AN EXAMINATION OF THE PREPAREDNESS OF PRINCIPALS THROUGH

THE PORTAL OF THE HIGH SCHOOL ASSISTANT PRINCIPALSHIP

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A Dissertation
presented to the
Faculty of the Graduate School
University of Missouri – Columbia

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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

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By

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December 2012

The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled

AN EXAMINATION OF THE PREPAREDNESS OF PRINCIPALS
THROUGH THE PORTAL OF THE HIGH SCHOOL ASSISTANT PRINCIPALSHIP

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would never have been able to finish my dissertation without the support and guidance of my committee members, support from my family, and help from friends.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Barbara Martin, for her excellent guidance, caring, and coaching along the journey.

I would like to thank Dr. David Kreiner for his assistance through the statistical analysis of the study.

I would also like to thank Dr. Hutchinson, Dr. Thomas, Dr. Antrim and Dr. Bigby for guiding my research and their willingness to participate in dissertation committee.

I would like to thank my children, Bailey and Evan Reich, for trying to be quiet while Mom was working on her paper and understanding her time away at class.

Finally, I would like to thank my husband, Craig Reich. He was always there pushing me forward and covering household duties to allow the opportunity to complete this journey.

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ABSTRACT

Weller and Weller (2002) stated that the assistant principalship is the gateway to school administration. The position of the assistant principal looks very different pending the setting and leadership of the principal (Burdett & Schertzer, 2005; Goodson, 2000, Marshall & Hooley, 2006). In this dissertation, a quantitative examination was employed to examine how the assistant principals perceived their preparedness to attain a school principalship. Additionally, this study investigated to find if a relationship between specific leadership styles (distributive, transactional, laissez-faire, and transformational) and the preparedness of assistant principals was present.

The participants for this quantitative study consisted of 100 practicing 7-12 high school assistant principals in the state of Missouri. Data collection methods included a researcher created survey identifying the perceived leadership style of their principal as well as their perceived preparedness to fill the role of principal.

The data revealed distributive leadership as the style most employed by the high school principals. Overall the assistant principals perceive they are prepared to assume the role of principal. However, there is a discrepancy in assistant principal's perceived preparedness in the area of instructional leadership as compared to disciplinarian and managerial skills. Overall, the distributive leadership style was shown to be the most

effective method employed to increase preparedness of the assistant principal to fulfill the role of principal in the areas of disciplinarian and supervisor of students.

The implications for practice may impact the preparatory program of principals, as the programs seek ways to improve assistant principal training at the university level. In addition, there is a need to improve the mentorship of assistant principals by the principal examining how the principal can share in more depth the role and responsibilities of instructional leadership. To increase the preparedness of the assistant high school principal for the role of principal a myriad of roles and responsibilities, beyond disciplinarian and supervisor of students must be provided.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The high school assistant principal position is often the first experience for a teacher to become a building leader (Weller & Weller, 2002). It is a place where educators are able to grow, learn, and change in a way that allows them to gain experience under the protection and guidance of the building principal (Hibert, 2001). This mentoring relationship can mold the new leader and create an environment for the new leader to try out ideas and strategies of leadership while working side by side with a mentor to ensure success (Marshall & Hooley, 2006).

Most assistant principals begin the administrative profession journey by working with principals who serve as guides and mentors (Burdette & Schertzer, 2005; Goodson, 2000). In that position, assistant principals are asked to do a variety of administrative duties to augment experiences and prepare them to be future school principals (Marshall & Hooley, 2006). Generally, in high schools the assistant principalship is considered the entrance to educational administration (Weller & Weller, 2002).

Background of Study

Weller and Weller (2002) argued "The role of the assistant principal is one of the least researched and least discussed topics in professional journals and books focusing on educational leadership" (p. xiii). In many leadership texts about the principalship, the assistant is not mentioned at all (Marshall & Hooley, 2006). Marshall and Hooley further described the assistant principal's job as entailing everything that the principal did not want or know how to do. Conversely, Weller and Weller (2002) posited that the assistant principalship should be a valuable training arena for future high school principals.

The historical expectation of the assistant principal was to hold the position of disciplinarian and not do much more, making involvement with the occasional counseling of the student regarding family issues out of the norm for the position (Weller & Weller, 2002). Weller and Weller (2002) further advocated that the assistant principal must do much more than discipline in order for the leadership of the school to be effective. Moreover, researchers (Aldridge, 2003; Davies, 2005; Marshall & Hooley, 2006; Preskill & Torres, 1999; Stecher & Kirby, 2004; Weller & Weller 2002) do not address the ideal assistant position roles. Marshall, Hooley, Weller, and Weller (2002) simply noted that the assistant principal position is not clearly defined and, therefore, the responsibilities are somewhat ambiguous. Furthermore, Weller and Weller (2002) noted that the assistant principal could enhance the effectiveness of a high school by working alongside the principal in visionary planning, collaboration, and leadership initiatives.

In addition, Goodson (2000) noted that the high school principal and assistant principal should be a team and not show dissention. Burdette and Schertzer (2005) affirmed that the assistant principalship should be a district's opportunity to grow principals from inside the district, training them to know and understand the philosophy of the district. Zellner, Ward, McNamara, Gideon, Camacho and Edgewood (2002) avowed that educational leadership training programs need to take a closer examination at the relationship between theory and practice in the assistant principalship. Hibert (2001) declared that in order to become a strong assistant principal, a strong mentor is required. Finally, Lovely (2001) maintained that "assistant principalships serve as a pathway to the principalship" (p. 42).

To support the argument that assistant principalships are a pathway to the principal's roles, some states have required assistant principals to hold a principal's certificate in order to fulfill the qualifications for their job while others have not (Zellner et al., 2002). However, not all states require this certification for assistant principals, Bruffee (1999) and Lencioni (2002) argued that the principal and the assistant principal collaborate and utilize team work in order train the assistant principal. Without this open and honest communication assistant principals have no guidance in what they are expected to do (Bloom & Krovetz, 2009).

Ultimately the relationship the principal has with the assistant principal, as well as the leadership style of the principal, can have an effect on what the assistant principal's position might entail (Bloom & Krovetz, 2009). Weller and Weller (2002) further argued that a shared leadership style through a distributive focus (Woods, 2004) will allow the assistant principal to act more as a co-principal and obtain more experience. Yukl (2006) and Lencioni (2002) noted that, a transformational leader would enable the assistant principal to change and grow while working toward a common vision, and that leadership style ultimately allows for the assistant principal to be more than just a disciplinarian. However, if the school leader is leading through managerial methods (Yukl, 2006), the assistant is likely to be delegated the jobs that the principal does not want to do. Through this transactional leadership style, (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987) jobs are assigned and expected to be carried out with little discussion or autonomous contemplation that goes into the process. Alternatively, a building leader may choose to utilize the laissez-faire leadership style in relation to the administration partnership. This style allows the assistant principal to set objectives and standards that are the desired outcome of the

partnership having the freedom to make their own decisions along the way. The responsibility of assistant principals is to reach the desired outcome (Oshagbemi & Ocholi, 2006), followed by little, if any, action by the high school principal.

Because of the wide variety of assistant principalship job descriptions, the discussion of how an individual is prepared to become an assistant principal is an important one. Both Marshall and Hooley (2006) and Weller and Weller (2002) stated that the primary method of training occurs through conversations with the high school principal. The level of reflective conversations (Lencioni, 2002; Scott, 2004) and trust that occurs during this collaboration time dictates the level of inclusion into leadership that the individual truly has as an assistant principal. Bruffee (1999) claimed "The most powerful force changing us was our influence on one another" (p. 9). Ultimately, if trained to be a principal, and then recruited to fulfill the position of an assistant principal, they must be willing to set aside personal beliefs and visions for a school (Bloom & Krovetz, 2009). This does not mean that their opinion is not valued or heard by the principal, it only means that the assistant needs to work closely with the principal to maintain a united front regarding the stakeholders of the school (Bloom & Krovetz). Moreover, if the assistant principal chooses to go against this ethical expectation, it can create chaos and unhealthy discourse amongst stakeholders (Marshall & Hooley, 2006).

Many of the assistant principal's responsibilities are based upon the perception of the principal as to what the role of assistant principal should entail. (Bloom & Krovetz, 2009; Weller & Weller, 2002). This perception can be about a variety of characteristics: ability of the assistant, willingness to share power, belief of what the position should include the desire and ability to have open conversations about themselves and the

leadership plans of the building, and personal experience as an assistant principal (Weller & Weller, 2002, p. 26). The comfort level of the principal sharing that power (Preskill & Torres, 1999) affects the method of mentoring and leadership that is modeled for the assistant principal.

Furthermore, the principals training on how to work with an assistant principal and how to mentor can come from a variety of sources (Bloom & Krovetz, 2009). Principals can learn how to mentor by example of how they are mentored, take cues from their leadership training through higher education, or attend professional development sessions on the topic of mentoring. The gist of it is the principal must have a desire to mentor the assistant principal in order for assistant principal guidance to occur (Bloom & Krovetz). Ultimately, examining the role of the assistant principal should reveal how the assistant principal is prepared and by whom.

<center>Conceptual Underpinnings of the Study</center>

Three constructs informed this examination of the assistant principalship as a future pathway to the principalship. First, examined was the changing role of the principal from manager to instructional leader (Fink & Resnick, 2001). Weller and Weller (2002) professed that the management portion of the school administrator position focuses on the here and now and has little interest in the vision of the school and the learning that takes place among students and educators. A second construct of this inquiry was the leadership style of the principal as examined through the lens of distributive (Burns, 1978; Woods, 2004), transformational (Jones & Rudd, 2007; Kuhnert & Lewis, 1978; Yukl, 2006), transactional (Jones & Rudd; Kuhnert & Lewis) and laissez-faire (Krause, Gebert, & Kearney, 2007; Oshagbemi & Ocholi, 2006) and how those

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styles might direct the relationship between the principal and the assistant principal. Furthermore, a deeper examination of the relationship between leadership styles of the principals and the preparedness of the assistant principal to become a principal will be discussed. Lastly, examined will be the preparation of assistant principals in academic programs and experiences on the job. Weller and Weller (2002) indicated the lack of a job description or formal preparation of the assistant principal contributes to ineffective use of the position; and thus how the assistant principals perceive their preparedness as they attain a school principalship is of interest to this educational researcher.

Changing role of the principal

"Principal's must wear many different hats during the school day, but the most effective school principals are not only managers and disciplinarians, but also instructional leaders for the school" (Van Roekel, 2008, p. 1). A principal's role is to have a shared vision and continuously evaluate the path the school is on and its alignment toward that vision (Van Roekel). "As schools have been asked to take on more and more responsibility, the expectations on the school leaders to meet these additional duties have increased" (NASSP, 2007, p. 2). DuFour (2002) avowed that the principal has a new emphasis on data and how data can be used to improve learning. "The principal's duty to improve the school instructional program is mandated by legislation in some states. Some state legislation requires the removal of principals when schools are classified as low performing (students do not meet achievement expectations) for a specified period of time" (*School Principal*, 2012, p.12).

Leadership styles

"Effective principals have a central belief system that is focused on student learning and well-being" (*Key Principal Leadership Activities*, 2012). "When principal leadership is strong even the most challenged schools thrive" (Fullan, 2006, p. 1). Fullan (2006, p. 17) further espoused:

> School-wide success, especially with respect to establishing the conditions for continuous improvement, depends on the leadership of the principal – leadership that focuses on the improvement of teaching, closely linked to student achievement; and also leadership that fosters the development of leadership in others who form part of the critical mass of leaders who can carry on improvement into the future.

Preparation of the assistant principal

Bloom and Krovetz (2009) shared, "We have seen too many assistant principals promoted into principalships without receiving the kind of mentoring and job experience that would have prepared them for their challenging new positions" (p. 1). Assistant principals have the same coursework experience as the lead principal. However, Good (2008) recognized it is important that assistant principals share their desire to build their abilities to be an instructional leader. "One reason assistant principals should make time to become strong instructional leaders is because when they are named principal is not a good time to learn instructional leadership skills" (Good, p. 47). Good further stated that it is important for assistant principals to make sure their duties do not get in the way of developing into more effective instructional leaders. A prepared assistant principal will have a positive effect on teachers, which will ultimately improve student performance (Good, 2008, p. 49).

Statement of the Problem

The role of the high school principal has changed (Daresh, 2004) with the increased accountability of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 (*NCLB), resulting in assistant principals playing a greater role in ensuring the academic success of students by helping to develop new curricula, evaluating teachers, and dealing with a myriad of responsibilities (Stecher & Kirby, 2004). Consequently, these educational leaders are now responsible for meeting expectations unparalleled by assistant principals of previous decades (Aldridge, 2003). With growing responsibilities, the building principal cannot be all things to all people. As a result, Lencioni (2002) argued that a team approach is more effective when dealing with complex situations and the assistant principal must be a valued member of that team.

In this changing environment, as district personnel seek to hire new principals many expect to hire principals who have experience. Commonly, sought out as the decision of choice are experiences as an assistant principalship (Bloom & Krovetz, 2009) for many such districts. Therefore, the role of assistant principal can potentially be a valuable training arena for future high school principals, allowing them to experience a range of responsibilities and circumstances.

