

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP AND
TEACHER MORALE IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN A
NORTHWEST GEORGIA SCHOOL DISTRICT

by

Dan O. Webb

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

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APPROVED BY:

DEANNA KEITH, Ed. D., Chair

CLARENCE C. HOLLAND, Ed. D., Committee Member

WILLIAM KISER, Ed. D., Committee Member

SCOTT WATSON, Ph. D., Associate Dean for Advanced Programs

ABSTRACT

Dan O. Webb. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP AND TEACHER MORALE IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN A NORTHWEST GEORGIA SCHOOL DISTRICT. This study examined the difference between 2012 CRCT math sores based on principal leadership styles and teacher morale, as well as the relationship between teacher morale and 2012 CRCT math scores at each of the 12 elementary schools within a Northwest Georgia county school district. There is a gap in current research regarding the importance of teacher morale and principal leadership at the elementary level, and another gap exists in research that compares teacher morale and student success. Teacher morale was quantified through the use of the Purdue Teacher Opinionaire (PTO), principal leadership practices were quantified through the use of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), and 2012 math CRCT scores were quantified through the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) report provided by the Georgia Department of Education (GADOE). The researcher used a causal-comparative/correlational research design to compare the dependent and independent variables. The findings indicated that there was no statistically significant difference in CRCT math scores based on either the leadership style of the principal or the level of teacher morale. The findings also indicated that there was not a statistically significant relationship between teacher morale and CRCT math scores.

Keywords: Leadership, Teacher Morale, CRCT

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my soul-mate, Anita, and our three wonderful children: Mason, Grace, and Jack. This has been a long process, and there have been many road blocks. Through the encouragement and support of you, Anita, I have been able to get through. I know that it has been difficult to watch as others, who started this program well after I did, finish before me. I want to thank you for trusting and believing in me. One thing that I am truly proud of is that other than the last few months of this process, our kids really had no idea that I was in school. I love you Anita.

Mason, Grace, and Jack, I want this to serve as an example of how you can accomplish anything provided you commit to do whatever it takes. I love each of you and I am proud to be your Dad.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Education has evolved from a profession that has traditionally not held teachers accountable for student results to a career that is so focused on accountability that a teacher's contract can hinge upon the ability to educate. Weckstein (2003) stated, "Never before in the history of education has teacher accountability been more relevant" (p.117). The job of a teacher is to teach, and now teachers must be able to prove quantitatively that they have done just that. In 2001, President Bush signed the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act. This bill quickly became the most comprehensive piece of educational legislation in this country's history. However, "policy ideas like the concept of 'accountability' shaped the policy process" (Jaiani & Whitford, 2011, p.16). Subsequently, NCLB shifted the focus from student performance to teacher accountability.

Students have always been taught, and their knowledge has always been tested; however, NCLB now requires educators to prove that learning has taken place. NCLB has caused many teachers to find themselves on the receiving end of directives with regard to instruction. Stillman (2011) stated, "With the installation of No Child Left Behind, teachers, particularly those who serve marginalized students, have increasingly been told what and how to teach" (p.141). The Georgia Department of Education Website (GADOE, 2012) stated that Georgia's students, teachers, administrators, and schools will be measured by performance on standardized tests. While these standardized tests are not popular among faculty and students, teachers must accept the fact that they are now the measuring stick for their students and their careers. The state of Georgia provides access to all public schools' overall testing data. Having this information accessible to the public can raise concerns if a certain segment of a school's population performs poorly. Additionally, the school's testing data can be used as one instrument for evaluating a

teacher's performance. As a result of this increased teacher accountability, many teachers feel pressure to produce students that succeed on the high stakes testing (Rinke & Valli, 2010). Knowing that their career success is partially based upon how well students perform on standardized tests causes a large amount of anxiety for some teachers. This fact, in the absence of quality leadership, can create an unstable working environment.

In addition to NCLB and the pressure of accountability that comes along with it, the current condition of the United States economy is having a large impact on our schools (Kennedy, 2011). For example, in the state of Georgia, all school systems were required to furlough all certified employees three days prior to December 31, 2009. A year later, numerous school systems, due largely to a lack of local tax revenue, found themselves in the unfamiliar position of working with a budget deficit. Many school systems have been forced to impose additional furlough days on employees, while some school systems were forced to eliminate some teaching positions altogether (Kennedy, 2011).

This study examined the relationship between teacher moral and principal leadership practices at 12 elementary schools located in a Northwest Georgia county school district. Sheppard, Hurley, and Dibbon (2010) highlighted approaches to leadership that have enhanced teacher morale. That study, however, was not solely focused on elementary school teachers. Current research fails to acknowledge the impact of principal leadership on teacher morale, and subsequently test scores, at the elementary level. The student-teacher relationship is the key to a successful school. An effective teacher can make a connection with a child and create a desire for learning that can be the difference between success and failure, not only for the child, but for the teacher as well. Konstantopoulos (2009) suggested that "all students benefit from effective teachers" (p. 95).

The morale of the teacher can be the driving force behind that teacher's level of effectiveness. When teachers feel confident about their teaching abilities, the school environment, and the school leadership, the level of morale will be high and students will benefit from the student-teacher relationship. Rowland (2008) found that teacher morale is influenced by the leadership style of the principal in middle schools.

While there has been research with regard to leadership and teacher morale on the high school level, Rowland suggested that additional research be conducted that specifically targeted the leadership style of elementary school principals and how it relates to teacher morale (Rowland, 2008). Rowland discovered that different types of leadership styles fostered differing levels of teacher morale (Rowland, 2008). Therefore, the ability to identify a certain leadership style that spawns high teacher morale would be beneficial when hiring for leadership positions within a school system. This type of research aids a system in finding the most effective leader for each of its schools. In an effort to assist school systems by identifying leadership styles that promote high levels of teacher morale, and also based upon Rowland's recommendations, the researcher attempted to replicate Rowland's study, but on the elementary level. The current study also took place in a Northwest Georgia school district, and included 12 elementary schools and 480 teachers. Two survey instruments were used to determine teachers' morale level and their principals' leadership practices. This chapter highlights background information related to this study, and then presents the problem that was studied, the purpose for the research, the research questions and hypotheses, and the professional significance of the study. Finally, the research variables are defined and the research design discussed.

Background of the Study

The building principal has traditionally been viewed as the authoritarian figure of the school. Today, an effective school principal must be a leader in every aspect of the school environment. Halawah (2005) suggested that “school climate is positively associated with principal's communication effectiveness” (p.213). Kouzes and Posner (2003) would categorize this behavior as a *Shared Vision*, which is one of the five categories identified in the LPI.

As education has evolved, the role of the classroom teacher has drastically changed as well. Effective teaching has always been gauged by student achievement; however, with no method to measure improvement, many teachers allowed themselves to become less focused on students' best interest. Subsequently, ineffective teachers began demonstrating unfavorable traits such as being “uninformed in subject, disorganized, aloofness, and insensitivity to student needs” (Check, 1986, p. 326). The implementation of NCLB changed this way of thinking for many teachers. Today, teachers, administrators, and schools are held accountable to reach specific goals in order to be considered successful. Teachers are no longer measured on how well they perform; they are now measured on how well their students perform (Rinke & Valli, 2010). This shift of focus has created an atmosphere, for many, where teachers are consumed with preparatory techniques for standardized tests in an effort to meet the standards set by local, state, and federal government (Roellke & Rice, 2008). Many teachers are troubled by the added pressures and demands that come with increased accountability. Research has indicated that increased teacher accountability has led to lower morale, causing some teachers to leave the profession (Hardy, 1999; Tye & O'Brien, 2002). One way to combat this decline in teacher morale is to have excellent school leadership.

The leadership style of a principal can drastically affect every aspect of the school. One of the many jobs required of the building principal today is the creation of a healthy school culture. A healthy environment facilitates high levels of teacher morale (Andrew et al., 1985). Teachers in need of professional guidance, as well as seasoned educators, thrive in schools where the building principal praises and supports their efforts. Moreover, this type of leadership creates a school culture where employees have higher levels of self-esteem, efficacy, and motivation - all of which leads to high teacher morale (Blasé, J. & Blasé, J.R., 1994). Conversely, a principal with poor leadership skills creates a school culture where apathy, disdain, and rebellion are the norm, and low teacher morale is commonplace (Dye, 2006).

Problem Statement

When consideration is given to the demands made on teachers today, school climate and teacher morale become serious issues that must be addressed by school leaders. One of the jobs of the school leader is to create a school climate where the classroom teacher can feel safe and confident to perform her job. Since the largest professional portion of a school system is the teaching staff, it is important that the teachers have positive attitudes; the behaviors, attitudes, and actions of other teachers can greatly affect the overall teacher morale level in a school. Schools that employ teachers with high morale tend to have a school climate that facilitates an increased level of commitment from its entire staff (Lester, 1990). Conversely, schools that employ teachers with low morale tend to have an atmosphere of apathy that can retard school progress and the development of its students (Hardy, 1999). Teacher morale can dictate the general feel or climate of a school; therefore, in order for students to have the greatest opportunity to excel, teacher morale cannot be low.

In today's classrooms, teachers are faced with many challenges, NCLB has made it mandatory that school systems prove that learning is taking place, and in the process has forced principals to adapt to an increase in teacher anxiety. Principals that fail to effectively manage NCLB expectations run the risk of experiencing "teacher burn out, decreased teacher effectiveness, and decreased morale" (Flores, 2012, p. 38). In many cases, NCLB expectations have negatively impacted teacher morale at the elementary school level, which has had a negative impact on student achievement. Principal leadership style can either positively or negatively influence teacher morale, and therefore, student achievement scores.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this ex post facto study was to use archival data and surveys to examine the relationships between principal leadership style and CRCT fifth grade math scores, principal leadership style and teacher morale, and teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores in a rural school district in Northwest Georgia. The leadership styles of the elementary school principals were determined using the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). The Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (PTO) was used to determine the level of teacher morale (Kouze & Posner, 2003; Bentley & Rempel, 1972). Both surveys were used to collect data to determine the relationships presented in the study research questions. The schools' 2012 fifth grade math CRCT scores (dependent variable) were gathered from the Georgia Department of Education (GADOE) public website.

Significance of the Study

As accountability becomes a larger piece of the evaluation process, school systems are looking for areas where they can improve. The accountability is at every level. Building level principals feel the pressure for their individual schools to perform better through test scores, in

elementary and middle schools, and through graduation rates at the high school level. This pressure then works its way through the local school administration and is then shared with the classroom teacher. Finally, the students are exposed to the pressure of successful completion of a state mandated test (Rinke & Valli, 2010). A review of the literature revealed that while there are studies that evaluate the relationship between leadership and teacher morale at the high school and middle school level (Grayson & Alvarez, 2008), there are very few studies that evaluate leadership styles and teacher morale at the elementary school level.

While there are some research studies that discuss leadership and teacher morale, the link between leadership, teacher morale, and student achievement is one that has been debated; however, this is an area where further research should be conducted (Kythreotis, Pashiardis, & Kyrakides, 2010).

Research Questions and Null Hypotheses

The research questions for this study are based on the questions originally used by Rowland (2008, p. 4-5). Following are the research questions and the corresponding null hypotheses that guided this study:

RQ1: Is there a difference between levels of teacher morale (as measured by the PTO) and CRCT fifth grade math scores (as measured by 2012 CRCT fifth grade math scores), or a combination of these scores, in elementary schools that have principals with different leadership styles?

H₀1: There will be no statistically significant differences between levels of teacher morale (as measured by the PTO) and CRCT fifth grade math scores (as measured by 2012 CRCT fifth grade math scores), or a combination of these scores, in elementary schools that have principals with different leadership styles.

RQ2: Is there a relationship between teacher morale (as measured by the PTO) and elementary school CRCT fifth grade math scores (as measured by 2012 CRCT fifth grade math scores)?

H₀2: There will be no statistically significant correlation between teacher morale (as measured by the PTO) and elementary school CRCT fifth grade math scores (as measured by 2012 CRCT fifth grade math scores).

Identification of Variables

There were three variables of interest for this study. Following, each is operationally defined.

Teacher Morale: For the purposes of this study, teacher morale was defined as the level of satisfaction within the school building, and was measured by a collective PTO score for each of the 12 elementary schools surveyed (Bentley & Rempel, 1972).

Principal Leadership Styles: For the purposes of this study, principal leadership practices were defined as the type of leadership portrayed by the building principal and was identified by that school's highest LPI score for each of the 12 elementary schools surveyed (Kouzes & Posner, 2003).

2012 Math CRCT Scores: For the purposes of this study, the 2012 fifth grade math CRCT scores were defined as each of the 12 elementary schools' percentage of student who *Meets* or *Exceeds* on the fifth grade mathematics 2012 CRCT.

Definition of Terms

The following list of terms and definitions intended to provide a general understanding of the lingo associated with this study. The definition of terms will ensure that the study can be understood and replicated.

