

EXPLAINING THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN PRINCIPALS' AND TEACHERS'
PERCEPTIONS OF THE PRINCIPAL'S LEADER BEHAVIOR

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify factors that contribute to the differences in teachers' and principals' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior. Data were collected from a systematically selected sample of principals in the 19,046 public high schools in the database of a commercial school mailing list company. Survey packets were sent to the principals. One hundred sixteen survey packets were returned with 106 being usable.

Principals completed Part I of a questionnaire designed to measure the principal's perceptions of his or her own leader behaviors. Each principal was asked to purposely select six teachers—one in English, math, science, social studies, vocational education, and special education—and have them complete a questionnaire to measure the teachers' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior. The criterion variables were determined by subtracting the mean teachers' response from the principal's response on each item for each school.

The mean teachers' responses on Part II of the questionnaire served as measures of the predictor variables.

Principal components analyses were conducted to reduce the data and create meaningful scales. The data were then statistically treated three different ways: (1) by identifying the criterion variables using the difference scores, (2) by identifying the criterion variables using the difference scores when principals' responses only from the questionnaires were used, and (3) by identifying the criterion variables using the difference scores when teachers' responses only from the questionnaires were used. Predictor variables were the principal's modeling of ideal behavior, the principal's skill in teacher evaluation, the teachers' overall awareness of the school, the teachers' perceptions of discipline procedures, and the demographic categories of principal's and teachers' experience, principal's gender, school size, and school type.

Multiple regression analyses were used to determine relationships between the criterion and predictor variables. Principals' modeling of ideal behavior was a significant predictor of

every criterion variable in every model. Principals' skill in teacher evaluation was a significant predictor of the principal's quality of communication in every model. School awareness, discipline procedures, and demographic variables were not significant predictors of the criterion variables.

DEDICATION

As I write this dedication I am thinking of those people to whom this accomplishment means a great deal: those people who encouraged me, prayed for me, and yes, even nagged me. To these people, I dedicate this study.

To Rhonda, my wife: When we met in the first grade, neither of us could have imagined the life we would have together. Thank you for your help, for your understanding, and for your patience. Most of all, thank you for your love.

To Jennifer and Michael, my children: Your Dad finally made it! I hope you are half as proud of me as I am of you. Just being who you are put a lot of pressure on me to finish this process. When both of you graduated as high school valedictorians your Mom and I were proud. But you didn't stop there. Jennifer, by becoming a National Board Certified Teacher, and Michael, by earning your MBA, you have shown us that you can do anything. I am so proud of both of you. You have grown into amazing adults. I love you and your families.

To Catey, Molly, Abby, and Grace, my grandchildren: Catey, I can always remember when I started my doctorate. I missed the first day of my first class because that is the day you were born. I was with you that day; I would not have been anywhere else. Molly, Abby, and Grace, I was there when you were born too. I held each of you on the first day of your life. You will never know how much I love you. I am so glad to be your grandfather.

To my mother and father: Even though you are no longer with us, I know you were proud of me. I love you.

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Dr. Duane Alderman: Duane passed away not long after I completed my prospectus. As a matter of fact, Duane participated in my prospectus exam by phone from his hospital bed. Duane was a friend and a colleague. He was always checking on me and always encouraged me to finish. In grateful appreciation of his memory, I acknowledge his help and care.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I THE PROBLEM.....	1
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	2
PURPOSE OF STUDY	5
RESEARCH QUESTIONS	6
AN EXPLANATION FOR THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TEACHERS’ AND PRINCIPALS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THE PRINCIPAL’S LEADER BEHAVIOR	6
<i>Development of the Criterion Variables.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Types of Variables That May Affect Differences in Teachers’ and Principals’ Perceptions of the Principal’s Leader Behavior.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Development of the Predictor Variables.....</i>	<i>10</i>
School Culture and the Discrepancy Between Principals’ and Teachers’ Perceptions of the Principal’s Leader Behavior.....	11
Level of Caring and the Discrepancy Between Principals’ and Teachers’ Perceptions of the Principal’s Leader Behavior.....	11
Modeling Ideal Behavior and the Discrepancy Between Principals’ and Teachers’ Perceptions of the Principal’s Leader Behavior.....	12
Level of Control and the Discrepancy Between Principals’ and Teachers’ Perceptions of the Principal’s Leader Behavior.....	13
Professional Practice and the Discrepancy Between Principals’ and Teachers’ Perceptions of the Principal’s Leader Behavior	13
Demographics and the Discrepancy Between Principals’ and Teachers’ Perceptions of the Principal’s Leader Behavior.....	13
CHAPTER II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	14
HISTORY OF LEADERSHIP FROM TAYLOR TO KOUZES AND POSNER.....	14
<i>Scientific Management and the Human Relations Movement</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Trait Theory</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Leader Behavior.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Managerial Assumptions</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Transactional and Transformational Leadership.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Situational Leadership.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Servant-Leadership.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Vision and Values</i>	<i>19</i>
HISTORICAL REVIEW	20
MODERN DEFINITIONS OF LEADERSHIP	21
IMPORTANCE OF THE LEADER-FOLLOWER RELATIONSHIP	23
THE IMPORTANCE OF PERCEPTIONS OF LEADERSHIP.....	24
DISCREPANCIES IN THE PERCEPTIONS OF LEADERSHIP.....	25
ATTRIBUTION THEORY	27
THE RELATIONSHIP OF THIS STUDY TO THE RESEARCH ON LEADERSHIP	28
CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY.....	29
POPULATIONS	29
SAMPLES.....	29

PARTICIPANTS.....	30
INSTRUMENTS	30
<i>Construction and Testing of the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaires</i>	<i>31</i>
Construction of the Principal's Leadership Questionnaires.....	31
Content Validation of Items on the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire: Teachers' Edition	32
<i>Administration of the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire and the Personal and Environmental Attributes Questionnaire.....</i>	<i>32</i>
Principal Components Analyses	33
Principal components analysis of the criterion variables.....	34
Principal components analysis using principals' data only.	37
Principal components analysis using teachers' data only.	37
Reliability of the Criterion Measures.....	42
Scoring of the Scales in the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaires.....	42
<i>Personal and Environmental Attributes Questionnaire.....</i>	<i>44</i>
Construction of the Personal and Environmental Attributes Questionnaire	44
Content Validation of the Personal and Environmental Attributes Questionnaire	44
Principal Components Analysis of Teachers' Responses to the Personal and Environmental Attributes Questionnaire	44
<i>Reliability of the Personal and Environmental Attributes Questionnaire.....</i>	<i>48</i>
Scoring of the Scales in the Personal and Environmental Attributes Questionnaire	48
METHODS OF ANALYSIS.....	49
CHAPTER IV RESULTS	50
DESCRIPTIVE DATA	50
REGRESSION OF THE CRITERION VARIABLES DERIVED FROM DISCREPANCY SCORES ON THE PREDICTOR VARIABLES	58
<i>Regression of Creating Culture on Principal Leadership Variables and Teacher and Principal Demographic Variables.....</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>Regression of Communication on Principal Leadership Variables and Teacher and Principal Demographic Variables.....</i>	<i>61</i>
REGRESSION OF THE CRITERION VARIABLES DERIVED FROM THE PRINCIPALS' RESPONSES ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE PREDICTOR VARIABLES	63
<i>Regression of Creating Culture on Principal Leadership Variables and Teacher and Principal Demographic Variables.....</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>Regression of Serving as a Change Agent on Principal Leadership Variables and Teacher and Principal Demographic Variables.....</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>Regression of Communication on Principal Leadership Variables and Teacher and Principal Demographic Variables.....</i>	<i>68</i>
REGRESSION OF THE CRITERION VARIABLES DERIVED FROM THE TEACHERS' RESPONSES ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE PREDICTOR VARIABLES..	70
<i>Regression of Consideration on Principal Leadership Variables and Teacher and Principal Demographic Variables.....</i>	<i>70</i>
<i>Regression of Serving as a Change Agent on Principal Leadership Variables and Teacher and Principal Demographic Variables.....</i>	<i>73</i>