Purpose of the Study

Harris and Lambert (2003) noted that building capacity for leadership within a school enhances the sustainability for school improvement. Fullan (2003) further argued that school leaders must participate and have "great capacity" (p. 30) for meaningful change to occur. Moreover, the assistant principalship often is a school district's chance to develop individuals from inside, training them to be principals (Burdette & Schertzer,

2005). Consequently, the purpose of this study was to investigate in what ways and to what degree, if any, does the utilization of assistant principals enhance their ability to move effectively into the role of the high school principal. Also examined was the leadership style of the principal, through the perceptions of the assistant principal, to determine if that had a association to the utilization of the assistant principal. Through examination of the leadership styles, practices, and approaches used by high school principals, as perceived by assistant principals to enhance the preparation of the assistant principal, findings may identify valuable indicators of effectiveness in building leadership capacity.

<div align="center">Research Questions</div>

The following research questions guided this inquiry:

1. What are the frequencies of the leadership style (distributive, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) used by the principal as perceived by assistant principals?

2. What are the perceptions of the assistant principal regarding their perceived preparedness (disciplinarian, instructional leader, or supervisor of students) for the role principal?

3. Is there a relationship between the leadership styles of the principal (distributive, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) as perceived by the assistant principal and the factors of how the assistant principal perceives being used in that role (disciplinarian, instructional leader, or supervisor of students)?

Limitations and Assumptions

The limitations to this study were relative to the geographical area and designs used by the researcher, and are indicated as follows:

1. This study was limited geographically to one Midwest state during an academic school year.

2. This study was limited by the degree of reliability and validity of the survey instrument.

3. It was assumed that participants were forthright in their responses and interpreted the survey instrument protocol as intended.

4. It was assumed that participants based their responses upon their own experiences.

5. This researcher might have bias due to a previous position as an assistant principal.

6. Lack of responses or a low return rate from subjects that receive surveys may limit the depth of the study.

7. This study was limited to the assistant principals self reporting whether or not their schools were urban, suburban, or a rural setting.

Design Controls

The design of this study involved a method of descriptive research. When conducting descriptive research it is common to use surveys to assess viewpoints of individuals (Gay & Airasian, 2000). Surveys allow researchers to draw generalizations concerning gathered data from the sample population (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). One major obstacle to the survey method of inquiry can be the lack of response from subjects

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who received the survey (Fraenkel & Wallen). In an attempt to overcome this problem, the researcher contacted each principal by email to seek his or her approval for participation in this study, after approval by the University of Missouri IRB. This email included an inform consent letter and a link to the survey. In the participant letter, it was noted that taking the survey constituted inform consent for the participants. Completed as needed to achieve an acceptable return rate were follow-up emails and phone calls.

An educational expert reviewed the assistant principal survey concerning preparedness of the assistant principal to ensure content validity within the instrument. The same educational expert, along with two current school administrators, reviewed the survey to ascertain content validity of the instrument. Asked to critique individual questions as well as the survey as a whole and offer suggestions for improvement to help with the validity of the survey were the reviewers. The suggestions offered by the experts were used to produce the version of the survey instrument which was then sent out for field testing of the instrument using the test- retest format. Fifteen principals, not used in the sample, were involved in the test- retest of the survey instrument. The 15 participants were provided with instructions on how to complete the surveys and also were asked to provide feedback about the instrument: appearance of the survey, clarity of directions, ease of understanding and the length of the survey. Asked to complete the surveys a second time within a period of one week were the participants to establish the reliability of the scores. Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) noted that reliability "refers to the consistency of the scores obtained—how consistent they are for each individual from one administration of an instrument to another and from one set of items to another" (p. 165).

Specifically, the purpose of the test- retest was to determine if scores were stable over time (Creswell, 2003).

Definition of Key Terms

These definitions were provided to give readers a deeper understanding of key concepts and components:

Assistant Principal. "The role is open to interpretation by principals and central office personnel alike, and it often becomes one that fulfills the common contractual phrase of *performing any and all duties assigned by a superior"*(Weller & Weller, 2002, p. xiii). This individual will be in any combination of grades 7-12.

Disciplinarian. A leader that will treat all students fairly (Ubben, Hughes, & Norris, 2001) by working together with a school community to "establish reasonable rules and to make sure that the punishment for breaking these rules is suitable" (p. 366-367). The discipline set forth by the principal or assistant principal must be within the policies and laws of the state and local school board.

Distributive Leader. A leader that demonstrates a leadership style that involves staff in decision making processes and empowers individuals to act (Woods, 2004).

Instructional Leader. Fink and Resnick (2001) defined an instructional leadership as a principal who "understands the instructional programs and is to judge the quality of teaching in order to select and maintain a good teaching staff" (p. 600).

Laissez-faire Leadership. Leadership in which a manager attains desired objectives by leaving subordinates or others free to make their own decisions (Oshagbemi & Ocholi, 2006). In the opinion of Oshagbemi (2008), " (T) he older a manager, ceteris

paribus, the more consultative, participative and Laissez-faire leadership processes s/he engages in, preferring more of collective decisions" (p. 1896).

Leadership style. Leadership style is the approach taken to set the direction and inspire others to make the journey to a new and improved state for the school or organization (Davies, 2005). In this study the four leadership styles that were used are distributive, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire.

Preparedness. On the job training experiences for the assistant principal, provided by the principal, resulting in them becoming a more effective member of the administrative team (Bloom & Krovetz, 2009), and ultimately preparing them to become a principal. In this study, the roles that were used are disciplinarian, instructional leader and supervision of student. Each role has been defined within the study.

Rural School District. Any High School (any combination of grades 7-12) was labeled as rural if they were not classified as urban or suburban based on the 2010 census report. This will be self-reported by the Assistant Principal.

Suburban School District. Any High School (any combination of 7-12) was labeled suburban based upon their location within 15 miles of an urban designated area as classified by the United States Census Bureau, 2010. This will be self-reported by the Assistant Principal.

Supervision of Students. Supervision of students is observing students and providing coaching on behavior or academics as needed (Whitaker & Zoul, 2008). Whitaker and Zoul (2008) professed "students who know us and know that we will be there each morning and afternoon watching them and greeting them tend to respect our presence and our friendly supervision (p. 58).

Transformational Leader. Transformational leaders inspire trust, loyalty, and respect (Yukl, 2006). A transformational leader inspires the kind of selflessness that puts the organization's goals and interests above personal interests, as well as generates commitment and enthusiasm. By being a transformational leader, the goal is to transcend beyond the task at hand, to inspire followers to grow (Burns, 1978).

Transactional Leader. Yukl (2006) and Kuhnert and Lewis (1987) stated that transactional leadership can be described as an exchange between a superior and subordinate, leaving both with something of value. A transactional leader (Yukl, 2006) can get things done, but with little relationship building or partnership. These limitations cause a lack of buy-in (Kuhnert & Lewis) to building goals.

Urban School District. Any High School (any combination of 7-12) located in an area classified by the United States Census Bureau, 2010, as urban was labeled an urban school in the study. This will be self-reported by the Assistant Principal.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

Weller and Weller (2002) stated that the assistant principalship is the gateway to school administration. The position of the assistant principal looks very different pending the setting and leadership of the principal (Burdett & Schertzer, 2005; Goodson, 2000, Marshall & Hooley, 2006). How the assistant principals perceive their preparedness as they attain a school principalship is of interest to educational researchers and the focus of this examination. In Chapter Two of this dissertation, a literature review revealed four constructs which will be examined in-depth. In Chapter Three, the research design and method for the study are presented, while in Chapter Four the analyses and results of the

data collected are discussed. In Chapter Five of the study, the discussion of the findings,

the conclusions and the implications for practice are discussed.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The role and responsibility of the assistant principal is to support and assist the

high school principal in the overall management and leadership of a school. With the

increased accountability of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 (*NCLB), assistant

principals play a greater role in ensuring the academic success of students by helping to

develop new curricula, evaluating teachers, and dealing with a myriad of responsibilities

(Stecher & Kirby, 2004). Consequently, these educational leaders are now responsible for

meeting expectations unparalleled by assistant principals of previous decades (Aldridge,

2003). Therefore, the role of assistant principal can potentially be a valuable training

arena for future high school principals, allowing them to experience a range of

responsibilities and circumstances. However, this potential is often unfulfilled because

"(t)oo often, assistant principals are seen as uninteresting- as separate from instructional

leadership in their mock-military discipline role and as people at the bottom rung of the

administrative career ladder" (Marshall & Hooley, 2006, p. 2). Being an assistant

principal means different things in different schools, and this ambiguity of role definition

undermines the potential value of the assistant principalship as a leadership development

experience. Weller and Weller (2002) indicated the lack of a job description or formal

academic preparation for the high school assistant principal role contributes to ineffective

use of the position, as assistant principals are often assigned responsibilities viewed as

undesirable by the principal. Subsequently, Bloom and Krovetz (2009) charged the

central office administration with setting the expectation that principals are to help

mentor the assistant principal as they develop into effective future principals. Therefore,

it is important to examine the assistant principal role and determine whether it prepares an individual to be a quality high school principal. For as Weller and Weller (2002) argued, "The effectiveness of those in this position depend on their ability to master and apply salient leadership knowledge and skills" (p. xiii).

Within the context of this literature review, the following related components were carefully examined: roles of the principal, concept of assistant principal, changing role of leadership, and finally the need for an assistant principal leadership model. The researcher sought to use these varying components to establish and substantiate the need for considering a more explicit and comprehensive assistant principal model in response to the current demand for increased standards and accountability. The above mentioned constructs were further examined through the lens of leadership theory to authenticate the need for discovering new ways to effectively use an assistant principal in the face of changing educational requirements and increased accountability (Stecher & Kirby, 2004).

<div align="center">Roles of Principal</div>

Principal as a Manager

One of the roles of the principal is overseeing the day to day operations of the school; in this role, the principal is more concerned with efficiency than effectiveness, in that "(m)anagement is concerned with efficiently operating in the current set of circumstances and planning in the shorter term for the school" (Davies, 2005, p. 2). The responsibilities of principal as manager include managing self, organization, finances, facilities and people (Green, 2009). Weller and Weller (2002) noted that "(t)he manager's work is highly fragmented in nature. It involves a variety of tasks that consume an average of 10 minutes or less per task" (p. 31). Mazzeo (2003) argued that typical

leadership preparatory programs tended to focus on managerial issues rather than instructional leadership bringing substantive change. Daresh (2004) further noted that typical principal preparatory programs emphasize development of managerial skills relating to finance and supervision with little or no prominence on developing a culture that promotes student learning. Consequently, the management portion of the school administrator position focuses on the here and now and has diminutive vision of the school and learning that takes place among students and educators (Weller & Weller, 2002).

Principal as an Instructional Leader

The most important role of the principal is the responsibility for instructional leadership, because student achievement is the bottom line in school effectiveness. "Accountability advocates believe that student achievement will improve only when educators are judged in terms of student performance and experience consequences as a result" (Stecher & Kirby, 2004, p. 2). Hallenger (2003) postulated, "(S)chool principals contribute to school effectiveness and student achievement indirectly through actions they take to influence what happens in the school and in the classrooms" (p. 333). Hallenger went on to argue that often instructional leadership is viewed as a top-down approach to leadership where the principal controls the improvements in instruction within the school. Fink and Resnick (2001) defined an instructional leader as a principal who "understands the instructional programs and [is] able to judge the quality of teaching in order to select and maintain a good teaching staff" (p. 600). Furthermore, DuFour (2002) stressed principals, as instructional leaders, must be able to develop learning communities within schools to enhance the skills and knowledge of those within to

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improve students' learning and achievement. Thus, through instructional leadership a principal influences professional development efforts, teaching strategies, and coaching methods. Whitaker (1997) noted principals exhibit several behaviors as strong instructional leaders, including being a resource provider, an instructional resource, a communicator, and are visible every day. Under the umbrella of instructional leadership are the loosely coupled (Morgan, 1997) responsibilities of supervision and instruction. Through this instructional leadership, a principal determines the focus of professional development designed to improve student achievement, encourages and expects specific instructional strategies, and creates a culture (Schein, 1996; Schein, 2000) of reflection and ongoing growth (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). This type of supervision provides leadership in which teachers in the building look to the principal as their mentor or teacher. In this situation, the supervisor provides specific and timely feedback to team members regarding their professional practice (Whitaker, 1997). Whitaker held that walkthroughs are teachable moments and should be viewed as such by the administration. In addition, instructional leaders should continue to grow as teachers themselves, modeling the behavior they wish to encourage (Lencioni, 2002). This facilitates their ability to improve the teachers and, in turn, influence student learning (Whitaker, 1997).

