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December 2014

HOW DO PRINCIPALS AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS DIFFER IN THEIR
BELIEFS REGARDING THE CHARACTERISTICS AND CULTURE OF A GOOD
SCHOOL

A Doctoral Thesis Presented to the
Faculty of the College of Education
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education
in Professional Leadership

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December 2014

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this study to Kynedi Madison Brooks and Jackson Keith Brooks.

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I would like to acknowledge my village who made this possible.

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Abstract

Culture plays a significant role in promoting student achievement in schools, and it has the ability to support or sabotage not only student success but also quality professional learning and is the basis for school improvement (Schein, 1996; Saphier & King, 1985; Landry, 2012). In order to establish and maintain the culture of a school, the principal and assistant principal must share core beliefs of an effective school and healthy school culture. When the principal of the school is absent or unavailable, the assistant principal assumes the leadership role for the campus. Misalignment between their beliefs of the mission and vision of the school can create dissonance, which can lead to a climate and culture of disarray. The perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding what constitutes a good school and the culture that contributes to a good school are pivotal to sustain a healthy learning environment for teachers and students. This study compared the perceptions of 311 principals and 371 assistant principals regarding the characteristics and culture necessary for a good school to succeed. The administrators that were surveyed are in the Gulf Coast Region of Southeast Texas and the data is archival in nature. The principals and assistant principals were given surveys and participated in interviews to examine their perceptions of the culture and characteristics of a good school. Themes and categories were identified by two different researchers as major indicators of a good school. This study will answer two research questions: 1. Do differences exist in the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding the characteristics of a good school?; and 2. Do differences exist in the perceptions of

principals and assistant principals regarding the culture of a good school?. With the use of archival data, the study examined themes/categories as described in previous studies and was able to answer the research questions. The findings in this study indicate there are differences that exist in the perceptions of principal and assistant principals regarding the characteristics of a good school and the culture of a good school. The differences in the perception concerning the characteristics of a good school were first identified in the categories that were identified from the responses of the principals and assistant principals. Principals' descriptors included Academic Focus and Student Centered while assistant principals included Student Achievement and Students Discipline. The categories that were similar accounted for at least 50% of the responses given by both administrators. Regarding the perception of the administrators to the culture of a good school, the data reports show at least 65% of the responses of the principals and assistant principals are in agreement. The differences exist within Academic Focus and Student Achievement; only 35% of the responses for principals are in agreement and only 34% for assistant principals are in agreement respectively. These themes were not in the categories of each administrator.

The need for assistant principal programs and administrator training to improve is noted. Recommendations include university preparation programs to address the importance of the culture of a school and the importance of fostering a positive climate and culture; leadership skills training for first time administrators; field experience for assistant principals as principals; teaching assistant principals and principals to recognize the autonomy of their followers; transformational leadership; collaboration implementation; and building capacity in assistant principals.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1	1
Introduction.....	1
Purpose of the Study and Statement of Problem	2
Research Questions.....	3
Significance of the Study	3
Definition of Terms.....	5
Limitations of the Study.....	6
Research Design.....	6
Chapter 2.....	8
Literature Review.....	8
Leadership Evolution: The Role of Principal and Assistant Principal	21
Culture and Leadership	32
Climate and Leadership	35
Perception and Self Perception	38
Characteristics of Effective Administrators in Education	42
Barriers to Effective Leadership in Education.....	51
The Difference between Effective & Ineffective Principals.....	54
Principal and Assistant Principal and Teachers Relationship.....	56
Turnaround Leadership.....	57
Summary	61
Chapter 3.....	63
Methodology	63
Research Questions.....	64
Research Philosophy.....	64
Participants.....	65
Research Design.....	67
Instruments.....	67
Data Collection	68
Data Analysis	69
Chapter 4.....	71
Results.....	71
Research Question One.....	71
Research Question Two	75
Summary	79
Chapter 5.....	80
Conclusions and Recommendations	80
Research Question One.....	82
Research Question Two	83
Implications.....	85
Suggestions for Further Research	86

Summary	87
References	88
Appendix A	110
Appendix B	111

List of Tables

Table 3-1 Frequency of Participants' Gender	66
Table 3-2 Frequency of Participants' Ethnicity.....	66
Table 4-1 Frequency of Principals' Descriptions of a Good School for Combined Categories (N=311).....	73
Table 4-2 Frequency of Assistant Principals' Descriptions of a Good School Combined Categories (N=371).....	73
Table 4-3 Percent of Principals and Assistant Principals Descriptions of a Good School	75
Table 4-4 Frequency of Principals' Descriptors of the Culture of a Good School for Combined Categories (N=445)	77
Table 4-5 Frequency of Assistant Principals' Descriptions of the Culture of a Good School in Combined Categories (N=371).....	77
Table 4-6 Percent of Responses Regarding Descriptors of the Culture of a Good School	79

Chapter 1

Introduction

According to the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) (2011), the study of principal's and assistant principal's perception is crucial because having an effective principal leading is critical to creating an effective school. Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Whalstrom (2004) also agreed that school leadership is a key component to students having a positive academic experience. Having an effective principal leading every school is critical to ensure that schools are effective (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2003). As it pertains to the principal's predecessor, the assistant principal, it is well documented that there is a misalignment between assistant principal training and his or her future role as a principal (Bartlett, 2011; Fields, 2002; Goodson, 2000; Hartzell, 1993; Koru, 1993; Madden, 2008; Marshall, 1992; Mertz, 2000).

The purpose of this study was to examine the themes derived from the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding the characteristics and culture of a good school. This study analyzed their perceptions to guide principal preparation programs prior to and during a principalship to encourage continued growth of administrators. There is much to be said about organizational structure and culture. Interestingly, analysts agree "that the organizational design and culture of schools can either enhance or hinder their effectiveness" (Hawley & Rollie, 2002, p. vii). Within this study, the views of both assistant principals and principals were revealed and analyzed. If principals' and assistant principals' views showed a large disparity, then this too showed or lead to ineffective leadership. This study can, with further research, speak to collaboration, teamwork, connecting with colleagues, and building trust within the administration of a school. The

goal of this study included opening the eyes and minds of principals and assistant principals to connect on a higher level than they have in the past. This study has the potential to help principals and assistant principals create a culture that will facilitate the creation of goals for their administrative team to be like-minded when they are in their school and conducting school business. Thus, it is important to note for principals and assistant principals “that paying attention to culture [is] the most important action that a leader can perform” (MacNeil, p.73, 2009).

Purpose of the Study and Statement of Problem

The purpose of this study was to examine the themes derived from the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding the characteristic and culture of a good school. Most educators would agree that all students can learn; however, some instructional practices and negative cultures and climates currently in practice in our nation’s schools do not support this idea (Thacker, Bell, & Schargel, 2009). Principals share their idea of what they believe to be the characteristics and culture of a good school, but so many times the assistant principal’s views are not taken into account. Weller and Weller (as cited in Harris & Lowery, 2004) support this idea when they state, “One of the ‘least researched’ and ‘least discussed’ roles in educational leadership is that of the assistant principal” (p. xiii). One of the major roles of an assistant principal is to carry out the principal’s vision. This study reveals to principals and assistant principals that there must be a consensus of shared beliefs between other principals and assistant principals in order for schools to be effective. When information is shared and looked at in different ways, advancements in education can be made. Collaboration creates synergies by cooperation, and the researchers achieve more by working together (Stacey,

2014). Effective leaders collaborate, but if they choose not to come together, the result can be devastating. Schools are not as successful in the absence of an effective leader. Peer into a failing school and you will find weak leadership (Leithwood, 1994). Since leadership is critical to school reform and is second only to school-related factors in its impact on student learning, educational leaders must understand the important role they play in impacting positive climates and achievement oriented cultures (Leithwood et al., 2004; Gonder & Hymes, 1994).

Research Questions

The core reason and purpose of conducting this study was to examine the themes derived from the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding the characteristics and culture of a good school. The study of principal's and assistant principal's perception was crucial, and according to McRel (2011), having an effective principal leading a campus is critical to creating an effective school. The research questions considered are listed below:

1. Do differences exist in the perceptions of the principal and assistant principals regarding the characteristics of a good school?
2. Do differences exist in the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding the culture of a good school?

Significance of the Study

Working together takes on many forms and facets, which can create shared visions to move an organization forward. According to Julia Stacey (2012) in a news article in the School of Business and Social Sciences at Aarhus University, one of the study's findings revealed distributed management yields better results. Distributed

management refers to the interplay between the management team and employee involvement (Stacey, 2012). This approach could yield better results in a school from climate and culture to instruction, and to other areas, which contribute to the forming of a good school, while unearthing the ideas and perceptions of the assistant principal to the principal. The term “good school” applies differently in distinct social or ethnic backgrounds but has a general meaning in professional terms. The significance of this study was to examine themes of a good school according to the perceptions of principals and assistant principals. Building capacity in assistant principals to make decisions that affect the school’s climate and culture is significant and necessary.

The study of the principal’s and assistant principal’s perceptions was crucial because having an effective principal leading is critical to creating an effective school (McRel, 2011). Leithwood et al. (2004) also agreed that school leadership is a key component to students having a positive academic experience. Having an effective principal leading every school is critical to ensure that schools are effective (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2003). As it pertains to the principal’s successor, it is well documented that there is a misalignment between assistant principal training and their future role as a principal (Bartlett, 2011; Fields, 2002; Goodson, 2000; Hartzell, 1993; Koru, 1993; Madden, 2008; Marshall, 1992; Mertz, 2000). This study aids in the building of a pipeline for effective principals who are currently assistant principals. This second tier of campus leadership has the ability to positively affect a school or sabotage a school from becoming a good school. Studying forms of school leadership can lead to a definition of the term “good school”. According to Scheerens (2012), leadership structure is an essential element that determines performance and behaviors of a school. Wilmore

(2012) asserted that transformational leadership is important to a school towards realization of positive behaviors and overall good school climate and culture. Another significance of this study is to reiterate the importance of shared vision and beliefs between the principal and assistant principal. Therefore, there is a strong relationship between school culture, climate, leadership, and the excellence attributed a school (Hallinger & Heck 1998). School's culture refers to prevailing norms and practices that stakeholders ascribe, while climate refers to the fundamental practices and norms of an institution. Hoy and DiPaola (2011) asserted that studying school culture and climate leads to a realization of the necessary leadership styles applicable to an organization. This fact reveals the existence of a strong alignment between culture, climate, and leadership, helps in realizing the name, "good schools". Thus, the significance of this research is bonded in analyzing fundamental factors that influence the performance of schools, and the general term of a "good school". Subsequent sections will provide scholarly reviews on these three elements as they directly contribute to school's performance. A school's performance is traditionally measured by data. Collaboration or lack of collaboration can affect the performance of a school. Collaboration has proven to be one of the most important parts of any organization. Collaboration creates synergies by cooperation and the researchers achieve more by working together (Stacey, 2014).

Definition of Terms

Distributed Management- the interplay between management and employee involvement (Stacey, 2014).

Assistant Principal- the person(s) who assists the principal in the day-to-day operation of the school.

Culture- deep patterns of beliefs, traditions, and values that have been formed over a school's history (Deal & Peterson, 2002).

Principal- the person who is responsible for an entire school, including all activities and persons who visit the school.

Effective/Good School- School where all students learn. Edmonds (1982) wrote the correlates that are prevalent in effective schools include: 1) strong educational leadership; 2) high expectations; 3) emphasis on basic skills; 4) Safe and orderly climate; and 5) frequent evaluation of student progress on achievement.

Limitations of the Study

The graduate students were allowed to choose from four administrators to interview. The number of principals and assistant principals who declined to participate in the study was not reported. The surveys were given exclusively to administrators and expected to obtain their perceptions regarding school culture. The collection, possible errors in coding, and the transferring of data from researcher to researcher can present a limitation.

Research Design

The research design for this study involved examining the perceptions of 311 principals and 371 assistant principals. The original research employed a cross-sectional, cognitive interview design and targeted subjects who were currently serving as principals and assistant principals in Texas (Williams, 2011; Landry, 2012). The open-ended questions in the culture section of the survey were analyzed for common themes. Williams (2011) and Landry (2012) both used qualitative coding techniques to identify the themes contained in the perceptual responses. Themes represented in the studies

conducted by Williams (2011) and Landry (2012) were analyzed for the purposes of this study. This study used Section B of the original survey instrument. Section B of the survey specifically asks principals and assistant principals to give their perceptions of what makes a good school and how would they describe the culture of a good school. The current researcher examined the themes derived from the perceptions of principals and assistant principals reported by Williams (2001) and Landry (2002). The researcher then identified the similarities and differences in the frequency of responses categorized by the themes derived from the perceptions of the principals and assistant principals. The researcher reported the results of the analysis in chapter 4 and 5 of this study.

Organization of the Study

This study is comprised of five chapters. Chapter One is composed of an introduction to the study, the significance, the problem, and the purpose of this study. The research questions are also identified in Chapter One. Chapter Two of the study reports the current and historical literature as it pertains to good schools, culture and climate, perceptions, and varying parts of leadership. Chapter Three reveals the method of conducting this study and outlines the who, what, when, and how of this study. Chapter Four delineates the actual results that were analyzed from two other studies. Charts are used in Chapter Four to show the quantities and frequency of responses by the principals and assistant principals. Finally in Chapter Five, the researcher interprets the data within the confines of the research question. Then the researcher shared opinions and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter presents the theories and research studies on the subject area and sets a ground for primary research. This chapter critically analyzes the topic of study and explores the opinions of other researchers and theorists. The chapter begins with an explanation of what researchers refer to as “good schools”. The chapter then moves on to explain the reasons climate and culture of an organization are so important. The chapter also discusses what the research says about the importance of effective leadership. In addition, the strong connection between the way principals interact with teachers, community, and upper administration and their effect on school climate and influences on school culture is discussed. Essentially, the literature will show school climate and culture influences overall student achievement. A series of correlational studies have shown school climate is directly related to academic achievement in high schools (Lee & Bryk, 1998; Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg 1998; Stewart, 2008).