<i>Regression of Communication on Principal Leadership Variables and Teacher and Principal Demographic Variables.....</i>	<i>75</i>
CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	77
CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION	77
<i>Conclusions and Discussion Based on Analyses of Demographics.....</i>	<i>77</i>
<i>Conclusions and Discussion Based on the Multiple Regression Analyses.....</i>	<i>78</i>
<i>Summary of Conclusions.....</i>	<i>80</i>
LIMITATIONS.....	81
EVALUATION OF THE THEORY	82
IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE	85
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	86
REFERENCES.....	87
APPENDIX A PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL’S LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE: PRINCIPAL’S EDITION	92
APPENDIX A2 PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL’S LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE: TEACHERS’ EDITION.....	94
APPENDIX B PERSONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ATTRIBUTES QUESTIONNAIRE.....	96
APPENDIX C PRINCIPAL SURVEY – PART I.....	98
APPENDIX C TEACHER SURVEY – PART I	100
APPENDIX D INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL	102
APPENDIX E LETTER TO PRINCIPALS.....	103
APPENDIX F1 CONTENT VALIDATION OF PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL’S LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE: TEACHERS’ EDITION	104
APPENDIX F2 CONTENT VALIDATION OF PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL’S LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE: TEACHERS’ EDITION	112
APPENDIX F3 ASSOCIATION AND CLARITY FOR ITEMS WITH AT LEAST 80% AGREEMENT ON CONTENT VALIDATION OF PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL’S LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE: TEACHERS’ EDITION, NOVEMBER 2004.....	117
APPENDIX G1 ITEM NUMBERS FOR PRINCIPALS’ RESPONSES ON THE CRITERION VARIABLES.....	120
APPENDIX G2 ITEM NUMBERS FOR TEACHERS’ RESPONSES ON THE CRITERION VARIABLES	121
APPENDIX H1 CONTENT VALIDATION INSTRUMENT FOR PERSONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ATTRIBUTES	122
APPENDIX H2 CONTENT VALIDATION OF QUESTIONNAIRE ASSESSING THE ATTRIBUTES OF PRINCIPALS’ LEADERSHIP: CLASSIFICATION OF ITEMS INTO DOMAINS BY EXPERTS	127

APPENDIX H3 ASSOCIATION AND CLARITY FOR ITEMS WITH AT LEAST 80% AGREEMENT ON CONTENT VALIDATION INSTRUMENT FOR THE QUESTIONNAIRE ASSESSING PERSONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ATTRIBUTES, DECEMBER 2004	130
APPENDIX I ITEM NUMBERS FOR TEACHERS' RESPONSES ON THE PREDICTOR VARIABLES	132
APPENDIX J1 ANOVA AND CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR THE REGRESSION OF CREATING CULTURE ON THE PREDICTOR VARIABLES.....	133
APPENDIX J2 ANOVA AND CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR THE REGRESSION OF COMMUNICATION ON THE PREDICTOR VARIABLES	136
APPENDIX J3 ANOVA AND CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR THE REGRESSION OF CREATING CULTURE ON THE PREDICTOR VARIABLES WHEN ONLY THE PRINCIPALS' RESPONSES FROM THE PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE WERE USED IN THE PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS ANALYSIS.....	139
APPENDIX J4 ANOVA AND CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR THE REGRESSION OF SERVING AS A CHANGE AGENT ON THE PREDICTOR VARIABLES WHEN ONLY THE PRINCIPALS' RESPONSES FROM THE PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE WERE USED IN THE PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS ANALYSIS	142
APPENDIX J5 ANOVA AND CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR THE REGRESSION OF COMMUNICATION ON THE PREDICTOR VARIABLES WHEN ONLY THE PRINCIPALS' RESPONSES FROM THE PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE WERE USED IN THE PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS ANALYSIS.....	145
APPENDIX J6 ANOVA AND CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR THE REGRESSION OF CONSIDERATION ON THE PREDICTOR VARIABLES WHEN ONLY THE TEACHERS' RESPONSES FROM THE PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE WERE USED IN THE PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS ANALYSIS	148
APPENDIX J7 ANOVA AND CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR THE REGRESSION OF SERVING AS A CHANGE AGENT ON THE PREDICTOR VARIABLES WHEN ONLY THE TEACHERS' RESPONSES FROM THE PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE WERE USED IN THE PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS ANALYSIS.....	151
APPENDIX J8 ANOVA AND CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR THE REGRESSION OF COMMUNICATION ON THE PREDICTOR VARIABLES WHEN ONLY THE TEACHERS' RESPONSES FROM THE PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE WERE USED IN THE PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS ANALYSIS	154

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	A Classification of the Waters et al. (2003) Leadership Responsibilities into Principal Leadership Behavioral Domains	9
Table 2	A Historical Review of Key Contributors to the Theory and Research in Leadership.....	20
Table 3	A Survey of Leader Behavior Measurement Instruments for Use with Leaders and Followers.....	26
Table 4	Number of Returned, Usable Questionnaires	31
Table 5	Rotated Components Matrix for Difference Scores on the Items on the Teachers' and Principals' Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire, N=106.....	35
Table 6	Scale, Items, Definitions, and Coding for Scales Resulting from the Principal Components Analysis of the Differences in Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions of the Principal's Leadership Questionnaire.....	36
Table 7	Rotated Components Matrix for the Principals' Responses on the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire, N=106.....	38
Table 8	Scales, Items, Definitions, and Coding - Principals' Responses on the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire.....	39
Table 9	Rotated Components Matrix for the Un-weighted, Mean Teachers' Responses on the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire, N=106.....	40
Table 10	Scales, Items, Definitions, and Coding for Scales Resulting from the Un-Weighted Mean Teachers' Responses on the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire	41
Table 11	Alpha Reliability Coefficients for the Scales Developed from the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire	43
Table 12	Rotated Components Matrix for the Personal and Environmental Attributes Questionnaire, N=526.....	46
Table 13	Scales, Items, Definitions, and Coding Resulting from the Personal and Environmental Attributes Questionnaire	47
Table 14	Alpha Reliability Coefficients for Predictor Variables on the Personal and Environmental Attributes Questionnaire	48

Table 15	Distribution of the Demographics of Responding High School Principals, N=106, Missing=0	52
Table 16	Distribution of the Demographics of Responding High School Teachers, N=526	53
Table 17	Distribution of the Demographics of Responding High School Principals by Categories	54
Table 18	Distribution of the Demographics of Responding High School Teachers by Categories	56
Table 19	Descriptives for Principals' and Teachers' Responses on the Criterion Variables	57
Table 20	Results of the Regression of Creating Culture on the Predictor Variables.....	60
Table 21	Results of the Regression of Communication on the Predictor Variables.....	62
Table 22	Results of the Regression of Creating Culture on the Predictor Variables When Only the Principals' Responses from the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire Were Used in the Principal Component Analysis	65
Table 23	Results of the Regression of Serving as a Change Agent on the Predictor Variables When Only the Principals' Responses from the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire Were Used in the Principal Components Analysis	67
Table 24	Results of the Regression of the Quality of the Principal's Communication on the Predictor Variables When Only the Principals' Responses from the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire Were Used in the Principal Components Analysis	69
Table 25	Results of the Regression of the Principal's Consideration for Teachers on the Predictor Variables When Only the Teachers' Responses from the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire Were Used in the Principal Components Analysis.....	72
Table 26	Results of the Regression of the Principal's Behavior of Serving as a Change Agent on the Predictor Variables When Only the Teachers' Responses from the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire Were Used in the Principal Components Analysis.....	74
Table 27	Results of Regression of the Principal's Quality of Communication on the Predictor Variables When Only Teachers' Responses from the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire Were Used in the Principal Components Analysis.....	76

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Variables explaining the discrepancy between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior	12
Figure 2.	Variables explaining the discrepancy between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior when the difference score on each item was used in the principal components analysis of the Perceptions of Principals' Leadership Questionnaire.....	82
Figure 3.	Variables explaining the discrepancy between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior when only the principals' responses were used in the principal components analysis of the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire.....	83
Figure 4.	Variables explaining the discrepancy between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior when only the teachers' responses were used in the principal components analysis of the Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Questionnaire.....	84

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Schools are complex organizations (Hoy, Gage, & Tarter, 2006) and school principals, who lead people, are charged with developing, maintaining, and improving the standards by which their schools operate. Leadership is a critical factor in determining organizational performance and effectiveness (Shum & Cheng, 1997), and as educational administration becomes more complex, with high stakes testing and personal and professional accountability, principals must be able to assess and, if necessary, adjust their leader behaviors to meet the needs of the people with whom they work.

Good principals recognize that leadership does not take place in a vacuum (Barnett, McCormick, & Conners, 1999). Everyday, principals have interactions with teachers. Over time, these interactions are the basis on which the personal and professional relationships between principals and teachers are built. School goals, which are the basis for developing organizational performance and effectiveness, are met by people; therefore, people are the central resources in schools (Deal & Peterson, 1999).

Education is a “people” business. Educational administrators are charged with working with teachers, staff, students, parents, communities, and governmental agencies to educate children. Even though administrators face serious accountability issues including high stakes testing, school accreditation, and the new federal legislation of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (P. L. 107-110, 2002), they must not forget that the goal of schools is to educate students and that teachers are most often the ones who accomplish that goal.