Principal as a Cultural Leader

Although it is important for principals to serve as instructional leaders, it does not sufficiently address the need for deeper student learning or the need to challenge students so they can problem solve as highly motivated and engaged learners (Dufour, 2002). Creating a school of such learners requires a principal who can work with teachers to literally transform the learning culture of the school. The principal must not only be able

to sustain change but also must be a sophisticated conceptual thinker who can transform

the organizational culture through individuals and teams (Fullan, 2002). Thus, it is the

responsibility of a principal to establish a successful culture of learning in the school

setting (Bolman & Deal 2003). Schein (2000) defined culture by stating, "Culture usually

refers to how people feel about the organization, the authority system, and the degree of

employee involvement and commitment" (p. xxiii). In earlier writings (1996), he referred

to culture as "the set of shared, taken-for-granted implicit assumptions that a group holds

and that determines how it perceives, thinks about, and reacts to its various

environments" (p.236). Often times a person is not even aware of the culture with which

they are currently associated until they encounter another culture (Schein, 1996). Tierney

(1988) further suggested, "(An) organization's culture is reflected in what is done, how it

is done, and who is involved in doing it" (p. 30). Bolman and Deal (2003) and Martin

(2002) noted that it is important that all schools create and sustain their own culture

through establishment of rituals, policies, and symbols. "The ideal solution, of course, is

to develop a strong culture that includes among its essential values those of diversity and

flexibility" (Smith & Reynolds, 1998, pg. 26). Kezar and Eckel (2002) established "that

change strategies seem to be successful if they are culturally coherent or aligned with the

culture" (p. 457). A leader must decide if the current culture needs to undergo changes,

and bring about the conditions to support and facilitate change (Lencioni, 2002).

Principal as a Change Leader

Hill (2003) argued that one of the most significant challenges facing principals is

successfully bringing about necessary change in the way schools do business on a daily

basis. Moreover, Davis (2003) noted it is essential for principals to make incremental

changes meaningful within their organizations. In addition, Fullan and Miles (1992) suggested that leaders make "small, easy changes rather than big, demanding ones" (p. 746). Morgan (1998) supported this idea when he suggested, "use small changes to create large effects" (p. 271). Understanding the change process is vital to success and must be viewed as a learning continuum that includes active participation from all those involved (Fullan & Miles, 1992). Once principals grasp a firm understanding of the change process, they are able to recognize individuals' resistance to change (Lencioni, 2002). Principals are then able to understand that reactions to change are "natural responses to transition, not misunderstood as resistance" (Fullan & Miles, 1992, p. 748). Bolman and Deal (2008) argued that the capability to make possible change in an organization is one of the most difficult, yet crucial, tasks for any leader. Understanding the school culture is a key to successful change. As Schein (2000) forewarned, "change programs fail because they do not take into consideration the underlying culture" (p. xxviii). Fullan and Miles (1992) further acknowledged the role of culture when they argued, "Changes in structure must go hand in hand with change in culture" (p. 748). If the culture of an organization is ignored, Schein (1996) postulated that any change process is likely to experience failure. Neither top-down measures alone nor the exclusive use of bottom-up approaches has the effects desired. Instead, a combination and systematic synchronization of both has proven most effective (Huber, 2004).

<div align="center">Concept of the Assistant Principal</div>

Goodson (2000) recommended that the high school principal and assistant should be a team and not show public dissension. Burdette and Schertzer (2005) affirmed that the assistant principalship is a district's opportunity to grow principals from inside the

district, training them to know and understand the philosophy of the district. Zellner, Ward, McNamara, Gideon, Camacho, and Edgewood (2002) found that educational leadership training programs need to take a closer look at the relationship between theory and practice while training leaders at all levels. Hibert (2001) declared that in order to become a strong assistant principal, a strong mentor is required. Finally, Lovely (2001) maintained that "assistant principalships serve as a path-way to the principalship" (p. 42).

Some states require assistant principals to hold a principal's certificate in order to fulfill the qualifications for their jobs (Weller & Weller, 2002). However many researchers (Bloom & Krovetz, 2009; Marshall & Holley, 2006; Weller & Weller) noted that few universities offer a strand of study related to the assistant principal position; therefore, in essence, assistant principals have no real training for their positions. Thus, without formal training it is imperative that the high school principal and the assistant principal collaborate (Bruffee, 1999) and utilize team work (Lencioni, 2002) in order to define and train the assistant principal in his/her position. With collaboration comes a need for open and honest communication or the assistant principals have no assistance in what they are expected to do (Weller & Weller, 2002).

Historically, the high school operation required the assistant principal to hold the position of disciplinarian and not do much more than discipline (Marshall & Hooley, 2006; Weller & Weller, 2002). However, Weller and Weller (2002) advocated that the assistant principal must do much more than discipline for the leadership of the school to be effective. Unfortunately, few researchers speak directly to the ideal high school assistant position roles (Weller & Weller, 2002). Ultimately, the assistant principal position has not been clearly defined and is somewhat ambiguous (Marshall & Hooley,

2006; Weller & Weller, 2002). However, Weller and Weller recommended that the assistant principal would help with the effectiveness of a school by working alongside the high school principal in visionary planning, collaboration, and leadership initiatives.

Marshall and Hooley (2006) noted that the relationship the principal has with the assistant principal, as well as the leadership style of the principal, can speak significantly to what responsibilities the assistant principal's role might encompass. Weller and Weller (2002) identified that a shared leadership style would allow the assistant principal to act more as a co-principal and obtain more experience beneficial to the assistant principal's preparation for the principal's position. Yukl (2006) noted that a transformational leader enables the assistant to change and grow while working toward a common goal or vision. These leadership approaches imply the need for the assistant principal to do more than simply being a disciplinarian. However, if the school leader is leading through managerial methods (Yukl, 2006) the assistant is likely to be delegated the jobs that the principal does not want to do.

Because of the wide variety of assistant principals' job tasks, the discussion of how an individual is trained to become an assistant principal is important. Both Marshall and Hooley (2006) and Weller and Weller (2002) stated that the primary method of training happens through conversations with the principal. The level of candor in these conversations (Lencioni, 2002; Scott, 2004) and trust that occurs during this collaboration time dictates the level of inclusion in school leadership that the individual truly has as an assistant principal. Bruffee (1999) claimed "the most powerful force changing us was our influence on one another" (p. 9). If candidates are trained to be a principal and then asked to fill the shoes of an assistant principal, they must be willing to table some of their

beliefs and visions for a school (Marshall & Hooley, 2006). This does not mean that their opinion is not valued or heard by the principal; it simply means that the assistant needs to work together with the principal to maintain a united front when it comes to the stakeholders of the school (Marshall & Hooley, 2006). If the assistant principal chooses to go against this ethical expectation, it can cause chaos and unhealthy discourse amongst stakeholders (Marshall & Hooley, 2006).

So much of the assistant principal's role and responsibility is based upon the opinion held by the high school principal (Weller & Weller, 2002). This opinion can be about a variety of characteristics: the ability of the assistant, willingness to share power, belief of what the position should include, desire and ability to have open conversations about themselves and the leadership plans of the building, and personal experience as an assistant principal (Weller & Weller). Since Preskill and Torres (1999) argued that the leader must translate the learning vision into achievable goals and objectives, it is essential that the assistant principal be engaged in those conversations. This can only be achieved through open, honest, and collaborative conversations (Bruffee, 1999). Furthermore, strategic leadership (Yukl, 2006) requires the leadership team of the principal and assistant principal to delve even deeper into those critical conversations.

In addition, the comfort level of the principal with sharing power (Preskill & Torres, 1999) affects the method of mentoring and leadership that is modeled. With so much at stake, it is no wonder that the assistant's position looks so differently at different buildings (Marshall & Hooley, 2006). Bloom and Krovetz (2009), Marshall and Hooley(2006), and Weller and Weller (2002) all agreed that the high school principal's training on how to work with an assistant principal and how to mentor can come from a

variety of resources. The principal can learn how to mentor (Bloom & Krovetz; Hibert, 2001) by example of how they were mentored, take cues from their leadership training through higher education, or attend professional development opportunities on the topic of mentoring. Overall, the principal must have a desire to mentor the assistant principal in order for this to occur (Bloom & Krovetz). Marshall and Hooley (2006) noted that there still is a need to look further into how the assistant principal is mentored and by whom. They argued this information is relevant to the preparedness of an assistant for the principalship.

Changing Roles of Leaders

Organizational theory requires the leader to examine situations through a variety of lenses and frames (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Morgan, 1997). The leader needs to remain open minded and look at the whole picture prior to jumping to conclusions or taking action. Bolman and Deal (2003) conceptualized organizational analysis as frames to highlight different aspects of organizational functioning; the four frames are structural, human resources, political, and the symbolic. Each one of these frames can be used as a tool to create a richer picture for leaders as they are working to improve the organization as a whole. Morgan (1997) used metaphors to help analyze organizations, conceptualizing organizations as organisms or brains, and considered how the input and output can be described in relationship to the organizations' processes. Both Bolman and Deal (2003) and Morgan (1997) stated the importance of a leader to be aware of how the various frames and metaphors affect the daily operations of the organization. In addition, these frames should be considered as the organization attempts to go through a change in any way (Bolman & Deal; Morgan). The analysis of the organization using these lenses

or frames can help the leader to be prepared for any roadblocks and even plan for them in advance. However, the leader needs to be prepared for the unexpected. Some obstacles cannot be predicted and will take careful consideration by the leader before taking action. Marshall and Hooley (2006) postulated that the assistant principal must take responsibility of taking the perspective of the lead administrator. This requires assistant principals to analyze where their beliefs and ideas fit in the beliefs and ideas of building leaders. Assistant principals need to be able to filter out other pressures and "focus on being cooperative, loyal, and essential to the ongoing functioning of the system" (p. 115). "Implementing change requires an understanding of politics and subcultures in the organization" (Weller & Weller, 2002). School leaders must be there to support the stakeholders through the change. The principal must not only be able to sustain change but also must be a sophisticated conceptual thinker who can transform the organization through people (Fullan, 2002). Additionally, assistant principals must be clear about the vision of the change to ensure they are not unintended resistors to change.

Gioia and Thomas (1996) found, "(A) prime role for leaders of strategic change is to frame that change in aspirational terms" (p. 398). The leader needs to allow organization members to see change as something they would like to become, a goal for which to strive and achieve. Yukl (2006) stated, "(t)he vision should be challenging and realistic" (p. 295), further supports this. The members of an organization should be able to see that the goal can materialize if they work and grow together and the leader will be there to help them along the way. It is up to the leader to communicate the vision to the organization and help them to see that they can achieve it as long as they work together toward the common goal.

Schlechty (2000) stated the following:

> School restructuring begins with a vision that is compelling and satisfies values held by those who live and work in schools. Restructuring occurs when rules, roles, and relationships are altered in whatever way seems appropriate to assuring that the vision can be pursued in progressively more effective ways. (p. 198)

The leader is able to express the vision and the belief that the vision is possible and worth achieving. If a strong leader has a quality vision for the organization, then the players of the organization have an image of the quality of their leader (Schlechty, 2000). It is up to the principal to meld these two parts, vision and their leadership style, to help the organization move quickly and succinctly through the change toward the vision. Before going too far down the road of a shared vision, it is important to make sure the building principal and assistant principal have a shared vision (Bloom & Krovetz, 2009).

Carrying an organization through change can be a daunting task. A vision is more than the blueprint for where the organization should be in the end; it is also a plan for how the leader intends on leading the organization to this point (Yukl, 2006). What steps are needed? Are there little successes to be celebrated? Is there a point where the plan can be revisited and revised? All of this is part of the overall vision that leaders must always keep in mind as they are making strategic decisions for the good of the organization. The leader must also ensure that the vision is in the forefront of the players' minds as well. This can be accomplished through shared planning and communication (Bruffee, 1999). The assistant principal can help the high school principal with the planning of the vision. The assistant principal can be the sounding board for teachers regarding the change (Weller & Weller, 2006) and share with the administrator what is going on in the school. Additionally, the assistant principal can participate in vision sharing activities that allow

both the principal and assistant principal to evaluate and modify their common understanding by talking about and evaluating their location on the journey along with the destination (Bloom & Krovetz, 2009).

"Resistance to change is a common phenomenon" (Yukl, 2006, p. 285). A leader should expect a certain amount of resistance to any implemented change. If a leader implemented change with little or no resistance, the leader might wonder what the organization valued initially. Gioia and Thomas (1996) stated, "Academic traditions should encourage participatory, consensus-based decision making, which might foster sensitivity issues that affect the delicate balancing of factional preferences" (p. 373) further supporting this idea of resistance. When a change is implemented, it includes a change in the values of the organization. Because there are new values in the organization, the leader must and should expect resistance. The change probably does not coincide with the current beliefs of the players. If the new vision did coincide with the beliefs of all stakeholders, it would not be a change. However, through this change Schlechty (2000) suggested, "People are more concerned that their advice be heard and taken seriously than that it be acted on" (p. 189). Schlechty's works reinforces the idea that a vision should be shared among the stakeholders involved and allow everyone the opportunity to voice ideas and concerns. Furthermore, these concerns and ideas must be validated, but how the leader chooses to validate the stakeholders depends on the leadership style. Bloom and Krovetz (2009) professed that through change and day to day routine it is a must that the assistant and building principal dedicate time to meet.

Consequently, effective principals lead through shared values and vision (Yukl, 2006). They involve staff in decision making processes and empower individuals to act.

Empowerment does not mean neglect or abandonment. Leadership is defined and actualized through constant, gentle confrontation and reveals where we are while guiding us to where we want to be (Dier & Hulley, 2005). Through the human resource frame, Bolman and Deal (2003) remind leaders to look at the needs of the stakeholders. Involve them in the planning and through conversations and collaboration (Bruffee, 1999), so the organization, as a whole, can then achieve a greater good (Burns, 1978).

