

LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS AND PRACTICES OF PRINCIPALS IN
PREDOMINANTLY MINORITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

by

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Abstract

The academic performance of African-American, Hispanic and low-income students is an ongoing national problem, as these students are not making the same academic gains as their White, Asian, and more socio-economically privileged peers. Schools across the country are striving to close this achievement gap, especially in light of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2002 (more commonly known as the No Child Left Behind Act), which states as its main objective "to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility and choices so that no child is left behind" (Public Law 107-110, 107th Congress, 2002). Research on effective schools shows that schools can positively impact student achievement—especially the achievement of minority and poor students (Andrews & Sonder, 1987; Edmonds, 1981). Moreover, research shows that very few elements account for more inconsistency in student achievement than school leadership (Leithwood, 1994). Principals' behaviors and practices impact student achievement (Edsource et al., 2005; Powell, 2004; Waters, Marzano & McNulty, 2003).

Hence, the purpose of this study was to use Powell's (2004) five domains of effective principal leadership behaviors and practices (e.g., vision, mission and culture; curriculum and classroom instruction; collaboration and shared leadership; family and community involvement; and effective management) as a lens to identify, compare and contrast, from the perspective of teachers, the leadership behaviors and practices of principals in predominantly minority elementary schools deemed effective and principals in predominantly minority elementary schools deemed marginally

effective. The sample consisted of 20 schools (e.g., 10 effective and 10 marginally effective) in a mid-Atlantic state. Data were collected using a 76-item survey questionnaire developed by Powell (2004).

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND THE REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter, the problem of the closing of the persistent achievement gap between African-American, Hispanic and low-income children and their White, Asian and more privileged peers is discussed. A theory is presented to show a correlation between student achievement and principals' leadership behaviors and practices. A review of related literature and research are also presented in this chapter.

The Context for the Study

The needs of society are changing (Walker, 1998). Elementary schools throughout the country are striving to meet the increased expectations that society has placed on them to ensure students have the skills they will need to compete and be successful in a continuously changing and more demanding future job market (Bjork & Ginsberg, 1995; Fleming, 2002; Institute for Educational Leadership [IEL], 2000). As a result, unprecedented national goals have been set and states have initiated unparalleled reform efforts to meet these new goals and close the "large and persistent achievement gap that exists among racial and ethnic groups" (Barton, 2005, p.12). Reform efforts such as "new math, all phonics, whole language, school reconstitution" (McElroy, 2005, p. 6), high-stakes testing, outcome and standards-based instruction, high-quality teachers in every classroom, a rigorous curriculum, explicit instruction, differentiated instruction, all-day kindergarten, extended school days and year round schools are just some of the numerous recent initiatives that have been enacted to increase student achievement and close the achievement gap between African-American and Hispanic students and their White and Asian peers (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Nye, Hedges & Konstantopoulou, 2002) as well as between children from low-income homes and those from more privileged homes (Taylor, 1999). The Elementary

and Secondary Education Act of 2002 (more commonly known as the No Child Left Behind Act) states as its main objective "to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choices so that no child is left behind" (Public Law 107-110, 107th Congress, 2002).

While these reform efforts hold promise for increasing student achievement and closing the achievement gap, it is believed that they will fall short without an effective instructional leader at the helm of every elementary school (Fullan, 2002; IEL, 2000; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004; Malone & Caddell, 2000; Sergiovanni, 1990). According to a report from the National Commission for the Principals (1990), "Every educational reform report of the 1980s concluded that the United States cannot have excellent schools without excellent leaders. Leadership, therefore, can provide the key leverage to successfully meet major challenges facing our nation's schools" (p. 9). Sweeny (1982) contended, "Effective schools have effective leaders. Much of what a school does to promote achievement is within the principal's power to influence and control" (p. 349). Bjork and Ginsberg (1995) further asserted that excellent schools simply cannot exist without exceptional leaders. In 1999, at a town meeting focused on the principalship, former secretary of the United States Department of Education Richard Riley went so far as to say, "The principalship is a position that is absolutely critical to educational change and development. A good principal can create a climate that can foster excellence in teaching and learning, while an ineffective one can quickly thwart the progress of the most dedicated reformers" (Educational Research Service, 2000, p. 13). Moreover, it is well documented in the research that principals' behaviors and practices impact student achievement.

Waters, Marzano and McNulty (2003) synthesized 30 years of research on the effects of principals' leadership behaviors and practices on student achievement. This

was their third quantitative meta-analysis involving school effectiveness studies. Their first two meta-analyses looked at teachers' behaviors and practices that impact student achievement. Their third meta-analysis focused specifically on principal leadership behaviors and practices. Initially, over 5,000 studies were reviewed. Of the initial 5,000 studies, 69 studies met their criteria "for design, controls, data analysis and rigor" (p. 2). The six criteria their studies met in order to be included in the meta-analysis were:

1. The study involved students at elementary, middle and/or high school levels.
2. The study involved American schools or schools in countries with school cultures similar to those found in America.
3. The study directly or indirectly examined the impact of principals' leadership behaviors and practices on student achievement.
4. The study involved the use of quantitative student achievement databases on standardized or norm-referenced assessments.
5. In the study, student achievement was the dependent variable, and teachers' judgments of their principals' leadership behaviors and practices were the independent variable.
6. Effect sizes had to be reported as correlations or were reported in a manner that enabled the effect sizes to be calculated. (p. 29)

The 69 studies, which were conducted between 1978 and 2001, reflected approximately 2,800 schools (e.g., 1,319 elementary schools; 323 middle schools and 371 high schools), 1,400,000 students and 14,000 teachers. The average number of students in each school was 500. Based on the results of their meta-analysis, the researchers found a modest, statistically significant, positive correlation (.25) between

effective principals and student achievement. Hence, they concluded that principals' behaviors and practices matter.

The desire to close the achievement gap and graduate students who are capable of competing and succeeding in a demanding future job market has placed increased attention on principals' leadership to get the job done (Cotton, 2003; Malone & Caddell, 2000). However, leadership does not occur in isolation (Cotton, 2003; IEL, 2000; Lashway, Mazzarella & Grundy, 1997; Spillane, 2005). Leadership takes place in an environment that consists of children, teachers, staff, parents, administrators and the community at large; and, in this environment effective principals work in collaboration with others (Mulford, Silins, & Leithwood. 2004). Effective leaders willingly "develop and count on contributions from many others in their organizations" (Leithwood et al., 2004. p. 5).

Corporate America has focused on effective leadership practices for decades. In their research on some of the best-run companies in the United States, Peters and Waterman (1982) found that "associated with almost every excellent company was a strong leader" (p. 17). They also identified basic principles that are evident in successful American companies. One of the principles, "Productivity Through People," speaks to the subordinate and supervisor relationship. Companies that are strong in this principle "do not foster a we/they labor attitude" (p.14); instead, they create awareness in all employees that their hard work is important and they are an integral part of the company's achievements. Deming's (1986) work on improving organizational effectiveness supports Peter's and Waterman's argument about the kind of subordinate and supervisor relationships that occur in successful organizations. Deming (1982) asserted that the number one job of managers is "to improve competitive position" (p. i). Furthermore, Deming stressed that to have a successful

organization requires supervisors and subordinates who work as partners (Hoy & Miskel, 1991; Lilyquist, 1998) and not in isolation.

As part of the effort to increase student achievement, subordinate and supervisory relationships in schools have been discussed as well. Lezotte (1991) identified first and second generation correlates of effective schools. In his comparison of these effective schools, Lezotte (1991) said that in the first generation, "The effective school principal acts as an instructional leader and effectively and persistently communicates that mission to the staff, parents and students" (p. 3). In the second generation, he asserted that instructional leadership would remain important; however, the entire staff would need to be involved in the collaborative planning and developing of a shared vision. Lezotte (1991) also argued that the second generation of effective schools would require greater involvement of parents and the community in school governance and teachers would assume a variety of leadership roles. Unlike in the first generation of effective schools, Lezotte asserted "A principal cannot be the only leader in a complex organization like a school. The role of the principal will be changed to that of 'leader of leaders,' rather than leader of followers" (p. 4). Spillane (2005) concurs. According to Spillane (2005), principals "do not single-handedly lead schools to greatness" (p.1), as schools need an "array of people" (p. 1) to ensure outcomes are achieved.

A review of the research literature indicates the importance of teacher judgments of principal leadership characteristics and job satisfaction (Cheng, 1996; Lashway et al., 1997; Palmero, 2002). Additionally, some researchers suggest that there is a relationship between principal leadership style, teacher job satisfaction, and principal effectiveness (Blasé & Blasé, 1999; Cheng, 1996; Keller, 1998; van der Grif, 1999). For example, in their research on leadership behaviors, Bolman and Deal (1997) developed four frames or orientations that reveal the way leaders think and

respond to everyday issues and problems. The four frames are: Structural, Human Resource, Symbolic, and Political. They found that these four frames could predict leadership effectiveness as perceived by their subordinates. Blasé and Blasé (1999) surveyed 850 teachers and found principals displayed certain behaviors that improved classroom instruction. Some of the specific behaviors noted were: talking with teachers, promoting teachers' professional growth, and fostering teacher reflection on instruction. More recently, Powell (2004) identified five domains of principal leadership behaviors and practices that lead to effective outcomes for schools. The five domains Powell (2004) identified are: Vision, Mission and Culture; Curriculum and Classroom Instruction; Collaboration and Shared Leadership; Family and Community Involvement; and Effective Management.

Background of the Problem

The academic performance of minority students has been an ongoing national problem (Boykin, 1991; Ladson-Billings & Gomez, 2001; Lipham, 1981). Barton (2005) used three decades of National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data to support his claim of the existence of a persistent achievement gap between African-American and Hispanic students and their White and Asian peers. NAEP provides national data on public and private school students in grades 4 and 8 who have been assessed on NAEP math and reading assessments (National Center on Educational Statistics, 2005). According to Barton (2005), three decades of NAEP scores indicate that the average eighth-grade minority student scores about the same as the average White fourth grader in math and reading. Barton (2005) further asserts:

In mathematics, the average Black fourth grader is likely to be able to subtract whole numbers with regrouping; the average Hispanic fourth grader can identify cylindrical shapes and measuring instruments; and

the considerably higher-scoring White fourth grader can represent a situation algebraically. Four years later, when the same students are in the eighth grade, the Black student is likely to be able to round decimals to the nearest whole number; the Hispanic student can use multiplication to solve problems; and the White student can use a pattern to draw a path on a grid. The contrast in reading is similar. For example, while the average Black and Hispanic fourth grader can recognize a story type as an adventure, the average White fourth grader can use story evidence to support opinion about character. (p. 14)

Graham (1994) argues that far too many minority students are performing poorly in schools. In her research on the variables that affect the academic achievement of undergraduate African-American males in four-year institutions, Monk (1998) found that throughout history the academic performance of African-Americans has been lower than any other racial group. While the lack of achievement in school can limit their options for the future (Graham, 1994), improving the education of minority students can improve their chances and opportunities in life (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Some schools have minority students who are performing as well as or better than their White and Asian peers (Graham, 1994; Hrabowski, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 2004). Research shows that very few elements account for more inconsistency in student achievement than school leadership (Leithwood, 1994). Furthermore, Knowles (2003) contends, "the principal practically determines the ideals and standards of achievement of both teachers and students within the school" (p. 41). Hence, there is some truth to the old adage "as is the principal, so is the school." Effective principal leadership is what is needed to increase student achievement and close the achievement gap between African-American and Hispanic students and their White and Asian peers (Donahue, Daane, & Jin, 2005).

Research on effective schools has consistently emphasized how an effective principal contributes to a school's success with increasing student achievement (Andrews & Sonder, 1987; Boyan, 1988; Goodlad, 1984). The Education Commission of the States (1983) asserted, "In study after study, it has been shown that one key determinate of excellence in public schooling is the leadership of the individual school principal" (p. 29). In fact, a number of reports released in the United States during the mid-1980s emphasize the important role of the principal in facilitating school reform (Bjork & Ginsberg, 1995; Protheroe, 2005). "Effective leaders are critical if all students are to achieve at high levels" (Southern Regional Education Board [SERB], 2003, p.2).

In a recent article about the kind of leadership that is needed for school reform, Protheroe (2005) declared, "Principals are at the center ... their leadership is key to successfully navigating change" (p. 54). Current school reform efforts have focused on preparing students to compete in a changing and more demanding job market as well as on closing the achievement gap that exists between racial and ethnic groups. "For nearly a century, researchers have studied academic performance in people without equal access to schooling and with low academic achievement" (Salley, 2005, p.1). Researchers have concluded that academic achievement for minority students is related to several cognitive and non-cognitive factors. Among the non-cognitive factors are the rigor of the curriculum, the amount of teacher experience, and class size (Barton, 2005), as well as school climate and environment (Dezmon, 1995). Principals impact all of these factors to varying degrees (Barton, 2005). Based on their analysis of studies of effective school leadership, Leithwood et al. (2004) asserted that effective leadership plays a highly significant role in increasing student learning and achievement; especially for Black and impoverished students (Andrews & Sonder, 1987).

The behaviors and actions of effective principals have been studied as well and have been found to make a difference in school success. The positive impact of the principals' leadership was substantiated in the 1970s when researchers found that effective schools were led by principals who set clear goals, participated in the instructional program, and made it clear to staff members and students that they were expected to excel (IEL, 2000). In his research on effective schools, Edmonds (1979) found that one obvious difference between schools that were increasing student achievement and those that were not was that, in effective schools, principals acted as instructional leaders.