Good Schools

While other studies have delineated school climate is correlated to student achievement, Sergiovanni (1984) believes good schools develop a love of learning for students, promote critical thinking and problem solving skills, contain aesthetic appreciation, curiosity, creativity, and interpersonal competence. These characteristics written above described by Sergiovanni are included in what makes a positive school climate. There are critical scholarly approaches that describe constitution and composition of good schools, and how these schools have manifested their performances

in many years. In the first part, knowledge of good schools is bonded in the scholarly reviews to follow.

According to Gray and Streshly (2010), good schools derive their names from the perfect management and discipline instilled by the authority. The authors commend the administrative staff of the schools to its good name. Therefore, good schools enjoy viable and formidable administrative frameworks, which in turn translate to its good name. It is therefore a matter of performance, which comes as a result of firm management and administration. Another school of thought suggests good schools are not just rated by standardized test and empowering students to perform well, but teaching and learning occur at high cognitive levels and the social and emotional needs of all stakeholders are met (Sergiovanni, 2001; Hudson, 2009).

Leadership ideals begin within the principal's office through his or her assistant principals, teachers and are translated to the student body. In this context, the author attributes good schools to performance-oriented principals (Repo, 2013). Indeed, principals owe their success to the high performance of schools. In this context, the characteristics of a good school relates to good/effective leadership and authority. An institutional framework that follows a conventional leadership style generates success to a school. Gray and Streshly (2010) reiterate that the success of the school is equally embodied through communication trends upheld in a school. The second characteristic of a good school is that it promotes effective communication within its structure Gray and Streshly (2010). Communication is considered the benchmark behind every successful organization. These authors distinctively remark that effective communication is an anchor to success of schools. For example, effective communication ensures that the

duplication of duties, which leads to unnecessary delays, is eliminated while success is administered in schools. In addition, effective communication leads to a timely completion of duties thereby eliminating backload that would otherwise derail much needed progress to the organization (Silver, 2013). Thus, effective communication is one of the fundamental pillars of good schools.

Obiakor (2011) redefines good schools in the context of classroom identification and referrals, classroom placement and inclusion, classroom label, and accountabilities. In this case, success of the school is fully embodied through facts attributed to classroom efficiency and success. Principally, behavioral and academic performance experienced in classrooms is reflective of the leadership trends administered in the entire institution. Obiakor narrows down the “good” name attached to a school to be a good match in classroom excellence. For example, Obiakor says, students whose overall classroom performances have been impressive and consistent are reminiscent of effective leadership and good schools models. In addition, the author considers good schools as places where the potential of every student is nurtured and rejuvenated. Value addition in the performance of students is yet another consideration of a good school.

Fink (2010) attributes good school to the progressive institutionalism and excellence. According to Fink (2010), school improvement efforts, particularly large-scale government-tendered projects, have been the mastermind behind the success of most schools today. Change begins with the adoption of a formidable structure that steers leadership in the right direction aimed at achieving success and excellence. In this context, the author argues that good schools derive this term out of the concerted efforts of ideal project implementation. This is the basis that good schools come into operation

and receive national and international fame. It is most important that such schools are associated with articulate policy implementation. On the other hand, people who resist change have virtually derailed efforts of applying success and enhanced performances in such schools. In addition, the most significant results are improved student performance and site-based management at the administrative levels. Three things are considered to be behind excellence of certain schools: practice, research, and policy implementation.

Ungoed (2012) links characteristics of high-performing schools to a supportive environment. The society is one of the key stakeholders of the school and forms the immediate surrounding upon which boards are constituted. The author states that a supportive society allows smooth running of the school and hence enhanced student performance. High-performing schools are thus guided by clear visions and goals. The goals of the school are derived from its foundational aspirations and spirits, which are derived from society. Achieving these visions require visionary leadership through popular societal involvement. This is yet another point that emphasizes critical view of high-performing school in the society. Indeed, the relationship between the society and the school correlates to its overall performance. Ungoed (2012) highly considers the sake of the society in steering discipline and performance to school. Indeed, discipline is directly congruent to academic performance, and this aspect unfolds from a visionary society and leadership trends (Clewel, Campbell, & Perlman, 2011). A healthy relationship between schools and society contributes to academic excellence in the school. In addition, students become disciplined in the school if the society fully endorses the efforts of teachers. Therefore, the interactive practices between school administration and society translate to excellence in students of high-performing schools. In this regard,

high-performance is an endorsement of the interactive process between school and society. In addition, society plays a crucial role in administering discipline by instilling strict guidelines to their children at home, and this considerably influences performance in schools.

Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, a sociologist, education researcher, and a professor at Harvard's Graduate School of Education provides insight into the high school system in her book, *The Good High School*. The text offers its readers portraits of six schools known for their excellence in varied settings (English, 2000). They include a pair of each type of school: private, suburban, and urban. Lightfoot has sought to give a description of schools as cultural organizations and reveals the intrinsic values that steered their decision-making and structures (English, 2000). Lightfoot has done exceptionally well in how she describes the schools and uncovers the complications of leadership in the institutions. But she has also challenged the normative education frameworks and becomes the stepping-stone for flexibility in the future research projects on education (English, 2000).

Being a talented storyteller, she manages to paint two portraits of a number of high schools that she has visited in the past years between 1979 and 1982. Through the portraits crafted, Lightfoot (1983) says that the portraits are “unencumbered by theoretical frames or the rigid perspectives” (p. 9). On that basis, readers are capable in learning the operations of every institution and the specific challenges facing each institution within the economic and social contexts. Through the portraiture, one can see plenty of flexibility from the stiff research designs of the traditional anthropological and sociological research methods (Hackmann, 2002). They also permit a wealth of

storytelling and one's ability to situate in a given text. In a bid to achieve her research goal on comprehending the institutional decision-making, the author centres on the school leaders she came across (Hackmann, 2002). She depicts the educational leaders in three dimensions in a painstaking manner and heightened by colourful details concerning the schools and the towns where the schools are located. The significant variables include racial demographics, socioeconomic status, and the school's status in relation to other similar schools (Hackmann, 2002). For instance, Lightfoot gives a vivid description of Riverdale residents as follows: "The inhabitants of the hill tend to describe themselves as upper-middle-class, although many find that the recent surge of inflation has deprived them of some of the most precious worldly pleasures they must choose between a trip to the Bahamas during the winter months and a series of Broadway theatre tickets and the high costs of college tuitions has caused many to be burdened by enormous loans" (Lightfoot, 1983, p. 57). Based on the illustration, she presents her strength in giving a vivid description of the complexities engulfing the middle-class.

According to Cusick (1984), in his review of Lightfoot, he posts portraits of six different secondary schools. The schools were different from each other with one being black and poor, one is exclusive wealthy, and the rest vary and in proximity to large cities. The verbal portrayal is a bit of art presented by Lightfoot, and her ultimate goal is pegged on presenting schools from a generous and critical perspective (Cusick, 1984). Furthermore, she counterbalances the propensities toward negativism. She fails to present the thesis concerning the 'good school,' neither does she provide an abstracted design of good schools (Cusick, 1984). Cusick (1984) critiques the conclusion that he deems was more based on the contrasts and comparisons among the schools with the summary

observations being fairly ordinary. For instance, she says, “Good schools are places where students are seen as worthy of respect” (Lightfoot, 1983, p. 350).

Lightfoot emerges as a welcome reprieve from a host of gloomy reports concerning American education. Her desire to center on goodness sets an overlooked direction in numerous assessments. While many assessments were overlooked, the implied recommendations to link the mission of the high schools to produce a skilled labor force were not dismissed (Hackmann, 2002). This should be coupled with the sense of maintaining law and order as well as preserving national security. Lightfoot (1983) inexplicitly asks the kind of society that would come from schooling that enhances and features goodness that is not subservient to other purposes (Hackmann, 2002). Lightfoot (1983) accurately and vividly portrays six high schools to investigate their level of goodness. Goodness, according to Lightfoot (1983) is defined as the quality of the schools and the dynamism that is immeasurable by one effectiveness indicator (Hackmann, 2002). Lightfoot (1983) produces portraits of the schools she deems effective. She focuses on two inner-city schools – John F. Kennedy High School in Bronx and George Washington Carver High School in Atlanta (Hackmann, 2002).

Two suburban and upper-middle-class schools are Brookline High School in Massachusetts and Highland Park High School in Chicago. Lastly, the two elite preparatory schools are Milton Academy, close to Boston and St. Paul’s High School in Concord, New Hampshire. From her conclusions, Lightfoot seeks serious reflection and reading (Bolin, 1984). Denying the negative, the kind of absolutist tone with which she criticizes the schools offers her suggestion that high schools need to shape their images according to the realistic standard of a school deemed to be ‘good enough’ (Bolin, 1984).

She suggests that it should not be about setting of minimum requirements, but through recognizing as well as addressing the uncertainties, vulnerabilities, and imperfections (Bolin, 1984). Lightfoot (1983) cautiously notes the prize of visible ideological perspective and also confirms that there is a need for a sturdy and regular leadership that offers order and allows effective teachers to thrive (Bolin, 1984). Lightfoot asserts that good high schools have students that are accountable and visible and the members of the staff are consistently vigilant in fear of them being lost (Bolin, 1984).

Lightfoot (1983) sets out to correct three significant flaws that she thought had plagued other studies in most schools. They include the tendencies toward autobiography, negativism, and theoretical abstraction. Her purpose seems to have been portraying life drawings of actual schools through action (English, 2000). Her inquiry starts by investigating what works best, identifying the good schools, examining what is right and whether what is deemed right can be replicated or transported to other areas. Initially, Lightfoot searched for what she perceived to be goodness (Hackmann, 2002). The so-called exemplary schools that may tell the readers about the different definitions of success in education and how that can be realized. The author underscores the open-minded and qualitative nature of her approach. She has not tried to be so rigid with her research agenda, neither has she put any effort in preparing classical, systematic research, but rather efforts to gather descriptive data about school (Hackmann, 2002). She shows her clear intention of the portraits to be generous and critical; thus, permitting subjects to reveal their numerous dimensions and strengths. She also emphasizes that there is no single objective or dominant truth for her to see. Rather, the truth seems to lie in the

conglomeration of varied perspectives and is only approachable through complex, holistic, and contextual explanations of reality (Hackmann, 2002).

She acknowledges that not even good schools have the best teachers.

Nevertheless, what makes the schools good is the fact that they have a good share of above-average teachers and lesser poor ones compared to lesser schools. In other words, Lightfoot deems good schools as those that have more than their share of above-average teachers compared to other schools. In addition, she deems good schools as those that can motivate their teachers owing to the fact that they are the main actors in the process of providing the perfect learning environment.

Based on these scholarly reviews and the researchers in this literature review, good schools derive their names from high-performance platform that encourages excellence high structure of discipline, schools that are simply good enough as stated by Sara Lightfoot (1983). In addition, the teachers, parents, and society have significant roles in contributing to the success of students. What remains factual is that administrative platform, its interaction with society, and the ratio of average teachers to poor teachers being greater than the contrary promotes excellence and high performance. This is the dimension in which good schools have come to existence and champion their leads. Setting a clear vision, and steering efforts towards these objectives lead to success, high performance and positive climate and culture in a school.

Climate and Culture

Ballantine and Spade (2011) state that every school has its individual culture that embodies its own set of norms, values, and beliefs. Therefore, institutional culture is directly derived from these social predisposition and impacts on the school's

performance. The authors equally state that each and every school has a distinctively though overlapping climates that exist for students, staffs and the faculty respectively. It is thus imperative to note that culture and climate operate interchangeably, and neither can work in isolation. In addition, the culture of the school is built on predisposed policies and practices, which considerably influence on the overall behaviors in the school. For instance, the way students, staffs and faculty behave is a reminiscent of the institutional foundational culture and climate. School climates play significant role in modifying behaviors and thinking of students to positive behaviors and to build a strong institution blended with positive values. The key determinant here is the value creation as a result of adopting certain sets of cultural and climatic norms.

Gonder and Hymes (2013) state that school culture and climate are the key matrices that determine schools performance and learning processes. Therefore, most institutions strive to achieve good image by creating strong pillars of climatic and cultural trends. Just like Ballantine and Spade (2011), Gonder and Hymes (2013) share similar opinions concerning the impacts of culture in fostering good behaviors and general best practices among different stakeholders of the school. In summary, school climate and culture are the key constructs that contribute to the performance and quality learning in schools. In this context, good performance is enhanced in an environment where discipline and positive culture and climate have higher prevalence rates. Gupton (2013) says that building a positive school culture supportive of students' achievement is a complex and multifaceted, but is an essential, fundamental part of instructional leadership. Gupton (2013) defines school culture as beliefs and expectations apparent in the school's daily routine, including how colleagues interact with each other. Therefore,

prevailing culture determines how various groups of people interact in school and the value of such interactions to the overall school's performance. In addition, many factors associated with excellence and performances have to do with the kind of culture applicable in school. Culture comprises of many variables, which dictate conducts of people within the school institution. For example, the way a student interact with his or her colleagues is reflective of the predominant school culture which outlines such practices. On the contrary, a school which lacks clear moral and value predisposition suffers immense tribulations, since it lacks the prerequisite attributes required for positive behaviors conducts.

Gamage (2012) states that the school climate is the heart and soul of the school. In this regards, the author reiterates that school climate is the fundamental factors that create the essence to student, staffs, and other faculty heads to love cherish and stay in the school, the next day. What keep people attracted to the school is its prevailing climatic conditions. In the ordinary sense, positive climate attracts people to school and vice versa where negative climate prevails. This is one fundamental impacts of positive climate to a school and how it plays positive roles to the good name of the school. On the contrary, a school exhibiting negative culture lacks the moral sense to steer positive climatic conditions, but instead breeds negative culture and general hatred for school (Benbenisti, & Astor, 2010). Prevailing school climate can leads to the development of resilience or become a risk factor to people who learn and stay in the school. On the other hand, culture affects the students through the norms that drive behaviors in a school environment, while climate is reflective of the impacts of the environment in their lives.

