is working under the direction of major professor, Dr. Kimberly Kimbell-Lopez. She may be reached at (318) 257- 2982 or email: kklopez@latech.edu

Members of the Human Use Committee of Louisiana Tech University may also be contacted if a problem cannot be discussed with the experimenter:
Dr. Les Guice (257-3056)
Dr. Mary M. Livingston (257-2292 or 257-4315)

Teacher Leadership: Teacher Survey

1. By checking the circle below, I attest that I have read and understood the following description of the study, "Perceptions of Teachers and Principals in Regard to Teacher Leadership", and its purposes and methods. I understand that my participation in this research is strictly voluntary and my participation or refusal to participate in this study will not affect my relationship with Louisiana Tech University or my grades in any way. Further, I understand that I may withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any questions without penalty. Upon completion of the study, I understand that the results will be freely available to me upon request. I understand that the results of my survey will be confidential, accessible only to the principal investigators, myself, or a legally appointed representative. I have not been requested to waive nor do I waive any of my rights related to participating in this study.

○ If you agree with the terms above, please check this circle to begin survey.

Teacher Leadership: Teacher Survey

2. Demographic Information

The information listed on this page is for sorting data purposes only. No district or school names will be used or published in this study.

2. Please type the name of your school district:

[   ]

3. Please type the name of your school:

[   ]

4. What is your gender?

◯ Male

◯ Female

5. How many years of teaching experience do you have?

◯ 0-5 years

◯ 6-10 years

◯ 11-15 years

◯ 16-20 years

◯ 20+ years

Teacher Leadership: Teacher Survey

3. TEACHER LEADERSHIP - TEACHER SURVEY

For the purposes of this survey, the researcher is using the definition of a "Teacher Leader" as an educator that continues to teach students, but also has influence and works with fellow colleagues for the purposes of improving teaching and learning (Danielson, 2006).

Please answer all questions using your best estimation.

6. Do you consider yourself to be a teacher leader?

O Yes

O No

7. Do you believe that other teachers in your school consider you to be a teacher leader?

O Yes

O No

8. Please rate how involved YOU ACTUALLY ARE with your current administrator in each leadership role or activity for the school as a whole (not just your classroom):

	Almost Always	Often	Occasionally	Seldom	Almost Never
1. Choosing textbooks and instructional materials	O	O	O	O	O
2. Shaping the curriculum	O	O	O	O	O
3. Setting standards for student behavior	O	O	O	O	O
4. Designing staff development/in-service (topic input)	O	O	O	O	O
5. Setting promotion and retention policies at your school	O	O	O	O	O
6. Deciding school budgets	O	O	O	O	O
7. Assessing or Evaluating teacher performance	O	O	O	O	O
8. Selecting new teachers	O	O	O	O	O
9. Selecting new administrators	O	O	O	O	O
10. Tracking students into special classes	O	O	O	O	O

Teacher Leadership: Teacher Survey

9. Below are the same questions you just rated above as your actual involvement in each leadership situation. This time please rate how involved YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE in each leadership role or activity:

	Almost Always	Often	Occasionally	Seldom	Almost Never
1. Choosing textbooks and instructional materials	O	O	O	O	O
2. Shaping the curriculum	O	O	O	O	O
3. Setting standards for student behavior	O	O	O	O	O
4. Designing staff development/in-service (topic input)	O	O	O	O	O
5. Setting promotion and retention policies at your school	O	O	O	O	O
6. Deciding school budgets	O	O	O	O	O
7. Assessing or Evaluating teacher performance	O	O	O	O	O
8. Selecting new teachers	O	O	O	O	O
9. Selecting new administrators	O	O	O	O	O
10. Tracking students into special classes	O	O	O	O	O

10. Are you satisfied with the number of teacher leadership opportunities that are available to you?

O Yes

O No

11. Do you feel that teacher leadership is valued in your school by the current administration?

O Yes

O No

12. Do you feel that teacher leadership is valued in your school by other teachers?

O Yes

O No

Teacher Leadership: Teacher Survey

13. Which ONE factor would you need from your administrator in order to function more effectively as a teacher leader?

- ◯ Encouragement from the principal
- ◯ Release time out of the classroom
- ◯ Additional training in teacher leadership
- ◯ Additional training in my content area
- ◯ Additional resources- books, dollars, professional development opportunities
- ◯ I do not desire to be a teacher leader.