Effective leaders are visionaries (Kotter, 1990; DuFour & Eaker, 1998). "They have the foresight and ability to establish a vision for the future as well as the ability to produce the changes needed to achieve that vision" (Fleming, 2002, p. 11). According to the National Commission for the Principalship (1990), not only do effective principals possess a shared vision, "Their staff members also share assumptions, operating procedures, and value norms. Achieving this state requires a process of persuasion and example by which the principal moves the group (teachers) to pursue objectives along a common roadway" (p. 12). This assertion supports Hersey and Blanchard's (1984) earlier contention when they argued that teachers who understand and share a common vision are empowered to make the necessary changes for school improvement. Effective leadership at the building level is necessary to ensure the success of educational reform efforts (Hersey & Blanchard, 1984; Sergiovanni & Corbally, 1984).

In the context of school reform, a number of reports released in the United States during the mid-1980s emphasized the role of school administrators in facilitating change (Bjork & Ginsberg, 1995). Cawelti (2000) reviewed research on

leadership and its impact on school reform. Four critical tasks on the part of principals emerged as needing to be done in order to improve schools:

1. Sustaining focus on student achievement;
 2. Developing a collaborative organization culture;
 3. Helping teachers to expand their repertoire of research-based teaching strategies; and
 4. Creating and sustaining a school climate and culture that promotes risk taking and experimentation with new ideas to improve productivity.
- (Cawelti, 2000)

Principals have been viewed through the myriad of ways they have functioned in schools (Fleming, 2002). For example, principals have assumed roles such as "the school's community relations director, disciplinarian, business manager, marketer, safety officer, facilities supervisor, fund-raiser, labor relations officer, medical supervisor, social service agent, statistician, and enforcer of laws, policies, and regulations from various levels of government" (Gilman & Lanman-Givens, 2001, p. 15) as part of their day-to-day operations. Another role that principals assume is the principal-as-change-agent role (Malone & Caddell, 2000). This role is represented by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium's six standards (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996), which were developed in collaboration with two principal organizations: The National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (Pingle, 2004).

According to this document, the six practices or standards that effective principals use to increase student achievement are:

1. Cultivating a shared vision of learning within the learning community;
2. Fostering and sustaining a school culture that is conducive for learning for students as well as staff;

3. Ensuring a safe and orderly learning environment;
4. Collaborating with families and members of the community as well as marshaling resources;
5. Acting in an ethical manner at all times;
6. Being politically savvy—understanding and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural environment of the school. (p. 29-32)

According to Pingle, (2004), "These standards drive and guide the practice of school leaders...and have become a driving force in the way school leadership should and will be viewed" (pp. 20-21).

Examining how principals' leadership behaviors and practices are perceived by teachers in effective predominantly minority elementary schools contributes to the knowledge of how effective principals think about, view, and make decisions about the various situations they encounter on a daily basis, which ultimately impact students' achievement (Andrews & Sonder, 1987; Bolman & Deal, 1992; Fleming, 2002). This knowledge may help principals to do a better job; provide implications for future principal development, preparation and training; impact principal hiring practices; and help to identify those effective principal practices and behaviors which increase student achievement—specifically, minority student achievement—in elementary schools.

Thesis

For decades, studies on effective schools show that principals' leadership impacts student achievement (Andrews & Sonder, 1987; Barton, 2005; Blasé & Blasé; 1994; Cotton, 2003; Edmonds, 1979; Heck & Marcoulides, 1993; Lezotte, 1991). "Administrative behavior, policies, and practices in schools appeared to have a

significant impact on school effectiveness" (Edmonds, 1979, p. 3); according to Andrews and Sonder (1987), this "is especially true for Black and low-income students" (p. 9). Based upon this and a review of the literature, the focus of this study was: School reform efforts aimed at closing the achievement gap will be hampered without effective principals. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to use Powell's (2004) five domains of effective principal leadership behaviors and practices (e.g., vision, mission and culture; curriculum and classroom instruction; collaboration and shared leadership; family and community involvement; and effective management) as a lens to identify, compare and contrast, from the perspective of teachers, the leadership behaviors and practices of principals in predominantly minority elementary schools deemed effective to principals in predominantly minority elementary schools deemed marginally effective.

Statement of the Problem

An achievement gap exists between African-American and Hispanic students and their White and Asian peers. Throughout the country school reform efforts are underway to close the achievement gap. However, a review of the commentary and research literature indicates that school reform efforts will be seriously hindered without effective (instructional) school leadership (Edmonds, 1979; Lezotte, 1992; McREL, 2000; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Robinson, 1985; SREB, 2003). In the course of a year, leaders encounter a myriad of issues, situations, problems, and dilemmas, which they are expected to address. Bolman and Deal (1992) contend that when addressing issues, situations, problems, and dilemmas, leaders use the frames or lenses they have developed over a lifetime. Bolman and Deal (1992) further contend that the frames or lenses that leaders develop over a lifetime actually define reality for leaders and assist them with making sense out of their world and work; frames also provide

strategies for addressing the daily myriad of situations, problems, issues and dilemmas that leaders encounter. Bolman and Deal developed four frames/orientations that show how leaders deal with everyday situations that can predict leadership effectiveness. Bolman and Deal maintain that leaders are constantly making conscious decisions regarding which frame to use and when. They also maintain that effective leaders are more effective when they can use a number of frames; "each offering a window on different factors of the basic challenges of leadership" (Bolman & Deal, 1993, p. 2). Additionally, while some leaders rely on one frame more than the others, effective leaders are able to adjust and vary their behavior orientations to match the need(s) of a situation and to make certain outcomes are attained (Fleming, 2002). More recently, Powell (2004) identified behaviors and practices of effective leaders in the following five domains: Vision, Mission and Culture; Curriculum and Classroom Instruction; Collaboration and Shared Leadership; Family and Community Involvement; and Effective Management. According to Powell (2004), principals having vision are those who have the ability to look beyond the current state of affairs. These principals have foresight about where the school should be in the future. Principals who know the school's mission understand that the mission is the school's "charge"; it explains how the vision will be achieved. Powell (2004) defines culture as "how the school acts and feels in accomplishing the mission to fulfill the vision" (p. 12). Powell asserts that Vision, Mission and Culture are interdependent—"each one supports and affects the other" (p. 11); and that an effective principal is one that can use his/her vision for the school to "influence the mission of the school and create a culture of learning and success for all students" (p. 14).

Powell (2004) argues that effective schools are "schools where all students master basic skills or meet state or local standards" (p. 14). According to Powell (2004), curriculum and classroom instruction are of key importance to an effective

school. Effective principals know good instruction and are actively and deeply involved in their school's instructional program. These principals have high expectations, believe that all students can and will learn and see themselves as the lead or head teacher of the school.

Powell (2004) also purports that effective principals collaborate and share their leadership among their staff. They trust their staff to make decisions and work in conjunction with their staff to ensure overall school success. Additionally, in order to bolster student achievement, principals of successful schools "strive to form meaningful relationships with family and community members" (p. 20). These principals recognize the important role parents and communities at large play in students' academic achievement and take an active role in encouraging their involvement in their schools. Moreover, successful principals, according to Powell (2004), are also "excellent managers of resources, time, and discipline in addition to the management of instruction" (p. 22). According to Powell (2004), effective principals use all of these behaviors and practices—vision, mission and culture; curriculum and classroom instruction; collaboration and shared leadership; family and community involvement and effective management—"to influence the learning of the school to create a successful school" (p. 5) (See Table 1).

Table 1

Domains and Examples of Principal Leadership Behaviors and Practices

Domains	Examples of Principals' Leadership Behaviors and Practices
Vision, Mission, Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides a vision that's embraced by others ▪ Makes student achievement a high priority/mission of the school ▪ Treats staff as professionals ▪ Treats all stakeholders with respect ▪ Leads ethically ▪ Highly visible throughout the school ▪ Knows and calls students by name ▪ Celebrates successes frequently and openly ▪ Visits classrooms regularly ▪ Provides a nurturing environment for students and teachers

Table 1 (continued)

Domains and Examples of Principal Leadership Behaviors and Practices

Domains	Examples of Principals' Leadership Behaviors and Practices
Curriculum and Classroom Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teaches lessons in classrooms ▪ Makes student learning a high priority ▪ Knows curriculum and recognizes good teaching ▪ Encourages and provides opportunities for staff development ▪ Ensures special programs and resources are in place to meet the needs of all learners ▪ Makes academic decisions on his/her own at times
Collaboration and Shared Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elicits teacher input regarding academic decisions and the purchase of instructional resources ▪ Involves staff in analyzing school data and developing the school's improvement plan ▪ Ensures teacher participation in the hiring process of new teachers ▪ Encourages and supports teacher leadership ▪ Encourages teacher participation in the decision-making process
Family and Community Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hires staff to reflect school's diversity ▪ Makes all feel welcome, comfortable and appreciated (i.e., personally greets students and parents as they enter the school or assigns a staff member to do so) ▪ Keeps parents informed about student expectations ▪ Creates open lines of communication between home and school (i.e., sends home weekly newsletters, meets frequently with parents, provides translators as needed, etc.) ▪ Encourages parental and community involvement (i.e., fosters partnerships with local businesses, encourages voluntarism, etc.) ▪ Removes barriers to communication (i.e., newsletters in more than one language)
Effective Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effectively manages school budget ▪ Is resourceful (i.e., acquires funds via grants, businesses, central office, etc.) ▪ Remains focused on instruction (i.e., delegates behavioral and social issues) ▪ Implements an effective discipline plan ▪ Ensures minimal classroom interruptions

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to use Powell's (2004) five domains of effective principal leadership behaviors and practices (e.g., vision, mission and culture;

curriculum and classroom instruction; collaboration and shared leadership; family and community involvement; and effective management) as a lens to identify, compare and contrast the leadership behaviors and practices of principals, from the perspective of teachers, in predominantly minority elementary schools deemed effective to principals in predominantly minority elementary schools deemed marginally effective. Identifying and examining the leadership behaviors and practices of principals in effective predominantly minority elementary schools, as compared to those in predominantly minority elementary schools deemed marginally effective, contributes to the growing knowledge of the leadership behaviors and practices demonstrated by principals in effective predominantly minority elementary schools; provides implications for future principal development, preparation and training, and hiring practices; and helps principals to do a better job in their role as instructional leaders, which ultimately will positively impact student achievement.

Significance of the Research

Since research supports the fact that principals play a key role in increasing student achievement, in part because their behavior or style of leadership impacts classroom instruction, it is important to identify the leadership behaviors of principals in effective predominantly minority elementary schools. Moreover, because of the need to ensure that all students are prepared for the demands of the evolving and more demanding future job market and to close the persistent achievement gap that exists between racial and ethnic groups as well as low-income and more privileged groups, it is important to identify the leadership behaviors and practices of effective principals in predominantly minority elementary schools. Effective principals have been defined as those who are strong instructional leaders who have a vision for their schools, set goals, use team-building strategies, and are capable of involving teachers in the

decision-making process (Virginia Department of Education, 2000). Powell's (2004) review of the literature and her case study findings shows that there are five key domains that impact the behaviors and practices of principals in effective schools. This study proposed to identify the leadership behaviors and practices of principals, per Powell's (2004) five domains, that positively impact student achievement as perceived by teachers.

Research Questions and Statistical Hypothesis

The interest of the researcher in studying principals' leadership behavior and practices in effective and marginally effective predominantly minority elementary schools stems in part from the researcher's experiences in public education as a classroom teacher, a school-based administrator, and an executive board member of a chapter of a national elementary school principals' organization. Two questions guided this study. The first question is quantitative in nature. The second question is open-ended and is qualitative in nature. The questions and null hypothesis are:

Research Question 1

Are there differences in principals' effectiveness in the five domains identified by Powell (2004) (e.g., school vision, mission and culture; curriculum and classroom instruction; collaboration and shared leadership; family and community connections; and effective management) in effective predominantly minority elementary schools versus marginally effective predominantly minority elementary schools from the perspective of teachers?

Null Hypothesis for Question 1

From the perspective of teachers, there are no statistically significant differences in the means of principals' effectiveness in the five domains identified by

Powell (2004) (e.g., school vision, mission and culture; curriculum and classroom instruction; collaboration and shared leadership; family and community connections; and effective management) in effective predominantly minority elementary schools verses marginally effective predominantly minority elementary schools.

Research Question 2

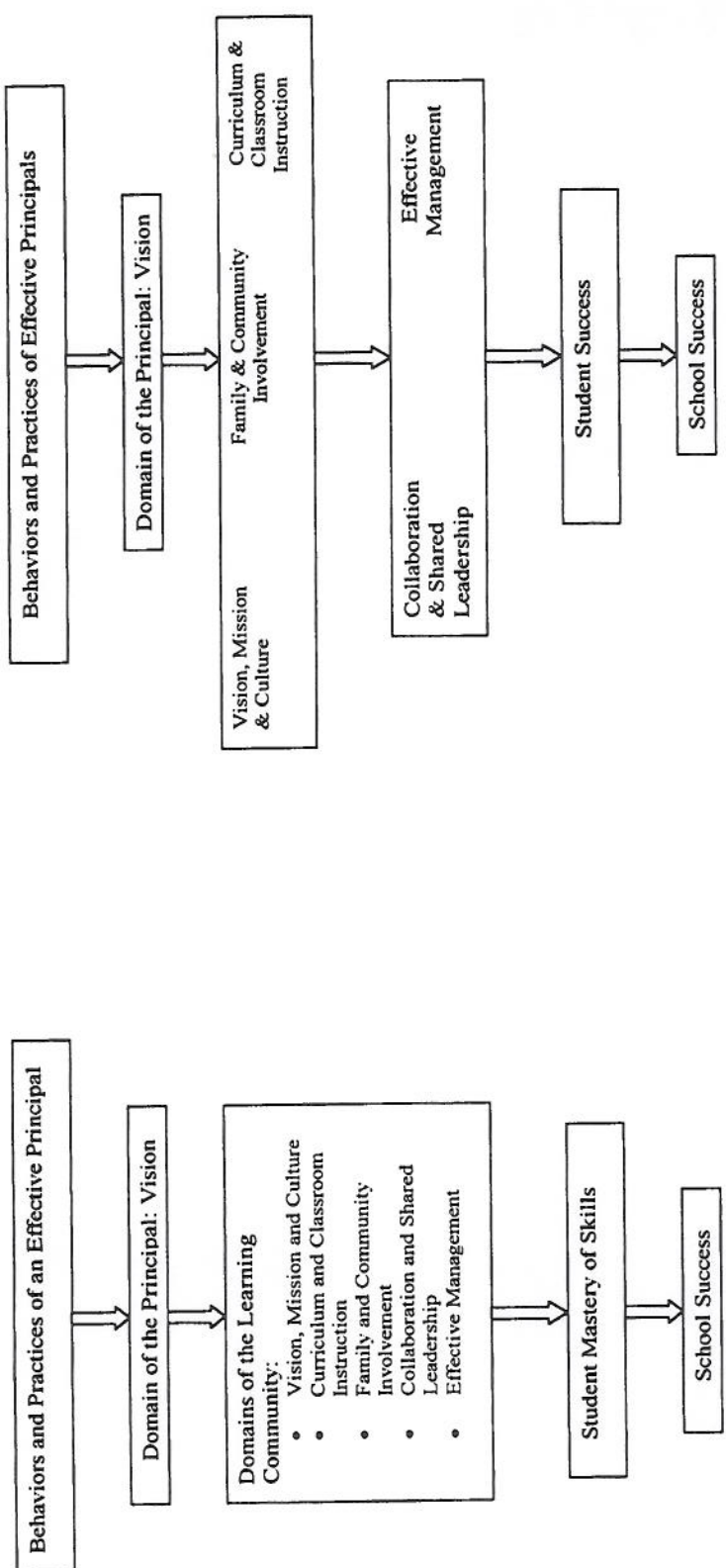
In your opinion, are there other domains that are equal to or more critical to a predominantly minority elementary school's success than those identified by Powell (2004)?