Knowledge is created when information is shared and when conversations take place among those involved (Bruffee, 1999; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Multiple steps are involved in the knowledge creation process, beginning with sharing tacit knowledge (Nonaka & Takeuchi) and having conversations with others (Bruffee, 1999). Tacit knowledge is defined as "something not easily visible and expressible, highly personal and hard to formalize, difficult to communicate or share with others" (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995, p. 8). Preskill and Torres (1999) noted, "Learning is maximized through opportunities to share individual knowledge and experiences with others" (p. 23). Effective organizations build learning communities and cultivate social opportunities for learning. Learning from others such, as in mentoring relationships, provides valuable insight into how the organization works and helps build skills to benefit the organization as a whole.

Mentoring programs of principal and assistant principals should be based on the needs of the organization to accomplish these goals, as well as the needs of the new administrator (Hopkins-Thompson, 2000). Programs to support these new principals, such as networking, mentoring, and coaching at both the school and district levels need to be in place. Principals should develop the vision for high-quality education for all

students and are responsible for progress in moving students toward higher proficiency (Yukl, 2006). Therefore, novice administrators need the training, tools, and skill necessary to become successful leaders focused on improving instructional practices (Riggins-Newby & Zarlengo, 2003).

<div align="center">Leadership Style Theories</div>

Bush (2003) postulated, "Leadership can be understood as a process of influence based on clear values and beliefs and leading to a 'vision' for a school" (p. 183). Sergiovanni (1984) added, "Leadership theory and practice provide a limited view, dwelling excessively on some aspects of leadership to the virtual exclusion of others." (p.6) However, the understanding and awareness of the leadership style possessed by the leader can be particularly helpful for the leader's own professional development (Lashway, 2003). A strong leader has the ability to flex their style; they can evolve and grow to respond to a situation or need (Morgan, 1997). Through this growth, the leader can adapt to become the best leader within any school setting. Flexing is a word used to describe changing leadership styles lead based on the personalities or details around a situation (Vroom & Jago, 1988). This flexing, or change, is required for maximum effectiveness of the leader. Flexing can be particularly helpful through the human resource frame (Bolman & Deal, 2003). When dealing with peoples' needs there are many considerations that go into the leadership theory and strategies selected.

Distributive leadership

Effective principals lead through shared values and vision. They involve staff in decision making processes and empower individuals to act. Leadership is defined and actualized through a shared commitment to a common vision (Lencioni, 2002) and results

in the greater good (Burns, 1978). It shows us where we are and guides us to where we want to be (Dier & Hulley, 2005). It is important to look at the needs of the stakeholders through the human resource frame (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Bruffee (1999) recommended involving them in the planning, and through conversations and collaboration so the organization as a whole can achieve a common good or vision. Distributive leadership focuses on the strengths of participants and what individuals can provide for the organization (Woods, 2004) in contrast to democratic leadership.

For improvement to be truly effective, leaders must develop sustainability (Woods, 2004). This is done in a variety of ways, including committing to and protecting deep learning in their schools; by trying to ensure that improvements last over time, especially after the leader has gone; by distributing leadership and responsibility to others; by considering the impact of their leadership on the schools and communities around them; by sustaining themselves so that they can persist with their vision and avoid burning out; by promoting and perpetuating diverse approaches to reform rather than standardized prescriptions for teaching and learning; and by engaging actively with their environments (Dier & Hulley, 2005).

Forms of empowerment and agency are at the core of distributive leadership theory (Harris, 2003). Gronn (2000) suggested that distributive leadership in a school is where the distinctions between followers and leaders tend to blur. "This does not mean that everyone is a leader, or should be, but it opens up the possibility for a more democratic and collective form of leadership" (Harris, 2003, p. 317). Finally, and most importantly, distributive leadership frames the challenge of how to share responsibility and authority and, more importantly, who distributes responsibility and authority. If it

remains the case that the principal distributes leadership responsibilities to teachers, then

distributive leadership becomes nothing more than informed delegation (Harris, 2003). A

distributive view of leadership, "incorporates the activities of multiple groups of

individuals in a school who work at guiding and mobilizing staff in the instructional

change process" (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2001, p. 20).

Distributive leadership is not defined as delegation (Gronn, 2000). It is important

that certain tasks and responsibilities would have to be completed by those in formal

leadership positions. The key to successful leadership resides in the involvement of

teachers in collectively guiding and shaping instructional development (Harris, 2003, p.

319). This form of leadership has important repercussions for the way in which

organizational change is enacted. It implies that teachers have the responsibility to lead

change and to guide organizational development and improvement (Harris, 2003). Gronn

(2000) shared, "distributed leadership is an idea whose time has come", p. 333). With the

continued focus on transforming education through building professional learning

communities within schools, it would seem that teacher leadership is also an idea that is

particularly timely (Harris, 2003).

Transactional leadership

Yukl (2006) and Kuhnert and Lewis (1987) stated that transactional leadership

can be described as an exchange between a superior and subordinate leaving both with

something of value. However, Kuhnert and Lewis suggest that not all interactions are

equal. Exchanges can include jobs or duties, or they can include trust and respect

(Kuhnert & Lewis). Kuhnert and Lewis professed that transactional leaders gain power

and influence by making sure they show their personality and values. Thus, the leader has

the ability to make decisions based on top-down style. This leader makes demands and expects follow through. This transactional leadership style (Yukl, 2006) can get things done. However, there is little relationship building or partnership and buy-in is limited (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987). Without the buy-in, the organization is not able to achieve to the same level as an organization with the total support (Yukl, 2006) and one with a leader who demonstrates a different leadership style.

Howell and Hall-Merenda (1999) explained that transactional leaders focus on the proper exchange of resources. The transactional leader gives followers something they want in exchange for something the leader wants (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987). Transactional leadership behaviors focus on monitoring and controlling employees through rational or economic means (Bass, 1985). Howell and Hall-Merenda (1999) explained, "In transactional leadership, leader follower relationships are based on a series of exchanges or bargains between leaders and followers" (p. 681). Howell and Hall-Merenda (1999) stated, "this type of leadership involves managing in the more conventional sense of clarifying subordinate responsibilities, rewarding them for meeting objectives, and correcting them for failing to meet objectives" (p. 571).

Bass (1985) argued that transformational and transactional leadership are separate concepts, and further argued that the best leaders are both transformational and transactional. Bass further posited (1998), "Consistent honoring of transactional agreements builds trust, dependability, and perceptions of consistency with leaders by followers, which are each a basis for transformational leadership" (p. 11).

Howell and Hall-Merenda (1999) described transactional leadership as a contingent reward provided to subordinates for satisfactory performance. This

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contingency reward occurs when the leader attends to followers' mistakes and failures when the problems become severe (p. 571).

Laissez-faire Leadership

Laissez-faire leadership refers to the extent to which a manager attains desired objectives by leaving subordinates or others free to make their own decisions (Oshagbemi & Ocholi, 2006). Furthermore, Oshagbemi and Ocholi (2006) stated that laissez-faire leadership allows for subordinates to leave others free to make their own decisions. In the opinion of Oshagbemi (2008), " (t)he older a manager, ceteris paribus, the more consultative, participative and Laissez-faire leadership processes s/he engages in, preferring more of collective decisions" (p. 1896). Krause, Gebert, and Kearney (2007) described laissez-faire leadership that allows subordinates creative freedom and in turn a higher level of respect for their superiors. Furthermore, Krause, Gebert, and Kearney stated that this style of leadership leads to a higher quality of initiative implementation.

Beilby (n.d.) held that laissez-faire leadership style is also known as the "hands-off" style. It is one in which the manager provides little or no direction and gives employees as much freedom as possible. Beilby, and Jones and Rudd (2007) agreed that through laissez-faire leadership, all authority or power is given to the employees and they must determine goals, make decisions, and resolve problems on their own. This style may be effective when employees are highly skilled, experienced, and educated. Employees must have pride in their work and the drive to do it successfully on their own. "Laissez-faire is an inactive form of leadership characterized by a reluctance to become actively involved and a view that the best leadership is to disassociate from the action" (p. 523).

A school administrator described as a laissez-faire leader would not intervene when goals are not met or a problem arises, unless the situation becomes serious (Jones & Rudd, 2007). This administrator delays decisions and slights responsibility. "Laissez-faire leadership assumes that followers are intrinsically motivated and should be left alone to accomplish tasks and goals" (p. 525).

Judge and Piccolo (2004) describe laissez-faire leadership as the avoidance or absence of leadership. Leaders who are described as laissez-faire avoid making decisions, are hesitate in taking action, and are absent when needed . Avolio (1999) noted that laissez-faire leadership is "poor, ineffective leadership and highly dissatisfying for followers" (p. 55). Laissez-faire leaders exhibit frequent absences and a lack of involvement during critical junctures (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Transformational leadership

Transformational leaders inspire trust, loyalty, and respect (Yukl, 2006). A transformational leader inspires the kind of selflessness that puts the organization's goals and interests above personal interests, as well as generates commitment and enthusiasm. Yukl (2006) listed the behaviors of a transformational leader as "idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration" (p. 262). Transformational leaders make others aware of the needs around them and stimulate others intellectually to drive them to find different perspectives to problems. They challenge people intellectually and emotionally, while providing strong support and guidance when needed. They are inspirational and focused, while modeling strong and appropriate behavior. By being a transformational leader, the goal is to transcend beyond the task at hand, to inspire followers to grow, and go beyond the present assignment (Burns, 1978).

"Strong leaders build cultures that outlive them; they lead even when they are gone" (Schlechty, P.C. 2000, p. 182). Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) shared, "Transformational leaders offer a purpose that transcends short-term goals and focuses on higher order intrinsic needs" (p. 755). Furthermore, transformational leadership results in followers identifying with the needs of the leader.

However, without the foundation of transactional leadership, transformational effects may not be possible (Eagly et.al, 2003). Bass (1998) commented that there are theoretical reasons to believe that transformational leaders will use transactional leadership and noted "consistent honoring of transactional agreements builds trust, dependability, and perceptions of consistency with leaders by followers, which are each a basis for transformational leadership" (p. 11).

Transformational leadership theory demonstrates qualities that motivate respect and pride from association with the leader. Their mere behavior communicates values, purpose, and importance of the organization's mission. Through inspiration and motivation, followers exhibit optimism and excitement about goals and future states. The intellectual stimulation inspires new ways for solving problems and completing tasks. The leader looks at each member of the team as an individual. This individualized consideration focuses on development and mentoring of followers and attends to their individual needs (Eagly et.al. 2003).

Leadership Styles of Principal: Impact on Assistant Principal

Ultimately, "(T)here is no silver bullet or set of techniques for leadership for change. Leaders for change must immerse themselves in real situations of reform and begin to craft their own theories of change, constantly testing them against new situations

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and the accounts of others' experience" (Fullan, 2002, p. 9). Through the analysis of an organization, a leader can strategically plan what will work best as the organization moves through a change. Talented leaders are able to adapt to any given situation and continue to stay true to his vision for the organization.

The relationship that the principal has with the assistant principal and the leadership style of the principal greatly influences the role of the assistant principal. A distributive leadership style will allow the assistant principal to act more as a co-principal and obtain more experience beneficial to the assistant principal's preparation for the principal's seat (Weller & Weller, 2002). An additional benefit, assistant principals are more likely to have full buy-in on building initiatives due to their involvement in the decision making (Woods, 2004). A transformational leader enables the assistant principal to change and grow while working toward a common goal or vision (Lencioni, 2002; Yukl, 2006). Working with a transformational leader, assistant principals focus beyond the task at hand to what comes next on the journey towards the educational goal (Burns, 1978). A transactional leader simply assigns tasks (Jones & Rudd, 2007) resulting in assistant principals having little input or partnership in the planning and generation of ideas (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1978). A laissez-faire leadership style allows for assistant principals to make decisions and enact plans in their own way as long as they are working toward a common goal (Oshagbemi & Ocholi, 2006). In the formative years, this leadership style gives little of the needed direction and mentoring (Goodson, 2000; Marshall & Hooley, 2006; Weller & Weller, 2002). Distributive and transformational leadership styles prove to be more supportive of the assistant principal being more than a disciplinarian (Marshall & Hooley, 2006; Weller & Weller, 2002). However, if the school

leader is leading through profound transactional methods (Jones & Rudd, 2007; Kuhnert & Lewis, 1978) the assistant is likely to be delegated the jobs that the principal does not want to do.

Summary

The role of the assistant principal is "one of the least researched and least discussed topics in professional journals and books focusing on educational leadership" (Weller & Weller, 2002, xiii). In many texts about the principalship, the assistant principal is not mentioned at all (Marshall & Hooley, 2006). Marshall and Hooley further described the assistant principal's job as entailing everything that the principal did not want or know how to do. Thus, it is important to take a closer examination of the high school assistant principalship because the research on this position is lacking and the responsibilities are as diverse as the school settings. It is essential to take a closer look at the wide-ranging roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal position, and see if it does in fact prepare a candidate for the high school principalship.