14. Which ONE reward would be the most effective at encouraging teacher leadership in schools?

- ◯ Release time from classroom responsibilities
- ◯ Informal words of thanks and praise from the principal
- ◯ Additional compensation

15. Which ONE barrier makes teacher leadership difficult in your school?

- ◯ The administrator does not provide enough opportunities for teachers to lead.
- ◯ The administrator does not encourage/enable teacher leadership.
- ◯ Convincing my colleagues to collaborate/network with other teachers is difficult.
- ◯ Teachers do not have enough time to fulfill classroom obligations AND lead beyond the classroom.
- ◯ Teachers do not have the correct skills to be leaders beyond the classroom.

Teacher Leadership: Teacher Survey

16. Use the following 5-point scale to rate your beliefs in the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Students are more successful in my class because I see myself as a leader.	O	O	O	O	O
2. Collaboration with other teachers is important to my students' overall achievement.	O	O	O	O	O
3. Modeling leadership skills is important for my students.	O	O	O	O	O
4. Lasting school improvement depends on teachers stepping outside of their traditional roles.	O	O	O	O	O
5. It is important for me to join with networks of other schools and programs, both inside and outside the district, to improve my teaching.	O	O	O	O	O

17. Use the following 5-point scale to rate your beliefs in the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6. It is important that I express my leadership by attending to the learning of the entire school community.	O	O	O	O	O
7. I work with members of the school community to establish and implement expectations and standards.	O	O	O	O	O
8. Our school has a clear vision and established goals.	O	O	O	O	O
9. Our staff works together to establish a feeling of trust not only in our individual classrooms, but at the entire school level.	O	O	O	O	O
10. The future success of my students depends mainly on the atmosphere I provide for them in the classroom.	O	O	O	O	O

APPENDIX E

SUPERINTENDENT PERMISSION

FOR DISTRICT PARTICIPATION

Superintendent Permission for District Participation Form

Dear Superintendent,

As part of my dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership from Louisiana Tech University, I am conducting a research study titled, Perceptions of Teachers and Principals in Regard to Teacher Leadership and School Improvement. The focus of this study is on teacher leadership and its role in successful school improvement. The research gathered should be helpful in providing insight into the role of principals in promoting teacher leadership within their buildings.

For the study, a representative sample was developed by categorizing all school districts in Louisiana according to their 2009-2010 Baseline School Performance Scores as reported by Louisiana Department of Education. Within each representative sample, school districts were randomly selected. If you choose to participate, I am seeking your permission as the superintendent to contact each school's principal in your district and the teachers within each school for the purpose of inviting them to participate in this study.

Once the principals agree and complete the principal on-line survey, the teachers within their school building will be invited to complete the teacher on-line survey. The principal survey consists of 14 items and the teacher survey consists of 17 items for the participants to rate and neither survey should take more than 10 minutes to complete.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Participants may withdraw at any time without penalty. Confidentiality of the schools, teachers and principals will be protected throughout the study. Individual responses to the survey are kept confidential. Only aggregate data will be reported in the study results. Your signature on the attached form indicates your informed consent for your district employees to participate in the study.

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to contact me at home (318) 285-9376, my cell phone (318) 245-3832, or barfieldresearch@yahoo.com . You may also contact my Faculty Advisor, Dr. Kimberly Kimbell-Lopez, at (318) 257-2982 or kklopez@latech.edu . Thank you in advance for your assistance with this project.

Sincerely,

Sue Barfield

Doctoral Candidate

Louisiana Tech University

SCHOOL FAX (318) 257-3676

HOME FAX (318) 285-9376

For the purpose of this study, **teacher leadership** is defined as those teachers who continue to teach students, but also have an influence that extends beyond their own classrooms to others within their own school and elsewhere.

<div align="center">

Superintendent's Copy

Permission for District Participation

</div>

I, _____, grant permission for each school principal in my district to be contacted regarding participation in the study, conducted by Sue Barfield, to gain a better understanding of the importance of teacher leadership and the role it plays in school improvement.

By signing this permission form, I understand that the following safeguards are in place to protect teaching staff choosing to participate:

• All responses will be used for dissertation research and potential future publications.

• All participation is voluntary, and may be withdrawn at any point in the study prior to submission of the survey.

• All identities will be protected in all reports of the research.

• Any consent or refusal to participate in this study will not affect the employment of participants in any way.

Please keep the letter and a copy of the signed permission form for your records. If you choose to grant permission for your district employees to participate in this study, please complete the following Superintendent Permission for District Participation Form and fax it to Sue Barfield at 318-257-3676 (school) or 318-285-9376 (home) as soon as possible.