According to Hoy and DiPaol (2013), institutional climate and culture are key facets of school improvement and development. The two authors attribute these two terms to the student's personal behaviors. Therefore, culture dictate behavioral nature to students and instructors and this shape the learning environment accordingly. Based on the predisposed literature of the term climate, Hoy and DiPaola (2013) use the term climate in defining educators' perception of their work environment, formal and informal structures, and the prevailing social relationships. In addition, school climate is considered as the individuals' perceptions of the prior established setting, which can be measured empirically. Principally, school climate determines work ethics among other attributes in the work environments both internally and externally (Glanz, 2006). Here, both internal and external environment have significant influence on the school culture. For instance, good schools are attributed to a positive climate, which is built by both internal and external parameters. Despite this general statement, there are varied inconsistency concerning the definition and application of climate and culture. There are schools of thought that climate and culture are derived from each other while others strongly agitate this claim. However, most scholarly review have linked positive school's climate to strong cultural platforms. Therefore, the way institution responds to various progressive issues is reminiscent in the cultural portfolio it undertakes alongside climatic variables.

According to Peterson and Deal (2013), there is a strong correlation between school culture and efforts steered in fostering a positive climate. Shaping the school culture requires clear reviews of negative practice and behaviors form students and staffs. For example, low-level schools are associated with negative practices like, bullying,

lesbianism, homosexuality, among other negative sets of social malpractices. Prevalence of such practices is associated with the underlying social pillars and fabrics of the school. Therefore, shaping such trends requires application of positive climatic, which has transformative impacts in the student's life and other stakeholders. One way of shaping behaviors is by modifying climate and culture so that schools can become safe heavens and sanctuaries for students, teachers and other staffs to stay. Peterson and Deal (2013) reiterate that positive climate and culture are considerably important in fostering good behaviors and morals in school. In addition, moral values and norms are some virtues associated with ample climate and culture respectively.

Hoy (2011), comments that institutional culture and climate lead to improved behaviors and school performance. The types of behaviors, norms, beliefs, stories, among other conditions that are built on organizational culture, affect school performance and overall effectiveness. In this regard, both internal and external environment play significant roles in shaping practices and behaviors of students, and this contributes to improved performance in the school. Therefore, shaping the school's culture requires constant periodic evaluation of various matrices that impact cultural and climatic conditions, both internally and externally. Examining this factor leads to the creation of a free social institution having positive climate and cultural practices. Consequently, it can be assumed that effective leadership and school climate are positively correlated to student performance. Over the years effective leadership has taken on many different definitions. With transition being one constant in leadership, over many years the need for strong leadership has not dissipated.

Leadership Evolution: The Role of Principal and Assistant Principal

Leadership Evolution. The role of principals in fostering student learning is an important facet of education and strong leadership is viewed as especially important for revitalization of failing schools (Branch, Hanushek, & Rivkin, 2013). According to Gregory Branch who in *Education Next*, an education publication, wrote the discussion on the importance of the principal's role on student learning and the necessity for strong leadership has been largely uninformed by systematic analysis of principals' impact on student outcomes.

Effective leadership is the beginning of principals positively affecting a school. This section will look at the importance of leadership, current styles of leadership, and characteristics of effective school leadership. The role of educational leadership has propelled itself into an evolving practice and profession since the 1930's as a manager to the 1960's as a behavioral leader, and now into transitional and transformational leaders. The role of the principal has evolved; however, over the past century, there has not been much research about the evolutionary abilities of the individuals that take on this position year after year. Peter F. Drucker (1954) defines leadership as the lifting of one's vision to higher sights, the raising of one's performance to a higher standard, and the building of one's personality beyond its normal limitations. This is just a one sound view of the characteristics and role of a principal or assistant principal

Effective organizational leaders share several common characteristics. With the absence of these characteristics, initiatives and change can fail. Leaders must take different approaches to help keep their organization from failing. Leadership in the education sector is highly recognized as it plays a vital role in the determination of the

students' outcome. It is ranked second, after classroom teaching, in relation to its influence on the learning process of students (Leithwood et al., 2004). The principal and assistant principal have a significant impact on the overall school as well as in meeting the needs of students. Over the years, the roles played by administrators in the education sector have become more demanding and complex, requiring a wide range of leadership attributes as skills, for effective execution of leadership roles (U.S Department of Education, 1999). Unfortunately, despite the changing roles of leaders in the education sector, only limited research and materials have been dedicated to the study on how to develop required leadership qualities and skills. Also, in educational entities, in the absence of the principal assistant principals are expected to carry out managerial roles, a factor embedded from the organizational structure of most educational centers today. In most education facilities, principals and assistant principals are the key administrators hence making it difficult to segregate between management and leadership, as they coexist. Also, school leaders are, for instance, mandated with the role of establishing the vision and goal of their institutions as well as formulating strategies to achieve the vision (SEDL, 2012). While this takes place the assistant principal is responsible for carrying out this vision in the absence of the principal no matter their level of agreement or disagreement.

According to a study compiled by Antonakis (2004) in his work *Nature of Leadership*, a detailed description of the evolution of leadership is defined as:

- 1920s [Leadership is] the ability to impress the will of the leader on those led and induce obedience, respect, loyalty, and cooperation.

- 1930s Leadership is a process in which the activities of many are organized to move in a specific direction by one.
- 1940s Leadership is the result of an ability to persuade or direct men, apart from the prestige or power that comes from office or external circumstance.
- 1950s [Leadership is what leaders do in groups.] The leader's authority is spontaneously accorded him by his fellow group members.
- 1960s [Leadership is] acts by a person which influence other persons in a shared direction.
- 1970s Leadership is defined in terms of discretionary influence. Discretionary influence refers to those leader behaviors under control of the leader which he may vary from individual to individual.
- 1980s Regardless of the complexities involved in the study of leadership, its meaning is relatively simple. Leadership means to inspire others to undertake some form of purposeful action as determined by the leader.
- 1990s Leadership is an influence relationship between leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes.

Notice that in the 1920s, leaders “impressed” their will on those led. In the 1940s, they “persuaded” followers; in the 1960s, they “influenced” them; whereas in the 1990s, leaders and followers influenced each other. All of these definitions are about the nature of the leader/follower relationship. The difference between the definitions rests on normative questions: How should leaders treat followers? And how should followers treat leaders? Who decides what goals to pursue? What is and what ought to be the nature of their relationship to each other? One thing the definition debate demonstrates is the

extent to which the concept of leadership is a social and historical construction. Definitions reflect not only the opinions of researchers, but the conditions of life at a particular time in a particular society and the values that are important to either the public or the leaders. The definition of leadership is a social and normative construction. For contemporary scholars, the most morally attractive definitions of leadership hail from the 1940s, 1950s, 1960s, and Rost's (1991) own definition of the 1990s Antonakis, Cianciolo, and Sternberg (2004). They imply a non-coercive, participatory, and democratic relationship between leaders and followers. There are two appealing elements of these theories. First, rather than induce, these leaders influence, which in moral terms implies that leaders recognize the autonomy of their followers. Rost's (1991) definition used the word influence, which carries an implication that there is some degree of voluntary compliance on the part of followers. In Rost's (1991) chapter on ethics, he stated, "The leadership process is ethical if the people in the relationship (the leaders and followers) freely agree that the intended changes fairly reflect their mutual purposes" (p. 161). Followers are the leader's partner in shaping the goals and purposes of a group or organization. For Rost (1991), consensus is an important part of what makes leadership ethical and what makes leadership. Free choice is morally pleasing because it shows respect for persons. But the fact that people consent to make changes does not mean that those changes are ethical or that their mutual purposes are ethical. An ethical process may not always yield ethical results. The second morally attractive part of these definitions is that they imply recognition of the beliefs, values, and needs of the followers. Today, we may not agree with the 1920s characterization of leadership, not because leadership is incorrectly defined, but because we do not think that is the best way to lead. Nonetheless,

there are plenty of leaders around today that fit that description of command-and-control leadership. If we all accepted Rost's definition of leadership, we would not be able to use the term to talk about a number of leaders whose leadership does not fit the bill (Ciulla, 2003).

In this generation of accountability and transparency, principals are required to exercise strong instructional leadership in their institutions. They face the task of increasing student performance while preserving order through acceptable student behavior, which may demand altering school climate and culture (Tableman, 2004).

While teachers are at least held responsible for enhancing student learning in schools, altering the organizational conditions for enhancement across schools is the central task of school principals (Halverson, Pritchett, Grigg & Thomas, 2005). In Tableman's (2004) best practices brief, principal accountability to instructional leadership is directly correlated to school climate. Tableman (2004) states, "School climate is a significant element in discussions about improving student achievement" (pg. 2). Consequently, school climate and accountability are also crucial features of the principal leadership.

Instructional leadership. Besides NCLB (2001) demanding accountability for student performance, it also means that principals become instructional leaders. Based on the legal framework, academic performance and instructional leadership are positively correlated. Particularly, the law requires principals to have the instructional leadership skills to assist teachers and generally improve school's climate, and the instructional leadership skills needed to assist students achieve challenging state student academic performance standards (Title II, Section 2113 46 (c)). For this reason, it is crucial for

principals to clearly comprehend instructional leadership. Secondly, if principals can empower other instructional leaders, this will be extremely beneficial and prove to be effective for students to achieve new accountability requirements. Kotter (1990) proposed the functions of management and leadership is not similar. He presumed the overriding purpose of management is to ensure order and consistency to institutions/organizations, while the purpose of leadership is to provide change and movement in organizations. A current study on instructional leadership insists the function of the school-based leader in developing people, setting directions, and making the organization work (Leithwood et al., 2004). The principal has the option to share the accountability of instructional leadership with other educational leaders by providing resources and guidance for teachers, creating a positive organizational culture, communicating vision and expectations, and professional learning communities, and exhibiting a clear aspect in the school (Leithwood, 2005). Significantly, the principal's instructional leadership traits influence the climate and instructional organization, both of which are connected to student performance (Bossert, 1982). Various studies have established connections between instructional leadership and the school climate (Hoy et al., 1990; Sergiovanni, 1995). Principals' behaviors are proportionally related to school climate, such as teacher advocacy, participatory decision-making, effective communication, and equitable evaluation procedures. According to Yukl (1998), studies usually define leadership depending on their individual future perspectives and the aspects of the circumstance of most interest to them. According to Yukl's (1998) syntheses of definitions, reflect the presumption that leadership includes a process whereby intentional impact is exerted by

one person over other people to structure, guide, and facilitate relationships and activities in a group or organization. Alternatively, Hoy & Miskel (2000) argue:

leadership should be described broadly as a social process in which an individual of a group or organization impacts the interpretation of organization's events, the selection of goals or desired results, organization of tasks, power relations, individual motivation and abilities, and shared orientations (p. 394).

Instructional leadership is different from that of a school administrator in various ways. Principals who praise themselves as administrators are too involved in dealing with strictly administrative tasks compared to deans of instruction who are instructional leaders. The latter role involves creating clear goals, managing the curriculum, monitoring lesson plans, allocating resources to instruction, and evaluating teachers. Briefly, instructional leadership is those decisions a principal takes, or allocates to others, to promote improvement in student learning (Flath, 1989). The instructional principal takes instructional quality the preferred priority of the school and tries to bring that vision to achievement. Teacher perceptions help to comprehend how principals' instructional leadership influences classroom instruction. Blasé (2000) did a thorough study of teachers' perceptions about qualities of school principals that impact teachers' classroom teaching have concluded that the traits connected with instructional leadership proportionately influence classroom instruction. The study found that when instructional leaders supervise and provide responses on the teaching and learning process, there were improvement in teacher reflection and relatively detailed instructional behaviors, a rise in introducing new ideas, wide options in teaching strategies, more feedback to student diversity, and more discretion to make alterations. The authors also observed that

teachers portrayed positive influences on satisfaction, motivation, and a sense of security. More lately, the definition of instructional leadership has moved in focus toward stronger involvement in teaching and students' learning. Attention has moved from teaching to learning, and some have recommended the term learning leader over instructional leader (Richard, 2002).

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (2001) describes instructional leadership as:

leading learning communities where staff members meet regularly to discuss their duties, reflect on their jobs, work together to problem solve, and take accountability for what students learn. They function in networks of common and complementary skills rather than in isolation or in hierarchies. Instructional leaders also ensure adult learning a preference; set high standards for performance; develop a culture of persistent learning for adults and create community support for school achievement (p.59)

Blasé (2000) portrayed instructional leadership in particular traits such as giving feedback, modeling effective instruction, making suggestions, soliciting opinions, supporting collaboration, giving praise for effective teaching, and providing professional development opportunities. Blasé (2000) suggested that learning should be the top preference of an instructional leader with focus on the enhancement of learning.

Therefore, to gain credibility as an instructional leader, the principal must also be a practicing teacher i.e. leading by example. In the UK, most principals engage an average of 20% of their time every week on teaching (Weindling, 1990). Instructional leaders should know what is happening in the classroom; an opportunity to participate the halls to

get first-hand about what is happening within the school as well as the classrooms.

Besides, a teaching principal reinforces the belief that "the only purpose of the school is to satisfy the educational needs of scholars" (Harden, 1988, p. 88).

Role of the Principal and Assistant Principal

The role of the principal is critical to education and how it is performed is even more important. The role of the principal is to lead and manage the planning, delivery, evaluation and improvement of the education of all students in a community through the strategic deployment of resources provided by the district and the school community. A key component of this role is to increase the knowledge base of teachers within their school about student learning and quality teacher practice (State Government Victoria, 2013).

The above definition demonstrates that the role of a principal has moved beyond the traditional administrative duties. Today, principals are expected to engage in multi-tasking where they have to assume different roles on short notice (Trail, 2000). School principals have several duties most important of which is the creation of a supportive and positive work environment for teachers and a conducive learning environment for students. It has been frequently mentioned in academic literature that besides enhancing the morale of the staff, principals influence students' achievements. Leithwood (2005) and Seashore-Louis (2011) stated that along with influencing students' performance, principals also shape teaching practices and set the tone of academic community. Besides ensuring smooth running of the schools, the principals today are also expected to focus on the school course and curriculum, collect, analyze and use data to monitor and

enhance student achievement and to lead teachers and students to achieve the academic goals (Hull, 2012).

