

AN EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A PRINCIPAL
LEADERSHIP SCREENING PROGRAM ON TEACHER
PERCEPTION AND TEACHER RETENTION

by

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ABSTRACT

The school principal is accountable for an environment conducive to learning. Qualified leaders improve student learning and affect the perceptions of members of the organization and their intention to stay. The responsibilities for school success and the shortage of applicants make it imperative that qualified principals are recruited and hired. Effective screening programs can ensure the candidates selected are prepared for leadership positions. Teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership are related to job satisfaction, job resignation, and transfers. Therefore, teachers' perceptions of principals provide a basis to evaluate the quality of principals' leadership.

The effectiveness of a principal leadership-screening instrument on teacher perceptions and teacher retention was examined. Two groups of principals were analyzed—those principals who completed the PrincipalInsight process and those who did not. Data were collected from a staff perception survey and teacher retention records.

The PrincipalInsight scores of the principals who were hired did not correlate to the teacher ratings from the staff perception survey. Nor did the PrincipalInsight scores correlate with retention rates at schools with novice principals. Therefore, the recruitment and hiring of candidates for principal based on scores from the PrincipalInsight is a matter for concern. However, findings indicated a significant correlation between the teacher ratings and teacher retention for veteran principals.

Recommendations include using veteran teachers to prescreen and evaluate candidates in light of, and with respect to the criteria developed for the screening program. The findings

suggest veteran principals provide a sense of community where teachers feel valued, supported, and applauded for their talents and skills, which encourages them to remain employed at their schools. Efforts must be made to implement professional development for new principals to facilitate an understanding for the necessity of building relationships, peer support, and a community for teachers, which are major factors in retaining teachers.

The findings provide information on structured screenings and their effectiveness in leadership hiring practices. Information from this study can serve to establish a protocol for the hiring of quality applicants for principal position. The participation of veteran principals and teachers is strongly encouraged in the process of the selection of new principals as their expertise and knowledge is most aligned with the responsibilities needed for present leadership positions.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The United States Senate Committee Report on Equal Educational Opportunity (1970) identified the principal as the single most influential person in a school. The principal is the leader of the school and this leadership imparts the intention and direction for the school and the school community. This leadership entails the implementation of clear goals and specific achievements objectives for the school. The principal is accountable for planning, execution of the instructional programs, evaluation of teachers, and an environment conducive to learning and student achievement.

Leadership is both simple and complex for principals. The two essential objectives critical to school effectiveness are (a) helping the organization set a defensible set of directions and (b) influencing members to move in those directions (Leithwood, Seashores, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). Principals are challenged to create an environment of trust and support that mobilizes all members of the organization to reach the school's objectives. The presence of a principal with the leadership ability to develop, influence, and motivate others to action is a key factor in creating a school in which teachers and students succeed.

The principal must be able to create a fundamental transformation in the learning cultures of schools and of the teaching profession itself. It is the leadership of a principal who is attuned to the big picture, a sophisticated conceptual thinker who transforms the organization through people and teams (Fullan, 2001). Leadership requires mobilizing all stakeholders to do important

and difficult work under conditions of constant change, overload, and fragmentation. It is about creating environments where students feel valued and teachers are supported. Principals promote the school success by sustaining a positive culture and instructional programs conducive to student learning and teacher professional growth.

Public schools in the United States need and deserve quality leadership. Qualified leaders significantly improve student learning and affect those in the organization to stay in the profession (Ingersoll, 2001). The large number and complexity of the responsibilities essential to school success combine with the shortage of applicants to make finding well-qualified candidates for the position of principal difficult (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). The time to address the issue is now. Effective screening programs can help ensure that the candidates selected are prepared and ready for leadership positions. Effective screening programs are an investment that will pay high dividends to the children served in our classrooms and to those who seek to make a career as a teacher in public education (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2004).

Statement of the Problem

This study examined a particular principal leadership-screening program and compared its predictive power with teacher retention and teacher perception data. School districts seek to obtain the most qualified candidates for the position of principal through a screening process that includes, but is not limited to, interviews and a test as a predictor of skills and talents. Applicants must have the skills necessary to meet current demands for academic excellence. A structured interview uses a protocol that remains consistent through all interviews conducted for the designated job classification. When well constructed and administered, the employment interview has substantial value in predicting supervisory-rated job performance (McDaniel,

Whetzel, Schmidt, & Mauer, 1994). One method for securing the most vital information from the hiring process is through the structured interview.

The structured interview process known as PrincipalInsight was implemented in 2003 in the school system with principals at 54 schools completing the instrument since the process was initiated. The structured interview scores suggest a significant incremental predictive validity in addition to measures of general mental ability, which have known generalizable predictive validity (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). A meta-analysis of 107 Gallup predictive validity studies found the empirically constructed structured interview process used by Gallup resulted in scores that were predictive of multiple performance criteria including sales data, production records, absenteeism, and employee retention (Schmidt & Rader, 1999).

Although the PrincipalInsight instrument is presented as an effective tool in securing the top applicant for the position of school principal, there is no empirical evidence to link the strengths and talents identified with on-the-job effectiveness. Are the structured interviews a reliable indicator of job performance for a school principal? The current study focused on leadership effectiveness as predicted by the structured interview process. Two groups of principals were analyzed—those who had completed the structured interview process and those who had not. The two groups were compared using data collected from the system’s Staff Perception Survey process and from teacher retention data from each school.

Significance of the Problem

This study is significant because teachers’ perceptions of a principal’s leadership directly affect teacher retention. This research explored teacher perceptions of leadership as seen in the

role as principal. Research is needed regarding teacher perceptions of leadership in relationship to teacher retention.

Leadership is regarded as an interactive relationship between leaders and followers, which is characterized by influence and identification (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership reflect such influence and identification. These perceptions are significantly related to job satisfaction, job-related stress, job resignation, and transfers (Evans & Johnson, 1990), and to teachers' morale (Hunter-Boykin & Evans, 1995). Therefore, teachers' perceptions of their principals can serve as an index of the quality of principals' leadership abilities.

When an applicant is prematurely promoted or lacks the requisite skills to be principal, fallout is widespread and leads to a number of school climate inhibitors, including (a) lower productivity and morale among staff, (b) unhappy parents, (c) a tarnished school reputation, (d) political or legal mistakes that warrant repair by others, and (e) additional stress and work for supervisors trying to fix problems (Gallup Organization, 2004). It behooves a school district to have in place a set of stringent criteria to determine if an applicant has the knowledge, skills, talents, and the capacity to handle the complexities involved in running a school. Most school districts underestimate the ramifications of hiring people who are not the right fit for a particular school or are not ready for the challenge of a principalship. The collective cost of poor hiring decisions can be devastating.

This large suburban school system operates 115 schools with an enrollment of 159,000 students. Recruitment of new principals is a perpetual task due to retirement, promotions, and those who leave the district. Furthermore, the growth of the district involves over 5,000 new students expected each school year and the opening of 10 new schools by the 2009-2010 school

year. The opening of these schools will also necessitate the recruitment and hiring of new principals. The schools of today are clearly complex environments that require principals to have an arsenal of expertise to ensure the academic success of all students.

Leadership in the school environment is critical to the overall success of the school program. It is second to classroom instruction among the school-correlated aspects that contribute to what students learn. Good leadership provides organizational direction, creates insights to work with personnel, establishes expectations, and promotes appropriate change to reflect the needs of the school. The applicants who are chosen to fill these vacancies must have talents, skills, and knowledge to assume the position of principal for these schools

Conceptual Framework

Theories about leadership abound. The great man theory assumes that the capacity for leadership is inherent—great leaders are born, not made; heroic, mythic, and destined to rise to leadership when the need arises. The great man theory was used in a time when leadership was thought of primarily as a male quality, especially military leadership (Burns, 2000). Later theories looked at other variables, such as situational factors and skill levels. The trait theory assumes individuals inherit certain qualities and traits that make them better suited to leadership. The trait theory contends that leaders are gifted with superior qualities that distinguish them from their followers. The contingency theory implies that leaders emerge as a result of time, place, and circumstances (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005).

Leadership traits have been studied to identify the work and personal characteristics of the individual and the skill traits associated with the leader's effectiveness. Work traits of good leaders are persistence, willingness to assume responsibility, decisiveness, dependability, and

tolerance of stress. Personality traits include dominance, decisiveness, cooperation, self-confidence, and energy. Skill traits include intelligence, creativity, diplomacy, persuasiveness, and organizational ability (Weller & Weller, 2002).

Buckingham and Clifton (2001) focused on leadership through the identification of talents and strengths of the individuals within the organization. They suggested building strength-based organizations by selecting individuals based on their strengths and placing them in positions where their strengths can be best used. Eventually, strong individuals are promoted to positions of leadership.

Behaviorist theories of leadership are based upon the belief that great leaders are made, not born. This leadership theory focuses on the actions of leaders, not on their mental qualities or internal states. According to behavior theorists, individuals can learn to become leaders through teaching and observation (Miner, 2002).

Research Questions

This study examined the relationships among predicted principal leadership measures of principal effectiveness as indicated by teacher perceptions and teacher retention. The dependent variables were predicted principal leadership (as measured by the PrincipalInsight instrument), teacher perceptions of their principal's effectiveness (as measured by the nine subscales of the Staff Perception Survey), and teacher retention. The PrincipalInsight instrument was administered to the principals at the time of their initial interview for a leadership position in the school system. The teachers' perceptions of their principals were measured by a staff perception survey developed in the school system. The retention rate of teachers in each school was

measured by the rate of teachers requesting a transfer from the school. These measures were used to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between predicted principal leadership (as measured by the PrincipalInsight instrument), staff perceptions of effectiveness (as measured by the nine subscales of the Staff Perception Survey), and teacher retention in schools where the principal has completed the PrincipalInsight instrument?

2. What is the relationship between staff perception of their principal's effectiveness (as measured by the nine subscales of the Staff Perception Survey) and teacher retention in schools where the principals have not completed the PrincipalInsight instrument?

3. Is there a significant difference between staff perceptions of effectiveness in schools with principals who completed the PrincipalInsight instrument and schools with principals who have not completed the PrincipalInsight instrument?

4. Is there a significant difference between teacher retention in schools with principals who completed the PrincipalInsight instrument and schools with principals who have not completed the PrincipalInsight instrument?

Definition of Terms

These definitions applied to this study.

Adequate yearly progress (AYP). The individual state's measure of progress toward the goal of 100% of students achieving to state academic standards in at least reading/language arts and math. It sets the minimum level of proficiency that the state, its school districts, and schools must achieve each year on annual tests and related academic indicators (No Child Left Behind Act, 2002).

Attrition. The reduction of the teaching staff within a school system because of resignation, retirement, or death of the employee (Ingersoll, 2002).

Highly qualified. Highly qualified refers to teachers who have met the standards as designed by the state of Georgia to be eligible for employment as a teacher in a public school (U.S. Department of Education, 2002).

Instructional leader. A principal who can articulate and facilitate curriculum and instructional strategies to assist teachers and increase student achievement (Tirozzi, 2001).

PrincipalInsight. An instrument designed to measure and rate talents for the selection of the best applicant for the position of principal (Gallup Organization, 2004).

School climate. The environment that enhances teaching and learning in a school, which will result in success for all students (Heck, 2000).

Staff Perception Survey. A district-wide survey used to capture staff perceptions as they relate to the school environment (Gwinnett County Public Schools, 2007).

Teacher retention. The ability to attract and retain highly qualified individuals who instruct and impart knowledge to students who remain employed with a school system from year to year (Plecki, Elfers, Loeb, Zahier, & Knapp, 2005).

Teacher perception. The process by which the individual interprets and organizes sensations to produce meaningful experiences from the environment (Williams, 2000).

Limitations

The limitations of this study include the following

1. PrincipalInsight scores were not obtained from all principals in the district.

2. Responses from the Staff Perception Survey may misrepresent effective leadership as their meaning could denote personal ideas and beliefs.

3. The Staff Perception Survey is an instrument designed by the school district, thereby posing an inherent weakness. The weakness may emerge in the way the study was conducted to measure staff perceptions concerning school leadership. The other component would require evidence of the internal validity in relationship to the rigor of the study and the extent to which consideration was given to alternative explanations for any casual relationships. The weakness may be apparent when reviewing the use of the instrument in repeated trials to yield the same results for reliability.

4. The population sample for this study was only composed of principals from one school district that used the PrincipalInsight instrument.

5. The data were collected from only one school system and from an instrument with a very limited audience.

Assumptions

The three assumptions made in this research study follow:

1. Principals had a score above the 68 points considered the beginning range for the selection for the best applicant for the position.

2. The Staff Perception Survey completed by teachers at each school was completed without discussion with other teachers and done confidentially.

3. The statistical analysis completed in the study fulfilled the essential assumptions by the significance of the data collected and examined.

Summary

This study examined predicted leadership strengths of school principals and how they correlated with teacher perceptions and teacher retention. The framework is established through the psychological constructs referred to as talents and skills identified as themes. The PrincipalInsight instrument evaluates themes that are assigned a score to indicate suitability for the position of principal (Gallup Organization, 2004). The question is posed as to the effectiveness of the structured interview process. Is the current tool a reliable predictor of job performance for the position of school principal? The dependent variables were principal leadership (as measured by the PrincipalInsight instrument), staff perceptions (as measured by the nine subscales of the Staff Perception Survey), and teacher retention. This research study hoped to provide information as to the effectiveness of the structured interview currently in place and its affect on teacher perceptions and teacher retention.