The questions for this study were based on Powell's (2004) study and a survey she developed related to teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership behaviors and practices that impact student achievement. Powell divided her survey into the five domains of effective principal leadership behaviors and practices identified in her study, which are: vision, mission and culture; curriculum and classroom instruction; collaboration and shared leadership; family and community relations; and effective management.

Conceptual Framework

According to Birnbaum (1992), "Leadership involves something that an individual or group does" (p. 13). When considering principals, Whitaker (2003) contends that what sets an effective principal apart from an ineffective principal has less to do with what an effective principal knows and more to do with what an effective principal does. Bolman and Deal (1992) further contend that what a leader does—that is, the leader's practices—how the leader behaves, thinks about and responds to situations, makes decisions and interacts with others is based on the lenses or frames the leader has developed over a lifetime. More recently, in her research on principals in effective schools serving at-risk student populations, Powell (2004) found

that "the behaviors and practices of the principal have influence on all aspects of the learning community" (p. 5). Powell asserted that the principal's vision for the school is the key. The principal's vision, according to Powell, "is crucial and is essential in guiding the school toward success" (p. 5). Hence, the overarching domain is the principal's vision for the school; subsidiary to the principal's vision for the school are the five other domains (e.g. learning community domains), which an effective principal's behaviors and practices influence. The five domains are: Vision, Mission and Culture; Curriculum and Classroom Instruction; Collaboration and Shared Leadership; Family and Community Involvement as well as Effective Management. Before she conducted her study, Powell (2004), hypothesized that all five domains were present in equal portions. However, Powell's research led her to conclude that the principal's vision for the school directly impacts the Vision, Mission and Culture; Family and Community Involvement; and Curriculum and Classroom Instruction domains. These domains in turn impact and begin to change the Collaboration and Shared Leadership and Effective Management domains. Ultimately, Powell (2004) found that all of the domains have an impact on student mastery of skills and overall school success (See Figure 1). Powell developed a survey instrument to assess principals' leadership behaviors and practices in the five domains, as judged by teachers, based on a review of the research and commentary literature on effective schools as well as qualitative research she conducted in effective schools serving at-risk student populations.



Powell's (2004) conceptual model for how the behaviors and practices of an effective principal impact school success after the completion of her study.

Powell's (2004) conceptual model for how the behaviors and practices of an effective principal impact school success before the completion of her study.

Figure 1. Powell's (2004) conceptual model before and after conducting her study

Literature Review

Literature reviewed in this section covers the background of leadership theories and leadership styles as well as research related to the effect of principal leadership behaviors and practices on student achievement. Studies were selected for review based on the following five criteria:

1. The study involved public schools at the elementary level (Pre-K or K–Grade 5).
2. The study involved high achieving schools in the United States with high percentages of African American, Hispanic, low-income, and/or at-risk student populations.
3. The study was conducted within the last five years (2000-2005).
4. The study focused on principal leadership behaviors and practices.
5. The study used a qualitative and/or quantitative methodology that included teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behaviors and practices.

Four studies met these criteria and are reviewed in the "Principal Leadership and Student Achievement" sub-section of this section (see p. 25).

Leadership Behavior Theories and Leadership Styles

The desire to create better organizations is one reason why leadership has been the focus of countless studies for several decades (Hoy & Miskel, 1991; Robbins, 2000; Yukl, 1998). Two early studies on leadership styles/behaviors and organizational effectiveness were conducted at Ohio State University and Michigan State University from the late 1940s through the 1950s. These studies were done in response to prior research, which claimed that leadership effectiveness was determined by certain inherent traits or personal qualities that a leader possessed such as intelligence, cooperation and self-confidence. Trait theorists believed that only those

who possessed certain innate qualities had the potential to become leaders (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977).

Researchers at Ohio State University (Halpin, 1966) created a preliminary 150-item questionnaire (Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire) for military and civilian workers (subordinates) to use to describe their supervisors. The questionnaire results showed that subordinates perceived their supervisors' behaviors as showing "consideration" or as "initiating structure." Consideration is defined as the extent to which a supervisor shows concern for subordinates' needs and welfare, while initiating structure is defined as the extent to which the supervisor is concerned with organizing work, defining roles and achieving organizational goals. The researchers reported that consideration and initiating structure were more highly correlated with job satisfaction than they were with high productivity.

Like the studies conducted at Ohio State University, the researchers at the University of Michigan found that leadership behaviors could be categorized in two ways as well—production centered or employee centered. Supervisors identified as being employee centered were concerned with their employees' needs and personal welfare. In contrast, the production-centered supervisors were primarily concerned with completing tasks and meeting organizational goals. The researchers found that employee-centered behavior was more highly correlated with job satisfaction and productivity. Moreover, an important difference between the two studies is that in the University of Michigan studies a leader could be described as in both the employee-centered and production-centered categories; whereas the University of Ohio studies initially described the leader as initiating structure or consideration—not both. A concern with both studies was that the findings were not consistent in finding relationships between patterns of leadership behavior and organizational effectiveness (Robbins, 2000). "General statements could not be made because results would vary

over different ranges of circumstances" (Robbins, 2000, p. 135). This concern led to the contingency theories of leadership. This approach to leadership maintains that leadership effectiveness is contingent upon the "behavior of the leader and situational variables such as task structure, position power, and subordinate skills and attitudes" (Hoy & Miskel, 1991, p. 270). Fiedler developed the first comprehensive contingency model for leadership. Fiedler made a clear distinction between leadership behavior and leadership style. According to Hoy and Miskel (1991), Fiedler believed that leadership behavior is related to the specific acts that the leader does, while leadership style speaks to the orientations that motivate a leader's behavior in different situations. Fiedler believed that leadership style was the key component to effective leadership. Fiedler found that the orientations that motivate leadership behavior are derived from either the need to accomplish tasks (task oriented) or the need to consider the well being of the group or subordinates (people oriented) (Hoy & Miskel, 1991). Fiedler also identified three situational factors: (1) relationship (e.g., trust, confidence, respect, etc.) that the subordinates have in their leader; (2) the amount of structure in the subordinate's job assignment; and (3) the amount of control the leader has over things such as hiring and firing. Fiedler's (1967) Least-Preferred Co-worker questionnaire was created to measure whether a leader is task or relationship oriented. Based on his research on more than 1,200 groups, Fiedler concluded that task-oriented leaders are more effective. Fiedler maintained that a leadership style could be either task or relationship oriented, but not both. He also maintained that a leader's leadership style could not be manipulated or changed because he believed that leadership style is inherent. Hence, the best leader for the situation has to be selected or the situation has to change to meet the leader.

The Path-Goal theory is another contingency theory model of leadership (House, 1971). This theory grew out of the studies done at Ohio State University.

This model "links leader behavior to [subordinate] performance" (Tosi, Mero & Rizzo, 2000, p. 467). In the Path-Goal model there are four leadership behaviors—the directive leader, the supportive leader, the participative leader, and the achievement-oriented leader (House, 1971). The directive leader makes expectations clear and provides guidance for subordinates. The supportive leader takes an interest in the needs of the subordinates. The participative leader works collaboratively with subordinates and seeks their input prior to making decisions. The achievement-oriented leader has high expectations for subordinates and challenges them to meet those expectations. All four leadership behaviors are contingent on both specific environmental factors and subordinate characteristics, both of which will ultimately have an effect on results (Tosi et al., 2000).

Hersey and Blanchard (1984) developed a theory of leadership based on the work of contingency theorists such as Fiedler. Their theory, Situational Leadership Theory, espoused that first leaders assess situations and then they adapt their behavior to meet the needs of the situation based on behavior patterns they have developed (Hoy & Miskel, 1991). Hersey and Blanchard (1984) developed two categories of leadership behavior—"task-related behavior" and "relationship-related behavior"—as well as four styles of leadership: directing, coaching, supporting and delegating. Hersey and Blanchard (1984) argue that the style of leadership the leader selects is based on the leader's assessment of the "job maturity" level of the subordinates; that is, the subordinates' capacity and confidence level to complete the task.

Just like Hersey and Blanchard (1984), Bolman and Deal (1984) contended that one of the first steps a leader takes when he/she encounters a situation is to assess it. How the leader assesses a situation is based on the lenses or frames the leader has developed over a lifetime. Bolman, Deal, and Rallis (1995) maintain, "All of us develop our own personal worldviews through many years of education and

experience" (p. 2). These worldviews form lenses and filters and these "preconditioned lenses and filters... shape how situations are defined and actions are taken" (p.2). Bolman et al. further contend, "without an orientation of reference stressful situations become overwhelming" (p. 2).

Like the researchers at Ohio State University, the University of Michigan and Fiedler, who developed leadership orientations, Bolman and Deal developed four frames: Human Resource, Structural, Symbolic and Political. Each frame provides leaders with different ways of assessing and responding to the various situations, problems, dilemmas, etc. they encounter every day (Birnbaum, 1992; Thomas, 2002). The Human Resource leader values relationships (Bolman & Deal, 1992); they show concern for others (Thompson, 1992). The Structural leader values data, sets clear goals and is results driven (Bolman & Deal, 1992). The Symbolic leader gives attention to ceremonies, rituals, and the passing down of stories in an organization (Bolman & Deal, 1992). The Political leader is an advocate, a skilled negotiator (Thomas, 2002) and has the capacity to marshal people and resources. These four frames also "provide insight into why leaders behave the way they do and how they are seen by others" (Birnbaum, 1992, p. 64). Bolman and Deal view leaders in terms of both leading and managing, as they assert that both are essential. Bolman and Deal further assert, "If an organization is over managed but under led, it will eventually lose any sense of spirit or purpose" (Bolman & Deal, 1992, p. xvi).

The aforementioned studies provide an early indicator of the domains that Powell (2004) later used and this researcher will use. Domains such as "consideration" (Ohio State University); "employee centered" (University of Michigan); "people oriented" (Fiedler, 1967); "relationship-related behavior," "supportive leader" and "participative leader" (Ohio State University); "relationship related-behavior" (Hersey & Blanchard, 1984); and "human resource leader" (Bolman

& Deal, 1992) are precursors to Powell's (2004) Vision, Mission and Culture and Collaborative and Shared Leadership domains. According to Powell (2004), principals effective in the Vision, Mission and Culture and Collaboration and Shared Leadership domains, based on teachers' perceptions, lead ethically, treat stakeholders with respect, maintain open lines of communication, and foster a nurturing and caring work/school environment. "Initiating structure" (Ohio State University); "production centered" (University of Michigan); "task oriented" (Fielder, 1967); "directive leader" (Ohio State University); "task-related behavior" (Hersey & Blanchard, 1984) and "structural leader" (Bolman & Deal, 1992) are precursors to Powell's (2004) Effective Management domain. According to Powell (2004), principals effective in the Effective Management domain, based on teachers' perceptions, keep the school focused on instruction. They protect instructional time and are skilled at obtaining the resources needed to ensure student success. Furthermore, these pioneer studies espoused that a leader's effectiveness is not based on the leader's innate abilities. Instead, a leader's effectiveness is based on the behaviors he/she demonstrates, which directly impact subordinates' behavior and productivity as well as overall organizational success. Just as studies on leadership came about from a desire to create better organizations, studies on principal leadership behaviors and practices that effect student achievement came about from a desire to create better schools.

Principal Leadership and Student Achievement

The effective schools research movement was born after Coleman et al. (1966) asserted that schools have little impact on student achievement. Coleman et al. believed that socio-economic status and family background were largely responsible for determining students' achievement levels in school, not the schools themselves. Edmonds (1981) disagreed. Edmonds (1981) analyzed reading- and math-

standardized test data on inner-city children who attended schools with high minority and/or poor student populations. He also re-analyzed the 1966 Equal Educational Opportunity Survey data and concluded that principals' instructional leadership skills accounted for the majority of the success of the children in these schools.

Furthermore, Edmonds' research showed that schools could indeed positively impact student achievement, especially when five elements or correlates are present. The five elements identified by Edmonds (1981) that lead to student achievement are:

1. Strong principal leadership;
2. An orderly and safe school environment;
3. High teacher and student expectations;
4. Instructional emphasis on the basic skills;
5. Frequent and systematic assessment of student progress.