Quoting the findings of Wallace Foundation, Hull (2012) stated that principals represented a quarter (25%) of the variation in the achievement of schools. Elaborating further the author stated that while teachers contribute significantly towards the growth and achievements of the students, there are other “in-school” factors involved that improve the students’ achievement on a bigger scale and principals bring those “in-school factors” together. The role and responsibilities of effective leadership (principals) have been highlighted in the NCLB (2001) policy of the US government.

According to Doresh (2012), assistant principals’ tasks are delegated in nature and in most cases act on behalf of the principal when absent or upon delegation. The first task attributed to this office involves frequent checks on other custodians and ensures all jobs are done and completed within the prescribed timeframe. Teachers, clerks, and other subordinate staffs make a regular report to the assistant principal who in turn makes his or her submission to the principal. Therefore, the supervisory authority is the mandate of the assistant principal as a result of designative responsibilities. Other than working with classified staffs, they equally work with teachers. The task of checks and balances never end with classified staffs, but also wades into the responsibilities of other teachers. Marshall and Hooley (2006) add on to say that assistant principals are in charge of monitoring daily schedules of teachers and ensuring that they discharge their mandate in line with the prescribed school policy and timeline. Therefore, assistant principals’ office receives work coverage, backload, and any complaint regarding work schedules and duty allocations.

Other than these duties, assistant principals sometimes have powers of policy and procedure implementation, especially in the absence of the principal. Indeed, the two offices work as a team and any decision application after a consultative process between these two offices. In addition, students and staff's welfares remain a duty of the assistant principal. According to Marshall (2006), this office is responsible for convening special meeting to meditate conflicting situation arising from students or staff's end.

Indirect Effect of the Principal

Educational theorists have likewise reported that the principal's impact on learning is mediated through the climate and culture of the school and is not a direct effect (MacNeil, Prater, & Busch 2009; Hallinger & Heck 1998). Fink and Resinck (2001) stated that school principals are responsible for establishing a pervasive culture of teaching and learning in a school. When a principal arrives at a new campus he or she must first understand the school's culture before implementing change (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997). In gathering testimonials from successful principals, they suggest that focusing on development of the school's culture as a learning environment is fundamental to improved teacher morale and student achievement (MacNeil et al, 2009). The culture of an organization is not simple but complex in nature and must be handled strategically. Though the effect of the principal is indirect as it relates to student achievement and teacher morale, it directly affects the climate and culture which can and will affect how students and teachers feel and perceive the environment to be conducive to learning, safety, efficacy.

Culture and Leadership

School culture is one of the most significant elements towards creating and fostering a transformative environment. Schooley, (2010), believes that “school culture” is one of the vital component of any educational enterprise. The author holds a belief that school culture is representations of behaviors and beliefs demonstrated by principals, teachers and students within the school. Principals being transformational leaders aids in the creation of a school culture that creates passion and a committed front of shared vision to the institution. Therefore, the principal’s behaviors significantly contribute to the school’s culture, which is a reflection on the good performance and “Good” name of the school. Schein (2010) asserts that principal’s leadership style is essential in creating a school culture that promotes quality teaching. Schein (2010) reiterates that aspects of quality teaching including, emotional and psychological support to teachers, engaging in active value empowering behaviors, making frequent appearances during school days and instigating professional behaviors in handling all stakeholders of the school is indeed an instance of positive school culture attributed to servant leadership right from the principal’s office. The efficacy of principal’s leadership style translates to the nature of behaviors and norms exhibited by both internal and external school stakeholders. Communication of behaviors, such as positive listening, encouraging remarks, and establishing clear school expectation, is an additive to the principal’s leadership in fostering positive student-culture, which essentially contributes to the overall good name and performance of the school. By making positive culture appearance in all factions of the school is indeed a factor of transformational leadership in the school. Based on these scholarly reviews, it is worth noting that adoption of effective leadership styles

encourages performance and competence due to inclusion of positive culture at all levels of the school's operations. In addition, administrative frameworks find it very easy upon application of positive culture, and thus aids in efficiency and goal-oriented stakeholders.

Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (2012) describe the relationship between formal leadership and the prevailing school culture. According to these authors, there is a significant correlation between formal leadership application in schools and the prevailing school culture. In this context, elements of formal leadership include fair distribution of workload, distinction among different organs of the institution and timeline duty allocation of all teachers and support staffs. This context of division of labor ensures that every person in charge of a given subject, class or any form of delegated responsibility becomes answerable to his or her area of jurisdiction. The impacts of this formal leadership include acceptance of a culture where every person own up to his or her responsibilities. Principally, instilling such elements instigate culture of competence and hence overall excellence. Based on author's assertion, it is justifiable that formal leadership practiced in a school contributes to the prevalence of positive work-culture and hence high performance and productivity. Begley (2011) describes a collaborative culture and leadership transformation through six social lenses, and this aid in understanding associations between leadership and school culture. The first lens involves developing leadership vision, developing critical opportunities, and inspiring others with this vision. The second parameter involves modeling behaviors within the school by setting examples for others, with the view of making them consistently operate under the ideals of espoused leadership values. Other than these values the aforementioned, chain of leadership and culture involves fostering commitment in

leadership and encouraging cooperation needed by members to work toward realizing a common goal. Other lenses include individualized support to members of staffs and students, offering intellectual stimulation to members while challenging them on the dynamic work environment, and shifting job demands. Bagley (2011) asserts that these lenses are essential in creating a free environment that responds to all social and cultural demands and expectations of every stakeholder. Regarding this review, it is worth noting that collaborative culture and transformational leadership styles aid in achieving an ethical work environment and overall good performance of a school. This is yet another assertion that supports a strong positive correlation between leadership and school culture. Gamage (2011) contributed to the role played by leadership in creating school culture and proposed that school principals have an obligation of understanding school's culture before making any substantial changes to the administrative framework of the school. According to Mulford, et al. (2013), having a clear knowledge on school's culture is a prerequisite that directly contribute to the success of the school. In addition, the author asserts that principal's transformative leadership styles contribute a lot to the success and progress of a school (Mulford et al., 2013). This is a school of thought that has been in public domain and has remained relevant towards school's success. Bolden, Hawkins, and Gosling (2011) reiterate that societal values contribute to the predisposed school culture, but adds that such trends can always be changed depending on leadership strategy employed by the principal. These scholarly reviews agitate for the right context of transformative leadership as it emanates from the principal, through teachers before being rolled-down to students. In a nutshell, there is very strong correlation between

leadership structure and the prevailing school's culture, which either positively or negatively influence the performance and the overall good name of a school.

Climate and Leadership

Various scholarly reviews strongly correlate positive school climate and transformative leadership to school's success and overall good name. Therefore, school climate and applicable leadership styles have strong impacts on behaviors and overall performance in school. Transformational refers to a leadership style that encourages competence and hard work. According to Mehrotra (2011) leadership styles instigated by school principal contribute to the prevailing school's climate. In this context, school leadership, especially from the principal's office is an essential message that determines whether positive or negative culture would prevail in the intuition. In this context, Mehrotra (2011) argues that principals, being policy makers and initiators of school guidelines have a great mandate on decreeing how students, staffs and other staffs conduct themselves in the school. There has been an empirical study which shows that the magnitude of the application of transformative leadership is congruent to the behaviors and performance of students, which is reflective if the prevailing school climate. Mehrotra (2011) defines a school as a place for social interaction among teachers, students, and other workers, while the climate is the prevailing condition attributed to this progressive interaction among people of diverse social and cultural inclinations. Principally, school climate is significant to the nature of the interaction between people professing different social, ethnic or behaviors inclinations.

According to Lomotey (2012), the principal is the leader of an intuition and must concrete his or her efforts in providing all around environments to his or her students and

staffs, which maximizes growth and professional development. This is thus the baseline of interactive leadership towards creating a sustainable climate that favors every stakeholder, irrespective of an individual's social or ethnic orientation. Lomotey (2012) says that the principal holds a key position to affect the attitude, climate, progress, corporation, and direction of efforts in the right direction. These constructs are subtle of a positive and influential climate in the school. In addition, transformative leadership as it emanates from the principal's office steers the school to the right track of positive values, norms, and general aspirations. With this said and done, the school recuperates and becomes a beacon of positive climate. Relevance of positive leadership arises from a point of job satisfaction to the teachers and the reflective excellence in students. Just like every faction of the school deserves progress as a result of administration of positive norms and ethical codes, excellence should be a key pillar to prosperity. In addition, interaction between organizational leadership and school climate has a major influence on productivity, and total work group in the entire institution. A canonical correlation result states that there is a statistically significant correlation between the set of school climate variable and the set of teacher leadership variable. In this regard, teacher-leadership is attributed to the excellence of the student upon administration of positive practices. Here, school climate includes a variety of factors like, behaviors, and general conducts of staffs and other support staffs. Considering academic preference as a factor subjected to two variables, like teacher's leadership and school's climate. According to Evans-Andris (2010), there is a significant point to believe that student's performance is highly improved in an environment where both instructional and transformative leadership prevail and is coupled by positive climate. According to Hoy and DiPaola

(2012), leadership and climate are positively correlated to the performance of an institution. Lack of clear and visionary leadership inoculates negative culture that only hinders motivation and job satisfaction. On the other hand, organizational leadership that clearly spells out its mandate and encourages its stakeholders promotes the creation of a positive work climate upon which all staff and students interact in a peaceful manner. This is one clear association that leadership has on the climate of an institution like a school. Harber and Davies (2012) say that there are four significant effects that organizational climate contribute to the attitude, performance, and satisfaction in the school. These effects are thus interlaced to a model of leadership adapted from the higher hierarchy to the student body. In summary, leadership portfolio undertaken in managing a school contributes to the nature or climate realized within the school. The authors attribute creation of organizational climate to key variables, which include behaviors, attitude and the overall culture of performance. In the first case, organizational climate as part of leadership strategy can operate as a constraint in both negative and positive sense by providing knowledge on what kind of behaviors are rewarded, punished or ignored. Based on clear analysis, this first case leads to a positive correlation between transformative leadership to the climate conditions, which determines the existence of the organizational behaviors. Harber and Davies (2012) cite the second case and reiterates that the prevailing organizational climate can influence behaviors by attaching different rewards and punishments to varying rewards and behaviors. In the third case, the author poses that leadership structure affects the organization climate by providing behavioral codes which act as self-evaluation parameters to individuals who directly or indirectly interact with the organization (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2010, p.78). Therefore, preset

modes of behaviors act as mirrors upon which characters make justifiable characteristic reflection to their habits. Based on these scholarly reviews, it is imperative to conclude that leadership structure and organizational climate are intractably entwined and either positively or negatively contributes to the success or failure of the school.

Perception and Self Perception

The perception of the climate and culture of a school is one that needs attention, because the perception of leaders to be effective or non-effective is the reality for their followers. Therefore, perception is important in any organization regarding its climate and culture. Perception is the process by which an individual picks, organizes, and understands information inputs to generate a meaningful image of the world. Perception refers to how we experience the world with our senses. It helps us to detect and react to different stimuli in our environment (Ross, 1975). The perceptual process is the procedure that takes place for us to be able to perceive our environment. Perception not only allows us to experience the world around us but also helps us to react to our environment. The five senses, touch, sight, taste, smell and taste, pick the stimuli from the environment, and the stimuli is transmitted to be interpreted by the brain. Each one of us sees the world differently. Learning, expectation, past experience, inspiration, incentive and punishment, emotion, attitude, needs, ecology, and mental status of the person are some of the factors that can affect how we view the world. The Physiognomies of the subject observed also affects a person's perception. The physical traits, appearance and mannerisms of the subject, also influences the perception. Perceptions affect our thinking and behavior. Social perception is the part of perception that permits people to comprehend the other people in their social world. The way the teachers and students

perceive the principal and vice versa affects the quality and nature of the relationships in the school. Human perceptions and the reality can be on the opposites of each other thus our perceptions can lead to Wrongful judgments and assumptions. The misjudgments that may arise from perceptions of different people can have a negative effect on how people relate. Perceptions may create stereotypes. Theory of Mind has a very significant role in both social contact and the perception of social interaction. How individuals perceive words said or behaviors of others affect communication. If teachers perceive the principal as arrogant, even if this may not be the case, it will strain the relationship between them. It is therefore important for the principal to present him or herself in a manner that attracts positive perception from the teachers (Schyns, 2005). The image of the principal is the stimulus that is acted upon by the brain to produce the result either like or dislike. Image includes how the principal speaks, dresses, socializes, and carries him or her and other attributes. Perceptions can be skewed depending on several factors. If a teacher has prior knowledge that the principal is corrupt, he will continue to look at the principal as such despite the fact that the principal does not portray such tendencies. Each and every individual has a different kind of self-perception. We may perceive ourselves as good-looking or ugly, sharp or typical in aptitude, withdrawn or overenthusiastic, pleasant or dislikable, easy going or problematic. For selected persons, self-perception is well established. How our self-perception rarely matches the opinions of others about us. You may see yourself as organized while others see you as bossy. It is extremely important to know the many ways that other people see you, particularly when the perceptions are undesirable in nature. It is also important to know if we have a positive impact on others. Perceptions keep changing with more experiences. In various circumstances our

perceptions of other people may differ as we get to know them better. Leaders should therefore avoid hurried judgments. Self-perception is not exactly mirrored by how other people view us. It is hence important to know how others perceive us, so as to determine how diligently it is in line with our own self-perceptions. For example, if the teachers perceive the principal as the leader of their group and the principal does not perceive himself as such there is a disparity. Another common instance is the circumstances where others view us as un-approachable, and yet we perceive ourselves as hospitable and friendly (Schyns, 2005). In this case, our confident self-perception is annulled by the states of mind and perceptions of others.

Self-perception refers to how individuals view themselves. It is how you think and feel about yourself. It's determined by our own thinking, our own inner process, our self-perception (Williams 2008). How one perceives oneself is based on how others perceive you. The opinion of other people has an impact how you see yourself. For instance, if the teachers in a group consistently refer to the principal as kind, then it is highly likely that he will see himself as kind. This shows that self-perception and perception are closely interlinked. Self-perception emanates from your previous experiences. Self-concept is learned. It progressively develops from the early months of life; it is however shaped and reshaped through repeated perceived experiences. If you encounter a lot of trials and fail, one might think he is a failure. It is therefore important for a leader to see himself in positive light.