Goodson (2000) suggested that the principal and assistant should be a team and not show dissention. Burdette and Schertzer (2005) affirmed that the assistant principalship is a district's opportunity to grow principals from inside the district, training them to know and understand the philosophy of the district. Zellner, Ward, McNamara, Gideon, Camacho, and Edgewood (2002) avowed that educational leadership training programs need to take a closer look at the relationship between theory and practice. Hibert (2001) declared that in order to become a strong assistant principal a strong mentor is required. Finally, Lovely (2001) maintained that "assistant principalships serve as a path-way to the principalship" (p. 42).

In Chapter Three, a description of the research design and methodology utilized in this study is presented. The mixed research design, incorporating quantitative and qualitative measures, is described. Presented in Chapter Four are the research analysis and findings. In Chapter Five, the results of the study, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further research are presented.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

"The role of the assistant principal is one of the least researched and least

discussed topics in professional journals and books focusing on educational leadership"

(Weller & Weller, 2002, xiii). Marshall and Hooley (2006) noted that the role of assistant

principal is mentioned rarely, even in researcher on leadership preparation for the

principalship. Marshall and Hooley further described the assistant principal's job as

entailing everything that the high school principal did not want or know how to do.

Therefore, the purpose of this research was to investigate in what ways and to what

degree, if any, is assistant high school principals utilized to prepare them to move

effectively into the role of principal. In addition, the leadership style of the principal was

assessed through perceptual data to see if a relationship existed between how the assistant

principal was utilized and the style of the principal.

In this chapter, a synthesis of the problem and purpose will help to frame the

research problems. In addition, the researcher will highlight for the reader the purpose of

this quantitative inquiry. The research design rationale will be presented along with the

population and sample, the instrumentation and the data analyses.

Problem and Purpose Overview

Goodson (2000) testified that the principal and assistant principal should be a

team and not show dissention. Burdette and Schertzer (2005) affirmed that the assistant

principalship is a district's opportunity to grow principals from inside the district, training

them to know and understand the philosophy of the district. Equally important, Zellner,

Ward, McNamara, Gideon, Camacho, and Edgewood (2002) avowed that educational

leadership training programs need to take a closer look at the relationship between theory and practice, especially regarding preparing the assistant principal. Moreover, Hibert (2001) declared that in order to become a strong assistant principal, a strong mentor is required. Finally, Lovely (2001) maintained that "assistant principalships serve as a pathway to the principalship" (p. 42).

Due to a lack of training framed around the assistant principal role and responsibilities, it is imperative that the high school principal and the assistant principal collaborate (Bruffee, 1999) and utilizes team work (Lencioni, 2002). Furthermore, Weller and Weller (2002) advocated that the assistant principal must do much more than discipline in order for the leadership of the school to be effective. Marshall and Hooley (2006) noted the assistant principal position is not clearly defined and is somewhat ambiguous. In addition, Weller and Weller (2002) argued the role of assistant principal would enhance the effectiveness of a school if the assistant principal, working alongside the high school principal, built leadership capacity in visionary planning, collaboration, and leadership initiatives.

For instance, the relationship the principal has with the assistant principal, as well as the leadership style of the principal, can speak greatly to what the assistant principal's position might entail (Yukl, 2006). For example, the shared distributive leadership style would allow the assistant principal to act more as a co-principal and obtain more experience beneficial to the assistant principal's preparation for the principal's position (Weller & Weller, 2002). While a transformational leader enables the assistant principal to change and grow while working toward a common goal or vision (Lencioni, 2002), Yukl (2006), however asserted that, if the principal leads through mostly transactional

behaviors and managerial methods the assistant principal is more likely to be delegated the jobs that the principal does not want to do. In contrast to these other styles is the laisser-faire leader who, as described by Judge and Piccolo (2004), is avoiding leading by not making decisions or taking action (p. 756). Avolio (1999) argued that this style of leadership would be "highly dissatisfying for followers" (p. 55).

The style of the leaders, along with how the principal views the role of the assistant principal, often determines the types of interactions that the high school principal and the assistant principal have in the daily routine of schooling, (Weller & Weller, 2002). For instance, both Marshall and Hooley (2006) and Weller and Weller (2002) stated the primary method of training happens through conversations with the principal. The level of critical and meaningful conversations (Lencioni, 2002; Scott, 2004) and trust that occur during this collaboration time dictate the level of inclusion in school leadership that the assistant principal truly has in the workplace. In support of this argument, Bruffee (1999) claimed "the most powerful force changing us was our influence on one another" (p. 9). So much of the assistant principal's position is based upon how the principal views the role of the assistant principal. However, as Preskill and Torres (1999) stated, the leader must translate the learning vision into goals and objectives which can only be achieved through open, honest, and collaborative conversations (Bruffee, 1999). Lencioni (2002) gave a clear how-to method to create a strong team. The high school principal and assistant principal must have a strong foundation of trust. The pair must trust each other to be open and honest in their relationship to building expectations and norms. A common norm must be the ability to keep conversations real. Through this positive discourse (Bruffee, 1999) the team can and

should grow together and truly accomplish more than if they were working as individuals. Therefore, it is essential that the role and responsibilities of the assistant high school principal and that the leadership style of the high school principal be examined to understand and perhaps enhance the preparation needed to be an assistant principal.

Research Questions

During the review of relevant literature and processes of analysis and reflection, three research questions emerged which provided a framework for the study:

1. What are the frequencies of the leadership style (distributive, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) used by the principal as perceived by assistant principals?

2. What are the perceptions of the assistant principal regarding their perception of preparedness (disciplinarian, instructional leader, or supervisor of students) for the role of principal?

3. Is there a relationship between the leadership styles of the principal (distributive, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) as perceived by the assistant principal and the factors of how the assistant principal perceives being used in that role (disciplinarian, instructional leader, or supervisor of students)?

Rationale for Quantitative Design

In general, the purpose of the study helps to determine the one of the essential differences between the use of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Heppner and Heppner (2004) explained, "Qualitative researchers are interested in capturing the

individual's point of view through multiple strategies such as interviewing and observation" (p. 139), whereas a quantitative approach allows the researcher to collect data from multiple sources that could be meaningful to a broad range of practitioners within the field. Since the purpose of this study was to examine how assistant principals are used in their buildings based on their principals' leadership style, the quantitative approach was determined to be most appropriate. Furthermore, the epistemological view of the researcher should be closely tied to the purpose of the inquiry. Merriam (1998) argued, "Choosing a study design requires understanding the philosophical foundations underlying the type of research" (p. 1). Quantitative research generally follows a positivist form of study where reality is argued to be observable and measurable. On the other hand, qualitative research is more likely to be interpretative, and multiple realities can exist (Merriam, 1998, p. 4). Furthermore, the advantage of identifying attributes of a large population from gathering data from a small group of individuals is an advantage of quantitative inquiry (Creswell, 2003). Therefore examining the role and responsibilities of the assistant high school principal from a different conjectural perspective through a quantitative method using the leadership style of the principal will add to the available body of research on the topic.

<center>Population and Sample</center>

The population for this quantitative inquiry consisted of high school assistant principals within one Midwestern state. The researcher established that the nonprobability sample (or convenience sample) of the participants would be assistant principals. Babbie (1990) noted that convenience sampling occurs based on the respondents' availability and convenience. Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) articulated the

importance of sampling the population for the purpose of research and generalizability. Used to select the sample of assistant high school principals included in this study were three distinct steps. First, purposefully identified was the pool of all assistant principals currently working within a high school with the combination of any grade level of 7-12. This was accomplished by using the online public domain directory established by in the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for the 2012-2013 school year (http://dese.mo.gov/directory/). Secondly, in order to obtain a representative sample of the school districts in Missouri, the participants' pool was examined based upon the location of the high school. The locations of the high schools were compared to United States census data from the year 2010. High schools were labeled as urban, suburban, or rural based upon their location which was cross referenced to match census data taken from the area in the 2010 census report. Any school located in an area classified by the United States Census Bureau as urban was labeled an urban school in the study. High schools located within 15 miles of an urban designated area were then placed in the suburban category within the study, and all other schools were then labeled as rural. Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) argued whenever representative sampling is used, "generalization is made more plausible if data are presented to show that the sample is representative of the intended population on at least some relevant variables" (p. 110). Indicated in Table 1 below is the liaison between the population and sample by comparing the percentage and number of schools in each of the three categories. Thirdly, upon completion of identifying and labeling (urban suburban, & rural) all high school assistant principals, a random sampling of the participants was achieved by using a random number generator to select the participants. Each of these steps allowed the

researcher to further define the sample, which allowed for improved generalizability of the results of the study. By randomly selecting participants, sampling errors should be reduced (Fink, 2006) along with the potential for sampling biases, therefore increasing the generalizability of the results (Heppner & Heppner, 2004, p.114).

Table 1

Population of High School Assistant Principals by Percentage and Number

Type of School	Population		Sample	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Urban	49	8	13	13
Suburban	265	43	46	46
Rural	303	49	41	42

Note: N=617 assistant principals

Data Collection and Instrumentation

After identifying the sample of assistant principals, and prior to contacting them, the University of Missouri IRB approval was sought and received (Appendix A). Next, contacted electronically, were the assistant principals, and included in that email was a participant informational (Appendix B) letter explaining the purpose of the study, how long the survey would take, what to expect during the study, that they could stop at any time without penalty. In addition, within the letter, the participants were told that their

taking of the survey implied their informed consent and that they should keep the informed consent email as well as the researchers' email and phone number was included if further questions arose. Participant anonymity was adhered to, as participant responses were sent individually to the survey monkey website and gathered for data analysis purposes.

Self-Assessment of the Role of an Assistant Principal and the Principal (SARAPP)

While developing the review of related literature the researcher was able to identify several important constructs that aided in the process of developing survey items. Assimilating the constructs of leadership style and the role assigned to the assistant principal was essential. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2003), validity is important and allows the researcher to draw solid conclusions from the instrument that can then be used to make inferences about the topic. Several important constructs connected the survey instrument to the review of related literature. The important constructs of distributive (Burns, 1978; Woods, 2004), transformational (Jones & Rudd, 2007; Kuhnert & Lewis, 1978; Yukl, 2006), transactional (Jones & Rudd; Kuhnert & Lewis), laissez-faire (Krause, Gebert, & Kearney, 2007; Oshagbemi & Ocholi, 2006) leadership styles were used to develop subscales in the survey (Appendix C) along with the roles identified for the assistant principal (disciplinarian, instructional leader, supervisor of students). Five survey items were used for each of the variables. The use of multiple questions improved the strength of the statistical analysis. The average response per subscale was calculated for statistical purposes. Additionally, the researcher allowed two former high school principals and two educational leadership professors to review the survey and offer feedback to improve the survey addressed validity. Upon completion of this

activity, the survey was changed to reflect the observations of the principals and professors. These suggestions were important for improving the wording and ensuring that public education professionals could answer the survey instrument questions.

Next, the survey was field tested by a group of assistant principals to improve reliability. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) reliability "refers to the consistency of the scores obtained—how consistent they are for each individual from one administration of an instrument to another and from one set of items to another" (p. 165). The test-retest format was used, with the group having a week between the time it was first taken and then retested. The participants in the field test were asked to take the survey, but to examine the content and point out any problematic wording. Modifications based on their feedback were done accordingly. The results of the field testing yielded a reliability coefficient of $r = .92$ across all subscales. Field testing of the instrument not only monitored reliability, but also helped improve validity.

<div align="center">Data Analysis</div>

Tabulated, and then analyzed by using the statistical package included within Monkey Survey were the data obtained from the survey. A myriad of statistical methods were applied to each of the three research questions. For research question one, to determine the frequencies of leadership style (distributive, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) used by the principal as perceived by assistant principals, a frequency distribution was utilized. In addition, for research question two, in order to determine preparedness (disciplinarian, instructional leader, or supervisor of students) for the role principal as perceived by assistant principal a frequency distribution was also utilized. As Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) stated, "To make any sense out of data, we must

put it into some sort of order" (p. 201). Next, in order to determine if there is a

relationship between the leadership styles of the principal (distributive, transformational,

transactional, laissez-faire) as perceived by the assistant principal and the factors of how

the assistant principal perceives being used in that role (disciplinarian, instructional

leader, or supervisor of students) as asked in research question three, a frequency

distribution was utilized and then a chi-square test of independence was conducted to

determine if there was a relationship between the categorical variables. The use of chi-

square is necessary when comparing categorical data (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). The

level of significance was determined at *p<.05.*

Researcher's Biases and Assumptions

One underlying assumption made by the researcher was the notion that most

assistant principals have a desire to become a principal. It is assumed that individuals in

leadership positions have a desire to continue to improve and move up the career ladder.

This assumption is supported by the research reviewed for this inquiry, (Aldridge, 2003;

Davies, 2005; Marshall & Hooley, 2006; Preskill & Torres, 1999; Stecher & Kirby, 2004;

Weller & Weller 2002) and further supported by the researchers' personal experience of

knowing several people who hold administrative positions. A second underlying

assumption is that high school principals work to induct and groom the assistant principal

to someday fill the role of principal. Although there is no direct course work at the

university level to help assistant principals fill their role, it is assumed that the principals

will act as mentors. In this mentorship role, high school principals will help assistant

principals define their role and coach them until they are able to independently complete

the job responsibilities. The research supported the notion that there is indeed a need for

this kind of mentoring. Again, this assumption is derived from the following research reviewed (Aldridge, 2003; Davies, 2005; Marshall & Hooley, 2006; Preskill & Torres, 1999; Stecher & Kirby, 2004; Weller & Weller 2002) and personal experience with colleagues who have held positions of leadership.