In the early 1980s two additional correlates were added: time on task and strong school/community partnerships. Based on his research, Edmonds concluded that ineffective schools could increase student achievement by strengthening the correlates they were weak in. More importantly, Edmonds concluded that schools could impact student achievement in spite of students' family background and/or socio-economic status. Edmond's correlates became the springboard for a school reform movement known as the effective schools movement (Thompson, 1992). The effective schools movement is responsible for changing the principal's role from that of principal as manager of the school to principal as instructional leader of the school (Fleming, 2002).

Since the launch of the effective schools movement, studies have been conducted that examined the effects of principal instructional leadership behaviors and practices on student achievement. Moreover, researchers have studied the instructional leadership behaviors and practices of principals of high- and low-

performing elementary schools as judged by teachers (Andrews & Sonder, 1987; Eberts & Stone, 1988; Fleming, 2002; Hallinger & Heck, 1997; Pingle, 2004). Like previous studies, their research identified "principals as central figures in fostering schools that successfully educate students" (Thomas, 2002, p. 25). However, in this new age of accountability through the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001 and the persistent achievement gap between African-American, Hispanic, and/or low-income students and their White, Asian and/or more privileged peers, recent studies examined principal leadership behaviors and practices that positively impact minority, low-income and at-risk student achievement.

In 2001, Towns, Cole-Henderson and Serpell conducted a study to identify characteristics that enable some low-income minority urban schools to succeed. Their study consisted of 62 schools, 51 of which were elementary schools. These schools were nominated to participate in the study and represented a cross-section of the country. All schools selected to participate in the study were situated in urban areas that serve low-income African-American and Hispanic students. Sixty-two principals were surveyed using a 48-item questionnaire. The survey sought the principals', teachers', and parents' perceptions of the principals' instructional leadership, school climate as well as other school characteristics. Principals were paid a stipend to complete and return the questionnaire. Twenty-nine surveys (47%) were returned. In addition to surveying the principals, a qualitative study was done at four of the elementary schools. Researchers spent one week in each school between April 1999 and June 2000. The researchers collected data on each school through observations and interviews with principals. Separate group interviews were also conducted with teachers, parents, students and principals. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used in this study; however, only the qualitative findings were reported. One could assume that the quantitative data was used to identify which schools to

include in the study. The researchers reported that the effective school correlates were evident in all of the schools. The researchers reported that the principals in these schools had high expectations and were strong instructional leaders, effective managers, collaborative, and encouraged parent involvement. The reliability of their findings is suspect because the author does not provide us with much information on how the qualitative information was gathered and interpreted. It would have been very helpful to know what procedures were followed to avoid any biases the researchers might have held.

Capps-Lawrence (2002) conducted a qualitative study in two public elementary schools in North Carolina. The purpose of her study was to examine the leadership behaviors and practices of principals in two high-poverty, high-achieving schools. Study School A, located near a military base, had a student enrollment of 450 students. Five percent of the students were identified as Hispanic, 30% African-American and 60% of the students qualified for FARMs. Study School B, adjacent to a low-income housing complex, also had a student enrollment of 450 students. However, the percentages of students who qualified for FARMs (75%) as well as the school's minority student population (20% Hispanic and 52% African-American) were higher than Study School A. Both schools were located in suburban areas; both schools were identified as at-risk due to the high percentages of students who qualify for FARMs; and both schools were identified as schools of distinction, as 80% or more of the students who attended these schools met or exceeded North Carolina's Department of Public Instruction's (NCDPI) End-of-Grade Assessment. The End-of-Grade Assessment is a standardized assessment in reading, writing and math that is given to all students in grades 3, 5 and 8. Students in grades 3, 5 and 8 must pass the assessment in order to be promoted to the next grade level. Eighty percent of the students at both schools scored at or above grade level on the assessment for two

consecutive years. This small sample of schools was not randomly selected. The schools were selected from a list of five similar schools that had been approved by NCDPI for research.

Multiple methods were used to collect data for this study. The researchers reported collecting data through two-hour individual interviews with the principals, central office representatives, School Improvement Team chairpersons, teachers and PTA presidents; facilitating stakeholder focus groups; reviewing school documents (i.e., staff and student handbooks; lesson plan books; mission and vision statements; etc.) as well as through observations conducted through five visits to each school. The researcher presented findings from the interviews. Findings at both schools were similar. Capps-Lawrence found that the principals in both schools fostered and influenced caring and nurturing school cultures. Her data showed that the principals were collaborative, effective managers and had high expectations for student success. The small sample, coupled with the fact that the researcher did not provide specific information regarding how the sample was selected or details regarding the focus groups, make it difficult to generalize the study's findings.

Using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, Powell (2004) studied the behaviors and practices of principals in three successful at-risk schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia. A case study was conducted at one school and all three schools were surveyed. The case study school served 564 students Pre-K (Head Start) through grade 5; had 60 teachers and two administrators. All three schools had student populations that were at least 50% low-income, at least 50% minority, and at least 25% English language learners. At the case study school, Powell (2004) interviewed 45 parents, four teachers and the principal. She made observations over a period of nine days and reviewed school documents such as parent communications,

staff newsletters and the school handbook. Powell (2004) collected over 305 pages of data. She analyzed the data for "categories, themes and patterns" (p. 72).

Based on the case study and her review of the literature, Powell (2004) developed a survey questionnaire that was administered to teachers in the case study school as well as the two other schools that were successful with student populations similar to the one found in the case study school. The survey questionnaire contained 76 items representing the five domains referenced earlier in this chapter. Sixty surveys were administered in the case study school and 56% (n=35) were returned; 58 surveys were administered in survey school #1 and 60% (n=35) were returned; 41 surveys were administered in survey school #2 and 61% (n=25) were returned. A total of ninety-five surveys were returned. The surveys were analyzed for descriptive statistics, reliability scores and factor analysis. The descriptive statistics showed an average mean score of 4.0 and an average standard deviation of .83; the total reliability score was .96. Additionally, 43 teachers wrote comments, resulting in twenty-eight themes. Powell's (2004) research on the behaviors and practices of principals in successful at-risk schools indicate the following:

1. The principal's vision for the school is the prevailing, overarching domain.
2. The vision of the principal has an equal effect on the Vision, Mission and Culture; Family and Community Involvement; and Curriculum and Classroom Instruction domains.
3. The Family and Community Involvement domain is an extension of the Vision, Mission and Culture domain.
4. Vision, Mission & Culture; Family and Community Involvement; and Curriculum and Classroom Instruction domains influence the

Collaboration and Shared Leadership domain as well as the Effective Management domain.

5. All five domains must be present and must work in concert in order for student achievement and overall school success to occur.

Like the Towns et al. (2001) and Capps-Lawrence (2002) studies, caution should be exercised when generalizing the results of Powell's (2004) study due to the small sample size. However, like Towns et al. (2001) and Capps-Lawrence (2002), Powell's (2004) findings support the literature on effective schools, as teachers reported that the behaviors and practices demonstrated by their principals are positively shaping their schools' climate and culture, which are correlated to increased minority and at-risk student achievement. These studies also add value to the growing body of research on principals' behaviors and practices in effective at-risk elementary schools that positively impact student achievement.

Most recently, the initial results of a large-scale study conducted by a team of researchers from EdSource, Stanford University, University of California and American Institute for Research (2005) were reported. The purpose of this study was to identify characteristics that enable some schools serving large populations of low-income and English Language Learner students to score as much as 250 points higher on California's Academic Performance Index (API) than other schools with similar demographics. Two hundred fifty-seven elementary schools, serving 135,673 K-grade 5 students and representing 145 districts from across the state of California, were randomly selected from a sample of 550 schools. Ninety-eight percent of the 257 schools were Title I schools and 34% of the schools did not meet AYP for two consecutive years. Many of these schools serve high percentages of Hispanic and/or African-American students as well.

California's API scores ranged between 200 and 1000. The mean API for study schools was 702 and ranged from a low of 569 to a high of 821. Separate questionnaires, which were developed based on research literature on effective schools with high-achieving, high-poverty student populations, were used to survey principals and teachers. Seven leadership domains that emerged from the researchers' review of the literature were included along with sub-domains in both survey instruments. Three of the leadership domains (e.g., curriculum and instruction, collaboration, and family involvement) are aligned with the five domains Powell (2004) identified based on her review of the research and case study. Additionally, like Powell, these researchers sought teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behaviors and practices as they relate to the domains.

The initial surveys were reviewed by academics and K-12 teachers and piloted in eleven schools from across the state of California. The final teacher questionnaire contained 371 items; the final principal questionnaire contained 442 items. Five thousand, five hundred teachers and 257 principals were surveyed. Eighty percent of the teacher surveys were returned; 100% of the principal surveys were returned. Student achievement data were regressed on the independent variables thought to explain the variations in the API scores. Initial study findings indicate that the schools reporting greater implementation of the practices found in four of the domains— (1) prioritizing student achievement; (2) implementing a coherent, standards-based instructional program; (3) using assessment data to increase student achievement; and (4) ensuring the availability of instructional resources—correlated with higher API scores than schools that reported fewer of these practices (EdSource et al., 2005).

The researchers readily acknowledge that further analysis of the data is needed and plan to report more detailed findings in 2006. However, their preliminary findings support the argument that principals' leadership behaviors and practices can positively

impact student achievement (Capps-Lawrence, 2002; EdSource et al., 2005; Powell, 2004; Towns et al., 2001), especially the achievement of minority and/or low-income students.

Each of the studies reviewed in this paper identified behaviors and practices of principals in predominantly minority elementary schools deemed effective from the perspective of teachers. Powell's (2004) study was selected for replication by this researcher because her study included all of the principal leadership behaviors and practices identified in the other three studies (with the exception of being politically savvy and a risk-taker). Additionally, embedded in Powell's (2004) Curriculum and Classroom Instruction domain is strong instructional leadership, which is often cited in the literature as another very important behavior and practice exhibited by principals in successful schools (See Table 2).

Summary

The research on recent principal leadership behaviors and practices in at-risk schools is scant; however, based on the four studies reviewed in this chapter, several effective principal leadership behaviors and practices in at-risk schools have emerged. While none of these studies claim that their findings show a causal relationship between the dependent and independent variables, all of the studies' findings show a correlation between principals' leadership behaviors and practices and student achievement. Additionally, these studies support the Consortium for Policy Research in Education's (2001) contention that "schooling consists of complex processes and it would be remarkable if there was only one best way to improve it" (p. 16). Clearly, based on recent research, no single leadership behavior or practice on the part of the principal is correlated with increased student achievement; hence, there continues to be a need to further identify which principal behaviors and practices are the most

highly correlated with student achievement—more specifically, minority and/or low-income student achievement.

Table 2

Leadership Behaviors and Practices Identified in the Four Research Studies

Principal Leadership Behaviors & Practices	Studies			
	Towns, Cole-Henderson (2001)	Capps-Lawrence (2002)	Powell (2004)	EdSource (2005)
Manages effectively	*	*	*	*
Encourages family and community involvement	*		*	*
Has high expectations	*	*	*	*
Is highly visible	*		*	
Focused on curriculum & instruction			*	*
Creates a mission statement	*		*	
Fosters nurturing and caring culture		*	*	
Politically savvy	*			
Shares leadership/collaborates	*	*	*	*
Is a risk-taker	*			
Is a visionary/fosters a shared vision	*		*	
Resourceful	*		*	
Communicates frequently	*		*	
Limits classroom interruptions			*	
Maintains low pupil-teacher ratios			*	
Hires staff to reflect school's diversity			*	
Implements an effective behavior management plan			*	
Acts as the school's instructional leader/head teacher			*	

Definitions of Terms

Achievement Gap - Differences in academic performance among racial/ethnic and socio-economic student groups (Bell, 2003).

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) - The minimum level of improvement that schools and school districts must achieve each year as determined by No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

At-Risk Schools - At-risk schools are schools that serve student populations where 50% or more of the students qualify for free or reduced price meals according to federal guidelines.

Classroom Instruction - Classroom instruction is the method, techniques and strategies teachers use to teach the curriculum to students (Glickman, 2002).

Collaboration - Collaboration occurs when groups of people are willing to work together and learn from each other in order to achieve a common goal (DuFour & Eaker, 1998). Kouzes and Posner (1995) define collaboration as the "we not I" philosophy (p. 152). They further contend that leadership is even more essential in collaboration and that leaders must "develop cooperative goals, seek integrative solutions, and build trusting relationship" (p. 154) to promote collaboration in schools.

Culture - Deal and Peterson (1990) said that culture "is a historically rooted, socially transmitted set of deep patterns of thinking and ways of acting that give meaning to human experience, that unconsciously dictate how experience is seen, assessed and acted on" (p. 8). Deal and Peterson (1990) believe it is the shared beliefs and values that closely bind a community together. In schools, culture is the way the staff behaves to accomplish the vision and mission of the school.

Curriculum - The curriculum is the program of studies required by the state for its students who attend public schools (Glickman, 1993).

Effective Predominantly Minority Elementary Schools - Effective majority minority elementary schools have high percentages of African-American and/or Hispanic students (50% or more) as well as high percentages (50% or more) of

students who qualify for Free and Reduced Priced Meals. Students in these schools met or exceeded AYP target scores for two or more consecutive years.

Family and Community Involvement - Family and community involvement is the partnership between the family, business leaders, other citizens and the school (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2000).

Free and Reduced Priced Meals (FARMs) - The percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced priced school meals (e.g., breakfast and lunch). FARMs is used to determine a school's poverty rate.

Management - Management is the process by which principals "ensure that the basic roles, rules, responsibilities, structures, and processes of the school are functioning effectively" (Tucker & Coddling, 2002, p. 261).

Marginally Effective Predominantly Minority Elementary Schools - Marginally effective majority minority elementary schools have high percentages of African-American and/or Hispanic students (50% or more) as well as high percentages (50% or more) of students who qualify for Free and Reduced Priced Meals. Students in these schools did not meet or exceed the AYP target scores for two or more consecutive years.