The perception of others no matter how positive will have no impact without positive self-perception. Self-perception affects a person's self-esteem. A low self-esteem in leaders will make them not trust themselves and always be in doubt. For a

leader to be able to relate with others he should avoid hasty suppositions. In similar experiences the leader and the other people have, the subjective view of matters will be different because it is personalized (Schyns, 2006). It is therefore important to seek opinions to ensure that you view actions taken in similar manners. Perceptions have filters. Generalizations, distortions, and deletions go a long way to counter the effects of perception. Deletions happen when the senses are selective in capturing stimuli or when the brain refuses to process some of the information because it processes only that which is essential. Distortion is when you observe a trivial portion of the entire situation and you have to fill in the gaps by adding information for you to be able to make your information make sense and so that the information supports your prevailing principles and standards (Bowman, 2002). Generalization involves making conclusions from certain facts you have come to establish (Bowman, 2002). After you have witnessed something a few times, you may tend to conclude that the incident that has proven correct in the past will also be true in the future too. Generalizations become very significant to a person's survival. For example, if someone has had quite a few ruthless encounters with people from the opposite sex, a different race, dissimilar culture, or of a specific society, you may end up generalizing all members of the group. In the coming days all future experiences will be filtered through the same belief. Information that opposes the belief is erased, and you misrepresent other information so it will support the belief. As long as our perceptions and the reality are in rhythm we should not be afraid of what others say. Despite it being important to consider how others view you as a leader, one should be aware that not everyone will like and approve of you and therefore self-perception is the most important between the two. Decisions have to be made and it should be for the

greater good (Ross, 1975). It would however be harmful to one's self and others if the leader lives in a fantasy world far from reality. A great principal takes time to comprehend and appreciate the countless constituencies and scopes of influence they interact with. High-handedness rarely creates good rapport and provides only a one sided view of the situation.

Characteristics of Effective Administrators in Education

Several researchers have undertaken different studies in an endeavor to establish the characteristics most common in effective leadership. Instructional leadership models emerged in the 1970s and 1980s from early research on effective schools (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Edmonds, 1982). These scholars emphasized the role of the principal as primary agent of school improvement, more specifically within highly challenged urban schools (Purkey & Smith, 1983). According to Heck, Larsen and Marcoulides (1990), one of the key characteristics of effective principals in education today is the ability to offer instructional leadership. Conversely with agreement instructional leadership has been “conceptualized as a mutual influence process, rather than as a one-way process in which leaders influence others” (Hallinger, p. 346, emphasis in original). Such a view underscores the necessary effects of instructional leadership, at the same time acknowledging, “it’s evolving nature in the context of teacher professionalism” (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 391). Instructional leadership refers to the commitment of principals and superintendents of their energies and time as well as talents towards the improvement of teaching and learning quality within their educational facilities. In his study, Chrispeels (1990) found that education leaders who were able to offer instructional leadership had a deep understanding of learning and teaching, including newer approaches that

emphasized more on knowledge construction by students and problem solving techniques.

In a comparison study, the principals of exceptionally high-achieving schools, as measured by consistent academic achievement in a variety of curricular areas, differed from their counterparts in consistently low-achieving schools “in terms of the type and effectiveness of instructional leadership they provided” (Heck, 1992, p. 28). In a study of 23 California elementary schools, 15 of which were high performing, and 17 California high schools, seven of which were high performing, Heck (1992) determined that three instructional leadership behaviors were significant in predicting the levels of student achievement of these schools, including “the amount of time principals spend directly observing classroom practices, promoting discussions about instructional issues, and emphasizing test results within these discussions” (p. 30). Such leaders were also found to be strongly committed to high achievement for all their students; especially those deemed as not strong performers, or students who experience difficulties in learning. These research findings are supported by another study conducted by U.S Department of Education (1999); which found out that instructional leadership contributed largely towards the learning institutions' success and improved student engagement in the learning process. However, Steltz (2010) also noted out that although a vital leadership quality, only 25% of the participants' principals were found to be skilled as far as instructional leadership was concerned. This lends itself to the evolving nature of the principal profession. Along with an evolving profession, data has presented itself in education as an Instructional Positioning System (IPS) for instructional leaders. Some have adopted data models to aid them in the use of data. One in particular would be the

Data Driven Instructional System (DDIS), which gives a sequential guide to using data to assist an instructional leader. Halverson, Griggs, Prichett, and Thomas (2005) created this model and prepared it in a paper at the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration in July 2005 in Washington, D.C. Many principals again are not astute in using data to make decisions. They are well versed in management and organization. While these are important, principals also have to consider the importance of values and being self-aware of their areas of needed growth and current strength. This literature will use Bethel (1990), *Making a difference: Twelve qualities that make you a leader*, and English, Hoyle, and Steffy (1985), *Skills for Successful Leaders* as guides for the qualities of a leader as a guide for this section. The following subsections will outline the skills for successful leader as the authors see it.

Personal values and self-awareness. Personal values are some of the leadership qualities that build effective school leadership. Values are built overtime from the time one is a child, and it is nurtured over the years and shaped by personal experiences. Values are made up of standards, qualities, and principles that a person deems essential in successful leadership, especially during decision making. Some of the values that are vital in developing exceptional leadership include trust, loyalty, and a sense of duty, respect, selfless service, integrity, honor, and personal courage. A school leader must be loyal to his or her calling, and the school's vision and mission. Wavering sends signals of doubt to the students and the teachers (Bolman & Deal, 1993).

Trust is another value that builds good leadership in education. Without trust, it is difficult to motivate and inspire teachers and students. Teachers and students must be able to trust their leader. A school principal should also show respect to all the stakeholders

(recognizing his role in the effective running of the school and the impact he or she has on the overall outcome of the school) for him to solicit their respect. Integrity is also another very strong value that helps in building effective leadership in education. Integrity entails doing what is right morally, ethically, and legally. Without integrity, it is difficult to motivate, inspire and lead people. Courage is also vital in leadership. Without personal courage, communicating to other people and soliciting their confidence in a person is difficult (Bolman & Deal, 1993).

Ability to motivate. Instructional leadership is built upon a framework of continuous feedback, which aims at encouraging both students and tutors. In his study, Chrispeels (1990) found out that successful principals were more likely to engage the whole school via use of continuous messages pertaining to the work quality expected from teachers, as well as the students. This leads to the creation of an environment in which success is based on learning gains by students from their teachers. Another facet that Crowson and Morris (1990) found vital in the development of instructional leadership was that it went beyond simply conveying of expectations by educational leaders. It was observed that instructional leaders did not merely issue orders and instructions, but they spend a considerable amount of time in actual learning environments or classrooms, not just observing the behaviors of students, but also taking active participation in the learning process (Crowson & Morris, 1990). However, it is vital to note that instructional leadership does not amount or lead to undermining of traditional roles carried out by other teachers. Instead, instructional leaders offer guidance and support to other tutors or teachers. According to Blumberg and Greenfield (1986), instructional leaders are able to evaluate instructions and offer open and powerful

messages or feedbacks aimed at encouraging instructors to improve their teaching approaches, so as to encourage better student learning. Also, instructional leaders ensure that the entire school community is engaged in dialogue pertaining to means of improving learning for students. Instructional leaders also go beyond the traditional definition of their jobs' expectations, and they try to minimize the bureaucratic burdens, hence allowing for more participation from students and tutors (Heck, Larsen & Marcoulides, 1990).

Management skills (planning). Educational leadership requires a leader to be able to understand the needed balance in running a learning institution. Management skills are thus vital leadership characteristics that help in ensuring effective leadership in education. Leithwood and Riehl (2003) reintroduced a fourth domain, managing organizations, as an essential component of successful school leadership. Though managing an educational facility is a demanding task, a leader must be in a position to balance between the needs of the parents, the politicians, the students and teachers, as well as the entire community. Unlike in the past when educational leadership's success was measured or assessed on the ability of a leader to manage a school's budget, school facilities and buildings, today effective educational leaders and managers must take into consideration the needs of different stakeholders, including the community, and to effectively communicate the vision of the school (Money-Zine.com, 2010).

According to a study conducted by Steltz (2010) on the impact of management skills on effective leadership in education, it was found out that management skills played a key role in the overall success of learning institutions. Although some effective

educational leaders were found not to have instructional leadership competencies, leaders who had good managerial skills were found to perform well, as they were able to nurture and create an excellent learning and teaching environment, regardless of the external pressures. The study also revealed that instructional leadership skills were not enough to enable educational leaders to be effective. Some participants who had been rated high on instructional leadership qualities but had low managerial competencies were found not to be effective in managing their educational institutions (Steltz, 2010).

SEDL (2012) argues that effective leadership in education goes beyond strong instructional leadership. Given the amount of demand leveled on principals and superintendents, exemplary educational leaders must also be excellent managers. To attain success, sometimes school administrators or education leaders should be in a position to negotiate through conflicting demands emanating from federal, state or local bureaucracies, constituent groups, politicians and parents. Without effective management skills, this is almost impossible. Chrispeels (1990), however, notes that while most education leaders enjoy management practices, as most of them are trained in this area, as compared to instruction, there is a dire need to shift from traditional administration practices, as management demanded today by educational facilities or institutions is different. Education leaders must be able to change their traditional focus on buildings, bonds, books, budgets, and buses to management based on community building, collaboration, and communication.

Community building and collaboration. Community building, collaboration, and communication are other characteristics that contribute to effective leadership in education. Over the years, education leadership has evolved, and today, this form of

leadership has taken a new dimension that emphasizes the need to collaborate and communicate with all stakeholders, both within and outside the premises of learning institutions. Crowson and Morris (1990) argue that the traditional “top-down model”, which was characterized by hierarchical approach to decision making, is no longer applicable in today’s education leadership. Traditionally, school principals and superintendents used to make decisions for others (lower in the hierarchy) to execute. According to studies conducted by researchers such as Kirby, Paradise and King (1992), in the field of education leadership, found that effective leadership is built on the building blocks of participation of parents, members of community, students as well as teachers. An effective leader in the education sector is a person who is able to influence individuals surrounding him or her, with inspirational and meaningful goals, which lead to the accomplishment of a school’s vision and mission. According to Steltz (2010), an effective education leader is endowed with powerful means of connecting with his or her surroundings, including all the stakeholders in an education institution, and also builds constituencies, which strongly advocate for implementation of change as well as institutional barriers breakdown, found in traditional learning and teaching approaches. Communication is vital to allow for the continuing connecting of a leader and all stakeholders.

Consistent communication. U.S Department of Education (1999), however, argue that, in the development of effective leadership in education, allowing communication and collaboration of stakeholders should not translate to consensus in all decisions made within a school. Although dialogue and active participation is essential in building effective leadership in education, principals and superintendents must maintain

some form of control and authority. This allows for development of respect from all the stakeholders, as well as accountability. SEDL (2012) argues that effective education leaders are individuals who are able to create room for dialogue, without resulting to a laissez faire form of leadership style. Although dialogue is encouraged, a leader must maintain his authority, especially in schools facing significant challenges as well as in institutions characterized by an apathetic climate. However, it is essential to note that the level of autonomy and authority retained by a principal is dependent on the unique characteristics of a school. According to Bolman and Deal (1993), while an authoritative leadership style may be effective in some schools, it may not work well in others. Understanding the unique characteristics of the school environment and the stakeholders is thus vital, towards building an effective leadership in the education sector.

Ability to inspire passion in all stakeholders. Ability to effectively work with the board of a school is another characteristic of effective leadership in education. Steltz (2010) argues that effective school leaders are able to build an effective two-way communication with their board members, and they are also able to understand the viewpoint of the board, work with the board and also pursue a unified goal or vision for their school. However, Chrispeels (1990) notes that building a rapport with the board should not amount to ‘bootlicking’ activities by the principals. Effective school leaders are school leaders who are able to pursue the vision of their schools, without necessarily finding ways to satisfy the needs and demands of the board members. The effective school leader is able to connect the pieces to implement ideas and change that will benefit students and not a board member’s agenda.

Ability to Implement New Ideas and Reforms. The ability to establish a “constituency for education reform in the larger community” is another characteristic of effective leadership in education identified by (Money-Zine.com, 2010, p. 4). Kowalski (2000) argues that the education constituency should be made up by individuals who hold varying views pertaining to public education. This requires school principals and superintendents to have media and public relation skills, and also a political savvy, to enable them to educate, and enlighten the general public on what needs to be undertaken, as well as, convince them that the goals undertaken by the leaders are fundamental, not only to their children’s learning process, but also for their future lives. Kirby, Paradise and King (1992) argue that some of the schools today are experiencing difficulties because their surrounding neighborhoods or communities require rebuilding. Effective education leaders are leaders who are able to collaborate with organizations and community agencies, so as to establish structures that address families and children’s social service requirements or needs. In addition, effective leaders are able to clearly define a shared vision to connect the community and school.

Ability to delineate clear vision and goals. Ability to articulate a viable vision and goal for an educational system and the ability to come up with a viable plan to achieve such a goal or a vision is a characteristic of effective leadership identified by Steltz (2010). One of the fundamental facets of leadership is the ability to come up with a feasible goal, which stimulates motivation among followers, and to come up with a way of achieving goals. Effective school leaders are able to set a goal for their schools, usually aimed at improving the learning experience of the students and the entire

community. At times this may include a change initiative, which calls for buy-in from the community.

Ability to move and change initiatives. Change is inevitable, even in learning institutions. According to a study conducted by Fullan (1991), it was found out that one of the key characteristics of effective education leaders was their ability to institute positive change within their schools. Education sector is characterized by dynamism, especially due to the invention of technology and the Internet, which has seen e-learning services emerge. Effective leaders are able to understand the need for continuous changes in their learning institutions and to come up with means of achieving or implementing such changes (Fullan, 1991).