Summary

Presented in Chapter Three was the information related to the design and methodology used to carry out this examination of the preparedness of principals through the portal of the assistant principalship. A rationale was provided for the use of a quantitative design research method. The population and sample were described, as well as data collection and instrumentation. The two-phased data analysis was articulated, as well as the researcher's biases and assumptions. Within Chapter Four, the data analysis and research findings are presented. Concluded within Chapter Five is a discussion of the research findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

The review of professional journals revealed that the assistant principal role is one that has a paucity of research devoted to the topic (Weller & Weller, 2002). Yet the assistant principalship in high school settings is considered the portal to a leadership position. Many researchers postulate that the role of the high school principal is to mentor and guide the assistant principal (Burdette & Schertzer, 2005; Goodson, 2000). Thus, the role of the assistant principal is viewed as preparation for future principals (Marshall & Hooley, 2006). However, Bloom and Krovetz (2009) noted, "We have seen too many assistant principals promoted into principalships without receiving the kind of mentoring and job experience that would have prepared them for their challenging new positions" (p. 1). By examining the role of the assistant principal this inquiry discloses how the assistant principal is prepared and by whom.

Contained in this chapter is a summary of the data analysis, population and sample, collection instruments, data gathering methods for each research question, and findings. For the three research questions, provided were tables to help interpret the frequencies of leadership styles used by principals as perceived by high school assistant principals, the preparedness of assistant principals for the role of principal, and the relationship between the leadership style of the principal and the assistant principal's preparedness.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine in what ways and to what degree, if any, does the utilization of the assistant principals by their high school principal enhance their ability to move effectively into the role of the principal. In addition, investigated was the leadership style of the principal, through the perceptions of the assistant principal, to determine if there were a relationship between that style and how the assistant principal was utilized. The examination of the leadership styles, practices, and approaches used by high school principals reveal valuable indicators of in building leadership capacity through the development of the assistant principal.

Nevertheless, being an assistant principal means different things in different schools, and this ambiguity of role definition undermines the potential value of the assistant principalship as a leadership development experience. Weller and Weller (2002) found that the lack of a job description or formal academic preparation for the high school assistant principal role contributes to ineffective use of the position and raises the questions about using the assistant principalship for preparing an individual to be a quality high school principal. As Weller and Weller argued, "The effectiveness of those in this position depend on their ability to master and apply salient leadership knowledge and skills" (p. xiii).

Design and Procedures

This inquiry was quantitative in nature involving one electronically sent survey, *Self-Assessment of the Role of an Assistant Principal and the Principal (SARAPP).*This quantitative questionnaire was distributed to 617 assistant principals in Missouri. The *SARAPP* survey questionnaire was developed by the researcher and pilot tested and

retested by administrators. Results were then used to analyze the test as a whole as well as subscales for reliability. The results of the field testing yielded a reliability coefficient of $r = .92$ across all subscales. In addition, several questions were modified after pilot testing and retesting, resulting in a 35-question survey.

During the development of the survey instrument, the researcher was able to identify several important constructs from the literature that aided in the process of developing survey items. The important constructs of distributive (Burns, 1978; Woods, 2004), transformational (Jones & Rudd, 2007; Kuhnert & Lewis, 1978; Yukl, 2006), transactional (Jones & Rudd; Kuhnert & Lewis), laissez-faire (Krause, Gebert, & Kearney, 2007; Oshagbemi & Ocholi, 2006) leadership styles were used to develop subscales in the survey (Appendix C) along with the roles identified for the assistant principal (disciplinarian, instructional leader, supervisor of students). Five survey items were used for each of the variables. Thus, validity and reliability were established (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003).

Frequency distributions were utilized to ascertain the frequencies of the leadership style (distributive, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) used by the principal as perceived by assistant principals. A frequency distribution was used to determine the frequency of preparedness (disciplinarian, instructional leader, or supervisor of students) for the role of principal as perceived by assistant principal. Then a chi square test of independence was conducted to determine if there was a relationship the two categorical variables. A one-way ANOVA was used to determine if there were a relationship between the leadership styles of the principal (distributive, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) as perceived by the assistant principal and the factors of how

the assistant principal perceived being used in that role (disciplinarian, instructional leader, or supervisor of students). Once the mean frequency rating of each category of leadership style was calculated, an ANOVA was used to determine a significant difference existed in the leadership styles. The high mean score was utilized to determine the most frequently used leadership style, and the chi-square test of independence was utilized to determine if there were a relationship between the two categorical variables of leadership style and preparedness for the role of principal. A $p<0.05$ significance level was established for all statistical tests conducted.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this inquiry:

1. What are the frequencies of the leadership style (distributive, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) used by the principal as perceived by assistant principals?

2. What are the perceptions of the assistant principal regarding the perceived preparedness (disciplinarian, instructional leader, or supervisor of students) for the role of principal?

3. Is there a relationship between the leadership styles of the principal (distributive, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) as perceived by the assistant principal and the factors of how the assistant principal perceives being used in that role (disciplinarian, instructional leader, or supervisor of students)?

Population and Sample

Prior to the initiation of the data collection process, the researcher sought and received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Missouri (see Appendix A). After receiving approval, the data were collected electronically through emails and a survey sent to high school assistant principals from 617 high schools representing 531 school districts in the state of Missouri. Those who returned surveys provided a representative sample population for this research study which consisted of 100 practicing assistant principals: 13 % (13) from urban school districts, 46 % (46) from suburban school districts, and 41% (41) from rural school districts in the state of Missouri. The researcher considered, while not equivalent to the geographical description of the assistant principals in the school districts of Missouri (8% urban, 43% suburban, and 49% rural), an appropriate representation of the high school assistant principals in Missouri (see Table 2) based on the representative sample of the assistant principal population was achieved. Of the 617 surveys sent out, 100 surveys were returned for a return rate of 16%.

Table 2

Population and Sample of Assistant Principals by Percentage and Number

Type of School	Population Percent	Sample Percent
Urban	8	13
Suburban	43	46
Rural	49	41

Note: N=531 School districts, 617 high schools assistant principals

Data Analysis

Responses to the *Self-Assessment of the Role of an Assistant Principal and the Principal (SARAPP)* collected from the 100 assistant principals in the state of Missouri included in the study were entered into Microsoft Excel. Research questions one and two were analyzed using a frequency distribution. Statistical significance was determined at the $p<.05$ level of confidence. Research question three data were analyzed using Chi-square and one-way ANOVA with statistical significance determined at the $p<.05$ level of confidence.

Research Question 1. What are the frequencies of the leadership style

(distributive, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) used by the principal as

perceived by assistant principals?

Research question one addressed the leadership styles used by the principal as

perceived by high school assistant principals in the state of Missouri. Responding

assistant principals rated each of the leadership style characteristics according to the

extent each characteristic was perceived utilized by their principal. Respondents rated

each characteristic on a 6-point Likert scale; the rating ranged from 6 = Always to

1=Never. A frequency distribution was utilized to determine the frequencies of leadership

styles of the principal as perceived by assistant principals. In Table 3 are the leadership

styles as perceived by high school assistant principals. The two highest perceived

leadership styles indicated on the survey were distributive and transformational.

Table 3

Frequencies and Percentages of leadership styles used by principals

Ratings	6=Always N (%)	5	4	3	2	1= Never N (%)
Leadership Style						
Distributive	26	39	22	7	5	1
Transactional	7	14	16	18	39	7
Laissez-faire	7	18	31	17	1 7	10
Transformational	17	38	24	10	7	4

Note. N=100 Assistant Principals

Assistant principals in the state of Missouri identified the leadership styles utilized by

principals with the following rankings: (1) distributive leadership (2) transformational

leadership (3) laissez-faire leadership and (4) transactional leadership. The findings show

that *always* or *almost always* 65% of the respondents identified their principal utilized the

distributive leadership style, 55% of the respondents identified their principal utilized the

transformational leadership style, and 25% of the respondents identified their principal

utilized the laissez-faire leadership style. Finally, 21% of the respondents identified their

principal utilized the transactional leadership style *always* or *almost always*. In addition,

1% of the respondents noted that their principals *never* used the distributive leadership

style, the transactional leadership style was *never* used by 7% of the principals, and the

laissez-faire was identified as *never* being used by 10% of the principals, while the

transformational leadership style was identified as *never* being used by 4% of the

principals.

Research Question 2. What are the perceptions of the assistant principal

regarding perceived preparedness (disciplinarian, instructional leader, or supervisor of

students) for the role of principal?

Research question two addressed the preparedness of the high school assistant

principal to take on the role of principal in the state of Missouri. Responding assistant

principals were asked to rate how often, they performed specific high school principal

tasks. Respondents rated each task on a 6-point Likert scale with the rating ranged from 6

= Always to 1=Never. A frequency distribution was utilized to determine the

preparedness of the high school assistant principal as perceived by the assistant principal.

The frequencies and percentages for preparedness perceived by high school assistant

principals in the state of Missouri are represented in Table 4.

Table 4

Frequencies and Percentages of Preparedness

Ratings	6=Always N	5	4	3	2	1= Never N
Preparedness						
Disciplinarian	50	42	8	0	0	0
Instruction	7	14	8	31	4	36
Supervision	45	45	10	0	0	0

Note. N=100 Assistant Principals

The two highest perceived preparedness tasks for assistant principals were dealing

with discipline (50%) and supervision of students (45%). The assistant principals

identified the task of instructional leadership at 7%, with 36% *never* involved with

instructional leadership.

Assistant Principals in the state of Missouri identified dealing with discipline of

students and supervision of students as the two most frequently recognized tasks in which

they spend their time. The findings revealed greater than 90% of the respondents were

always prepared either with discipline of students or supervisions of students.

Additionally, 40% of the assistant principals reported *rarely* or *never* being involved in

instructional leadership tasks.

Research Question 3. Is there a relationship between the leadership styles of the principal (distributive, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) as perceived by the assistant principal and the factors of how the assistant principal perceives being used in that role (disciplinarian, instructional leader, or supervisor of students)?

A frequency distribution was utilized to determine the most often utilized leadership style and then a chi-square test of independence was conducted to determine if there was a relationship between the most commonly utilized leadership style and the preparedness of the assistant principal for the role of principal (Table 5). The mean ratings of each leadership style were calculated, and then the ANOVA was used to determine if there is a significant difference in leadership styles as to the preparedness of assistant principals. The level of significance was determined at $p<.05$.

Displayed in Table 5 are the mean scores of leadership style used by the principal as identified by the assistant principal. Of the four identified leadership styles, distributive was used most frequently with a mean score of 5.06, followed by transformational with a mean score of 4.75. Laissez-fair and transactional leadership both had a mean score of 4.42.

Table 5

Mean scores of leadership style use and of each leadership style

Style	Number	Mean	Standard Error of Measurement
Distributive	70	5.07	0.18
Transactional	5	4.42	0.17
Laissez-faire	5	4.42	0.17
Transformational	20	4.75	0.14

Note. N=100 Assistant Principal

The chi-square test of independence was utilized to determine if a relationship existed between the two categorical variables, type of leadership styles and preparedness. The level of significance was determined at *p<.05.* Displayed in Table 6 is the chi-square test of independence showing that only one of the leadership styles differed significantly in the preparedness of assistant principals most often utilized, X^2 (*N*=100, 4) = 104.67, *p<.0001* or Chi Square, *p< .0001.* Principals identified as using a distributive leadership style by assistant principals tended to be perceived by the assistant principal as preparing them for the role of the principalship more than the other styles; however all of the leadership styles (distributive, transactional, laissez-faire, and transformational) tended to use the assistant principal as a disciplinarian and supervision of students more than as an instructional leader.

Table 6

Chi Square Test of Independence

Leadership Style	Chi Square	DF	Significance
Distributive	5.45	4	.308**
Transactional	1.83	4	.417
Laissez-faire	1.95	4	.420
Transformational	5.02	4	.292

Note. * $p < 0.05$, 2-tailed. ** $p < 0.01$, 2-tailed.

Summary

Presented in Chapter Four was a review of the purpose of the inquiry, along with descriptions of the data collection process and the instrument, *Self-Assessment of the Role of an Assistant Principal and the Principal Survey*. A representative sample of 100 high school assistant principals completed the survey out of a possible 617, resulting in a return rate of 16%.

Analysis of the data collected from the *Self-Assessment of the Role of an Assistant Principal and the Principal* survey provided data for each of the three research questions. From the data, it was revealed the distributive leadership style was perceived as most often utilized and the majority of the assistant principals perceived themselves prepared to fill the role of principal in the areas of disciplinarian and supervisor of students. While

the distributive leadership style had a significant relationship with preparing assistant

principals as principals, few assistant principals identified themselves as prepared in the

area of instructional leadership.