Chapter 1 provides an overview to the research area to be examined. A statement of the problem is presented with the significance of the problem, conceptual framework, research questions, limitations, and assumptions. Chapter 2 presents the review of the literature— leadership theories, role of the principal, school climate and perceptions, school culture, emotional intelligence, and teacher recruitment and retention. Chapter 3 presents the methodology that was used in the study. It contains the research design, description of the school system, population and sample, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis. The results of this investigation are presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 discusses the findings, draws conclusions, and presents implications and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The employment process for the position of principal in a school district has become one of exigency with a compelling demand for delivery. This urgency, brought on by retirement, accountabilities of NCLB for schools, and competition for hiring, makes it imperative for school districts to recruit and hire the best applicant for the position of principal. Present research explores teachers' perceptions of principal performance, teachers' perceptions of evaluations given by the principal, and teachers' perceptions of African American principals. There appears to be a limited amount of research regarding teachers' perceptions of leadership in relationship to teacher retention. Therefore, Chapter 2 presents the review of the literature concerning leadership theories, role of the principal, school reform, school climate, and teacher retention.

School Effectiveness and Effective Schools

The research on school effectiveness began as a response to the Coleman Report of 1966 (Coleman et al., 1966). A group of social scientists believed that factors such as poverty or parents' lack of education prevented children from learning regardless of the method of the instruction. The report originated 10 years after the Brown ruling in Section 402 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964:

The Commissioner shall conduct a survey and make a report to the President and the Congress, within two years of the enactment of this title, concerning the lack of availability of equal educational opportunities for individuals by reason of race, color, religion, or national origin in public educational institutions at all levels in the United

States, its territories and possessions, and the District of Columbia. A mandate was issued to have the survey to be completed in two years. (Coleman et al., 1966, p. iii)

The study was based on findings from responses to questionnaires completed by a sample population that included approximately 600,000 students and 60,000 teachers in 3,100 schools across the nation. It was the second largest social science research project ever conducted in the United States (Coleman, 1990; Coleman et al., 1966). Additionally, standardized achievement tests were administered to students in Grades 1, 3, 6, 9, and 12, to assess the educational opportunities for students offered by the schools they attended. Regression analysis was used to predict student outcomes that were independent of family background. The researchers concluded that schools provided little effect on student achievement. This research raised questions as to the value schools add to student learning, giving rise to research on school effects and school effectiveness.

The interpretations and findings from the Coleman Report alarmed researchers, leading them to identify schools that were serving poor children who were achieving. They set out to target schools with student results that were better than expected based on socioeconomic background and standardized test scores. These research findings would indicate schools make a difference for poor and minority students and with these achievements, the Coleman findings would be invalid. The research did find schools that performed better than expected based on student socioeconomic data and they were identified as *effective* or *instructionally effective*. These researchers included Weber (1971); Lezotte, Edmonds, and Ratner (1974); New York State Office of Education Performance (1974); Brookover and Lezotte (1979); and Edmonds (1979).

The focus for research for school effectiveness changed to identify the characteristics that made schools more effective. Murnane and Phillip (1981) suggested positive effects on

achievement for inner-city Black students from elementary schools with teachers during their first 7 years of teaching. Teacher characteristics were associated with teacher effectiveness based on scores on tests related to verbal and cognitive skills, such as college entrance exams. Similar methodology in the effective school literature was theoretical and based on factory-style input-output models, large data sources that included school attributes such as physical facilities, library books, and teacher characteristics that were analyzed for relationships with improving student test scores in reading and math (Lee & Bryk, 1989). Edmonds and Frederickson (1978) reviewed the data from the Coleman studies (1966) and concluded there were at least 55 effective schools in the Education Equal Opportunity Survey in the northeast quadrant. The search for effective schools led by Klitgaard and Hall (1973) examined six data sets through the identification of outlier schools—those schools at the end of the bell curve in terms of student achievement.

Klitgaard and Hall (1973) concluded that overachieving schools consisted of between 2% and 9% of the various samples. Teddlie and Reynolds (2000) pointed to problems in the methodology as information on inputs did not include findings on behavioral responses of teachers, students, or families, and the model, which results in more sophisticated studies with the use of multiple methods and the addition of process factors to the basic input-output model. The study of these schools pointed to a set of characteristics, known as effective school correlates, that described the culture and the learning environment of low-income schools where students were achieving. These correlates were seen as ways for administrators and teachers to improve student achievement (Edmonds, 1979, 1986; Lezotte & Bancroft, 1985).

Specific characteristics of a profile emerged from the studies on effective schools, which are both process and organizational oriented and supposedly identify effective and ineffective

schools by the extent to which these characteristics exist. Those characteristics identified by Edmonds (1979) are (a) strong leadership, (b) high expectations for student achievement, (c) atmosphere conducive for learning, (d) emphasis on basic skills, and (e) frequent monitoring of student performance. This 5-factor model has been replicated in later school effectiveness studies to add other factors (Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, & Ecob, 1988). A review of these factors for effective schools provides no direct guide for the use of this information. Most of the research on effective schools provides a variety of characteristics for effective schools, but offer little direction for putting them together. One can say the variables are tendencies, not absolutes, and should not be regarded as a blueprint for achieving an effective school. This is due in a large part to the interdependent factors, variation from school to school, and factors can only explain a part of the variance (Purkey & Smith, 1983).

The effective schools movement brought forth controversies that centered around school accountability, student achievement through performance tests, generalized findings, quantitative versus qualitative research, ideological issues, sound theoretical foundation, limited strategies for classroom practices, guidance for schools, and the failure of the effective school movement to control political abuse of their findings (Elliott, 1996; Reynolds, 1977; Stoll & Fink, 1996). Reactions to these concerns gave birth to the school improvement movement that would be practice and policy oriented. The major focus of the movement was to help education change that fostered student outcomes and strengthened schools to manage change (Creemers, 2002). The plan for change was done in three stages: (a) initiation, (b) implementation, and (c) institutionalization. The change was directed toward the conditions of learning and internal conditions within the school (Fullan, 1991; Miles, 1986). The initial stage involved reforming the curriculum, which was fraught with problems as teachers were not a part of the process and the

inservice trainings were primitive and not able to be transferred to the classroom. The second stage was a reflection of stage one and failure of the approach. Lastly, the third stage involved the implementation of several school improvement projects to be studied for increasing student achievement (Fullan, 1991, 2001; Hopkins & Reynolds, 2001). Reynolds and Teddlie (2000a) identified school improvement studies as the third strand of the school effectiveness research, which addresses three areas:

1. Studies of school effects. Those that attempt to relate school inputs (e.g., a rigorous curriculum, teaming of teachers, and the like) to school outcomes (e.g., student academic achievement, students' self-esteem, and sense of belonging).

2. Effective schools studies. Those that describe the process of differentially effective schools using the outlier and case study approaches.

3. School improvement studies. Those that document the implementation and sometimes the success of school change efforts.

While school effectiveness is a view of where the school is, school improvement is dynamic—following a school in movement toward something (Reynolds & Teddlie, 2000a, 2000b). The merger of the fields of school effectiveness and school improvement seemed a natural progression given the information about the processes of school that should be changed to improve student outcomes. In other words, the goal of school improvement is to change the level of school effectiveness components (Creemers, 2002).

Effective schools have been defined (Weller & Weller, 2002) as “those that meet the social, emotional, physical, and academic needs of students” (pp. 20-21). This definition, which only includes student performance and standardized tests, is inadequate. Stedman (1987) defined effective schools as those schools having programs that positively affect student attitudes, self-

esteem, social responsibility, higher-order thinking skills, and test performance. This definition is a combination of many policies, programs, behaviors, and attitudes within each entity that makes a school effective.

One of the foremost concerns in the United States is improving education. Fullan (1991) and Miles (1986) stated that, “Modern societies are facing terrible problems; education reform is seen as a major source of hope for solving them” (p. 752). The reform movement proposed change in the structure of public schools and the process in how they are operated. These reforms seek legislation to facilitate excellence in education and provide support for local control of the process (Blankstein, 1992). Public education must embrace democratic participation structures to effect cultural change. These structures require a new vision of leadership to meet the challenges of leading today’s school (Seitz & Pepiton, 1996).

Mortimore and Sammons (1991) stated that, “The variation between successful and less successful schools can be accounted for by the difference in school policies within the control of the principal and teachers” (p. 4). Leadership plays a significant role in creating an effective school through the restructure and defining of (a) the mission, (b) the goals, and (c) the expectations for the organization (Blumberg & Greenfield, 1980; DeBevoise, 1984; McCurdy, 1983). Lasting reform for the improvement for public education will require leadership, which can create fundamental transformation in the learning culture of schools and the profession of teaching (Fullan, 2000).

The research of Hallinger and Heck (1996) produced two separated quantitative analyses on the effects of principal leadership between 1980 and 1995. Their research encompassed 40 studies, which was all that could be located for review over a period of 15 years. This resulted in an average of 2.5 studies per year being completed on principal leadership during what many

perceived as the most dynamic period in the history of school reform. Hallinger and Heck concluded that principal leadership effects on school outcomes were not warranted. The analyses suggested that principal effects were small and required sophisticated research designs to detect. The 40 studies on principal effects used student achievement as the dependent variable, which is most important but provides no consideration for nonachievement outcomes. The overview of the study provided a narrow view of how school leadership is perceived.

Leithwood and Jantzi (1998) examined the relative effects of student engagement in school leadership provided by the principal, teachers, and those in other roles. They also sought to examine the effects of *total leadership* and both transformational and transactional forms of leadership. The data for the study included survey responses from 2,727 teachers and 9,025 students in 110 elementary and secondary schools in a large Ontario school district. Two survey instruments were developed to collect data from teachers on school conditions and leadership and from students to collect evidence regarding engagement with school and the educational culture of their families. Individual responses were aggregated by school, and means, standard deviations, and reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) for all scales were obtained. Factor analysis was used to examine the extent to which the variables included in the school conditions and leadership measured the intended concepts for measurement as well as analysis of the 53 items listed in measuring the nature of school leadership. The results from the examination of influence on schools and students through a transformational leadership approach conducted through *t* tests determined significant differences ($p < .05$) between elementary and secondary school ratings except those concerning student leadership. Limitations with the findings emerged from both methodological and substantive issues with the most obvious issues due to the path

analytic techniques, which provide only soft answers to the sort of cause and effect questions that the study addressed.

Leadership

Leadership is an enigma. Studies by researchers have been encompassing, philosophers have engaged in long deliberations and written treaties about leadership, and practitioners have tried to pinpoint exactly what is meant when we use the term (Weller & Weller, 2002).

Historically, definitions of leadership have focused on the leader's behavior. The 1st century work of Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* portrays the behaviors, conduct, and values of famous ancient Romans and Greeks that were emulated as part of the leadership training (Hartley, 2006). The 16th century produced Machiavelli's *The Prince*, which provided Lorenzo de Medici with the political prescriptions for a winning account of leadership in an Italian city-state, and in the 20th century Burns' (1978) *Leadership* explored the dynamics of the leader-follower relationship in the framework of conflict and power defined as

Leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivation—the wants and the needs, the aspirations and expectations—of both leaders and followers. And the genius of leadership lies in the manner in which leaders see and act on their own and their followers' values and motivation. (p. 19)

House's (2004) study defined leadership in a narrow and organizational scope as “the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization of which they are members” (p. 51). A 10-year study (House, Hanges, & Javidan, 2004) conducted by 170 researchers of the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness program was an analysis of a cross-level integrated theory of the relationship between culture and societal organizational and leadership effectiveness in 62 societies around the world. The results from over 17,000 middle managers in

the areas of industries, banking, food processing, and telecommunications were included in this cross-cultural study.

House et al. (2004) defined, conceptualized, and operationalized the study by the choice of a multicultural team of researchers, the selection of industries through polling, and the use of selection instruments to reflect the different cultures. Finally, data collection completed by researchers was independent of the cultures they studied. This study is similar to the personality test such as the Myers-Briggs and Keirsey that breaks down the 62 societies into 9 cultural dimensions, 6 culturally endorsed leadership theory dimensions, and 21 leadership dimensions. House et al. found the United States as the only culture in which participative leadership had a positive influence on employee performance. Overall, findings suggested that leaders are seen as the embodiment of an ideal state of affairs; thus, the instrument for change in the society.

Leithwood et al. (2004) made two claims. First, Leithwood et al. reported that, “Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school” (p. 7). Second, they stated that, “Leadership effects are usually largest where and when they are needed most” (p. 7). Without a powerful leader, troubled schools are unlikely to be turned around. The authors stressed that “many other factors may contribute to such turnarounds, but leadership is the catalyst” (p. 7). This study, which looked at school leadership and the development of principals, was conducted through a series of indepth case analyses of developed inservice program models for principals in five states.

The study encompassed perceptions of the participants, interviews, surveys, and the comparison of sample principals about their preparedness and practices. The subsample followed principals into their schools to examine school operations, teachers, views of school leadership, and the trends on student performance. The findings from these case studies concluded that

effective school leadership influences student achievement through the support and development of teachers and the implementation of effective organizational processes (Leithwood et al., 2004).

Role of the Principal

Leadership theories and research into principals' roles have provided limited validity, practical utility, and comprehensiveness that were addressed in the study conducted by Leithwood and Montgomery (1984). The study attempted to describe effective principals' behaviors and provide a coherent explanation of them. Previous studies (Leithwood, 1996) lacked current knowledge about the principal's role, which was grounded in empirical data, failure to account for demands placed upon the principal by the context of the school, and flawed research designs. Leithwood and Montgomery's study involved the use of two groups of school-based practitioners who developed principals over a period of 2 years. The process was modified through the interview process with 90 principals resulting in a four-stage growth profile. The content validity for the profile was examined through various types of data, which were addressed with the modifications. The results of this research using multiple designs found four arenas of principal effectiveness; the highest being systematic problem solving, followed by program management, humanitarian, and administration. The systematic problem solvers were seen with a legitimate, comprehensive set of goals for students seeking out the most effective means for their achievement. One of the noted limitations of the study was use of the information processing theory to explain principal behaviors. Although this was seen as a limitation it is a beginning point of reference as there were only two empirical studies to be

located about this issue, both related to the basis of principal decision making (Isherwood & Tallboy, 1979; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1983).

The Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (2001) reviewed over 5,000 studies conducted over a 30-year period on the relationship between school leadership and student achievement. Seventy studies met the criteria for the design, controls, data analysis, and rigor that included (a) quantitative student achievement data, (b) student achievement measured on standardized, norm-referenced tests, and (c) tests with objective measures of achievement. The study used student achievement as the dependent variable and teacher perceptions of leadership as the independent variable. The sample population for the meta-analysis involved 2,894 schools, 14,000 teachers, and over 1.1 million students. This was one of the largest samples for an examination of research on practices of leadership. The data from the study indicated that there was a substantial relationship between leadership and student achievement and the average effect size between the two variables was .25. These findings indicated a statistically significant difference. The study found 21 specific leadership responsibilities that significantly correlated with student achievement:

1. Culture
2. Order
3. Discipline
4. Resources
5. Curriculum, instruction, assessment
6. Focus
7. Knowledge of curriculum, instruction assessment
8. Visibility

9. Contingent rewards
10. Communication
11. Outreach
12. Input
13. Affirmation
14. Relationship
15. Change agent
16. Optimizer
17. Ideals/beliefs
18. Monitors/evaluates
19. Flexibility
20. Situational awareness
21. Intellectual stimulations

Marzano et al. (2005) also suggested that while leaders can have a positive effect on student achievement they also can have a marginal, worse, or negative effect on achievement. Two variables determined whether a leader had a negative or positive effect on achievement. The first variable was the focus of change and how a leader determines the improvement for the school that will have a positive effect on achievement. The second variable was the leaders' understanding of the *order* of change they are leading and the adjustments to make to their leadership practices.

Leadership is both simple and complex, and the two essential objectives critical to any organization's effectiveness are (a) helping the organization set a defensible set of directions and (b) influencing members to move in those directions (Leithwood et al., 2004). Schools contain

students from a broad spectrum of background, knowledge, and interests. They are asked to learn more challenging content at a deeper level and educators are charged with learning how to teach students to achieve academic success. Schools must transform themselves into learning communities not only for the students they serve, but also for the teachers and staff professionals who run them (Boston et al., 2004).

Principals must be familiar with innovative teaching theories and practices and have the ability to assist teachers in modeling them in the classroom. These conversations are the life-blood of successful schools, infusing instructional practices with fresh ideas and renewed energy (Tschannen-Moran, Uline, Woolfolk Hoy, & Mackley, 2000). These conversations may be rare if leaders do not know how to structure time in a manner for this collaboration to occur. They do not occur if leaders do not create and maintain the environment where teachers feel comfortable in providing and receiving assistance from their peers (Uline & Berkowitz, 2000). Glantz (2006) contended that the successful leader facilitates teachers in the following ways:

1. Models best practices by modeling the behavior when conducting workshops and meetings. The use of wait time and thought provoking questions are examples of strategies teachers can use in the classroom.
2. Provides time for collaboration for teachers to dialogue with colleagues to see others teach, thereby generating effective teaching strategies and best practices.
3. Visits other school sites to observe teachers who demonstrate effective teaching strategies to bring back new ideas and new approaches for teaching the content.
4. Invites workshop facilitators from within and outside the district to present sessions on subjects that teachers want to learn about.

Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, and Gundlach's (2003) study examined what school leaders do to effectively lead school. They conducted interviews with principals, vice-principals, and teachers from 21 public, private, charter, contract, and magnet schools in four cities in four states over a 2-year period. The results suggested that principals do not necessarily have to be expert in all areas (e.g., instructional, cultural, managerial, human resources, strategic, external development, political leadership), but must be *diagnosticians*, having the ability to provide for the needs of the school at the right time and in the right context. Schools must have someone who ensures the quality of instruction, models teaching practices for others, supervises curriculum, and ensures teachers have the resources they need to promote learning. Principals no longer just manage day-to-day school operations but must now be school improvement experts who are able to motivate staff to make necessary changes to ensure student success and achievement (Boston et al., 2004).

Leithwood et al. (2004) reported that leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school. They also reported that the effects of good leadership are largest where they are needed most. Troubled schools are unlikely to turn around without a powerful leader, and though other factors may contribute to the success, leadership is the catalyst. Educational leaders will no longer be deemed successful for achieving goals only for the advanced and average students. Leaders must believe that every student can succeed. This leadership vision is necessary, but insufficient. Leaders must also nurture this disposition in others, creating belief where there is disbelief (Skrla, Scheurich, & Johnson, 2000).

Tirozzi (2001) reported that, "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” (p. 438). Principals are faced with a multitude of roles, including overseeing all building activities, establishing instructional priorities, and ensuring teachers get the support they need to do their work. The performance of the principal in any of these roles is a determining factor in the attitudes of the staff, students, and parents toward the school (LoVette & Watts, 2002). The relentless pressures of today’s complex environments have intensified the workload for principals (Fullan, 2002). The work of a principal is multifaceted, hectic, and fraught with uncertainties. Given the ongoing press for accountability, the work of the principal is shifting to ensure results (Zepeda, 2003).

Principals who are instructional leaders are about the business of making schools effective by focusing their attention, energy, and efforts toward student learning and achievement by supporting the work of teachers (Zepeda, 2003). Instructional leadership, as defined by Zepeda, is strong leadership that promotes excellence and equity in education and entails (a) projecting and holding steadfast to the vision; (b) garnering and allocating resources; (c) communicating progress; and (d) supporting the people, programs, services, and activities implemented to achieve the school’s vision. As educational scholars look at schools and the role of the school leader, the concept of shared leadership has moved to the forefront of leadership approaches (Murphy, 2002). Principals invest in teachers by providing resources and instructional support and maintaining the consistency and pervasiveness of the educational program (Printy & Marks, 2004).

Principals facilitate the coordination of teachers with others in their content fields, inspiring innovative discussions in order to develop teaching strategies, encourage improvement, and provide feedback based on student learning outcomes. These meetings include the teaching teams, grade-level teams, content teachers, and administrators. Through these discussions and

shared experiences, teachers establish a purpose where they can work together, provide clarity of what is valuable, and create a future focus. This interaction provides the ingredients for shared leadership (McEwan, 2001).

According to the National Association of Elementary School Principals (2001), six standards of instructional leadership are unequivocal and nonnegotiable in their focus on learning for principals. The catalyst for these standards is the belief that a “first-rate school is unable to exist without first-rate school leadership” (p. 6), and a leader must exhibit more than charisma and good management skills. Leading learning communities provide strategies for achieving a standard that involves creating and fostering a community of learners, embracing learner-centered leadership, seeking out multiple sources of contributions for leadership, and uniting daily operations of the school day to the school and student learning goals (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2001). These standards for principals include the following:

1. Lead schools in a way that places students and adult learning at the center.
2. Set high expectations and standards for the academic and social development of all students and the performance of adults.
3. Demand content and instruction that ensure student achievement of agreed upon academic standards.
4. Create a culture of continuous learning for adults tied to student learning and other school goals.
5. Use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools to assess, identify, and apply instructional improvement.
6. Actively engage the community to create shared responsibility for student and school success.

The single greatest influence on students in a classroom is the teacher. According to Stronge (2002), “Teachers have a powerful, long-lasting influence on their students” (p. vii). Good principals support good teachers by providing instructional strategies, services, and resources continuously. These principals attract and hire highly qualified teachers who have expertise in specific content knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are essential in the promotion of student achievement. Principals realize that retaining quality teachers is essential because experience counts (Glantz, 2006). Experienced teachers differ from the rookie teachers in that they have attained expertise through real life experiences, classroom practice, and time (Stronge). Teachers with more experience plan better, apply a range of teaching strategies, understand students’ learning needs, and better organize instruction.

Blase and Blase (2004) identified three primary elements of effective leadership with improving and retaining a quality teaching staff:

1. Conducting conferences. Whether instructional conferences are pre, post, grade level, informal, or formal these are opportunities for the principal to make suggestions, model, give feedback, inquire, and solicit opinions from teachers.

2. Providing staff development. Behaviors associated with providing staff development include emphasizing the study of teaching and learning, support for collaboration, development of coaching relationships, use of action research, provision of resources, and application of the principle of adult growth and development to all phases of the professional learning program.

3. Developing teacher reflection. Principals have the opportunity to purposefully engage teachers in the expression of feelings, sharing of concerns, and thinking strongly about instructional issues.

Fullan (2001) signified the importance of knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessments by explaining that a principal's knowledge of effective practices is necessary to provide guidance for teachers on daily tasks involved in teaching and learning. Elmore (2000) concluded that, "Leadership is the guidance and direction of instructional improvement" (p. 13). Reeves (2004) reiterated those thoughts by stating that an extensive knowledge bank regarding best practices is important and necessary to mentor teachers.

The recommendations articulated for principals suggest monthly meetings with administrators to be on top of the current trends in curriculum, instruction, and assessments (Fullan, 2001). Principals must seek out training and development opportunities by networking with colleagues, joining professional organizations, and attending personal programs of self-improvement (Educational Research Service, 2000).

McEwan (2003) suggested the following seven steps to become an effective leader:

1. Establish, implement, and achieve academic standards.
2. Be an instructional resource for your staff.
3. Create a school culture and climate conducive to learning.
4. Communicate the vision and mission of your school.
5. Set high expectations for your staff and yourself.
6. Develop teacher leaders.
7. Develop and maintain positive relationships with students, staff, and parents.

The traditional image and concept of the school principal as a passive, reactive manager has evolved into a concept that is essential for creating and sustaining a well run school and, most important, critical for promoting student achievement (Matthew & Crow, 2003). According to Young (2004),

Good principals must be viewed as guides and coaches, leaders who establish high expectations and common directions . . . they regularly observe classrooms, guide lesson planning, create common planning time, monitor student learning, collect data, and use results to influence improvement plans. (p. 51)

Principals play an important part in leading continuous professional learning. Although it would not be reasonable to expect principals to have indepth knowledge about effective instruction at the level of an expert teacher, they do need to have knowledge about good curriculum and instructional practices to make sound decisions about professional development to lead the learning of the school faculty (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001; Stein & D'Amico, 2002). Principals knowledgeable about curriculum and instruction have the ability to (a) identify the most effective teacher in a given content area in order to capitalize on the expertise to build capacity within the school and (b) recognize that capacity is not present and the need to set specific goals to improve curriculum and instruction.

Effective leaders are able to recognize the relationship between accountability, improved teaching, and the support that teachers need from administrators who oversee the instructional program. The systems of accountability have created a ripple effect between what students and teachers do. The National Association of Elementary School Principals (2001) concluded that,

We've learned that it's meaningless to set high expectations for students' performance unless we also set high expectations for the performance of adults. We know that if we are going to improve learning, we must also improve teaching. And we must improve the environment in which teaching and learning occurs. (p. 2)

Elmore (2002) claimed that, "Systems need to be able to identify people who know what to do, and to create settings in which people who know what to do can teach those who do not" (p. 26). Achieving effectiveness is done through the development of contributions from others within the organization to (a) strengthen school culture, (b) modify organizational structures, and (c) build collaborative processes (Center for Collaborative Education, 2003). Developing

professional teaching capacity has been identified as a key element of leadership and for the creation of ongoing school-based opportunities to improve education in all school districts (Boston et al., 2004).

School administration is a leadership position of substantial importance in the compulsory school system of our democratic society (Dufour, 2001; Fullan, 1998, 2000; Renihan, 1999). As we enter the new millennium and focus on effective leadership as the key to ensure success and sustainability of public school effectiveness, the pipeline of qualified and interested candidates to fill the vacancies of principal has heavily diminished (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2001). The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2008) projected the field of education to grow as fast as the average for all occupations through 2014. The number of employed positions in educational administrations will jump by 13% between 2000 and 2010. A significant portion of educational administrators will retire in the next 10 years. A 10-year study conducted by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (2001) revealed the average age for the retirement of a principal was 57. The report found that more than half of the administrators plan to retire as soon as they are eligible, thus continuing the more than 40% turnover rate in the next decade. These statistics can now classify the position of principal as an endangered species. The most daunting and challenging task of the human resource department in the educational organization is the effective recruitment and selection of school administrators. The challenge is due to the inexact science of attracting, screening, and identifying candidates of good quality to the complex leadership need of schools today (Leithwood et al., 2004).

School Climate and Perceptions

Various researchers have noted the definitions for school climate. Hoy and Miskel (2005) defined school climate as “the set of internal characteristics that distinguished one school from another and influence the behaviors of each school’s members” (p. 185). Hanson (2001) stated that every school has a culture:

Schools also have their own unique cultures that are shaped around a particular combination of values, beliefs, and feelings. These school cultures emphasize what is of paramount importance to them as they strive to develop their knowledge base in a particular direction, such as producing outstanding football teams, high SAT scores, disciplined classrooms and skilled auto mechanics, or sending kids to college who come from inner-city urban schools. Although the culture of a school is not visible to the human eye, its artifacts and symbols reflect specific cultural priorities. (p. 641)

The responsibility for the school’s culture is defined by Marzano et al. (2005) as the extent to which a leader fosters shared beliefs and the sense of community and cooperation with staff members. Their study defined the behaviors associated with these responsibilities as (a) promoting cohesion among staff, (b) promoting a sense of well-being among staff, (c) developing an understanding of purpose among staff, and (d) developing a shared vision of what the school could be like.

Leonard (2002) asserted that positive school cultures are identified by professional collaboration that is “evidenced when teachers and administrators share their knowledge, contribute ideas, and develop plans for the purpose of achieving educational and organizational goals” (p. 4). In healthy school cultures, principals are united with teachers in a working relationship where the vision and mission are shared, they are focused on student learning, and they work under a common set of assumptions about learning for both students and adults. A positive school culture is aligned to the goals and objectives that are congruent with the vision and mission of the school (Zepeda, 2003).

Elmore (2003) concluded that knowing the right thing to do is the central problem of school improvement. Holding schools accountable for their performance depends on having people in schools with the knowledge, skill, and judgment to make the improvements that will increase student performance. The role of the principal is to create a school culture that transcends personality and with a clear sense of expectations as to what is important. A positive school climate can enhance staff performance, promote higher morale, and improve student achievement (Waters et al., 2004).