Ability to come up with new ideas and implement them. SEDL (2012) argues that changes spur effective leaders to take risks, which include challenging the stakeholder's beliefs and attitudes towards different issues, and changing their traditionally conceived mental models of how school education should be, and how things should work in schools. In some instances, school leaders are required to take dramatic but symbolic actions or gestures in an endeavor to stimulate thinking patterns' change in people pertaining to their work (Kowalski, 2000).

Barriers to Effective Leadership in Education

Effective leadership in education is vital as it determines the overall learning process and performance of the students, as well as the willingness and motivation of teachers. It also helps in the improvement of the school environment and the community. However, building effective leadership in education is one of the most challenging endeavors for principals as well as superintendents (Zinn, 1998). There are several

barriers, which hinder development of effective leadership in education as discussed below

Lack of support. Lack of leadership support in schools from different stakeholders is one of the key barriers towards the development of effective leadership in education. In most cases, school principals and superintendents experience passive or expressed resentment from their fellow teachers and colleagues. Such resentment makes leadership development difficult for school principals, leading to difficulties in implementing changes in school's management and learning practices (Henderson & Hawthorne, 2000). Also, leadership roles, in most cases, come along with constraints in interpersonal relationships, especially when teachers resent the appointment of their leaders. With such negative attitude and lack of support, developing effective leadership becomes problematic for principals and superintendents. Unwillingness of teachers to take up leadership roles in education is another factor that has contributed to lack of effective leadership in the education sector. Given the challenges associated with education leadership, most teachers are unwilling to take up mantle of leadership. Without support from all stakeholders, effective leadership development in education is impossible (Henderson & Hawthorne, 2000).

Lack of clear definition of leadership. One of the major barriers towards effective leadership development in education is the lack of clearly defined roles of principals and superintendents. Over the years, leadership in education has been neglected, not only by school planners but also by researchers and other significant entities. Unlike in contemporary business environments, education leadership is not clearly defined, a factor that has left many school leaders unaware of the tasks they are

required to undertake. According to Bellon and Beaudry (1992), the combination of administration, management and leadership roles in education leadership is another factor that has increased the vagueness of education leadership today. Many school leaders also carry out the role of school management and administration, and this has created confusion, especially because there is no clear cut view on what leadership tasks school principals are expected to carry out. This has seen most school leaders concentrate more on management and administration duties, while neglecting leadership roles. Also, in most schools, there is no clear definition of the roles of school leaders and that of the board members (Zinn, 1998).

Lack of training and access to leadership information. Leadership training is essential towards development of effective leadership. However, due to the limited resources and research committed to leadership in education, most school leaders do not have access to leadership training, a factor that has contributed to poor leadership being experienced today in many schools. Also, school leaders have limited access to information pertaining to leadership hence improving on leadership skills is difficult (Graybeal, 2006). There is also limited time and money allocated to school leaders training in most schools, and school leaders who wish to undertake private studies on leadership find it challenging due to the amount of tasks they are mandated to carry out at extremely limited timelines. Lack of training facilities for school leaders is a significant barrier towards the development of effective leadership. Although some leaders are born, most leaders are made through a process of continuous learning, mentorship and coaching. However, without access to training facilities and leadership information, developing effective leadership in education is difficult (Zinn, 1998).

Lack of mentorship. Mentorship is one of the vital factors in effective development of effective leadership qualities. Unfortunately, most schools today have no mentorship programs to nurture young leaders in education. According to a study conducted by American Association of School Administrators (1986), it was found out that most education leaders unintentionally fail to nurture leadership qualities for future leaders. Education leaders find themselves with so much work, leaving limited room for leadership development and mentorship. Given the fact that most education leaders also undertake management, classroom responsibilities, and administration roles, the responsibilities bestowed on them, in most cases, makes them forget their leadership roles, hence; mentorship is a serious problem in education leadership. Also, unlike in business settings, leadership mentorship is extremely tricky given that teachers are often transferred from one school to another, in some cases, within unusually short periods. Lack of mentorship is one of the key barriers to effective leadership in education (Graybeal, 2006).

The Difference between Effective & Ineffective Principals

Based on the performance, principals can be regarded as effective or ineffective. Effective principals are those who are more successful in bringing a positive change in schools and who are able to gain the respect and cooperation of the teaching staff in a shorter time. Effective principals ensure that every class has an effective teacher every year. An effective principal provides a supportive environment to both teachers and students, recruits, trains and supports teachers and provides facilities to ensure that the satisfaction levels of the teachers remain high; a factor most important for teacher retention. They work towards teacher collaboration and create data and instructional

systems through which teachers can view whether they have successfully transferred their knowledge and skills to the students.

Effective principals encourage the teachers to give their best to the students and also monitor how well the students are receiving it. An effective principal identifies and analyzes the strengths of the teachers and the areas where improvement and growth is possible. They provide feedback and suggest strategies for improvement and monitor the progress of the teachers (Briggs, Davis & Cheney, 2012). In short, the role of the principal in providing quality education in schools is vital (Steyn, 2013).

Ineffective principals, on the other hand, are those who do not have a clear vision (Williamson, 2007). Williamson (2007) further stated that an ineffective principal simply makes big promises and statement and seldom does anything to accomplish them. An ineffective principal is unsuccessful in gaining the support and respect of the teachers and takes little interest in their grooming and problems. Lack of commitment and restricted range of response are other signs of an ineffective leader who spends more time in the office and is seldom seen in hallways (Williamson, 2007).

A big difference between an effective and ineffective principal is that an ineffective principal avoids conflicts whereas an effective principal sees conflicts as creative ways to solving problems. Ineffective principals lower the morale of the teachers and student achievements take a dip during their tenure. It has also been observed that ineffective principals are more likely to leave schools than effective principals (Branch, Hanushek & Rivkin, 2008; Carlson, 2012).

It is clear that some principals are effective and some are ineffective; however, the question is what makes principals ineffective? The answer to this question is inadequate

training and flaws in traditional principal preparation program. These programs fall short of screening and recruiting the right candidate for the job. There is much emphasis on theoretical and outdated course work and no or little opportunity is provided to give the candidates real life experience in schools. A Public Agenda Survey conducted in 2006 (Briggs et al, 2012) showed that almost two thirds of the principals stated that the preparation program did not adequately prepare them to lead the schools in real life. This lack of training is also the cause of principal turnover as almost 50% of the principals leave their jobs within the “first five years” with the rate of departure being the highest in the first three years (Briggs et al, 2012).

Principal and Assistant Principal and Teachers Relationship

Power in any organization is based in the ability to manage resources and the access to resources (Peffer, 1992). These resources include relationships, authority, people, and information. The principal is in charge of governing these resources. Because the teachers are part of the principals’ authority base, they are advantaged of having a vast understanding of decision-making related to these resources. Moreover, because of the close working relationship between teachers and their principals, the teacher may privy to given demands of principal leadership as it associates to the role of instructional leader (Marshall & Hooley, 2006).

According to Hartzell, Nelson, and Williams (1995), power and authority are relationship entities; every relationship has two sides. The nature of the relationship between the principal and teachers depends on the behavior of both parties. To have a concrete relationship, the principal and teacher need to have clarity associated to each

individual's strengths and weaknesses, and the features of personal styles (Hartzell et al., 1995).

John Gabarro and John Kotter (1992), both management and personnel researchers, argue that employees and bosses have unique personality values, structures, and ways of working that have been developed over time, and neither teachers nor the principal can change. Nevertheless, what can alter is how both parties identify characteristics in those structures and systems either impeded or facilitate their abilities to work together. Once teachers are aware of these things, measures can be taken to improve the relationship.

At times, relationship between principals and teachers become adversarial when the principal seems to consistently give priority, resources, attention, and recognition to school functions and demands other than those of the teachers (Hartzell et al, 1995). A fundamental principal of psychology is that we respond to our perceptions, and self-fulfilling predictions do exist (Eden, 1984). Alternatively, if teachers perceive the principal as a competitor, he will behave differently than if they appreciate the principal as a potential partner in contributing to achieve certain goals.

Turnaround Leadership

NCLB encouraged the replacement of the principal in persistently low-performing schools, and the Obama administration has made this a requirement for schools undergoing federally funded turnarounds (Branch et al, 2013). A turnaround is a dramatic, quick, and sustained change in an institution's performance. Turnaround leadership is leadership required to turn an institution that is performing poorly persistently to acceptable performance. In a school set up, a turnaround is a change from

a persistently underperforming school to that which performs to acceptable levels as measured by achievement of students in state tests. Despite teachers playing a crucial role in performance of student learning, in an underperforming school, the role of the principal to dramatically and quickly improve the performance of students is paramount. A turnaround leader is a bold leader, who will be able to take the necessary steps to dramatically change the situation in a school. A failing school is the institution that requires turnaround leaders. While all effective leaders may be assumed to have almost the same qualities, turnaround leaders require specific traits, which will enable them change the situation of the school dramatically (Stark, 1998). A bold leader, is the most important trait for turnaround leaders, as a bold principal will be able to replace ineffective teachers and support staff, lengthen the days in schools, setting a higher bar for attendance and performance, change of curriculum that may be popular among the teachers and the students, and garnering for support from the district leadership and the community among other things as it may prove necessary for a turnaround.

As the Wallace Foundation stated, “There are virtually no documented instances of troubled schools being turned around without intervention by a powerful leader” (Leithwood, et al. 2004). Selecting a leader to turn a low performing school to a performing one may prove hard for authorities. Ideally, choosing a person who has experience and has led a low performing school to a high performing school would do the task. Currently, authorities use degrees a person has obtained, years of service, or a history of leading schools to success. This criterion for choosing leaders leaves only a few people as potential candidates for the job. Moreover, a few qualified principals will

be willing to take up the challenge and move from their current work places. The principals may not have the necessary skills for leading a turnaround in a school.

Research conducted in the Chicago public schools on diverse sectors shows that for a successful turnaround leadership, the leaders must follow some steps. These steps are grouped into four categories namely: initial analysis, driving for results, influencing, and measuring and improving. These steps lead to a continuous cycle of gathering information based the data, implementation of plans, monitoring of implementation and change of approaches used to ensure desired results. These actions revolve around breaking organizational norms that inhibit success for the institution. These were derived from Public Impact for the Chicago Public Education Fund in 2008. The authors who contributed to Public Impact are Lucy M. Steiner, Emily Ayscue Hassel, and Bryan Hassel. Also the Reform Support Network has completed previous research on the four categories that will be used in this literature.

The first stage for a successful turnaround leadership is the initial analysis stage. The initial analysis stage calls for collecting the relevant data from the school that inhibits success. An effective turnaround leader must have the ability to collect relevant information from all corners in the institution that inhibits success in that institution. The stage involves working with all the stakeholders to identify problematic areas that needs consideration. In this stage the leader should formulate the necessary plan of action to eliminate the factors inhibiting success of the institution. For example, a leader can identify teachers' ineffectiveness as the cause of the problem in the school. The leader must then come up with the appropriate plan to identify why the teachers are ineffective and ways to improve their effectiveness. The ability of a leader to perform this first stage

with expertise will determine whether the turnaround will be successful or not.

The second stage of a turnaround is driving for results stage. After the initial analysis stage a turnaround leadership will focus on getting the results for the plan formulated in the first stage. This stage forms the most important stage of the turnaround. For a leader to achieve success in this stage he or she must have the necessary qualities. In this stage a leader should first focus on some few and simple but extremely necessary early wins in the first few months. The principal should prioritize on the steps to be taken and then from there ensure that the first steps are successful this is what will determine his or her success. The principal should then aim to break the norms in the institution. In a failing school, changing the norms in place is paramount for achieving change. The leader should require all teachers to change for the better so as to change the school. All the teachers should know that so as to change everything else must flow with the change (Fullan, 2004). The leader should make replacements on staff where they seem ineffective. After employing some tactics some will be successful while others will fail. An effective turnaround leadership will focus on the successful tactics while halting the unsuccessful tactics. For a radical change in an institution leadership should not waste time on tactics that seem not to work. Most importantly the leadership should not confuse progress to be the ultimate success. Rather, the leadership should welcome progress and keep in mind that achieving success is a journey that requires constant work and commitment.

The third step to a turnaround is influencing. A successful turnaround leadership must ensure that he influences both inside the organization and outside. Inside the organization, the leader should be able to communicate a positive vision for the school.

The leader should employ passion and commitment in communicating the vision in order to influence the teachers and the support staff to work towards achieving that vision (Fullan, 2004). An effective turnaround leader should have a high degree of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence means being able to identify with the emotions of the staff; that way the leader will be able to help staff feel problems personally, thus able to influence them. A motivational leader will influence staff to a high degree and make them follow his vision for the school. The leader should also be able to influence people outside the institution to help him achieve his vision. Silencing critics by achieving success will influence them to join in the vision.

The fourth step is measurements and improvements. Change is a process which requires monitoring of progress. To effectively monitor change, a leader should have a way of measuring progress. That way he or she will know what progress he or she has made and in what time. This provides for necessary and timely interventions in case anything is not going to plan (Fullan, 2004). The leader should also be able to report on the progress and make sure that every decision maker reports on the data used in decision making and what decisions are made. As time goes, the necessary adjustments should be made to the existing plan to improve it. A leader who is able to perform all the four steps above can be comfortably regarded as an effective turnaround leader as he is likely to achieve success.

Summary

This research is consistent with current literature that suggests a principal's leadership style, teacher retention, and principal relationships influences school climate

Haymon (1990). For example, the levels of trust and how decisions are made, the failure to enrich staff, and deal with contradictions are major impacts on a schools' climate. It is essential that schools become places where teachers are involved in school renewal or reform efforts for enhancing the schools and where administrative support motivates the entire staff to model traits that foster collegiality and a professional atmosphere (Bullach, 2006; Northouse, 2007; Tableman, 2004). In addition, the strong connection between the way principals interact with teachers, community, and upper administration has an effect on school climate. Essentially, the literature shows school climate influences the overall student achievement and teacher retention. A series of correlational studies have shown school climate is directly related to academic achievement in high schools (Lee & Bryk, 1998; Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg 1998; Stewart, 2008).