In Chapter Five, a discussion of the findings of the study, framed within the

limitations are included. In addition, presented are conclusions, implications for practice

and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The researcher sought to add to the body of knowledge concerning how high school assistant principals in the state of Missouri perceive their preparedness for the role of principal. The study also identified which leadership style the assistant principals perceived their principal utilizes, and the relationship between leadership style and the preparedness of the assistant principal for the role of principal.

The role of the assistant principal, while not having been investigated significantly in educational leadership research (Weller & Weller, 2002), is important because often it is seen as preparation for the role of principal (Burdette & Schertzer, 2005; Lovely, 2001). Also noted in the research is the need for strong relationships between the principal and the assistant principal resulting in a positive mentorship process (Hibert, 2001).

While a few states require assistant principals to hold a principal's certificate (Weller & Weller, 2002), many do not. Consequently, researchers (Bloom & Krovetz, 2009; Marshall & Holley, 2006) noted that few universities offer a program of study related to training for the assistant principal position. This lack of formal training makes collaboration (Bruffee, 1999) and team work (Lencioni, 2002) between the assistant principal and the principal imperative.

With the high stakes accountability issues facing educators today, Weller and Weller (2002) advocated for the assistant principal to do much more than discipline for

the leadership of the school to be effective. Unfortunately, few researchers speak directly to the ideal roles for the high school assistant position (Weller & Weller, 2002).

Marshall and Hooley (2006) noted that the leadership style of the principal, impacts considerably the responsibilities assigned to the assistant principal. To obtain more experience beneficial to the assistant principal's preparation for the principal's position, Weller and Weller (2002) found that a shared leadership style would allow the assistant principal to act more as a co-principal, while a transformational leadership style would enable the assistant to change and grow (Yukl, 2006). Conversely, a transactional leader would probably utilize the assistant principal primarily for managerial tasks.

In this changing environment within schools, as district personnel seek to hire new principals many expect to hire principals who have a myriad of experiences. As the decision of choice, Bloom and Krovetz (2009) argued that experiences as an assistant principal are often sought by many districts in candidates for the principalship. Therefore, the role of assistant principal can potentially be a valuable training arena for future high school principals, allowing them to experience a range of responsibilities and circumstances and one worthy of investigation.

<div align="center">Limitations and Design Control</div>

Several limitations were identified, and the design controls used to minimize the limitations are discussed here. Identified by the researcher are the following limitations:

1. This study was limited geographically to one Midwest state during an academic school year.

2. This study was limited by the degree of reliability and validity of the survey instrument.

3. It was assumed that participants were forthright in their responses and interpreted the survey instrument protocol as intended.

4. It was assumed that participants based their responses upon their own experiences.

5. This researcher might have bias due to a previous position as an assistant principal.

6. Lack of responses or a low return rate from subjects that receive surveys may limit the depth of the study.

7. Assistant Principals self-identified whether their schools were in urban, suburban, or a rural setting.

The first limitation noted in this inquiry is limiting the population to one Midwest state; however, to control for this limitation the researcher used a nonprobability sample (or convenience sample) of the participants. To enhance the generalizability of the sample (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003), the researcher used a three step process: first, she purposefully identified the pool of all assistant principals currently working within a high school defined as the combination of any grade level from 7 to12; second, the participant pool was examined based upon the location of the high school where they were employed; third, upon completion of identifying and labeling (urban, suburban, & rural) all high school assistant principals, a random sampling of the participants was chosen using a random number generator. As noted, "generalization is made more plausible if data are presented to show that the sample is representative of the intended population on at least some relevant variables" (Fraenkel & Wallen, p. 110).

Several steps were taken to control for reliability and validity of the instrument. First, an educational expert and two current school administrators reviewed the survey to ascertain content validity of the instrument. The reviewers critiqued individual questions as well as the survey in its entirety and offered suggestions for improvement to enhance the validity of the survey. Next, the revised version of the survey instrument was field-tested using the test-retest format. The results of the field testing yielded a reliability coefficient of $r = .92$ across all subscales, which revealed the scores were stable over time (Creswell, 2003).

Lastly, when conducting descriptive research it is common to use surveys to assess viewpoints of individuals (Gay, 1996); however, an obstacle to the survey method of inquiry can be the lack of response from subjects who received the survey (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). In an attempt to overcome this problem, the researcher contacted each assistant principal by email to seek his or her approval for participation in this study in lieu of an email coming from the Survey Monkey tool. This email included an informed consent letter and a link to the survey. The use of Survey Monkey helped to overcome the obstacle of return rate due to ease of survey completion and resulted in doubling the actual sample population of the study from the initial 50 participants to 100. While this was only a return rate of 16% of the 617 emails sent, by using a representative sampling process to allow equal opportunity for response, the generalizability of this study were enhanced (Fraenkel & Wilson, 2003)

Discussion of the Findings

A total of 100 assistant principals participated in the study by completing *Self-Assessment of the Role of an Assistant Principal and the Principal Survey.* Overall, the data revealed in this inquiry supported the assertions by Bloom and Krovetz (2009) that many assistant principals are not being prepared properly for the principalship.

Research question one focused on the leadership style used by the principal as perceived by the assistant principal. The data showed that in the category of *always* or *nearly always* using a leadership style, 65% of assistant principals perceived their principal as utilizing the distributive style, 55% the transformational style of leadership, 25% laissez-faire style, and 21% transactional style.

As noted by Marshall and Hooley (2006), the leadership style of the principal affects the tasks that the assistant principal will be assigned. The findings from this study indicate that the majority of the assistant principals are acting as co-principals in the areas of discipline and supervision of students. Weller and Weller (2002) noted that a distributive leadership style would allow the assistant principal to gain more experience valuable to them when they obtain a principalship. The caveat in this study is the issue of the delegation of various experiences to the assistant principal. In this inquiry, the experiences being gained by the majority of assistant principal are mainly in the areas of discipline and supervision. However, it should also be noted that 55% of respondents identified transformational leadership as the leadership style of the principal. This style allows the assistant principal to change and grow while working toward a common goal or vision (Yukl, 2006). In general, both the distributive and transformational leadership styles imply the need for the assistant principal to do more than simply be a

disciplinarian. However, if the school leader is leading through managerial methods (Yukl, 2006) such as transactional or laissez-faire, the assistant principal is likely to be delegated the jobs that the principal does not want to do, which in this inquiry was discipline and supervision of students.

Research question two focused on the preparedness of the assistant principal to assume the role of principal. Preparedness of principals was defined in this inquiry by experience in three roles: disciplinarian, instructional leader, and supervision of students. Data from the quantitative survey revealed that 92% of the assistant principals perceived that they are prepared to fill the role of principal in the role of disciplinarian, 90% in the role of supervisor of students, and 21% as an instructional leader.

Framed within the changing role of the principal as noted in the literature (DuFour, 2002; Van Roekel, 2008) it is important to note that the data revealed in this inquiry demonstrate that these assistant principals are not being used in the manner that helps them become effective principals. Van Roekel (2008) noted that the most effective school principals spend their days not only as managers and disciplinarians, but also as instructional leaders. The data in this inquiry do not support that premise. As Dufour (2002) argued, principals must emphasize data and use data analysis to improve learning. With 36% of the assistant principals noting that they were never asked to engage in instructional leadership tasks, the issue of preparedness for the role of instructional leader is a concern. The focus of current school reform is student achievement (*School Principal*, 2012), the principal is responsible to improve the school's instructional program; without experiences in this area, the ability of the assistant principal to be successful in that arena seems limited.

Research question three was directed toward the relationship between the leadership style employed and the preparedness of the assistant principal to assume the role of principal. This data set clearly revealed that a distributive leadership style is the style perceived used most to increase the preparedness of the assistant principal to fill the role of principal. Weller and Weller (2002) postulated that a distributive leadership style allowed the assistant principal to act more as a co-principal and obtain more experience in preparation for the principal's role (Weller & Weller, 2002). Woods (2004) noted that a distributive leadership style would be more likely to allow assistant principals to have full buy-in on building initiatives due to their involvement in the decision making. However, the caveat raised by this data set, "Does delegating discipline and supervision more often to assistant principals than instructional leadership tasks prepare them to become effective principals?" Fullan (2006) argued leadership should focus on the improvement of teaching and be linked to student achievement. With 36% of the respondents identifying that they were never asked to engage in activities labeled as instructional leadership, how can leadership capacity be created that will carry on such improvement in the future.

Both Weller and Weller (2002) and Marshall and Hooley (2006) argued the crucial method of training assistant principals by principals is conversation. The findings from this study reveal the level of critical and meaningful conversations (Lencioni, 2002; Scott, 2004) between the assistant principals and the principals were primarily about the supervision and discipline of students. If, as Bruffee (1999) argued, "The most powerful force changing us was our influence on one another" (p. 9), it appears in this study that the principal is missing opportunities to discuss instructional issues with the assistant

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principal. Consequently, if instructional tasks, as identified in this study, are the least of the responsibilities of the assistant principal, how can the principal, as Preskill and Torres (1999) stated, translate the learning vision into goals and objectives effectively?

The results of this study in relation to the current literature in this area revealed both consistencies and inconsistencies in the findings of this study with regard to perceptions of the leadership style of principals and the preparedness of assistant principals. Summarized in Table 7 is this information and includes the current findings.

Table 7

Summary of Related Research

Researcher	Leadership Style Principal	Assistant Principal	Preparedness
Bloom & Krovetz (2009)		▲	▲
Burdette & Schertzer (2005)		▲	▲
Burns (1978)	▲		
Dufour (2002)			▲
Fink & Resnick (2001)	▲		
Good (2008)		▲	▲
Hibert (2001)		▲	▲
Jones & Rudd (2007)	▲		
Krause, et al. (2007)	▲		
Kuhnert & Lewis (1987)	▲		
Lovely (2001)		▲	
Weller & Weller (2002)		▲	▲
Woods (2004)	▲		
Yukl (2006)	▲		▲
Zellner et al. (2002)		▲	
Reich (2012)	▲	▲	▲

Conclusions

The findings of this study added to the body of research about the assistant principalship in a variety of ways. This research took a closer look at the leadership style employed by the building principal, the preparedness of the assistant principal to fill the role of principal, and the potential of a relationship between leadership style and preparedness.

In conclusion, research question one focused on the leadership style used by the principal as perceived by the assistant principal. The data showed that in the category of *always* or *nearly always* using a leadership style, the assistant principals perceived their principal as utilizing the distributive style (65%). Weller and Weller (2002) noted that a distributive leadership style would allow the assistant principal to gain expansive experience, preparation for when they obtain a principalship. However, there is still a lack of tasks, roles, or duties attributed to instructional leadership delegated to them by their principal. With this lack of experience, the preparedness might not be as well-rounded in all areas, specifically instructional leadership, as needed to be an effective principal.

Research question two examined the preparedness of the assistant principal to assume the role of principal. Preparedness of principals was defined in this inquiry by opportunities to perform three roles: disciplinarian, instructional leader, and supervisor of students. Results showed that 92% of the assistant principals perceived that they are prepared to fill the role of principal as disciplinarian, 90% the role of supervisor of students, and 21% the role of instructional leader. With the shift in the roles and responsibilities of the school principal toward instructional leadership, suggested is that

the assistant principals' lack of experience in this facet equates to lack of preparedness as an instructional leader.

Research question three examined if a relationship between the leadership style of the principal and the preparedness of the assistant principal to assume the role of principal was present. The analysis revealed a relationship between the variables of distributive leadership style and the preparedness of the assistant principal to become a principal. However, a concern identified by a strong majority of the assistant principals is that while they are prepared in the areas of discipline and supervision, they are not having conversations with their principal in the area of instructional leadership.

In closing, assistant principals must have an opportunity to learn, grow, and perform not only as disciplinarians and as managers, but also as instructional leaders. Expanding the mentoring conversations (Weller & Weller, 2002; Marshall & Hooley, 2006) between principal and assistant principals to include meaningful and purposeful dialogue on instruction and student learning is essential. By providing these instructional experiences and conversation, an assistant principal can learn experientially by watching a mentor in action.

<div align="center">Implications for Practice</div>

The results of this study should contribute to the current body of research and literature on how to increase the preparedness of assistant principals. The assistant principalship is considered a training ground (Weller & Weller, 2002) for the principalship, yet this data do not support the argument that this preparation is comprehensive (disciplinarian, instructional leader, and supervisor of students). Zellner, Ward, McNamara, Gideon, Camacho and Edgewood (2002) avowed that educational

leadership training programs need to take a closer look at the relationship between theory and practice in the assistant principalship. Perhaps by either providing a program of study for the assistant principalship or including appropriate topics within the principal programof study.

Specifically, universities might apply information from this study into preparation programs for administrators. Current programs do not educate future administrators in the area of the assistant principalship in a systematic manner. The focus of preparation programs is to prepare students for the role of principal; however, by adding coursework or topics focused on the area of the assistant principalship, prospective candidates will be better prepared to fill their role.