School improvement involves school culture. This area cannot be neglected. If the school structure changes (often seen as the most visible sign of school improvement), yet the school culture remains the same, then the harm of short-lived and superficial changes are real (Creemers, 2002). When school improvement occurs, the characteristics of school culture are evident. The principal and entire staff must have shared goals and feel responsible for success. Other parts of the process are collegiality, risk taking, mutual respect, support, and an attitude of lifelong learning (Anfara, 2006).

Heck (2000) and Goddard, Hoy, and Hoy (2000) linked school climate and student achievement. School climate may be one of the most important ingredients of a successful instructional program. Establishing a safe and secure learning environment and creating a positive, nurturing school climate are the first steps in a long series of critically high expectations effective principals set for themselves and the educational communities they lead. Most important, however, is the love for learning and students, which is at the heart of every successful principal (Cotton, 2003).

There is emerging evidence that supports a connection between leadership and organizational performance (Frearson, 2002; Hallinger & Heck, 1996). Martinez's (2002)

literature review on effectiveness showed the link between student retention/achievement with teaching and learning. It also suggested the proactive leader drives the motivation and structures that improve teaching and learning. Where schools have the benefit of shared instructional leadership, faculty members offer students their best efforts and students respond in kind; they are organizations that learn and perform at high levels (Marks & Printy, 2003).

Alvy and Robbins (2005) pointed out that the value of the principal is closely linked to the ability to build trusting relationships with the people who make up the school. This would include students, teachers, classified staff, families, and the greater community. Building trusting relationships go a long way toward establishing a healthy school culture where everyone works together. Alvy and Robbins reported, “Principals do not gain trust because of the title on their office door, they must earn it, and to earn it they must give it. Principals must demonstrate faith in the independent skills and decisions of others” (p. 52). Relationships depend on the emotional attitude of the principal. Especially in difficult times, the eyes of the organization members always turn to the leader (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002).

All good-to-great companies begin the process of finding a path to greatness by “confronting the brutal facts of their current reality” (Collins, 2001, p. 7). When an honest and diligent effort is made to determine the truth of a situation, the right decision often becomes self-evident; it is impossible to make good decisions without infusing the entire process with an honest confrontation of brutal facts. A primary task in taking a company from good to great is to create a culture wherein people have a tremendous opportunity to be heard and, ultimately, for the truth to be heard (Collins). Principals fulfill a critical role in the school with respect to teachers and their satisfaction in the work environment. Teachers achieve success and satisfaction through their perception of their experiences with leadership. Lunenburg and

Ornstein (1996) maintained that job satisfaction depends on the degree of importance principals place on human resources. That is, the more principals value their people, the higher the levels of morale and job satisfaction.

Lord, Brown, and Freiberg (1999) stated that, “The interpersonal relation of superiors to subordinates affects subordinates’ identification and self-concepts, which, in turn, are critical determinants of social and organizational processes” (p. 170). The relationship between the principal and teacher affects how the teacher perceives his or her role in the school, and that perception, thereby, helps to influence the success and failure of the school. Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (2003) conducted a survey of 1,017 school teachers and 800 principals at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. The findings indicated that both teachers and principals believe that the most important leader behavior for principals is to motivate students and teachers to perform at their best. However, when specific questions were posed to the teachers concerning the principals’ leadership, these researchers found teachers and principals had divergent views of the principals’ leader behaviors. Researchers conducting the Metropolitan Life survey concluded that teachers felt their principals were more interested in test scores, reporting, and compliance than providing guidance and support for teachers. Principals, on the other hand, responded that they provided optimum time, energy, support, and direction to teachers rather than to test scores, reporting, and compliance.

Waters et al. (2004) conducted a meta-analysis with a dominant interest on school leadership as practiced by principals involving 69 studies, 2,894 schools, 1.1 million students, and over 14,000 teachers. All of the students and schools were located in the United States, and academic achievement was measured by standardized achievement tests, achievement tests, or

composite indexes based on one or the other. Student participants were represented from kindergarten through 12th grade.

The 69 studies included in the meta-analysis used either a conventional or a purposeful sample that directly or indirectly examined the relationship between the leadership of the principal and student achievement (Waters et al., 2004). A questionnaire was used for teachers to provide a rating of principal leadership. The average score for the teachers' response was then correlated with the average achievement for students in their school. The unit of analysis was the school, with each school having a single summary score that represented the average achievement of the student. One or more summary scores represented the average perception of teachers regarding one or more specific leadership behavior of the principal. The findings, when computing the correlation between the leadership behavior of the principal in the school and the average academic achievement of students in the school, resulted in a correlation of 0.25. In broad terms, this correlation indicated that principals and their leadership can have a profound effect on achievement for students who attend their schools.

School Culture

The core of successful leadership centers around three themes: (a) setting directions, (b) development of people, and (c) redesigning the organization. The leader must develop and implement an understanding of the organization and its goals and activities. This understanding becomes the basis for a sense of purpose or vision (Leithwood et al., 2004). School culture is complex, symbolic, and contextual and what occurs in school can only be understood and interpreted in a unique context (Hoy & Hoy, 2006). Bolman and Deal (2003) summarized the difficulties and complexities of understanding the activities of the organization as follows:

1. Proceedings, which occur within the organizations, are not always as they appear. The most significant factor of the proceeding is not its occurrence but rather the reason for the occurrence.

2. The significance of the proceeding is often not clear and the activity must be interpreted in context. Proceedings have multiple meanings because of individual interpretations.

3. Proceedings and actions present questions to be answered now with the future presenting its own set of problems. There is no rhyme or reason as to the what, why, or the next occurrence.

4. Solving organizational problems is a limited process through the efforts of rational decision making when proceedings and actions are ambiguous and uncertain.

5. Information is invented to resolve conflict, provide understanding, and create hope. The organizational members when faced with ambiguity and uncertainty create symbols and stories to resolve conflicts.

6. Myths, rituals, ceremonies, and sagas often provide individuals with a purpose they need for meaning. The importance of the organization lies within what is stated rather than what is produced.

The implications introduced by Hoy and Hoy (2006) for school leaders are clear and the principal must be part of the culture to understand it. Significant events can never be accepted at face value; their meanings must be interpreted in terms of values and norms of the school and from the point of view of different organizational members. The Waters et al. (2004) study on school leadership defined the responsibility of culture as the extent to which the leader fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation among staff. The behaviors are associated with these responsibilities:

1. Promoting cohesion among staff.
2. Promoting a sense of well being among staff.
3. Developing an understanding of purpose among staff.
4. Developing a shared vision of what the school could be like.

The role of the principal is to create a school culture that transcends personality and with a clear sense of expectation as to what is important. This includes how students are taught and how to interact with other adults (Barth, 2002). Leaders who are effective in shaping the culture of a school influence teachers who, in turn, positively influence students. Leithwood and Riehl (2003) stated,

Leaders act through and with other people. Leaders sometimes do things, through words or actions, that has a direct effect on the primary goal of the collective, but more often their agency consists of influencing the thoughts and actions of other persons and establishing policies that enable others to be effective. (p. 8)

Organizational climate and culture are two complementary ways to capture the energy or the working environment of schools. Culture is seen as a shared set of beliefs and values that hold organizational climate together, thus providing an individual identity (Hoy & Miskel, 2005). According to Hoy and Hoy (2006), this culture can be seen from four domains:

1. Trait assumptions. Unconscious basic assumptions on the premise about human nature, social relationships, truth, reality, and environments; they are taken for granted and are highly resistant to change.

2. Core values. Groups, which evolve and develop a set of core values, are central to behavior; definition of values in broad terms and embraced to fit into what is to be identified as successful.

3. Shared norms. The unwritten and informal expectation of the organization is what teachers learn as they become socialized into the school.

4. Artifacts. The members' shared perspective that is spoken, seen, and heard and which makes the organization distinct. This would include the physical environment, language, activities, and ceremonies that are a routine part of the organizational life of the school.

A study conducted by Williams (2000) compared teachers' perceptions of principals in middle schools. The comparison was between effective schools nominated for the National Secondary Recognition Program and randomly selected schools that were not nominated. The perceptions of the teachers from both types of schools were identified to determine the principal effectiveness in the school. Williams concluded that principals in the effective schools were more successful as leaders in organizational development than were the principals of less effective schools.

Leaders must attend to the different aspects of the school, which can be seen as an organization, as well as a community with internal processes and external relationships. Sustaining and supporting the performance of all the workers, including teachers and students, requires organizational development from leaders to enable schools to function as professional learning communities (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Other tasks involved in this process include (a) strengthening school culture, (b) modifying organizational structure, (c) building collaborative processes, and (d) managing the environment.

Deal and Peterson (2003) explained that, "Highly respected organizations have evolved with a shared system of informal folkways and traditions that infuse work with meaning, passion, and purpose" (p. 1). They observed that, "Cultural patterns are highly enduring, have a powerful impact on performance, and shape the ways people think, act, and feel" (p. 4). This is especially seen in schools. They reported that, "In the world of education with its multiple challenges and

complex goals, ritual is probably more important than in a business with a tangible product or service” (p. 32).

Emotional Intelligence

In addition to instructional leadership, attention should be given to the leader’s emotional intelligence. This emotional intelligence is defined as the *willingness* of the leader to be *tuned in* to employees as people (Leithwood et al., 2004). This view of emotional intelligence is displayed through the leader’s personal attention to employees and through the utilization of the employees’ capacities, increasing the employees’ enthusiasm and optimism, reducing frustration, transmitting a sense of mission, and indirectly increasing performance.

A leader must form relationships and build a team. This involves making personal communication with adults a priority. Nohria, Joyce, and Robinson (2003) observed a range of personality characteristics for a chief executive officer and those that proved to be insignificant included whether the person is

Viewed as a visionary, detail oriented, secure, insecure, patient, impatient, charismatic, or quiet. One quality, which does matter: the ability to build relationships with people at all levels of the organization and to inspire the rest of management team to do the same. The chief executive officers who can present themselves as fellow employees rather than masters can develop positive attitudes that translate into improved corporate performance. (p. 51)

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Educators are employed with the task of recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers into classrooms each year. School staffing has become a priority. The U.S. Department of Education estimated the labor force would need approximately 2.2 million teachers over the next decade, an annual average of more than 200,000 new teachers (Howard, 2003). Each year the

teacher applicant pool diminishes in size and administrators are pushed to implement new ways to keep schools fully staffed. School districts across the nation are in competition to find highly qualified teachers. It has become necessary for school districts to focus on more than recruiting teachers for employment, but on retaining teachers after employment (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003).

Between 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, 85% of teachers continued in their teaching profession at the same school they had taught the previous year, 8% transferred to a different school, and 7% left the teaching profession (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005). During the 1999-2000 year, 17% of all teachers were new hires at their schools. These new hires were first-year teachers, transfers from other schools or districts, and former teachers who re-entered the profession (Luekens, Lyter, & Fox, 2004; Provasnik & Dorfman, 2005).

The No Child Left Behind Act (2002) stated teachers, to be deemed as highly qualified, must (a) possess a bachelor's degree, (b) hold full state certification or licensure, and (c) prove that they know each subject they teach (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). Teachers are held accountable on every front. The ultimate goal is to achieve higher rates of student achievement for all students regardless of their socioeconomic status (Darling-Hammond, 2001; Stone & Mata, 1998).

Since the early 1980s, education policy research has warned of the coming possibility of a severe shortage of elementary and secondary schoolteachers. The U.S. Department of Education (2002) predicted that one million primary and secondary school teachers would retire by 2008. According to the National Center for Educational Information, there will be over 2.2 million teaching positions to be filled within the next 10 years (Feistritzer, Harr, Hobar, & Scullion, 2005). These analysts predicted a dramatic increase in the demand for new teachers,

resulting mostly from two converging demographic trends: increasing student enrollments and increasing teacher attrition due to the aging of the teaching force (Ingersoll, 2002).

Ingersoll (2001) identified the three major reasons why teachers leave the profession: (1) retirement, (2) personal reasons, and (3) job dissatisfaction. The analysis for this study was based on the Schools and Staffing Survey and its supplement, the Teacher Follow-up Survey, a large comprehensive nationally representative survey of 50,000 teachers from public and private schools conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics. The analysis of the data included multiple regression analysis with teacher turnover, teacher characteristics, school characteristics, organizational conditions, and reasons for turnover as variables. According to Stempien and Loeb (2002), the most prominent predictor of turnover is the age of the teacher. Viadero (2002) looked specifically at the new teachers hired and reported that 29% of these applicants leave the field of education within their first 3 years of teaching and 39% leave by the end of 5 years. Many of the teachers leaving the profession early tend to be those designated by their district as the best new recruits (Gordon & Maxey, 2000). As these shortages create a compelling pressure to produce more teachers as quickly as possible, the area of recruitment and retention of public school teachers is an important issue (Watlington et al., 2004).

Watlington et al. (2004) identified efforts of the U.S. Department of Education to respond to the shortages by addressing these problems with teacher recruitment, reforms for teacher education, changes with certification rules, and professional development for teachers. Recruitment and retention were identified as the most important and every effort was made throughout the United States and abroad to seek and find highly qualified staff (Greer, 2004). Teacher attrition is greatly outpacing the rate at which they are being prepared to enter new classrooms. According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2003),

“It is as if we were pouring teachers into a bucket with a fist-sized hole in the bottom” (p. 5). Despite these aggressive recruitment efforts by school districts, there remains a net loss of teachers each year. The nation’s schools hired 232,000 new teachers for the 1999-2000 school year but a year later schools lost more than 287,000 teachers. To meet these demands, schools need to find ways to reduce the frustrations and increase the rewards of teaching (McCain, Johannessen, & Ricca, 2005).