Thank you,

Sue Barfield

SUPERINTENDENT PERMISSION FOR DISTRICT PARTICIPATION FORM

Please **sign** and **date** below then fax to: Sue Barfield @ (318) 257-3676 or

(318) 285-9376

I have read the material above and any questions that I have posed have been answered to my satisfaction. I grant permission for the principals and their staffs to be contacted and invited to participate in this study.

_____   _____

                     Superintendent's Signature   Date

(Return only this page. Keep the others for your records.)

APPENDIX F

PRINCIPAL SURVEY PARTICIPATION INVITATION

Principal Survey Participation Invitation

Dear Participant,

As part of my dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership from Louisiana Tech University, I would like to extend a personal invitation to you to participate in a research study entitled, *Perceptions of Teachers and Principals in Regard to Teacher Leadership and School Improvement*

PROJECT BACKGROUND This project involves gathering data through a survey investigating understanding and perception of teacher leadership positions and the effect such positions have on school improvement The data will be collected for analysis and may be published You must be at least 21 years of age to participate

PURPOSE The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of principals and teachers on the role of teacher leadership and the role it plays in school improvement

VOLUNTARY The survey is voluntary Participants may refuse to answer any question or choose to withdraw from participation at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits to which they are otherwise entitled

BENEFITS Your participation in this research project will enrich the information base A clearer understanding of the role of teacher leadership is important to principals as they encourage teachers to step into such a position It is also important for teachers to understand the role of teacher leader and how if affects school improvement

RISKS This project does not involve any risks greater than those encountered in everyday life

CONFIDENTIALITY Your confidentiality will be maintained in that a school's name or district will not appear on the survey or in the published study itself A code number may be assigned so that responses may be grouped for statistical analysis The data will only be reported in aggregate form

WHAT DO YOU DO? Go to   http //www surveymonkey com/s/barfieldresearchp3

Your efforts are greatly appreciated If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to contact me at home (318) 285-9376, my cell phone (318) 245-3832, or barfieldresearch@yahoo com You may also contact my Faculty Advisor, Dr Kimberly Kimbell-Lopez, at (318) 257-2982 or kklopez@latech edu

If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in research, please feel free to contact the Office of University Research at (318) 257-5075 Thank you in advance for your assistance with this project

Sincerely,

Sue Barfield

Doctoral Candidate

Louisiana Tech University

FAX (318) 285-9376

APPENDIX G

TEACHER SURVEY PARTICIPATION INVITATION

Teacher Survey Participation Invitation

Dear Participant,

As part of my dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership from Louisiana Tech University, I would like to extend a personal invitation to you to participate in a research study entitled, *Perceptions of Teachers and Principals in Regard to Teacher Leadership and School Improvement* The focus on this study is on the role of teacher leadership and how it effects school improvement

PROJECT BACKGROUND This project involves gathering data through a survey investigating understanding and perception of teacher leadership positions and the effect such positions have on school improvement The data will be collected for analysis and may be published You must be at least 21 years of age to participate

PURPOSE The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of principals and teachers on the role of teacher leadership and the role it plays in school improvement

VOLUNTARY The survey is voluntary Participants may refuse to answer any question or choose to withdraw from participation at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits to which they are otherwise entitled

BENEFITS Your participation in this research project will enrich the information base A clearer understanding of the role of teacher leadership is important to principals as they encourage teachers to step into such a position It is also important for teachers to understand the role of teacher leader and how if affects school improvement

RISKS This project does not involve any risks greater than those encountered in everyday life

CONFIDENTIALITY Your confidentiality will be maintained in that a participant's name will not appear on the survey or in the published study itself A code number may be assigned so that responses may be grouped for statistical analysis The data will only be reported in aggregate form

WHAT DO YOU DO? Please go to http //www surveymonkey com/s/barfield-surveyt

Your efforts are greatly appreciated If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to contact me at home (318) 285-9376, my cell phone (318) 245-3832, or barfieldresearch@yahoo com You may also contact my Faculty Advisor, Dr Kimberly Kimbell-Lopez, at (318) 257-2982 or kklopez@latech edu

If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in research, please feel free to contact the Office of University Research at (318) 257-5075 Thank you in advance for your assistance with this project

Sincerely,

Sue Barfield

Doctoral Candidate,

Louisiana Tech University

FAX (318) 257-3676