Mission - "The mission establishes an organization's purpose" (DuFour & Eaker, 1998). Deal & Peterson (1990) contend, "it is the focus of what people do" (p.23).

No Child Left Behind - "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001" (NCLB) was signed by President Bush in 2002. This act states as its main objective "to close the achievement gap between all sub groups by the year 2014" (Public Law 107-110, 107th Congress, 2002).

Predominantly Minority Elementary School - A predominantly minority elementary school is a school that has a student body that consists of 50% or more African-American and/or Hispanic students.

School Vision - Kouzes and Posner (1995) define vision "as an ideal and unique image of the future...Visions are statements of destination" (p. 95 & 100). In a school it is the definite ideas that principals have for how they want their schools to be (Blumberg & Greenfield, 1986).

Shared vision - "A vision will have little impact until it is widely shared and accepted and until it connects with the personal visions of those within the school" (DuFour & Eaker, 1998; p. 65). The principal's vision becomes a shared vision when it is widely accepted by staff and the school community (Powell, 2004).

Review of Chapter 1 and the Succeeding Chapters

This is a four-chapter dissertation. In Chapter 1, the thesis, purpose and significance of the study were stated. Additionally, the research questions and hypothesis were noted and research and commentary literature reviewed. In Chapter 2, the population, sample and methods of data collection are identified. The survey instrument is described and the procedures for the analysis of the survey are outlined and discussed. In Chapter 3, data from the survey are presented based on the five domains identified in Powell's (2004) conceptual model and additional domains if they become apparent. The data were analyzed for descriptive statistics, reliability scores and factor analysis. In Chapter 4, there is a discussion of the findings from the survey. Conclusions are drawn and the limitations of the study are discussed. Additionally, the implications of the findings as well as recommendations for further study are presented.

CHAPTER II

STUDY DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was designed to examine the degree to which teachers' perceptions about principals' leadership behaviors and practices differ in predominantly minority elementary schools deemed effective and predominantly minority elementary schools deemed marginally effective, located in a school district in a mid-Atlantic state. Literature related to the impact of principal leadership behaviors and practices on student achievement indicates that principal leadership is a key component in a school's success and student achievement (McREL, 2000; United States Department of Education, 1996). The methodology of this study, population and sample, and research questions are presented in this chapter.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify, compare and contrast, from the perspective of teachers, the leadership behaviors and practices of principals of predominantly minority elementary schools deemed effective and of predominantly minority elementary schools deemed marginally effective. Identifying, comparing and contrasting the leadership behaviors and practices of principals in effective and marginally effective predominantly minority elementary schools may contribute to the growing knowledge of the behaviors and practices of principals in effective predominantly minority elementary schools; provide implications for future principal hiring practices, development, preparation and training; and help principals to do a better job in their role as instructional leaders, which will ultimately impact student achievement.

Significance of the Study

Research supports the fact that a persistent achievement gap exists between minority and non-minority students as well as between low-income students and their more privileged peers. Moreover, since research supports the fact that principals play a key role in increasing student achievement—their behaviors and practices impact classroom instruction—it is important to identify the leadership behaviors and practices of principals in effective predominantly minority elementary schools.

Research Design

The research design chosen for this study was a sample research survey using a questionnaire. This research design method was selected because according to Rea and Parker (1997), "surveys have broad appeal, particularly in democratic cultures, because they are perceived as a reflection of the attitudes" (p. 1). Additionally, the advantages of using a survey include: the ability to make generalizations based on a small sample of a population; a survey can be conducted in a timely fashion; surveys are cost effective; and they can be replicated to "assess differences attributable to location or time" (Rea & Parker, 1997, p. 5).

Population and Sample

A population made up of public schools in a mid-Atlantic state was chosen for this study. The mid-Atlantic state chosen for this study has 137 school districts including a Department of Correctional Education and has a total of 1,862 schools, of which 1,173 are elementary schools. This mid-Atlantic state serves approximately 1,204, 808 students pre-school through grade twelve. Slightly under half, 552,576 (45%) of these students, are in pre-k through grade 5. Of the students attending school in this mid-Atlantic state, 463,764 (38.5%) are minorities (e.g., 3,722 (0.31%) American Indian/Alaska Native; 58,015 (4.8%) Asian/Pacific Islander; 322,030

(26.7%) Black; 84,334 (7.0%) Hispanic; 663 (.05%) Native Hawaiian), 719, 606 (59.7%) students are White and 16,438 (1.4%) are "unspecified." Approximately 33.5% of the student population is economically disadvantaged, as they qualify for Free and Reduced Priced Meals (FARMS). As part of its strategic plan, this state has pledged to reduce the achievement gap for all students from all backgrounds. Additionally, this mid-Atlantic state has pledged to meet the educational needs of their diverse student population to ensure that students who are low-income, a racial/ethnic minority, have educational disabilities and/or are limited English proficient achieve proficiency or better on the state assessments in reading and other content areas.

Criteria for Selection

Schools in this study were selected based on the results of two consecutive years (e.g., 2003-2004 and 2004-2005) of the state's annual assessments in reading, language arts and math in grades three and five. Schools selected for this study fit into one of two categories: those that made Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years (i.e., 2003-2004 and 2004-2005) and those that did not. The criteria for the selection of effective predominantly minority elementary schools included in this study were:

1. 50% or more students who qualify for FARMS;
2. African-American and/or Hispanic student populations at or above 50%;
3. Public elementary school with grade levels from pre-kindergarten or kindergarten through grade 5;
4. Located in the mid-Atlantic state selected for this study;
5. Achieved AYP for the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 school years.

The criteria for the selection of marginally effective predominantly minority elementary schools included in this study were:

1. 50% or more students who qualify for FARMs;
2. African-American and/or Hispanic student populations at or above 50%;
3. Public elementary school with grade levels from pre-kindergarten or kindergarten through grade 5;
4. Located in the mid-Atlantic state selected for this study;
5. Did not achieve AYP for the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005.

Procedure for Selection of the Sample

Schools in a district in a mid-Atlantic state were purposefully selected using school profile data obtained from this mid-Atlantic state's Department of Education web site using school characteristics and profile data such as state school assessment, Free and Reduced-price Meals data as well as the African-American and Hispanic student enrollment data in each elementary school. Schools reporting FARMs percentages under 50%, African-American and Hispanic student populations under 50%, without pre-k or kindergarten classes, and/or having grade levels above grade five were not considered for this study. Additionally, schools where the current principal was not the principal for both the 2003-2004 and 2004 and 2005 school years were not considered for this study.

Consent for Research and Confidentiality

Permission to use Powell's (2004) survey questionnaire was obtained from Dr. Powell on November 22, 2005. See Appendix A for her consent letter. Permission for research was obtained from the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Services Office of Research Compliance before the study was

conducted (see Appendix B). Measures were taken to maintain the confidentiality of the state, school district, respondents and schools. Names, addresses or social security numbers were not used on the survey. Two different Internet links to the same survey were created—one for the effective schools and one for marginally effective schools.

Instrumentation

Powell (2004) developed a conceptual framework regarding effective principal practices and leadership behaviors based on the literature and her case study findings. Powell's survey instrument is designed to measure the extent to which principals exhibit behaviors in the following five domains: Vision, Mission and Culture; Curriculum and Classroom Instruction; Collaboration and Shared Leadership; Family and Community Involvement; and Effective Management as perceived by teachers (see Appendix C). Her survey contains 76 questions and uses a Likert type scale, "in which a continuum of response alternatives is provided for the respondent to consider" (Rea & Parker, 1997). The Likert scale entails a five-point rating scale in which the perceptions of teachers are elicited and measured on a continuum from highly favorable (i.e., 5 = Strongly Agree) to highly unfavorable (i.e., 1 = Strongly Disagree). Within this five-point scale are two affirmative (i.e., 5 = Strongly Agree and 4 = Agree) and two non-affirmative response choices (i.e., 2 = Disagree and 1 = Strongly Disagree). The fifth response choice, Not Sure, is the neutral answer (e.g., 3 = Not Sure). To encourage respondents to make a choice and not defer to the neutral choice, Not Sure was placed at the end of the Likert scale answer list.

Survey

Powell's (2004) survey instrument contains 76 questions representing the five domains. There are 16 questions for the School Vision, Mission and Culture domain; 22 for the Curriculum and Classroom Instruction domain; 9 for the Collaboration and

Shared Leadership domain; 16 for the Family and Community Involvement domain; and 13 for the Effective Management domain. Powell (2004) developed the questions based on information ascertained from both the literature and case study research she conducted. To ensure questions from each domain were not listed together, the questions were scrambled, using a web site of Randomly Scrambled Lists of Numbers. Once schools were identified and permission to conduct the study was granted from the researcher's dissertation committee, Virginia Tech's Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB), the district's superintendent and principals, a letter explaining the survey and its purpose was sent electronically to all principals in the ten study schools. The letter contained an Internet link for the survey. Follow-up emails and a handwritten note were sent to encourage principals to remind their teachers to complete and return the survey.

Validity

According to Trochim (2005), "Quality is one of the most important issues in research" (p. 16). Moreover, in order to trust and have confidence in a research study it is imperative that it measures what it claims to measure (Borg & Gall, 1983). The use of internal and external validity procedures in this study helps ensure its quality and that the study measures what it purports to measure.

Internal and External Validity According to Campbell and Stanley (1966), internal validity is the "basic minimum without which any experiment is uninterpretable" (p. 5). Research findings that are valid have results that are considered trustworthy. Using a variation of Campbell and Stanley's (1966) Static-Group Comparison allows for the control of certain variables such as history, testing, instrumentation and regression and ensures external validity, which is the degree to which a study's results can be generalized (Campbell & Stanley, 1966).

During the summer of 2004, Powell's (2004) initial survey, which consisted of 110 questions, was assessed by 13 doctoral students at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, to ensure the survey instrument's reliability. The doctoral students evaluated the questions for "Appropriate domain, importance, and understandability" (p. 37). The validation process resulted in the elimination of 36 questions. Powell's final survey instrument contained 76 questions representing her five domains, which were derived from her review of the literature as well as from the qualitative portion of her study (a case study). The breakdown of the 76 survey questions is as follows.

Table 3

<i>Five Domains</i>	
Domain	No. of Survey Questions
School Vision, Mission & Culture	16
Curriculum and Classroom Instruction	22
Collaboration and Shared Leadership	9
Family and Community Involvement	16
Effective Management	13

Reliability

Reliability is the degree to which a study can be replicated, as it determines the quality of and consistency within the instrument. Furthermore, Trochim (2005) maintains that an instrument's reliability cannot really be computed; only estimated. Powell (2004) used Cronbach's alpha to estimate the reliability of her survey instrument. The total reliability score for her instrument was .96, which is very high.

Data Collection

Data were collected from five effective predominantly minority elementary schools and five marginally effective predominantly minority elementary schools in a mid-Atlantic state. The independent variables were the teachers in the study schools'

Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) status (e.g. effective or marginally effective). The dependent variables were the teachers' answers to the survey questions regarding Powell's (2004) five domains. A variation of Campbell and Stanley's (1966) Static-Group Comparison pre-experimental design model was used. In this model, there are two groups of teachers and two different sets of schools (e.g., effective and marginally effective predominantly minority elementary schools) that the teachers have experience in. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for the statistical analyses. The researcher first computed frequency distributions to be sure that the scores were normally distributed for both groups of respondents. The frequency distributions confirmed that the scores were normally distributed. The researcher next computed Cronbach alpha inter-item reliability coefficients. Following that, correlation coefficients were computed for the five domains for both effective and marginally effective schools. Next, independent t-tests were computed to compare the means of the five domains. Finally, discriminate function analysis was used to identify the domain that would be the best predictor of principal leadership behaviors and practices.

Cronbach alpha provided the researcher with a measure of inter-item reliability, which provided information on the reliability of the five domains chosen for study. The researcher calculated correlation coefficients between all of the combinations of the five domains. These correlations provided information on the degree of common variance. Cronbach alphas provided the researcher with a measure of inter-item reliability, which provided information on the reliability of the five domains chosen for study. The researcher calculated inter-domain correlations, which provided information on the degree of common variance shared by the different domains. The researcher chose to use independent t-test because it is an appropriate statistic for a study of this nature (Shavelson, 1988). According to Shavelson (1988),

the purpose of the t-test is to aid the researcher in ascertaining "whether the observed difference between two sample means arose by chance or represents a true difference between populations" (p. 329). Shavelson (1988) further contends that the t-test allows the researcher to compare and analyze the difference between the means, derived from two separate and distinct groups/samples (independent variable), on a measure (dependent variable) that is related to the groups. The samples were taken at the same time (Thorne & Giesen, 2003) and the statistical data was calculated, compared and analyzed to look for differences between the means of the two groups (Vernoy & Kyle, 2002). The independent t-test is, in fact, "the test of the difference between two means for independent samples" (Hinkle, Wiersman & Jurs, 1994, p. 263). Hence, the use of independent t-tests provided the researcher with an indication of statistically significant mean differences between the two samples being studied (e.g., effective and marginally effective predominantly minority elementary schools) on each of the five domains identified in Powell's (2004) study. The output from the analysis included the means of the two samples; the standard deviation of each sample; the t-value; the degrees of freedom; and the level of statistical significance, which was set at $>.05$. Any statistically significant differences between the means of the two groups of teachers were construed as there being a relationship between the independent and dependent variables; the independent variable was not construed as being responsible for the differences in the means of the two groups (Shavelson, 1988).

Discriminate function analysis is used to determine "which variables discriminate between two or more naturally occurring groups" (StatSoft, 2003, p. 1). Discriminate function analysis is a special case of multiple regression. The researcher used discriminate function analysis to determine which domain was the best predictor of a teacher's membership in an effective or marginally effective school.