Teacher Incentive Programs

States and districts are also offering incentive programs to individuals with strong academic backgrounds in areas of math and science or others who are adaptable to teaching. Other initiatives include Teach for America, Troops to Teachers, online recruitment systems, and job fairs to attract candidates to the field of education (Laczko-Kerr & Berlinger, 2003). According to Morice and Murray (2003), incentives include tax breaks, home ownership, signing bonuses, and other financial incentives. The most outstanding incentive to applicants is scholarships to pay for the completion of their college program. These incentive programs require the applicant to teach for a set period in the district where they are hired for employment (Haycock & Yi, 2001).

Classroom Conditions for Teaching

Today’s teachers face a variety of increasingly difficult conditions in the classroom, including English speakers of other languages, language immersion classrooms, inclusion, and state-mandated programs. Teachers are expected to have the knowledge and skills in the diverse areas of portfolio assessment, technology, cooperative learning, and a vast knowledge of

instructional strategies (Potter & Swenk, 2001). The present educational conditions, goals, and standards are overwhelming for the beginning teacher in what is an already complex profession. Inman and Marlow's (2004) study examined the reported attitudes of beginning teachers in order to identify perceived positive aspects of teaching as factors, which may lead to teacher retention. The sample was composed of teachers from randomly selected schools in Georgia. The findings indicated that teachers' initial entrance into the classroom experience is that of "classroom or reality shock" (p. 605) and often mistakes the feeling of uneasiness as an indication of having made a mistake in their choice of a profession.

Teacher Attrition Rate

Concerns about the disproportionately higher resignation rate for the beginning teachers than for teachers who have been teaching for more than 10 years continues to be an area in which answers are being sought. With almost 30% of new teachers leaving within 5 years, and even higher attrition rate in disadvantaged districts, a revolving door of applicants makes recruitment a Sisyphean task (Darling-Hammond, 2001). Early attrition from teaching bears enormous costs. A recent study in Texas estimated that the state's annual turnover rate of 15%, which includes a 40% turnover rate for public school teachers in their first 3 years, costs the state a conservative \$329 million a year, or at least \$8,000 per recruit who leaves in the first few years of teaching. High attrition means that schools must use funds urgently needed for school improvements and spend them instead in a manner that produces little long-term payoff for student learning (Darling-Hammond, 2000b).

Steep attrition in the first years of teaching is a long-standing problem. Rates of attrition from individual schools and districts include leavers, plus movers who go from one school or

district to another. Teacher turnover is 50% higher in high-poverty than in low-poverty schools (Ingersoll, 2001) and new teachers in urban districts exit or transfer at higher rates than their suburban counterparts do (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2001). Therefore, the national goal of providing an equitable education to children across the nation will require developing and retaining high-quality teachers in every school from kindergarten to 12th grade (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005).

Given the strong evidence that teacher effectiveness increases sharply after the first few years of teaching, this kind of churning in the beginning teaching force reduces productivity in education (Kain & Singleton, 1996). The education system never gets a long-term payoff from its investment in novices who leave. Teacher turnover negatively affects the cohesiveness and effectiveness of schools by disrupting educational programs and professional relationships that are intended to improve student learning (Bryk, Lee, & Smith, 1990; Ingersoll, 2001).

Large concentrations of underprepared teachers create a drain on schools. In a large number of urban schools across the United States, a large share of teachers are inexperienced, underqualified, or both. Shields et al. (2001) estimated that more than 20% of schools in California have more than 20% of their staffs teaching without credentials. These inexperienced teachers are assigned almost exclusively to low-income schools serving students of color. Such schools must continually pour money into recruitment efforts and professional support for these new teachers. Other teachers, including those who serve as mentors, are stretched thin and feel overburdened by the needs of their colleagues and students. Schools squander scarce resources trying to teach the basics each year to teachers who come in with few tools and leave before they become skilled (Carroll, Reichardt, & Guarino, 2000).

Johnson and Birkeland (2003) found the challenge of attracting, supporting, and retaining new teachers to staff the nation's schools will require a comprehensive strategy, one that addresses the full range of new teachers' concerns. The study affirmed merely recruiting promising teachers will not guarantee a solution to the school staffing challenge. Simply enrolling them into an induction program will not ensure that teacher have the continuing support they need to teach well.

New teachers achieve success and find satisfaction primarily at the school site through their experiences with students and colleagues. If these experiences are not rewarding teachers are most likely to transfer to another school or leave teaching altogether (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). Clear lessons emerged from the research, not only for principals, experienced teachers, and district administrators, but also for state and local policymakers. School administrators and veteran teachers must take action immediately to build a supporting foundation for the development of new teachers to enhance their experiences in schools. The policymakers must help to make teaching an attractive, accessible, and financially rewarding career.

Strategies for Teacher Retention

Berry (2004), in a study on teacher recruitment and retention for hard-to-staff schools, found that teachers would teach and stay in these schools. They will stay if they are sufficiently prepared to teach in these schools, paid well, and if their working conditions include a supportive principal. Teachers must be afforded opportunities for leadership, input in key decision making, more time to learn from colleagues, and the chance to work more closely with fewer numbers of students and families. All of these factors make a difference.

There are two types of teacher turnover from schools (Ingersoll, 2001). One can be seen as teacher attrition, referring to those who leave the occupation of teaching. The second type is known as teacher migration, which refers to teachers who transfer or move to different teaching jobs in other schools. It might appear that teacher migration is a less significant form of turnover as it does not increase or decrease the overall supply of teachers, as do retirement and other career changes. This may be true from a systemic point of view; however, from the school management perspective, teacher migration and attrition have the same effects as they both result in vacancies within the staff that must be filled (Ingersoll, 2000). The teacher shortage and the impact of migration are distributed unevenly and inequitably; schools and districts in low-income communities experience a disproportionate share of migration and a steady loss of teachers. Many classrooms across the United States have either a novice teacher or a noncertified person instructing students (Ingersoll, 2001).

Nationally, the teacher turnover is 50% higher in high-poverty schools than in more affluent schools (Allen, 2005; Ingersoll, 2001; Ondrich, Pas, & Yinger, 2008; Provasnik & Dorman, 2005). Allen reported that 20% of teachers in schools where there is high poverty have 3 or fewer years of teaching experience, compared with 11% in schools with low poverty. Research has shown (Ingersoll, 2002) that the higher the minority enrollment of the school, the higher the rate of teacher attrition among White teachers. In a study of Washington state teachers, Plecki et al. (2005) concluded that teacher retention is related to ethnic demographics of the school student population. Schools that serve a large percentage of White students tend to retain a higher percentage of their teaching staff at the same school for a 5-year period. Schools that serve a larger population of African American students retained fewer of their teachers

across the same time. Findings were similar in reported studies in Georgia and Texas (Scafidi, Sjoquist, & Stinebrickner, 2005; Texas Education Agency, 1995).

Teacher Induction and Mentoring

Principals must remember that the first year of teaching is often challenging, difficult, and lonely for many teachers. School administrators should provide the support and empathy that novice teachers need to survive and feel successful (Menchaca, 2004). Providing adequate training and support for beginning teachers increases the retention of more competent, qualified, and satisfied faculty. This process, referred to as induction, includes the first 3 years of teaching after receiving certification of teaching licensure (Odell & Huling, 2000).

Induction, also referred to as mentoring, is widely respected, cost effective, and has the potential to affect teacher retention, improve the attitudes and instructional strategies of novice teachers, and provide professional growth opportunities for mentor teachers (Menchaca, 2004). Principals have the ability to change schedules and modify organizational structures that can ensure teachers share common planning time to discuss improving instruction. Given sufficient time and the message that collaboration is treasured, teachers learn to trust their colleagues and are more willing to share their best practices and challenges. Glickman (2003) noted that successful schools' principals are not intimidated by the knowledge and expertise of others; instead, they value it by distributing leadership.

Ingersoll (2001) showed the negative effects of poor salaries on teacher turnover. There is also evidence that higher salaries can produce a better-qualified teacher candidate pool. New York City Schools dramatically reduced by 50% the number of emergency-credentialed teachers when beginning salaries increased by 22% (Rothstein, 2002). Similar accounts have been shown

in Maryland and in Anaheim, California, where increased teacher salaries increased the supply of certified teachers.

Teacher Preparation Programs

Educators have debated over the years on the variables that influence student achievement. New findings suggest that teacher qualifications may play important roles in how much students learn in school (Darling-Hammond, 2000a; Ferguson, 1991; Haycock, 1998; Wenglinsky, 2000). A 50-state survey conducted by Darling-Hammond found the student demographics (poverty, minority status, and language background) are powerfully related to student outcomes in reading and math at the state level. However, demographic factors were less influential in predicting individual achievement levels than teacher quality variables such as holding full certification and a major degree in the field of content. Teacher preparation provided a stronger correlation with student achievement than class size, overall spending, or teacher salaries and accounted for 40% to 60% of the total variance in achievement after taking student demographics into account. The study suggested that states' policies on teacher quality might be a contributing factor in student achievement. These states will need to look for measures to improve recruitment, education, certification, and professional development to make the gains in the area of student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2001).

A study conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (Blair, 2000; Wenglinsky, 2000) found students whose teachers had expertise in the content were able to work with students from different ethnic backgrounds and special needs students tested more than one full grade level above their peers. Teachers who were able to differentiate learning strategies and used integrated hands-on learning and frequent teacher assessments in their lessons tested 72%

ahead of their peers in math and 40% ahead in science. Students who were encouraged by their teachers to use critical thinking skills such as writing about math scored 39% higher.

Teacher Pay

Teachers, on average, are now among the lower-paid public employees. The average teacher salaries according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2008) for K-12 positions range from a median of \$47,000 a year for kindergarten teachers to over \$52,500 a year for some secondary school positions. These numbers are just reflective of the U.S. median. A closer look at salaries reflects the discrepancies with states like New York where the median kindergarten teacher salary is over \$71,000 a year, and states like New Jersey where middle school vocational teachers make over \$60,000 a year. In states such as Montana and Arkansas, teacher salaries rarely exceed \$40,000 a year even after teaching for many years. In 2006, more than half of all elementary, middle, and high school teachers belonged to unions, mainly the American Federation of Teachers.

In accordance with facts provided in the U.S. Department of Education (2002) report on teacher quality that address the need to raise teachers' salaries, national opinion polls consistently reveal the public believes teacher salaries are just not good enough. There is also support to pay more in taxes to reward high-quality teachers and teaching. Podgursky (2001) also argued that a single-salary schedule in teaching works against recruiting and retaining teachers for hard-to-staff schools. Podgursky noted that if all teachers were compensated equally, and without reflecting the difficulty of the task, then they would naturally move to jobs with less stress, fewer demands, and easier students to teach.

Student Discipline and Teacher Turnover

Ingersoll (2002) suggested that student discipline problems constitute another factor tied to teacher turnover. Schools vary dramatically in their degree of student misbehavior, regardless of the background and economic status of the student population; schools with more misbehavior problems have more teacher turnover. Teachers consistently frame their difficulties in managing students as the result of insufficient school structure or support systems, not as the result of problems with the students themselves. Teachers, especially those in the first 3 years of employment, expect the principal and experienced teachers to lead in creating an orderly, productive work environment that has a focus on learning and an established norm of behavior with discipline codes and routines (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003).

Support for Teachers

Creating the conditions that support teachers in their classrooms is no simple matter (Elfers, Plecki, & Knapp, 2006). At a minimum, it involves ensuring new teachers with an appropriate assignment, manageable workload, and sufficient resources with which to teach. This support would also include the involvement of the principal and fellow teachers maintaining a stable school and orderly work environment. New teachers need colleagues they can count on for advice and support (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). Teachers who leave because of job dissatisfaction do not attribute their leaving to just low salaries. Ingersoll (2001) found teachers' resignations were due to a lack of support from school administrators, student motivation, teacher influence, and student discipline problems.

Principals must provide an environment that encourages new teachers to take control of how they teach and set high expectations for student achievement. New teachers have a desire to

contribute and feel they are a part of the school culture (Sergiovanni, 1996; Wong, 2003). New teachers can quickly become disconnected from the school's vision and goals, which creates isolation from the professional community and a pathway to exit the profession. Principals must develop environments that encourage teacher autonomy, collaboration, and a format for questions to discover practices and what make them effective (Elfers et al., 2006).

Socialization for the new teacher can determine whether the first year is a success or failure (Angelle, 2006). This process is not only important for the new teacher but for the school community that provides the experience. The link between organizational climate and socialization is school leadership, which sets the tone for the beginner's first experience in the school community. Research found the lack of support from the instructional leader was a primary reason for the beginning teacher leaving the field (Eggen, 2002).

The principal fulfills a critical role in the operations of a school, but none is more important than that of retention and development of new staff members. The avenues in which to facilitate this endeavor can be achieved through mentoring, action research, and study groups for induction and retention. The success of this process undoubtedly lies with responsibilities being assumed by the principal. McCain et al. (2005) conducted a study with novice teachers and identified nine major categories of concerns expressed by the teachers:

1. Relationship with students. Will they accept me? Will they accept me as a bona fide teacher?
2. Relationships with parents. What will I do if a parent is upset with me?
3. Relationships with colleagues. Will my colleagues believe that I know what I am doing?
4. Relationship with supervisors. Will I satisfy the expectations of the evaluator?

5. Workload/time/management/fatigue. How can I get it all done?
6. Knowledge of subject/curriculum. What is really important to teach?
7. Evaluation and grading. What should I do when the numbers don't match my subjective impressions? What am I measuring?
8. Autonomy and control. Can I teach in the way that I believe is best?
9. Appearance and identity. How will students judge someone like me?

First, the principal must demonstrate a connection and excitement for the concerns and problems researched or studied. Mentoring should be a process that involves training and time allocated to assist and advise new teachers. Secondly, support must be given to those who participate in the program. Professional learning is not only provided to new teachers but the principal must also be obligated to be an active participant. Perhaps most important, the principal must act on the recommendations from the research or study group (Watkins, 2005).