Kouzes and Posner (1995) defined leadership as “the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations” (p. 30). The key phrases in this quote are “want to” and “shared aspirations.” Principals can often get teachers to comply with their directives simply because of the power they hold over teachers. This type of compliance is based solely on the coercive power of the principal and not on legitimate leadership skills (Erchul, Raven, & Ray, 2001; Raven, 1993). It should be noted that obedience to leadership is primarily voluntary. People follow leaders who appear to be legitimate (Bolman & Deal, 1997). True principal-leaders use not only the authority they have but the relationships they have built, the credibility they have developed, and their communication skills to inspire teachers to work cooperatively and do their best (Jacobson, Johnson, Ylimaki, & Giles, 2005; Souba, 1998).

Statement of the Problem

In the early 1900s, Fredrick Winslow Taylor developed a theory of organizational administration that was labeled the principles of scientific management. The four principles are:

1. Management is responsible for analyzing every aspect of how workers performed their jobs. He conducted time and motion studies to find the best way for workers to complete their tasks.
2. Management studies the workers and, after analyzing their work, trains them to correct their shortcomings.
3. Management is responsible for making the workers adhere to the work plan that is developed after the workers and tasks are analyzed.
4. Management is responsible for seeing that there is a division of labor between management and workers; that each knows what the other does and holds them accountable for their performance (Taylor, 1911).

In the 1920s, the principles of scientific management began to fall out of favor (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993). Taylor was accused of treating people like machines to accomplish the organization's goals. Management focused on the needs of the organization, not on those of the people. The relationship between leaders and followers was viewed as a one-way relationship; the leader told the followers what to do and they did it. People were considered secondary to the organization with little concern for their thoughts, feelings, and needs. Gradually, the human relations movement replaced scientific management as the premier theory of organizational administration.

From 1924 to 1927, the management at the Western Electric Hawthorne Works in Chicago had researchers conduct a series of experiments to determine how the amount of lighting affected production (accel-team, 2004). After finding that there was no clear connection between the amount of light and productivity, researchers began to wonder about the factors that would affect work output.

In 1927, Elton Mayo and associates began to examine the work conditions and productivity at the Hawthorne plant (accel-team, 2004). Because they knew that illumination had no effect on productivity, they began to look for other factors. Mayo worked with a group of six women. He chose two of the women, and they, in turn, chose the other four.

Mayo put the women on piecework for eight weeks (accel-team, 2004). He then experimented with changing the length of their working day and with the number and the length of breaks they were given. A supervisor explained each change before it took place. The women were allowed to decide on how the work would be accomplished. Mayo found that production went up for these six women during this eight-week period.

Mayo then returned these six women to their original, rigorous schedule that included a 48-hour workweek, work on Saturdays, and no rest breaks (accel-team, 2004). The women were taken off piecework. They were observed under these conditions for 12 weeks. Surprisingly, Mayo and associates found that during this 12 week period production for these six women was the highest recorded since the beginning of the experiment.

Mayo concluded that production improved, not because the physical working conditions were changed, but because management was paying attention to the six women individually and as a group (accel-team, 2004). The scientific management approach of finding the “one best way” to accomplish a task was replaced with a concern for the workers. Thus, the human relations movement in management was born.

Elton Mayo and associates argued that “the real power centers within an organization were the interpersonal relations that developed within the working unit” (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993, p. 96). Effective organizations “developed around the workers and had to take into consideration human feelings and attitudes” (p. 96). Therefore, for organizations to experience success, managers had to fulfill the needs of the workers. In essence, leaders had to develop mutually beneficial relationships with the followers. The human relations theorists understood that organizational goals were met, not by policies and procedures, but by people (Hersey & Blanchard).

As leadership models, scientific management and human relations are on opposite ends of the leadership continuum. Although each of these models are useful at certain times, leaders cannot be successful by only concentrating on one or the other. Leadership, especially principals’ leadership in schools, must be balanced by using elements of both task oriented and people oriented leader behaviors.

School administrators, who are under tremendous pressure to make sure that every child meets legislated educational goals, are often returning to the principles of scientific management. Legislators and educators have determined curricula, and administrators analyze every aspect of

teaching to try to find the best methods and techniques for all teachers to employ. They provide teachers with in-service in these methods and techniques and, through the evaluation process, make sure teachers adhere to this training. School-level administrators hold teachers accountable for their actions and are, in turn, held accountable by their district or division-level supervisors. District-level administrators are accountable to the local, state, and federal governments.

Emphasis is placed on achieving goals by determining and using scientifically based “best practices” (P. L. 107-110, 2002). There is nothing wrong with administrators, as leaders, encouraging or insisting that teachers use best practices: However, principals should be aware of the importance of the personal attention they show teachers. Because a principal’s leadership is affected by the relationships he or she has with teachers, effective principals must be aware of teachers’ needs and try to help fulfill those needs while achieving school goals (Deal & Peterson, 1999).

Lord, Brown, and Freiberg (1999) wrote, “The interpersonal relation of superiors to subordinates affects subordinates’ identification and self-concepts, which, in turn, are critical determinants of social and organizational processes” (p. 170). Put into the language of schools, the relationship between principal and teacher affects how the teacher perceives his or her role in the organization, and that perception, in turn, helps to influence the successes and failures of the school.

In 2003, Metropolitan Life conducted a survey of 1017 K-12 public school teachers and 800 school principals who served in public elementary, middle, and secondary schools. The survey revealed that both teachers and principals believe that, ideally, the most important leader behavior for principals is to motivate students and teachers to do their best. However, when the researchers asked specific questions about the principals’ leadership, they found that teachers and principals had divergent views of the principals’ leader behaviors.

Researchers for MetLife (2003) discovered that teachers felt their principals were more interested in student test scores, reporting, and compliance than they were in guiding and motivating teachers. However, when principals responded to these issues, they had exactly the opposite view. Principals felt that they attached more importance and time to guiding and motivating teachers than to test scores, reporting and compliance.

Principals were shown to have more positive views of the principal-teacher relationship than teachers did. Most principals (97%) were satisfied with their relationship with teachers

while 71% of teachers were satisfied with their relationship with the principal. A higher percentage of principals than teachers viewed their relationship as open (84% vs 50%), collaborative (84% vs 54%), friendly (84% vs 57%), mutually respectful (89% vs 58%), and supportive (86% vs 60%) (MetLife, 2003).

Many researchers agree that the leader-follower relationship, as viewed by the follower, is a major determinant of the effectiveness of the leader (Blase, 1988; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997; Lord et al., 1999; Shum & Cheng, 1997). Again, in the language of schools, how teachers perceive the relationship they have with the principal influences the effectiveness of the principal's leadership. Therefore, the principal-teacher relationship is worthy of study. As Fiedler and Chemers (1974) wrote, "From a theoretical as well as an intuitive point of view, the interpersonal relationship between the leader and his group members is likely to be the most important single variable which determines his power and influence" (p. 64).

Any research that is aimed at explaining the leader-follower phenomenon between principals and teachers should be useful. This agrees with Blase (1995), who administered *The Inventory of Principals' Characteristics that Contribute to Teacher Empowerment* to 285 teachers in 11 Georgia schools, and wrote: "Although substantial research has been centered on principal-teacher relationships, more research along these lines, from a variety of theoretical perspectives, would be valuable" (p. 216).

Purpose of Study

Leadership, like beauty, is difficult to describe, but you know it when you see it" (Souba, 1998, p. 1). As Souba infers, leadership is more easily recognized than it is quantified. Many researchers have tried to define and describe successful leadership and leadership skills so that present and potential leaders can emulate those skills and become successful leaders. Burns (1978) wrote: "Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth" (pp. 1-2). "If we know far too much about our leaders, we know far too little about leadership. We fail to grasp the essence of leadership that is relevant to the modern age" (pp. 1-2).

Grasping the "essence of leadership" is difficult to do, especially the leadership of a school principal. Being a principal is a complex job, requiring a multitude of talents which are not easily quantified (Hoy et al., 2006). However, all the leader behaviors a principal exhibits help to define the relationship he or she has with his or her teachers.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the principal-teacher relationship as a leader-follower relationship. In this study, I identified factors that contribute to the discrepancies between principals' and teachers' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior.

Research Questions

The research question was:

What variables explain differences in principals' and teachers' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior?

Within this research I sought to answer the following four sub-questions:

1. What variables explain differences in principals' and teachers' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior in the area of consideration?
2. What variables explain differences in principals' and teachers' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior in the area of creating culture?
3. What variables explain differences in principals' and teachers' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior in the area of communication?
4. What variables explain differences in principals' and teachers' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior in the area of adaptability?