Additionally, descriptive statistics on the two samples of teachers chosen for this study provided the researcher with information about the teachers such as their ages, level of education, years in education, etc. These demographics were used to look for statistically significant differences on Powell's five domains.

Survey data were submitted and returned electronically, via the Internet, using SurveyMonkey.com, a survey software program. Once received, the data were downloaded into SPSS. The survey data were used to support and refute the study's hypotheses and confirm the conceptual model. The data were also used to draw conclusions about the behaviors and practices of principals in effective predominantly minority elementary schools and marginally effective predominantly minority elementary schools as perceived by teachers.

Summary

In this chapter, the methodology and the population and sample of this study were described. The method for the dissemination of the survey as well as data collection and analyses were also described. The results of the data analysis were used to confirm or refute the study's hypotheses and conceptual model and enabled the researcher to draw conclusions about the behaviors and practices of principals in effective predominantly minority elementary schools based on teachers' perceptions.

CHAPTER III

REPORT OF THE FINDINGS

This chapter includes a restatement of the purpose of the study and the results of the data analysis. The purpose of this study was to identify the leadership behaviors and practices of principals in effective and marginally effective predominantly minority elementary schools. Data were collected and analyzed from ten schools in one school district located in a mid-Atlantic state. Five of the schools were identified as effective and five of the schools as marginally effective. During the spring of 2006, full-time teachers (i.e., classroom teachers and specialists) at the ten schools completed the Principal Leadership Behaviors and Practices survey developed by Dr. Powell (2004). Dr. Powell created the survey based on the results of her findings from a case study as well as her review of the literature. Principals in the five effective and five marginally effective schools were e-mailed a separate Internet link to the same survey to forward to their full-time teaching staff. Hence, two different links to the survey were sent via the Internet. Data from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics, inter-item reliability scores, correlation coefficients, independent t-tests and discriminate functional analysis, using SPSS, a statistical package for the social sciences. The data are reported for each of the five domains of the study by type of school (e.g., effective and marginally effective).

Procedures

In order to conduct this study, permission was granted from the Institutional Review Board at Virginia Tech. Permission was also obtained from the superintendent's office in the study school district (see Appendix D). Once permission was granted, the school district and the researcher identified ten potential study schools (e.g. five effective and five marginally effective) based on the researcher's

selection criteria. A district representative informed the potential study schools of their selection via email. The principals at each potential study school were also informed that their school's participation was optional.

After the principals were informed of the study via the district representative, the researcher was granted permission to contact the principals of each of the study schools, via e-mail, to seek permission to survey their full-time teachers (see Appendix E). The principals in the five effective schools and five marginally effective schools accepted the researcher's invitation to participate in the study (Appendix F). When they agreed to allow their teachers to be surveyed, the researcher forwarded a copy of the survey instrument, providing a different survey link for each type of school (e.g., effective and marginally effective) directly to each principal via the Internet, as all of the principals wanted their teachers to receive the cover letter and survey instrument directly from them, not from the researcher. Subsequently, the principals at each of the participating study schools were responsible for electronically forwarding the cover letter and survey link to all of their full-time teachers.

The survey was open for approximately one month—April 3, 2006 through May 5, 2006. At the mid-point (two weeks), a follow-up handwritten card, containing a five-dollar gift certificate to a well-known coffee shop, was sent to each principal as an incentive to encourage them to encourage their teachers to complete the survey. The handwritten card included a thank-you note for agreeing to participate in the study as well as a note reminding principals of the survey's closing date. The note also asked the principals to remind their teachers to complete the survey before the survey's closing date. The teacher response rate increased as a result of this additional reminder and incentive.

Instrument Characteristics

The question responses on the survey are Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, and Not Sure. After the survey data was downloaded from Survey Monkey, a web-based survey tool that enables users to design a survey, collect data and analyze data for a fee, the responses were converted to the following Likert type scale: A 5 was used for Strongly Agree; 4 for Agree; 2 for Disagree; 1 for Strongly Disagree; and 3 for Not Sure. In an effort to force respondents not to choose the neutral response, Not Sure was the last answer choice on the answer list. However, for analysis purposes, Not Sure was coded as three. Of the 76 questions, three were negative questions; thus, they were recoded. The three negative questions were: Question 17—*Students are taught in only heterogeneous groups*; Question 53—*The principal makes some academic decisions without the input of teachers*, and Question 55—*The district office determines class size*.

Return Rate

The survey was sent to full-time teachers in ten schools in a public school district in a mid-Atlantic state via the Internet using Survey Monkey. One hundred ninety-eight full-time teachers from the five schools that met the researcher's criteria for effective schools and 212 full-time teachers from the five schools that met the researcher's criteria for marginally effective schools were surveyed. The total number of full-time teachers surveyed was 410. Of the 198 teachers surveyed in the five effective schools, 93 responded for a total effective schools response rate of 46.96%. Of the 212 teachers surveyed in the five marginally effective schools, 79 responded for a total marginally effective response rate of 37.26%. One hundred seventy two (172) full-time teachers responded to the survey, for a total response rate of 41.95%.

Table 4

Response Rates of Participants

Type of School	No. of Schools Identified	No. of Full-Time Teachers	No. Responded	Response Rate
Effective Schools	5	198	93	47.96%
Marginally Effective Schools	5	212	79	37.26%
Total	10	410	172	41.95%

Two factors may have influenced the survey's return rate. One factor was the time of year the survey was administered. Because it took almost a month to obtain approval to administer the survey from the school district, the survey was administered just before the state's mandated annual assessments in math, reading and language arts, which are utilized by the state to measure its schools' annual yearly progress in order to meet the federal requirements of No Child Left Behind. These are important assessments. Hence, teachers were very focused on preparing their students for these assessments, especially during the weeks just prior to the administration of the assessments.

The second factor that may have influenced the survey's return rate was the researcher's inability to personally connect with or directly contact the teachers in the survey schools. While the school district granted permission to the researcher to administer the survey, they left the method of administering the survey to their principals' sole discretion. The principals in each of the survey schools agreed to allow their teachers to be surveyed, but only on the condition that the survey and its cover letter were forwarded to them for distribution. Hence, the survey and cover

letter were forwarded, via the Internet, to the principals; subsequently, the principals forwarded the survey and cover letter to their full-time teachers.

Data Analysis

Once the survey closed, the survey data was downloaded into SPSS for statistical analyses for frequency distributions, descriptive statistics (demographics), Cronbach alphas (a measure of inter-item reliability), correlation coefficients, independent t-tests, and discriminate function analysis. The researcher computed frequency distributions to establish the normality of the distributions. All distributions proved to be normal.

Demographics of Respondents

One hundred seventy-two teachers responded to the survey. Data were collected on their gender, total teaching experience, teaching experience at current school, level of education, and age. Table 5 presents a summary of the demographics. The percentages in the table do not add to 100% because a number of respondents did not respond to all categories. The number of respondents from the effective schools who identified themselves as male was four (4%); there were five (6%) male respondents from the marginally effective schools. The number of respondents who identified themselves as female was 85 (92%) from the effective schools and 71 (91%) from the marginally effective schools. The average number of years teaching at the effective schools was 16 ½ years and it was 16 years at the marginally effective schools. In most categories, the response rates from the effective and marginally effective schools are quite similar. That is not the case for years in education. The effective schools have about twice the percentage of somewhat inexperienced teachers as do the marginally effective schools.

Table 5

Demographics of Teachers in Effective and Marginally Effective Schools

Demographic	Group	Type of School	n	%				
Gender	Male	Eff.	4	(4%)				
		Marg.	5	(6%)				
	Female	Eff.	85	(92%)				
		Marg.	71	(91%)				
Gender	Male	Eff.	4					
		Marg.	(4%)					
	Female	Eff.	5					
		Marg.	(6%)					
			85	(92%)				
			71	(91%)				
Years in Education			1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+	
			Eff.	29	16	18	8 (9%)	19
			Marg.	(31%)	(17%)	(19%)	13 (17%)	(21%)
				14	17	15		17
				(18%)	(22%)	(19%)		(22%)
Years at This School			1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+	
			Eff.	67	15	4 (4%)	2 (2%)	3
			Marg.	(72%)	(16%)	6	4 (5%)	(3%)
				46	16	(8%) ¹		4
				(60%)	(21%)			(5%)
Educational Level			BA/BS	MA	MA+30	Ph.D/Ed.D		
			Eff.	44	42	6 (7%)	1 (1%)	
			Marg.	(47%)	(45%)	8	2 (2%)	
				38	30	(10%)		
				(49%)	(39%)			
Age			21-30	31-40	41-50	51+		
			Eff.	26	16	24	22 (24%)	
			Marg.	(28%)	(17%)	(26%)	25 (32%)	
				15	20	17		
				(19%)	(25%)	(22%)		

Reliability

The researcher computed Cronbach alphas on all five domains for both the effective and marginally effective schools to check for internal consistency. The results were compared to Powell's (2004) results and are presented in Table 6. Cronbach alpha was used to determine the quality and consistency of the survey instrument. Cronbach alpha is commonly used to determine "The degree of homogeneity among the items in an instrument" (McMillan, 2004, p. 143). Table 6 presents the Cronbach alpha for both the Powell study and this study. The Cronbach alphas are very similar. The data show that the survey has strong inter-item reliability. The total reliability score of .95 was calculated for this survey instrument. The sub-scores for the questions in each domain were .92 for Vision, Mission and Culture; .77 for Curriculum and Classroom Instruction; .87 for Collaboration and Shared Leadership; .79 for Family and Community Relations; and .77 for Effective Management. According to Gall, Gall and Borg (1999), "If a scale has a high alpha coefficient [typically, .60 or higher, with the highest possible coefficient being 1.00], it means that individuals who respond in a certain way to one item on the scale are likely to respond in the same way to the other items on that scale" (p. 196). Therefore, these alpha scores are generally considered very reliable. See Table 6 for the alpha sub-scores for each domain, the number of items for each domain, the total score as well as for a comparison to Dr. Powell's (2004) alpha scores.

Table 6

Cronbach Alphas for Powell Study and Felder Study

Domain	No. of Items Per Domain	Alpha Score – Powell (2004)	Alpha Score – Felder (2006)
Domain 1: Vision, Mission, & Culture	16	.88	.92
Domain 2: Curriculum & Classroom Instruction	22	.79	.77
Domain 3: Collaboration & Shared Leadership	9	.85	.87
Domain 4: Family & Community Involvement	16	.86	.79
Domain 5: Effective Management	13	.80	.76
Total Instrument	76	.96	.95

Correlation Coefficients

The researcher calculated correlation coefficients for the effective and marginally effective schools. The results are presented in Tables 7 and 8. In interpreting these data, the researcher used an established set of criteria to make judgments about the significance of the correlations (Gliner & Morgan, 2000). The level of .05 was used to note those correlations that were statistically significant. If a correlation was between 0.0 and .30, it was considered to be weak; if it were between .31 and .70 it was considered modest; and if it were .71 or above, it was considered to be strong (Gliner & Morgan, 2000).

The correlations presented in Tables 7 and 8 show that most of the correlations were in the modest range, .30 to .70, and all were statistically significant at the .001 level. All of the correlations in Domain 1—vision, mission, and culture—were at .63 or higher. Domain 1 is highly related to the other domains.

Table 7

Correlation Coefficients for Domains 1 – 5 for Effective Schools

	Dom 2			Dom 3	Dom 4	Dom 5
	r	n	p			
Domain 1 – Vision, Mission and Culture	.76	81	.001	.75 (85) P=.001	.63 (85) P=.001	.73 (85) P=.001
DOMAIN 2	_____			.57 (80) P=.001	.57 (79) P=.001	.60 (80) P=.001
DOMAIN 3	_____				.57 (89) P=.001	.66 (91) P=.001
DOMAIN 4	_____					.65 (89) P=.001
DOMAIN 5	_____					

Domain 1 – Vision, Mission and Culture; Domain 2 – Curriculum and Classroom Instruction;
 Domain 3 – Collaboration and Shared Leadership; Domain 4 – Family and Community Relations; Domain 5 – Effective Management

Table 8

Correlation Coefficients for Domains 1 – 5 for Marginally Effective Schools

	Domain 1	Domain 2	Domain 3	Domain 4	Domain 5
DOMAIN 1	1.00 (72)	.76 (57) P=.001***	.77 (69) P=.001***	.63 (69) P=.001***	.81 (71) P=.001***
DOMAIN 2		1.00 (59)	.61 (58) P=.001***	.52 (57) P=.001***	.62 (57) P=.001***
DOMAIN 3			1.00 (73)	.55 (69) P=.001***	.71 (71) P=.001***
DOMAIN 4				1.00 (72)	.64 (70) P=.001***
DOMAIN 5					1.00 (75)

P = < .05*; <.01**; <.001***

Domain 1 – Vision, Mission and Culture; Domain 2 – Curriculum and Classroom Instruction;
 Domain 3 – Collaboration and Shared Leadership; Domain 4 – Family and Community Relations; Domain 5 – Effective Management

t-Tests

t-Tests were computed to answer Research Question 1 and Null Hypothesis 1. They were used to determine differences in mean scale scores.

Research Question 1

Are there differences in principals' effectiveness in the five domains identified by Powell (2004) (e.g., school vision, mission and culture; curriculum and classroom instruction; collaboration and shared leadership; family and community connections; and effective management) in effective predominantly minority elementary schools versus marginally effective predominantly minority elementary schools from the perspective of teachers?

Null Hypothesis for Question 1

From the perspective of teachers, there are no statistically significant differences in the means of principals' effectiveness in the five domains identified by Powell (2004) (e.g., school vision, mission and culture; curriculum and classroom instruction; collaboration and shared leadership; family and community connections; and effective management) in effective predominantly minority elementary schools verses marginally effective predominantly minority elementary schools.

The data presented in Table 9 show that the null hypothesis was accepted for Domains 3 and 4 and rejected for Domains 1, 2, and 5. The results for Domains 1, 2, and 5 are of special interest because the marginally effective schools have higher mean scores than do the effective schools. This means that the teachers in the marginally effective schools judged their principals' behaviors and practices more positively in these domains than did the teachers in the effective schools.