Summary

The review of the literature opened with a discussion of the Coleman Report (1966) where social scientists sought to address the inequities of educational opportunities for students by race, color, religion, or national origin. Findings from this report concluded that schools provided little or no effect on student achievement. Opponents aimed to disprove these findings through research on high performing schools based on students' results on norm-referenced and criterion-reference tests (Edmonds, 1979; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Weber, 1971). These efforts led to the "effective schools" movement. Many asserted that these research studies were more theoretical in nature than empirically based, thereby beginning the school improvement

movement. The school reform movement sought to identify the specific characteristics that produced effective schools and increased student achievement.

The principal as the school leader proved most significant in schools where students were academically successful as they created a vision of success with a positive school climate and culture of high expectations. Principals in high performing schools are perceived to embody specific attributes that are manifested in their relationships and performance as a resource provider, instructional coach, and communicator in the school. Principals with the emotional intelligence and the capacity to recognize feelings within oneself and others to promote emotional and intellectual growth, connect authentically with students, staff, and faculty to create an environment for learning and teachers who are committed to teaching (Meyer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). Today's climate of heightened expectations to improve teaching and learning has placed school leadership at the center of the school reform movement. Principals must create learning environments of rigor that will produce exemplary students with high standardized test scores and teachers who are committed to teaching and staying in the profession.

These responsibilities and demands have raised serious concerns among those in the education community concerning the selection process used to hire candidates for the position of principal. Concerns rise as to the quality of potential candidates and their knowledge of the real world complexities existing within a school, including instruction and curriculum, data management and its implications, personnel development, and leading school-wide change. The tools used today in hiring the candidate for principal simply are comprised of a panel interview with a host of questions being presented to ascertain knowledge, opinion, and beliefs about issues and topics related to leadership and school operations. The second part of the process

involves a structured interview process where applicants are rated on a multiple-choice questionnaire to determine a score to indicate a skill level for successful leadership.

The new millennium challenges educators with a shrinking supply of qualified and interested candidates to fill leadership vacancies in schools across the nation. The recruitment and selection of school leaders involves attracting, screening, and identifying potential leadership candidates who can meet the new demand and changing expectations. The issues of higher expectations, changing demands, and accountability related to student outcomes, lengthy work weeks, and less job security are challenges faced by school human resource departments as they recruit and select school leaders (Checkley, 2000; Fenwick, 2000; Murphy & Beck, 1994; Normore, 2004; Winter, Rinehart, & Munoz, 2002).

The implications point to the manner in which districts hire applicants for the position of principal and the selection process determining the most qualified for the position of principal. The residual effect of hiring candidates who lack the knowledge and skills to lead schools effectively could easily lead to reprimands for not meeting state mandates. Districts that hire inefficient leaders create an array of challenges, high costs, and possible legal ramifications. Standards for school are increasing as reflected in the mandate that 100% of students in all sub-groups must be proficient (performing at grade level) by 2014 (No Child Left Behind, 2002). School districts must embrace the task of implementing a selection process to secure the best applicant for the position of principal. Complacency and the acceptance of the status quo create the potential for disaster. With the No Child Left Behind mandates and the changing cultural demographics of students, new applicants hired in the position of principal must be equipped for these responsibilities and challenges.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains the methodology that was used to conduct the study. The chapter includes a description of the population, sample selection, data collection instruments, data collection, and the analysis of the data. Data for this study included the PrincipalInsight instrument (which reflects scores from those who were selected as a principal for the school system), the Staff Perception Survey (which was completed by school staffs and represents their perceptions of the effectiveness of their principal where they were employed), and teacher retention data.

Research Design

This causal-comparative study used a quantitative research design to determine the relationship between predicted principal leadership, staff perceptions of the principal's leadership, and teacher retention. The design afforded the opportunity to identify the relationship among the established variables as seen through cause and effect. The independent variable is the type of school (those with principals who had completed the PrincipalInsight instrument and those with principals who had not completed the PrincipalInsight instrument). The dependent variables were predicted principal leadership (as measured by the PrincipalInsight instrument), staff perceptions of principal effectiveness (as measured by the nine subscales of the Staff Perception Survey), and teacher retention.

Description of the School System

The school system is one of the fastest growing districts in the nation. The growth of the system continues to evolve with over 5,000 new students being enrolled each year. The projected student enrollment is 166,685 students for the 2010-2011 school year. These facilities included 68 elementary (K-5) schools, 20 middle (6-8) schools, 16 high (9-12) schools, and 11 other schools that serve special education and alternative programs. The system is divided into clusters and within each cluster there are three to six elementary schools, one or two middle schools, and one high school. Other educational facilities serve to provide alternative educational services for middle and high school students, technical programs, and special education services for students with special needs. Over 8,500 students graduated in spring 2008. Approximately 89% of these graduates planned to attend college or postsecondary school for advance degrees in fall 2008. The demographic description of the student population includes 27% African American, 11% Asian American, 22% Hispanic, 37% White, and 4% other (The U. S. Department of Education, 2009).

The school system hired more than 1,200 teachers new to the system in 2005 to meet the growing student population and 1,570 additional teachers were hired for the 2007-2008 school term. There are more than 11,800 teachers currently employed by the district. Twenty new principals were appointed for the school year with a projected hire of nine principals for the 2009-2010 year. The projected hire for the 2010-2011 school year will include approximately 14 new principals (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008).

A beginning teacher in the school district will earn over \$38,000. The average teacher will hold a master's degree with 10 years teaching experience and earn \$53,694 a year. The starting salaries for principals are determined by grade level; elementary (\$92,000-\$112,000),

middle (\$96,000-\$116,000), and high school (\$100,000-\$120,000). In addition to the base pay, a principal receives an additional supplement of \$7.85 for each student enrolled in the school (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008).

Population and Sample

This study involved two comparison groups, principals who completed the PrincipalInsight instrument and principals who did not complete the instrument. Data from elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools were collected. Two groups of schools were studied—those with principals who completed the PrincipalInsight instrument ($n = 42$) and those with principals who have not completed the PrincipalInsight instrument ($n = 54$). The group of principals who had not completed the PrincipalInsight instrument had an average of 10 years of experience, more than 3 years in the current school, and averaged 50 years old. This group had 13 males and 29 females with 31 Whites and 11 Blacks. There were 26 principals serving at the elementary level, 10 at the middle level, and 6 at the high school level.

The principal group that completed the PrincipalInsight instrument averaged 45 years of age, with 2 years experience as principal, and with no more than 2 years of experience at their present locations. There were 20 males and 34 females in this group. Thirty-seven principals served at the elementary level, 9 at the middle school level, and 8 at the high school level. This group contained 40 Whites, 12 Blacks, and 2 Hispanics.

Instrumentation

PrincipalInsight

PrincipalInsight is a web-based instrument designed to aid in the selection process of applicants based on a composite total of job-related performance indicators (Gallup Organization, 2004). The web-based assessment allows an applicant to log into a protected Gallup website and complete a series of items with a number of formats: multiple choice, Likert scale, yes/no, and paired comparison. The item content comes from performance-related in-depth interviews conducted by Gallup psychologists. Scored and nonscored items are contained in the assessment. The scored items are used to form a composite score for each applicant. The Gallup Organization reported a Cronbach coefficient alpha of .87. Additionally, the composite score has correlated significantly and positively to the overall teacher rating and overall supervisor rating of principals. A preliminary differential validity analysis showed that the composite score did not function differently across age, gender, or race groups.

Hunter and Schmidt (1990) conducted a meta-analysis of the PrincipalInsight selection instrument. The meta-analysis indicated a positive and generalizable predictability across a variety of criterion categories and positions. The research involved 535 predictive validity coefficients from an extensive body of research from industry types, including retail, financial services, insurance, healthcare, professional and amateur sports, schools, hotels, restaurants, trucking, and high tech. The studies included 55,234 observations. The criterion type studied the most was the financial industry ($n = 139$) and included sales and manager positions. The second criterion type was the performance ratings (137), which were mostly ratings from supervisors but did include some customer ratings, employee ratings, student ratings, observer ratings, third party, and peer ratings. The final criteria included (a) production records, retention, absenteeism;

(b) some measures of performance; and (c) workman's compensations claims. The meta-analysis was the first to show evidence of predictive validity of these alternative assessments. The meta-analysis extended the boundaries on the predictive validity of Gallup assessments (Hunter & Schmidt, 1990).

Staff Perception Survey

The Staff Perception Survey is administered annually to all teachers in each school by the district's office of research and accountability. The surveys are collected by a teacher and returned to the office for scanning and analysis. Results of the Staff Perception Survey are posted for principals to review by spring of the same school year. The survey has nine subscales: instruction, safety, discipline, leadership, communication, technology, climate, citizenship, and facilities. The items on each subscale are rated using a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). The subscale scores used in the analysis of the research questions were school averages aggregated from the teachers' individual responses at each school.

The staff perception instrument was first administered in August 2003. More than 11,400 individuals were administered the instrument during the 2005-2006 school term and 12,159 instruments were administered during the 2006-2007 school term. Instruments of measurement for validity and reliability were not tested for this survey. A panel of 12 individuals, including principals, assistant principals, teachers, Georgia State Department of Education employees, and a university professor, were asked to review the Staff Perception Survey to determine whether the instrument was true to themes being addressed in the survey. In this way, face validity might be determined for the Staff Perception Survey. While this panel process was not a

psychometrically sound way of estimating validity, the activity can be considered the first step in the initial screening procedure in test development (Gay & Airasian, 2003).

An email invitation was sent to each member of the panel. A link to an online questionnaire was embedded in the email (See Appendix). The Staff Perception Survey was sent as an attachment in the online questionnaire. Responses indicated that the panel members agreed that the Staff Perception Survey does measure what it claims to measure. However, several concerns were noted by the panel:

1. The need for the themes to encompass relevant concepts. Suggestions for considerations included professional learning, curriculum planning, and instructional coaches under the instruction theme. Suggestions for additional items in the technology theme referred to the use of white boards, student response system, record-keeping software for accountability, phone messenger system, and availability of training for teachers.

2. Ambiguous language and terminology. The word *condition* was noted and whether it was a reference to the physical condition of the building, the school climate, or the culture. The words *practice* and *learning* were used interchangeably throughout the survey. Members of the expert panel noted that the words are not the same; one term is not necessarily synonymous with the other.

3. Overlapping of statement themes. The statements presented under the leadership theme were also seen under the communication and climate theme. The leadership theme provides 11 statements for review and 5 of the statements are repeated verbatim under the communication and climate themes.

4. Statements under themes to address teacher accountability preparedness. Suggestions were presented in relationship to the effectiveness and the results teacher achieve with their

students. Their comments referenced statements like “Am I effective in teaching the curriculum?” This preparedness could involve the areas of classroom management skills, conflict resolution strategies, and practices for handling classroom disruption.

Data Collection

The information collected for this study was conducted using secondary sources. The collection of data included the composite score from the Gallup PrincipalInsight instrument administered to principals in the school system. The school district Division of Human Resources provided this information plus data on the number of teachers requesting a transfer from each school for the year 2007-2008. The mean theme scores from the Staff Perception Survey were obtained via the Office of Research and Accountability.

Data Analysis

Data from 96 schools were collected for the analysis of the research questions. Principals at 42 schools had completed the PrincipalInsight instrument. This is an adequate number to conduct a number of basic statistical procedures. However, more elegant, multivariate analyses can be conducted only with a larger sample of principals who have completed the PrincipalInsight instrument. Therefore, the research questions posited for the study were designed to explore simple relationships without determining interrelated relationships that might be present. Principal leadership scores were not available for the group of principals who had not completed the PrincipalInsight instrument.

1. What is the relationship between predicted principal leadership (as measured by the PrincipalInsight instrument), staff perceptions of effectiveness (as measured by the nine

subscales of the Staff Perception Survey), and teacher retention in schools where the principal has completed the PrincipalInsight instrument?

2. What is the relationship between staff perception of their principal's effectiveness (as measured by the nine subscales of the Staff Perception Survey) and teacher retention in schools where the principals have not completed the PrincipalInsight instrument?

3. Is there a significant difference between staff perceptions of effectiveness in schools with principals who completed the PrincipalInsight instrument and schools with principals who have not completed the PrincipalInsight instrument?

4. Is there a significant difference between teacher retention in schools with principals who completed the PrincipalInsight instrument and schools with principals who have not completed the PrincipalInsight instrument?

The data collected from the 42 schools with principals who had completed the PrincipalInsight instrument were used to answer the first research question. A correlation analysis, using Pearson r , was used to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between principal leadership, staff perceptions, and teacher retention. Question 2 was answered using data collected from both groups of principals. Two correlation analyses, using Pearson r , were used to determine whether there were statistically significant relationships between staff perceptions and teacher retention for the two groups. A Fisher's z transformation was performed to determine whether there was a significant difference in the correlation strengths between staff perceptions and teacher retention between the two groups of schools. Research Questions 3 and 4 were analyzed using t tests. The staff perceptions and teacher retention rates were compared between the two groups of principals. All statistical analyses were evaluated at an alpha level of 0.05.

Summary

The results of the study were evaluated against the initial hypothesis with conclusions and recommendations being offered based on research findings. Limitations of this research were identified and suggestions for future research on this topic are provided. A final report of the findings will be sent to the school system Office of Research and Accountability with additional resources made available for service to other departments within the organization.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Complete data collected from 96 schools in the district were used in this causal-comparative study. A quantitative research design was used to determine the relationship between principal leadership, staff perceptions of the principal's leadership, and teacher retention. The independent variable was the type of school (those who have principals who have completed the PrincipalInsight instrument and those who have principals who have not completed the PrincipalInsight instrument). The dependent variables were principal leadership (as measured by the PrincipalInsight instrument), staff perceptions (as measured by the nine subscales of the Staff Perception Survey), and teacher retention.

Description of the Sample

Complete data were collected from 96 schools in the district. Forty-two schools had principals who completed the PrincipalInsight instrument, while 54 schools had principals who had not completed the instrument. These two groups made up the independent variable. Tables 1, 2, and 3 contain demographic information about the principals, their years of experience, and the level of the school in which they were principals. The principals who had not taken the PrincipalInsight instrument were significantly older ($M = 50$ years) than those who had taken the leadership instrument ($M = 46$ years). Those principals who had taken the leadership instrument had significantly fewer years of experience in the current school and total experience than did the principals in the other group. However, the proportion of principals from each group in the

elementary, middle, and high school grade levels were similar (see Table 2). The same held true for the proportion of males and females and ethnicities in each group of principals.

Table 1

Years of Experience of the Principals by Group

	Insight scores (<i>n</i> = 42)		No insight scores (<i>n</i> = 54)		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Experience						
In current school	2.10	2.00	4.93	3.45	5.04	<.01
Total experience	2.76	2.55	10.24	13.46	3.99	<.01
Age	45.62	7.97	50.44	7.93	2.95	<.01

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Principals by Group

	Insight scores (<i>n</i> = 42)		No insight scores (<i>n</i> = 54)		χ^2	<i>p</i>
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%		
Level of school					.77	.68
Elementary	37	68.5	26	61.9		
Middle	9	16.7	10	23.8		
High	8	14.8	6	14.3		
Gender					.39	.53
Male	20	37.0	13	31.0		
Female	34	63.0	29	69.0		
Race					1.71	.43
White	40	74.1	31	73.8		
Black	12	22.2	11	26.2		
Hispanic	2	3.7	0	0.0		

Table 3 contains information about the distribution of principals in each grade level by gender and race. A larger percentage of White males were principals of high schools (9%) than females (3%) or Blacks 3%) or Hispanics (0%). Females were more likely to be principals of elementary schools (53%) than of any other grade level.

Table 3

Distribution of Principals by Gender, Race, and School Level (n = 96)

Gender	Race	School level	<i>n</i>	%
Males	White	Elementary	9	9.4
		Middle	7	7.3
		High	9	9.4
		Total	25	26.0
	Black	Elementary	3	3.1
		Middle	2	2.1
		High	2	2.1
		Total	7	7.3
	Hispanic	Elementary	0	0.0
		Middle	1	1.0
		High	0	0.0
		Total	1	1.0
Females	White	Elementary	36	37.5
		Middle	8	8.3
		High	2	2.1
		Total	46	47.9
	Black	Elementary	14	14.6
		Middle	1	1.0
		High	1	1.0
		Total	16	16.7
	Hispanic	Elementary	1	1.0
		Middle	0	0.0
		High	0	0.0
		Total	1	1.0

Analysis of the Research Questions

Research Question 1

What is the relationship between principal leadership (as measured by the PrincipalInsight instrument), staff perceptions (as measured by the nine subscales of the Staff Perception Survey), and teacher retention in schools where the principal has completed the PrincipalInsight instrument?

The data collected from the 42 schools with principals who had completed the PrincipalInsight instrument were used. A correlation analysis, Pearson r , was used to determine the relationships between principal leadership, staff perceptions, and teacher retention. Neither retention nor any of the nine subscales of the Staff Perception Survey were significantly correlated with the score the principal obtained on the PrincipalInsight instrument (See Table 4).

Table 4

Correlation of PrincipalInsight Scores with Retention and Staff Perception Survey Subscales (n = 42)

	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Retention	-.09	.56
Instruction	.04	.78
Safety	.10	.53
Discipline	.04	.80
Leadership	.03	.86
Communication	.03	.87
Technology	.08	.63
Climate	.02	.91
Citizenship	-.04	.82
Facilities	.19	.22

Research Question 2

What is the relationship between staff perception (as measured by the nine subscales of the Staff Perception Survey), and teacher retention in the two groups of principals?

Question 2 was answered through data collected from the 54 schools with principals who had not completed the PrincipalInsight instrument and from the 42 schools with principals who had completed the leadership instrument. A correlation analysis, using Pearson r , was used to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between staff perceptions and teacher retention for each group. A statistically significant and moderate to high positive association was found between retention and the nine subscales of the Staff Perception Survey in the group of principals who had not taken the leadership instrument. However, no similar correlation was found in the group of principals who had taken the PrincipalInsight instrument (See Table 5).

Table 5

Correlation of Retention with Staff Perception Survey Subscales by Group

	Insight scores ($n = 42$)		No insight scores ($n = 54$)	
	r	p	r	p
Instruction	.15	.34	.60	<.01
Safety	.30	.06	.63	<.01
Discipline	.22	.16	.72	<.01
Leadership	.16	.31	.71	<.01
Communication	.17	.28	.72	<.01
Technology	.12	.46	.49	<.01
Climate	.21	.18	.74	<.01
Citizenship	.24	.13	.64	<.01
Facilities	.17	.29	.50	<.01

The testing of the hypothesis that there is no difference in correlation between the two groups was accomplished by using Fisher's z transformation to normalize the sampling distribution. The r values were converted to z and a z test was performed (Minium, 1978). In all cases, there were significant differences between the two groups (See Table 6). The principals who had not taken the PrincipalInsight leadership instrument had significantly different correlations between retention and the Staff Perception Survey subscales than the other group of principals. In each instance, the correlation values of the principals who had not taken the PrincipalInsight leadership instrument were higher than were those of the other group of principals.

Table 6

Differences in Correlations of Principal Leadership Scales with Retention Rates by Group

Staff Perception Survey subscales	insight scores ($n = 42$)	no insight scores ($n = 54$)	z test	p
Instruction	.15	.60	-3.10	< .01
Safety	.30	.63	-3.17	< .01
Discipline	.22	.72	-4.00	< .01
Leadership	.16	.71	-4.01	< .01
Communication	.17	.72	-4.10	< .01
Technology	.12	.49	-2.41	< .05
Climate	.21	.74	-4.23	< .01
Citizenship	.24	.64	-3.34	< .01
Facilities	.17	.50	-2.43	< .05

Research Questions 3 and 4

Is there a significant difference in staff perceptions in schools with principals who completed the PrincipalInsight instrument and schools with principals who have not completed the PrincipalInsight instrument?

Is there a significant difference in teacher retention in schools with principals who completed the PrincipalInsight instrument and schools with principals who have not completed the PrincipalInsight instrument?

Research Questions 3 and 4 were analyzed using *t* tests. The staff perceptions and teacher retention rates were compared between the two groups of principals. There were no significant differences between the two groups on retention or the nine subscales of the Staff Perception Survey (See Table 7).

Table 7

Comparison of Retention and Staff Perception Survey Subscales by Group

	Insight scores (<i>n</i> = 42)		No insight scores (<i>n</i> = 54)		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Retention	90.68*	6.58	90.35	6.11	-.25	.81
Instruction	3.49**	.14	3.48	.16	-.12	.91
Safety	3.45	.22	3.41	.26	-.85	.40
Discipline	3.27	.23	3.26	.27	-.26	.80
Leadership	3.25	.28	3.16	.34	-1.28	.20
Communication	3.25	.24	3.21	.31	-.65	.52
Technology	3.22	.20	3.22	.15	.01	.99
Climate	3.20	.28	3.13	.34	-1.14	.26
Citizenship	3.22	.29	3.20	.32	-.26	.79
Facilities	3.44	.18	3.39	.27	-1.20	.23

* Retention is measured in percent of those who remained at the school

** Subscale scores ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*)

Summary

Data from 96 schools in the district were used to compare two groups of principals—those who had completed the PrincipalInsight leadership instrument ($n = 42$) and those who had not completed the instrument ($n = 54$). Neither retention nor any of the nine subscales of the Staff Perception Survey were significantly correlated with the score the principal had obtained on the PrincipalInsight instrument. A statistically significant and moderate to high positive association was found between retention and the nine subscales of the Staff Perception Survey in the group of principals who had not taken the leadership instrument. However, no similar correlation was found in the group of principals who had taken the PrincipalInsight instrument.

The principals who had not taken the PrincipalInsight leadership instrument had significantly different correlations between retention and the Staff Perception Survey subscales than the other group of principals. In each instance, the correlation values of the principals who had not taken the PrincipalInsight leadership instrument were higher than were those of the other group of principals. There were no significant differences between the two groups on retention or the nine subscales of the Staff Perception Survey. The conclusions that can be drawn from and the implications of these results are discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is ample evidence in the body of research in the area of educational practice to confirm that the school principal is regarded as critical to school success and student achievement (Marzano et al., 2005). Several decades of research have resulted in studies that detail the positive relationship between the practice of school principals and student academic achievement (Cotton, 2003). These studies predicted a dramatic increase in the demand for new principals primarily from two demographic trends, which are increased student enrollments and attrition due to the aging leadership force. Current principals will be retiring over the next 5 years and the problem is worse in urban schools than in suburban and rural schools (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008).

The educational reform movement of the past 2 decades, culminating in the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, has moved American education into an era of high accountability with heightened expectations regarding student achievement and learning and with serious penalties for schools and their leaders who fail to achieve these standards. These mandates have generated *failing schools* or *hard-to-staff schools* that are often characterized by high poverty, low test scores, high staff turnover, and teachers who are inexperienced, provisionally certified, or teaching out of field (Berry, 2004). These troubled schools have difficulty attracting qualified principals for leadership positions and attracting and retaining a quality teaching force (Ingersoll, 2001). Research shows that high performing schools offer higher salaries and better benefit packages and attract more applicants for principal job openings

than low-performing schools (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). The changing nature of school leadership, the knowledge and skills required of principals, and the demands for higher student achievement and teacher retention create a daunting task for school districts across the nation to recruit and hire qualified candidates. The challenge is due to the inexact science of hiring and the implementation of a process to accomplish this goal successfully (Leithwood et al., 2004).

The objective of this study was to examine the effectiveness of a principal leadership-screening program on teacher perceptions and teacher retention. The screening program consists of a structured interview for hiring principals administered through the PrincipalInsight instrument. This instrument serves as a predictor for successful leadership based on scores achieved by the candidates (Schmidt & Rader, 1999). The study used a causal-comparative research design. The population consisted of individuals who were employed as principal in a large suburban school district. The sample contained 42 principals who completed the PrincipalInsight instrument and 54 principals who had not completed the instrument.

Findings

The analysis of the demographic data indicated that principals who had not taken the PrincipalInsight instrument were veterans in the field of school leadership. They had more than 10 years of experience as principals. These veteran principals had served more than 3 years in their present location and had been principal at other schools, adding to their knowledge on teaching and learning. The principals who had taken the PrincipalInsight were younger leaders who came up through the ranks as assistant principals. They had 2 years of experience as a principal, most likely obtained at their current school. The principals from both groups were equally distributed between the elementary, middle, and high school grade levels. The largest

groups of principals were White females holding positions in elementary schools that serve students from kindergarten to fifth grade. The analysis also revealed the distribution of principals by school levels, gender, and race. A larger percentage of the sample was White male principals in high schools (9%) than were females (3%), Blacks (3%), or Hispanics (0%). Females were more likely to serve as principals in the elementary schools (53%) than at the middle (9%) or high school (3%) levels.

A correlation analysis, using Pearson r , was selected to investigate the relationship between the principal's leadership scores, themes on the Staff Perception Survey, and teacher retention. The results of the data analysis for principals who did not have PrincipalInsight scores when correlated with themes from the Staff Perception Survey and teacher retention resulted in a statistically significant relationship, which was moderate to high and positive. The principals with PrincipalInsight scores did not reveal any significant relationships between the staff perception themes and teacher retention.

Conclusions

A major finding of this study revealed a significant correlation between teacher ratings and teacher retention for veteran principals. These findings support the connection between leadership and organizational performance that defines the core of successful leadership, having the ability to set directions, develop people, and redesign the organization based on a vision (Frearson, 2002; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Martinez, 2002). The teacher rating establishes a framework to suggest that principals, through their leadership, have the ability to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization (House, 2004). The meta-analysis conducted by the Mid-Continent Research for

Education and Learning (2001) with more than 2,984 schools identified a correlation between principal leadership behaviors and student achievement. Another component part of the study included teachers' perceptions of the principal's leadership behaviors. The teacher ratings used in the study (Marzano et al., 2005) were felt to be most valid because they were closest to the day-to-day operations of the school and the behaviors of the principal.

These principal behaviors were seen as responsibilities felt to be the standard operating procedures in schools where students are academically successful. Similarities to the current study are noted with the use of the Staff Perception Survey completed by teachers ranking themes reflective of the school and the principal leadership. The current study's results would suggest the veteran principals are effective leaders from the perceptions of their teaching staff. Therefore, we can conclude veteran principals spend time building relationships with teachers, students, and the community. These relationships serve to establish a positive and nurturing school climate, which creates trust with teachers who can achieve success and satisfaction with their job assignments. These experiences, in turn, create positive perceptions of the school and the leadership of their principal (Lord et al., 1999).

The results of the current study also found a statistically significant and high relationship between the leadership theme of the Staff Perception Survey and the retention rate for veteran teachers. Teacher retention is important, as the most effective teachers are those who have mastered the curriculum through time spent in the classroom. Teachers who leave at the end of the year drain the time and budget for professional learning and the cost to recruit and train a new teacher for the following year. There was no correlation between the scores on the PrincipalInsight scores and teacher retention. The discovery of this information implies that veteran principals work to create organizational structures that provide an array of interventions

for support and professional development serving to retain their teaching staff. Whereas, the novice principals enter a school with a list of obligations and responsibilities to accomplish and in the mist of this chaos they must find the time to get to know the staff. The energy to establish relationships and build trust with a faculty pays dividends; however, for novice leaders it is a transition process. Some teachers feel it is an opportunity to leave to pursue greener pastures at other schools rather than embracing the path of a new principal.

The current study found no correlation between teacher ratings and teacher retention for the novice principals. The scatterplots of the novice group revealed evidence of many high teacher ratings but with retention rates ranging from high to low. However, the scatterplots of the veteran group showed that principals who received the low teacher ratings were also (as a general rule) those with low retention ratings.

According to the developers of the PrincipalInsight instrument, Schmidt and Hunter (1998), the structured interview scores provide significant incremental predictive validity in addition to measures of general mental ability. However, according to the results of the current study, the PrincipalInsight scores of the principals who were hired based on the interview did not correlate to the teacher ratings received from the Staff Perception Survey. Nor did the PrincipalInsight scores correlate with retention rates at schools with novice principals. Therefore, the recruitment and hiring of candidates for the leadership positions of principal based on scores from the PrincipalInsight is a matter for concern. The instrument is promoted, aggrandized, and marketed to provide districts with quality candidates.