An Explanation for the Differences Between Teachers' and Principals' Perceptions of the Principal's Leader Behavior

The Metropolitan 2003 survey of elementary, middle, and secondary public school teachers and principals revealed that there was a discrepancy between principals' and teachers' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior. Although the researchers provided data which indicated that this discrepancy between principals' and teachers' perceptions existed, they offered no theory explaining why it existed. Obviously, principals and teachers form their perceptions of the principal's leader behavior differently. The attribution theory may help to explain why (Attribution Theory, 2004).

Attribution theory is a way for people to explain what happens to them. If something good happens, people often attribute the outcome of the event to something that they had done. They take credit for their good fortune. However, if something bad happens to them, they often attribute the outcome to something that was beyond their control (Attribution Theory, 2004). If a student passes a test, he or she may attribute it to the fact that they were prepared and knew the

material. But, if a student does poorly on a test, they may attribute it to the fact that the test was hard or that the teacher was purposely trying to fail the students.

If the student did poorly and thought the teacher was trying to fail students, he or she forms negative perceptions of the teacher. If the student thinks he or she failed the test because it was hard, he or she may attribute his or her performance to the difficulty level of the test and may have neutral feelings about the teacher or may even form positive feelings about the teacher if the student felt the teacher had tried to help him or her understand the material. This idea of attributing a reason to an outcome may help to explain the discrepancy between principals' and teachers' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior.

Principals form perceptions of their leader behavior internally, while teachers form their perceptions of the principal's leader behavior by observation. When the principal's leader behavior affects a teacher positively, the teacher may attribute the positive outcome to the principal's actions or the teacher may attribute the positive outcome to something that the teacher did. If the principal's leader behavior affects a teacher negatively, the teacher may blame the negative effect on the situation and have neutral or positive feelings, about the principal. However, the teacher may perceive the principal's actions as directly causing the negative outcome and form negative perceptions of the principal's leader behavior.

Because of this effort to explain outcomes and because principals and teachers form perceptions of the principal's leader behavior differently, a discrepancy between the principals' and teachers' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior exists.

Development of the Criterion Variables

Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) conducted a meta-analysis that included 70 studies on leadership. These studies were conducted over a 30-year period. The criteria for inclusion in the meta-analysis was that the study had to be quantitative, student achievement had to be used as the dependent variable, and teacher perceptions of leadership had to serve as the independent variable. The meta-analysis involved 14,000 teachers, 2,894 schools, and over one million students. Their research yielded 21 specific principal leadership responsibilities that had a significant effect on student achievement.

I divided the definitions Waters et al. (2003) assigned these 21 leadership responsibilities into five domains I labeled Principal Leadership Behaviors (see Table 1).

Even though I divided these leadership responsibilities into five domains, I used only four in this study: (1) **Consideration**, which contains leadership behaviors related to personal and professional relationships based on awareness of needs and demonstrated care and support; (2) **Creating Culture**, which contains leadership behaviors related to creating a school culture based on personal beliefs about education; serving as an advocate for the school, children, and teachers; recognizing and rewarding children, teachers, and staff for their works; and effectively dealing with failures; (3) **Communication**, which contains leadership behaviors related to creating and communicating a clear vision and goals for the school; communicating effectively with teachers formally, in written and oral language; and informally, through modeling appropriate behavior; and (4) **Adaptability**, which contains leadership behaviors related to the ability to adapt behaviors to situations and how well the principal copes with and manages change. I chose not to use the fifth domain because it is largely a measure of management, not leadership.

I used these four domains as initial components of the criterion variables: the measure of the difference between the principals' and teachers' perception of the quality of the principal's leader behavior, where teachers' perceptions of the quality of their principal's leader behaviors are subtracted from the principal's perceptions of the quality of his or her leader behaviors, as measured on a Likert scale.

*Types of Variables That May Affect Differences in Teachers' and Principals'
Perceptions of the Principal's Leader Behavior*

In 1997, Leithwood and Jantzi conducted a study in a large school district in Ontario, Canada. The purpose of the study was to explore the factors that influenced teachers' perceptions of their principal's transformational leadership. The overall question they posed was, "What factors influence teachers to attribute leadership qualities to their principals?" (p. 312).

Table 1

A Classification of the Waters et al. (2003) Leadership Responsibilities into Principal Leadership Behavioral Domains

Domain	Leadership responsibility (Waters et al., 2003)	Definition (observed principal behavior)
Consideration	Maintain working relationships with members of the school community	Demonstrates a personal knowledge of teachers and staff
	Maintain visibility throughout the school	Has positive, meaningful interactions with teachers and students
Creating culture	Create school climate	Promotes a sense of community, cooperation, and shared beliefs within and about the school
	Foster positive school image	Openly advocates for the school
	Affirm actions of self and others	Recognizes and celebrates successes and acknowledges failures
	Maintain personal philosophy about education	Maintains strong beliefs about schooling and openly communicates those beliefs
Communication	Provide contingent rewards	Recognizes and rewards individual successes
	Focus on present and future	Establishes clear goals and vision and keeps them in the forefront
	Send clear messages and practice active listening	Establishes and maintains good communication with teachers and students
	Provide intellectual stimulation for self and others	Makes sure that teachers and staff are aware of and discuss current educational research
Adaptability	Seek teacher input	Involves teachers in the decision making process
	Evaluates need for change	Challenges the status quo
	Motivate others	Inspires and leads others to take risks
	Demonstrate flexibility	Adapts leader behavior to fit the situation
Management	Aware of total school environment	Is aware of what is going on in the school and uses this information to make decisions
	Understand purpose of school	Monitors the effectiveness of educational practices
	Maintain order in school community	Establishes standard operating procedures
	Procure resources	Provides teachers with the proper materials and training
	Participate in development and assessment of curriculum	Is involved in development and implementation
	Familiar with instructional methods	Is knowledgeable about educational practices
	Maintain order and discipline	Protects teachers' instructional time

Note: The responsibilities are from Waters, J. T., Marzano, R. J., & McNulty, B. A. (2003). *Balanced leadership: What 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement*. Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.

Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) surveyed 2378 teachers (1632 in 100 elementary schools and 746 in 15 secondary schools). The survey addressed two main issues: the transformational leadership and the management skills of the principal with whom the teacher worked. Of the 69% of the teachers who responded, 53% or 1253 surveys contained useable data on the transformational leadership of the principal and 52% or 1042 contained useable data on the principal's management skills. This expanded on a previous study they had conducted in 1996 when they surveyed 420 teachers in a British Columbia school district.

Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) were especially interested in teachers' perceptions of their principal's transformational leadership and the factors that contributed to those perceptions. They decided on two categories of variables, alterable and unalterable, that they would use to explore the transformational leadership of principals. Alterable variables were defined as those variables that were "subject to intentional change in a relatively short period of time" (p. 317). In their original 1996 study, alterable variables were sub-divided into in-school and out-of-school variables. In the 1997 study the category of out-of-school alterable variables was dropped "because of its lack of explanatory power in our original results" (p. 317). Unalterable variables were those that were "typically difficult to change through intentional effort" (p. 317).

Alterable variables included phenomena associated with the school's "mission and goals, culture, structure and organization, policies and procedures, planning, information collection and decision making, and instruction" (p. 317). Unalterable variables included basic demographic characteristics of teachers and principals (age, gender, and experience) and the size and level (elementary or secondary) of the schools.

In exploring the relationship between teachers and principals, it seems obvious that some factors affecting the teachers' perceptions of the principal-teacher relationship are dynamic and changeable, while others are static, longstanding, and difficult or impossible for principals or teachers to change. In this study, I explored variables that helped determine principals' and teachers' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior.

Development of the Predictor Variables

The predictor variables are those I determined would account for the discrepancy between the principals' and teachers' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior. To develop the domains for the predictor variables I reviewed two books and 21 studies on leadership. From these sources, I gleaned keywords that were repeated several times. Based on my review of the

literature on leadership and my experience as an administrator, I divided this list of keywords into five domains: (1) **School Culture**, which contains items related to the history of the school and community, the vision and mission for the school, the morale of the school, and how people are recognized for their achievements; (2) **Level of Caring**, which contains items related to how well listening occurs in the school, the concern for others, and how friendly and inviting the school is; (3) **Modeling Ideal Behavior**, which contains items related to trust, respect, credibility, and open communication; (4) **Level of Control**, which contains items related to discipline, safety, volunteerism, scheduling, and allocation of resources; and (5) **Professional Practice**, which contains items related to the evaluation of and feedback to school personnel, how encouragement and motivation is demonstrated, the principal's visibility within the school, a collaborative environment, and the decision-making process.