Table 9

Independent t-Test of Teachers' Judgments of Principals' Leadership Behaviors and Practices by Effective and Marginal Schools

Vision, Mission, and Culture – Domain 1

	No. of Cases	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	D.F.	2-Tail Sig.
Effective	86	58.48	11.34	4.30	156	.001***
Marginal	72	66.21	11.18			

Curriculum and Classroom Instruction – Domain 2

	No. of Cases	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	D.F.	2-Tail Sig.
Effective	81	80.62	8.26	2.91	138	.01**
Marginal	59	84.46	6.87			

Table 9 (continued)

Independent t-Test of Teachers' Judgments of Principals' Leadership Behaviors and Practices

Collaboration and Shared Leadership - Domain 3

	No. of Cases	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	D.F.	2-Tail Sig.
Effective	91	30.79	6.89	1.37	162	.17
Marginal	73	32.34	7.61			

Family and Community Relations – Domain 4

	No. of Cases	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	D.F.	2-Tail Sig.
Effective	90	55.36	7.94	1.04	160	.298
Marginal	72	56.75	9.04			

Effective Management – Domain 5

	No. of Cases	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	D.F.	2-Tail Sig.
Effective	91	46.09	7.17	4.25	164	.001***
Marginal	75	50.84	7.16			

P = < .05*; <.01**; <.001***

Discriminate Function Analysis

Table 10 presents the results of the discriminate function analysis. The data show that the best predictor of membership in an effective or marginally effective school was Domain 1, Vision, Mission, and Culture.

Table 10

Standardized Canonical Discriminate Function Coefficients Predicting Group Membership in Effective and Marginally Effective Schools

Domain	Function
Vision, mission, culture	1.405
Domain 3	.170
Domain 2	.394
Domain 4	-.682
Domain 5	-.658

Survey Comments

The 77th survey question was an open-ended question. This open-ended question was included to answer Research Question 2 and to give respondents an opportunity to provide additional information and insights regarding effective principal leadership behaviors and practices.

Research Question 2

In your opinion, are there other domains that are equal to or more critical to a predominantly minority elementary school's success than those identified by Powell (2004)?

The open-ended question was: "In your opinion, are there other domains that are equal to or more critical to a predominantly minority elementary school's success than those already identified in this survey?" Twenty-one teachers wrote comments. These comments were analyzed for content. Fifteen themes emerged from the teachers' comments. See Table 11 for the themes and number of comments made for each. See Appendix G for the survey comments. The most frequently mentioned comments were with regard to: (1) Focus on the whole child; (2) encourage parental accountability and educate parents about the demands of NCLB, including ways

parents can help schools support students' academic achievement; and (3) demonstrate cultural responsiveness.

Table 11

Themes from Teachers' Comments

Theme	Number of Comments
1. Educate parents and hold them accountable	15
2. Focus on the whole child, not just basic academic skills	9
3. Demonstrate cultural responsiveness and ensure equity	9
4. Communicate effectively with all stakeholders	4
5. Be a knowledgeable and strong instructional leader	3
6. Build relationships and a sense of family and community	2
7. Be caring	2
8. Provide resources	2
9. Be politically savvy	2
10. Use staff time effectively	2
11. Model desired behavior	1
12. Ensure safety and behavior conducive to learning	1
13. Select a knowledgeable administrative team	1
14. Provide structure	1
15. Demonstrate support for teachers	1

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The findings are discussed using the domains derived from the review of the literature. The researcher presents findings on the survey return rates, demographic data, Cronbach alpha, correlation coefficients, independent t-Test, Discriminate Function Analysis, as well as comments from the open-ended question. Limitations of the study are discussed and conclusions are presented based on the findings. Implications and recommendations are presented for further research.

Discussion of Findings

Survey Return Rates

The return rates of this study were lower than the researcher would have liked. The rate was approximately 40% across the district. It would have been desirable to have a return rate nearer 70%. The researcher identified a number of reasons for the low return rate, primarily suggesting that it was the result of the imminence of the state assessment test program and the pressure on teachers to have their students do well. This was coupled with the fact that the principals insisted on disseminating the surveys themselves instead of allowing the researcher to distribute them. Personal contact with the researcher may have produced higher return rates.

Demographic Data

The demographics on the teachers in the ten schools surveyed indicated that there were great similarities between the effective and the marginally effective school personnel. The only important difference noted was that the effective schools had

about twice as many teachers with one to five years' experience as did the marginally effective schools. While there was nothing in the demographic data to prove that the demographics of the different schools would have affected the survey results, it is not outside of the realm of possibility. More experienced teachers may have a better and more in-depth understanding of the job of the principal and effective leadership behaviors and practices, which may have caused them to rate their principals higher

Cronbach Alpha

The first set of computations done on the survey results was the Cronbach alphas. The Cronbach alpha for the total survey was .95. The lowest was .70. This demonstrates high inter-item reliability; this statement is supported by the fact that Powell's (2004) study had similar high inter-item reliability after calculating Cronbach alphas. The validity of the survey was documented by both Powell's research and this researcher's review of the literature and the peer reviews of the instrument by colleagues of both Powell and Felder, plus a review by Felder's research committee.

Correlation Coefficients

Correlations were computed for both the effective and marginally effective schools on all five domains. In most cases, the correlations were of modest strength, meaning that they were between .31 and .70, although in the upper range, most in the .60 category. This means that the five domains shared a common variance of approximately 36% to 49%. The intercorrelations between Domain 1 and the other four domains had the highest correlations, all above .63, and most at .70 or higher. All were statistically significant beyond the .001 level. For predictive purposes, Domain 1 was a better predictor of the other four than any other domain.

Independent t-Test

This study examined the leadership behaviors and practices of ten principals in ten predominantly minority elementary schools in one school district in one mid-Atlantic state. Five of the schools met the researcher's criteria for effective and five of the schools met the researcher's criteria for marginally effective. The findings of the first research question showed that for domains 1, 2, and 5, the null hypothesis was rejected. For domains 3 and 4, it was accepted. The results of this study are not totally surprising when one considers the demands that society, federal and state governments and school districts have placed on schools to increase achievement and close the achievement gap. This has placed a burden on principals, especially those in schools labeled ineffective or marginally effective, to demonstrate greater proficiency as school leaders. A review of the findings from this study indicated that teachers in the marginally effective schools rated their principals statistically significantly higher on three out of five domains (e.g., domain 1 - vision, mission and culture; domain 2 - curriculum and classroom instruction; and domain 5 - effective management) than did the teachers in the effective schools.

The researcher has learned that the principals in the marginally effective schools (1) had been experienced effective principals in other schools in or outside of the district or (2) served as assistant principals under an effective principal prior to being appointed as a principal. Hence, the principals in the marginally effective schools are just as likely to know and demonstrate effective leadership behaviors and practices as principals in effective schools. In fact, because their schools are seen as less effective, these principals are often expected to go above and beyond the call of duty to increase student achievement and turn schools around.

Discriminate Function Analysis

Discriminate function analysis can be used to identify which variable(s) (i.e. domain[s]) best predict whether a teacher is likely to be in an effective or marginally effective school. Based on the discriminate function analysis, the domain that is the strongest predictor of school membership (e.g., effective or marginally effective) is domain 1—vision, mission and culture.

As a result of the data collected from this study and the research on effective schools, it is anticipated that the marginally effective schools in this study may become more effective based on their principals' current leadership behaviors and practices.

Open-ended Question

In addition to the 76 survey questions, respondents were asked to respond to an open-ended question (question number 77). This question asked respondents to indicate other leadership behaviors and practices that effective principals demonstrate besides the ones addressed in the survey. Fifteen themes emerged as a result of the teachers' comments. The top three themes were: (1) focusing on the whole child, (2) parental accountability, and (3) cultural responsiveness.

The majority of respondents from the effective and marginally effective schools indicated that effective principals must be concerned about the whole child; that is, academic skills that go beyond proficiency in reading and mathematics as well as meeting a child's social, emotional and physical needs. In light of the immense focus and urgency placed on passing state assessments and the negative consequences when a school does not make AYP, many schools have become narrowly focused on "teaching to the test," yet children have needs that extend beyond basic reading and math skills. Hence, the respondents suggest a return to a more holistic view and approach to educating students (Noddings, 2005). They suggest a holistic approach to

educating students "that recognizes that successful young people are knowledgeable, emotionally and physically healthy, motivated, civically inspired, engaged in the arts, prepared for work and economic self-sufficiency, and ready for the world beyond their own borders" (Eisner, 2005, p. 17).

Parental impact on student learning is far reaching (Bippus, 2006). According to Epstein (2006), schools need to "communicate effectively with all parents and the public about students' achievement" (p. 82). Furthermore, Epstein contends that school must "involve families in their children's education in ways that help students improve skills and achievement" (p. 82). This notion is supported by the respondents in this study, as they highlighted the need for principals to educate parents about the growing demands of accountability and the ramifications of not meeting AYP as well as ways parents can assist schools in their efforts to ensure increased student achievement. Finally, our nation's schools are undergoing considerable demographic change (Willis, 2000). According to the United States Census Bureau (2003), by 2020 more than half of the students in America will be students of color. Brazon, Osher and Fleischman (2005) argue that culturally responsive schools can help "establish a learning environment that promotes success for all students" (p. 84). Clearly, respondents believe demonstrating cultural responsiveness is another important and effective principal leadership behavior and practice for creating and maintaining effective schools.

Reasons for the Survey

The academic performance of African-American, Hispanic and low-income students is an ongoing national problem. School districts throughout the country are striving to close this achievement gap that exists between African-American, Hispanic and low-income students and their White, Asian and more socio-economically

privileged peers, especially in light of the No Child Left Behind Act, which states as its main objective "to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility and choices so that no child is left behind" (Public Law 107-110, 107th Congress, 2002). Research on effective schools indicates that effective principals can positively impact student achievement—especially the achievement of minority and poor students (Andrews & Sonder, 1987; Edmonds, 1981). Moreover, research shows that very few elements account for more inconsistency in student achievement than school leadership (Leithwood, 1994). Principals' leadership behaviors and practices are essential to student achievement (Edsource et al., 2005; Fleming, 2002, Waters, Marzano & McNulty, 2003; Powell, 2004).

School districts and principals throughout the country are feeling the pressure and urgency of increased accountability for student achievement as well as the consequences when students do not achieve at the level mandated by state and federal governments. America's public schools are under a microscope, especially marginally effective and ineffective schools. While these schools often receive additional attention, support and resources to help them increase student achievement, their principals often "shoulder the responsibility for [their] school's progress towards students reaching standard" (Fleming, 2002, p. 140). The principals in these schools have to demonstrate Herculean efforts to meet the heightened accountability demands and expectations while they continue to "juggle dozens of priorities from politics to personnel, from the budget to the boiler" (College Board, 2006). School districts across the country are implementing what researchers have known and touted for over three decades—that is, that one of the most important variables in turning around marginally effective and ineffective schools is ensuring that an effective principal is leading the school (College Board, 2006; Ferrandino, 2005; Lashway, 2004). Thus, school districts have become very selective in their principal hiring practices for

marginally effective and ineffective schools. Experienced effective principals or principals who have demonstrated effectiveness in their role as an assistant principal or in other administrative roles as well as those who have trained under the tutelage of or worked closely with an effective principal are often the persons selected to turn schools around and boost student achievement (Ferrandino, 2005; Lashway, 2004) in marginally effective and ineffective schools.

Study Limitations

This study involved 10 schools from the same school district in a mid-Atlantic state. The following limitations may have limited the generalizability of the findings:

1. The sample for this study consisted of 10 elementary schools (five effective and five marginally effective) from one school district in a mid-Atlantic state. Perhaps including more schools as well as schools from different school districts would have produced results that could be even more generalizable.
2. It was assumed that only full-time teachers in the study schools completed the survey.
3. It was assumed that the teachers in the 10 study schools sampled had a shared understanding of the terminology used.
4. Two questions (e.g. Question 63 [There is a pre-school program for four year olds?] and Question 65 [There is an all day kindergarten program?]) should have been given the response option of "yes" or "no" instead of using the 5-point response rating scale.

Implications

Inevitably, school districts throughout the country will continue to do their utmost to close the achievement gap and raise student achievement. The results of this

study could be beneficial to school districts, principals, teachers, schools of education, policy makers, etc. in their efforts to close the achievement gap and improve student achievement. Specifically, implications for practice as a result of this study include:

1. Districts may use the information on effective leadership behaviors and practices from this study to strengthen their recruitment, evaluation and retention efforts of highly qualified principals at all levels.
2. Districts and schools of education may use information from this study to provide staff development and principal preparation programs to increase the leadership capacity of current and future principals.
3. This study may be used to support policy on transferring principals in effective schools to schools that are less effective as well as policy on assigning assistant principals to schools.
4. Principals may use this study to reflect on, assess and improve their leadership behaviors and practices.
5. The results from this study may be used to inform stakeholders (e.g., parents, teachers, students, community members, central office staff, and the business community) of the leadership behaviors and practices a principal should demonstrate in order to close and eliminate the achievement gap and increase student achievement for all students.
6. Teachers and principals may not be knowledgeable about the leadership behaviors and practices of principals in other schools. This study can address this deficit.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the results of this study the following recommendations are made:

1. It is recommended that this survey be reserved for experienced teachers —teachers with five or more years of experience with the same principal. More experienced teachers may have a better understanding of the principalship and effective leadership behaviors and practices; therefore, more experienced teachers may be in the best position to effectively assess principals' leadership behaviors and practices verses novice teachers.
2. There seemed to be little difference between the leadership behaviors and practices of principals in effective and marginally effective schools in this school district. Hence, the leadership practices and behaviors of principals in totally ineffective schools should be compared to principals in effective and/or marginally effective schools.
3. Other persons who work closely with principals and are knowledgeable about effective principal leadership behaviors and practices (i.e., instructional leadership team members; assistant principals; Parent/Teacher Association [PTA] Executive Board members; supporting services staff [i.e., secretarial staff and building services mangers]; grade level/department chairpersons; school cluster colleagues, superintendents, etc.) should be surveyed to ascertain principals' leadership behaviors and practices from their perspectives.
4. To help ensure participants have a shared understanding of effective leadership behaviors and practices, participants should be provided with staff development activities associated with effective schools.
5. In addition to collecting and analyzing demographic data on the participants; demographic data should be collected and analyzed on the principals as well.