Moreover, the study could serve as a reminder for principals to improve their mentoring relationship with their assistant principal. Through the use of teamwork (Lencioni, 2002), the administrative team can better support the teachers in their buildings and in turn better support the students. This co-principalship through mentoring should focus around the three major roles of principal (manager, disciplinarian, and instructional leadership). During this mentoring process, principals are encouraged to include reflective dialogue involving instructional processes and student learning. Perhaps there is uncertainty in sharing the role as the instructional leader due to its newness as a role of principal since it has only been in the last decade that instruction and student learning have become the focus of principals (Dufour, 2002). Conceivably providing professional development to the administrative team will expand the leadership capacity for instructional leadership.

In addition, as a result of the research, assistant principals should advocate for additional responsibilities. If the ultimate goal of assistant principals is to move into the principalship, they need to advocate and reshape their experience to include a wider variety of responsibilities, including instructional leadership.

Ultimately, it is the researcher's intention to improve the experience of the assistant principal. Because the job expectations are unclear and can vary between buildings and positions, a better defined purpose of the role of the assistant principal allows for the person in that role to have a better chance of preparation, given that the assistant principalship is a portal to that position.

Recommendations for Future Research

The review of literature and the results of this investigation indicated that the relationship between principals' leadership style and the preparedness of assistant principals merit additional research. In addition, an inquiry with a larger sample and at various building levels might result in findings that are more significant. Furthermore, doing an inquiry at various times during the school year (i.e. beginning, mid-year, ending) may have also alter assistant principals perceptions of their administrator, as may have the length of time an assistant principal had worked with a specific principal or in a specific building. Another inquiry that included research from both the principals' perceptions and the assistant principals' perceptions might have highlighted differences in how assistant principals were being used. Finally, a qualitative study along with the quantitative study might have helped clarify the interpretations of the administrators and their assistant principals.

Future studies should assist in solidifying the understanding of the relationship between high school principals and assistant principals and thus serve as a guide for administrator preparation programs, as well as direct high school principals in diversifying the activities they assign to their assistant principals resulting in heightened preparation for the principalship.

Summary

The study's findings raise concern that many assistant principals are not receiving the proper preparation for the role and responsibilities of the principalship. Instructional leadership support and activities for these assistant principals are decisive in light of the accountability standards enacted by current national reforms.

The data revealed a compelling need for bolstering the experience of the assistant principal. As the role of the principal is changing, so must the role of the assistant principal. Moreover, the assistant principalship should be viewed as an incubator, encompassing the myriad roles and responsibilities of the principal but have the opportunities to use the principal as a sounding board in a somewhat protective environment. With a strong mentor as the principal, who is able to see the bigger picture, this is a possibility.

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    Austin, TX.

APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval

1. IRB Approval

Campus Institutional Review Board

University of Missouri-Columbia

485 McReynolds Hall

Columbia, MO 65211-1150

PHONE: (573) 882-9585

FAX: (573) 884-0663

October 8, 2012

Principal Investigator: Reich, Carrie L

Department: ELPA

Your Application to project entitled An Examination of the Preparedness of Principals through the Portal of the High School Assistant Principalship was reviewed and approved by the MU Campus Institutional Review Board according to terms and conditions described below:

IRB Project Number 1204984

Initial Application Approval Date October 8, 2012

IRB Expiration Date October 8, 2013

Level of Review Exempt Project Status Active - Open to Enrollment Regulation 45 CFR 46.101b(2)

Risk Level Minimal Risk

The principal investigator (PI) is responsible for all aspects and conduct of this study. The PI must comply with the following conditions of the approval:

1. No subjects may be involved in any study procedure prior to the IRB approval date or after the expiration date.

2. All unanticipated problems, serious adverse events, and deviations must be reported to the IRB within 5 days.

3. All modifications must be IRB approved by submitting the Exempt Amendment prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk.

4. All recruitment materials and methods must be approved by the IRB prior to being used.

5. The Annual Exempt Form must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval at least 30 days prior to the project expiration date.

6. Maintain all research records for a period of seven years from the project completion date.

7. Utilize the IRB stamped document informing subjects of the research and other approved research documents located within the document storage section of eIRB.

If you have any questions, please contact the Campus IRB at 573-882-9585 or umcresearchcirb@missouri.edu.

Thank you,

Charles Borduin, PhD

Campus IRB Chair

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent

1. Informed Consent Form – Assistant Principal Participant

Letter of Informed Consent - Educator Participant

[Date]

Dear (Educator Participant):

Thank you for considering participation in a research study titled *An Examination of the Preparedness of Principals through the Portal of the High School Assistant Principalship.* This study is part of my dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia. You have been invited to participate in this study because you are currently working as a High School Assistant Principal in a PK-12 educational institution. The information gathered should be beneficial to secondary and postsecondary educational leaders responsible for preparing principals into PK-12 settings at all levels.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this research is to examine the perceptions of high school assistant principals regarding the leadership styles, practices, and approaches used by principals to enhance the preparation of the assistant principal, findings may identify valuable indicators of effectiveness in building leadership capacity. The researcher will use an on line survey to examine the studies' constructs.

The following questions guide this quantitative study:

1. What are the frequencies of the leadership style (distributive, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) used by the principal as perceived by assistant principals?
2. What are the perceptions of the assistant principal regarding the perceived preparedness (disciplinarian, instructional leader, or supervisor of students) for the role of principal?
3. Is there a relationship between the leadership styles of the principal (distributive, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) as perceived by the assistant principal and the factors of how the assistant principal perceives being used in that role (disciplinarian, instructional leader, or supervisor of students)?

Before you make a final decision about participation, you must know how your rights will be protected:

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INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT FOR EDUCATOR PARTICIPANT

● Participation in the study is voluntary. You may withdraw at any time. If later you do not wish the data you provided to be used, inform me; your wish will be honored before culmination of the study. Your refusal to participate will have no adverse consequences. For any questions about your participation in this research, please contact me at 816-335-5967 or by e-mail at creich@grainvalley.k12.mo.us. You may also contact my dissertation supervisor, Dr. Barbara Martin, at (660) 543-8823 or by e-mail at bmartin@ucmo.edu.

● As an interview participant your name and answers will remain confidential; only my dissertation supervisor and I would have access to identifiable data. Any materials identifying specific individuals, district, or school will be kept locked and destroyed seven years after the completion of this project. Data collected from the school participants will analyzed for quantitative examination, and summarized for reporting. Results may be published in *Dissertation Abstracts* and in professional journals at any time, protecting your anonymity and confidentiality.

●Your control as to which survey items you choose to answer ensures that there will be no identifiable risk for you greater than that encountered in your everyday life. The University of Missouri does not compensate human subjects if injury or discomfort results from the research. Nonetheless, the university holds medical, professional, and general liability insurance coverage, and provides its own medical attention and facilities in the unlikely event that participants suffer as a direct result of negligence or fault from faculty or staff associated with this research. In such eventuality, the Risk Management Officer should be contacted immediately at (573) 882-3735 to obtain a review of the matter and receive further information. Ethical guidelines about Protection of Human Subjects set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations "45 CFR 46" will be upheld. This statement is not to be construed as an admission of liability.

● This research has been preauthorized by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Missouri-Columbia. If you have further questions regarding research participants' rights, please contact the Campus Institutional Review Board at (573) 882-9585, or visit http://ohrp.osophs.dhhs.gov/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.htm.

If you elect to participate and make your professional perspective count as part of this study, please review the Informed Consent form at your earliest convenience and keep a copy noting that your taking of the on line survey denotes your acceptance and understanding of this informed consent. The on-line survey (https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SARPAP) will occupy approximately 20 minutes of your time. Your inform consent is provided at the beginning of each survey and by completing the survey inform consent is given. Your participation is very valuable so thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Carrie L. Reich
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia

INFORMED CONSENT FROM EDUCATOR PARTICIPANT

I, understanding by clicking the following survey link,
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SARPAP agree to participate in the study *An Examination of the Preparedness of Principals through the Portal of the High School Assistant Principalship* conducted by Carrie L. Reich, doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri-Columbia. I understand the following:

- My participation is voluntary, and may be withdrawn at any point before culmination of the study.
- My responses will be used for dissertation research and for potential future journal publications.
- My identity and affiliation will be kept confidential in all phases of the research.
- An on-line survey will take approximately 20 minutes of time to complete.

Please keep the consent letter and a copy of the signed consent form for your records. If you choose to participate in this study, the completion of the survey will indicate your informed consent.
I have read the material above, and any questions that I have posed have been answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study

Signed: _____   Date: _____

Title/Position: _____
School/District: _____

Carrie Reich
Home Phone: (816) 847-7114   Cell Phone: (816) 335-5967
Email: creich@grainvalley.k12.mo.us

APPENDIX C

Survey Protocols

1. Self-Assessment of the Role of the Assistant Principal and the Principal

(SARAPP)

SELF- ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF AN ASSISTANT

PRINCIPAL AND THE PRINCIPAL

(SARAPP)

By opening this link I have agreed to participate in the study *An Examination of the Preparedness of Principals through the Portal of the High School Assistant Principalship* conducted by Carrie L. Reich, doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri Columbia. I understand the following:
• My participation is voluntary, and may be withdrawn at any point before culmination of the study.
• My responses will be used for dissertation research and for potential future journal publications.
• My identity and affiliation will be kept confidential in all phases of the research.
• An online survey will take approximately 20 minutes of time to complete.
I have read the inform consent letter, and any questions that I have posed have been answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Part I: Self-Assessment of Demographic Information

Age: _____   **Years experience in the classroom**: _____   **Gender:** _____ Male _____ Female

Years experience in this school as an administrator: _____

Your principal's Gender: _ Male _ Female _

Your Educational level (check one):

_____ B. S. _____ B. S. + 0-12 hours   _____ B. S. + 12-24 hours

_____ M. S. _____ M. S. + hours   _____ Ed. Spec. _____ Doctorate

Student population of your school (check one):

_____Less than 425_____426-650_____651-999_____Greater than 999

Which best describes the location of your school (check one):

_____Rural _____Suburban _____ Urban

Rural- location more than 15 miles from an urban designated area
Suburban- location within 15 miles of an urban designated area
Urban- large metropolitan area designated as urban as indicated in the 2010 Census

Part II: Self-Assessment of Leadership Behaviors

This section of the survey consists of 35 behavior descriptors that refer to leadership-based characteristics. On a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 indicating that you or your Principal NEVER behave as described and a 7 indicating that you or your Principal ALWAYS behave as described, circle a rating that describes leadership-based disposition and behavior

1	My Principal involves the staff in decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	All staff members have buy-in to the school vision	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I feel as though I am a co-principal and am able to make my own decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	My principal focuses on what individual can do for the whole, rather than all stakeholders participating.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	Discipline is only part of my job responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	My principal motivates me to achieve goals I have set for myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	My principal uses a compelling vision to guide and motivate staff.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	My principal encourages me to question the traditional way of doing things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	I am comfortable leading change resulting in movement in new directions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	My principal expresses confidence in my by assigning difficult tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	I would describe my principals' leadership style as compelling.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	My principal sets transparent work goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	I have a set of clear job expectations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	For my principal, building relations is secondary to getting the job done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

15	I have little input in creating the vision for the school.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	Decision making is not a significant part of my position.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	Most of my job includes tasks that my principal does not care to complete.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	My principal supports the efforts of others through feedback and guidance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	Staff members in my building make their own decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	My principal supports staff collaboration and teamwork.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	The end goal is clear, how I lead to achieve it is up to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	My principal delays in making a decision.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	When a problem occurs in our building, the teachers work together to find a solution.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	I feel comfortable leading the day to day operations of the school.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25	I feel comfortable analyzing the data and acting as an instructional leader to improve student learning.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26	I have been allowed to transform the culture of the school to focus on student learning.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27	I feel competent to bring necessary change to the school.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28	I feel prepared to fill the role of Principal.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29	The principal initiates activities and practices that expose staff to current research effective schooling.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30	My principal modifies his/her leadership style to adapt to different situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31	I am willing to lead change initiatives with uncertain outcomes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32	My principal exercises both directive and non directive leadership behaviors as the situation warrants.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33	My principal encourages teachers to accomplish things they perceive to be beyond their gasp.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34	My principal consistently models a positive attitude about the ability of staff to accomplish substantial	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	things.							
35	My principal encourages other to express diverse opinions.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**

Other insights or experiences you would like to add:

VITA

Carrie Reich was born in Lincoln, Nebraska, October 9, 1976, and graduated from Lincoln Southeast High School in 1994. She received her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education in 1998 from Central Missouri State University, Master of Education in Elementary Administration in 2003 from Central Missouri State University, and Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership and Policy (to be conferred in December 2012) from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Her professional career has included one year as a fifth grade teacher at Lucy Franklin Elementary, three years as a sixth grade Reading and Science teacher at Brittany Hill Middle School, and three years as a sixth grade Science teacher at Sunny Vale Middle School all in the Blue Springs, Missouri School District. She then became Assistant Principal at Fire Prairie Middle School in the Fort Osage School District in Independence, Missouri. In addition to her role as an Assistant principal, for her last two years at the Fort Osage School District she served as the District Student Support Coordinator. Through this role she assisted in design and implementation of the student support model, worked with district 504 needs, coordinated the restraint and seclusion implementation, and supported the district-wide implementation of the Behavior Intervention Support Team model. She then became principal of Sni-A-Bar Elementary in the Grain Valley School District located in Grain Valley, Missouri.