I used these five domains and the general demographic categories of principals' and teachers' experience, principals' and teachers' gender, principals' and teachers' age, school size (student enrollment), and school type (rural, suburban, or urban) to develop my theory for this study (see Figure 1).

School Culture and the Discrepancy Between Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions of the Principal's Leader Behavior

If teachers view their school's culture as being positive, they will have positive perceptions of their principal's leader behavior. Barnett et al. (1999) found that a positive school culture is associated with teachers having positive attitudes toward their jobs. They also determined that the leadership practices of the principal were an important factor in determining school culture.

Level of Caring and the Discrepancy Between Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions of the Principal's Leader Behavior

Teachers who feel their principal listens to them and shows concern for their well-being will perceive the principal's leader behavior in positive terms. In their study on the transformational leadership of principals, Barnett et al. (1999) found a high correlation ($r = .81$) between the individual concern principals' demonstrated to teachers and the teachers' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior.

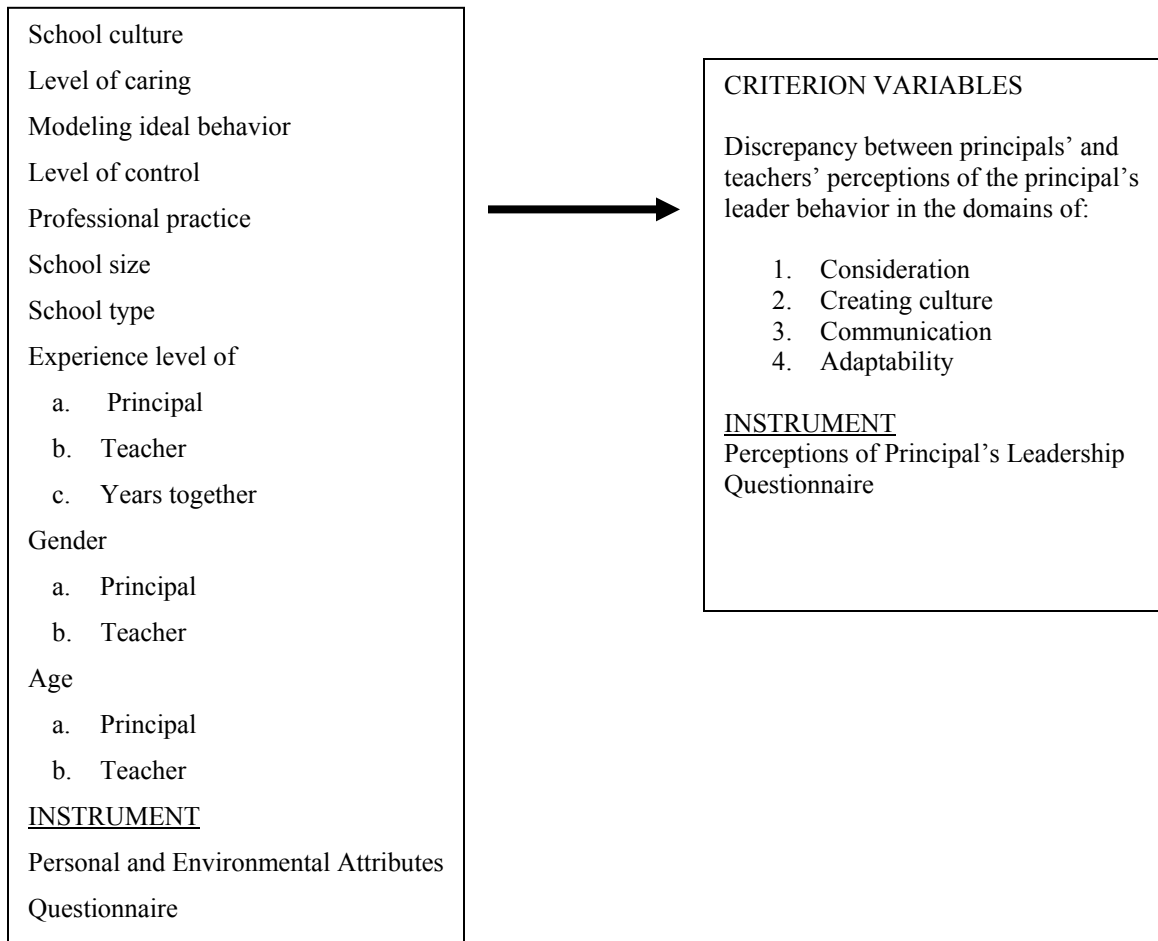


Figure 1. Variables explaining the discrepancy between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the principal's leader behavior

Modeling Ideal Behavior and the Discrepancy Between Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions of the Principal's Leader Behavior

If teachers perceive that their principal models ideal leader behavior in the areas of trust, respect, credibility, and open communication, they will view the principal's overall leadership in positive terms. Blase and Blase (1999) found that when principals modeled positive behaviors, teachers were more likely to act positively. In an earlier study, Blase (1987) concluded that teachers who worked for principals whom they considered to be negative role models "tended to dis-involve themselves from their work" (p. 205).

Level of Control and the Discrepancy Between Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions of the Principal's Leader Behavior

When principals are fair and consistent in exercising their control, teachers will perceive the principal's leader behavior in positive terms. Blase and Blase (1997) found that principals who were facilitative, shared leadership, and empowered teachers had a positive effect on their teachers' attitudes. Blase and Blase (1997) also found that principals who often demonstrated their power over teachers, had a negative effect on their teachers' attitudes.

Professional Practice and the Discrepancy Between Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions of the Principal's Leader Behavior

When principals demonstrate positive leader behaviors in the area of professional practice, teachers will perceive the principal's overall leadership in positive terms. Jantzi and Leithwood (1996) found that principals who inspired others, who provided intellectual stimulation, and who set high expectations and standards for their schools were more positively perceived as transformational school leaders. Blase (1987) concluded that principals who were not visible and who were indecisive and ambiguous had a negative effect on teachers' perceptions of their leadership.

Demographics and the Discrepancy Between Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions of the Principal's Leader Behavior

The effects of the general demographic categories of principals' and teachers' experience, principals' and teachers' ages, and principals' and teachers' gender, school size (student enrollment), and school type (rural, suburban, or urban) on the criterion variables are not clear. In this study, I will test the effect of these variables on the criterion variable and report the results.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

My purpose is to explore the principal-teacher relationship as a leader-follower relationship. I seek to identify factors that contribute to differences in teachers' and principals' perceptions of principal's leader behavior. The studies I chose for the literature review were those in which the researchers examined the phenomena of leadership, followership, and the perceptions of leadership. However, before examining current research, it is important to understand how the study of modern leadership has developed.

History of Leadership from Taylor to Kouzes and Posner

Fiedler (1967) wrote:

The topic of leadership has always held a strong fascination for man. The literature abounds with books on how to be a good leader. Advice has ranged from such homilies as being honest, loyal, good, and fair, to the more cynical guidelines laid down by Niccolo Machiavelli.

The control of others for the purpose of accomplishing a common task is both a necessary and a desirable skill, and it is likely to remain so as long as we must cope with tasks which one man cannot accomplish without the assistance of others. (p. 3)

There have been many studies conducted on leaders and leadership. This section of the literature review is an examination of the evolution of leadership research throughout the 20th century.

Scientific Management and the Human Relations Movement

Fredrick Winslow Taylor conducted one of the early 20th Century leadership studies. In the early 1900s, Taylor became one of the most widely read theorists on organizational administration (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993). He believed that the best way to increase the output of workers was to improve the techniques and methods they used. He developed time and motion studies to analyze every aspect of workers' tasks to improve performance. This technical approach to leadership became known as scientific management (Taylor, 1911).

Scientific management was task-oriented. In scientific management, the main focus of the leader was to address the needs of the organization, not the needs of the people.

Consequently, Taylor “has been interpreted as considering people as instruments or machines to be manipulated by their leaders” (Hersey & Blanchard, p. 90).

In the 1920s and 1930s, Taylor’s scientific management was challenged by the human relations movement. As the name implies, the human relations movement was people-oriented. The focus of the leader was to “facilitate cooperative goal attainment among followers while providing for their personal growth and development” (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993, p. 97).

Trait Theory

Until the 1940s, much research about leaders focused on individual leadership traits. The great-man theory of leadership was espoused by those who thought that great leaders were born with certain traits that allowed them to lead effectively. The great-man theory was used to explain the development of successful and visionary leaders. The trait theory of leadership followed the great-man theory and differed from it in the fact that, although researchers believed that successful leaders had common leadership traits, they did not believe people were born with leadership ability, but developed it through experience (Bass, 1990).