6. The researcher should insist on/negotiate having more control of and contact with participants to ensure a greater response rate.
7. In order to monitor and encourage more participation, survey data should be collected by individual participant instead of by type of school (effective verses marginally effective). Hence, each participant should be provided with an separate survey link verses providing one link for all of the participants from the effective schools and one link from the participants in the marginally effective schools.

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Appendix A
Powell Consent Letter

January 15, 2006

To: Monique T. Felder

Signature obscured
for Security

From: Susan T. Powell, PHD

Subject: Permission to use dissertation survey

This letter is written to give Monique T. Felder, Doctoral Student at Virginia Tech, permission to replicate my dissertation study and use the survey instrument as part of the research for her dissertation studies. I am excited that my research is being extended. Please feel free to contact me at any time. I look forward to reading the results of your research.

Appendix B
IRB Approval Letter

DATE: January 19, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Walt Mallory
Monique Felder

FROM: Carmen Green 

SUBJECT: IRB Exempt Approval: "Leadership Behaviors and Practices of Principals in Effective Predominately Minority Elementary Schools" IRB # 06-017

I have reviewed your request to the IRB for exemption for the above referenced project. I concur that the research falls within the exempt status. Approval is granted effective as of January 19, 2006.

Virginia Tech has an approved Federal Wide Assurance (FWA00000572, exp. 7/20/07) on file with OHRP, and its IRB Registration Number is IRB00000667.

cc: File
Department

M. D. Alexander

Appendix C
Survey and Cover Letter

April 3, 2006

INTERNET SURVEY: PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS AND PRACTICES

Dear Teacher,

I am a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech. I am studying the leadership behaviors and practices of principals in predominantly minority elementary schools. Your school is one of the 10 schools in the state of XXXXX identified for this study. I need your help with my study. A computerized survey instrument has been designed to obtain teachers' perspectives of their principal's leadership behaviors and practices. The survey has 76 selected response questions, one open-ended question and five background/demographic questions at the end. The survey is accessible via the internet and will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. I have obtained the approval of your school district and principal to administer this survey. You can access the survey instrument by going to the following Survey Monkey web site: XXXXX. The login number is: XXXX and the password is: XXXXX. The survey will be available to you April 3, 2006 – May 5, 2006. You can preview the survey questions below.

Please answer the questions as they pertain to your school only. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at XXXXXXXXXXXX or e-mail me at mfelder@vt.edu. Please note that your responses are confidential. Names, social security numbers or other identifying information should not be included. Additionally, data will be collected by the school unit, not by individual respondent.

Thank you for your input. I am hopeful that the data collected will lead to increased student achievement in your school district and beyond.

Sincerely,

Monique T. Felder
Doctoral Candidate, Virginia Tech
24713 Cutsail Drive
Damascus, MD 20872

Survey Questions

You are asked to indicate your perspective about your school/principal’s leadership behaviors and practices using this 77-item survey instrument. Please use the following scale in answering the first 76-items. The 77th item is an open ended question.

1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree Not Sure

Please be discriminating! The results will be more helpful if you think about each item as it pertains to your school/principal’s leadership behaviors and practices only. Please answer all questions and complete the five background questions as well. To choose a response, simply click on the answer you’ve selected. Answers can be changed by clicking on the response again and then selecting a new response. Type your responses to opened ended questions directly in the space provided below each open ended question. You can return to any question by clicking the “previous” button or forward to a question by clicking on the “next” button. Thank you for your time and input.

Survey Questions	1 = Strongly Agree	2 = Agree	3 = Disagree	4 = Strongly Disagree	5 = Not Sure
1. Curriculum needs determine the type and frequency of staff development	1	2	3	4	5
2. The principal and staff together develop the school plan.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Students participate in an extended year schedule.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The school staff embraces the vision of the principal for school success.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Frequent field trips enhance the curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5
6. An after school program for students reinforces academic skills.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Teachers use assessment data to plan instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The principal, not the district, makes hiring decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The principal supports the discipline plan.	1	2	3	4	5

Survey Questions	1 = Strongly Agree	2 = Agree	3 = Disagree	4 = Strongly Disagree	5 = Not Sure
10. Teachers address the individual academic needs of students.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Students are on task throughout the school day.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Outside organizations support the school momentarily.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Teachers know what resources to use for students' social and medical needs.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Family members feel comfortable in the school.	1	2	3	4	5
15. The principal provides teachers with enough supplies, books, and materials to deliver instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
16. There is a feeling of respect among and between staff members and students.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Students are taught only in heterogeneous groups.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Teachers focus on the SOL objectives when teaching the curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5
19. The staff gives the principal input on the purchase of resources.	1	2	3	4	5
20. The internet is used for communication between school and home.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Most parents attend conferences concerning student progress.	1	2	3	4	5
22. The needs of the children come first in our school.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Parents are seen frequently in the school.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Frequent extra-curriculum programs enrich the curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Family members are encouraged to come to school.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Most people in this school believe all children can learn.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix D

School District Approval Letter

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

February 17, 2006

Ms. Monique Felder
24713 Cutsail Drive
Damascus, MD 20872

Dear Ms. Felder:

Thank you for your interest in conducting your research study in [REDACTED] County Schools [REDACTED]. Your proposal was considered by division leadership. Your proposal to conduct research on *Leadership Behaviors and Practices of Principals in Effective Predominantly Minority Elementary Schools* has been approved by the Superintendent. [REDACTED] requires that you involve no more than 10 elementary schools in your study. Once schools are selected, my office will notify the principals that your study was approved and that they should expect to be hearing from you. Ultimately, though, the decision for an individual school to participate belongs to the principal. For schools that do participate, individual teacher participation is completely voluntary as well. [REDACTED] requests a copy of the study findings when they are complete. I wish you the best of luck with your study.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
*Supervisor of Program Evaluation

DR. [REDACTED]
Supervisor of Program Evaluation

P.O. BOX 389, [REDACTED] • WWW. [REDACTED] • FAX [REDACTED]

Appendix E

First E-mail Letter to Principals

March 20, 2006

Dear _____

I am a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech. I am studying the leadership behaviors and practices of principals in predominantly minority elementary schools. Your school is one of 10 schools, in the state, identified for this study. I am writing to request your support with my study, which has been approved by your school district and Virginia Tech.

The survey instrument I plan to use was created by Dr. Powell at Virginia Tech; is designed for teachers; and has been used in other school districts in the United States. The survey focuses on principals' leadership behaviors and practices from different perspectives; it is not an evaluation tool. My hope is that this study will add to the growing body of knowledge on principal leadership, in predominantly minority schools, at the elementary level. The last section of the survey requests demographic data that is also important to the study. A hard copy of the survey is enclosed for your review.

The study will be administered electronically through a link that I will forward directly to you, so you can easily forward it to your full time instructional staff (i.e., classroom teachers and specialists). The survey should not take teachers more than 15 minutes to complete and can be done at home, at school or anyplace where teachers have access to the internet. A hard copy of the survey can be provided to teachers who prefer not to complete the survey via the internet. The results of teachers' responses to the survey will be 100% confidential. Names (e.g., school, teachers, principal, school district, etc.) and other identifying information, of any kind, are not requested on the survey and will not be used in my results. Additionally, please note that survey data will be collected by school district, not by individual school or individual respondent. You are invited to request a summary of the results of the study.

The survey will be available, Monday, April 3, 2006 through Monday, May 5, 2006. I will contact you by phone this week to see if you have any questions or need additional information. In the meantime, do not hesitate to contact me at XXX-XXX-XXXX (home), XXX-XXX-XXXX (Virginia Tech), or via email at mfelder@vt.edu for any reason.

Thank you for your consideration of my request to survey your full-time instructional staff. I am hopeful that the results of this study will lead to increased student achievement for all children in your school district and beyond.

Sincerely,

Monique T. Felder
Doctoral Candidate, Virginia Tech

Appendix F

Second E-mail Letter to Principals

March 31, 2006

Dear

Thank you, so very much, for allowing your teachers to participate in my approved doctoral research study on leadership behaviors and practices of principals in predominantly minority elementary schools. The survey focuses on principal leadership behaviors and practices from different perspectives of teachers. It is not an evaluation tool and has been approved by your school district. The survey is 100% confidential, as names and other identifying information are not requested or needed. Data will be collected by school district, not by individual school or individual respondent.

Please email the following Internet link to your full-time teachers/professional staff (e.g., classroom teachers and specialists) along with the attached cover letter. The survey link will take your teachers to the first page of the survey which contains directions for completing the survey.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u+648401800000>

The survey is available Monday, April 3, 2006 through Monday, May 5, 2006 and should take less than 15 minutes to complete.

Thank you, again, for your willingness to participate in this study! If you have any questions or need additional information regarding the study or survey instrument, please do not hesitate to contact me at XXX-XXX-XXXX (home), XXX-XXX-XXXX (Virginia Tech) or via email at mfelder@vt.edu. I am hopeful that the results of this study will lead to increased student achievement in your school district and beyond.

Sincerely,

Monique T. Felder
Doctoral Candidate, Virginia Tech

Cc Dr. XXXXXX
Supervisor of Program Evaluation
XX County Public Schools

Appendix G
Survey Comments

Survey Questions	1 = Strongly Agree	2 = Agree	3 = Disagree	4 = Strongly Disagree	5 = Not Sure
27. Successes are celebrated frequently by the principal and staff.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Assessment is a vital part of the instructional process.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Leadership in the school is shared between the principal and staff.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Translators are provided for parents who do not speak English.	1	2	3	4	5
31. The school is a happy place for learning.	1	2	3	4	5
32. Students in this school understand and follow the discipline plan for behavior.	1	2	3	4	5
33. The school vision sets the stage for how the staff proceeds with instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
34. After school programs are well attended by parents.	1	2	3	4	5
35. The principal is seen frequently throughout the building.	1	2	3	4	5
36. Teachers are encouraged to participate in decision-making.	1	2	3	4	5
37. Community members volunteer at the school.	1	2	3	4	5
38. The principal understands good classroom instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
39. Teachers frequently assess students on SOL objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
40. The staff makes decisions with the principal concerning teaching and learning.	1	2	3	4	5
41. The principal manages funds to ensure the school has the best resources to teach the students.	1	2	3	4	5
42. There are uninterrupted blocks of time for instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
43. Test taking strategies are taught.	1	2	3	4	5

Survey Questions	1 = Strongly Agree	2 = Agree	3 = Disagree	4 = Strongly Disagree	5 = Not Sure
44. The staff plans the program for the school in collaboration with the principal.	1	2	3	4	5
45. The culture of the school is conducive to learning.	1	2	3	4	5
46. My school develops a plan to ensure all students are successful.	1	2	3	4	5
47. Students attend school on Saturdays to reinforce academic skills.	1	2	3	4	5
48. Direct instruction teaching methods are utilized.	1	2	3	4	5
49. The principal visits classrooms frequently.	1	2	3	4	5
50. Teaching methods and programs are based on research.	1	2	3	4	5
51. Most people in the school work for the success of all students.	1	2	3	4	5
52. The principal keeps the teacher-student ratio low.	1	2	3	4	5
53. The principal makes some academic decisions without the input of teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
54. Members of civic or social organizations volunteer in the school.	1	2	3	4	5
55. The district office determines class size.	1	2	3	4	5
56. The staff enjoys working in this school.	1	2	3	4	5
57. Teachers are leaders in the school.	1	2	3	4	5
58. School communication is printed in more than one language.	1	2	3	4	5
59. The school forms partnerships with businesses.	1	2	3	4	5
60. The principal uses a variety of funding sources to sustain programs at the school.	1	2	3	4	5

Survey Questions	1 = Strongly Agree	2 = Agree	3 = Disagree	4 = Strongly Disagree	5 = Not Sure
61. The principal knows the names of the students.	1	2	3	4	5
62. The school is the center of the community.	1	2	3	4	5
63. There is a pre-school program for four year olds.	1	2	3	4	5
64. Most people in our school believe the principal is an ethical leader.	1	2	3	4	5
65. There is an all day kindergarten program.	1	2	3	4	5
66. There is a parent liaison to assist parents.	1	2	3	4	5
67. Most staff members participate in staff development.	1	2	3	4	5
68. The discipline plan for student behavior is effective.	1	2	3	4	5
69. A nurse on staff addresses the medical needs of students.	1	2	3	4	5
70. Teachers in our school are free to be risk-takers.	1	2	3	4	5
71. The staff participates in the hiring process.	1	2	3	4	5
72. The adopted curriculum in the focus of all classroom instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
73. Homework completion is required daily.	1	2	3	4	5
74. Teachers are honest with parents concerning student progress.	1	2	3	4	5
75. School staff members hold classes for parents.	1	2	3	4	5
76. Instructional time is protected from interruptions.	1	2	3	4	5

77. In your opinion, are there other domains that are equal to or more critical to a predominantly minority elementary school's success than those identified in this survey? _____

Please provide the following background information:

1. Are you: A) Male____ B) Female____

2. How many years have you been in education, including the years at your current school?
A B C D E
0-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21+

3. How many years have you been teaching at this school?
A B C D E
0-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21+

4. Indicate your educational level
A B C D
BA/BS MA MA+30 Doctorate

5. To what age group do you belong?
A B C D
22-30 31-40 41-50 51+