Implications

The findings from this study revealed significant issues; therefore, the following implications for practice are suggested.

Establish a Screening Program

The recruitment and hiring of qualified candidates to be effective school leaders will require an established protocol that defines quality with a list of skills, competencies, and traits. The study included novice principals with PrincipalInsight scores. According to the instrument's developers, this score is a predictor of strengths and talents, but there was no information provided in the areas of competencies (high verbal skills; presentation skills; and expertise in hiring, recruitment and retention of a teaching staff) and technical skills (excel, knowledge of data, and disaggregating of data).

It seems appropriate that an effective selection procedure should include assessment of a candidate's ability to deal with situations that they would most likely encounter on the job. Therefore, creating a leadership portfolio/profile configuration to meet the district needs and a presentation to a panel consisting of central office administrators, principals, teachers, and instructional liaisons would be the initial steps in establishing a screening program (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). The portfolio would include individual development; competencies; and experiences in administration, professional development, and service to education and the community. This process would afford the panel the opportunity to view the attributes, skills, and knowledge desired in a school leader (Waters et al., 2004). Other areas that could be evaluated during this process include writing, use of technology, data analysis, teacher

evaluation, oral communication, strategic planning, knowledge of instruction, change process, and procedural and substantive due process.

Educate the Hiring Staff

Scores of the veteran principals in this study showed significant correlation between teacher overall ratings and retaining a teaching staff. Therefore, it is recommended that veteran teachers be used to prescreen and evaluate candidates against the criteria developed for the screening program (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). Veteran teachers are one of the best resources and are experts in the area of curriculum and instruction. They understand content, teaching strategies, and how to facilitate and promote student learning with consistency. This knowledge would serve to assist in determining strengths and weakness of candidates being interviewed for leadership positions. Leaders for schools of today must be instructional leaders who can provide professional development, articulate effective teaching strategies, and facilitate teachers and administrators for instructional development to promote student learning (Zepeda, 2003).

Qualified Applicants

Tapping into this research supports the notion that districts need to be more open to the type of individuals they believe can achieve success as school leaders and recruit accordingly. The findings suggest issues related to gender are minimal as females are hired in record numbers for leadership positions in the school system. However, the positions filled by female candidates are more so at the elementary level than any other level. One could view that the limited number of women at the high school level is due in part to the small number of schools at this level, the grueling pace of high school, extracurricular high school activities that consume evening and nighttime hours, and the conflicts of their personal family responsibilities. This information is

not addressed in this study but suggests new arenas to pursue in further research. It is a call for school districts to consider leadership positions for women and minorities beyond the doors of kindergarten through fifth grade. This shift will embrace the richness of the experiences provided with the hiring of women and minorities at the middle and high school levels and meet the goals of a world-class school district.

Teacher Retention

Results of the National Center for Education Statistics Teacher Follow-up Survey (Luken, Lyter, & Fox, 2004) indicated the following reasons why public school teachers typically leave their positions: desire for better teaching assignment, dissatisfaction with administrative support, and dissatisfaction with workplace conditions. While teaching experience does not guarantee effectiveness, research indicates that teachers with more classroom experience are more effective than are those with limited experience (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005). There is much debate about the specific characteristics of an effective teacher. Some qualities such as enthusiasm are immeasurable yet there are other measurable qualities of effective teachers, including years of experience and content mastery (Ingersoll, 2001).

Findings from the current study determined there was a statistically significant relationship between staff perception and teacher retention for veteran principals. These findings would suggest veteran principals provide a sense of community where teachers feel valued, supported, and applauded for their talents and skills thereby encouraging their decisions to remain employed at their schools. Efforts must be made to implement professional development for new principals to assist in building relationships, peer support, and a community for teachers, major ingredients for retaining staff (Blase & Blase, 2004).

Job-Related Behavioral Interviews

It is suggested that interviews be conducted where candidates are asked to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities about specific experiences. The candidates must tell about specific experiences when they demonstrated these competencies. This information allows the interviewer to determine whether candidates possess the competencies to perform a particular job.

Professional Learning

It is important to hold seminars and use case studies and examples from within the organization to help hiring teams understand how important it is to select people with the right skills and who are the right fit for the organization. Provide professional learning opportunities for new principals to assist in understanding the role they play in retaining teachers and the manner in which to facilitate this initiative. The principal's role in the operations of the school is critical, but there is none more important than the retention and development of new teachers. Professional development for new principals can ensure plans are in place for support, collaboration, and professional development thereby, creating relationships of trust where teachers make investments and commitments to the schools where they teach (Ingersoll, 2001).

Recommendations for Future Study

Differential Gains for Veteran Principals

The impact of the findings from this study may have significant implications for leadership research as veteran principals showed significant impact on teacher perceptions, a key factor in retaining teachers with experience who have a major impact on student achievement. These teachers have mastered the curriculum and instructional practices. Therefore, further

research is needed to determine whether the current study's findings can be replicated with other veteran principals.

Experience Level of Principals

All of the principals in the novice group of the current study were principals who had no more than 3 years of experiences. There were no significant correlations between teacher ratings and teacher retention in this group. Were these principals the agents for change in their new position and can they still be identified as effective with teachers leaving during this time? The next step may entail the review of the data with this treatment group to see whether time provides the experiences for these principal, which may be reflected in a significant gain in teachers perceptions and teacher retention.

Number of Participants

This research study encompassed a small group of principals from one school district. This small population sample limited the variables that could be used to explain the outcomes in the analyses and the ability to generalize the findings. Therefore, consideration for future study would include participants from other school districts who use the PrincipalInsight instrument to increase the sample size for a new study. The novice group in this study had no more than 3 years of experience in their position as principal. A larger pool could change the group's dynamics if there were principals with PrincipalInsight scores serving in the position of principal for more than 3 years.

Validity of Survey Instrument

The Staff Perception Survey was used to measure teachers' perceptions about specific areas within the school environment. This survey has a large response rate but lacks the validity and reliability to meet the standards for statistical authenticity. The current study initiated the first step for this process with the establishment of face validity. The expert panel agreed the survey does contain items that measure areas in the school environment. Information from the panel suggested further development of the survey could provide better validity. Panel members' suggestions included the elimination of overlapping questions for specific themes, language errors, and the inclusion of statements that are more relevant to the themes. Therefore, it is recommended that statistical procedures be implemented to ensure the Staff Perception Instrument is valid and reliable. Content validity assesses the degree to which the test measures the intended content area, whereas reliability is the degree to which the test consistently measures what it is designed to measure. These are the pillars of empirical research.

Summary

The findings from this study provide additional information to the limited literature on structured screenings and their effectiveness in leadership hiring practices. Information obtained through this research process can serve to assist with establishing a protocol for the recruitment and hiring of quality applicants for leadership positions. The participation of veteran principals and teachers is strongly encouraged in this process as their expertise and knowledge is most reflective of the responsibilities needed for present leadership positions. The role and responsibilities of future principals call for candidates who can *hit the ground running*, requiring

school districts across the nation to have measures in place to hire candidates who can get the job done.

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APPENDIX

Online Questionnaire to Measure Face Validity of the Staff Perception Survey

The research study seeks to examine the effectiveness of a structured interview process in the selection of principals and its impact on teacher perceptions and teacher retention rates. The Staff Perception Survey is an instrument to measure teacher perceptions.

Please review the attach questionnaire and complete the following questions.

1. Are the directions clear?

- Yes
- No

2. Does the overall language and reading level of the questionnaire reflect the ability of the teachers in Gwinnett County?

- Yes
- No

3. Does the questionnaire alleviate the opportunity for a personal crusade about an individual or particular situation in the organization?

- Yes
- No

These items are identified under the *INSTRUCTION* theme of the questionnaire.

- I understand the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) for which I am accountable.
- I have been provided with the staff development necessary to use the AKS.
- I use the AKS to guide my teaching.
- I am provided with materials to help me teach to individual student needs.
- The assessments of the AKS I use are congruent with what I teach.
- The focus at our school is teaching and learning.

Do the items reflect what is important to teachers?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that should be included but are not?

- Yes
- No

Together, do the items provide thorough coverage of the theme?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that overlap each other and therefore provide essentially the same information?

- Yes
- No

Can the respondents accurately respond to each item in this theme with the information they possess?

- Yes
- No

These items are identified under the *SAFETY* theme of the questionnaire.

- The school space is used efficiently.
- I feel safe in this school.
- Conditions exist at my school for me to be successful and productive.
- The administration treats me with respect and professionalism.

Do the items reflect what is important to teachers?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that should be included but are not?

- Yes
- No

Together, do the items provide thorough coverage of the theme?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that overlap each other and therefore provide essentially the same information?

- Yes
- No

Can the respondents accurately respond to each item in this them with the information they possess?

- Yes
- No

These items are identified under the *DISCIPLINE* theme of the questionnaire.

- Classroom management in this school is conducive to learning.
- Students know what the expectations for behavior are in this school.
- When I made discipline decisions consistent with established school policy, the school administrators support those decisions.
- Students at this school are managed in a firm, fair and consistent manner.
- Administrators respond promptly to teachers who identify students with behavior problems.
- I recognize good students' behavior with positive feedback.
- Overall, students display appropriate behavior at our school.
- Students in this school practice good citizenship.
- Students in this school practice respect for self and others.

Do the items reflect what is important to teachers?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that should be included but are not?

- Yes
- No

Together, do the items provide thorough coverage of the theme?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that overlap each other and therefore provide essentially the same information?

- Yes
- No

Can the respondents accurately respond to each item in this them with the information they possess?

- Yes
- No

These items are identified under the *LEADERSHIP* theme of the questionnaire.

- The administration communicates effectively with staff members
- Teachers feel free to express opinions even if they are different from the administration.
- Administrative procedures in this school are clearly defined and communicated.
- Good work of individual staff members is commended by the administration.
- The administration treats me with respect and professionalism.
- Staff members at this school have an opportunity to provide input into decisions that affect them or the school.
- Planning for improvement is a collaborative process involving appropriate school staff.
- Staff members receive responses to their input in a timely and appropriate manner.
- The principal takes responsibility for what takes place at the school.
- The principal gives purpose, meaning, and direction to what the school is about.
- The principal makes decisions when appropriate.

Do the items reflect what is important to teachers?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that should be included but are not?

- Yes
- No

Together, do the items provide thorough coverage of the theme?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that overlap each other and therefore provide essentially the same information?

- Yes
- No

Can the respondents accurately respond to each item in this them with the information they possess?

- Yes
- No

These items are identified under the *COMMUNICATION* theme of the questionnaire.

- The administration communicates effectively with staff members
- Administrative procedures in this school are clearly defined and communicated.
- Staff members receive responses to their input in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Rules are published in this school.
- Students know what the expectations for behavior are in this school.
- Administrators respond promptly to teachers who identify students with behavior problems.

Do the items reflect what is important to teachers?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that should be included but are not?

- Yes
- No

Together, do the items provide thorough coverage of the theme?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that overlap each other and therefore provide essentially the same information?

- Yes
- No

Can the respondents accurately respond to each item in this them with the information they possess?

- Yes
- No

These items are identified under the *TECHNOLOGY* theme of the questionnaire.

- The assessments of the AKS I use are congruent with what I teach.
- During this school year, I increased technology use in the classroom or continue to make extensive use of it as in prior years.
- The focus at our school is “teaching and learning.”
- The school facility is free of barriers or impediments to instruction.

Do the items reflect what is important to teachers?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that should be included but are not?

- Yes
- No

Together, do the items provide thorough coverage of the theme?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that overlap each other and therefore provide essentially the same information?

- Yes
- No

Can the respondents accurately respond to each item in this them with the information they possess?

- Yes
- No

These items are identified under the *CLIMATE* theme of the questionnaire.

- Teachers feel free to express opinions even if they are different from the administration.
- Good work of individual staff members is commended by the administration.
- Teacher input into decisions is valued.
- Conditions exist at my school for me to be successful and productive.
- The administration treats me with respect and professionalism.
- My work is evaluated fairly in this school.
- Staff members at this school have an opportunity to provide input into decisions that affect them or the school.
- Planning for improvement is a collaborative process involving appropriate school staff.
- Concerns of staff are reflected in decisions made in this school.
- Staff members receive responses to their input in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Students at this school are managed in a firm, fair and consistent manner.

Do the items reflect what is important to teachers?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that should be included but are not?

- Yes
- No

Together, do the items provide thorough coverage of the theme?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that overlap each other and therefore provide essentially the same information?

- Yes
- No

Can the respondents accurately respond to each item in this theme with the information they possess?

- Yes
- No

These items are identified under the *CITIZENSHIP* theme of the questionnaire.

- Overall, students display appropriate behavior at our school.
- Students in this school learn about good citizenship.
- Students in this school learn about respect for self and others.
- Students in this school learn about good work habits.
- Students in this school practice good citizenship.
- Students in this school practice respect for self and others.
- Students in this school practice good work habits.

Do the items reflect what is important to teachers?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that should be included but are not?

- Yes
- No

Together, do the items provide thorough coverage of the theme?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that overlap each other and therefore provide essentially the same information?

- Yes
- No

Can the respondents accurately respond to each item in this theme with the information they possess?

- Yes
- No

These items are identified under the *FACILITIES* theme of the questionnaire.

- The school is clean.
- The school is well maintained.
- The school facility is free of barriers o impediments to instruction.
- The school's space is used efficiently.
- I feel sage and secure in this school.

Do the items reflect what is important to teachers?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that should be included but are not?

- Yes
- No

Together, do the items provide thorough coverage of the theme?

- Yes
- No

Are there items that overlap each other and therefore provide essentially the same information?

- Yes
- No

Can the respondents accurately respond to each item in this them with the information they possess?

- Yes
- No