1. *Leadership Style*: For the purposes of this study, leadership style will be defined as the single category with the highest score on the LPI, out of a possible five categories, for each of the principals at the 12 elementary schools who participated in this study.
2. *Teacher Morale*: For the purposes of this study, teacher morale will be defined as the overall satisfaction that a teacher feels with regard to his/her career. The morale levels for teachers will be measured by the PTO. The higher the PTO score, the higher the level of teacher morale.
3. *2012 Fifth Grade Math CRCT Scores*: For the purposes of this study, 2012 fifth grade math CRCT scores will be defined as the percentage of students who Meets or Exceeds on the fifth grade math CRCT for the 2011 – 2012 school year.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Accountability is a necessary element in any organization. It allows for individuals to demonstrate their ability to excel in their given field while ensuring that proper procedures are followed in regard to the duties that they are charged to perform. By having a system in place to evaluate performance, individuals in leadership can work towards improving the results of the organization. In education, however, the catalyst for teacher accountability (NCLB) has increased the anxiety level of classroom teachers. This anxiety, in combination with other factors, have worked together to cause an overall decrease in teacher morale. This chapter will review the literature relating to some of those factors while investigating the concepts of leadership, morale, and academic performance, as well as the relationship between those three.

Theoretical Framework

One of the theoretical frameworks for this study is Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1968). Maslow's theory consists of five levels and suggests that individuals each possess a hierarchy of needs. The pyramid of needs in his theory requires the individual to satisfy their most basic need prior to caring about needs at a higher level and moving up the hierarchy toward self-actualization. The framework identified by Maslow affects all relationships involved in this study. The theory can be applied to the role of the classroom teacher and her relationship with the building principal. The fundamental needs of security of employment and a sense of belonging must be established in order for the teacher to achieve the higher level needs of self-

esteem and confidence.

The building principal can play a crucial role in the lives of the classroom teachers in the school. Leadership that fosters an environment that promotes a high level of teacher morale can, at a minimum, satisfy the needs of safety and security for its teachers, and ultimately satisfy the needs for love and belonging as well. Each level of the hierarchy builds upon the satisfaction of the needs below, and the morale of the teacher affects each level in some way. Because Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs deals with individual needs that must be satisfied prior to moving up to the next level, and because the principal-teacher relationship can have a direct effect on the achievement of the students, this theory will be the lens through which all aspects of this study will be viewed.

Another idea that serves as a theoretical framework for this study is the theory that excellent leadership elevates people and actuates excellence of action in those who report to that leader. Danoff (2010) stated that Burns, to whom modern scholars give credit for the concept of Transformational Leadership (Burns, 1978), borrowed heavily from the ideas of de Tocqueville. Alex de Tocqueville rejected the Machiavellian (1530) view of leadership, which relied on coercion, manipulation, and domination. de Tocqueville saw leadership as a process through which leaders "help to empower, educate, and invigorate citizens" (Danoff, 2010, p.10). In turn, the newly invigorated citizen is inspired to succeed in whatever endeavor he/she chooses. In his book *Democracy* (1831), de Tocqueville said, "It would seem now the [leaders] seek to do great things with men. I wish that they would try a little more to make men great" (p. 83). Plato (*Republic*) also wrote about the ideal of the leader as a model of behavior that

leads citizens to noble character for the good of all men. When these ancient ideas, which have been followed by leaders throughout history, are applied to this study, it is seen that the leadership of a school principal is effective if it improves the motivation, character, and ability of the teachers, making them more effective at their trade, thus improving the results (test scores) of the organization (Day et al., 2009).

A third theoretical framework for this study is the potential influence of a leader's positive reinforcement on his staff. B.F. Skinner is the father of behavior modification and developed the concept of positive reinforcement (Skinner, 1938). Positive reinforcement is the idea that a behavior is likely to reoccur if that behavior is reinforced. For example, if a teacher who is consistently late to work is given praise every time they arrive on time, the results should be more punctuality. The praise is the positive reinforcement, and arriving at work on time is the behavior being reinforced. The use of positive reinforcement is utilized by principals to motivate teachers so that desired behaviors result. Empirical research suggests that reinforcement theory improves the performance of subordinates (Miltenberger, 2004). This improvement in performance comes at no expense to the leader.

Leadership

Definition

Leadership clearly does not mean what it used to mean, especially in regards to educational leadership. Mahatma Gandhi said, "I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles; but today it means getting along with people." Definitions of leadership are as varied as the people who give them. Every governmental, business, and educational organization has their own definition and their own list of qualities that define excellent

leadership.

The literature on leadership is numerous and diverse. Definitions of leadership are plentiful, and theories on leadership are being constantly developed and refined. Perhaps a universally accepted definition of leadership will never be developed, but that does not stop authors from striving for a concise definition and understanding of leadership. For example, according to Davis (2003), the term “leadership” implies “movement, taking the organization or some part of it in a new direction, solving problems, being creative, initiating new programs, building organizational structures, and improving quality” (p. 4). Researchers struggle with the definition of leadership because it is a multifaceted and complex concept. Bass and Stodgily (1990) found that more than 3,000 studies provided definitions of leadership. In spite of the number of definitions of leadership and the lack of precision regarding what defines a leader, Birnbaum (1992) made this assertion: “Any comprehensive consideration of academic leadership must be able to accommodate both the strong leader and the weak leader views, because evidence suggests that while both may be incomplete, both are in some measure correct” (p. 8).

In the past, scholars interested in leadership, leaders, or leadership theories were most concerned with the peripheries of leadership, such as traits, personality characteristics, and whether leaders are born or made (Roost, 1991). Discussion of leadership focused on the idea of the greatness of particular leaders and how they have impacted the societies in which they lived (Heifetz, 1994). Roost (1991) noted that modern leadership scholars are most “aimed at understanding the essential nature of what leadership is, and the processes whereby leaders and followers relate to one another to achieve a purpose” (p. 4). This is also the context in which leadership will be examined

in this study.

A Brief History of Leadership

The importance of leadership has been understood throughout written history. Sanskrit literature, developed as many as 7,000 years ago, identified ten types of leaders (Sanskrit Textbook). Confucianistic beliefs on right living portray an aspect of leadership in how it depicts the scholar-leader and his benevolent rule (Pockell, 2007). They believed that leadership was a matter of intelligence, trustworthiness, humaneness, courage, and discipline (Pockell, 2007). Throughout history, men have asserted their leadership in different ways, but primarily through authoritarian means and use of force (Roberts, 1987). In the 19th century, the propensity for rebellion and anarchy led citizens to question the idea of leadership itself. Historically, views of leadership have reflected the societies who held those views. Very often, the view of leadership and leaders was an outgrowth of the secularism or religion of a particular group of people (Pockell, 2007). Christian thinking on leadership usually focused on the idea that God divinely appoints leaders and then expects them to use their human and material resources according to God's wishes. Most recently, leadership theory and research has begun to focus less on leaders themselves and more on how leaders interact with their subordinates and their organizations. Add more modern leadership information and recent citations.

Key Functions of Leadership

According to White Stage Leadership Development (2011), there are three main functions of leadership. The first function is to assert authority. Leaders have the right to assert their authority by making decisions. Some leaders limit themselves to making major decisions for the organization, while delegating that right when smaller decisions

are involved. Other leaders (often referred to as “micromanagers”) prefer to be involved in all organizational decisions, whether big or small. Principals span the realm on this particular leadership function. Many are visionary leaders who set the course for their schools and lead the teachers toward realization of that vision, leaving the teachers and school personnel to handle the details. Others are detail-oriented leaders who want to have a say in every decision that is made in their school.

A second function of leadership is taking responsibility by setting goals for the organization. A rudderless ship is impossible to guide; there must be a definite direction in which the leader seeks to guide his organization. This concept is very important in schools. Goal-setting is a fundamental function of principalship. Since the advent of NCLB (2001), school goals have been set by the federal government, who has become the de facto leaders of every local school in terms taking over the responsibility of goal-setting.

The third function of leadership is accountability. Leaders must accept the success or failure of the organizations that they lead. Accountability in leadership is a concept that has been lost in modern education. Principals often pass the blame for school failure on to either district administration, governmental regulation, or even the failure of their subordinates. This function of leadership is the one of the three that most clearly demonstrates the character of leaders.

Modern Leadership Theories

The following leadership theories are not an exhaustive list. They represent the plethora of leadership theories that are in existence. Most of these theories are applicable to educational settings, yet some are not. Each theory is explained and, if applicable,

how it relates to educational situations is specified.

The great man leadership theory. The Great Man Theory was developed in the 1840s. Even though no one was able to identify with any degree of certainty which human characteristic, or combination of human characteristics, identified great leaders, it was agreed upon that only a man could have the characteristics of a great leader. In *Heroes and Hero Worship* (1841), Carlyle identified the talents, skills, and physical characteristics of men who rose to power. The Great Man Theory assumed that great leaders were born with leadership traits. Thus, great leaders were not made; they were born (Galton, 1869). This theory sees great leaders as those who are destined by birth to become great leaders. Furthermore, the belief of the proponents of this theory was that great leaders would rise to meet challenges when confronted with the appropriate situations. The Great Man Theory was popularized by Thomas Carlyle, a writer and teacher. He developed the Great Man Theory as the result of his study of influential heroes. In his book *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (Carlyle, 1888), he examined a wide range of heroes and their characteristics.

Herbert Spencer, an English philosopher, disputed the Great Man Theory by stating that great leaders are only the product of their times, and their actions the results of social conditions, not men with inherent greatness. A renowned sociologist, Spencer (1896) wrote arguments against the Great Man Theory. In *The Study of Sociology*, Spencer wrote, "you must admit that the genesis of a great man depends on the long series of complex influences . . . Before he can remake his society, his society must make him" (p. 97).

Trait Leadership Theory. The Trait Leadership Theory (1920s-1940s) purports

that people possess (either innately or as the result of environmental stimuli) certain qualities that will allow them to excel in leadership situations. For example, qualities such as intelligence, sense of responsibility, work ethic, and creativity are traits often possessed by a great leader. Allport, an American psychologist, "identified almost 18,000 English personality-relevant terms" (Matthews, Deary & Whiteman, 2003, p. 3). The proponents of the trait theory of leadership focused on analyzing mental, physical, and social characteristics to determine the traits that comprise an excellent leader (Stodgill, 1948). Problems abound with the foundational Trait Leadership Theory studies:

- In the 1930s the field of psychometrics was in its early years.
- Personality traits measurements were not reliable across studies.
- Study samples were of low level managers
- Explanations were not offered as to the relationship between each characteristic and its impact on leadership.
- The context of the leader wasn't considered.

However, Allport, F. and Allport, G.'s (1921) research were new to the field of behavioral studies, so they served as the foundation for future trait research that was less problematic. (Matthews et al., 2003) noted that significant relationships exist between leadership and such individual traits as intelligence, adjustment, extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness to experience.

To the contrary, Zaccaro, Rittman, and Marks (2001) noted that trait theories still:

1. Focus on a small set of individual attributes such as Big Five personality traits, to the neglect of cognitive abilities, motives, values, social skills, expertise, and

problem-solving skills.

2. Fail to consider patterns or integrations of multiple attributes.
3. Do not distinguish between those leader attributes that are generally not malleable over time and those that are shaped by, and bound to, situational influences.
4. Do not consider how stable leader attributes account for the behavioral diversity necessary for effective leadership.

Principals and other educational leaders are certainly diverse in the traits that they exhibit (Zaccarro, 2007). However, a core of common traits can be found in the majority of successful principals.

Behavioral theories of leadership. In reaction to the Trait Leadership Theory, the behavioral theories of the 1940s and 1950s focused on the behaviors of leaders instead of their mental, physical, or social characteristics. Since behaviors and the effects of behaviors are measurable variables, researchers were able to quantify the cause and effect relationship of specific leader behaviors. The behavioral theories suggested that, since leaders were made, not born, anyone could become a leader by adhering to certain behaviors. Behavioral theories of leadership divided leaders in two categories: those that were concerned with tasks and those concerned with the people.

With behavioral theories of leadership, the question is which behaviors *identify* successful educational leaders, and which behaviors *lead to* success in educational leadership. The behaviors of principals are closely scrutinized by teachers, parents, school district leaders, and governmental agencies. They must behave as if they are concerned with both tasks and people in order to meet the expectations of the various groups that watch them closely. Failure in attention to tasks could lead to school failure

and lack of organization. Failure in showing concern for people could cause problems to increase in number and severity due to dissatisfaction with the leader. That situation could cause low teacher morale and be difficult to overcome professionally.

Contingency Leadership Theory. The Contingency Leadership Theory (1960s) argued that leadership style should vary based on the situation in which the leader is placed. This theory suggests that both leadership style and performance depend not on the qualities of the leader, but the context in which the leadership is being given. It is generally accepted within the contingency theories that leaders are more likely to express their leadership when they feel that their followers will be responsive.

The application to education here is a hotly debated topic. Some would say that principals should adjust their leadership style according to the needs of the school and staff. For example, a school with inexperienced teachers may require quite a bit of micromanagement, while a school with a more experienced staff may require much less hands-on leadership from the principal. Others would say that an educational leader should have core values that transcend any school environment or situation.

Participative theories of leadership. Participative leadership theories focus on collecting input, participation, and contribution from group members or other stakeholders who are assigned a specific task. These theories insist that decision-making done as a participative process can potentially improve the quality of the decision. Participation in decision-making makes the logic behind the decision both transparent and more readily accepted by those who will execute the decision. There is also a social aspect to participative theories of leadership. Collective decision-making increases the social interaction and commitment amongst the members of the group to one another. It

is important for leaders to remember that participative leadership can be extremely counterproductive when participation is requested of the stakeholders, but then their input ignored.

Modern educational leadership relies heavily on participative theories of leadership. Principals are expected to consult stakeholders regarding decisions that affect the school. The participation of the teachers, staff, parents, and even students is encouraged to ensure that every major decision is achieved through consensus and is accepted by everyone involved.

Situational Leadership Theory. Situational theories of leadership are when the behavior of the leader is determined by the behavior of the leader's followers. If the leader can adapt her behavior in a way that meets the needs of the group she leads, the more effective and influential she will be. Situational leadership is about meeting the needs of those being led. In order to meet those needs, the leaders must consider the follower's ability, knowledge, experience, skill, confidence, commitment, and motivation. Stated that what an individual actually does when acting as a leader is in large part dependent upon characteristics of the situation in which he functions.

A school in session contains hundreds to thousands of students, faculty, staff, and volunteers. Every day presents a new set of challenges and struggles for the leadership of the school. The building principal accepts responsibility for the decisions that are made in order for the school to run smoothly. However, due to the diversity in personalities, values, beliefs, and views of each individual, the principal must have the ability to use differing styles of leadership that will suit the current situation. Situational leadership is effective in schools because it allows the principal to consider the abilities and needs of

the teachers and staff, contemplate what is best for the teachers and the school, and make decisions that fit the situation at hand (Hiebert & Klatt, 2001).

Transactional Leadership Theory. Transactional theories (1970s) are characterized by a transaction made between the leader and the followers. Transactional leadership attempts to make the leader-follower relationship positive and mutually beneficial. For the transactional theories to work, the leader must develop and maintain an effective system of rewards and punishments. The transactional leadership environment works best when the goals of the leader and follower are the same, or at least not at odds with each other. Transactional leaders believe that when people have agreed to do a job in exchange for a salary and other benefits, a part of the deal is that they cede all authority to their manager; the prime purpose of a subordinate is to do what their manager tells them to do. For obvious reasons, this particular leadership style is not popular in schools at any level.

Transformational Leadership Theory. The Transformational Leadership Theory seeks to create a solid relationship that results in trust and eventually leads to extrinsic and intrinsic motivation for both the leader and the follower. Rules and regulations are flexible and guided by group norms. The essence of the Transformational Leadership Theory is that leaders transform their followers through their inspirational nature and charismatic personalities. This type of leadership provides a sense of belonging for the followers because they can easily identify with the leader's inspiration, charisma, and sense of purpose. These theories assume that leaders will have dedicated followers if (a) they inspire them, if (b) they have a clear and compelling vision that leads to high achievement, if (c) they show them why the task is important, and if (d) they

maintain high ethical and moral standards Jandaghi, Matin, and Farjami (2009) discussed how Transformational leadership relates to success in the business world. In their study, they found that “transformational leadership is significantly higher in successful companies than unsuccessful ones” (p. 215). This type of leadership can be successful in almost any setting, primarily because it empowers those involved, but has been found to be especially successful in education settings. Transformational Leadership is about getting everyone involved in decision-making. Horan (1999) stated, “The overriding element of successful leadership is to involve people in the process of leading” (p. 21).

Kouzes and Posner (2003) divided Transformational leadership into five specific leadership practices:

1. *Modeling the Way*: a practice that involves the leader actively participating in the day-to-day functions that makes the system work.
2. *Shared Vision*: a practice that demonstrates the leader’s ability to conceptualize the needs of the organization, and the ability to effectively communicate that vision to others within the organization.
3. *Challenging the Process*: a practice that gives opportunity for the leader to evaluate and identify areas of the organization that need improvement and find innovative solutions to these problems.
4. *Enabling Others to Act*: a practice that is defined by not being afraid to allow members of the team to make suggestions or corrections based on what they feel would benefit the organization.
5. *Encourage the Heart*: a practice in which the leader does not forget about his co-

workers. He continuously motivates and encourages those around him because he knows that his followers will inevitably have to go through the hard times that often accompany change.

Transformational leadership is one of the most popular leadership styles in education today. When initially introduced by Burns (1978), transformational leadership was described as being guided by morals. A principal who is a transformational leader has the ability to convey a message that does not focus on self-interest; rather the focus is placed on the interest of the school. This type of leadership displays a genuine caring and nurturing environment for students and teachers. Sagnak (2010) found that this type of caring environment in which transformational leadership thrived was most prevalent at the elementary school level (p. 1146). Transformational leadership is now prevalent in many schools, at all levels, nationwide. The popularity seems to stem from the transformational practice of allowing others, through the leadership process, to take ownership in the school or organization.

Leadership Styles

A leadership style is the cumulative effect of a leader's philosophy, personality, and experience. Potentially, different situations could require different leadership styles. One particular style is not the answer to every situation. When adopting a particular leadership style, the leaders should make sure that the style chosen is the one that most effectively achieves the group's common goals while still meeting the individual needs of the members. Following are the most commonly accepted (by leadership researchers) leadership styles:

- *Autocratic or authoritarian leadership style:* The autocratic leadership

style centralizes all power and decision-making rights in the leader. The most common type of autocratic leaders is a dictator. These types of leaders require complete control of the organization and complete submission from their subordinates. This style can be beneficial when decisions need to be made quickly. The negative side of this style is that it does not give any opportunity for followers to voice their points of view or give input on organizational direction. Examples of autocratic leaders are George Patton and Adolf Hitler.

- *Participative or democratic leadership style:* The democratic leadership style usually includes the group functioning together to reach a common goal through shared decision making. Democratic or participative leaders give instructions only after consulting the group. In this way, they can motivate and achieve while building positive group dynamics and positive relationships between leaders and followers.
- *Laissez-faire or free rein leadership style:* A laissez-faire leader does not lead, but leaves the group entirely to itself. They allow subordinates to make their own decisions and require them to accept the consequences of those decisions. Both the methods the followers use and the policies they implement are their own, and are decided upon without input from the leader. Laissez-faire leadership is usually well-liked by followers, but has proven largely unsuccessful in both organizational and school situations.
- *Narcissistic leadership style:* Narcissistic leadership can best be described as “driven by unyielding arrogance, self-absorption, and a personal

egotistic need for power and admiration” (Neider-Chester & Schriesheim, 2010, p. 29). Most leadership experts divide narcissistic leaders into two categories: healthy and destructive (Maccoby, 2007). Both types will profess loyalty to the organization, but destructive types are really only interested in self-aggrandization. However, healthy narcissists can still lead the organization to success while behaving in this way because they have healthy core values and follow through on plans (Maccoby, 2007). Examples of narcissistic leaders include Mao Zedong (destructive), Ghengis Khan (destructive), Pope Innocent III (healthy), and Franklin Roosevelt (healthy).

- *Top-down leadership style:* Due mainly to the chain of command or the hierarchy that exists within a school system, some form of top-down leadership will always exist in schools. This type of leadership has an established structure that clearly identifies who is responsible for each area of the school. In most cases, the building principal is at the top of this managerial framework. Gordon and Patterson (2006) identified two types of top-down leadership in their study: overt and covert. Overt top-down leaders are principals that make it well known that they are the ones making decisions for the organization. They are usually gifted at surveying a situation and making quick, yet excellent decisions that will benefit the school as a whole. These types of leaders are valuable in schools and communities where there is a history of indecisiveness on the part of leaders. They have the ability to make tough decisions quickly and accept

possible negative repercussions as a result of those decisions with ease.

This type of leader bases his decision on what he thinks is in the best interest of the school.

Conversely, covert top-down leadership appears to not even be top-down leadership at all. In fact, top-down covert leaders appear to share the decision making process with those who surround him: teachers, staff, and parents (Gordon & Patterson, 2006). However, the “covert top-down leaders end up making decisions alone, finding it difficult to give up decision-making responsibility to faculty and parents” (Gordon & Patterson, 2006, p. 213). This type of leadership can be dangerous if it is discovered that the input gained from stakeholders is not being used properly. Credibility among faculty, staff, and parents is quickly lost if it is revealed that the perception of shared leadership is not reality.

- *Toxic leadership style:* A toxic leaders is someone who is in a position of power, but abuses the leader-follower relationship by leaving the organization and followers in a worse condition than when he/she took control (Price, 2004).

Price (2004) argues that ethical failures in leadership (such as a toxic leadership style) are not always moral failures. Sometimes the failures are cognitive, or occur as a result of the leader making rules or exceptions for himself that do not apply to anyone else in the organization. Very often, toxic leaders portray narcissistic tendencies.

Kellerman (2004) lists seven qualities that define a toxic leadership style. They are as follows:

1. *Incompetence:* The leader and at least some followers lack the will or skill (or

both) to sustain effectiveness. With regard to at least one important leadership challenge, they do not create positive change.

2. *Rigidity*: The leader and at least some followers are stiff and unyielding. Although they may be competent, they are unable or unwilling to adapt to new ideas, new information, or changing times.
3. *Intemperance*: The leader lacks self-control and is aided and abetted by followers who are unwilling or unable to effectively intervene; instead they enable the leader's behavior.
4. *Callousness*: The leader and at least some followers are uncaring or unkind. The needs and desires of most members are ignored, especially those of subordinates.
5. *Corruption*: The leader and at least some followers lie, cheat, or steal. To a degree that exceeds the norm, they put self-interest ahead of the public interest.
6. *Insular*: The leader and at least some followers minimize or disregard the health and welfare of those outside the group or organization for which they are directly responsible.
7. *Evilness*: The leader and at least some followers commit atrocities. They use pain as an instrument of power. The harm can be physical, psychological or both.

Qualities and Practices of Successful Leaders

Plato (Republic) said that leaders should have the best, most informed minds available. The good and just should lead citizens to noble character for the benefit of all. He said that leaders should not lead out of self-interest. Plato's Chinese contemporary, Lao-Tzu, wrote a poem that describes how great leaders direct their followers to successful completion of tasks:

Of the best rulers,
The people only know that they exist;
The next best they love and praise
The next they fear;
And the next they revile.
When they do not command the people's faith,
Some will lose faith in them,
And then they resort to oaths!
But of the best when their task is accomplished,
their work done,
The people all remark, "We have done it ourselves."

Successful principals share many common qualities. They act in ways that reflect commitment to developing the human resources of the school. For example, providing support and intellectual stimulation, facilitating professional learning among the staff, and building trust. They create open and productive school cultures, create safe environments for students and teachers, and build relationships with community stakeholders. To manage the teaching and learning program of the school, successful principals also monitor instruction, engage staff in critical reflection on instruction, introduce staff members to effective forms of instruction, proactively recruit and hire the most appropriate staff, and buffer the school from outside interferences and distractions (Leithwood & Day, 2007).

Two important common qualities of successful principals are high cognitive abilities (such as flexibility and creativity) and excellent problem solving skills (Day et

al., 2009). Successful principals usually have a personality that is honest, straightforward, self-confident, open, and humble. They are also very motivated, which is usually demonstrated through a high energy level, persistence, strong emotional commitment, and achievement orientation. Finally, strong educational leaders have strong social skills (e.g., listen well and have a good sense of humor; Chicago Public Education Fund, 2008; Day & Leithwood, 2007). Internal qualities of excellent leaders include unwavering values and beliefs, such as respect for others, a sense of equity, professionalism, and inclusion (Day & Leithwood, 2007).

Multiple studies have found that school leaders influence academic achievement in many different ways. They set directions, develop people, redesign the organization, and manage the teaching and learning program (Day et al., 2009; Leithwood & Riehl, 2005; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). Robinson et al. (2008), in their meta-analysis, found many of these leadership qualities to be relevant as well. Building vision and setting direction are aspects of leadership that have been discussed in leadership research for many years (Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Hallinger, 2005; Leithwood, 1994, Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Additionally, Gurr and Drysdale (2007) found the following qualities of a principal to be excellent for leadership: providing a sense of direction that encourages people to contribute their best efforts, establishing and continuously raising expectations, clarifying problems to be addressed, and articulating core personal values that guide their vision and actions.

Ethical Leadership

Effective leadership and ethical leadership are inextricably linked (Ciulla, 2003). Ciulla (2003), in his book *Ethics and Leadership Effectiveness*, lists four important

aspects of the leadership-ethics relationship: the ethics of a leader as a person, the ethics of the leader/follower relationship, the ethics of the process of leadership, and the ethics of what the leader does or does not do.

Ethical leaders behave in a way that exhibits leadership and sets an example for his/her followers. Freeman and Stewart (2006) define ethical leadership as “embodying the purpose, vision, and values of the organization and of the constituents, within an understanding of ethical ideals . . . connecting the goals of the organization with that of the internal employees and external stakeholders” (p. 2). Freeman and Stewart state that leaders must exhibit certain behaviors in order for their leadership to be ethical. Those behaviors are as follows:

1. Ethical leaders should articulate and embody the purpose and values of the organization.
2. Ethical leaders should focus on organizational success rather than personal ego.
3. Ethical leaders should find the best people and develop them.
4. Ethical leaders should create an ongoing conversation about ethics, values, and the creation of value for stakeholders.
5. Ethical leaders should create mechanisms of dissent.
6. Ethical leaders should understand followers’ values.
7. Ethical leaders should make tough calls while being imaginative.
8. Ethical leaders should know the limits of the ethical principles and values they live.
9. Ethical leaders should frame actions in ethical terms.
10. Ethical leaders should connect the basic value proposition to stakeholder support

and societal legitimacy.

The application to schools is obvious. The ethical (or unethical) behavior of principals permeates the atmosphere, actions, and success of the entire school. It is important for principals to speak of ethical behavior to teachers and students, but nothing speaks louder than when a principal embodies and lives the values that they desire to see in followers (Freeman & Stewart, 2006).

Morale

Definition of Morale

The online Merriam Webster dictionary (2011) defines morale as “the level of individual psychological well-being based on such factors as a sense of purpose and confidence in the future.” Willis & Varner (2010) defined morale as “a confident state of mind that progressively looks to achieve an essential and shared function” (p.12).

Teacher morale has been defined by Bentley and Rempel (1980) as “the professional interest and enthusiasm that a person displays toward the achievement of individual and group goals in a given job situation” (p. 2). The behavior of employees, including school personnel, is often driven by morale. If a person or group is confident, disciplined, happy, and willing to work hard for a common goal, they will have high morale and behave accordingly.

According to Finger (2005), there is no single factor that consistently explains morale, whether good or bad. A combination of related factors determines the level of morale in an organization (Finger, 2005). Group morale is a real phenomenon, but depends largely on the morale of each individual within a group. According to Finger (2005), the best way to improve the esprit of a group is for the leader to affect each

person in the group personally. Greenleaf (1996) refers to this as servant-leadership. The servant leader focuses on individual relationships through service and ensuring that each individual's needs are met.

Teacher morale may be defined in multiple ways, but most definitions include the idea that teachers have personal needs (Bentley & Rempel, 1972) as well as the idea that the teacher's perception of how well these needs are met impacts their state of mind and performance. There seems to be a strong relationship between teacher morale and student learning (Ramsey 2000). Because of the pervasiveness of low teacher morale, students in some schools may be getting shortchanged in regards to their education. Mackenzie (2004) found that morale was generally lower than in previous times, although many suggested that morale was positive in their own schools. This suggests that morale may be more complex than has been previously understood.

The Importance of High Morale

Low morale has a very high cost for an organization. Ewton (2007) stated that morale can thrust an organization forward towards success or be the vehicle that drives the organization to failure through employee dissatisfaction and inefficiency. According to the Gallup Organization (2011), nearly 350 billion dollars per year is lost due to factors that are related to unhappiness in the workplace, such as absenteeism and lost productivity.

Principals who fail to address morale issues in their schools will most likely have to deal with unhappy teachers, students, parents, lower test scores, higher rates of absenteeism, more conflict between staff members, and increased teacher attrition. All of these results could be prevented, or at the very least diminished, through a concerted

effort to increase teacher morale levels. When teacher morale is low, the most important negative effect is on the students. Students can sense low morale amongst staff, teachers, and administrators. There are many reasons to strive to keep morale high in schools, but the most important is to create an environment that enables student success.

Three Levels of Teacher Morale

There are three types (levels) of morale that, when taken together, comprise teacher morale. They are personal morale, school morale, and professional morale. In other words, personal morale + school morale + professional morale = teacher morale. Personal morale is a compilation of personal situations, such as health, family, and financial stability. Most of these factors are private and personal. Events that occur in schools and local communities lead to what is referred to as school morale. Professional morale is inextricably intertwined with the status of teaching as a profession. The three levels of morale and the confusion they can cause helps to "explain why a good proportion (53%) of participants . . . identified morale in their own school as positive, while 66% suggested that the morale of teachers . . . was poor" (MacKenzie, 2004, p.21). While some school leaders prove to be successful in maintaining a high level of school morale, professional morale continues to be linked to the low status of the profession (Mackenzie 2004). Ideally, morale would be positive at all three levels.

Factors That Affect Teacher Morale

Teachers today are inundated with new innovations and administrator experiments. These new ideas and plans are usually implemented in the name of improving teacher performance. Some have merit, and some do not. However, teacher input on these innovations is often ignored entirely, which makes them feel undervalued

as professionals. Huysman (2008) found that motivation, effort, and job satisfaction are linked to teacher morale. When teacher input is disregarded, their motivation, effort, and job satisfaction are negatively impacted. According to Huysman, job dissatisfaction directly impacts teacher morale. In fact, Huysman found that job satisfaction was the most significant aspect of teacher morale. Teacher job satisfaction is tied to intrinsic factors of teacher morale, such as security, the ability to utilize acquired teaching skills, the ability to serve, and activity level. Teacher job satisfaction is also tied to extrinsic factors of teacher morale, such as compensation, authority, school policies, advancement, and recognition for achievement, politics, bargaining, and distribution of power (Huysman, 2008). Reed (2010) and Smith (2010) found similar connections between teacher morale and their perception of how school administrators view their value.

Other factors can be tied to teacher morale level. Wentworth (1990) listed the following as essential factors that determine teacher morale: input into decision making that directly affects curriculum and instruction, recognition and appreciation of teacher and student achievement, school climate that reflects a feeling of cooperation and pride, communication, opportunities for meaningful professional growth, shared goals, supportive leadership, quality time for planning and problem solving, well-maintained physical environment, positive human relations in the school and the community, encouragement and reward for innovation and teaching effectiveness, attention to professional needs, and attention to personal needs.

MacKenzie (2007) and Smith (2010) both identified a relationship between teacher salary and teacher morale. When teachers are consulted, they overwhelmingly claim that poor compensation is the most significant factor in low teacher morale (Smith,

2010). Researchers have found other factors that impact teacher morale. Among those factors is lack of recognition and respect (Huysman, 2008; MacKenzie, 2007; Reed, 2010). Andrews (1985) emphasized that schools with high levels of teacher morale have systems of teacher recognition in place. Part of that respect and recognition is being afforded the opportunity to participate in decision making at the school and district level (Miller, 1981; Wentworth, 1990). Miller (1981) and Wentworth (1990) also found that causes of positive school culture include student achievement, respect, communication, shared decision making, and administrative support. Despite what research has repeatedly shown in terms of creating and maintaining a positive school culture, MacKenzie (2007) indicated that toxic school cultures are still far more prevalent than positive ones. MacKenzie offered several recommendations for improving school culture as a means to impact teacher morale. Some of these recommendations were reducing teacher workload, arranging more preparation time, increasing administrative support, giving more positive recognition when earned, and increasing opportunities for advancement.

Teacher morale is relevant to education researchers because it is critical to school success. Unfortunately, the factors that influence teacher morale, either positively or negatively appear to be mostly related to extrinsic factors (controlled most often by school administrators or media outlets) that are out of the control of the teacher. Inequitable treatment leads to loss of motivation and subsequently affects teacher morale in a negative manner (Huysman, 2008). Young (1998) concurred with Huysman (2008) that morale is often influenced more by outside factors than internal ones. Rogers (1992) identified both internal and external factors as being influential on morale, but highlights

pace of bureaucratic change, discipline and management concerns, staff and staff relations, and time and workload pressures (all extrinsic factors) as the most common stressors for teachers.

Causes of Low Teacher Morale

Amongst all of the previously mentioned factors that affect teacher morale, there are several causes of low teacher morale that need to be explored more in-depth.

Parental interference. When parents interfere in a negative way with what is going on in the classroom and the principal does not support the teacher, it can cause a real decrease in morale. The teacher feels like no one is on their side and that they do not have the freedom to do their job. One common example of parental interference is when parents blame the teacher for a poor grade received by their child. Oftentimes, even when the teacher can support their assessment of the student's work with evidence, the administrator bows to the pressure from the parent to change the student's grade.

NCLB responsibilities. Bryd-Blake, Afolayan, Hunt, Fabunmi, Pryor, and Leander (2010) conducted a study that examined the morale of teachers in high poverty schools. One of the factors that consistently affected teacher morale was the additional responsibilities NCLB placed on the classroom teacher. The study provided evidence that "the pressure of NCLB adversely affected teacher's morale" (Bryd-Blake et al., 2010, p. 452). NCLB has caused anxiety for many teachers: especially older teachers who began their career being accountable only to administrators and parents. However, teachers new to teaching also experience a decrease in morale levels. Therefore, a teacher's morale (and subsequently, a school's morale) can be adversely influenced by NCLB guidelines, and since teacher morale is a predictor of teacher effectiveness (Singh,

Buddhisigar, 2009), NCLB may be having the opposite impact that was originally intended by the law. Accountability for student achievement can also be the driving force behind job satisfaction, which is a major contributor to teacher morale levels (MacKenzie, 2007). Prior to the advent of standards-based education and high-stakes testing, one of the most important measures of an effective teacher was whether that teacher was popular with the students and their parents. If a principal received no complaints and students were passing classes, the teacher was thought to be performing well. Today, however, as a result of NCLB, teachers are now accountable for the academic (testing) performance of the students they teach. The added pressure of providing evidence that students have mastered material puts an added workload on teachers and decreases their desire to teach at all.

Discipline problems/classroom management. Liu and Meyer (2005) listed student behavior as the number one factor in low teacher morale. Many teachers are experiencing increasing problems with behavior and discipline (Buckingham 2003). Doebler (1996) looked at what specific problems student teachers faced in the secondary level. The author suggested that the lack of instructional guidance contributed to the problems that student teachers faced. Thirty identifiable problems were grouped into three major categories: instructional behavior, personal characteristics, and classroom management/discipline. The most frequently occurring problems were classroom management and discipline. The number one problem (30% of the respondents) discovered was the student teachers' classroom mismanagement. It is clear that colleges and universities are not devoting enough time to equipping teachers with the necessary tools and methods to maximize student learning. It is imperative that the building

principal have procedures in place to assist teachers who are new to the classroom. When these procedures are not in place, and classroom management issues are allowed to become pervasive and ongoing, decreased teacher morale is the inevitable result.

Teacher burnout (another cause of low teacher morale) is largely due to classroom discipline issues. This burnout could be alleviated through strong leadership. Assigning a mentor to observe mentorees daily in an effort to gain knowledge on different strategies for managing the classroom is a step that could be taken by the principal to assist classroom teachers. The problem lies at the feet of the administration that allows this type of burnout to take place. Ultimately, school climate is the responsibility of the principal, and should be a large piece in the school improvement puzzle because it has a direct impact on the morale of teachers.

Lueddeke (2003) identified the roles of discipline and teaching in student achievement. He also looked at whether or not gender has any influence on effective teaching. The results showed a difference between the levels of structure in the classroom and gains in student learning. The study found that high levels of classroom structure and discipline played a large role in student achievement. Most students that have the potential to disrupt do so because of a lack of, or change in, structure. Free time is the enemy of the teacher that has a classroom of students with the potential to act out. Therefore, the structure of the class is an essential part of prevention. For teachers that struggle with this type of structure, classroom management is close to impossible. In most cases, when there is a lack of structure, there is mismanagement. When there is mismanagement, there is the potential for misbehavior. When there is misbehavior, there is a lack of classroom instruction. All of these factors combined can produce an

environment that yields a high level of anxiety for the teacher. Subsequently, low teacher morale is the result. Strong leadership has the ability, through frequent interaction with staff, to identify such a situation and develop a plan to assist the teacher. Such a plan will not only improve the teacher's ability to teach, it will improve the classroom environment and teacher morale as well.

Gordon (2002) discussed how teachers view classroom management and discipline as a constant source of stress while teaching. The most predominant stressors in the study were found to be various forms of inappropriate classroom behavior. Teachers who have difficulty handling discipline issues as they arise in the classroom, or teachers who receive little support from their administration while handling discipline issues, may experience higher stress and a lower morale level, and may even leave the profession (Tye & O'Brien, 2002). It is important for principals to make their teachers feel that they are supported in order to keep quality teachers in the profession and maintain morale in the demanding field of education.

The effectiveness of a classroom becomes apparent when the teacher has met the needs of the students and provides successful and meaningful learning experiences. Teachers need to understand the rationale for having a strong management system in place. For teachers that consistently deal with discipline issues in their classrooms, school leaders must identify the cause. Once it is established that the issues are not a result of ineffective classroom management, then it becomes the responsibility of the administration to prevent these types of barriers to learning. The best way to address perpetual discipline issues is through a fair, swift, and progressively severe discipline policy. Most schools have these types of policies in place; however, many times it is the

misapplication of the policy that causes the problem, and not the policy itself.

Teacher workload. According to Sachs (2003) and Hoyle (2001), teacher workload has been a problem for more than two decades. Teaching conditions have changed and intensified in more recent times due to heightened expectations, broader demand, increased accountability, more social work responsibilities, multiple innovations, and increased amounts of administrative work. This has led to work overload (Hoyle 2001; Sachs, 2003). Teacher morale is decreasing because teachers are tiring due to over assessment, misguided and poorly designed definitions of accountability, and excessive/pointless paperwork (MacKenzie, 2007). Platsidou and Agalotis (2008) express the opposite view, that even special education teachers do not experience a great deal of job-related stress. However, research suggests that teachers are being required more than ever to act as social workers and family figures (Lawrence 1999), which increases workloads unnecessarily. They are also expected to meet the needs of students with a wider range of abilities, leading to high stress, decreased satisfaction, and poor morale.

Working conditions. District- and school-level leaders who desire to retain effective teachers in the classroom must take steps to increase teachers' job satisfaction, and consequently teachers' morale, by improving the conditions in which those teachers work (Cha & Cohen-Vogel, 2011). Sammons, Gu, Day, and Ko (2011) stated that there are four aspects of working conditions that have the potential to raise teacher morale.

They are:

- *increasing commitment and enthusiasm of staff*
- *achieving an orderly and secure working environment*

- *enhancing local reputation*
- *improving pupil behavior and discipline as a result of a whole school approach*

Perceptions of the teaching profession. The decline in the perception of teacher status began in the late 1970s (Crowther, 2003), with 1998 identified as the time when the standing of teachers in society reached its lowest point (Dinham & Scott 1998a). Eltis (1997, p. 8) stated that teachers are viewed as “public servants with very little autonomy” and play “a very subservient role, always accountable to superiors” (Dinham & Scott, 1998b, p. 2). From these belittling statements, it is obvious that the standing of teachers in society is very low, while the standard that society holds them too is very high. Such a dichotomy between perceptions and expectations is very likely to have a negative impact on teacher morale. The abilities of classroom teachers are continually challenged by the communities in which they live. Communities are said to feel “ambiguity about teachers' expertise” (Hoyle 2001, p. 143). When the members of the community in which a teacher lives doubt the teachers’ ability to do the job that they are being paid for, teacher morale is crushed. Shaker (2009) said that the entire education system disregards teachers’ professional judgment and denigrates their ability and accomplishments.

Salary. Teacher salaries have not kept pace with salaries in other professions or the cost of living (Kalantzis & Harvey 2003). Vinson, Esson, and Johnston (2001) stated that the issue of teacher salary and compensation “has become entangled with teachers' perceptions of lack of employer respect” (p. 8). Like employees in any other profession, teachers are more likely to be conscientious and productive workers if they feel that they

are being fairly compensated for the amount of work they do. However, as teacher workloads have increased and standards have become higher, teacher salaries have either remained stagnant or decreased. The morale of any person would be negatively impacted in that type of situation, and teachers are no different.

Lack of quality professional development. It has been shown that teacher satisfaction is directly linked to student achievement (Dinham & Scott, 1998b). Student achievement leads to teacher satisfaction, which in turn is directly related to teacher effectiveness. Teacher effectiveness has been shown to be connected to access to relevant professional development. In the Dinham and Scott (1998b) study, more than half of the study participants identified a connection between access to relevant professional development and teacher morale. Thus, teacher morale can be circumstantially linked to professional development opportunities.

Environments with little or no opportunity for professional growth or advancement seem to foster low employee morale (Dye & German, 2006). Teachers who participate in professional development perceive themselves as more prepared and more effective instructors, and that perception positively impacts overall morale levels.

The Effect of Leadership on Teacher Morale

The results of research indicate that respondents repeatedly identify leadership as a major stimulus for high teacher morale (Lumsden 1998; MacKenzie, 2007; Miller, 1981; Rowland, 2008). There are multiple reasons that they are so closely related. Principal leadership influences the school climate (Kelley, Thornton & Daugherty, 2005), how comfortable teachers are at work, student achievement, and even teacher salaries to a certain extent; all of those things that are influenced by principal leadership also impact

teacher morale (Butt, Lance, Fielding, Gunter, Rayner, & Thomas, 2005; Evans, 1997; Hunter-Boykin & Evans, 1995; Kelley, Thornton, & Daugherty, 2005; Rhodes, Nevill, & Allan, 2004). A principal's actions have the potential to either increase or decrease teacher morale, but the goal is obviously to raise teacher morale for the purpose of improving school climate and student achievement. Andrews et al. (1985) developed a list of principal practices that establish and maintain positive teacher morale. Those practices are as follows:

- *being open and having good morale themselves*
- *communicating at many levels*
- *involving others in setting objectives, planning, and decision-making*
- *setting planning priorities*
- *delegating responsibilities to get things accomplished*
- *knowing the values and needs of the community, the students, and the staff*
- *holding high expectations for staff, but recognizing the responsibility to help them*
- *meeting the expectations of staff*
- *giving recognition to those who are helping to advance the objectives of the school*
- *having written policy developed for procedures and regulations*
- *exercising authority*
- *providing resources needed to achieve the school's objectives*
- *working to obtain high salary levels for teachers*

To this list, Blasé, J.R. and Blasé, J. (1994, 2001) added that a principal can improve teacher morale in a simple way-by giving them praise. Praise provides teachers with

“increased efficacy, self-esteem, and motivation” (Blasé, L. & Blasé, D., 1994, p.76).

Nguni, Slegers, and Denessen (2006) found transformational leadership traits to have a positive correlation to teacher morale, while transactional leadership traits did not.

Transactional leadership motivates teachers through simple rewards, such as exchanging work for financial compensation. Transformational leadership motivates the teacher by leading them to self-actualization. MacKenzie (2007) found that 97% of teachers perceived that leadership at the school level had a major impact on morale. He also found that 95% of teachers identified leadership at the system level as important.

MacKenzie (2007) said, “Teacher morale is a by-product of visible, demonstrated support and respect from those who administer the system” (p.95). Thus, it can be logically deduced that if effective leadership positively influences teacher morale, then ineffective leadership could negatively influence teacher morale. Conversely, many people believe that teachers get out of teaching what they put into it; if they experience low morale, they are not trying hard enough to succeed and create high morale.

The Effect of Leadership on Academic Performance

The research connecting leadership to academic performance is sparser than the research that connects leadership to teacher morale. Perhaps this is because school leaders, such as principals, do not interact directly with students on a daily basis, so the impact is more difficult to measure. The effect of a school leader is filtered through teachers. The research that does exist demonstrates that the effect of leadership on student academic outcomes is generally weak (Day, Sammons, Hopkins, Harris, Leithwood, & Gu, 2007). However, those students who have high expectations thrust upon them by school leadership do seem to rise to the occasion and perform better than

those who do not have high expectations (Daniels, 2011). The important piece of information for researchers to learn is which amongst the leadership practices mentioned by Kouzes and Posner (2003) changes school climate favorably and leads to positive changes in student behavior, attendance, and academic performance. That is partially what this research seeks to learn.

The Effect of Teacher Morale on Academic Performance

There is a strong correlation between teacher morale and student achievement (Andrews et al., 1985; Hopkins-Layton, 1981; Houchard, 2005; Lumsden, 1998; Ramsey, 2000; Wentworth, 1990). There are several reasons why teacher morale is related to student achievement. First, teachers with low morale take personal and sick days at a higher rate than their colleagues with higher morale. Having several substitute teachers over the course of a year can certainly decrease student learning (Andrews et al., 1985). Secondly, teacher morale may be related to student achievement because teachers with high morale are much more likely to work harder and longer to improve student achievement. Obviously, student achievement would increase in these cases. Third, when a student has a positive relationship with a teacher, their achievement will improve (Andrews et al., 1985). Fourth, positive student-teacher relationships (which naturally lead to better academic performance) are much more likely to occur when the teacher has high morale. Therefore, teacher morale is related to student learning in this way as well. Fifth, Ramsey (2000) stated that teacher morale and student achievement are related because worker efficiency is directly related to teacher morale. Sixth, Lumsden (1998) found that low teacher morale negatively impacts student productivity, student achievement, and poor classroom climate, so teacher morale and student achievement are

related because productivity (and subsequently, academic achievement) decreases when teacher morale is low. For all of these reasons, it is clear that a teacher's level of morale can have an enormous impact on student achievement.

Conclusion

This review of the literature presented different aspects of the relationships between leadership, teacher morale, and student achievement. First, the study's theoretical framework was presented. Next was an in-depth examination of the subjects of leadership and morale, specifically how they relate to the field of education. Finally, the interactions between leadership, teacher morale, and student achievement were studied. Chapter Three will present a plan to determine if teacher perceptions of leadership practices show that leadership affects teacher morale or student achievement, and to determine if teacher perceptions of teacher morale affect student achievement.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this causal-comparative/correlational study was to use archival data and surveys to examine the relationships between principal leadership style and CRCT fifth grade math scores, principal leadership style and teacher morale, and teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores in a rural school district in Northwest Georgia. This chapter highlights the general design of the study, and identifies subjects and instruments used to determine the presence and strength of the relationships in question. The data collection and data analysis procedures are also described in detail.

Research Design

To assist in answering the research questions of this study through the evaluation of the null hypotheses, the researcher utilized a causal-comparative/correlational research design. This design identified if there was a statistically significant difference between teacher morale or CRCT fifth grade math scores (or both) at schools with principals that had different leadership styles and if there was a statistically significant relationship between teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores. The former was determined by conducting a one-way MANOVA analysis (teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores across the three categories of principal leadership styles). The latter was determined by conducting a correlational analysis between teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores.

The causal-comparative/correlational model, with Hypothesis 1 measured with a MANOVA and Hypothesis 2 measured with a correlational analysis, was utilized because the researcher did not, and could not; manipulate the variables of interest in this study.

MANOVA was used for analysis of Hypothesis 1 because, according to Green and Salkind (2011), a MANOVA is the best test when a researcher wants to “evaluate a hypothesis that includes not only equality among group means on the dependent variables, but also equality among group means on linear combinations of these dependent variables” (p.291). This design had the ability to determine two things: if either teacher morale or CRCT fifth grade math scores (or both) were impacted by principal leadership styles and if those impacts were statistically significant. A correlational analysis was used for Hypothesis 2 because the researcher simply wanted to determine if there was any statistically significant relationship between teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores.

Research Questions and Null Hypotheses

The following research questions and null hypotheses are based upon Rowland’s research (Rowland, 2008, p. 22) and guided this study:

RQ1: Is there a difference between levels of teacher morale (as measured by the PTO) and CRCT fifth grade math scores (as measured by 2012 CRCT fifth grade math scores), or a combination of these scores, in elementary schools that have principals with different leadership styles?

H₀1: There will be no statistically significant differences between levels of teacher morale (as measured by the PTO) and CRCT fifth grade math scores (as measured by 2012 CRCT fifth grade math scores), or a combination of these scores, in elementary schools that have principals with different leadership styles.

RQ2: Is there a relationship between teacher morale (as measured by the PTO) and elementary school CRCT fifth grade math scores (as measured by 2012 CRCT fifth grade math scores)?

H₀2: There will be no statistically significant correlation between teacher morale (as measured by the PTO) and elementary school CRCT fifth grade math scores (as measured by 2012 CRCT fifth grade math scores).

Participants

The population selected for this study consisted of all certified teachers at each of the 12 elementary schools within a Northwest Georgia county school district. Collectively there were a total of 480 certified teachers that were invited to participate in the study. The breakdown of teachers were: 11 pre-k teachers, 61 kindergarten teachers, 54 first grade teachers, 54 second grade teachers, 58 third grade teachers, 46 fourth grade teachers, 44 fifth grade teachers, 43 special area teachers (physical education, art, music, and computers), 62 special education teachers, 16 Title I teachers, 12 English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) teachers, 10 speech teachers, and nine teachers of gifted students. Since the researcher included all 480 possible subjects as part of the sample, a nonprobability consecutive sampling model was used (Ross, 2010). The sample was collected by identifying all certified teachers at each of the 12 elementary schools within the Northwest Georgia target school district, and inviting each of the 480 teachers to participate in the study. A sample size of 214 participants (medium effect size = .30) was required to ensure a statistical power of 0.95 (Cohen, 1988). In the end, 226 of the 480 teacher participated. This established a 47% participation rate. The demographics of the participants are included in the following table:

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Caucasian	African-American	Hispanic	Male	Female
93%	6%	1%	8%	92%

Permission to conduct the study was acquired through the county superintendent of schools. Once permission was granted, the researcher met with each building principal to explain the study, the instruments used (LPI and PTO), the method of delivery of the instruments to the participants, and the time window that the instruments would be available to the participants. An email explaining the study was then sent to each participant (Appendix A). The email briefly explained the study and conveyed that the research was both voluntary and anonymous. The email also included a link to both the LPI and PTO and when it would be available.

Setting

The study took place in a Northwestern Georgia county school district that has 12 elementary schools, four middle schools, and three high schools. The region is largely rural in nature, with pockets of small urban environments; however, none of the schools examined in this study contain a large metropolitan population. The grade levels included in this study were pre-k, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, third grade, fourth grade, and fifth grade. According to the district's website, the county is located approximately 45 miles northwest of Atlanta, and has a population of about 97,000 residents. The median age within the county is 35.6 years, and the average family size is 3.14. The demographics of the county are 84.5% Caucasian, 10.4% African American,

and 4.9% Hispanic. Within the school system, the demographics are similar to those within the county: 85% Caucasian, 8% African American, and 7% Hispanic. Additionally, 52% of the student population is considered economically disadvantaged, 12.5% receive special services, and 4% are classified as English Language Learners (ELL). Each of the 12 elementary schools included in the study achieved AYP during the 2010 - 2011 school year (BCSD, 2011).

Instrumentation

There were two instruments used in this study, the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire and the Leadership Practices Inventory. Both instruments have been used numerous times by researchers in different studies (Moore, 2012; Rowland, 2008). The LPI is the more recently developed of the two instruments; its third edition having been published in 2003. Even though the PTO was originally developed in the 1960s, its effectiveness at gathering honest teacher opinions has made it a popular choice in many recent studies (Bhella, 2001; Houchard, 2005; Hunter-Boykin & Evans, 1995).

The LPI is primarily used to delineate teachers' views on the actions, leadership styles, and behaviors of their principals. The survey consisted of 30 questions set up on a 10 point scale. Each statement in the LPI had a possible score ranged of 1-10: (1) almost never, (2) rarely, (3) seldom, (4) once in a while, (5) occasionally, (6) sometimes, (7) fairly often, (8) usually, (9) very frequently, and (10) always. The associated scoring for each response was as follows for this study: (1) almost never = 1, (2) rarely = 2, (3) seldom = 3, (4) once in a while = 4, (5) occasionally = 5, (6) sometimes = 6, (7) fairly often = 7, (8) usually = 8, (9) very frequently = 9, and (10) always = 10. The total score for the LPI can range from 30-300, and measures both composite and subscale scores

(Kouzes & Posner, 2003). This instrument offered questions that were closely related to the behaviors and actions of the majority of building principals. Reliability coefficients of .88 and .92 were established by Kouzes & Posner (2003) through test and retest methods. Kouzes & Posner (2012) stated, “Validation studies that we, as well as other researchers, have conducted over a fifteen-year period consistently confirm the reliability and validity of the Leadership Practices Inventory and the Five Practices of Exemplary Leaders model” (p. 311). Permission to use the LPI was granted through written request by the researcher.

The LPI divides leadership styles into five categories established by the instrument’s designers that correspond to the *Five Practices of Exemplary Leaders* (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). Each of the five categories measure different styles of leadership. Modeling the Way describes a leader who leads by example. In this section of the LPI, the questions focus on leaders who are actively involved in many different aspects of the job. Inspire a Shared Vision describes a leader who involves those around him/her in the decisions that will affect the organization. Questions in this section deal with future oriented issues. Challenge the Process describes a leader who thinks outside of the box. Questions in this section involve risk taking and learning from mistakes. Enable Others to Act describes leaders who place trust in those around him/her to act. Questions in this section deal with relationships and trusting others. Finally, Encourage the Heart addresses a leader who celebrates the success of the organization. Questions in this section deal with acknowledging the accomplishments of others and celebrating success (Kouzes & Posner, 2003).

The PTO survey measures teacher morale in 10 different areas, and is made-up of 100 questions scored on a four point scale (Bentley & Rempel, 1972). The PTO collects teachers' views of their principals in each of the 10 categories: rapport with principal, satisfaction with teaching, rapport among teachers, teacher salary, teacher load, curricular issues, teacher status in the community, community support for education, school facilities and service, and community expectations. For the purposes of this study, a composite score of the PTO was used. Each statement in the PTO had four possible responses: (A) agree, (PA) probably agree, (PD) probably disagree, and (D) disagree. The associated scoring for each response was as follows for this study: (A) agree = 4, (PA) probably agree = 3, (PD) probably disagree = 2, and (D) disagree = 1. PTO scores can range from 100-400; with a higher the composite score representing a higher level of teacher morale. The validity of the instrument is based upon the design purposes and specifically through the content. Bentley and Rampel (1980) measured the reliability of the PTO instrument and found a .87 reliability coefficient. The copyright for the PTO has expired; subsequently, the instrument is available for use in research without the acquisition of permission from the authors.

The 2012 fifth grade math CRCT data was collected from the GADOE website. The data was collected from the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) link. The *Achievement* tab that was linked to each of the study's twelve elementary schools provided specific information regarding CRCT data. Number three on the *Achievement* tab of the CCRPI provided the researcher with the percentage of students who *Meets* or *Exceeds* on the 2012 fifth grade mathematics CRCT.

Procedures

The researcher obtained permission to conduct the study by successfully submitting and defending the proposal to his dissertation committee at Liberty University. The study was then submitted to Liberty University for IRB approval. Once final approval was given by the IRB (Appendix B), the researcher obtained permission to conduct the study, in writing with signature, from the county superintendent. The researcher was then able to meet with all twelve participating principals at a county-wide principal's meeting. At this meeting, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and answered questions and concerns given by the principals. The dates, deadlines, and procedures for the surveys were explained. Additionally, a brief explanation of the two instruments to be used in the study (LPI and PTO) and the method of the survey delivery were discussed. A list of all teachers to participate in the study was obtained from each school's website, and verified through each elementary school's office personnel. The date and time for the distribution of the email containing the survey links, as well as the expiration of the survey was discussed. The email notified the teachers of the voluntary and anonymous nature of the survey, how to take the web-based survey, and the time window that the survey was available. All 480 teachers at each of the 12 participating elementary schools received the survey link to complete the PTO and LPI. An additional opportunity was offered in the event that the optimal number of respondents was not reached during the first solicitation.

A brief statement (Appendix A) prepared by the researcher was included in the email sent to each participant to explain the purpose of the research and to reassure the maintenance of anonymity of both the school and the participants. They were reassured

that participation was voluntary and would have no effect on their relationship with the researcher, the school system, or Liberty University. Additionally, contact information for the researcher and Liberty University was provided to each building principal.

Survey Monkey is the web-based program used in the delivery of the PTO, and the LPI online survey provided the web-based program used in the delivery of the LPI. The researcher loaded the PTO onto the Survey Monkey program, and the link to the survey was included in the email sent to all 480 participants. The LPI online survey allowed the researcher to load each of the 480 participants into the program along with their email addresses according to their school site. Once all of the participants were entered into the LPI online survey, the program sent the survey link along with a brief statement (Appendix C) prepared by the researcher explaining the purpose of the research and assuring the maintenance of anonymity of both the school and the participants. Online surveys have become increasingly popular among various types of research (Lappe, 2000). These surveys provide flexibility in time and location, which gives the participant the ability to concentrate more fully on each question. Additionally, the researcher was not present while the survey was completed, which reaffirms the anonymity of the study (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorensen, 2006).

For the purposes of this study, the overall score on the PTO determined levels of teacher morale at each school, and the highest score of the five subscale scores of the LPI was used to determine the principal's leadership style for each elementary school. The data collected from each school was entered into a spreadsheet unique to each individual school. This allowed the researcher to easily access specific parts of the large amounts of

compiled data. The 2012 fifth grade math CRCT data was collected from the GADOE website through the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) link.

Data Analysis

Rationale for Type of Data Analysis

This research was causal-comparative/correlational and utilized nonparametric methods because at least one of the variables was nonnormal and heteroscedastic in nature (Green & Salkind, 2011). The data was measurement data for teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores, and frequency data for Principal Type.

A MANOVA was chosen as the most appropriate test to utilize for RQ1. The MANOVA has the ability to indicate differences on the dependent variables (Teach Morale and CRCT Score) between levels of the independent variable (Prin Type). Conducting multiple ANOVA analyses would have been the best approach for Hypothesis 1, but the researcher did not choose this test because of the increased chance of committing Type I errors (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2001). Type I errors occur when the same variables in a data set are used for too many statistical tests (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007). Visual examination of the normality histograms (figure 1 and 2) revealed that the data was not normally distributed. Statistical tests (skewness and kurtosis) of normality were conducted to verify the data. The results of the skewness and kurtosis tests showed that both the skewness and kurtosis fell well outside of the acceptable range to be considered normal (De Carlo, 1997; Kendall, Stuart, Ord, & O'Hagan, 1999). It was determined that the nonnormal data was a result of skewness and not outliers. Burdenski (2000) stated, "Mardia (1971) demonstrated that MANOVA is robust to modest

violations of normality if the violation is caused by skewness rather than outliers” (p. 19). Thus, a single MANOVA was chosen as the most appropriate analysis.

For Hypothesis 2, Pearson’s r was chosen as the most appropriate analysis tool, as long as the statistical assumptions necessary to use the test were met. However, because normality and linearity were identified as problematic for hypothesis 1, the same violation of assumptions would apply for hypothesis 2 as well. Therefore, a nonparametric analysis, Spearman’s rho, was used for the bivariate correlation hypothesis tests (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007). An assumption of Spearman’s rho is homogeneity of variances. This assumption means that there is similar variability in scores with regard to all dependent variables (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2001). Because the data has been identified as nonnormal, the researcher used the nonparametric Levene’s test to use rank data to determine the homogeneity of variances. This nonparametric test required transforming the data into mean rank data prior to conducting the test, however. The results means that the variances of all groups are equal and, therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was met.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The purpose of this causal-comparative/correlational study was to determine the differences in teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores at schools with different principal leadership style and to determine the strength of relationship between teacher morale and fifth grade CRCT math scores in a rural school district in Northwest Georgia. Quantifying the relationships between these variables gave the researcher valuable insight into how much a principal's leadership style actually impacts a school environment and standardized test scores. A teacher survey (PTO), a principal survey (LPI), and the GADOE website were utilized to collect the needed data. Complete data sets were available for 12 total schools, which included principals, teachers, and student math scores. The research questions in the study addressed how teacher morale and fifth grade CRCT math scores varied according to principal leadership styles and how strongly teacher morale was correlated with elementary CRCT fifth grade math scores.

This chapter presents the results of the study and is organized in four sections. First, the descriptive data for the variables of interest are displayed. In the next section, the results of the assumptions tests for the research hypotheses are given. The third section describes the results of the data analysis for the research hypotheses. The final section provides a summary of the results.

Descriptive Statistics

The independent variable in RQ1 was principal leadership styles. The LPI identifies five leadership styles: *Model the Way*, *Inspire a Shared Vision*, *Challenge the Process*, *Enable Others to Act*, and *Encourage the Heart*. The LPI means in each category for each principal are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

*Principal Leadership Styles –Leadership Practices**Inventory (LPI)*

Elementary School	Number of Responses	Model the Way	Inspire a Shared Vision	Challenge the Process	Enable Others to Act	Encourage the Heart
E-1	24	51.5	54.7	54.3	55.2	53.3
E-2	24	49.8	48.0	48.5	45.6	45.7
E-3	22	44.4	42.6	40.2	46.6	44.4
E-4	17	53.2	55.8	52.5	53.8	50.4
E-5	22	49.5	51.3	48.5	51.1	47.6
E-6	30	52.6	51.3	50.2	52.7	49.9
E-7	31	49.9	50.8	48.9	48.9	43.3
E-8	25	56.2	53.4	52.0	55.0	50.0
E-9	20	47.0	46.9	46.3	51.9	49.2
E-10	22	53.9	54.0	52.2	51.3	50.1
E-11	19	57.3	57.2	56.5	54.6	54.0
E-12	22	54.5	55.2	52.7	55.1	54.9

Although all ten categories of the PTO are presented, the variable of interest from this instrument utilizes only the composite score. Each category for the PTO had a varying number of questions, therefore, it is important to note that categories can be compared among schools, but comparisons cannot be drawn between categories within the same school. The PTO means and are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Teacher Morale - Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (PTO)

Elementary School	Number of Responses	Cat. 1	Cat. 2	Cat. 3	Cat. 4	Cat. 5	Composite Score
E-1	19	75	67	50	23	19	316
E-2	21	59	66	45	11	18	262
E-3	20	61	67	46	20	21	291
E-4	11	63	66	45	21	25	299
E-5	19	60	64	46	20	22	286
E-6	27	71	68	50	19	19	308
E-7	25	67	69	50	20	24	310
E-8	13	71	65	51	22	21	313
E-9	19	68	67	46	18	22	300
E-10	15	70	69	45	20	22	304
E-11	15	74	66	51	24	18	317
E-12	21	71	69	47	21	28	312

*Cat. 1 – Rapport with Principal, Cat. 2 – Satisfaction with Teaching, Cat. 3 – Rapport with Teachers, Cat. 4 – Teacher Salary, Cat. 5 – Teacher Load.

Table 3 (Continued)

Teacher Morale - Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (PTO)

Elementary School	Number of Responses	Cat. 6	Cat. 7	Cat. 8	Cat. 9	Cat. 10	Composite Score
E-1	19	14	25	18	17	8	316
E-2	21	12	17	8	19	7	262
E-3	20	12	23	15	15	11	291
E-4	11	13	23	15	19	9	299
E-5	19	13	22	14	16	9	286
E-6	27	13	22	20	18	8	308
E-7	25	14	23	15	18	10	310
E-8	13	15	23	15	20	10	313
E-9	19	14	24	16	15	10	300
E-10	15	12	23	15	18	10	304
E-11	15	14	24	19	19	8	317
E-12	21	15	22	15	15	9	312

*Cat. 6 – Curricular Issues, Cat. 7 – Teacher Status (In the Community), Cat. 8 – Community Support for Education, Cat. 9 – School Facilities and Service, Cat. 10 Community Pressure (Expectations).

Table 4

2012 Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) Math Scores (Percent That Meets or Exceeds)

E-1	E-2	E-3	E-4	E-5	E-6	E-7	E-8	E-9	E-10	E-11	E-12
86.0	87.9	85.7	89.0	88.2	83.3	85.5	85.7	87.2	88.3	96.8	84.6

The 2012 CRCT fifth grade math scores represent the total percentage of students that received a *Meets* or *Exceeds* score at each of the twelve elementary schools within the target Northwest Georgia school district. Both *Meets* and *Exceeds* indicate proficiency on the CRCT fifth grade math test.

Assumption Testing

Hypothesis 1 Assumptions

Preliminary assumption testing for a MANOVA was conducted. The assumptions tested were normality, equality of covariances, and independence of observations (Green & Salkind, 2011). The assumption that data was normally distributed was first tested by visual examination of a normality histogram. The normality histograms for the two continuous variables in this study can be seen in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Figure 1. Normality Histogram for Teacher Morale With Normal Curve Displayed

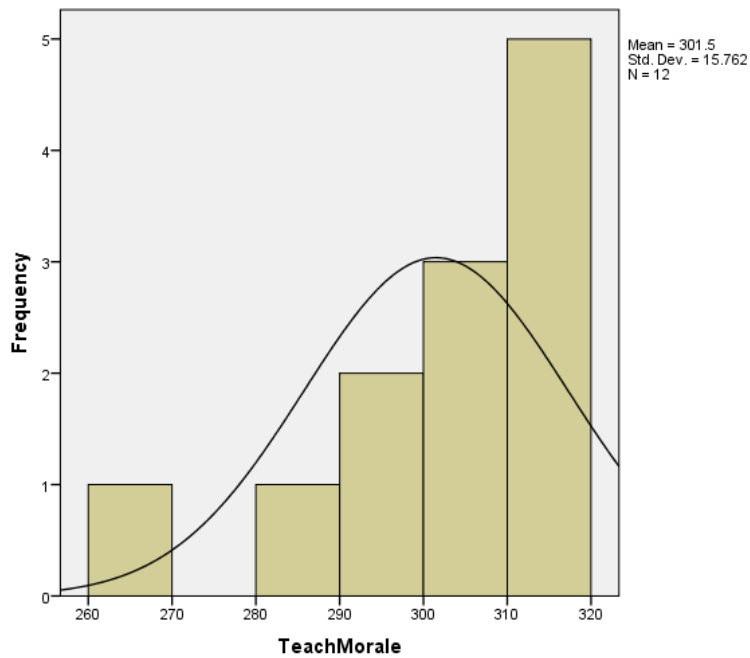
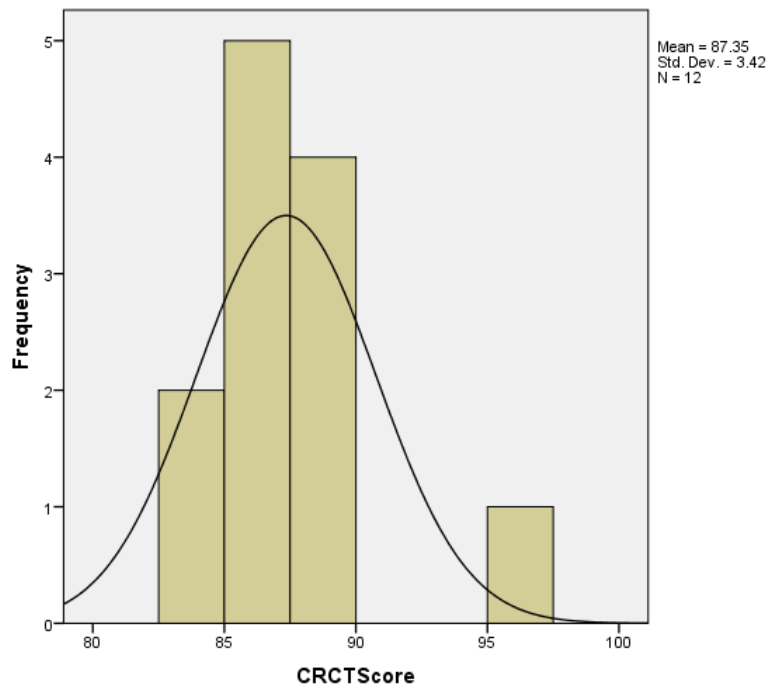


Figure 2. Normality Histogram for CRCT Score With Normal Curve Displayed



Neither histogram can be visually determined to be normal. Thus, to verify nonnormality, statistical tests (skewness and kurtosis) of normality were conducted. Skewness measures the symmetry of the distribution and kurtosis defines the shape of the distribution. If the skewness and kurtosis fall within a range that is +/- twice the standard error for skewness and kurtosis, then the distribution presents no problematic deviations from normality (De Carlo, 1997; Kendall, Stuart, Ord, & O'Hagan, 1999). Table 5 portrays the skewness and kurtosis numbers for Teacher Morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores.

Table 5

Skewness and Kurtosis Numbers for the Study Variables

Variable	N Statistic	Mean Statistic	Skewness		Kurtosis	
			Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Teach Morale	12	301.50	-1.565	.637	2.713	1.232
CRCT Score	12	87.35	2.033	.637	5.577	1.232

For both variables, skewness and kurtosis fell well outside of the acceptable range to be considered normal. Because of the nonnormal histograms and because the skewness and kurtosis numbers exceed twice the standard error for skewness and kurtosis, the data was not considered normal. Burdenski (2000) stated, "Mardia (1971) demonstrated that MANOVA is robust to modest violations of normality if the violation is caused by skewness rather than outliers" (p. 19). The researcher assessed the variables for the presence of extreme outliers. None of the data points fell more than 3.29 standard deviations from the norm, meaning no extreme outliers were present in any of the variables of interest (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007). The violation of normality was due to

skewness (see Table 5) rather than extreme outliers, meaning that MANOVA is robust to violations of normality in this case (Burdenski, 2000; Mardia, 1971).

The assumption of equality of variance-covariances was assessed with Box's M. Box's M tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups. The result of the test (Table 6) was nonsignificant, meaning the null hypothesis could not be rejected and the variances-covariances can be assumed to be equal for all groups.

Table 6

Box's Test of Equality of Variance-Covariance Matrices

Box's M	13.458
F	1.432
df1	6
df2	578.405
Sig.	.200

The assumption of independence of observations was addressed in this study through the research design. No participant was measured on more than one of the research variables and no participant was measured more than once on any one variable. Therefore, the assumption of independence of observations was met.

The assumption of normality was not found to be tenable for the variables in Hypothesis 1. However, the assumption of equality of variances-covariances was met according to Box's M, and the assumption of independence of observations was also met. These results indicate that a multivariate test of differences of means, Pillai's Trace, can be utilized to test Hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 2 Assumptions

Preliminary assumption testing for a correlational analysis was conducted. The assumptions tested were normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity (Green & Salkind, 2011).

The teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores variables were both found to be nonnormal (see Figure 1, Figure 2, and Table 5). This result led to the decision to utilize the nonparametric Spearman's rho test of correlation. However, an assumption of Spearman's rho is homogeneity of variances.

The assumption that the data is homoscedastic means that a similar variability in scores exists at all values of the dependent variable (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2001).

Homoscedasticity can be easily determined by examination of a statistical homogeneity of variance test produced in SPSS. Normally, Levene's test would be the appropriate test to use, but because the data has already been determined to be nonnormal, the more robust test is the nonparametric Levene's test. This test used rank data to determine the tenability of homogeneity of variances; this required transforming the data into mean rank data prior to conducting the test. The results of the nonparametric Levene's test can be seen in Table 7.

Table 7

Results of the Nonparametric Levene's Test

Variable	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
TeachMo_Diff_R	.478	2	9	.635
CRCTSco_Diff_R	.478	2	9	.635

The nonsignificant result for the nonparametric Levene's test means that the null hypothesis that the variances of all groups are equal cannot be rejected. Therefore, the assumption of homogeneity of variances is met.

The assumption that the data was linear was not tested, but rather the data was assumed to be nonlinear because of the violations in the skewness and kurtosis data. Green and Salkind (2011) stated, "If the assumption [normality, as determined by skewness and kurtosis data] is met, the relationships among the measured variables are also linear" (p. 267). Since both skewness and kurtosis numbers indicated violations of normality, linearity was also violated. Since the linearity assumption was not found to be tenable, a nonparametric test is again deemed most appropriate for the correlational analysis (Hypothesis 2) involving the nonlinear variables of interest.

Neither the assumption of normality nor the assumption of linearity was found to be tenable for the research variables. However, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met when the nonparametric Levene's test was utilized. These results indicate that the nonparametric test of correlation, Spearman's rho, can be utilized to analyze Hypothesis 2.

Data Analysis Results

Null Hypothesis 1

There will be no statistically significant differences between levels of teacher morale (as measured by the PTO) and CRCT fifth grade math scores (as measured by 2012 CRCT fifth grade math scores), or a combination of these scores, in elementary schools that have principals with different leadership styles.

Results for Hypothesis 1

A MANOVA test was conducted to evaluate differences between levels of teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores at schools with principals who had one of three different leadership styles (Enable Others to Act, Inspire a Shared Vision, and Model the Way). No significant differences were found among the three principal leadership styles for either dependent variable, Pillai's Trace = 0.31, $F(4, 18) = 0.84$, alpha levels were set at .05 ($p < .05$). The multivariate eta squared based on Pillai's Trace was weak, .15.

Table 8 contains the means and standard deviations of the dependent variables for the three groups for both dependent variables. Follow up tests were not conducted to evaluate differences among the three groups because the null hypothesis, that the means of the groups are equal, could not be rejected. Table 9 shows the Pillai's Trace results.

Table 8

Means and Standard Deviations for the Dependent Variables

Dependent Variable	Prin Type	Mean	Standard Deviation
Teach Morale	1	303.75	10.72
	2	302.20	10.40
	3	297.33	30.66
CRCT Score	1	85.55	1.63
	2	87.12	1.94
	3	90.13	5.87

Table 9

Results of the Pillai's Trace Test

	Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
	Pillai's Trace	.31	.84	4.00	18.00	.51	.15
Prin Type	Wilks' Lambda	.68	.83	4.00	16.00	.52	.17
	Hotelling's Trace	.46	.89	4.00	14.00	.54	.18
	Roy's Largest Root	.46	2.07	2.00	9.00	.18	.31

Null Hypothesis 2

There will be no statistically significant correlation between teacher morale (as measured by the PTO) and elementary school CRCT fifth grade math scores (as measured by 2012 CRCT fifth grade math scores).

Results for Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 was evaluated by conducting a Spearman's rho test in order to measure the strength of the relationship between teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores. The correlation was not statistically significant, and it was negative, $r_s(12) = -.17$, alpha levels were set at .05 ($p < .05$), thus not allowing for rejection of Null Hypothesis 2. Table 10 displays the results of the Spearman's rho analysis.

Table 10

Variable		TeachMorale	CRCTScore
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.17
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.59
	N	12	12
	Correlation Coefficient	-.17	1.0
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.59	.
	N	12	12

Because Null Hypothesis 2 could not be rejected, it could be concluded that no statistically significant correlation exists between teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores in elementary schools.

Summary of the Results

This chapter presented the descriptive statistics, assumptions testing, and tests of hypotheses for this study. The data analysis revealed that some of the assumptions could be met for some of the variables, but that the assumption of normality could not be assumed for any of the variables. This led the researcher to reject use of Pearson's r for analysis of Hypothesis 2 because the data was not part of a normally distributed data set. Spearman's rho, a nonparametric measurement of correlation, was used instead. For Hypothesis 1, nonnormality was less of a troubling issue because MANOVA testing can still be conducted for nonnormal data if the lack of normality is due to skewness rather than extreme outliers, which it was in this case.

The study addressed two research questions. Research Hypothesis 1 addressed the difference between teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores at schools where principals had different leadership styles. It was found that no statistically significant differences existed for either dependent variable. Research Hypothesis 2 addressed the correlation between teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores. There was also no statistically significant relationship between these variables. Several tables and figures were presented that depicted these statistical analyses. The researcher interpretation of these results is discussed in Chapter Five

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

The previous chapter presented data analysis that utilized a MANOVA to measure the mean differences between teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores at schools with principals who have different leadership styles. The previous chapter also presented data analysis that employed Spearman's rho to measure the relationship between teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores. The chapter presented descriptive statistics for each study variable; assumption testing that demonstrated the viability of utilizing parametric testing, and data analysis to test each of the research hypotheses.

The purpose of this chapter is to review the findings of the previous chapter and discuss them in light of related literature and the theoretical framework that guided this study. This chapter is divided into the following sections: summary of the findings, discussion and implications, delimitations/limitations/assumptions, recommendations, and conclusion.

Summary of the Findings

Research Hypothesis 1

Research Question 1 asked if there will be a difference between levels of teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores, or a combination of these scores, in elementary schools that have principals with different leadership styles. The researcher hypothesized that significant differences would exist. Pillai's Trace showed that this hypothesis was incorrect because the data showed no statistically significant differences: 0.31, $F(4, 18) = 0.84$, alpha levels were set at .05 ($p < .05$).

Research Hypothesis 2

Research Question 2 asked if there was a statistically significant correlation between teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores in elementary school students. The researcher hypothesized that the correlation between the two variables would be significant. The Spearman's rho correlation statistic showed that this hypothesis was incorrect because the relationship was not statistically significant: $r_s(12) = -.17$, alpha levels were set at .05 ($p < .05$).

Discussion and Implications

As indicated by the results in Table 8, it appears that there is no specific leadership style that will produce higher student achievement, nor does it seem as if leadership style influences teacher morale levels. This was not an expected result because it would seem to be common sense to educators that the style of the school leader and the morale of the teachers have great potential to impact student learning, and therefore student test scores (Burns, 1978; Day et al., 2009). Day et al. (2009) especially predicts that a school with high teacher morale is likely to be a more successful school. Burns' (1978) work on transformational leadership also indicated that excellent leaders would positively impact both instruction and academic results. However, this result indicates that there is no relationship between these variables.

As indicated by the results of Research Hypothesis 2 testing, the morale of a teacher has nothing to do with the success of her students. This was not an expected result; prior to this study, the researcher believed that when a teacher feels well about themselves, their work, their coworkers, and their leadership, their students would benefit in the classroom (Ewton, 2007). Perhaps it is the teachers who are more intelligent and

the most knowledgeable in their subject area that have a statistically significant impact on student achievement (CRCT) rather than teachers who exhibit characteristics of high morale. Perhaps the experience of the teacher and/or the experience of the school principal are more important than teacher morale in regards to test results. This result gives credence to the proponents of education that is skill and results focused and oriented only towards achieving academic results. If teacher morale is irrelevant to test scores, the logical conclusion is for school and district administrators to ignore teacher pleas for more student-oriented schools that value teachers as the point people in driving academic success. Conversely, if motivation, effort, and job satisfaction comprise teacher morale (Huysman, 2008), then teachers do not need to pay any special attention to how motivated they are, how much effort they give, or their level of personal satisfaction with their work.

One of the tenets of the theoretical framework developed for this study stated that every student has the potential to learn if their basic needs are met (Maslow, 1968). Maslow's theory consists of five levels and suggests that individuals each possess a hierarchy of needs. According to this theory, a student's ability to succeed academically depends on their more basic needs first being satisfied; a teacher's ability to perform effectively and professionally would also seem to depend on satisfaction of lower level needs. It was thought that the results would show that individual needs must be satisfied prior to moving up to the next level. The results of this study do not support Maslow's (1968) assertions. Student academic performance, a form of self-actualization, did not depend on their need for support from teachers and principals. Performance, at least in this study, seemed to be unrelated to having a principal who is an effective leader or a

teacher who is comfortable and happy with her job. Similarly, the fundamental needs of security of employment and a sense of belonging did not need to be established in order for the teacher to achieve the higher level needs of self-esteem and confidence. It is possible that because of the tight knit community that surrounds most of the schools, within the northwest Georgia school system, both the teachers and students have their most fundamental needs of security fulfilled through the school and the community. Additionally, it is possible that the teacher's knowledge base, and their ability to convey their knowledge to their students are not affected by their principal or their attitude towards their profession. It is possible that most teachers within this system simply keep their focus on teaching their students and not on how they feel about their principal or the duties that accompany their job.

The second tenet of the theoretical framework developed for this study stated that excellent leadership elevates people and actuates excellence of action in those who report to that leader. Transformational leadership (Burns, 1978) in schools is supposed to empower teachers and raise morale, which in turn creates an atmosphere where learning is more likely to occur. When a school principal is effective it should improve test results within the school (Day et al., 2009). However, this did not prove to be true in this study. Principal leadership style had no bearing, statistically, on either teacher morale or student math scores. This discovery, once again, could be a result of teacher autonomy: the teacher staying focused on teaching their students and not concerning themselves with the leadership style of their principal or the challenges of being a teacher. There were also two leadership styles that were not represented by any of the twelve elementary schools that participated in the study. It is possible that teachers who work for principals with

either of the two leadership styles not represented in this study (Challenge the Process and Encourage the Heart) would have a higher level of morale and, in turn, have an increase in fifth grade math CRCT scores.

The third tenet of the theoretical framework developed for this study stated that a behavior is likely to reoccur if that behavior is reinforced (Skinner, 1938). The use of positive reinforcement is utilized by principals to motivate teachers so that desired behaviors result. It is also used by teachers to motivate students so that higher grades and test scores result. Even though most research suggests that Skinner's reinforcement theory improves the performance of subordinates (Miltenberger, 2004), such reinforcement would produce negligible results, according to this study's findings. It is possible, however, that the reinforcement could be unsubstantiated and taken as mean of pacification instead of sincere appreciation. This type of positive reinforcement, although initiated with good intention, can also cause jealousy and animosity among staff. Honest feedback (positive or negative) comes from extended periods of time spent in the classroom by the school's administration. Unfortunately, this type of time is often impractical due to the multiple duties and responsibilities of the administration.

Limitations

Limitations exist in this study because of weaknesses in the research methodology, design, analysis, and sample. There are certain limitations that apply to every MANOVA study and every correlational study. There are also limitations that apply specifically to this research, and those are explained in this section as well.

Limitations Due to Study Design

The sample for this study was not random. The participants were chosen based on the convenience and locations of potential participants. This may have inadvertently caused bias in the research design. While no particular control was put in place to limit the effects of a lack of randomization bias, the sample did include a representative demographic of principals, teachers, and students from the target county (See Table 1).

MANOVA tests are valuable statistical analysis tools because they have the ability to pinpoint differences between groups that are caused by multiple independent variables. However, there are limitations to MANOVA that are significant enough to mention. First, it is especially sensitive to normality problems caused by the presence of outliers (Green & Salkind, 2011). The control for this limitation is to identify and eliminate outliers, which was not necessary in this study since no outliers were present. MANOVA is also susceptible to distortions in data if the within-group covariance matrices are unequal. The researcher controlled for this limitation by using Pillai's Trace (as opposed to more commonly used MANOVA tests) to test the hypothesis, which is far less sensitive to unequal within-group covariances.

Correlational studies are valuable in that they show that one variable is either related, or not related, to another variable. Correlation analyses also provide the strength of relationship between two variables. However, correlation is not an indicator of causation (Ary et al., 2006; Tabachnik & Fidell, 2001). One cannot say that one variable causes another variable just because they are correlated. For example, if teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores had been found to be correlated by this study, it would not have indicated that a variation in teacher morale caused the CRCT fifth grade math

scores to go up or down proportionally, only that the two variables were related. No control was needed to rectify this situation because causation was not stated or implied in the study, only correlation.

Limitations Due to Study Instrumentation and Analysis

The use of Spearman's rho instead of Pearson's r increases the likelihood of a Type I error (the null hypothesis is true, but it is rejected). The research planned to control for Type I errors by using a corrected significance level called the Bonferroni approach. However, this was not necessary as the correlation was not even significant without using Bonferroni (Green & Salkind, 2011).

The CRCT is a criterion-referenced test which means that the test covers subject and grade materials specific to Georgia Professional Standards (GPS) and not material that measures instruction taught throughout the United States (GADOE, 2013).

The instrument used to measure teacher morale for this study (PTO) is over 40 years old. The age of this instrument could increase the probability of inaccurately predicting teacher morale levels.

The instrument used to quantify leadership style is a *snapshot* of how the teachers at each school view their principal at that particular moment in time. Depending upon the situations and environments at each of the 12 schools at the time the LPI was offered, the results could provide a falsely identified leadership style. It is also possible that the classification of leadership style could be faulty as the principal style may be more of a result of implemented policy and practices directed from central office administration rather than actual leader beliefs and actions.

Implications

Three major implications may be drawn from the results of this research. These implications lead naturally to practical applications that apply to elementary schools in general:

- School principals should not be hired based on their leadership style. District administrators should seek out principals who have a record of getting teachers and students to produce high test scores. No particular leadership style should be favored, as a matter of hiring practice, by district search committees and interview teams.
- Principals should place math teachers where they are most likely to achieve the best results and help the most students' master content and become proficient on state-level testing. How these actions influence teacher morale should play a small, if any, role in teacher assignments.
- Teacher morale should not be the determining factor for teacher hiring or teacher placement. Other factors such as content knowledge, years of experience, and past test score results should be considered.

Jandaghi, Matin, and Farjami (2009) found that transformational leadership is a successful type of leadership in the business world. Their studies showed that companies that used this type of leadership typically had higher levels of success than companies that employed other leadership styles. For this study, the LPI quantified principal leadership style into one of five Transformational leadership styles. While this type of leadership has been linked to success in business, this study suggests that the leadership style is not as important as other factors when selecting a school leader.

While there are many factors that have an effect on teacher morale, Young (1998) and Huysman (2008) both agree that most factors impacting teacher morale are out of the control of the teacher. This study provides evidence that although high levels of morale in a school may be important to the school culture (Finger, 2005), it is not a result of any particular leadership style.

While Ramsey (2000) stated that there seems to be a strong relationship between teacher morale and student achievement, this study provides evidence to the contrary. Morale levels of teachers do not have an effect on student performance in mathematics, nor is morale related to a specific type of leadership in place at the elementary school level. Other areas such as years of experience, content knowledge, and previous student performance might prove to be more beneficial when hiring teachers and school leaders.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research attempted to quantify the relationships between three variables: principal leadership style, teacher morale, and CRCT fifth grade math scores. However, in the course of conducting this research, several research needs related to this study became apparent. Recommendations for future research includes ways to extend the current study, as well as ideas for entirely separate investigations that are now necessary because of gaps, weaknesses, or interesting revelations identified during this study.

The study should be repeated with students from different grade levels. It is equally important to learn the impact of leadership style and teacher morale on middle school and high school students as it was to learn that information with elementary school students. A researcher could also repeat this study with K-12 students to gain a more comprehensive look at the issues raised by this study.

This study could be repeated using the CRCT scores from different subject areas. Perhaps the results would be different for both research questions if other areas were investigated besides mathematics.

It would be interesting to replicate this research in different geographical areas and compare the results. Questions about the impact of principal leadership style and teacher morale on test scores exist in all regions of the United States, so a researcher could find a new location to conduct a similar research study.

Future research could include an examination of the leadership styles of principals who lead schools with high CRCT scores to see if there is a correlation between principal leadership styles and CRCT scores in those schools. If so, a similar study could be conducted that compares the leadership styles of principals at schools that produced high CRCT scores with schools that produced low CRCT scores.

Future studies could examine the relationship between principal leadership and teacher morale and the graduation rate at the high school level. Whether certain leadership styles lead to an increase in graduation percentage or not would be an especially important question in the present era, when education focuses so strongly on college and career readiness.

Finally, it may be beneficial for future studies to determine if there is a relationship between principal leadership style and CRCT fifth grade math scores at schools where the principals exhibit the two types of leadership that were not practiced by any of this study's participants. It may be found that those two types of leadership influence teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores, but the three tested in this study do not.

Conclusion

Overall, the findings from this study provide valuable insight into leadership styles, teacher morale, and student performance. No significant relationship was found between teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores. The findings in this study present evidence that teacher morale has no effect on student performance. This information will be valuable to the school system looking to increase student performance by guiding their search towards a well-balanced candidate rather than the professional interests and enthusiasms of a potential teacher (Willis & Varner, 2010). Additionally, the study found no significant differences between teacher morale and CRCT fifth grade math scores across different principal leadership styles. The findings suggest that principal leadership style does not play much of a role in teacher morale or student academic performance. Finger (2005) noted that there are multiple combinations of factors that have an effect on teacher morale, and while principal leadership style is a part of the equation, this study suggest that leadership alone does not have an effect on teacher morale. Likewise, the study also provided a factual basis that principal leadership style has no impact on student achievement.

The pertinent information presented in this study is essential for district administrators in determining principal placement and teacher assignments, as well as pedagogical techniques within their schools.

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APPENDIX A. EMAIL TO TEACHERS

Hello fellow educators,

My name is Dan Webb and I am a doctoral candidate pursuing my Ed.D. in Educational Leadership at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia. My study will examine principal leadership styles and teacher morale at the elementary school level. Additionally, the study will compare 5th grade CRCT scores to principal leadership styles and teacher morale.

You have been selected to participate in my study by completing two different surveys: The Leadership Practices Inventory and The Purdue Teacher Opinionaire. Both surveys will be administered online and will be confidential and all participants will be kept strictly anonymous.

Please note that participation is voluntary.

Should you choose to participate in this study, please click on the following links. The links will direct you to both online surveys that can be completed at your convenience.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me: 770-608-5525 or dowebb@liberty.edu.

Thank you for your consideration for participation in this study.

Dan Webb
770-608-XXXX

APPENDIX B. IRB PERMISSION LETTER



The Graduate School at Liberty University

May 6, 2013

Daniel O. Webb
IRB Exemption 1597.050613: The Relationship of Principal Leadership and Teacher Morale Among the
Elementary Schools of a Northwest Georgia School District

Dear Daniel,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and that no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101 (b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:

- (2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:
 - (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and
 - (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and that any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption, or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Please retain this letter for your records. Also, if you are conducting research as part of the requirements for a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, this approval letter should be included as an appendix to your completed thesis or dissertation.

Sincerely,



Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.
Professor, IRB Chair
Counseling

(434) 592-4054



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APPENDIX C. LPI LETTER DELIVERY

Dear _____,

Welcome to LPI Online. Daniel Webb has created a new LPI 360 assessment for you.

This is a tool that will measure your leadership behaviors and contribute to your development as a Leader.

To begin, click the link below, and then register:

Please do not forward this link to any other participants.

Due Date: May 24, 2013

After registering, please click on "Start Assessment" under the LPI 360 heading to complete your self-assessment. If your administrator is requiring that you add Observers to evaluate you, please do so by clicking on "Manage Observers".

Questions about taking the assessment?

Please contact your Administrator: Daniel Webb.

Technical Issues? Please contact tech support at:

Please do not reply to this email. It is an automated mailbox.