Chapter 3

Methodology

Methodology suggests a way of conducting the study; it outlines the procedures and methods to conduct a study while defining the complete structure. Overall, a study could be based on a qualitative, quantitative, or a mixed research design (Creswell, 2009). Qualitative design is focused on human opinions and interpretations (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) unlike quantitative design which “focus attention on measurements and amounts” (Thomas, 2003, p. 1). There is also a combination of both qualitative and quantitative designs, which is referred to as mixed methods. Mixed method combines both qualitative methods and quantitative ways of carrying out the study; therefore, both opinions and numbers are used collectively to reach conclusions. This study used a quantitative design. The quantitative design will be used to examine the themes to be analyzed. Quantitative approach has an advantage that it allows themes to be quantified and hence is best for topics that may attract several different opinions. This goes with the topic under discussion. The reason to use quantitative research design is to allow summarization of opinions as highlighted by Rumrill et al (2011) that quantitative research design allows “summarization, classification, interpretation and generalization”.

The purpose of this study was to examine the themes derived from the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding their beliefs of what makes a good school. This study used the data of two completed studies conducted by Williams (2011) and Landry (2012). Williams’ 2011 study, *Principal Descriptions of a Good School and the Culture of a Good School*, and Landry’s 2012 study, *The Role of School Assistant Principals and their Perceptions Regarding the Characteristics and Culture of a Good*

School, were analyzed to draw conclusions regarding the beliefs of the principals and assistant principals. The study examines archival data acquired through surveys given to 371 assistant principals and 311 principals in Texas public schools. The researcher was able to answer the research questions with the data collected.

Research Questions

1. Do differences exist in the perceptions of the principal and assistant principals regarding the characteristics of a good school?
2. Do differences exist in the perceptions of the principal and assistant principals regarding the culture of a good school?

Research Philosophy

Research philosophy informs the research structure and gives a direction to the study. The philosophy a researcher selects for a study can be critical, interpretive, or positivist. Each philosophy gives a different outlook to the study. Betz and Fassinger (2011) defined all these types of philosophies explaining that if a study is critical, it is analytical in its approach towards the findings; if a study is interpretive, it takes the opinions of the research participants and assumes the reality as explained by the observers; whereas positivism is more of a quantitative approach which relies more on statistics than on human interpretation of the situation. This study used constructive interpretivist research philosophy in order to reach findings, which “assumes a relativist notion of multiple, equally valid realities that are constructed in the minds of actors and observers” (Betz & Fassinger, 2011, p. 238). The reason to base this study on constructive-interpretivist research philosophy was to allow the researcher to view the opinions of actual actors who are in the real situations of leadership. This philosophy

allowed for the gathering of different opinions on the characteristics and culture of what make a good school. Using this philosophy was also beneficial because of its flexibility to interpret different views and to give them the status of equally valid realities hence emphasizing that there are different facets of a same issue and every individual has a different view on a topic while all views have their own standing. Interviews provided insights into how people think and provided a deeper understanding of the phenomena being studied. A method to gain more in-depth information to supplement surveys are interviews; conducting interviews, however, can be an expensive proposition that can exceed the available resources. According to Adkins in 2002 at the International Conference on System Sciences, the Skilled Facilitator Approach is a proved theory-based method to increase group effectiveness in a face-to-face interaction. A skilled facilitator can encourage these group interactions to capture this data to provide a more comprehensive understanding of what is being studied.

Participants

The participants in this study derived from the study conducted by Landry (2012) and Williams (2011), which included 371 public school assistant principals and 311 public school principals respectively. The principals and assistant principals were all from the Southeastern Gulf Region of Texas. In Landry's (2012) study, 3 non-public school principals were included, and in Williams' (2011) study, 20 private school principals and 8 charter school principals were included. The demographics that this study used in its comparison included gender and ethnicity. This data was archived and was acquired directly from Williams' (2011) and Landry's (2012) studies. The data is displayed in tables included in the study. The tables depict the demographics of the

respondents, which include 235 females and 105 male assistant principals with 31 not reporting. The ethnic breakdown consisted of 52% Anglo, 25% African-American, and 18% Hispanic. The following tables show gender breakdown in Table 3.1 and ethnicity breakdown in Table 3.2. The data were retrieved directly from Williams' (2011) and Landry's (2012) studies. The researcher of this study combined the demographics onto one table for gender and one other table for ethnicity.

Table 3-1

Frequency of Participants' Gender

Gender	AP	PR
Female	235	183
Male	105	128
Not Reported	31	0
Total	371	311

PR = Principal, AP=Assistant Principal

Table 3-2

Frequency of Participants' Ethnicity

Ethnicity	AP	PR
Anglo	195	202
African-American	94	62
Hispanic	70	42
American-Indian/Asian/Pacific/Other	12	5
Total	371	311

PR=Principal, AP=Assistant Principal

Research Design

The research design for this study involved examining the perceptions of 311 principals and 371 assistant principals. The original research also employed a cross-sectional, cognitive interview design and targeted subjects who were currently serving as principals and assistant principals in Texas (Landry, 2012; Williams, 2011). The two studies included surveys of the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding the characteristics of a good school and the culture of a good school. The open-ended questions in the culture section of the survey were analyzed for relationships; which lead to a qualitative approach. The themes in the studies conducted by Williams (2011) and Landry (2012) were analyzed. This study used Section B within the original survey instrument. Section B of the survey specifically asks principals and assistant principals to give their perceptions of what makes a good school and how would they describe the culture of a good school. The current researcher examined the themes derived from the perceptions of principals and assistant principals using descriptive statistics. The researcher identified the similarities and differences in the frequency of the themes derived from the perceptions of the principals and assistant principals.

Instruments

After conducting a qualitative study involving 200 principals, MacNeil and Kajs (1997) developed The Principal Survey. The survey was initially developed as a clinical research tool for students enrolled in the Masters of Education (Educational Leadership) program. Following one semester, the survey was re-evaluated in order to converge on highly focused topics. The study by MacNeil and Kajs (1997) recognized five sources identified as contributing factors to the frustration and obstacles that school principals

face throughout the span of their career. Utilizing the scale development guidelines, The Principal Survey was created (DeVellis, 2003). The process of development required reviewing the MacNeil and Kajs (1997) study followed by the generation of items and a determination of formatting. Construct validity of The Principal Survey was assessed through item analysis using the exploratory principal axis factor and the alpha reliability program with SPSS 17.0. This method established consistency through defining subsets including items correlated with ensuing factors. The overall survey included 115 items: 22 contending with background and school demographics, 62 Likert scale items, and 31 open-ended questions, which required descriptive answers. The open-ended questions related to principals' and assistant principals' perceptions of good schools and their culture allowed respondents to expound on their responses and express their views without the limitation of a prearranged list of answers (Bradburn, Sudman & Wansink, 2004).

Data Collection

Polit and Hunglar (1999) suggest that collecting quantitative data is a very demanding activity that requires ingenuity, creativity, insight, conceptual sensitivity, and hard work. Merriam (2002) says that simultaneous data collection and analysis is essential because it enables the researcher to make alterations throughout the study and to test upcoming themes, concepts, and categories against subsequent data. This study used the archival data from Williams (2011) and Landry (2012) which was acquired from a larger study of assistant principals and principals at a large urban research university in the Gulf Coast Region of Southeast Texas. Permission was granted by Dr. Angus MacNeil, the author of the original instrument, to analyze this data. The researcher

collected the themes identified by principals and assistant principals regarding their perceptions of a good school and the characteristics of the culture of a good school.

Data Analysis

Data analysis can be inductive or deductive; Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2003) explained that inductive approach is particularly concerned with the interpretations and opinions of humans involved in the research as stated by the authors that inductive approach takes into account “the context in which such events were taking place” (Saunders et al., 2003, p. 106). Whereas the deductive approach is more concerned with scientific approach where human interpretation is less preferred over the numbers and figures. This study, focused on a quantitative approach, used an inductive approach to data analysis. This study used researcher’s interpretation of their perceptions of assistant principals and principals. Two studies provided data to be analyzed, Williams’ (2011) *Principals’ Descriptions of a Good School and the Culture of a Good School* and Landry’s (2012) *The Role of School Assistant Principals and Their Perceptions Regarding the Characteristics and Culture of a Good School*. Specifically for this study, two data sets were analyzed. The two sets of data used the same questions from section B of the survey developed by MacNeil and Kajs (1997). The data acquired from Williams (2011) included principals’ descriptions of a good school and the culture of a good school. The data acquired from Landry (2012) included the role of assistant principals and their perceptions regarding the characteristics and culture of a good school. Both sets of data were identifiers of good schools and culture of good schools as perceived by assistant principals and principals who were interviewed. In this study, the researcher examined the themes from two studies and used descriptive statistics to identify the

differences and similarities of principals' and assistant principals' perceptions regarding the characteristics and culture of a good school.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to examine the themes derived from the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding their beliefs of what makes a good school. In this study, the researcher used descriptive statistics to examine the themes derived from the perceptions of the principals and assistant principals. Analysis of the data was conducted and the data were not altered in any manner. Two studies were used to acquire the data specifically related to principals' and assistant principals' perceptions concerning what makes a good school that were identified in a larger study conducted by Waxman, MacNeil, and Lee (2006). Two questions were used in the analysis of this data. The questions were open-ended and were answered by 311 principals and 371 principals. The principals were not necessarily paired with their assistant principals from the same school. The questions were analyzed using the themes/categories created by Williams (2011) and Landry (2012). These categories were derived from the answers that were given by the campus administrators. The studies that were used to conduct the analysis of the data included Williams (2011), *Principal Descriptions of a Good School and the Culture of a Good School*, and Landry (2012), *The Role of School Assistant Principals and their Perceptions regarding the Characteristics and Culture of a Good School*.

Research Question One

Do differences exist in the perception of principals and assistant principals regarding the characteristics of a good school?

The first research question's purpose was to identify the characteristics of a good school as perceived by principals and assistant principals. These were not paired with or

by their colleagues in the same building. The two questions that were answered were taken from the large surveyed that was completed by students at a large university in the Southeast Gulf Region. Williams' (2011) analysis of the principal responses produced the following themes:

1. Academic Focus
2. Student Centered
3. Strong leadership
4. Positive Climate
5. Parent and Community Involvement
6. Professional Development.

Landry (2012) also identified themes through his analysis of the responses of the assistant principals. The themes are as follows:

1. Student Achievement
2. Professional Learning Communities
3. Positive Climate
4. Strong Leadership
5. Parental & Community Involvement
6. Student Discipline.

This study's Research Question One asked: Do differences exist between the perception of principals and assistant principals regarding the characteristics of a good school? The frequency of responses by the principals and assistant principals are quantified in Table 4-1 and Table 4-2. The themes used to describe the responses by the principals show differences and similarities.

Table 4-1

Frequency of Principals' Descriptions of a Good School for Combined Categories

(N=311)

Responses	<i>f</i>	%
Academic Focus	209	34.7
Student Centered	100	16.6
Strong Leadership	99	16.4
Positive Climate	91	15.1
Parent & Community Involvement	73	12.1
Professional Development	30	5.0
Total	603	100.0

Table 4-2

Frequency of Assistant Principals' Descriptions of a Good School Combined Categories

(N=371)

Responses	<i>f</i>	%
Student Achievement	181	34.5
Professional Learning Communities	117	22.3
Positive Climate	91	17.3
Strong Leadership	68	13.0
Parent & Community Involvement	53	10.1
Student Discipline	15	2.9
Total	525	100.0

Academic Focus is not exactly the same as Student Achievement; however, a researcher could liken the two themes to each other. As for the research that has been conducted in this study, Academic Focus and Student Achievement were examined as the same theme. Examples of responses that principals provided were: "A good school is one

in which the focus is on teaching and learning”; “A good school is focused on high academic achievement for all students”; “Effective teaching and learning is at the heart of every school”; “A good school focuses on learning for all.” Some of the responses of the assistant principals were categorized as Student Achievement, which was not identified in the principals’ perceptions, but within the responses from the principals the researchers noticed the term student achievement being used. The responses from the assistant principals included: “One in which all stakeholders are vested and the focus is on the student achievement is evident”; “Focus is always on student achievement”; “Proficient learning in a school where results are a priority among all stakeholders.” “Increasing expectancy results.” “It is not a matter if the school is in a poverty-stricken environment or a low socio-economic area.” These factors have nothing to do with defining a "good school". “One where all involved parties have taken ownership of education, and students’ progress is the main focus.” Another category displayed a contrast in the two studies. Student centered category was included in the principal responses but was not in the assistant principals responses at a high enough frequency to be included in the results. Student Discipline was identified in the assistant principals’ perception, but was not noted in the principals’ perceptions. The other four categories are aligned as the principals and assistant principals are in agreement. The frequencies in which the responses are not aligned were in the PLCs, which occurred with the assistant principals at a frequency rate of 22% and within the principals’ perception it occurred 5% as professional development. The opinions of the researcher will follow in Chapter Five as it relates to the differences, or lack thereof, within the beliefs of principals and assistant principals regarding the characteristics and culture of a good school. Table 4-3 below

demonstrates the percent of responses given by the principals and assistant principals regarding the characteristics of a good school.

Table 4-3

Percent of Principals and Assistant Principals Descriptions of a Good School

Responses	AP%	PR%
Student Achievement/Academic Focus	34.5	34.7
Student Centered	0	16.6
Strong Leadership	13.0	16.4
Positive Climate	17.3	15.1
Parent & Community Involvement	10.1	12.1
Professional Development/PLC	22.3	5.0
Student Discipline	2.9	0

The results for Research Question Two, which asks the principals and assistant principals to respond with their perceptions related to the culture of a good school, are reported in the next section.

Research Question Two: Do differences exist in the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding the culture of a good school?

In Landry's (2012) study regarding the assistant principals, their responses regarding the culture of a good school were categorized similar to the categories composed from characteristics of a good school. The categories include:

1. Professional learning communities
2. Positive Climate
3. Student Achievement
4. Valuing the student

5. Parental and community involvement
6. Strong leadership

with a total of 474 responses.