In 1948, Ralph Stogdill published a review of 163 studies on leadership. These studies were focused on discovering the traits that all leaders had in common (Bass, 1990). The studies were evaluated for the physical, intellectual, social, and personality traits possessed by leaders. “There was a preponderance of evidence from a wide variety of studies...that indicated that patterns of leadership traits differed with the situation” (Bass, 1990, p. 73). Stogdill’s review caused a shift in thinking, encouraging social scientists to look beyond traits in an attempt to understand leadership.

Leader Behavior

Researchers began to examine leader behavior, not leader traits. In 1945, the Bureau of Business Research at Ohio State University initiated studies that attempted to identify various aspects of leader behavior (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993). In the Ohio State studies, leadership was defined as “the behavior of an individual when directing the activities of a group toward goal attainment” (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993, p. 101).

Researchers at Ohio State grouped leader behavior into two major categories: (a) Initiating Structure, which was task oriented behavior and (b) Consideration, which was relations oriented behavior (Bass, 1990). The Ohio State Leadership Studies were considered to be the

“most notable, and the most complete, research directed toward the determination of dimensions of leader behavior” (Buros, 1972, p. 1149) at the time.

Managerial Assumptions

As an extension of the human relations movement, the self-esteem of workers became an important factor in measuring the effectiveness of leaders (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993). McGregor, Argyris, Likert, and others set forth the idea that the leaders’ assumptions about their followers affected leadership (Bass, 1990). McGregor stated that managerial assumptions affected workers’ behavior, while Argyris argued that most workers were treated like immature humans. Likert put these ideas together in his description of management systems that were based on the values and beliefs of the leader (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993). Likert’s management systems follow:

Likert's Four Management Systems

	Managerial assumption	Workers' motivation
System 1	No confidence or trust in employees	Fear, threats, punishment, occasional rewards
System 2	Condescending trust in employees	Rewards and actual or potential punishment
System 3	Substantial, but not complete trust in employees	Rewards, occasional punishment, and some involvement in decision-making
System 4	Complete confidence and trust in employees	Full participation and involvement in decision-making

Note. Compiled from Hersey, R. E. & Blanchard, K. H. (1993). *Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources*. (6th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Transactional and Transformational Leadership

Burns (1978) identified two basic types of leadership: transactional and transformational. In transactional leadership “leaders approach followers with an eye to exchanging one thing for another” (Burns, 1978, p. 4). In transformational leadership the “leader recognizes and exploits an existing need or demand of a potential follower. But, beyond that, the transforming leader

looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower” (p. 4). Transactional leadership is sometimes referred to as “ordinary” leadership while transformational leadership is referred to as “extraordinary” leadership (Barnett et al., 1999). Although Burns considered transforming leadership to be a more potent form of leadership, he felt that most leader-follower relationships were transactional (Burns, 1978).

Situational Leadership

In his 1948 review of the literature, Stogdill concluded that leadership varied from situation to situation (Bass, 1990). In 1954, Gibb wrote about the importance of the relationship between the leader, the followers, and the situation they faced. Gibb set forth three theories of leadership: (1) unitary trait theory, (2) constellation-of-traits theory, and (3) interactional theory.

The unitary trait theory is the belief that there is a single trait that characterizes leaders wherever they are found. The constellation-of-traits theory is the assertion that leadership is not a unitary trait, but a pattern of traits that each leader possesses which distinguishes the leader from the followers. Individuals who subscribe to the interactional theory believe that the description of leadership must take into account: (1) the leader’s personality; (2) the attitudes, needs, and problems of the followers; (3) the dynamics of the group; and (4) the nature of the situation (Gibb, 1954). Gibb set the stage for modern situational leadership theorists.

Situational leadership is leadership that is evaluated based on the situation in which the leaders and followers find themselves (Bass, 1990; Fiedler & Chemers, 1974; Hersey & Blanchard, 1993). One common thread in situational leadership is that it requires the leader to be flexible and to be able to determine which leadership style is appropriate for the situation (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993; Hesselbein, Goldsmith, & Beckhard, 1997).

Servant-Leadership

In 1970, Robert K. Greenleaf wrote an essay entitled *The Servant As Leader*. In this essay Greenleaf set forth the idea that anyone who desires to lead must first have a desire to serve. The leader must serve the people by trying to make sure the people’s needs are met. Greenleaf later expanded this view of servant-leadership to include organizations and trustees (<http://www.greenleaf.org/leadership/servant-leadership/Robert-K-Greenleaf-Bio.html>).

Larry Spears (2004), president of the Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership, developed 10 characteristics of servant-leaders: (1) listening, (2) empathy, (3) healing, (4)

awareness, (5) persuasion, (6) conceptualization, (7) foresight, (8) stewardship, (9) commitment to the growth of people, and (10) building community. Spears reports that these 10 servant-leader characteristics are not exhaustive, but do communicate the basic ideas of this concept of leadership.

Abel (2000) conducted a study designed to create a comprehensive description of servant-leaders. She identified characteristics and behaviors that defined servant-leaders. Abel found servant-leaders have an ethic of service which is a strong motivation for their leader behaviors. Servant-leaders have a sense of being “called” to their position. They view their work as more than a job and feel that they are the best person to lead in their particular situation. Abel (2000) found that servant-leaders have positive personal characteristics in the areas of “trustworthiness, truthfulness, honesty, compassion, and integrity” (p. 84). She found that servant-leaders value people. Because they value people, they develop positive relationships, thus creating an environment of cooperation.

Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) found a wealth of literature about servant-leadership: However, they reported that “the empirical examination of servant-leadership has been hampered by a lack of theoretical underpinnings” (p. 301). They developed operational definitions for the 10 characteristics of servant-leaders reported by Spears (2004), plus the additional characteristic of calling. Their goal was to develop and validate an instrument that could be used to empirically measure these 11 characteristics of servant-leadership.

Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) used a panel of 11 experts to determine face validity and identify poorly written items. Initially, items that were correctly placed in each of the 11 categories 60% of the time were retained. Some items were rewritten and then all items were presented to another panel of five experts. Items correctly categorized 80% of the time were included in the final instrument.

Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) administered the survey to 80 elected community officials from the Midwestern United States and to 388 of the officials’ colleagues or employees. After collecting the data from the participants, the researchers performed a principal components analysis with a Varimax rotated solution. This data reduction resulted in items loading into the following 5 domains:

Domain	Operational definition
Altruistic calling	Leader's desire to make a positive difference
Emotional healing	Leader's ability to foster spiritual recovery from adversity
Wisdom	Leader's awareness and anticipation of consequences
Persuasive mapping	How well leaders use sound reasoning and conceptualization
Organizational stewardship	How well leaders guide and direct their organization in making positive contributions to community

Note. Compiled from Barbuto, J. E. & Wheeler, D. (2006). Scale development and construct clarification of servant leadership [Electronic version]. *Group and Organization Management*, 31 (3), 300-326.

The researchers found some discrepancies between the perceptions of leaders and followers. Leaders reported the best predictor of their employees' willingness to do extra work was their organizational stewardship. However, employees reported that the leader's wisdom was the most important factor in determining the employees' willingness to do extra work. Leaders assumed that organizational stewardship and wisdom were the best predictors of employee satisfaction, but the employees related their leader's skill in the area of emotional healing as the best indicator of employee satisfaction. Both leaders and followers listed organizational stewardship as the best indicator of the leader's effectiveness (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006).

Vision and Values

Leaders are encouraged to lead with vision. Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus found that for effective leaders, "attention through vision was one of their key strategies" (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, p. 93). Kouzes & Posner (1995) wrote: "It's their sense of vision and their ability to look ahead that distinguishes credible leaders" (p. 94).

Covey (1996) wrote: "The leader of the future... will be one who creates a culture or value system centered upon principles" (p. 149). Covey (1996) sets forth three roles that leaders

must take: (1) pathfinding—creating a compelling vision and mission; (2) aligning—ensuring that every aspect of the organization contributes toward achieving the vision and mission; and (3) empowering—allowing people to use their talents, intelligence, and creativity. A clear vision and reflective thought, coupled with actions and consideration, are the hallmarks of a modern, effective leader.

Historical Review

Table 2 is a review of some key historical and modern leadership studies. Table 2 is by no means an exhaustive list. Several researchers (Bass, 1990; Burns, 1978; Fiedler, 1967; Kouzes & Posner, 1995; Yukel, 1994) recognize that leadership is one of the most studied phenomena in our society.

Table 2

A Historical Review of Key Contributors to the Theory and Research in Leadership

Researcher-contributor	Theory, model, or concept	Conclusions	Date
Taylor	Scientific management	Improve production by improving methods.	1911
Mayo	Human relations	Improve production by attention to workers.	1933
Stogdill	Leader traits and behavior	Traits alone do not predict who will be a leader. Research should focus on leader behavior.	1948
Gibb	Interactional theory	Personalities of leader and followers and characteristics of group and situation combine to predict leadership.	1954
McGregor	Theory X—Theory Y	Managerial assumptions about followers affect leader behavior.	1957
Tannenbaum & Schmidt	Continuum of leader behavior	There is a continuum of leadership styles from democratic to authoritarian.	1958
French & Raven	Bases of social power	Identified five bases of power.	1959
Argyris	Immaturity—maturity continuum	The assumptions of leaders about followers affect the behavior of followers.	1964

(continued next page)

Table 2 (continued)

Researcher-contributor	Theory, model, or concept	Conclusions	Date
Herzberg	Two factor theory of motivation	The factors affecting job satisfaction differ from the factors that affect job dissatisfaction.	1966
Likert	Management systems	The management system applied by the leader affects the productivity of the followers.	1967
Fiedler	Contingency theory	The situation determines the effectiveness of the leader. Engineer the situation to fit the leader.	1967
Hersey & Blanchard	Situational leadership	Leadership style should match situations.	1969
Greenleaf	Servant-leadership	Those who lead must first serve.	1970
Burns	Transformational leadership	Leader-follower relationships determine the effectiveness of the leader.	1978
Bennis & Nanus	Leadership competencies	Effective leaders create a shared vision and a mission with followers.	1985
Covey	Principle-centered leadership	Leadership is based on values and principles.	1991
Kouzes & Posner	Leadership practices	Leader self-evaluation on key leadership practices is used to improve leadership.	1995

Note. Compiled from Bass, B. M. (1990). *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications*. (3rd ed.). NY: The Free Press; Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. NY: Harper & Row; Covey, S. R. (1996). Three roles of the leader in the new paradigm. In F. Hesselbein, M. Goldsmith & R. Beckhard (Eds.). *The leader of the future*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; French, J. R. P. & Raven, B. (1959). The bases of social power. In J. M. Shafritz & J. S. Ott (Eds.), *Classics of organization theory*. (4th ed.). (pp. 375-384). Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace; Gibb, C. A. (1954). Leadership. In G. Lindzey (Ed.), *Handbook of social psychology: Vol. 2. Special fields and applications*. (pp. 877-920). Reading, MS: Addison-Wesley; Hersey, R. E. & Blanchard, K. H. (1993). *Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources*. (6th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall; Kouzes, J. M. & Posner, B. Z. (1995). *The Leadership Challenge*. (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; Taylor, F. W. (1911). *The Principles of Scientific Management*. NY: Harper & Brothers.

Modern Definitions of Leadership

Barker (1997) laments the fact that many researchers do not define leadership when they discuss it or write about it. After analyzing a total of 587 studies with the word “leadership” in their title, he found that 366 did not have a specific definition for the word. Barker felt that the bulk of researchers assumed that everyone knows what leadership is, therefore a definition was not required.

Because leadership is such a complex phenomenon, it is inappropriate to assume that people have a common, working definition of leadership. And, since leadership is dynamic, with leaders adapting their behavior to the situation, it is difficult to create an all-encompassing definition. How leadership is defined depends on the frame of reference in which it is being observed. The leadership of a company's C.E.O. may be defined quite differently from the leadership of an army colonel. Certainly, the definition of leadership, as practiced by a school principal is different from either the C.E.O. or the colonel.

Several researchers agree that leadership is recognized as a social process that depends on both the leaders and followers (Barker, 1997; Bass, 1990; Hersey & Blanchard, 1993; Lord et al., 1999). This concept of leadership seems to fit the school setting. Schooling is certainly a social process and the principal is recognized as the leader while the teachers are the followers. While this definition is acceptable, it is too generic and vague to be used to fully explain leadership.

Burns (1978) defined leadership as either transactional or transformational. Transactional leadership is leadership based on an exchange where followers receive rewards for their followership. In transformational leadership, leaders are able to motivate followers to achieve based on the value of the outcome of the activity. Transactional leadership is often defined as ordinary leadership while transformational leadership is considered to be extraordinary (Burns, 1978). Burns' theories of transactional and transformational leadership are very similar to the definitions of leadership that were developed in the Ohio State Leadership Studies in 1945. In this series of studies, researchers developed the idea that leadership or leader behavior falls into two major categories: (1) Initiating Structure, which is leadership focused on achieving tasks, and (2) Consideration, which is leadership that is focused on the needs of the followers (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993).

Categorizing and defining leadership is based on the leader's ability to complete tasks and work with people. Reviewing the work of early researchers (accel-team, 2004; Taylor, 1911) it is clear that they defined leadership as either task oriented or people oriented. The results of the 1945 Ohio State Leadership Studies were similar. Initiating Structure is associated with task oriented behavior, while Consideration is leadership that is concerned with people and relationships (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993). Burns' (1978) transactional and transformational theories of leadership remain popular and are the subject of much modern research (Barnett, et

al., 1999; Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). However, these theories can still be categorized as task oriented and people oriented leadership.

While breaking leadership down into task oriented and people oriented behavior is useful in helping to understand the components of leadership, I choose to look at leadership as a whole. For leaders and followers to understand leadership, it is important for them to understand the Gestalt of leadership. Yukel (1994) wrote that a leader's effectiveness is measured by how well his or her group accomplishes tasks and achieves a set of predetermined goals. Although this definition of leader effectiveness seems to be task oriented, Yukl goes on to write that effective leaders encourage and accept participation of his or her followers in the decision-making process.

For my study, I look at leadership as perceived through the eyes of the followers. I needed to adopt a definition of leadership that would encompass these goals. The modern definition of leadership that best fits the purpose of my study was developed by Kouzes and Posner (1995). They defined leadership as "the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations" (p. 30). This definition of leadership has several components which fit nicely within the framework of the principal-teacher relationship. First, it invites one to look at leadership as a whole process by which the leader convinces the followers to accomplish goals. Secondly, it stresses the importance of the followers' perception of the leader's ability to lead. Finally, it differentiates between managers, who coerce subordinates' compliance with rules, and leaders, who through creativity and awareness, inspire the cooperation of their followers.

Importance of the Leader-Follower Relationship

"All theories of leadership emphasize connecting people to each other, and all theories of leadership emphasize connecting people to their work" (Sergiovanni, 1996, p. 33). This implies that a relationship exists between leaders and followers and that the relationship helps to determine the effectiveness of the organization. This echoes the research of Hersey and Blanchard (1993) when they wrote that a leader must be concerned about "human relationships" (p. 89). However, when leadership is discussed, the discussion usually only focuses on the leader and his or her characteristics and actions. However, Hollander (1992) wrote, "The concepts of leader and leadership do not exist in isolation. To be viable, both depend upon followership" (p. 43).

Lord et al. (1999) researched the role of how the followers' self-concepts affected the leader-follower relationship. They, like Hollander (1992), found that the perceptions and actions of the followers played a large role in determining the effectiveness of the leader with whom they worked. While it seems reasonable to study leadership by examining the behavior and characteristics of a leader, both Hollander (1992) and Lord et al. (1999) agreed that the role the follower plays in the leadership process is considerably understudied. Hollander (1992) concluded that most leadership studies focus on the leader because it is easier to focus on one person than on many.

Burns (1978) and Bass (1990) agree that leadership should not be viewed as a "thing" but as a relationship between the leader and the members of his or her group. Goals are achieved through the active participation of both the leader and followers. Gerstner and Day (1997), who conducted a meta-analysis of the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory, which focuses on the dyadic relationship between a leader and a member, found that "the relationship that develops between a leader and a follower is predictive of outcomes at the individual, group, and organizational levels of analysis" (p. 3). Therefore, the effectiveness of an organization depends on the leader-follower relationship, and that relationship depends on perceptions.

The Importance of Perceptions of Leadership

Researchers (Barker, 1997; Bass, 1990; Hersey & Blanchard, 1993; Jung & Sosik, 2006; Lord et al., 1999) agree that the concept of leadership involves both leaders and followers. However, leaders and followers often have differing perceptions regarding leadership. It is important to understand what contributes to the discrepancy between the leader's self-perceptions of his or her leadership and the followers' perceptions of that same leadership (Becker, Ayman, & Korabik, 2002).

In an effort to better understand leader behavior and the perceptions of leadership, the Bureau of Business Research at Ohio State University initiated studies that attempted to identify various aspects of leader behavior (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993). Up until that time, most research was designed to describe leadership focused on the different traits of leaders. However, data from the Ohio State Leadership Studies made the researchers realize that using the traits of leaders as the criteria for describing leadership ignored the role played by the follower in the leader-follower relationship (Bass, 1990).

The researchers conducting the Ohio State Leadership Studies determined that to understand the concept of leadership, one must not ignore the interaction between leader and follower (Bass, 1990). In their attempt to understand this interaction, the researchers constructed an instrument that could be used to measure the perception of both leaders and followers about leadership.

The Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) was an instrument that allowed leaders, followers, and supervisors to quantify leader behavior. Researchers found that by using the LBDQ, leader behavior could be categorized into four areas: (1) Consideration, (2) Initiating Structure, (3) Production Emphasis, and (4) Sensitivity. Of these four areas, researchers found that “Consideration and Initiating Structure were by far the most important, accounting for some 83 percent of the variance” (Buros, 1972, p. 1150) in the items.

Over time, other instruments were developed that allowed leaders to describe perceptions of their own leader behavior, while followers could use the same instrument to record their perceptions of the leader’s behavior. Table 3 is a list of some of these instruments.

Discrepancies in the Perceptions of Leadership

Leaders need to be aware of how they are perceived by their followers. In the 2003 MetLife Survey of the American Teacher, researchers found that, teachers and principals perceive their relationship with each other in strikingly different ways. More principals than teachers are pleased with the current state of affairs. Thus, principals may be less motivated to improve a situation where they do not perceive a problem to exist (MetLife, 2003, p. 6).

This is key for principals as leaders. If they do not understand the perception of their teacher followers, they may not initiate change in areas where change is

Table 3

A Survey of Leader Behavior Measurement Instruments for Use with Leaders and Followers

Name of instrument	Acronym	Measures	Completed by	Developed by
Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire	LBDQ	Observed leader behavior	Leader & subordinates	Research staff of the Ohio State Leadership Studies (1957)
Ideal Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire	ILBDQ	Ideal leader behavior	Leader & subordinates	
Supervisor Behavior Description Questionnaire	SBDQ	Observed supervisor behavior	Supervisor & subordinates	
Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire Form XII	LBDQ -- XII	Observed leader behavior—based on LBDQ	Leader & subordinates	Stogdill (1962)
Leadership Practices Inventory	LPI	Inventory of leadership practices	Leader & followers	Kouzes and Posner (1988)

Note. Compiled from Bass, B. M. (1990). *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications*. (3rd ed.). NY: The Free Press; Buros, O. K. (Ed.). (1972). *The Seventh Mental Measurements Yearbook*. Highland Park, NJ: The Gryphon Press; Hersey, R. E. & Blanchard, K. H. (1993). *Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources*. (6th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.; Kouzes, J. M. & Posner, B. Z. (1995). *The Leadership Challenge*. (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

needed. The first step in correcting this is for both principals and teachers to understand how they perceive the leadership of the principal.

The data compiled in the 2003 MetLife survey is useful in understanding the discrepancies in the perceptions of leadership that exist between principals and teachers. The results were from a nationally representative sample of 1017 teachers and 800 principals in K-12 public schools. The results clearly indicate that although schools across the country have put more and more emphasis on school leadership, those who are involved in schools have different ideas about what school leadership actually means (MetLife, 2003).

Researchers found that although 78% of all principals surveyed rate themselves as excellent school leaders, only 36% of all teachers share this view. Principals and teachers differed on how well they perceive the principal's ability to motivate students to higher achievement. A majority of principals (59%) rated themselves as excellent in this while only 35% of teachers shared this view (MetLife, 2003).

Principals and teachers disagreed on how well the principal listened to teachers. Only 30% of all teachers rated their principal as being an excellent listener, while 53% of the principals rated themselves as excellent in this area. Another difference in perception occurred in the area of the principals' visibility. Principals (67%) felt that they were highly visible, but only 38% of the teachers agreed (MetLife, 2003).

Throughout the survey, principals were much more likely to perceive and describe their school in more positive terms than teachers. This difference in perception is more evident in the views of secondary teachers. Secondary teachers are "less likely to report that they have a friendly or collaborative relationship with their principal" (MetLife, 2003, p. 4).

A lack of communication may very well be the cause of many of the divergent views held by principals and teachers. Certainly, clear communication between parties is one of the most important aspects of developing understanding. However, data from the 2003 MetLife survey indicate that even the concept of communication itself is an area of misunderstanding between principals and teachers. Nine out of ten principals (91%) felt that there was open communication within their schools while only 58% of the teachers agreed with this assessment.

Written in the negative, these data mean that 42% of all teachers surveyed felt that communication within their schools was either a problem or was certainly not as open as it should be (MetLife, 2003). These data clearly indicate that there is a discrepancy in the perception held by principals and teachers regarding the leadership of principals.

Attribution Theory

Since there is a discrepancy in the perception held by principals and teachers regarding the leadership of principals, one must ask why. Teachers and principals are members of the same organizational and social structure: the school. As members of the school, teachers and principals participate in many of the same events, and, theoretically, share the same goal of educating students. They share a great number of experiences. If they have this commonality, why do they perceive the principal's leadership differently?

Attribution theory helps us to understand why this discrepancy in perception between teachers and principals exists. Attribution theory is used to explain why people act and feel as they do. (<http://www.as.wvu.edu/~sbb/comm221/chapters/attrib.htm>). It is concerned with how people interpret events and how it affects their thinking, behaviors, and perceptions (Weiner, 1996).

“Heider (1958) was the first to propose a psychological theory of attribution” (Attribution Theory, 2004, p. 1). He viewed people as amateur scientists who observed other people’s behavior and then processed those observations to attempt to understand and explain their behavior. “Attribution theory assumes that people try to determine why people do what they do” (Attribution Theory, p. 1).

Attribution is a three-step process: (1) a person observes or perceives a behavior, (2) the person must determine that the behavior was intentional, and (3) the person must decide if they believe the other person was forced to perform the behavior (the behavior is then attributed to the situation, an external attribution) or if the person chose to perform the behavior (the behavior is then attributed to the person, an internal attribution) (Weiner, 1996). This three-step process can be followed formally, as when researchers study leaders’ leadership behavior, or it can be followed informally as when teachers observe their principal’s behavior and develop a perception as to why the principal acted as he or she did.

The informal process, by which teachers observe the principal’s behavior and then come to a conclusion as to the reason for that behavior, is important in understanding why teachers react to their principals as they do. If teachers determine that there was an external attribution for the principal’s behavior, that is, the principal was forced to perform the behavior, they are less likely to assign the behavior, either good or bad, to the principal. However, if the teachers determine that the principal chose to perform the behavior, an internal attribution, they are more likely to assign the behavior, either good or bad, to the principal, which in turn, has a greater effect on shaping the teachers’ perception of the principal’s leadership.

The Relationship of this Study to the Research on Leadership

This review of the literature is evidence that leadership has been, and continues to be, a topic of great interest and study. Theories of leadership are varied and none seem to be comprehensive: Each study adds “one more piece to the puzzle.” I am trying to add more knowledge to the research on leadership by exploring reasons for the discrepancy between teachers’ and principals’ perceptions of the principal’s leader behavior.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The methodology is described in this chapter. The population, from which the sample was drawn, and the development and administration of the questionnaires are discussed. The statistical methods used to analyze the data are presented.

Populations

The populations for this study came from the list of public high school principals' names which are included in the database of MCH, a commercial mailing list company founded in 1928 by Dr. Forrest E. Long, Professor of Education at New York University. While at New York University, Dr. Long became the editor and publisher of *The Clearing House*, an educational journal for secondary schools. Distribution of *The Clearing House* led to the development of the first commercial school mailing list. The databases are supported by "a large research staff who compile and update the data continuously, primarily through telephone surveys" (MCH, 2004, p. 3).

For this study, the list of principals in the MCH database served as one population. The other population was the teachers who served in the principals' schools. The names and number of teachers in this population were unknown: However for the purposes of this study, it was not important to know that information.

Samples

In 2005, there were 26,405 public high schools operating in the United States (DIGITALMILL, 2005). Of that number, the MCH database included 19,046 public high schools and the name of the principal for each school. From this list of 19,046 names of public high school principals, a sample of 3000 principal names was systematically selected using the nth name selection process. The names were printed on mailing labels. There were 750 rows of labels with four names per row. I decided to send survey packets to 750 principals. I counted down four rows, used the names from that row, and continued to select every fourth row until I had 750 names. If the name of the principal's school seemed to indicate that the school served a special student population (i.e., vocational, special education, magnet), I dropped that name and selected the next name from the next row. Because of financial considerations, I prepared and