In Williams' (2011) study the responses from the principals were categorized into similar categories as with the first question. The categories include:

1. Academic Focus
2. Positive Climate
3. Student Centered
4. Strong Leadership
5. Parent & community Involvement
6. Professional Development
7. Other

with a total of 445 responses.

The following tables demonstrate the frequency of principals' descriptors and the assistant principal descriptors regarding the culture of a good school.

Table 4-4

Frequency of Principals' Descriptors of the Culture of a Good School for Combined Categories (N=445)

Responses	n	%
Academic Focus	156	35.1
Positive Climate	93	20.8
Student Centered	89	20.0
Strong Leadership	68	15.2
Parent & Community Involvement	29	6.5
Professional Development	6	1.3
Other	4	.08
Total	445	100.0

Table 4-5

Frequency of Assistant Principals' Descriptions of the Culture of a Good School in Combined Categories (N=371)

Responses	<i>f</i>	%
Professional Learning Communities	126	26.6
Positive Climate	120	25.3
Student Achievement	104	21.9
Valuing the Student	57	12.0
Parent & Community Involvement	34	7.2
Strong Leadership	33	7.0
Total	474	100.0

In the data reported in Table 4-4 and Table 4-5, both researchers, Williams (2011) and Landry (2012), combined the responses of the principals and assistant principals in cases where the respondents answered with more than one response to the open-ended

questions. This is the reason the tables have a larger numbers of responses than the 371 assistant principals and 311 principals who participated in the original survey.

According to the responses of the principals and assistant principals, Academic Focus and Student Achievement had the highest combined frequencies with 35.1% and 21.9. The assistant principals responded most in the area of Professional Learning Communities. Similarities exist among the responses in regards to the characteristics of a good school as the two researchers categorized the responses. In the categories of Positive Climate, the principals and assistant principals displayed this as their second most frequent area to respond with 20.8 % for the principals and 25.3% for assistant principals. Then, in the area of the student achievement and valuing the student as mentioned in the assistant principals' responses there was 21.9% and 12% respectively and for the principals being student centered equated to 20% as the third highest response. Next, parental and community involvement was close in their number of responses by both the principals and assistant principals with 6.5% and 7.2%. Finally, strong leadership was in the responses of the principals at a 15.2% rate where as it was reported out at a 7% rate. Landry (2012) received responses in the areas of professional development and he added one category identified as other due to the responses of the principals, which did not fall into the specific categories reported.

Table 4-6 demonstrates the percentages of responses by principals and assistant principals regarding the descriptors of the culture of a good school. This visual will depict the similarities and differences in a table.

Table 4-6

Percent of Responses Regarding Descriptors of the Culture of a Good School

Responses	AP%	PR%
Professional Learning Communities	26.6	0
Professional Development	0	1.3
Positive Climate	25.3	20.8
Parent & Community Involvement	7.2	6.5
Strong Leadership	7.0	15.2
Student Centered/Valuing the Student	12.0	20.0
Academic Focus/Student Achievement	21.9	35.1
Total	100.0	100.0

Summary

The studies used to analyze the themes derived from the perceptions of principals and assistant principals were *Principal Descriptions of a Good School and the Culture of a Good School* (Williams, 2011) and *The Role of School Assistant Principals and their perceptions regarding the characteristics and culture of a Good School* (Landry, 2012). The current chapter reported the data from these two studies and compared the two sets of data to answer two research questions. No new methods were conducted by the researcher. The two researchers, Williams (2011) and Landry (2012), presented the data from two questions from a larger study conducted by university professors at a large gulf region university. In this chapter, only the facts were reported about the data and no additional information was interjected. The interpretations of the researcher will be observed in the following chapter.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

According to McRel (2011), the study of principal's and assistant principal's perception is crucial in understanding school climate and culture; therefore, having an effective principal leading is critical to creating an effective school. Leithwood et al. (2004) also agreed that school leadership is a key component to students having a positive academic experience. Having an effective principal leading every school is critical to ensure that schools are effective (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2003). As it pertains to the principal's predecessor, it is well documented that there is a misalignment between assistant principal training and their future role as a principal (Bartlett, 2011; Fields, 2002; Goodson, 2000; Hartzell, 1993; Koru, 1993; Madden, 2008; Marshall, 1992; Mertz, 2000).

The purpose of this study was to examine the themes derived from the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding their beliefs of what makes a good school. This study sought to answer two critical questions: 1) Do differences exist in the beliefs of principals and assistant principals regarding the characteristics of a good school?; and 2) Do differences exist in the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding the culture of a good school? The purpose of this study was to give attention to the importance of shared vision and beliefs between the principal and assistant principal. While the assistant principal has not been studied a great deal, it is important to note the assistant principal can sustain the innovation of the principal or completely disrupt and sabotage what the principal is attempting to accomplish. This is important because this relationship can contribute to creating a good school. Not only is having a shared vision

and common beliefs important but also preparing the assistant principal for the principalship is also very critical. All assistant principals will not become principals; however, those who aspire to be principals must be prepared. The Southern Regional Education Board stated there is a lack of long-term planning to properly recruit and place effective principals (Schmidt-Davis & Bottoms, 2011). According to SREB, about 18,000 principals leave vacancies in K-12 schools yearly. The principal is a critical resource in an effective school (Schmidt-Davis & Bottoms, 2011). While many districts practice a variety of hiring practices, high performing districts are known to promote from within (Schmidt-Davis & Bottoms, 2011). Therefore, it is extremely important for long-term planning to prepare the assistant principal to become an effective principal.

The phrase “good school” has been interpreted by researchers in many different ways with varied definitions in this study. Within the literature, some investigators identified a good school as a school that had high structure in discipline. Other researchers stated a good school is one that has high academic achievement, while another stated a higher number of good enough teachers than not so good teachers (Lightfoot, 1986). This study has concluded, according to the data, that there are more similarities than differences in the themes derived from the perceptions of principals and assistant principals. A good school can be defined as a school with high structure discipline (Ungoed, 2012). High academic achievement can be used to identify a good school (Obikor, 2011). A school with a higher number of good enough teachers than not so good teachers is considered a good school (Lightfoot, 1986).

The perceptions of the principals and assistant principals were acquired through cognitive interviews. These interviews were conducted and collected through a university

in the Gulf Coast Region of Southeast Texas. The investigation was completed by graduate students was to conduct a study to determine what principals and assistant principals deemed most important in schools. This study conducted by the researcher was purposed to identify the differences and similarities in the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding the characteristics and culture of a good school. Descriptive statistics were employed in this study in the data analysis stage. The purpose of this study was to examine the themes derived from the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding their beliefs of what makes a good school (MacNeil and Kajs ,1997).

The purpose of this study was to examine the themes derived from the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding their beliefs of what makes a good school.

The research questions included:

1. Do differences exist in the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding the characteristics of a good school?
2. Do differences exist in the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding the culture of a good school?

Research Question One: Do differences exist in the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding the characteristics of a good school?

The first research question identified the differences and similarities of principals' and assistant principals' perception regarding characteristics of a good school. The explicit categories that the researcher identified had some similarities and some differences. The categories reported by Williams (2011) and Landry (2012), which identified the themes that were acquired from the responses of the principals and assistant principals, shared four themes and two themes they did not have in common. Strong

leadership, positive climate, parent and community involvement, and professional development were the themes shared. Student achievement and academic focus were linked to each other as a common theme. Student centered and student discipline were not common responses among the administrators. For the first research question, the administrators agreed 48% to 62% on the characteristics of a good school while disagreeing a small percent of the time based on student discipline and student centered themes or job embedded roles. The principal and assistant principal perceptions are subject to their “balcony” view of what they do in their roles day to day. The data revealed more similarities than differences in characteristics of a good school as perceived by principals and assistant principals. The similarities show a shared vision and common beliefs which can lead to an effective school with effective leadership. The differences can be a positive aspect of a principal and assistant principal dynamic. The differences can pose problems on a campus with the principal and assistant principal such as not following the vision of the campus or not leading the way the principal believes once he or she is not on the campus. Many different dynamics can happen with similarities and differences in the perceptions of principals and assistant principals.

Research Question Two: Do differences exist in the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding the culture of a good school?

Regarding the culture of a good school, the principals had it highest frequency of responses in the area of academic focus at 35.1%, while the assistant principals highest was professional learning communities at 26.6%. The smallest percent was in the area of professional development for principals at 1.3% and strong leadership for assistant principals at 7%. The areas the administrators had in common were positive climate,

student centered/valuing the student, strong leadership, and parent and community involvement, which accounted for 51.5% of the assistant principals' responses and 62.5% of the principals' responses. The categories that were different include professional learning communities for assistant principals at 26.6%, while the principals' responses included professional development at 1.3%. Student Achievement and Academic Focus may be considered by some as the same category; this study views these two as the same. This study identifies student achievement as the end result of an academic focus. The perceptions of the principals and assistant principals were aligned with the roles described in the literature.

The data in this study, retrieved from Williams (2011) and Landry (2012) has been examined and have revealed there are similarities and differences in the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding the characteristics and culture of a good school. These findings were derived from the summarization of the results of the two studies analyzed. The studies revealed there are more similarities in the themes that principals and assistant principals believe to be characteristics and culture of a good school. The differences in the themes and frequencies were much smaller than the similarities of the themes and frequencies. Some reasons for these findings could include demographics, years in the profession of education, and or the current initiatives in public education in Texas. Though the exclusivity of the data acquired was limited to principals and assistant principals, this data presents itself as valuable and critical to the principalship.

Implications

Research has suggested there is a strong correlation between school leadership and student learning (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). In addition, several researchers state that leadership is second to classroom instruction that contribute to student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2004). According to Maslowki (2001), a relationship exists between the values, behavior of the principal, and school culture. It is critical to have an effective leader leading every school to ensure school effectiveness (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). This study has significance because the principals and assistant principals provide the leadership, vision, and guidance for a school to be labeled as effective. This study provided a lens for the principal and assistant principal which identified areas of significance to both administrators. This study displayed areas of importance from each individual administrator. With results of this study, the researcher believes the administrators will be able to see their responses were based on their roles within a school. This data can lead to principals allowing for assistant principals to have different roles on a school campus to build capacity within the assistant principal to better prepare them for the principalship. The study revealed that principals and assistant principals may need to shift their focus and give more attention to others areas that contribute to good school. Though their focus reflects their roles as administrators, their roles to each other are not revealed with any high level of priority or urgency. The purpose of this study was to examine the themes derived from the perceptions of principals and assistant principals regarding their beliefs of what makes a good school. Though some important aspects of leading a school were derived from the perceptions, there are a few themes that were not derived from the perceptions. The

researcher has identified in the section following a few that are critical to leading a school.

The principals and assistant principals did not give any responses related to how they communicate with each other or to others on their campus. This is extremely significant because how one communicates can determine if it is heard and understood or disregarded and misunderstood. One theme that was not included was the importance of relationships in the workplace. The principals and assistant principals' relationship is a model for the relationships between the teachers and a model for the teacher/student relationship, which is the most important so student learning can take place consistently. The additional themes mentioned above are possible areas to be included in further study.

Suggestions for Further Research

1. A study within school districts to find out what their long term plans are regarding the training of assistant principals.
2. A large scale comparative study with corporate managers' perception of what make a good business as compared to what makes a good school.
3. A comparative study of the different principal certification programs across the U.S. with dialogue via social media about new training for principals and assistant principals to address the changing culture of the principalship.
4. A large scale study on the length of time assistant principals are in their position then looking at their effectiveness as a principal to find if there is any relation to time spent as an assistant principal to principal effectiveness.

Summary

The analysis of the themes displayed more similarities than differences in the perceptions of the principals and assistant principals. The themes which displayed differences included student discipline and student centered. The theme student discipline was categorized with assistant principals as what makes the culture for a good school. Based on the data student discipline was an outlier. Student centered theme was categorized with principals as what contributes to the culture of a good school. The results of the aforementioned themes are consistent with the literature as these are closely related to the roles of the principal and assistant principal. The similarities in the themes displayed a higher frequency than differences in the themes regarding the characteristics and culture of a good school. The themes derived from the perceptions of the principals and assistant principals were very similar regarding both the characteristics of a good school and the culture of a good school.

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Appendix A

APPROVAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

UNIVERSITY of
HOUSTON

College of Education
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Professional Leadership Program

Keith Brooks
Date: 10/16/2014

Dear Keith,

I am writing to you at this time to give you approval to use the existing data from the survey entitled, "Principal's Perception of Their Use of Time Evaluation, Succession and Supervision", which was approved by the committee for the protections of Human Subjects on January 25, 2010.

Respectfully,



Angus J. MacNeil Ph.D.
Ph: 713-743-5038
E-mail: amacneil@uh.edu

HOUSTON'S CARNEGIE-DESIGNATED TIER ONE PUBLIC RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

214 Farish Hall • Houston, TX 77204-5023
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Appendix B

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH FORM

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

DIVISION OF RESEARCH

November 13, 2014

Keith Brooks
c/o Dr. Steven Busch
Curriculum and Instruction

Dear Keith Brooks,

Based upon your request for exempt status, an administrative review of your research proposal entitled "How do Principals and Assistant Principals differ in their Beliefs regarding the Characteristics and Culture of a Good School" was conducted on October 22, 2014.

At that time, your request for exemption under **Category 4** was approved pending modification of your proposed procedures/documents.

The changes you have made adequately respond to the identified contingencies. As long as you continue using procedures described in this project, you do not have to reapply for review. * Any modification of this approved protocol will require review and further approval. Please contact me to ascertain the appropriate mechanism.

If you have any questions, please contact Nettie Martinez at 713-743-9211.

Sincerely yours,



Kirstin Rochford, MPH, CIP, CPIA
Director, Research Compliance

*Approvals for exempt protocols will be valid for 5 years beyond the approval date. Approval for this project will expire **November 11, 2019**. If the project is completed prior to this date, a final report should be filed to close the protocol. If the project will continue after this date, you will need to reapply for approval if you wish to avoid an interruption of your data collection.

Protocol Number: 15117-EX

316 E. Cullen Building Houston, TX 77204-2015 (713) 743-9204 Fax: (713) 743-9577

COMMITTEES FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS.