

# A Comparison Of The Leadership Roles Of Public And Private Elementary School Principals

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A COMPARISON OF THE LEADERSHIP ROLES OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Education  
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at the University of Central Florida  
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## ABSTRACT

Public school principals' role requirements have undergone changes during standards-based reform and accountability (Copland, 2001; Daresh, 1998; Jones, 1999; Lashway, 2003a). This study was designed to identify the leadership role focus and behaviors of public school principals who were attempting to meet the challenges of this movement and to provide valuable information about the effects of accountability reforms on school leadership. Public school principals were subject to the mandated policy initiatives associated with the accountability movement. Private school principals, or lower school heads, were not subject to these federal and state policy reforms. The leadership role and behaviors of public and private elementary school principals working under these two distinctly different circumstances were compared. Accountability reforms called for public school principals to focus the principal's role on instructional leadership as the priority rather than managerial leadership. There was a need to understand if there were any significant differences in roles and behaviors of public and private school principals: (a) to inform public and private school policymakers and representatives who impact the educational system through local, state, and federal legislation; (b) to inform educational leadership training programs and licensing systems; and (c) to assist those who lead schools (Lashway; Portin, 2000).

Public and private school principals in the state of Florida reported self-perceptions of their leadership role focus and behaviors using the *Instructional Leadership Inventory (ILI)*, an instrument obtained from MetriTech, Inc. The data collection was conducted according to the elements of Dillman's (2000) Tailored Design

Method for mailed surveys. The survey instrument was distributed to a sample of 501 public and private elementary school principals in the state of Florida. The data collection process resulted in a total of 263 returned surveys, a 52.5% total response rate. The public school response rate was 48.0%, or 168 returned surveys out of the 350 mailed surveys. The private school response rate was 62.9%, or 95 returned surveys out of the 151 mailed surveys.

Comparison of the two groups, public and private, demonstrated that principals and lower school heads reported being similar in many ways in relation to the demographics and the work environment of the two groups. The differences in personal and professional characteristics were minimal. There were very few statistically significant differences between public elementary school principals and private lower school heads when looking at the *ILI* instructional leadership criteria. However, the findings revealed that there were considerable statistically significant differences between public elementary school principals and private lower school heads when reviewing the *ILI* managerial leadership criteria.

Implications derived from these analyses support two areas of change in the leadership behaviors of public school principals. A significant number of public school principals reported that they spent considerable time on the managerial leadership behaviors of *Monitoring Student Progress*, *Supervising Teaching*, and *Managing Curriculum*, behaviors related to assessment and accountability. Public school principals reported using achievement test results in multiple ways to gauge the progress of the school toward school goals. These findings contributed to existing knowledge and provided new knowledge about principals' leadership role focus and behaviors based on

data gathered during the age of the accountability movement. Recommendations include adjusting staffing to prioritize instructional leadership in the face of managerial demands, reducing public school populations through alternative strategies, enhancing the strength of community interest and support for the school, and furthering research aimed at a better understanding of the influence of external social and political goals, standards, and accountability on the middle management role of the school principal.

Dedicated to my father and mother, Robert C. and Catherine P. English

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## CHAPTER 1

### PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH DESIGN

#### Introduction

The nation's public educational system has fallen under intense scrutiny in the form of the accountability movement. Media coverage has alerted the country's citizens to reports, such as *A Nation At Risk* (1983), and to research findings that pointed to gaps in student academic performance in America's public schools (Benveniste, Carnoy, & Rothstein, 2003; Bracey, 2003; Krug, 1990; Lashway, 2003a). The public called for action to address this issue, and the government responded by increasing its involvement in the nation's public school system (Crosby, 1999; Krug; Tyack & Cuban, 1995; Wenning, Herdman, & Smith, 2002).

National goals for academic achievement and state standards were established to raise student performance and to improve the quality of public education (Copland, 2001; Wenning, Herdman, & Smith, 2002). Public policymakers assumed that standards and standards-based accountability would be used to encourage, document, and acknowledge the progress of student and school performance (Public Education Network, 2003; Wenning, Herdman, & Smith). Responsibility for accountability was directed from the top down to individual public school sites (Public Education Network; Tyack & Cuban, 1995; Wenning, Herdman, & Smith). The government and public focused their attention on the academic performance of individual schools in each state's public education system. Federal and state policy initiatives led to a mandated system designed to hold public schools accountable for the academic achievement of their students, but private

schools were not required to participate in this push for accountability (Benveniste, Carnoy, & Rothstein, 2003; Wenning, Herdman, & Smith).

America's public schools did not meet national and public expectations for student academic achievement, but private schools were perceived to maintain a positive standing (Benveniste, Carnoy, & Rothstein, 2003; Tyack & Cuban, 1995; "What Do People Think," 1999). During the 1980s and 1990s researchers conducted studies for organizations such as the National Center for Educational Statistics to explore the suggested performance difference between public and private schools (Benveniste, Carnoy, & Rothstein; Bracey, 2003; National Center For Educational Statistics, 2002). Rose and Gallup (2005) in the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Phi Delta Kappa/ Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools found that 49% of the national public totals supported the belief that student achievement would be better in private schools. Rose and Gallup (2004) in the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Phi Delta Kappa/ Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools found that 56% of the public would select a private school over a public school if cost were not an issue. Research investigated public and private schools and their students' academic achievement to attempt to discover if there was a significant difference in the two systems (Alt & Peter, 2003; Benveniste, Carnoy, & Rothstein; Bracey; Parker, 1984).

#### Similarities and Differences of Public and Private Schools

Alt and Peter (2003) reviewed four national studies of public and private schools using data collected in 1988, 1998, and 2000. Public and private schools were found to have similarities and differences (Alt & Peter; Benveniste, Carnoy, & Rothstein, 2003; Parker, 1984). Schools surveyed varied in size, level, community type, and student

populations. Similarities were found in class size and teacher-pupil ratio. Classes in public schools averaged 24 students per classroom, and private schools averaged 23 students (Alt & Peter). Teacher-student ratio averaged 16 students per teacher in public schools and 13 students per teacher in private schools.

Public and private schools were also considered similar in that they exhibited a common core organizational technology, schooling (Benveniste, Carnoy, & Rothstein, 2003; Parker). The technical core of schooling, both public and private, involved: (a) teachers and students being overseen by principals, (b) teachers working with students in classrooms, (c) and parents or guardians working with both teachers and principals. Schools were characterized as loosely coupled organizations dealing in: (a) goals, (b) tasks, and (c) decision making.

Public schools were considered different from private schools in that they had different levels of bureaucracy. Private schools: (a) selected students and were selected by parents, (b) had teachers who were not unionized, (c) raised revenues from tuition and donations, (d) were part of a smaller bureaucracy, and (e) were not required to participate in federal and state mandated educational policy initiatives (Alt & Peter, 2003; Benveniste, Carnoy, & Rothstein, 2003; Parker, 1984; Wenning, Herdman, & Smith, 2002). Private school teachers also reported having more influence on teaching practices and school policies, being more satisfied with their teaching position, and feeling positive about their principal and the school's management (Alt & Peter). Public schools: (a) admitted all students; (b) had teachers active in unions; (c) received revenue primarily from local, state, and federal taxes; (d) were part of a district, state, and federal system; and (e) were responsible for public mandated policy initiatives such as the accountability

movement's acts and policies (Benveniste, Carnoy, & Rothstein; Parker; Wenning, Herdman, & Smith).

Academic excellence was found to be a high priority in both public and private schools with public and private school principals both held accountable for school performance, but private school principals were unencumbered by the federal and state accountability movement (Alt & Peter, 2003; Benveniste, Carnoy, & Rothstein, 2003; Parker, 1984; Wenning, Herdman, & Smith, 2002).

### Principal as Leader

Locating accountability measures at the school level led public and political thought to the leadership of the school. Lashway (2003b) suggested that there was a need for strong principal leadership in the public school system during the accountability movement. Previous to 2001 and the expanded efforts for school-based accountability, the position of principal was identified as the critical element in a school's success (Richardson, Lane, & Flanigan, 1996; Schriff, 2001). Studies found that the role of principal as leader in public and nonpublic organizations: (a) was a critical factor in creating schools capable of improving the quality of student academic performance and (b) had a crucial impact on the functioning and performance of the school and the academic progress of its inhabitants (Blank, 1987; Marsh & LeFever, 2004; Parker, 1984). The principalship was recognized as the key leadership position responsible for establishing and maintaining educational quality and school success (Duke, 1992; Marsh & LeFever; Portin, 2000; "No Principal," 2003; Schriff).

Responsibility for improving instruction and student learning during the accountability movement rested in the hands of school principals (Lashway, 2003b; "No

Principal,” 2003). According to the former United States Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, since principals were in this key position of responsibility at the school level, it was assumed that public school principals would accept the challenge to lead America’s schools to academic success by improving student performance on standards-based assessments (Copland, 2001; “No Principal”).

### Leadership Focus

Krug, Ahadi, and Scott (1991) conducted a study to explore principals’ leadership role and behaviors. Leadership focus was found to be contingent upon the contextual or situational variables and the role (Kelly, 1955). Leaders adapted behavior to situations. Leaders viewed their role behaviors as: (a) promoters of the instructional process, instructional leadership role; and (b) managers of the school, managerial leadership role (Krug, Ahadi, & Scott). Principals were found to engage in the same daily tasks and role responsibilities, but principals applied their personal beliefs about the leadership role to the task. Some principals exercised an instructional leadership focus, while others employed a managerial focus. The leadership role was found to be dependent on the beliefs of the leader. Principals interpreted the situation and determined the direction their leadership behavior would take (Krug, Ahadi, & Scott).

The results of the study indicated that one facet of successful school leadership was the framing of principals’ daily behaviors and role in terms of an instructional or a managerial leadership role focus (Krug, Ahadi, & Scott, 1991). Principals seeking to become leaders of successful schools applied their beliefs in the instructional leadership role to the behaviors they assumed. Leaders conceptualized their role as instructional and

took advantage of activities, tasks, and events by applying an instructional leadership role focus (Krug, Ahadi, & Scott).

### A Need for Further Research

As a result of the mandated changes in the nation's public schools, a need has developed to explore further conceptually and empirically principals' leadership role focus (Portin, 2000). Research directed at the leadership behaviors and role of public school principals responsible for state accountability and private school principals who are not responsible for state accountability would provide valuable information about this key position during an age of increased accountability.

Private schools, such as The Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS) schools, that are also members of the National Council of Independent Schools (NCIS) were not required by the federal or state governments to participate in the national push for academic accountability (Wenning, Herdman, & Smith, 2002). FCIS did not employ federal and state educational accountability measures nor were they subject to the implications of these measures for failure to achieve adequate yearly progress (Florida Council of Independent Schools, 2002). Public and private school principals differed in relation to mandated accountability. Private school principals were, therefore, a useful group to compare with public school principals in a study of the contemporary principalship during the accountability movement.

### Statement of the Problem

Public and private elementary school principals' roles and behaviors as school leaders have developed under different circumstances. Public school principals have had

to adjust to the push for standards-based assessment to demonstrate student progress as a measure of accountability (Harris, Ballenger, & Leonard, 2004; Marsh & LeFever, 2004), while private school principals have not been burdened with this responsibility (Benveniste, Carnoy, & Rothstein, 2003; Wenning, Herdman, & Smith, 2002). This has affected the leadership role focus and behaviors of public school principals (Daresh, 1998; Marsh & LeFever; Jones, 1999) but has not been a requirement for private school principals' leadership role focus and behaviors (Florida Council of Independent Schools, 2002; Wenning, Herdman, & Smith). It is not known what effect this has had on the leadership behaviors of public school principals and how these principals have developed their leadership role focus as they have attempted to meet this new challenge. This research explored differences in the leadership behaviors and role perceptions of principals in Florida's public elementary schools administering the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT) and the leadership behaviors and role perceptions of principals in Florida's private elementary schools that do not administer the FCAT.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guided the design of this study.

1. To what extent are there differences, if any, in the leadership behaviors (i.e., defines mission, manages curriculum, supervises teaching, monitors student progress, and promotes instructional climate) of public school principals and private school principals?
2. To what extent are there differences, if any, in the demographic characteristics of public and private school principals?

3. To what extent are there differences, if any, in the work environment (i.e., school characteristics, community characteristics, and staff characteristics) of public and private school principals?

### Clarification of the Problem Statement

#### Definition of Terms

The following definitions were included to clarify terminology used in this study.

Managerial Leader - Smith, Maehr, and Midgley (1992) identified three behaviors as management activities: (a) monitoring student progress, (b) supervising teaching, and (c) managing curriculum.

Instructional Leader - Smith, Maehr, and Midgley (1992) identified two behaviors as instructional leadership activities: (a) defining school mission and (b) promoting instructional climate.

Elementary school principal - The formal leader of public elementary schools.

Lower school head - The formal leader of the elementary section of private schools.

Private School - Private school or independent school refers to a nonpublic school that is a member of the Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS).

#### Method

The leadership role of public and private elementary principals was investigated by collecting data about leadership behaviors of principals. The analysis established, or documented, roles and behaviors of public and private school principals related to

leadership and revealed self-perceptions of public and private school leaders' role focus. Information gained provided insight into differences that may or may not have emerged between public and private school principals' leadership focus.

### Population

The population studied included elementary principals, public and private, employed in schools located in the state of Florida. They were derived from the Florida Department of Education public school records and the Florida Council of Independent Schools' private school directory. To minimize the number of differences in variables associated with public and private schools, the subjects were selected from elementary schools similar in grade level (Benveniste, Carnoy, & Rothstein, 2003; Parker, 1984). To limit differences related to private schools, schools were selected from members of the FCIS. FCIS required members to meet rigorous standards related to: (a) governance; (b) philosophy; (c) professional staff; (d) records; (e) school session; (f) business and finance; (g) health; (h) transportation; (i) student discipline; (j) facilities, fixtures, and equipment; (k) maintenance; (l) grounds; (m) programs; and (n) instructional aids (Florida Council of Independent Schools, 2002).

Probability sampling was used with schools meeting the above criteria to determine a representative sample of significant size. Simple random sampling was applied to arrive at the final list of public and private elementary school principals to be surveyed. Approval was obtained for human subjects study from the University of Central Florida's Institutional Review Board before the research study was implemented.

## Instrumentation

The *Instructional Leadership Inventory (ILI)* displayed in Appendix B was used to survey public and private elementary school principals (Maehr & Ames, 1988). Principals reported self-perceptions of their leadership role focus and behaviors using the *ILI*, an instrument obtained from MetriTech, Inc.

Instrument validity and reliability of the *ILI* were established and documented using a total sample of 262 principals in a series of validation studies (Krug, 1990). Results based on the coefficient alpha index of internal consistency on individual scales ranged from .74 to .86. These high values suggested that the inventory was reliable and justified its use with individual principals (MetriTech, Inc., 1988).

Validity was reported using a correlation technique with the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) and the *ILI*. The related scales from the two measures were found to converge based on the results of a series of regressions. This method of construct validity evaluated the instrument's ability to converge with alternative measures using the same constructs. Evidence gained from the resulting correlations: (a) with other self-report measures, (b) with supervisory performance ratings, and (c) with relevant external behavior measures supported the validity of the *ILI* (Krug, 1990). The multiple regressions run on the PIMRS and *ILI* demonstrated high correlations or a high degree of convergence ranging from .34 to .90 on the individual scales of the two independent measures (Krug).

### *Instrument Scales*

The eight scales of the *ILI* design are displayed in the table in Appendix A and include: (a) five administrative behavior scales related to instructional and managerial

leadership characteristics and (b) three administrator perception scales related to aspects of the work environment. The questionnaire also includes personal and professional demographic information displayed in Appendix A and will be used to provide descriptive data on the principals and the schools.

Data directed at determining the principal's administrator leadership behaviors, question one, refer to *ILI* survey scales: (a) Defines Mission, (b) Manages Curriculum, (c) Supervises Teaching, (d) Monitors Student Progress, and (e) Promotes Instructional Climate itemized in Appendix A. Principal personal characteristics and demographic data, question two, will be obtained through *ILI* survey questions 101-110. Data directed at the principal's perceptions of the work environment, question three, refer to *ILI* survey scales for: (a) the staff, (b) the school district, and (c) the community itemized in Appendix A. Detailed information is provided in Appendix A for the specific relationship of research questions to the *ILI* Survey scales.

### Procedure

An introductory letter displayed in Appendix C was mailed to elementary school principals randomly selected from the population of public and private elementary school principals in Florida. This letter: (a) introduced the study purpose and relevance to improving education, (b) explained the significance of the respondent's contribution to this research, and (c) notified the principal to expect the US postal mailed survey. The letter thanked all participants for responding to the survey (Dillman, 2000).

The questionnaire, cover letter, and stamped self-addressed envelope were sent by mail to the randomly selected sample of public elementary school principals (N=350) and the FCIS private elementary school principals (N=151) in the state of Florida (Dillman,

2000). The cover letter is provided in Appendix D. Follow-up letter A included in Appendix E was sent by mail as a thank you and reminder. The second follow-up letter B, also included in Appendix E, to nonrespondents provided an opportunity to request another copy of the survey be mailed or requested by phone if needed. The final contact to nonrespondents was by phone when possible. Additional copies of the survey were mailed to those requesting a second copy if the nonrespondent was willing to participate.

Responses were entered into SPSS software for analysis using appropriate statistical tests. Descriptive statistics and frequencies were performed to establish and compare significant percentages between groups and categories.

#### Data Analysis

A codebook was obtained from MetriTech, Inc. to clarify the values of the survey data, and the inventories were scanned into a shell that was also obtained from MetriTech, Inc. Descriptive statistics were then run on both public and private groups and were used as comparative data. Demographic variables such as type of school, were compared to scale attributes or perceptions (Fink, 2003). Comparisons of means were calculated to show the relationship between the two groups' variables and scales.

#### Delimitations and Limitations

##### Delimitations

One delimitation was related to the population, which was limited to public and private elementary principals in the state of Florida. Research results were limited to elementary principals in the state of Florida. Results were not generalized to any other

state's elementary principal population. Third, results were limited to elementary school principals and did not include principals at other levels of education.

### Limitations

One limitation of this research study was related to the accuracy of perceptions in the self-reporting of individuals. A second limitation was related to the use of private school principals who were not held accountable to federal and state accountability measures, as was the comparative group. A third limitation recognized the differences of public and private schools beyond the scope of this research.

### Significance of the Study

Public school principals' role requirements have undergone changes during standards-based reform and accountability (Copland, 2001; Daresh, 1998; Jones, 1999; Lashway, 2003a). This study was designed to identify the leadership role focus and behaviors of public school principals who were attempting to meet the challenges of this movement and private school principals who were not required to meet these challenges. There was a need to understand if there were any significant differences in the leadership role focus and behaviors of public and private school principals during the age of accountability: (a) to inform public and private school policymakers and representatives who impact the educational system through local, state, and federal legislation; (b) to inform educational leadership training programs and licensing systems; and (c) to assist those who lead schools (Lashway; Portin, 2000). Findings contributed to existing knowledge and provided new knowledge about principals' leadership role focus and

behaviors based on data gathered during the age of the accountability movement (Glatthorn, 1998).

## Conceptual Framework

### Review of Literature

National interest has been focused on the educational system since the launch of Sputnik in 1957 raised awareness of educational accomplishments in another country (Bracey, 2003; Tyack & Cuban; 1995). In reaction, the nation strived to raise the academic performance of students during the 1960s by (a) demanding teaching excellence and (b) expanding the role of the principal. Principals were responsible for managing change to improve instruction and achievement in addition to maintaining role responsibilities for managerial procedures, rules, regulations, processes, and results (Kellams, 1979). Principals were also encouraged to use the media to restore positive public relations (Kellams).

Interest in America's educational performance was reaffirmed by the events of the 1980s including the national report, *A Nation At Risk*, which generated discussion and policy for establishing goals and standards-based school reform (Lashway, 2003a). Accountability measures used to determine school performance in the 1980s led to more rigorous accountability in the 1990s, and a decade later even those methods were no longer considered adequate (O'Connor, Hales, Davies, & Tomlinson, 1999).

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 called for additional accountability measures focused on revealing the quality and worth of the nation's schools. Policies associated with the reform movement were aimed at improving education in America and addressed issues such as: (a) class size reduction, (b) state

academic standards, (c) state testing programs, (d) high school exit exams, (e) retention policies, (f) mandated summer programs, and (g) after school tutoring (Borba, 2003). National teaching and learning agendas targeted student achievement within a limited measurable range of: (a) subjects, (b) abilities, and (c) competencies as documented by quantitative accountability measures (Day, 2000). These closely monitored government policy initiatives provided a technical method to quantify national educational achievement for comparative purposes (Day).

Daresh (1998) identified accountability and assessment as major categories of change in the leadership role of principals. States within the nation developed high standards for educational academic performance and accompanying high stakes testing to ensure accountability. Principals and teachers were subjected to testing to demonstrate proficiency, and funds were linked to student performance outcomes in plans such as Florida's A+ component included in the Equity in Education Plan (Goldhaber & Hannaway, 2004). The pressure for socially competitive and comparative accountability impacted the principal's role in unidentified ways as principals attempted to: (a) manage the facilities, (b) meet mandated accountability, (c) allocate resources, (d) function as instructional leaders, and (e) provide professional development for teachers (Daresh). Research acknowledged that the increase in principals' role responsibilities included greater: (a) pressure and (b) accountability (Jones, 1999). The role of principal changed and was considered in a state of transition (Copland, 2001; Lashway, 2003a; Portin, 2000).

### *Increased Accountability*

Previous to the NCLB Act, the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAESP) conducted a study, *Priorities and Barriers in High School Leadership*, to determine the importance of specific role characteristics in the principalship (Schriff, 2001). Role responsibilities surveyed included: (a) discipline, (b) facilities management, (c) dealing with parents, (d) lesson demonstration, (e) budgets, (f) teacher evaluation, (g) community relations, (h) school safety, (i) strategic planning, (j) student assessment, (k) professional development, (l) program evaluation, and (m) curriculum development. Principals ranked the following indicators of success in order of importance from one being the highest to eight being the least important: (a) teacher skills and performance, (b) climate among teachers and administrators, (c) quality of candidates for teacher openings, (d) parent satisfaction, (e) teacher satisfaction, (f) autonomy to make decisions impacting the school, (g) level of parent involvement, and (h) gains and scores on standardized tests. Few principals, 19.8%, agreed that schools should create pre- and post-test benchmark assessments, use student performance as assessment, or use school wide achievement test data in the evaluation process.

Only 6.6% of principals surveyed by Schriff (2001) felt that standardized achievement test scores would accurately represent the academic achievement of students in their school. Yet since 1957, research has revealed that efforts have increased to hold principals responsible for student, teacher, and administrative performance outcomes on high stakes testing to be used as a determinant of principal effectiveness and school success (Duke, 1992; Schriff). Schriff noted that standardized test results were less important to principals when determining measures to gauge success; yet, the NCLB Act

(2001) and other educational reform initiatives identified accountability measures as the method to determine school success.

Leadership of the schools took on the demands of accountability reform in areas of: (a) curricular innovation, (b) increased testing for accountability, and (c) marketing factors (Portin, 2000). These new responsibilities added on to an already complex role have made the role of principal even more demanding. As new responsibilities for accountability continued to increase while maintaining those role responsibilities already established, time and attention of the principal were stretched in increasingly multiple directions (Murphy, 1992). The contributions of these national and state policy measures may have affected a change in the leadership role focus of the principal that was already multifaceted and filled with conflict (Portin).

#### *Evolution of the Managerial and Instructional Role of Principal*

The role of principal originally emerged from the role of teacher. In early American schooling, the teacher conducted or administered the school performing administrative as well as clerical and janitorial duties (Brown & Anfara, 2002). As the system of schooling expanded and became more complex, positions of head teacher or principal teacher took form as the controlling member of the school. The principal teacher's role included performing minor administrative tasks, teaching, and handling discipline (Brown & Anfara).

In the 1920s, the National Education Association (NEA) officially acknowledged the role of school principal. Principals as professional managers ran the schools with a focus on business efficiency and scientific expertise (Brown & Anfara, 2002). The role of principal leadership was poorly defined and led to principals taking on all tasks and roles

that were not those assigned to teachers or district administrators (Blank, 1987). As universities designed programs for educational administration, the knowledge base of principals changed along with the developing complexity of administering schools.

The principal's role evolved from the early teacher leader to the efficient manager of the 1920s and 1930s. It continued to change and expanded from the 1940s to the 1970s to include the responsibilities of: (a) democratic politician, (b) practical leader, (c) technician, (d) bureaucrat or statesman, and (e) humanistic leader (Kellams, 1978). Finally, a blend of characteristics in the role was established during the 1980s and 1990s with a focus on the instructional leader as a transformational visionary and change agent (Beck & Murphy, 1993).

The expectations and responsibilities of the role of principal steadily grew by adding to, but never subtracting from, the job description (Copland, 2001). Responsibilities and expectations for the role of principal in the 21<sup>st</sup> century expanded to include developing the strategies needed for compliance with increased federal and state measures for accountability in a progressively more demanding school environment (Harris, Ballenger, & Leonard, 2004; Lashway, 2003a). Reports revealed: (a) shifting educational demands, (b) huge workloads, (c) high stress, (d) lack of respect, and (e) lack of job security as major issues facing principals (Copland). The responsibility for accomplishing initiatives for increased accountability, raising student achievement and school success, and achieving high expectations fell to principals (Harris, Ballenger, & Leonard).

*Managerial Leadership Role.* The role of managerial leadership beginning in the 1920s and 30s referred to a focus on organizational and transactional functions, tasks, and

behaviors of the principal as a manager (Copland, 2001; Leithwood & Duke, 1998). Principals were identified as middle managers and held accountable for the management of the school. Managers managed using the authority and influence allocated by the formal position and in proportion to the status of the position within the administrative system. Myers and Murphy (1995) identified six managerial functions: (a) supervision, (b) teacher transfers or input controls, (c) behavior controls or job descriptions, (d) output controls or student testing, (e) selection/socialization, and (f) environmental controls.

Glassman defined the role of managerial functions as: (a) seeking district or community support or resources for change, (b) involving staff in planning, and (c) making decisions of central importance to the school. The management component of the role involved the rational aspects of the school's operation: (a) policy, (b) daily operation, and (c) decision making necessary to guide the functioning of the organization (Smith, Maehr, & Midgley, 1992).

*Instructional Leadership Role.* Democratic participation in the leadership of schools began to emerge in relation to the role of the principal in the 1940s and 1950s (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Kellams, 1979). The principal was described as a person who was moving toward shared authority and serving as an instructional leader. During the 1980s, the managerial leadership model of the school principal expanded to include the instructional leadership roles of: (a) defining the mission of the school, (b) managing the instructional program, and (c) promoting school climate (Hallinger, 1992). Glassman (1984) defined the instructional leader as: (a) leading instructional improvement and innovation, (b) developing educational goal consensus in the school, and (c) guiding staff development efforts at the school level. The instructional leadership role continued to

develop and grew to include: (a) setting high standards and goals, (b) planning and coordinating with staff, (c) having an orientation toward innovation, (d) frequently monitoring student and staff performance, and (e) involving parents and the community (Blank, 1987). High ratings for instructional leadership referred to: (a) initiating or leading innovation in curriculum or instruction, (b) initiating new courses, (c) introducing new instructional methods, and (d) arranging staff development programs (Blank). The instructional leadership role attributed authority to the formal position and expert knowledge. The focus was on the behaviors of teachers as they interacted with, and affected, the growth of students (Leithwood & Duke, 1998).

*Dual Leadership Role.* Glassman described the role of the principal that evolved as a dual role including both: (a) instructional and (b) managing responsibilities. Richardson, Lane, and Flanigan (1996) found research supported the perception that the principal evolved from a traditionally passive, reactive managerial leader to that of an active instructional leader and learner assuming the responsibility for all instructional and management aspects of the school. Smith, Maehr, and Midgley (1992) described the dual leadership role as consisting of: (a) ideology, (b) tradition, and (c) guiding of policy based on informed decision making.

This dual model of instructional and managerial responsibilities expanded to include power at the local site characterized by roles and behaviors related to: (a) determining the organizations purpose and goals, (b) budgeting, (c) hiring, (d) developing staff, (e) selecting curriculum and instructional materials, and (f) deciding about organizational structure through initiatives such as school based management (Copland, 2001). Teachers were included in decision-making and recognized as knowledgeable

about learning and the classroom. Schriff (2001) found that 99% of principals ranked teacher and administrator collaboration as a major factor in contributing to student success.

The role of the principal in the 21<sup>st</sup> century aspired to raise levels of commitment to a mutual purpose and to develop the capacity to achieve that purpose or vision (Hallinger, 1992; Licata, Teddlie, & Greenfield, 1990). The dimensions of leadership included: (a) building school vision, (b) establishing school goals, (c) providing intellectual stimulation, (d) offering individualized support, (e) modeling best practices and organizational values, (f) demonstrating high performance expectations, (g) creating a productive school culture, and (h) developing structures to foster participation in decision-making (Copland, 2001). The main focus was on visionary concerns with little emphasis on managerial concerns (Leithwood & Duke, 1998).

In the NASSP study conducted by Schriff (2001) previous to the NCLB Act, both male and female principals ranked: (a) establishing a learning climate and (b) personnel issues of hiring, firing, and evaluation of teachers as the two most important principal roles. Principals ranked operational management and budgeting roles as 21.4% or less in relation to level of importance. Authority for role responsibilities such as program evaluation, professional development, and curriculum development were delegated to others 78.8% of the time.

The principal's role of the 1990s required a leader who was able to: (a) facilitate administrative vision; (b) demonstrate concern for student learning processes; (c) relate to faculty, staff, and community in a cooperative environment; (d) implement and institutionalize strategies for leading change; and (e) promote an atmosphere of

collegiality and participation in a learning environment (Richardson, Lane, & Flanigan, 1996).

Research on the principalship suggested that school leaders demonstrated the instructional role behaviors of transformative, invitational, and empowering, as opposed to managerial role behaviors of transactional, autocratic, and controlling (Day, 2000). Blumberg and Greenfield (1986) found that principals had to be: (a) proactive and quick to take the initiative, (b) resourceful in adapting to the demands of their roles so that time was available to address their personal objectives as principals, and (c) eager to make their school over in their image. Portin (2000) identified three areas previously not included in the descriptions of the principal's role: (a) entrepreneurial skills for fund raising, (b) political leadership skills, and (c) societal services challenges.

Sweeney (1982) recognized principals who made a difference as: (a) emphasizing instruction, (b) being assertive and results oriented, and (c) able to develop and maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning. Behaviors associated with role responsibilities of principals were: (a) coordinating instructional programs, (b) emphasizing achievement, (c) frequently evaluating pupil progress, (d) maintaining an orderly atmosphere, (e) setting instructional strategies, and (f) supporting teachers.

According to Cross and Rice (2000), successful schools were led by principals who put academics first and who knew how to motivate staff and teachers. Research supported principals' instructional leadership role as having an important effect on improving student achievement and school success, the goal of the accountability movement (Jason, 2001).

### *A New Challenge*

Principal role responsibilities have changed in America's educational environment and have impacted the role of the principal and the success of schools (Copland, 2001; Hallinger, 1992). Cumulative expectations and responsibilities over the past two decades have had principals searching for the knowledge, ability, and fortitude to address the new challenges faced by school leaders. Brown and Anfara (2002) found that principals, when surveyed, consistently expressed the need for more time to spend on the instructional role of the teaching and learning aspects of their schools. Instructional leadership included four elements during standards-based reforms: (a) vision and commitment, (b) high expectations and trust, (c) effective communication, and (d) courage to seek assistance; but principals burdened with managerial roles reported not having enough time: (a) to monitor student work and the academic health of the school, (b) to seek a personal vision for the school, (c) to develop open and trusting relationships, (d) to foster a common agenda for improvement, (e) to communicate effectively, (f) to collaborate in collegial relationships, or (g) to create an inviting learning environment (Cross & Rice, 2000).

Instructional leadership behaviors have included involvement in decision-making and the encouragement of participative decision-making at the school level. Blank (1987) suggested that decentralization of decision-making with centralized authority of national and state initiatives constrained or precluded decision-making at the school level. Boyer (1983) found that shifts toward decentralization of decision-making with authority at the state and national level and an increase in requirements for documentation and accountability at the local level tended to decrease opportunities for instructional leadership.

Blank (1987) recommended that government organizations at the state and federal level should conduct further research on leadership to understand the consequences of the various goals and stresses of the accountability movement. Centralized external social and political initiatives may be emphasizing goals with hidden or unknown dynamics. The original goal intended may not generate the effects or results that were desired and expected. Smith, Maehr, and Midgley (1992) stated their research on leadership role focus and behaviors revealed important patterns and recommended further work be done to better understand the influence of external social and political goals, standards, and accountability on the middle management role of the school principal.

The accountability movement as an external contextual force has affected the role of the principal as leader and may have encumbered the efforts of principals to improve academic performance and school success (Blank, 1987; Copland, 2001). Smith, Maehr, and Midgley (1992) suggested there were effects on principals' behaviors when external contextual forces acted on their role responsibilities. Their research demonstrated that external contextual factors related to district goals and stresses increased principals' leadership behaviors toward managerial behaviors such as monitoring student progress, supervising teaching, and managing curriculum. Reasoner (1995) suggested that administrator role changes related to control caused stress and pressure. In this situation, leaders tended to adopt a managerial style of leadership based on position power with a focus on telling behaviors. Instructional leadership behaviors related to defining the mission of the school and promoting an instructional environment were replaced by a managerial focus. When surveyed teachers felt their principals were not exhibiting an instructional leadership role or instructional leadership behaviors (Alt & Peter, 2003).

Blank (1987) found that policymakers' mandating increased accountability through political actions or forces to improve school performance did not anticipate the side effects of the changed expectations. These unanticipated outcomes were noted as potential inhibitors to achieving state and national goals. External actions and policies should be focused on supporting the level of administration held responsible for performance, the principal. Principals acknowledged additional layers of job responsibilities were being added on a regular basis such as mandated accountability, without any being taken away, resulting in more time required to fill job requirements. Portin (2000) also found that the layers of additional responsibility did not always come accompanied by related job authority. Locus of control for authority was ambiguous, top down, and restricted by state legislation and policy. Blank recommended that policymakers at the state and national level modify policy initiatives and consider the influence on the leadership role of principals, which in turn directly affects the performance of the schools and teachers, and the achievement of students.

#### *A Leadership Focus Shift*

Four themes related to change in principal role emerged from a study reported by Portin (2000): (a) increased job pressure, (b) supervision of non-instructional needs, (c) mediating hopelessness, and (d) managing resources. Increased job pressure was attributed to a reorientation of principals' time to accommodate more activities and longer hours required to be effective. Non-instructional or managerial needs were described as needs that shifted principals' attention away from instructional leadership and toward managerial responsibilities. Schriff (2001) found that principals had difficulty assuming both roles effectively given the daily pressures of the principalship. Portin

(2000) referred to Sergiovanni's balance between a leadership and managerial dichotomy where principals were noted as feeling a shift toward managerial dichotomy in aspects of the job. Respondents stated that there was not enough time to cover both managerial and instructional leadership responsibilities and tended to lean toward managerial duties due to the visible and consequential nature of managerial responsibilities as a high priority.

Principals were also noted as expressing concern when decision-making was decentralized yet authority was increasingly centralized. Respondents reported tension building as additional responsibilities of an ambiguous nature required time causing principals to be unable to find required time to engage in the perceived instructional leadership activities of school community, culture, and climate. Principals reported a growing sense of frustration, pessimism, and declining morale and enthusiasm (Portin, 2000). Changes in principals' perceptions were recognized in three areas: (a) shifting of leadership activities to managerial ones, (b) ambiguity and complexity of decision making, and (c) declining morale and enthusiasm (Portin). School principals needed expertise in communicating and advocating for unique characteristics of their schools that suffered when schools were ranked and compared against criteria universal to the nation or state (Portin).

Kellams (1979), in his review of principal leadership role development, found a continual thread of conflict between the managerial leadership role focus and the instructional leadership role focus from as early as the 1950s. Deal and Peterson (1994) portrayed the integration and evolution of the managerial and instructional models or role descriptions as blurred in current practice, balancing and shifting between technician and artist, and contingent on the situation or external contextual forces.

### *Personal Motivation*

Jason (2001) found that one of the skills principals needed for successful leadership was personal motivation or an internal drive to achieve success in leadership goals. At the core of leadership was the leader's belief that improvement or success was possible. Principals based the ability to achieve success on the ability to influence school improvement endeavors. Activities that principals felt would have long lasting effects were: (a) providing feedback to students and teachers, (b) troubleshooting and facilitating instructional delivery, and (c) working with teachers to improve curriculum and instruction (Jason). These internal school processes of instructional leadership were linked to student learning and focused on the teaching learning processes of: (a) curriculum planning, (b) teaching methods, (c) extra curricular activities, and (d) parental involvement. Jason found that a high level of meaning or worth and value felt by principals in role responsibilities contributed significantly to personal motivation to continue in the instructional leadership role when faced with challenging situations. Jason suggested that to influence the improvement of student achievement and school success, principals must be freed to act as instructional leaders who believed they could influence outcomes. Principals who perceived that engaging in an activity would culminate in goal accomplishment or success were personally motivated and effective. Principals' abilities to maintain the instructional leadership role in the face of the accountability movement were questioned (Jason).

### Organization of the Dissertation

The dissertation began with a revised version of the proposal presented in the past tense as Chapter 1. Chapter 2, the Literature Review, an intensive review of the empirical research and conceptual literature that supported this study was built on the initial literature review presented in Chapter 1. Chapter 3, Methodology, develops the methodology in detail and clarifies all aspects of the research study process. Chapter 4, Data Analysis, includes the results of the data analyses in detail. Chapter 5, Summary, Findings, Implications, and Recommendations, summarizes and discusses the interpretation of the findings. A comprehensive List of References follows Chapter 5 with appendixes attached in the final section concluding the dissertation.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

In order to understand what has been taking place in America's schools, it has always been advantageous to look back to the underpinnings or educational movements and national events that have influenced education. Bickel (1983) conducted a review of the effective schools movement literature of the 1970s and 80s, and based on his findings he postulated three central assumptions related to school improvement and education. He began with the first assumption; schools could be identified as unusually effective in teaching poor and minority children basic skills as measured by standardized tests. Second, he continued his train of thought; successful schools exhibited characteristics that were correlated with their success and that were well within the domain of educators to manipulate. Finally, he reasoned that the characteristics of successful schools provided a basis for improving schools not deemed to be successful. These three assumptions have very aptly mirrored the logical sequence of thought that has led the nation toward the existing accountability policy in education and into the educational accountability movement (Eisner, 1985). National public and political attention was drawn to empirical variables gleaned from the existing research on successful schools, and based on this information policymakers have designed educational reform initiatives to improve the performance of America's schools (Greenfield, 1995).

Taking this reasoning one step further, local school leadership was identified as one significant variable in school success. And last, the influence on school performance

exerted by local school leadership was attributed to the principal's role and behaviors related to teaching and learning (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Principals, acting as instructional leaders, influenced multiple school-wide variables related to teaching and learning and could raise student achievement and simultaneously the public and political opinions of the nation's educational system. This transition would be brought about by a federal and state policy design laying out a set of planned approaches for accountability. This design took the form of a standards based curriculum connected to standards based assessments with attached rewards, incentives, and sanctions. The accountability movement was dependent on designing education policy in such a way as to enable school leaders to demonstrate evidence of students' learning of standards based curriculum on standards based assessments (Eisner, 1985). Elmore (2000) referred to this logical sequence of thought as deceptively simple (p. 4).

### Why Leadership?

Ogawa and Bossert (1995) developed four basic assumptions found in theory and research related to the functions of leadership: (a) leaders influenced overall performance of the organization, (b) leaders operated within organizational cultures, (c) leaders were defined by their organizational roles, and (d) leaders were individuals with certain attributes or traits and who acted in certain ways. Pounder, Ogawa, and Adams (1995) applied these four assumptions to educational organizations and found that school leaders influenced individuals, the culture of the organization, and the organization's ability to achieve its goals through traits and actions.

After extensive analysis of the research on leadership in educational organizations, Sergiovanni (1979) referred to school leadership using the rational model.

Educational leaders were "...those persons, occupying various roles in the school, who work[ed] with others to provide direction and who exert[ed] influence on persons and things in order to achieve the school's goals. Formal leaders – those persons in formal positions of authority – [were] genuine leaders only to the extent that they fulfill[ed] these functions. Leadership functions [could] be carried out in many different ways, depending on the individual leader, the context, and the nature of the goals being pursued" (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003, p. 9). Leaders worked in systems to manage the relationships between the external contexts of the environment and the internal workings of the school to achieve the organization's goals (Leithwood & Riehl).

In addition, educational leadership was found to be contingent on the external environment and the internal nature of the school (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Leithwood & Duke, 1998; Reeves, 2000; Scheerens, 1997). Environmental conditions included a complex set of external contexts in the form of the market for school services, human resources available to schools, access to funding, government policies, local and state regulations, geographic location, and the sociocultural aspects of the local community. The complex set of internal contexts encompassed the conditions and events inside the school community (Leithwood & Duke). These external and internal factors have taken different forms and have been in differing states of transition, fluctuating with each reform initiative.

This situation has created unstable external and internal environments in the school during a time when the schools of America have been called on to undergo system-wide change (Elmore, 2000; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). During periods of systemic change, there has been an emphasis on the role of the leader as the person or

change agent to provide strong, coherent guidance and a sense of stability (Leithwood & Riehl). Principals as the leaders of change have been called on to transform schools by building commitment to the organization's purpose, teaching and learning and empowering teachers to accomplish this purpose (Verona & Young, 2001).

Policymakers, educators, and private and public organizations have attempted to find the key to school improvement and have narrowed the focus of attention to the principal as the leadership position with a tremendous influence on the quality of teaching and learning in schools (Bottoms, O'Neill, Fry, & Hill, 2003; Hale & Moorman, 2003; Herrington & Wills, 2005; McGuire, 2002). Elmore (2000) referred to leadership in education as the guidance and direction of instructional improvement, and the principal as the person with vital skills and knowledge directly connected to improved instruction and student performance gains. Interest in the principal's role and behaviors has grown steadily in the literature on school performance in a focused search for the specific traits and actions that affect desired gains in student performance.

In summary, a focus on reviews of research and resulting public educational initiatives aimed at local level leadership have specifically targeted the school's principal as the change agent in a position with the potential to lead the nation to successful schools (Hale & Moorman, 2003; Herrington & Wills, 2005; McGuire, 2002). States opted to direct their policy actions affecting accountability reform through this local level school administrator (Greenfield, 1995; Lashway, 2003c; Marks & Printy, 2003; Meyer & Feistritzer, 2003). This placed the principal in the spotlight charged with producing positive school outcomes measured by student performance gains (Bottoms et al., 2003; Cooley & Shen, 2003).

### The Principal's Changing Role

Historically, the principal's position entailed a managerial focus centered on the structures and processes surrounding instruction but rarely becoming directly involved in instructional leadership. The actual teaching was left to the teachers who remained protected from scrutiny and isolated by the principal (Elmore, 2000). The role requirements of the principal have evolved from the good manager maintaining the school by keeping buildings in good repair, ensuring resources were available, administering the budget, dispensing discipline, collecting and reporting legally mandated information, and assuring the school operated in compliance with local, state, and federal guidelines to a collaborative site-based manager and instructional leader who was a facilitator of change (National Association of State Boards of Education, 1999).

Studies of the principal's work described the position's characteristics as a complex set of skills, knowledge, and dispositions encompassing educational leadership. Educational leadership included two integrated roles, one being the managerial role and the other the instructional role (Hale & Moorman, 2003; Herrington & Wills, 2005; McGuire, 2002; Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, & Gundlach, 2003; Whitaker, 1996; Wildy & Loudon, 2000; Williams & Portin, 1997).

Educational standards and performance-based assessment extended the reach of the government into the school and led directly into the classroom to hold schools accountable for how well teachers taught and how well students absorbed instruction. The local school principal was given the role of managing the conditions of teaching and learning in the school and was held accountable for the presence or absence of student performance gains (Elmore, 2000). The accountability movement impacted the role and changed the focus of school leadership to teaching and learning.

The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) did a comprehensive review of the research and determined the knowledge and skills needed in the role of the principal in the age of accountability (Bottoms et al., 2003). A principal was found to need the ability to: (a) understand which school and classroom practices improve student achievement, (b) know how to work with teachers to bring about positive change, (c) support teachers in carrying out instructional practices that help all students succeed, and (d) prepare accomplished teachers to become principals (Bottoms et al., p. 1). Bottoms et al. emphasized the core functions of the school leader during accountability reform were focused on curriculum, instruction, and student achievement.

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) (2002) task force identified six factors that contributed to the changes in the role of school principal. First, increased accountability from the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and other policies broadened and redefined the role. Customary administrative duties and managerial duties expanded to include an emphasis on curriculum, data analysis, and instructional leadership. Second, student populations became diverse racially, economically, linguistically, and developmentally. The implications stemming from the belief by principals that all students can learn became a major challenge. Third, management issues of staffing, decision-making, and the quality of teachers became difficult to solve. Fourth, instructional responsibilities for improving classroom practices to increase student academic achievement required greater time, skills, and knowledge about teaching and learning. Fifth, state policies and unfunded mandates demanded time be devoted to meeting policy rules and regulations and also required an ability to manage money. Last,

time required of the principal's job was increasingly demanding more hours per week, and pressure and stress levels escalated with the multiple expectations of the job.

In summary, school reform and restructuring movements changed the role demands and increased the magnitude of the principal's instructional and managerial roles. Many dilemmas arose as the principal attempted to balance these dual roles for educational leadership by blending the managerial responsibilities and the instructional role behaviors. A strong instructional focus was called for to meet the needs of the students and school and additionally, accountability reform mandates (Greenfield, 1995; Whitaker, 1996). The principal was expected to embrace instructional leadership practices focused on teaching and learning by sharing power, acting democratically, and encouraging collaboration and participation; while at the same time, providing clear leadership, guaranteeing the efficiency of school management processes, and meeting federal, state, and district accountability demands (Hale & Moorman, 2003; McGuire, 2000; Wildy & Loudon, 2000; Whitaker).

#### Is There a Conflict?: Managerial and/or Instructional Leadership

The role responsibilities and behaviors of the principal have been explored continuously since the effective schools movement emerged from the Sputnik era. According to Reeves (2000), research has now moved beyond the Coleman Report, which targeted socioeconomic status of students, an external contextual factor, as the most influential variable limiting learning and has focused on the principal, an internal contextual variable, that has been proven to affect student academic gains. Former President George H. W. Bush's America 2000 goals targeted the school principal as the essential leader to pave the way to effective schools and higher student performance

(Thomson, 1991). The National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) published *Principals for Our Changing Schools* which also supported the importance of this leadership position to affect change in schools and defined the two dimensions of this position: (a) the ability to influence school culture and build vision for encouraging performance in teaching and learning and (b) the functional role of ensuring that technical tasks were accomplished (Thomson).

During the late 1970s and into the 1980s, researchers' findings suggested the principal, as leader, had an effect on school performance. Leadership in schools became a variable with the potential to add light to the black box surrounding differences in school performance (Clark, Lotto, & McCarthy, 1980; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Sheppard, 1996). Principals were found to operate in a wide variety of roles from solely the maintenance-oriented manager to an educational leader, successfully blending the role requirements of managerial and instructional leadership (Bredeson, 1985; Stronge, 1993). Definitions of an instructional leadership role were multiple and varied from very narrow specific definitions to generally broad interpretations (Sheppard; Stronge). The broad description viewed instructional leadership as the actions taken by the principal that promoted student learning including defining the mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting the school climate.

As the person defined through research and in policy as the educational leader affecting all aspects of the school, the principal was considered to exert a significant influence over teacher quality and student achievement, two goals of the accountability movement. This key individual identified by the federal government as affecting the success of the nation appeared to emerge as an important subject for further study. An

analysis was needed to determine the actual roles and behaviors of the principalship during the age of accountability (Greenfield, 1995; Herrington & Wills, 2005; Portin et al., 2003).

Greenfield (1995) described the managerial dimension of the role as: (a) all technical aspects of the job, (b) planning, coordinating, controlling, and operating the school in the support of the instructional program and school goals, and (c) maintaining compliance with federal laws, state mandates, and the organizational policy of the school district, state, and nation. The instructional dimension of the role included the activities, problems, and processes associated with the technological core of teaching and learning: (a) matters related to the content and objectives of the school's curriculum, (b) the processes of teaching and learning, (c) the organization of and climate of instruction, (d) the supervision and evaluation of the school's instructional programs and processes, and (e) the teaching and learning efforts of teachers and students (Greenfield).

Researchers found that the principal's role was not an easy position to define since it was impacted continuously in reaction to various external contexts of federal, state, and local reform measures (Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Lashway, 2003c; McGuire, 2002; Meyer & Feistritz, 2003). The Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) (2000) cited the following list of managerial responsibilities: (a) complying with district-level edicts, (b) addressing personnel issues, (c) ordering supplies, (d) balancing program budgets, (e) keeping hallways and playgrounds safe, (f) putting out fires that threatened tranquil public relations, and (g) making sure that bussing and meal services were operating smoothly. These were followed by a list of the responsibilities of instructional leaders: (a) knowing academic content and pedagogical techniques; (b) working with

teachers to strengthen skills; (c) collecting, analyzing, and using data to fuel excellence; (d) rallying all members of the school community and organizations around the common goal of raising student performance; and (e) having leadership skills and knowledge to exercise autonomy and authority to pursue these strategies.

Whitaker and Turner (2000), funded by the Indiana Principal Leadership Academy, administered a 31-item survey to 1,801 public and private school principals in Indiana. The items were derived from a list of various facets of the role of principal reported by eight interviews with representative principals. Principals rated the items in order of priority, first ranking the items in order of desired priority and then ranking the same items again in order of actual priority. Principals reported establishing a school climate to be the number one priority both as the desired priority and the actual priority. The largest differences related to management issues, which were ranked as a low priority when in fact, they actually ranked very high in terms of day-to-day behaviors on the job. When asked to respond to the prompt “to establish myself as an instructional leader on my campus and to expand the curriculum beyond district and state standards,” principals ranked this role very low, 21 and 27 respectively, as desired priorities, but ranked “to encourage innovative teaching practices” as a desired priority a four and an actual priority a six.

Doud and Keller (1998) reported the results of the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) survey of K-8 principals. The self-perceptions revealed staff supervision and contact as the highest priority in role responsibilities followed by student discipline, interaction, and management. The behaviors assigned the

lowest priority were planning and conducting staff development, budget administration, and interaction with the central office staff.

The Michigan State Board of Education conducted a study of principals representing urban, suburban, rural, charter, elementary, middle, and secondary schools statewide to determine if there was a need for instructional leadership in the evolving role of the principalship (McGuire, 2002). The theory was proposed that principals needed good management skills based on corporate models of leadership and not specific skills in public education, instructional leadership, and academics. The Michigan study found that managerial qualifications did not provide the instructional guidance and assistance to teachers necessary for the school's academic success (Herrington & Wills, 2005).

Meyer and Feistritzer (2003) suggested eight attributes of an educational leader. First, the principal's role was to inspire and direct a team to solve problems in order to ensure student learning. Second, the leader ensured that the curriculum and teaching were aligned with state expectations. Third, the principal operated in a political environment and political savvy was necessary to advance the interests of the school, teachers, students, parents, and community. Fourth, the leader was responsible for maintaining a sense of mission with high expectations. Fifth, the principal ran the school, the equivalent of a midsize business, and must possess managerial competence. Sixth, the role required resourcefulness, as the principal must accomplish goals within limits related to finances and authority. Seventh, the principal must possess energy, resilience, and dedication. Last, in the age of accountability and high-stakes testing, principals needed to be effective in the multiple uses of data related to student achievement and in the communication of this information to improve teaching and learning.

Williams and Portin (1997) conducted a statewide study for the Association of Washington State Principals (AWSP) to determine how the position had changed as a result of external contextual shifts in public education and the impact of these changes on the role of principal. The state initiated changes were accountability measures and included: (a) increased intensity of the existing programs, (b) implementation of federal and special education laws, and (c) adoption of the state curriculum standards and the accompanying standards-based assessments. These contextual shifts were accompanied by local school district decentralization and shifts in students' ethnic and socioeconomic composition.

Members of the AWSP were sent a 55-item questionnaire designed by the researchers and based on focus group interactions with state principals. Williams and Portin (1997), reported that 81% of the 687 respondents with five or more years of experience felt that they were increasingly acting to comply with legislated mandates and other additional managerial responsibilities, which reduced their ability to provide instructional leadership and staff development.

The managerial leadership role was defined as: (a) managing the budget, (b) maintaining the building, (c) completing and submitting required reports, and (d) complying with legislative mandates and state and district regulations (Williams & Portin, 1997). The instructional leadership role was defined as: (a) supervising curriculum, (b) improving the instructional program, (c) working with staff to identify a vision and direction for the school, (d) building a close and congruent working relationship between the school and its community. Principals were thought to give high priority to management tasks due to the legal and visible nature of managerial

responsibilities. The changing role of the principal appeared to be shifting from an instructional leadership focus to management as a result of external priorities, lack of authority, and time constraints (Portin, Shen, & Williams, 1998; Williams & Portin).

According to Lashway (2003c), student learning should be at the center of what principals do. Hale and Moorman (2003) described the instructional leadership role of the principal as the priority over managerial duties. Principals must be adept at providing leadership for learning in the areas of leading instruction, shaping the organization for the demands of teaching and learning, and connecting the school and its work to the outside world. King (2002) defined instructional leadership as “ anything that leaders do to improve teaching and learning in their schools and districts” (p. 62).

Elementary principals surveyed by NAESP regarded teaching experience to be of value to their instructional leadership ability (Doud & Kellar, 1998). Jamentz (2002) also referred to principals’ teaching experience as an important factor in the instructional leadership role. Internalized paradigms of effective classroom practice enabled principals to provide accurate judgments and feedback on teacher instruction. Meyer and Feistritzer (2003) cited principals who spoke of the value of management training, but emphasized the need for educational leaders to have classroom experience in order to observe teachers in action and make suggestions to improve teaching and learning. Petzko (2002) reported principals ranked staff supervision and evaluation, interpersonal skills and relationships, and instructional leadership as the first three priorities in principals’ abilities. Principals must be “...strong organizational leader[s] as well as ...instructional leader[s]” (Meyer & Feistritzer, p. 60). Principals, when asked, felt that they achieved the greatest satisfaction out of the role of instructional leader when they were fully engaged

with teachers, students, parents, and classroom instruction to improve the school's program and student learning (Greenfield, 1995; Meyer & Feistritzer; Portin, Shen, & Williams, 1998; Supovitz & Poglinco, 2001).

Schiff (2001) found the average workweek for a principal was 62 hours with less than one third spent on curriculum and instruction activities. Petzko (2002) researched a trend of increasing average hours per week for principals from 1965 to 2000. Twelve percent of principals reported working 60 or more hours per week in 1965 compared to 46% in 2000. "Few principals have time to spend in classrooms or communicate with students about their academic work" (Cooley & Shen, 2003). Doud and Keller (1998) reported that 72% of K-8 principals surveyed in 1998 by NAESP identified fragmentation of principals' time as the most pervasive major concern.

Although instructional leadership was the desired role focus, Fink and Resnick (2001) suggested that realistically few principals were able to act with this instructional leadership focus. A principal's day was filled with management activities and little time was left for visiting classrooms and analyzing instruction. Petzko (2002) found time required by administrative details was identified by 89% of principals and time required for regulations and mandates from state and district governing boards was identified by 82% of principals as taking the most time in 2000. Principals indicated they spent the most time on school management, personnel, student activities, and student behavior. These results were compared to a study conducted in 1992 revealing an increase in time required for these same factors. Elmore (2000) implied that policy leaders were asking school leaders to assume responsibilities beyond the scope of: (a) time available and (b) previous role experiences and training.

In summary, the changing role of the school leader, the principal, was found to have direct and indirect links to school improvement. The principal, as an educational leader, was identified as able to lead the school to success by maintaining a focus on teaching and learning or instructional leadership over managerial leadership. Rather than allowing the leadership roles to conflict, principals were encouraged to embrace the instructional role as the priority and simultaneously maintain the managerial functions of the position. According to Leithwood and Riehls (2003), Hallinger and Heck (1996), and Ogawa and Bossert (1995), the role of educational leader was similar to leading any type of organization to high performance and required a multidimensional or integrated approach taking in all aspects of leadership including setting directions, goals or vision; redesigning the organization, strategies, or structures; and developing the people.

As an educational leader with the instructional role as the priority, the focus would be on setting directions related to articulating a shared vision, defining the school's purpose, and promoting an instructional climate while maintaining the managerial aspects of monitoring student progress, supervising teaching, and managing curriculum. Redesigning the organization included the school's curriculum, culture, structures, and processes within staff, school, and community contexts. Last, developing people provided motivation through staff development, pedagogical support and capacity building, and modeling moral and ethical values to promote the instructional climate and the school's mission, teaching and learning (Leithwood & Riehls, 2003). However, McGuire (2002) stated that "Unfortunately, for many principals the responsibilities of instructional leadership have been eclipsed in recent years by the challenges of school

management...however, state and federal education policies demand that instructional leadership be given high priority” (p. 4).

### Organizations Defining the Principal’s Integrated Role: Educational Leadership

#### The Task Force on Elevating Leadership in Schools

The Michigan State Board of Education established the Task Force on Elevating Leadership in Schools to study principal leadership in their schools and to produce a set of recommendations to guide the State Board of Education in their work to set policy and shape the direction of school improvement in Michigan (McGuire, 2002). The Task Force on Elevating Leadership in Schools was challenged to resolve two issues: (a) what makes a good school leader and (b) what can schools and leaders do to close the achievement gap. Results identified the responsibilities of the principal as:

- a. Raising achievement while giving particular attention to the achievement gap;
- b. Being instructional design and delivery experts;
- c. Being curriculum experts;
- d. Being an expert on state standards and benchmarks;
- e. Being consensus builders;
- f. Being skilled at grant writing;
- g. Being legal experts;
- h. Being computer literate;
- i. Being marketing and public relations experts;
- j. Being administration and building managers;
- k. Being special education experts; and
- l. Being ready to handle any emergency (McGuire, p. 2).

Based on this list of responsibilities generated from discussion with principals, the task force concluded that three types of leadership proficiencies were needed to be effective leaders of successful schools (McGuire, 2002). First, principals needed competence in instructional leadership. In order to guide the instruction in the school, principals should have: (a) a background in instruction, instructional goals, and teaching strategies; (b) a familiarity with assessments and the use of results to guide instruction; and (c) a deep knowledge in a subject area to enhance their ability to recognize subject mastery in others. Second, principals needed competence in the organizational leadership or management functions of the school. Management of the school entailed: (a) making school management manageable; (b) knowing how to organize school communities to support the core functions of learning and instruction; (c) recognizing organizational distracts and impediments to teaching and learning; and (d) shifting the school culture to a normative culture where expectations were clear for teachers and students and visible in every classroom. Third, principals needed to be responsive to the surrounding community and to keep the school and community informed and engaged about school progress.

#### Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium

In 1994, The National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) organized a committee comprised of members from 24 states and other stakeholder groups interested in the status of leadership in the nation's schools (Murphy, 2005). The purpose of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) was to determine a set of standards that would define the profession of principal for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The group was charged with two objectives: (a) to create a set of standards that would reshape the profession of school administration and (b) to direct action in the

academic, policy, and practice domains of the profession. Murphy explored the foundations of the ISLLC Standards for School Leaders. These standards were developed to provide roles and behaviors principals should possess for a sound basis in leading schools. The foundation for the ISLLC standards emerged from empirical research in eight fundamental areas of knowledge about: (a) the schools where students achieved at high levels, (b) the actions and values of the people who led effective schools and productive school systems, (c) the trends visible in the external environment in which the school was embedded were likely to reshape the educational enterprise, (d) the major changes underway in the schooling enterprise itself, (e) the valued ends of schooling, (f) the valued goals of educational programs in school administration, (g) the needs and wants of the customers of school administration preparation programs, and (h) the expectations of resource providers. Evolving from the eight foundational ideologies the ISLLC principles stated that standards should:

1. Reflect the centrality of student learning,
2. Acknowledge the changing role of the school leader,
3. Recognize the collaborative nature of school leadership,
4. Be high, upgrading the quality of the profession,
5. Inform performance-based systems of assessment and evaluation of school leaders,
6. Be integrated and coherent, and
7. Be predicated on the concepts of access, opportunity, and empowerment for all members of the school community (Murphy, p.167).

The resulting standards required that a school administrator was an educational leader who promoted the success of all students by:

1. Facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.
2. Advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional development.
3. Ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
4. Collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
5. Acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
6. Understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context (Murphy, p.167).

Throughout the standards, Murphy (2005) stated the intent was to change “...the calculus of the profession from management to learning” (p. 178). The focus of educational leadership has been shifted to instructional leadership, reoriented “...toward advancing the educational well-being of youngsters” (Murphy, p. 179). The ISLLC standards have been seen as a leverage point to affect change in educational leadership around leadership for learning. The vision embedded in the standards referred to “...a profession rooted in learning and committed to the well being of youngsters and their families” (Murphy, p. 181).

## National Association of State Boards of Education

Principals have been ranked by research as being at the top of school variables impacting student learning. Changes in the role expectations as a result of legislation and policy initiatives have created a need for new skills and knowledge to adequately meet job responsibilities. According to the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Study Group on School Leadership (1999), principals who have influenced the implementation of reforms focused on student achievement: (a) led change, (b) inspired students and staff, (c) leveraged resources, and (d) brought community members into the process of change. Research has demonstrated the following characteristics required of principals:

1. Viewing teaching and learning as the main purpose of school;
2. Reaching out to parents and community members and keeping the public informed and engaged in school progress;
3. Working with people who have different and sometimes contradictory needs, diverse interests, and varying expectations;
4. Believing that all students can learn and that it is their job to foster learning for all;
5. Developing vision and school mission and communicating it to staff, parents, and students;
6. Monitoring school's adherence to legal and policy requirements;
7. Fostering rigorous yet attainable standards for teaching and learning;
8. Providing clear, consistent goals and monitoring student and teacher progress toward them;
9. Spending time in classrooms and listening to teachers;

10. Attracting, evaluating, and supporting good staff development; and
11. Promoting trust, sharing, and collaboration across the school community

(NASBE, p.13).

Managerial leadership and instructional leadership have been determined to happen simultaneously, but first and foremost, principals have been charged with the instructional role behaviors of teaching and learning (NASBE, 1999). Leading with a clear vision focused on improved student achievement; ensuring curriculum and instructional delivery support; developing leadership capacity; and leading a learning community have been identified by both principals and policymakers as the role priorities of the position.

#### National Association for Elementary School Principals

The NAESP (2001) worked with principals to identify six standards that would define the actions of an instructional leader. The end result of the focus group interactions, interviews with 40 principals, and other qualitative methodology was a list of actions in line with policy mandates for leaders of teaching and learning. Principals were found to:

1. Lead schools in a way that places student and adult learning at the center;
2. Set high expectations and standards for academic and social development of all students and the performance of adults;
3. Demand content and instruction that ensure student achievement of agreed upon academic standards;
4. Create a culture of continuous learning for adults tied to student learning and other school goals;

5. Use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools to assess, identify, and apply instructional improvement; and
6. Actively engage the community to create shared responsibility for student and school success (NAESP, p. vii).

Principals also acknowledged their belief that the role of instructional leader required achieving a balance between the work of managing and that of leading.

Principals called for the required authority needed to meet these role responsibilities.

Leithwood and Riehl (2003) identified three core practices that were consistent with ISLLC and NAESP standards: (a) setting directions, which included identifying and articulating a vision, fostering the acceptance of group goals, and creating high performance expectations; (b) developing people, which involves offering intellectual stimulation, providing individualized support, and providing an appropriate model; and (c) redesigning the organization, which included strengthening school cultures, modifying organizational structures, and building collaborative practices.

In addition to these roles, Leithwood and Riehl (2003) listed four roles required by principals specific to educational reform and mandated accountability: (a) market accountability, creating and sustaining a competitive school; (b) decentralized accountability, empowering others to make significant decisions; (c) professional accountability, providing instructional leadership; and (d) management accountability, developing and executing strategic plans. Principals ideally should aspire to: (a) building leadership capacity in their staff and (b) assuming an instructional leadership role by spending time in classrooms and working with teachers to develop teachers as instructional leaders in order to meet the requirements of accountability reform.

In summary, the dual role of the educational leader, managerial and instructional, has been refocused on the central purpose of schools, to promote and maximize teaching and learning (Hoachlander, Alt, & Beltranena, 2001). The core function of the school leader was instructional leadership and included motivating, directing, and managing instruction tailored to the specific student population and local community. The principal has been expected to develop a shared vision of the instructional program, and to work with the faculty and the community on a daily basis to carry out the collective mission of raising student performance. The behaviors of the principal included the ability to understand the elements and practices that contribute to student learning and to blend these elements into a well managed, balanced, clear, and inclusive culture for student learning. The successful accomplishment of this role depended on the leader's ability to integrate the two leadership roles into an educational leadership role with the instructional behaviors given the highest priority.

The common themes throughout the research and standards of various public and private organizations were found to be consistent with the scales and item content of the *Instructional Leadership Inventory* (MetriTech, Inc., 1988), the instrument selected for this research. The instrument reflected measures of the managerial focus with: (a) monitoring student progress, (b) supervising teaching, and (c) managing curriculum; the instructional focus with: (d) defining school mission and (e) promoting instructional climate; and the internal and external contextual focus with: (f) staff contextual characteristics, (g) school contextual characteristics, and (h) community contextual characteristics (Conoley, Impara, & Murphy, 1995; Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Murphy, 2005; Smith, Maehr, & Midgley, 1992).

### The Link: Instructional Leadership and Achievement

In the 1980s, the National Commission on Excellence in Education refocused schools on academic achievement with the publication, *A Nation at Risk* (Grogan & Andrews, 2002). The development of top-down legislative mandates required states to take action. School boards and superintendents continued the line of authority by directing individual school principals to initiate the implementation of the expanding wave of educational reform policy even though studies had only suggested the empirical link between high levels of student achievement and schools led by competent principals (Heck & Marcoulides, 1990; Thomson, 1991).

Studies on effective school leadership conducted at the beginning of the effective schools era by Andrew and Soder (1987), Bickel (1983), Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, and Lee (1982), Brookover, Schweitzer, Schneider, Beady, Flood, and Wisenbaker (1978), Clark, Lotto, and McCarthy (1980), Edmonds (1977), Edmonds (1979), Hallinger and Murphy (1987), Heck and Marcoulides (1990), Lezotte (1989), MacKenzie (1983), and Stroud (1990) proposed that differences among schools in relation to levels of success, determined by student achievement, were accounted for by common leadership themes such as: (a) a strong principal leadership focused on instruction; (b) a school climate central to learning; (c) a school-wide emphasis on the primary goal of the school, teaching and learning; (d) a high expectation for all students; and (e) a system monitoring student performance in relation to instructional objectives. The leadership, focused on teaching and learning, was found to make a difference in student and school academic gains. Principals were consistently recognized over time as the "...key lynchpin between teacher development and school improvement" (Grogan & Andrews, 2002, p. 249). Leadership in schools was empirically linked to student achievement and was found to

exert a statistically significant influence on school performance outcomes (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003).

Andrews and Soder (1987) conducted a two-year study in Seattle, Washington's elementary schools. The study focused on 12 organizational characteristics of a school related to the staff perceptions of the principal's leadership focus and the relevance to improved student academic performance. These characteristics were grouped in four categories: (a) resource provider, (b) instructional resource, (c) communicator, and (d) visible presence. Students in strong-leader schools were found to make significantly higher reading and math achievement test gains than students in weak-leader schools. The findings suggested that when teachers perceived schools' leaders to be focused on instructional leadership, student achievement improved.

Stroud (1990) added to the existing research striving to determine if instructional leadership behaviors predicted higher student achievement gains. This study also attempted to identify which instructional leadership behaviors were associated with effective schools. Stratified random sampling was used to select fifty elementary principals in DeKalb County, Georgia. Student reading achievement scores obtained from the Georgia Criterion Referenced Test were used to determine the 25 effective and the 25 less-effective schools. One hundred fifty-five teachers completed the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS). Perceptions of principals were determined based on three dimensions: (a) defining the school's mission, (b) managing curriculum and instruction, and (c) promoting the school's learning climate.

Stroud (1990) assumed that higher ratings on the PIMRS would correlate with higher student achievement gains. The results from this study did not empirically support

the assumption. Teachers in both low and high-performing schools perceived their principals as similar, and there were no statistically significant differences found between instructional leadership and student achievement. Stroud recommended that further research was needed to go beyond this narrow interpretation of instructional leadership to include a broader view of instructional organization, management actions, and school contextual variables.

Heck and Marcoulides (1990) also sought to develop the empirically based causal relationship or link between instructional leadership and student achievement gains using the organizational and governance variables recommended by Stroud (1990) in addition to mission, curriculum, and climate. Research conducted by Heck, Larsen, and Marcoulides (1990), Bossert et al. (1982), and Hallinger and Murphy (1987) was used to provide support for the study. Principals were found to affect school academic outcomes by manipulation of three variables: (a) supervising the instructional organization; (b) building effective school climate for learning; and (c) building effective school governance, or managing the political relationship of the school to its environment.

The respondents included leaders from 85 elementary schools and 33 secondary schools with either high or low performance bands for three years on the California Assessment Program (CAP) (Heck & Marcoulides, 1990). The effects of students' socioeconomic status and language background were controlled. The principal and four teachers obtained from a random sample of faculty at each of the schools responded to the Instructional Activity Questionnaire (Larsen, 1987) composed of 29 behaviors identified through research by nationally known instructional leadership experts. The coefficient of determination or degree of relationship for the theoretical model was .92

for elementary principals and .97 for secondary principals demonstrating a strong link between what principals do to manage the school's instructional organization and climate and the school's academic performance.

The instructional behaviors of the leader, the principal, were found to be strongly associated with improved student performance. Academic areas impacted by instructional leadership were found to be: (a) direct contact with teachers through clinical supervision, (b) regular classroom visitations, (c) changes in instructional strategies, (d) development of school goals consistent with curriculum, (e) use of test results to implement program changes, (f) frequent monitoring of student progress, and (g) observation and evaluation of curricular programs. The three underlying instructional leadership variables: (a) school governance, (b) instruction organization, and (c) school climate recommended by Stroud (1990) were also linked to student achievement gains.

Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) examined the empirical evidence from 70 rigorous studies linking instructional leadership and student achievement. Principals were found to have 21 leadership responsibilities that could be broken down into 66 specific leadership practices. The meta-analysis revealed the effect size of the correlation to have an r-value of .25. When interpreted, this converted into a one standard deviation gain in student achievement when leadership improved its focus on teaching and learning. One standard deviation was associated with a ten-percentile difference in school performance. Waters, Marzano, and McNulty suggested that the opposite could take place and a marginal or negative correlation could result if leadership was not focused on school and classroom practices that improved student achievement or if the wrong leadership practices were prevalent.

The College of Education and the Center on Reinventing Public Education (CRPE) at the University of Washington focused their research on the role of the principal. Portin et al. (2003) interviewed a sample of 150 educators from 21 elementary, middle, and high schools located in four different states over a two-year period. School types included successful and developing: (a) public, (b) magnet, (c) charter, (d) contract, and (e) sectarian and nonsectarian private independent schools. The goal of this research was to understand and identify the core roles of the principal during accountability reform. The five major conclusions drawn from the study were: (a) the core of the principal's job was diagnosing the school's particular needs and deciding how to meet them, (b) integrated leadership was needed regardless of school type and (c) principals were responsible for ensuring that leadership happened, (d) school governance structures affected the way key leadership functions were performed, and (e) principals learned by doing and acquired skills while on the job.

Portin et al. (2003) developed an understanding of each school's profile by studying state policy context, visiting classrooms, attending meetings, reviewing public test score data, joining informal gatherings, and participating in various school activities. Researchers identified and grouped leadership tasks, functions, roles, and responsibilities into seven common multidimensional yet integrated functions of leadership important to the academic success of all schools studied: (a) instructional leadership, (b) cultural leadership, (c) managerial leadership, (d) human resources leadership, (e) strategic leadership, (f) external developmental leadership, and (g) micropolitical leadership. Instructional leadership referred to ensuring quality instruction, modeling teacher practices, supervising curriculum, and ensuring quality of teaching resources. Cultural

leadership referred to tending to the symbolic resources of the school such as its traditions, climate, and history. Managerial leadership referred to overseeing the operations of the school such as its budget, schedule, facilities, safety and security, and transportation. Human resources leadership referred to recruiting, hiring, firing, inducting, mentoring teachers and administrators, and developing leadership capacity and professional development activities. Strategic leadership referred to promoting vision, mission, and goals and developing a means to reach them. External development leadership referred to representing the school in the community, developing capital, tending to public relations, recruiting students, buffering and mediating external interests, and advocating for the school's interests. Last, micropolitical leadership referred to buffering and mediating internal interests while maximizing financial and human resources (Portin, 2004). Cusick (2002) reported through a series of case studies the dynamic complexity and integrated nature of the principal's job.

#### A Broader Definition of Instructional Leadership

Marks and Printy (2003) selected 24 schools that had recently been restructured from a national pool of 300 schools to examine the relationship between principals' educational leadership and students' achievement during the accountability movement. Schools were selected from elementary, middle, and secondary level institutions practicing site-based management. Marks and Printy researched the impact of active collaboration based on instructional matters between principals and teachers on student academic achievement. Eighty percent of the teachers responded to a survey and participated in two formal interviews over the course of a year. Observations of instruction, assessment practices, and samples of student work were collected and

evaluated by researchers trained to maintain rater reliability and validity. Adjustments were made for student diversity in personal and academic backgrounds.

A broader definition of instructional leadership included transformational characteristics that encompassed building the collective capacity of the school to improve organizational performance by: (a) focusing on problem identification and solving, (b) collaborating with stakeholders, (c) raising the level of staff commitment (d) reaching full potential, and (e) striving for the greater good of all (Marks & Printy, 2003).

Characteristics of transformational leadership clustered in three areas: (a) developing a shared vision for the school, mission centered; (b) holding high performance expectations, individualized support, and intellectual stimulation, performance centered; and (c) modeling school values, developing a productive culture with capacity building, and participative decision making.

Marks and Printy (2003) concluded that transformational leadership was a contributing factor in successful leadership for academic gain but was insufficient alone. Instructional leadership was needed to coexist in an integrated form with transformational leadership in order to influence school performance as measured by instructional quality and student academic achievement (Marks & Printy; Sheppard, 1996; Verona & Young, 2001).

The broad interpretation of instructional leadership functions was found to contain the central dimensions of transformational leadership. Principals integrated managerial and instructional leadership and collaborated with teachers practicing shared or distributed instructional leadership (Marks & Printy, 2003; Sheppard, 1996; Verona & Young, 2001). For the purpose of the study, the principal's integrated leadership role

included the managerial behaviors: (a) to maintain high expectations for teachers and students, (b) to supervise classroom instruction, (c) to coordinate the school's curriculum, and (d) to monitor student progress (Marks & Printy). Instructional leaders emphasized instruction, curriculum, and assessment; provided direction based on the daily activities of teachers and students; and participated in collaboration with teachers to accomplish mutual goals for teaching and learning.

Transformational leadership alone lacked a connection to teaching and learning, but when combined with instructional leadership the teaching and learning provided the connection. When instructional leadership defined broadly was low, student and school achievement was low and authority and control were centralized. Marks and Printy (2003) and Grogan and Andrews (2002) noted the multifaceted influence of the accountability movement generated leadership pressures related to responsibility for: (a) teaching and learning, (b) systemic change, (c) implications of the standards movement, (d) curriculum frameworks, and (e) new forms of assessment. Schools with high-integrated leadership were found to have higher achieving students (Marks & Printy).

This concept of integrated leadership emphasized the principal's interactive instructional and managerial roles of working with teachers on curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Marks and Printy (2003) found that a broadly defined instructional leadership role was important for school improvement as measured by student academic performance. The researchers noted that a pattern emerged related to effective school leadership. There was an absence of broadly defined instructional leadership in schools that lacked transformational leadership. Instructional leadership, "...as distinct from management, was a rare commodity" (Marks & Printy, p. 392).

Pruitt (2003) conducted a comparison of the instructional leadership role of 35 principals in high-performing and low-performing schools in Lee County, Florida. Using the *Instructional Leadership Inventory* (MetriTech, Inc., 1988), Pruitt surveyed a convenience sample of 17 high-performing schools' principals and 18 minimum performing schools' principals as determined by Florida's school grading criteria. Principals had been in their schools for a minimum of three years. Higher performing schools scored higher on the staff contextual scale and the school contextual scale. These principals viewed their schools as having a cohesive professional staff that was committed and motivated. They also perceived their schools as having a clear sense of direction and mission. Their schools ran smoothly, had adequate educational resources, and facilities that were clean and safe. Principals also believed their schools outperformed other schools in their district. Low-performing schools scored low on these two scales. The staff was thought to lack self-discipline and professional commitment and was perceived as unproductive, unenthusiastic, and unmotivated. These principals believed their schools had adequate resources, but had low expectations for students. The transformational characteristics of instructional leadership were found to have significance on academic performance.

In summary, the link between leadership role focus and school academic gain has been researched comprehensively over time and has repeatedly demonstrated that instructional leadership matters (Clark, Lotto, & McCarthy, 1980; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). In schools with strong leaders focused on the purpose of schooling, teaching and learning, and centered on a climate of high expectations; students have achieved at a higher level of performance. Instructional

leadership during the age of accountability when defined broadly has been recognized as the priority for school success.

### Different Circumstances: The Push for Accountability

An influential factor in accountability arose during the late 1980s when federal programs financing education came under the third wave of financial litigation for evaluation. Evaluation of educational programs took the form of student assessment to determine system effectiveness and to hold local education authorities financially accountable for meeting program goals (McDermott, 2003). Continued funding of federal and state educational programs was tied to reported performance outcomes.

Nationwide networks such as the National Governors Association (NGA) were also active in legislation related to standards based accountability (McDermott, 2003). Education specific organizations arose to provide statistics to document the state of educational accountability and progress such as the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Public education policy directed its efforts toward higher student performance and employed a multifaceted approach to achieve this mission: (a) a market driven course of action developing a competitive climate; (b) decentralization that allows others to design plans and establish policy; (c) a professional strategy to develop instructional leaders; and (d) a managerial approach requiring strategic planning based on monitoring, evaluating, and data analysis (Leithwood & Earl, 2000).

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act continued this trend in the direction of legislation to extend federal authority over public education. Examples of laws in the past that established this policy trend of student assessment at specific levels based on core

academic standards have been legislation such as: (a) the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act (IASA), (b) the 1997 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and (c) the 1998 Perkins Vocational-Technical Education Act (McDermott, 2003). Previous to the NCLB Act many states such as Texas, Kentucky, Nebraska, Iowa, Florida, and North Carolina had already enacted standards-based initiatives, accountability systems, and high-stakes testing using funds from acts such as the Goals 2000 Act of 1994 (McDermott; Ladd & Zelli, 2002).

Public policymakers created legislation for public education, but they generally left the enactment of the policies to educational practitioners. As soon as legislation or educational policy mandates passed into law, responsibility for implementation was dependent on public educators such as superintendents, principals, and teachers (Fowler, 2000). Policymakers at the federal level directed states to develop legislation to mandate: (a) accountability through processes involving student achievement standards, (b) standards based assessment, and (c) dissemination to the public by the publication of test results in the media (Popham, 2001). At the state level, policymakers required districts and schools to teach to state curriculum standards and provide quantitative data to demonstrate student performance and adequate yearly progress (AYP). At the school level, the principal was charged with overseeing that state curriculum standards were taught and AYP was achieved as demonstrated by student performance gains on standards based assessments.

Although the principal, as the key administrator visible at the school level, was not specifically mentioned in the language of the school improvement section of the NCLB Act, the law included: (a) replacing the school staff responsible for making AYP,

(b) decreasing management level authority at the school level, and (c) restructuring the school's internal organization as sanctions that all implicate the principal (U. S. Department of Education, 2002). The NCLB Act also built in performance expectations for principals, and Title II of the Act made substantial funds available for principal training, professional development, and recruiting (Mazzeo, 2003; McGuire, 2002).

This multifaceted system of accountability was designed to provide incentives to schools to gain compliance with federal and state policies through a system of rewards, interventions, and sanctions. Low-performing schools faced sanctions or corrective measures such as forming a school improvement plan, technical assistance, restructuring, reconstitution, closure, loss of funding, principal replacement, or loss of students to voucher programs (Cooley & Shen, 2003; Herrington & Wills, 2005; McGhee & Nelson, 2005). On the other hand, schools that met their school performance AYP were the recipients of rewards. This challenged the principal as the school's leader to become a strategic planner, a program designer, and an instructional leader competing in the marketplace for job security.

Principals in their central role became responsible for the implementation of state and national education policy initiatives for the NCLB Act school improvement initiatives (Goldhaber & Hannaway 2004; McGuire, 2002; Wenning, Herdman, & Smith, 2002). Principals were expected to effectively implement the broad definition of instructional leadership. Yet, policymakers did not seek to fully understand the learning or knowledge base necessary to initiate, implement, and institutionalize the multifaceted policy approach. Background preparation for the principalship did not provide the specific knowledge and skills needed to implement the systemic changes called for to

thrive in a performance based age of accountability (Herrington & Wills, 2005; Hess, 2003; Hope & Pigford, 2001; McGuire; NASBE, 1991; Portin et al., 2003; Thomson, 1991). NASBE suggested in the organization's report, *Principals of Change: What Principals Need to lead Schools to Excellence*, that "While successful reforms depend upon principals succeeding at both management and [instructional] leadership, currently, principals are adequately prepared for neither" (NASBE, p. 13).

#### Implications of Governance Structure: Public and Private

Public school policy at the federal, state, and local levels attempted to use a rational choice theory approach to develop reform in local public schools to achieve the systemic changes demanded by accountability (Spillane, Diamond, Burch, Hallett, Jita, & Zoltners, 2002). Public policy levers were put in place to control the direction a school can take in the form of rewards, interventions, and sanctions. These levers affected the systemic reforms in public schools through the principal as the change agent.

The principal, located in the middle position linking the school with accountability policy, was entrusted to navigate the change process. The public school principal acted as the sense maker, interpreting and mediating policy reforms within the individual school with its unique environment that constrained or enabled actions. The interaction of each individual principal's interpretation of the initiative and the environmental limitations determined the methods employed to reach the goal of higher student performance.

Meyer and Feistritz (2003) suggested that there was no one model or definition of principal leadership as a result of the multiple qualities that come into play in different situations. Each principal acts individually ignoring, adapting, or adopting policy based

on the implications for the specific school situation. Reeves (2000) found that external contextual effects accounted for 30-40% of the between-districts differences in accountability measures. Cusick (2002) reported through a series of case studies the complexity of internal and external contexts impacting the principal's job. Since each public school principal functioned as an individual making choices based on unique internal school and external district, state, and national contexts, this has made national educational uniformity a very complex challenge.

Three key findings in the research conducted by Portin et al. (2003) were that: (a) not every school needed the same kind of leadership, (b) not every school was the right place for anyone nominally qualified to be a principal, and (c) the rules under which principals acted matter a great deal. Clearly, instructional organization, school climate, and school governance mattered. Without the autonomy to act with authority and the support from policymakers, principals became middle managers with the responsibility but not the power to do the job (Portin et al.).

Based on patterns established from the research on external influences stemming from public and private school governance, Portin et al. (2003) suggested public school leaders were affected by: (a) actions of the superintendents, district-wide school boards, and central offices; (b) federal, state, county, or city government policy; and (c) collective bargaining agreements. Charter and independent school leaders' external influences were: (a) their boards of trustees, and (b) less directly affected by their state and city or county licensing and regulations. A pattern emerged suggesting that differences in governance structure influenced distributive leadership and the authority to act in each of the leadership functions.

Portin et al. (2003) found private schools had a clear and uncomplicated mission and were more likely to share leadership functions. Public schools had a diffuse mission that was largely defined by external pressures and demands such as union contracts, constraints on resources, and the historically fixed bureaucratic organization with legislative policy placing responsibility in the principalship. Private schools appeared to have more latitude in how to allocate resources and organize staffing needs to meet the needs of their students.

St. John and Ridenour (2001) explored the difference in public and private schools placed in a market driven system. Both public and private schools developed strategic adaptations to take full advantage of a market driven reward, school scholarships. Public school leaders were caught in the middle by the bureaucratic nature of the educational system causing tensions that impeded their ability to adapt to the market oriented initiatives. Private schools were not hampered by the multileveled bureaucracy of the public system and were able to implement the program changes to achieve the monetary advantages.

Public schools reported that a fixed curriculum limited authority over instructional leadership practices. Researchers found the degree of autonomy in a school determined the degree of latitude in decision-making, and the degree to which the school was likely to act. Principals in constrained situations were found to have problems ascending beyond a middle manager leadership role spending the majority of their time completing administrative tasks (Portin et al., 2003).

Findings led to four recommendations related to governance: (a) district leaders should ensure that the authority and freedom of action they give principals matches the

responsibilities they demand of them, (b) states and school districts should prioritize effective leadership, rather than simply classroom experience, as the best indicator of potential effectiveness as a principal, (c) colleges of education should include complex tasks like diagnosing and planning in their principal preparation and preparation should continue even after principals begin working in schools, and (d) districts should place principals in jobs where they match the current needs of the school (Portin et al., 2003). Hess (2003) recommended flexibility in the principal's leadership role.

#### Attempts at Systemic Reform

Several studies have attempted to document examples of leadership models that were able to overcome the overwhelming complexity of the principals' job under accountability reform. Principals studied by Portin et al. (2003) gravitated to one of two poles. Either the leadership was: (a) centered on the principal, or (b) distributed or shared among others in the school. All principals studied were found to be involved in instructional leadership either directly or indirectly (Portin et al.). Leaders were found to ensure that instructional leadership occurred, but did not have to provide directly each function. Public school principals were found to be the center for all leadership functions more often than other types of school principals.

Chan and Pool (2002) conducted an interview and survey of 134 school principals in southeast Georgia who were implementing the state's accountability system to determine the proportion of time each devoted to their specific role responsibilities. The focus of the study addressed three concerns: (a) discrepancies between principals' priorities and their realities, (b) reasons for differences, and (c) steps and strategies to enable principals to reduce the gap between the priorities and realities of the job. Thirteen

responsibilities were addressed: (a) supervision and instructional support, (b) school improvement, (c) staff development, (d) personal administration, (e) policy review and development, (f) professional update, (f) curriculum planning and development, (g) student interaction and discipline, (h) public relations, (i) system-wide duties, (j) school emergencies, (k) school business administration, and (l) student extracurricular activities. Principals ranked responsibilities from one to thirteen. Supervision and instructional support, listed first, was ranked as a number one priority by all principals, followed by school improvement, staff development, curriculum planning and development, and personnel administration. Principals from elementary, middle, and high schools prioritized the 13 responsibilities with very similar results. When ranking the amount of time spent on responsibilities, principals ranked interactions with students and discipline followed by personnel administration, staff development, supervision and instructional support, and public relations as the most time consuming parts of their role. Principals spent the least time on policy review and development, professional update, student extracurricular activities, system-wide duties, and school business administration. Elementary principals were found to spend more time on curriculum planning and development than middle or high school principals.

Fink and Resnick (2001) reported on Community School District 2 in New York City. In reaction to policy mandates for accountability, the district restructured the two roles of the principal, managerial and instructional leadership, to develop a successful district-wide educational leadership team that has led the district to successful school improvement and has raised student performance through a focus on teaching and learning.

The America's Choice School Design also restructured their focus to develop instructional leadership to accomplish accountability goals (Supovitz & Poglinco, 2001). This K-12 school reform model was designed by the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) to raise academic achievement using standards based reform. The program focused on high expectations for students and teachers, literacy, a common core curriculum, standards-based assessment, distributed leadership, safety nets for support, and total commitment to teachers and by the school community for the program.

Supovitz and Poglinco (2001) used a mixed design to study the characteristics of instructional leadership found in the program participants. Three common themes emerged as important in instructional leadership: (a) organization of school and vision around instructional improvement, (b) cultivation of a collaborative and supportive professional community, and (c) organization of the leader's time to support instructional improvement as the priority. Principals reported instructional leadership was not a substitute for management, but managerial aspects of the job were blended with instructional aspects. Management was still an important dimension of the job, but the emphasis was placed on instructional leadership. Hess (2003) noted that some schools needed corporate leaders or managers, and others instructional leaders, but it was difficult to define a "...hard and fast distinction between the two" (p. 4).

#### The Effect of Accountability on Role Focus and Behaviors

Federal and state education policy spanning more than a decade from the 1980s with former President George H. W. Bush's education summit in 1989 to 2001 and the NCLB Act has centered educational reform around standards-based initiatives, achievement of students, assessment, and accountability to narrow the achievement gap

and to improve America's schools (Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Ladd & Zelli, 2002; McDermott, 2003; Stotsky, 2000). One central policy issue that emerged from the evaluation of state accountability systems has been the "...power of an accountability system to change the behavior of school principals in both the short and the medium term" (Ladd & Zelli, p. 495).

Whitaker (1996) studied 13 principals identified as extreme cases of leadership burnout from a sample of 107 principals surveyed with the *Maslach Burnout Inventory*. These principals were dealing with the changes required by accountability policies. Four principals left the profession during the study's timeframe reducing the purposeful sample to nine principals ranging in age from 35 to 44. The subjects were comprised of three high school principals, five elementary principals, and one middle school principal. The majority were white males with four to fifteen years of experience at this level of administration. Interviews were conducted person to person using ten semi-structured interview questions and responses collected were analyzed into themes.

Principals described the pressure for accountability as a multifaceted challenge trying to be instructional leaders, implement change, and complete managerial tasks. The dilemma faced by these principals related to the conflict between the instructional and managerial roles required of the principalship (Whitaker; 1996). The greater demands placed on principals from the central office and federal and state mandates for accountability required increased paperwork and the implementation of change with reduced budgets and authority.

Cooley and Shen (2003) conducted a study of data from the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) 1999-2000 collected by the NCES during the early stages of the

accountability movement. The self-perception survey section on public school principals involved 4,386 participants with a 90% return rate. Ninety-three percent of the respondents reported they engaged in management of the school facilities and resources, attention to procedures, and maintaining physical security for the school community daily or once or twice a week. Seventy-eight percent reported engaging in activities to facilitate student learning daily or once or twice a week. Eighty-four percent felt they supervised faculty and staff daily or once or twice a week, 70% devoted time to achieving the school mission daily or once or twice a week, and 65% stated that they worked on building professional community among faculty and staff daily or once or twice a week.

Wildy and Loudon (2000) conducted a qualitative study of 695 urban and rural principals and administrators focusing on the dilemmas faced by principals in relation to autonomy, efficiency, and mandated accountability. Principals identified six clusters of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that they considered important for the role of school principal during accountability: (a) caring for others, (b) strength in making decisions, (c) fairness and consistency, (d) being open to alternatives, (e) involving others, and (f) articulating long-term goals. These six clusters focused on the instructional leadership role of principals and highlighted an omission of the managerial leadership role characteristics related to: (a) the need for efficiency, (b) school management processes, and (c) accountability requirements. Instructional leadership was felt to be lacking but important for accountability reform.

An analysis conducted by Ladd and Zelli (2002) of North Carolina's ABCs accountability and incentives program indicated that accountability was powerful in changing the behaviors of the school principal in intended and unintended ways. The

ABCs program initiated in 1996-1997 school year was designed to: (a) hold schools accountable for the basic skills, and (b) give local districts and schools more operational control through the use of a system of rewards and positive incentives for schools that increased student achievement and sanctions and/or interventions for schools that demonstrated low-performance (Ladd & Zelli). The program was designed to alter the behavior of the principal to align with the state's policy objectives. By 1992-1993 and previous to the ABCs program, North Carolina had: (a) initiated a standards based course of study, (b) aligned a curriculum referenced test to the state standards, (c) raised teacher salaries to the national average, (d) invested in teacher training programs, (e) promoted a Smart Start readiness to learn program, and initiated a value added design.

Two waves of survey data were collected from a random sample of 70 elementary school principals (Ladd & Zelli, 2002). A state goal of the program was instructional leadership as defined by Krug, Ahadi, and Scott (1991): (a) defined and promoted the school's mission, (b) managed the curriculum, (c) spent time working with teachers, (d) monitored student progress, and (e) provided a supportive instructional climate. Ladd and Zelli found that the North Carolina program achieved the state's measured and rewarded goals of focusing the principal's attention on instructional leadership, basic skills, and low-performing students.

The unintended negative outcomes were related to the number of educational goals not measured or rewarded such as shifts in: (a) the focus of curriculum to a narrow set of curricular areas, (b) the focus of resources away from other subject areas, (c) the quality of teachers willing to work in low-performing schools, (d) the views of the principal in low-performing schools related to belief that students could improve to meet

standards, and (e) the focus of the principal on low-performing students and away from grade level and high-performing students (Ladd & Zelli, 2002). Ladd and Zelli concluded that the North Carolina accountability system had a powerful effect on the behavior of the school principal both positively and negatively and cautioned policymakers in the use of top-down accountability systems.

Langer and Boris-Schacter (2003) conducted a three-year study of 200 principals across the United States between 1999 and 2002, years of increasing accountability policy. Principals surveyed reported that managerial demands on their time inhibited them from the instructional leadership role of evaluation and staff development central to their leadership mission for school improvement. Experienced and novice principals reported: (a) huge amounts of work with limited resources, (b) multiple and ambiguous goals, and (c) countless constituencies. Participants reported three tensions: (a) tension between the need for instructional leadership and the reality of managerial tasks, (b) tension between personal and professional demands, and (c) tension between the principal's role and community expectations.

Harvey and Donaldson (2003) surveyed 128 Maine principals from schools with K-6 and K-8 grade configurations in the midst of accountability reform. The principals had a mean age of 49 years, an average of 23 years of experience, and a gender ratio of 66 males to 62 females. Eighty-four percent of the principals surveyed reported that they experienced moderate to high stress from role overload as a result of the lack of time and lack of resources required to meet role expectations and demands. Role conflict as a result of incompatible or incongruent demands placed on the principal was reported by 67 percent of the responders. Other researchers supported this finding and have consistently

found that principals reported role conflict between the instructional leadership role and daily management responsibilities that have been difficult to ignore and have seemed to take precedence (Chan & Pool, 2002; Cusick, 2002; Farkas, Johnson, & Duffett, 2003; Lashway, 2003c; Whitaker, 1996; Williams & Portin, 1997).

Farkas, Johnson, and Duffett (2003) supported by the Wallace Foundation conducted a qualitative research project, *Rolling Up Their Sleeves: Superintendents and Principals Talk About What's Needed to Fix Public Schools*. The national mail survey was sent to a random sample obtained from a national database of 3,000 superintendents and 4,400 public school principals. Netted responses equaled 1,006 public school superintendents and 925 public school principals to capture their voice on topics of relevance to educational leadership. The survey instrument was designed by Public Agenda after conducting seven focus groups in six U. S. cities. Farkas, Johnson, and Duffett described the facets of the role of principal as: (a) instructional leader, (b) wise manager, (c) problem solver, (d) master negotiator, and (e) politician. Sixty-two percent of superintendents believed that moving a successful principal with a record of effective school leadership to a low-performing school could turn the school around.

Eighty-two percent of the principals attributed change in their school and district to the NCLB Act. Sixty-five percent of the principals believed that it would require many adjustments before it could work. Overall, principals reported that they have focused on curriculum, instruction, mentoring, and professional development; but felt "...hamstrung by red tape, competing laws and regulations, and inadequate resources to meet the requirements and mandates" (Farkas, Johnson, & Duffett, 2003, p. 7). Seventy-five percent of the principals reported that they were doing more than they used to in the areas

of curriculum, teaching techniques, mentoring, and professional development. Principals stated that they felt that school leadership was key to improving public education. When asked if local state and federal mandates took up way too much time, 37% of principals reported that this came very close and 47% reported that this came somewhat close to describing their district. Forty-nine percent of principals reported that bureaucracy was frustrating. When asked about the NCLB Act, 88% of principals felt it was an unfunded mandate, 73% felt that it relied too heavily on student achievement, 53% felt that it was an intrusion into traditionally locally controlled areas, and 57% felt that the consequences and sanctions were unfair. Overall, 63% of superintendents felt that raising student achievement was the biggest part of a principal's evaluation. Seventy-three percent of the superintendents thought it was a good idea to hold principals accountable for student standardized achievement test scores, but only 41% of the principals agreed. Forty-three percent of the superintendents in rural districts and 58% of superintendents in urban districts believed that principals were more likely to be removed from schools where student achievement was low (Farkas, Johnson, & Duffett).

Cooley and Shen (2003) concluded with three major concerns that emerged from their research on principals' self-perceptions: (a) testing remains the most important measure of accountability, (b) the criterion of the environment is political in nature, and (c) principals have been called upon to engage in instructional leadership to improve schools. "However, they are still mired in the managing tasks due to the immediate nature of these tasks" (Cooley & Shen, p. 23). The researchers recommend that the long-term impacts of the accountability movement be studied to determine the effects, if any.

In summary, there appeared to be a major shift in the role of the principal toward a more technical, managerial way of operating; an ideological shift away from communitarian values toward the principles of business management. Principals have been required to maintain traditional responsibilities while learning to leverage accountability, draw on data and research for making decisions, embrace technology, compete with other schools, and devise performance-based evaluation systems (Hess, 2003). A managerial leadership focus, which encouraged militaristic and coercive forms of decision-making and even bullying, was an unfortunate consequence of a managerial approach. In this leadership situation, power was concentrated in the hands of a manager and created a separation of leadership from staff, a process that undermined a distributive or more inclusive form of leadership (McInerney, 2003).

Public school principals were found to be limited in authority related to instructional leadership by bureaucratic imperatives and related constraints to principals' work (Portin et al., 2003). Bureaucratic constraints or external influences were identified as the actions of superintendents, district-wide school boards, and central offices which, were in turn influenced by federal, state, county, and city government policies and collective bargaining agreements (Farkas, Johnson, & Duffett, 2003; Portin, 2004; Whitaker, 1996). Other school types had lean governance structures and limited external constraints and were less directly affected by bureaucratic constraints. Differences in governance structure were found to influence the degree to which leaders in schools functioned as instructional leaders and shared leadership responsibilities. Principals who were able to exercise shared leadership by overseeing a team of staff members with instructional expertise were more apt to function as instructional leaders (Hess, 2003).

The change in leadership focus escalated public school principals' responsibilities and fragmented time to the point where principals reported difficulty in addressing their dual responsibilities (NASBE, 1999). Combined with this, authority became insufficient as a result of restrictions and limitations within the scope of responsibilities such as those attached to increased public school accountability. Additionally, there was a growing sense of frustration and fragmentation as these demands were connected to a variety of punitive measures for less than adequate performance. Findings in the literature revealed high stress levels and mounting pressures in the position of the principalship (NASBE; Verona & Young, 2001).

#### Florida's A+ Plan and School Choice: Sanctions

One area of interest in the NCLB legislation was the market focus on the provisions for accountability that tied into a voucher program including vouchers to alternative schools. The NCLB Act required that all schools failing to meet AYP repeatedly would allow students to choose other public or nonpublic schools to attend.

In 1999, prior to the NCLB Act, Florida implemented legislation called the A+ Accountability Plan allowing students in low-performing public schools to opt out of their school and to move to a different public or private institution with a voucher plan. Goldhaber and Hannaway (2004) suggested that Florida's A+ Plan was a model of voucher legislation to study since the plan had been in action since 1999. The rationale for the voucher movement was market driven and arose from the fact that public schooling was a closed system or monopoly and was unlikely to affect fundamental change without a catalyst to increase competition ((Leithwood & Earl, 2000; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Public schools would either perform well or lose students to higher

quality alternatives based on a market driven competitive model. It was not known how the system would react to this concept.

Florida responded to this model of school accountability or vouchers since 1999. Schools were graded based on a formula taking into account AYP, and those students of schools receiving an F two out of any four years and that currently had an F grade were eligible for vouchers. These vouchers could be used at another non-failing public school or private school including religious schools. School grades were based on student performance on the FCAT and the school's dropout rates. According to Goldhaber and Hannaway (2004), the plan was broad based, institutionalized, and sufficiently funded to merit close study.

Goldhaber and Hannaway (2004) conducted a qualitative study of five Florida schools, two of which had received an F grade and three of which had received an A grade. Researchers found that both types of schools felt multiple internal and external pressures as a result of the A+ Plan leading to a narrow instructional focus. F schools received more funding and personnel distributions were altered. Behavioral consequences were evident in both types of schools as a result of two factors: (a) the voucher effect and (b) grading stigma. Both A and F schools narrowed the instructional focus. Principals in F schools were replaced and new principals were given the opportunity to restructure staff. Principals felt tremendous pressure from district officials over the possible loss of accreditation and students to vouchers.

According to Goldhaber and Hannaway (2004) one hundred nineteen students from two Florida schools were eligible for vouchers in the first year. Sixty-seven students and parents selected an alternative Florida public school, and 52 opted for a private

Catholic school. In 2002-03 ten additional schools qualified for vouchers. More than 500 students attended private schools, and 870 students chose alternative public schools.

### Summary

It may be concluded from this comprehensive review of the literature that the very nature of the public school principal's role was changing (Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Meyer & Feistritzer, 2003). Instructional leadership emerged as a policy focal point in the dilemma of how best to lead America's schools to educational success (Doud & Keller, 1998; Grogan & Andrews; McGuire, 2002; Portin et al., 2003). The ISLLC Standards for Leadership have outlined the shift in the nature of educational leadership to a desired focus on teaching and learning, the core technology or purpose of schooling.

The public school principal attempted to assume the new role and has had to prioritize the job responsibilities and to allocate time accordingly (Chan & Pool, 2002). The principal was found to be under extreme pressure to focus the leadership role on building a school vision and culture focused on teaching and learning: (a) to raise student achievement, (b) to demonstrate an expertise in knowledge of state standards and benchmarks, and (c) ultimately to close the achievement gap (Fink & Resnick, 2001; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; McGuire, 2002; Meyer & Feistritzer, 2003; Whitaker, 1996).

These accountability mandates took the form of instructional leadership role responsibilities as well as additional managerial role responsibilities. Murphy (2005) suggested that the effect of this controversial and influential shift in leadership was as yet unknown and would remain in that state lacking empirical evidence, since it was largely uninvestigated. The influence of the accountability movement on school leadership was yet to be explored related to the call for an instructional leadership role focus.

This research was an attempt to add to the knowledge base by empirically researching the impact of accountability reforms such as the NCLB Act and Florida's Equity in Education A+ Plan on the role and behaviors of the principalship by using sound quantitative methodology with a valid and reliable instrument. This researcher strived to gain empirical data from principals in the state of Florida to document the principal leadership focus during the age of accountability.

This research was designed to address the question of whether there were statistically significant differences in the leadership behaviors and role perceptions of principals in Florida's public elementary schools subjected to accountability in the form of administering the FCAT and the leadership behaviors and role perceptions of principals in Florida's private elementary schools that were not subjected to accountability mandates and do not administer the FCAT. Did the national and state accountability movement lead the way to an instructional leadership focus for public schools, or did it bury the public elementary school principal in managerial duties to the exclusion of all else?

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

The methodology and procedures employed in this study are described and discussed in the following sections of this chapter. The first section begins with the purpose of the research and is followed by the setting; an explanation of the research design and rationale including the list of the research questions to be addressed; a description of the population and sampling strategies used for data collection; a review of the *Instructional Leadership Inventory (ILI)*, the instrument that was used to conduct this research, and a detailed explanation of the Tailored Design Method (Dillman, 2000) as it was employed for data collection. The final section of this chapter details the statistical procedures to be carried out in the Data Analysis, chapter four, specific to each research question.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this work was to provide valuable information about the effects of accountability reforms on the role of public elementary school principals. The leadership role and behaviors of public and private elementary school principals working under two distinctly different circumstances were compared. Public school principals were subject to the mandated policy initiatives associated with the accountability movement. Private school principals, or lower school heads, were not subject to these federal and state policy reforms. Accountability reforms called for public school principals to focus the

principal's role on instructional leadership rather than managerial leadership. The study of these two groups investigated the leadership role focus of public school principals as compared to private lower school heads in relation to instructional leadership. Similarities and differences in role focus and behaviors of the two types of leaders were documented and any emerging patterns were discussed.

#### Setting: The State of Florida

The setting selected for this research project was the state of Florida. Florida created a state accountability plan and has complied with the federal requirements for accountability. The plan included a standards based curriculum, the Sunshine State Standards, and a related measure of standards based assessment, the FCAT. Florida public elementary schools worked under the Equity in Education A+ Plan involving rewards, incentives, and sanctions for school performance as measured by the school's student achievement gains on the FCAT. The formula attached to AYP determined a range from high performing or grade A schools to low performing grade F schools. Principals have been held accountable for complying with mandates including AYP in their individual schools and have been subjected to the applicable rewards, incentives, and sanctions.

#### Research Design and Rationale

Florida's public school principals have had to adjust to the push for standards-based assessment to demonstrate student progress as a measure of accountability while Florida's private school principals have not been weighed down with this responsibility. This has affected the leadership role focus and behaviors of public school principals but

has not impacted private school principals' leadership role focus and behaviors. The problem addressed in this research study focused on the effect these different circumstances have had on the instructional and managerial leadership behaviors of public elementary school principals. In addition, it addressed how these principals have developed their priorities for determining their primary leadership role focus and behaviors as they have attempted to meet this challenge.

This quantitative study was designed to explore similarities and differences in roles and behaviors of Florida's public and private elementary school leaders to determine if any statistically significant findings or patterns emerged from the data analysis.

The following three research questions guided the collection and analysis of data in the design of this study:

1. To what extent are there differences, if any, in the leadership behaviors (i.e., defines mission, manages curriculum, supervises teaching, monitors student progress, and promotes instructional climate) of public school principals and private school principals?
2. To what extent are there differences, if any, in the demographic characteristics of public and private school principals?
3. To what extent are there differences, if any, in the work environment (i.e., school characteristics, community characteristics, and staff characteristics) of public and private school principals?

### Population and Sample

The public school population to be studied included 1,570 public elementary school principals derived from the Florida Department of Education public school records for the 2004-05 academic year. The private school population comprised 151 lower school heads derived from the Florida Council of Independent Schools' (FCIS) private school directory for the 2004-05 academic year. The subjects were selected from public and private schools similar in grade level ranging from grades K to six. Private schools were selected from independent school members meeting the rigorous standards of the FCIS. Simple random sampling was applied using SPSS software to arrive at the final list of 350 public elementary school principals surveyed. Each of the 151 FCIS private school principals meeting the above grade level criteria was surveyed. A total of 501 elementary school leaders were included in the final sample group.

### Instrument

The researcher obtained the *Instructional Leadership Inventory (ILI)*, a self-report instrument from MetriTech, Inc., to survey the two sample groups of public and private elementary school principals (Maehr & Ames, 1988). The *ILI* item content was determined to cover the research requirements for this study based on findings in the review of literature on instructional and managerial leadership behaviors. The individual items included in each scale were identified as instructional practices and behaviors of leaders that were found to be associated with improvements or gains in student academic performance (Conoley, Impara, & Murphy, 1995).

Principals were required to self-report perceptions of their leadership behaviors using the *ILI* instrument. The instrument consists of four parts. Part one asks the

respondent to answer questions by selecting either (A) or (B). Part two is based on a 5-point Likert type response ranging from strongly disagree (A) to strongly agree (E). Part three is based on a 5-point Likert type response ranging from almost never (A) to almost always (E). Part four, demographic information, provides ten personal questions with a selection of responses grouped into categories from (A) to (E). The instrument's scoring system includes a set of eight scales. Each scale has a select number of associated questions. Specific questions organized into the scales are identified in Appendix A. Data analysis was designed to classify total group responses into either an instructional or a managerial focus category. A sample copy of the instrument is included in Appendix B.

#### Instrument Scales

The *ILI* was composed of 110 questions distributed into eight scales and ten demographic inquiries. The eight scales of the *ILI* design, displayed in the table in Appendix A, included: (a) five administrative behavior scales related to instructional and managerial leadership characteristics and (b) three administrator perception scales related to contexts of the work environment. The personal and professional demographic information, displayed in Appendix A, were used to provide individual group demographics and comparative descriptive data on the principals and the schools.

Scales directed at determining the principals' degree of managerial leadership behaviors, referred to: (a) manages curriculum, (b) supervises teaching, and (c) monitors student progress. Scales directed at determining the principals' degree of instructional leadership behaviors, referred to: (a) defining school mission and (b) promoting instructional climate. Principals' personal characteristics and demographic data were obtained through *ILI* survey questions 101-110. Contextual scales directed at the

principals' perceptions of the work environment referred to: (a) the staff, (b) the school district, and (c) the community and are itemized in Appendix A. Detailed instrument information has been provided in Appendix A for the specific relationship of the itemized questions to the eight *ILI* scales.

### Instrument Reliability and Validity

The *ILI* was reviewed in the *Twelfth Mental Measurements Yearbook* (Conoley, Impara, & Murphy, 1995). The *ILI* is one of four instruments in the *ILEAD* series. According to Conoley, Impara, and Murphy (1995), the authors of the *ILI*, Maehr and Ames (1988), did extensive work in researching the content and validating the instrument. The instrument was designed to incorporate both instructional leadership and organizational theory. Measures were determined through research to identify effective instructional leadership behaviors and the values of the organization.

The *ILI* authors, Maehr and Ames (1988), assessed the internal validity by correlating the related scales with the three other instruments in the same *ILEAD* series by MetriTech, Inc. and with measures of similar constructs within the *ILI* instrument itself such as comparing superintendents' perceptions with principals' perceptions. The eight scales were found to have strong positive intercorrelations that were between .52 to .74 (Conoley, Impara, & Murphy, 1995).

External instruments and measures were compared with the *ILI* to determine correlations of constructs for external validity. The external validity and reliability of the *ILI* were established using a sample of 262 principals to obtain a coefficient alpha index of internal consistency on individual scales ranging from .74 to .86 (Krug, 1990).

According to Conoley, Impara, and Murphy (1995), these values suggested that the *ILI* was reliable and also justified its use with individual principals.

The Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) was used to establish validity using a correlation technique. Similar scales from the *ILI* and the PIMRS were found to converge when measuring the same constructs. Information was gained from the resulting correlations: (a) with other self-report measures, (b) with supervisory performance ratings, and (c) with relevant external behavioral measures to support the validity of the *ILI* (Conoley, Impara, & Murphy, 1995, Krug, 1990). The multiple regressions run on the PIMRS and *ILI* demonstrated high correlations or a high degree of convergence ranging from .34 to .90 on the individual scales of the two independent measures (Krug). Other methods were also used by the authors, Maehr and Ames (1988), to assess construct validity and reliability of the instruments and to test for expected differences between groups.

Coefficient alpha was used between the four instruments in the *ILEAD* series to assess reliability. The resulting coefficients ranged from .70 to .80. Conoley, Impara, and Murphy (1995) agreed that the rigor in the assessment of validity for the *ILEAD* series and the *ILI* alone were exemplary and the cumulative evidence of the research supported the construct validity of the *ILI*.

Norming for the *ILI* was conducted in Illinois. Results from 242 principals from elementary and secondary schools in the state were used to derive the norms. Only principals have been used to norm the instrument revealing a weakness in the norming (Conoley, Impara, & Murphy, 1995). However, this sample group met the needs of the population of principals included in this research study.

Limits of the *ILLI* instrument were discussed (Conoley, Impara, & Murphy, 1995). Mention was made of self-reporting technique studies that have cautioned the use of the *ILLI* in interpreting scores, since principals could report practicing certain activities when, in fact, they are not or when principal belief systems are relevant to the presence or absence of behaviors. It was also recommended that the authors, Maehr and Ames (1988), continue to contribute additional documentation to the reliability and validity of the *ILLI*.

### Data Collection

First, approval was obtained for human subjects study from the University of Central Florida's Institutional Review Board (UCFIRB) in March 2005 before the research study was implemented. The data collection for this study was conducted according to the elements of Dillman's (2000) Tailored Design Method. Dillman found that implementation procedures had a significant impact on response rate in survey data collection. Dillman recommended consideration of multiple contacts, the contents of letters, the appearance of envelopes, incentives, personalization, and sponsorship as attributes in the communication process that have influenced improvement in response rates. In mail survey research, multiple contacts have been found to be more effective than any other attribute for gaining higher responses. Other attributes have been found to have moderate effects, but were important when attempting to maximize total returns. Dillman strongly advised detailed attention to every aspect of implementation and communication in the data collection process. The researcher attempted to follow the Tailored Design Method and incorporated Dillman's recommendations.

Dillman (2000) developed five elements to increase response rates in mailed survey designs. These five elements were included in the design of this research. The first element was a respondent friendly questionnaire. After reviewing several other published surveys, the *ILI* was selected for its: (a) clear and easy comprehension, (b) question order and layout, (c) short question length, and (d) relationship to the desired data content. The survey drawback was the time required to complete the *ILI*, 20-30 minutes. In response to the time factor, several principals enclosed notes commenting on the positive benefit gained by completing the *ILI* and the self-reflective qualities of the instrument. Only one principal enclosed a negative comment in response to the length of the instrument.

Dillman's (2000) second element was the four compatible contacts by First-Class mail with an additional special contact. The third element was the return envelope with a First-Class stamp, and the fourth element was the personalization of correspondence. The four mailed contacts used in this research were personalized, included a self-addressed stamped envelope with first-class postage, and were mailed First-Class.

Contact one, Appendix C, was a 5.5" by 8.5" large personalized postcard mailed the first week in April 2005 to the 501 participants. This pre-notice message was modeled after Dillman's example (2000, p. 157). It included the date, personalized inside address, what will happen, what it is about, usefulness of survey, thank you, personal professional benefit, and researcher's signature.

The second mailing package was sent to the 501 participants one week later and included a cover letter, the survey, an answer sheet, and a stamped return address envelope. The cover letter, found in Appendix D, was modeled after Dillman (2000, p. 162) and included the inside address, the request, why one was selected, usefulness of the

survey, token of appreciation, IRB information with confidentiality, willingness to answer questions, thank you, directions for survey return, and researcher's signature. A total of 186 of the 501 surveys were returned as a result of this mailing.

The third personalized contact sent to the 501 participants several weeks later was the thank you postcard found in Appendix E. The message was modeled after Dillman (2000, p. 180) and included a brief text about the survey package, the need for each and every response and a thank you for participating in the research project. The final line specified how to obtain a second copy if the first mailing was lost or misplaced and included an e-mail address as a contact. One nonresponder e-mailed asking for a second copy of the survey.

The fourth personalized contact, found in Appendix E, was a postcard sent to nonresponders in June 2005. Several administrators recommended the June date as an appropriate time to contact school principals. Principals were thought to have time for work such as this during the month of April, before FCAT begins, and after the school year ends at the end of June. The message was modeled after Dillman (2000, p. 182) and stressed the usefulness of the research, value of each and every response, and the e-mail and phone number of the researcher as a method to obtain a second copy of the survey. Two people returned the survey as a result of the mailing. Three additional people contacted the researcher by phone and one other person contacted the researcher by e-mail. Several people did mention when they were contacted by phone during the fifth and last contact that the fourth notice had spurred them to search for the document and place it on the top of their *to do* pile.

The fifth contact was to nonresponders and was by phone when possible. Each nonresponder's school was called over the course of four weeks beginning the second week of June 2005 and ending the first week of July 2005. Three answering options ranged from speaking directly with the principal, to leaving a message with the principal's secretary, and last, leaving a message on the principal's voice mailbox. The messages and conversations identified the researcher as a student at the University of Central Florida conducting research for a dissertation. The researcher very politely reviewed the mailing of the initial survey package and requested the nonresponder to help by participating in this valuable research project to benefit principals in the state of Florida. A phone number was left as the method of contact. Only three principals returned the call. Seventy-seven second copy survey packages were mailed as a result of phone conversations with principals, and 56 surveys were returned as a result of the last two contacts, the fourth mailing, and the phone contact.

The data collection process presented in Table 1 resulted in 263 returned surveys, a 52.5% total response rate. Two hundred sixty-three usable *ILLI* surveys out of the 501 mailed surveys were returned. The public school response rate was 48.0% or 168 returned surveys out of the 350 mailed surveys. The private school response rate was 62.9% or 95 returned surveys out of the 151 mailed surveys.

Table 1

Number of Respondents to Survey by School Type (N=263)

Type of School	Surveys Sent	Surveys Returned	Return %
Public	350	168	48.0%
Private	151	95	62.9%
Total	501	263	52.5%

### Data Analysis

Two groups were identified for the study, public and private elementary school principals. Responses to the *ILI* from these two groups were scanned into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences for Windows (SPSS) software for analysis using appropriate statistical tests. The codebook used to clarify the values of the survey data and the SPSS shell were obtained from MetriTech, Inc. Descriptive statistics were then run on both public and private groups and were used as comparative data. Demographic variables, such as type of school, were compared to scale attributes or perceptions (Fink, 2003). Comparisons of means analyses were calculated to show the relationship between the two groups' variables and scales. The following is a detailed description of statistical analyses used to address each of the three research questions:

#### Research Question 1

To what extent are there differences, if any, in the leadership behaviors (i.e., defines mission, manages curriculum, supervises teaching, monitors student progress, and promotes instructional climate) of public school principals and private school principals?

### *Defines Mission Scale*

A comparison of the *Defines Mission* items comparing the two groups was undertaken. Descriptive statistics were calculated for data obtained from the *Defines Mission* scale items 53, 58, 63, 68, 73, 78, 83, and 88 of the public school principals and the private school principals. *Defines Mission* items were obtained from inventory questions including corresponding *ILI* item numbers:

- a. Item (53), Discuss school goals, purposes, and mission with staff?
- b. Item (58), Take advantage of an opportunity to stress and communicate school goals?
- c. Item (63), Try to be visible in the school building?
- d. Item (68), Recognize good teaching at formal school ceremonies?
- e. Item (73), Communicate excitement about future possibilities to staff and students?
- f. Item (78), Instruct a committee to be creative and innovative in its work?
- g. Item (83), Focus on school goals in curriculum development?
- h. Item (88), Discuss school goals with students?

### *Manages Curriculum Scale*

A comparison of the *Manages Curriculum* items comparing the two groups was undertaken. Descriptive statistics were calculated for data obtained from the *Manages Curriculum* items 54, 59, 64, 69, 74, 79, 84, and 89 of the public school principals and the private school principals. *Manages Curriculum* items were obtained from inventory questions including corresponding *ILI* item numbers:

- a. Item (54), Provide information teachers need to plan their work effectively?

- b. Item (59), Insist policies and procedures be followed?
- c. Item (64), Find resources to help staff do a good job?
- d. Item (69), Make detailed staff improvement plans?
- e. Item (74), Review the fit between curriculum objectives and achievement testing?
- f. Item (79), Coordinate curriculum across grade levels?
- g. Item (84), Provide specific support for curriculum development?
- h. Item (89), Make sure that lesson plans fit with the stated instructional objectives?

### *Supervises Teaching Scale*

A comparison of the *Supervises Teaching* items comparing the two groups was undertaken. Descriptive statistics were calculated for data obtained from the *Supervises Teaching* items 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, and 99 of the public school principals and the private school principals. *Supervises Teaching* items were obtained from inventory questions including corresponding *ILI* item numbers:

- a. Item (55), Spend time working on teaching skills with a teacher?
- b. Item (60), Observe a class?
- c. Item (65), Encourage staff to try their best?
- d. Item (70), Communicate high expectations to staff and students?
- e. Item (75), Model effective teaching techniques for staff?
- f. Item (80), Demonstrate an innovative teaching method to staff?
- g. Item (85), Help a teacher develop a specific strategy to increase student achievement?
- h. Item (90), Try to motivate a staff member?
- i. Item (95), Check to see that staff is working up to capacity?

- j. Item (99), Demand more effort from a staff member?

### *Monitors Student Progress Scale*

A comparison of the *Monitors Student Progress* items comparing the two groups was undertaken. Descriptive statistics were calculated for the data obtained from *Monitors Student Progress* items 56, 61, 66, 71, 76, 81, 86, 91, 94, and 96 of the public school principals and the private school principals. *Monitors Student Progress* items were obtained from inventory questions including corresponding *ILI* item numbers:

- a. Item (56), Review a student's performance with a teacher?
- b. Item (61), Stress the importance of achieving top test scores to teachers?
- c. Item (66), Use student assessment information to gauge progress toward the school's goals?
- d. Item (71), Discuss assessment results with faculty to determine areas of strengths and weaknesses?
- e. Item (76), Inform teachers, students, and community of assessment results through newsletters, memos, assemblies, and other media?
- f. Item (81), Use the work and projects of students as part of the instructional evaluation?
- g. Item (86), Make regular contact with teachers to evaluate student progress?
- h. Item (91), Work with teachers to discover new approaches for dealing with learning problems?
- i. Item (94), Model creative thinking for staff and students?
- j. Item (96), Set specific expectations for student performance.

### *Promotes Instructional Climate Scale*

A comparison of the *Promotes Instructional Climate* items comparing the two groups was undertaken. Descriptive statistics were calculated for data obtained from the *Promotes Instructional Climate* items 57, 62, 67, 72, 77, 82, 87, 92, 93, 97, and 98 of the public school principals and the private school principals. *Promotes Instructional Climate* items were obtained from inventory questions including corresponding *ILI* item numbers:

- a. Item (57), Write a letter of commendation for a job well done?
- b. Item (62), Ask parents to praise teachers for good work?
- c. Item (67), Encourage a teacher to try out a new idea?
- d. Item (72), Encourage a teacher to compete for an award?
- e. Item (77), Nominate teachers for awards?
- f. Item (82), Encourage and support a staff member seeking additional training?
- g. Item (87), Praise staff members for their good work?
- h. Item (92), Join an informal discussion among staff members?
- i. Item (93), Seek advice from staff members in making a decision?
- j. Item (97), Write a memo to staff praising their efforts?
- k. Item (98), Foster regard for teachers among students and parents?

### *Comparisons between Scales*

A comparison of the data obtained from *ILI* scale item groups above for the eight scales for the two groups, public and private, was undertaken. Comparisons of means were calculated for each type, public and private, to show the relationship between principals' leadership behaviors, principals' personal characteristics, and the eight scales:

1. Defines mission

2. Manages curriculum
3. Supervises teaching
4. Monitors student progress
5. Promotes instructional climate
6. Staff contextual
7. Student contextual
8. Community contextual

#### Research Question 2

To what extent are there differences, if any, in the demographic characteristics of public and private school principals?

#### *Demographic Characteristics*

A comparison of the data on demographic variables for the two groups was undertaken. Descriptive statistics were calculated for the demographic variables of the public school principals and the private school principals. Demographic variables obtained from *ILLI* items 101-110 were:

- a. Sex
- b. Age
- c. Ethnic background
- d. Years of experience as a principal
- e. Years of teaching experience
- f. Highest degree earned
- g. Current position

- h. Student population
- i. Number of continuing education courses
- j. Special commendations or awards related to work as an administrator item

### Research Question 3

To what extent are there differences, if any, in the work environment (i.e., school characteristics, community characteristics, and staff characteristics) of public and private school principals?

#### *Staff Contextual Scale*

A comparison of the data on *Staff Contextual* characteristics for the two groups was undertaken. Descriptive statistics were calculated for the data obtained on *Staff Contextual* characteristics of the public school principals and the private school principals. *Staff Contextual* variables obtained from *ILI* items 13-26 were, your staff is:

1. Cohesive
2. Professionally committed
3. Motivated
4. Respected in the district
5. Respected in the community
6. Innovative and creative
7. Capable
8. Skillful
9. Respectful
10. Productive

11. Self-disciplined
12. Persevering
13. Enthusiastic
14. Forceful
15. Assertive
16. Cooperative

*School Contextual Scale*

A comparison of the data on *School Contextual* characteristics for the two groups was undertaken. Descriptive statistics were calculated for the data obtained on *School Contextual* characteristics of the public school principals and the private school principals. *School Contextual* variables obtained from *ILLI* items 27-41 were, your school:

1. Has a sense of direction or mission
2. Runs smoothly
3. Has adequate educational resources
4. Has inadequate facilities
5. Has high student mobility
6. Has a truancy/dropout problem
7. Is effective in reaching objectives
8. Has inadequate finances
9. Has a good reputation in the district
10. Consistently outperforms schools in the area
11. Is viewed with extreme pride by the students
12. Is clean, orderly, and safe

13. Has high expectations for student achievement
14. Has frequent incidents of vandalism/theft
15. Has students who take homework seriously and complete it in time

### *Community Contextual Scale*

A comparison of the data on *Community Contextual* characteristics for the two groups was undertaken. Descriptive statistics were calculated for the data obtained on *Community Contextual* characteristics of the public school principals and the private school principals. *Community Contextual* variables obtained from *ILI* items 42-52 were, your community:

1. Is highly involved in education
2. Has high expectations for student achievement
3. Encourages educational innovation
4. Is progressive
5. Is ethnically diverse
6. Is highly educated
7. Is a partner in education
8. Helps the school enforce policies such as timely completion of homework
9. Is antagonistic toward school policies
10. Does not take an involvement in the educational process
11. Provides an abundance of volunteer services to the school

### Summary

The description of the methodology used for this study involved following the Tailored Design Method (Dillman, 2000) for a mailed survey to a sample of public and private elementary school principals in the state of Florida and included the calculations identified as appropriate for each research question. Data analyses specific to each of the three research questions detailed in this Chapter are presented in Chapter 4 and include: (a) an interpretation of the findings, and (b) the related discussion of the findings. Implications and recommendations based on the analyses and findings are discussed in Chapter 5.

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings resulting from the analyses of data collected in this research study. The chapter is presented in three sections: (a) the analyses and findings for the demographic data identifying the characteristics of the research groups, public elementary school principals and private lower school heads; (b) the analyses and findings for the three research questions; and (c) a summary of the relevant findings.

The purpose of this research was to explore similarities and differences in the roles, behaviors, and role focus of public school principals as compared to private lower school heads in relation to instructional and managerial leadership. The study of these two groups investigated possible influences of the accountability movement on the behaviors and leadership role focus of public elementary school principals. Data was collected using a self-perception survey, the *Instructional Leadership Inventory (ILI)*. The *ILI* included specific information related to behaviors, role focus, and demographic characteristics required for this research study.

#### Population and Sample

The 350 public elementary school principals in the random sample studied were derived from the total school population of 1,570 elementary principals listed in the Florida Department of Education public school records for the 2004-05 academic year. The private school sample included the total population of 151 lower school heads

meeting the grade level requirement and listed in the Florida Council of Independent Schools' (FCIS) private school directory for the 2004-05 academic year. The respondents surveyed were leaders of public and private schools that were included within the grade levels spanning pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. The first group of this sample is the public elementary school principals (N=168). The second group of this sample is the private lower school heads (N=95).

### Instrument

The survey instrument, the *Instructional Leadership Inventory (ILI)*, was obtained from MetriTech, Inc. (1988). Principals were required to self-report perceptions of their leadership behaviors on the *ILI* instrument. The instrument consists of four parts. Part one asks the respondent to answer questions by selecting either (A) or (B). Part two is based on a 5-point Likert type response ranging from strongly disagree (A) to strongly agree (E). Part three is based on a 5-point Likert type response ranging from almost never (A) to almost always (E). Part four, demographic information, provides ten personal questions with a selection of responses grouped into categories from (A) to (E). A sample copy of the instrument is included in Appendix B.

The *ILI* is composed of 110 questions distributed into eight scales and ten demographic inquiries displayed in the table in Appendix A. Contextual scales directed at the principals' perceptions of the work environment referred to: (a) the staff, (b) the school district, and (c) the community. Scales directed at determining the principals' degree of managerial leadership behaviors, referred to: (a) *Manages Curriculum*, (b) *Supervises Teaching*, and (c) *Monitors Student Progress*. Scales directed at determining the principals' degree of instructional leadership behaviors, referred to: (a) *Defines*

*Mission* and (b) *Promotes Instructional Climate*. Principals' personal characteristics and demographic data were obtained through *ILI* survey questions 101-110.

#### Reliability Analysis of the Instructional Leadership Inventory

Reliability data on the *ILI* were reported by Conoley, Impara, and Murphy (1995) in the *Twelfth Mental Measurements Yearbook*. Krug (1990), from a sample of 262 principals, obtained a coefficient alpha index of internal consistency on the instrument's eight individual scales that ranged from .74 to .86. According to Conoley, Impara, and Murphy, these values suggested that the *ILI* was reliable and also justified its use with individual principals. Smith, Maehr, and Midgley (1992) used the *ILI* with a sample of 160 principals. The range of the coefficient alpha index of internal consistency on the eight individual scales was found to be .74 to .89. The range of results from the present study with a sample of 263 public and private elementary school principals included in Table 2 were from .73 to .80 for the five behavioral scales.

Table 2

Reliability: Calculated for the Five Leadership Behaviors (N=263)

Leadership Behaviors	Chronbach's Coefficient Alpha		
	Public	Private	Total Group
Defines Mission	0.79	0.74	0.76
Promotes Instructional Climate	0.79	0.80	0.79
Supervises Teaching	0.79	0.82	0.80
Monitors Student Progress	0.76	0.77	0.78
Manages Curriculum	0.73	0.74	0.73

The alpha data reported for the three contextual scales presented in Table 3 ranged from .56 to .91. The total range of the data from the 263 respondents on the eight individual scales was .56 to .91. Data from the public school group of 168 respondents on the eight individual scales ranged from .61 to .92 and the analysis of the private school group of 95 respondents ranged from .47 to .85. The *ILI* was found to have a broader range of reliability in this study compared to previous studies by Krug (1990) and Smith, Maehr, and Midgley (1992).

Table 3

Reliability: Calculated for the Three Contextual Characteristics of the Work Environment

(N=263)

Contextual Characteristics	Chronbach's Coefficient Alpha		Total Group
	Public	Private	
Staff	0.92	0.85	0.91
School	0.61	0.47	0.56
Community	0.74	0.65	0.72

### Data Collection

Previous to the implementation of the research study, approval was obtained for human subjects study from the University of Central Florida's Institutional Review Board (UCFIRB). The data collection for this study was then conducted according to the elements of Dillman's (2000) Tailored Design Method for mailed surveys. Contact one, Appendix C, was the pre-notice message and included the date, personalized inside address, what will happen, what it is about, usefulness of survey, thank you, personal professional benefit, and researcher's signature. The second mailing package was sent to the 501 participants one week later and included a cover letter (Appendix D), the survey, an answer sheet, and a stamped return address envelope. The cover letter, provided an expression of appreciation, IRB information with confidentiality, willingness to answer questions, thank you, directions for survey return, and researcher's signature. The third personalized contact was the thank you postcard (see Appendix E) included a brief text about the survey package, the need for each and every response, a thank you for participating in the research project, and specified how to obtain a second copy if the first mailing was lost or misplaced. The fourth personalized contact (see Appendix E) was a

postcard sent to nonresponders and stressed the usefulness of the research, value of each and every response, and the e-mail and phone number of the researcher as a method to obtain a second copy of the survey. The fifth contact was to nonresponders and was by phone when possible. The data collection process resulted in 263 returned surveys, a 52.5% total response rate. The public school response rate was 48.0%, or 168 returned surveys out of the 350 mailed surveys. The private school response rate was 62.9%, or 95 returned surveys out of the 151 mailed surveys.

### Research Questions

The following subsections focus on the individual research questions that were used to guide the collection and analyses of data in the design of this study. Each subsection includes a narrative description specific to the research analyses and findings for the question under discussion and any additional requisite analyses.

#### Research Question 1

The first question guiding this study was, “To what extent are there differences, if any, in the leadership behaviors (i.e., defines mission, manages curriculum, supervises teaching, monitors student progress, and promotes instructional climate) of public school principals and private school principals?” The *Instructional Leadership Evaluation and Development Program: Instructional Leadership Inventory Manual* (MetriTech, Inc., 1988) identified questions 53 to 100 in the *ILI* that applied to the five scales that correspond to the behaviors in Research Question 1. Respondents to questions 53 to 100 on the *ILI* selected from almost never (0), seldom (1), sometimes (2), frequently (3), and almost always (4).

### *Defines Mission*

The public elementary school principal group and the private lower school head group were found to be similar in responding to items on several behaviors when comparing percents related to the specific criteria identified for the *Defines Mission* scale presented in Table 4. Respondents in the public and private groups were similar in the frequency in which they ranked the majority of items in the *Defines Mission* scale. Respondents in both groups, public (91.7%) and private (89.5%), felt that they *frequently* or *almost always* discussed school goals, purposes, and mission with staff. Respondents tried to be visible in the school building, communicated excitement about future possibilities to staff and students, instructed committees to be creative and innovative in their work, focused on school goals in curriculum development, and discussed school goals with students. However, differences appeared when questioned about taking advantage of opportunities to stress and communicate school goals with the public frequency of ranking *frequently* or *almost always* 88.1% and private frequency of 80.0%. Last, 59.8% of the public group and 51.5% of the private group ranked *frequently* or *almost always* in response to recognizing good teaching at formal school ceremonies.

Table 4

## Descriptive Statistics: Defines Mission Scale Criteria Frequencies

Behavior / Scale	Group	Almost Never %	Seldom %	Sometimes %	Frequently %	Almost Always %
Discuss goals, purposes, mission	Public	0.0	0.0	8.3	63.7	28.0
	Private	1.1	0.0	9.5	69.5	20.0
Stress, communicate goals	Public	0.0	1.2	10.7	58.3	29.8
	Private	0.0	1.1	18.9	60.0	20.0
Visible in the school	Public	0.0	0.0	0.6	22.6	76.8
	Private	0.0	0.0	2.1	28.4	69.5
Recognize good teaching at ceremonies	Public	3.0	8.4	28.7	34.7	25.1
	Private	6.3	18.9	23.2	32.6	18.9
Communicate excitement about future	Public	0.0	1.2	7.7	53.0	38.1
	Private	0.0	2.1	11.6	43.2	43.2
Instruct committee to be creative and innovative	Public	0.6	1.2	26.9	46.7	24.6
	Private	2.1	7.4	22.1	42.1	26.3
Focus on school goals in curriculum development	Public	0.0	0.0	6.6	36.5	56.9
	Private	0.0	0.0	5.3	36.8	57.9
Discuss school goals with students	Public	0.6	13.7	39.9	35.1	10.7
	Private	3.2	17.9	36.8	32.6	9.5

Rank: 0= almost never, 1=seldom, 2=sometimes, 3=frequently, and 4=almost always

Note: Total percentages for any rows may be greater than 100% due to rounding.

In the analysis of the *Defines Mission* scale the difference in the comparison of means found in the independent *t* test of the public elementary principal group and the private lower school head group was statistically significant ( $p=.046$ ) as presented in Table 5. The descriptive analysis of the criteria specific to the *Defines Mission* scale items showed both the public and the private school groups to be similar ( $p>.05$ ) in all but two of the *Defines Mission* instructional leadership behaviors. Statistically significant

differences were found ( $p < .05$ ) in the two behaviors: (a) takes advantage of an opportunity to stress and communicate school goals and (b) recognizes good teaching at formal school ceremonies. These items were found to support differences in the two groups, public and private, and the comparison of means for the *Defines Mission* scale analysis.

Table 5

T-test for Equality of Means: Defines Mission Scale and Behaviors

Behavior	Group	N	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equality of Means for <i>Defines Mission Scale</i>	Public	167	.046*
	Private	95	
53. Discuss school goals, purposes, and mission with staff	Public	168	.116
	Private	95	
58. Take advantage of an opportunity to stress and communicate school goals	Public	168	.037*
	Private	95	
63. Try to be visible in the school building	Public	168	.162
	Private	95	
68. Recognize good teaching at formal school ceremonies	Public	167	.030*
	Private	95	
73. Communicate excitement about future possibilities to staff and students	Public	168	.947
	Private	95	
78. Instruct a committee to be creative and innovative in its work	Public	167	.382
	Private	95	
83. Focus on school goals in curriculum development	Public	167	.765
	Private	95	
88. Discuss school goals with students	Public	168	.237
	Private	95	

Note: Equal variances not assumed, comparison of means is significant at \* $p < .05$ . Total respondents may differ depending on participants' completion of responses to individual items.

### *Promotes Instructional Climate*

The findings from the analysis of data for frequencies are provided in Table 6.

Public and private school respondents reported assigning a similar rank of *frequently* or *almost always* when asked about how often they wrote letters of commendation for a job

well done, asked parents to praise teachers for good work, encouraged a teacher to try out a new idea, encouraged and supported a staff member seeking additional training, praised staff members for their good work, sought out advice from staff members in making decisions, and fostered regard for teachers among students and parents.

Three of the questions in the *Promotes Instructional Climate* scale reflected behaviors that resulted in significant frequencies individually. The first statistically significant difference in behavior was found when comparing frequencies for encouraging a teacher to compete for an award. The percentages of ranks for *frequently* or *almost always* were 59.3% for the public school respondents and 34.7% for the private school respondents. Second, a difference was observed when reviewing the analysis of data for nominating teachers for awards. *Frequently* or *almost always* was ranked by 55% of the public group as compared to 27.4% in the private group with the same rankings. Third, 82.1% of the public school leaders and 85.3% of the private school leaders were found to identify the rank of *frequently* or *almost always* in response to joining an informal discussion among staff members. The final behavior in this scale showed no statistical significance, but showed 65.3% of the public respondents and 80.0% of the private school group ranked writing a memo to staff praising their efforts as *frequently* or *almost always*. The analysis of data revealed these four notable differences in frequencies of behaviors within the *Promotes Instructional Climate* scale of the instructional leadership role.

Table 6

## Descriptive Statistics: Promotes Instructional Climate Scale Criteria Frequencies

Behavior / Scale	Group	Almost Never %	Seldom %	Sometimes %	Frequently %	Almost Always %
Write letter of commendation	Public	0.0	7.7	42.3	40.5	9.5
	Private	3.2	7.4	38.9	35.8	14.7
Ask parents to praise teachers	Public	7.2	15.0	42.5	28.1	7.2
	Private	11.6	23.2	34.7	26.3	4.2
Encourage teacher to try out a new idea	Public	0.0	0.0	8.3	47.6	44.0
	Private	1.1	1.1	8.4	42.1	47.4
Encourage teacher to compete for award	Public	0.6	6.0	34.1	42.5	16.8
	Private	10.5	16.8	37.9	26.3	8.4
Nominate teachers for awards	Public	1.2	5.4	38.3	38.9	16.2
	Private	12.6	22.1	37.9	17.9	9.5
Encourage / support staff seeking training	Public	0.0	0.0	1.8	36.9	61.3
	Private	0.0	0.0	3.2	27.4	69.5
Praise staff for good work	Public	0.0	0.6	8.9	42.3	48.2
	Private	0.0	1.1	8.4	45.3	45.3
Join discussion among staff	Public	0.0	0.6	17.4	61.1	21.0
	Private	0.0	1.1	13.7	41.1	44.2
Seek advice in making a decision	Public	0.0	0.0	10.1	54.2	35.7
	Private	0.0	0.0	14.7	50.5	34.7
Write memo to staff praising their efforts	Public	1.2	4.8	28.7	43.1	22.2
	Private	2.1	5.3	12.6	47.4	32.6
Foster regard for teachers among students / parents	Public	0.0	0.0	8.3	49.4	42.3
	Private	0.0	1.1	9.6	43.6	45.7

Rank: 0= almost never, 1=seldom, 2=sometimes, 3=frequently, and 4=almost always

Note: Total percentages for any rows may be greater than 100% due to rounding.

In the analysis of the *Promotes Instructional Climate* scale, the difference between the means of the public elementary principal group and the private lower school head group was not found to be statistically significant ( $p=.067$ ) as shown in Table 7. Although the *Promotes Instructional Climate* scale comparison of means was not found to be statistically significant as a scale, the public elementary school principal group and the private lower school head group were found to differ significantly ( $p<.05$ ) when comparing the frequencies of individual items related to the specific criteria for the *Promotes Instructional Climate* scale. The public school principals and the private school heads were found to differ significantly when reviewing the following three items: (1) encourages a teacher to compete for an award ( $p<.001$ ), (2) nominates teachers for awards ( $p<.001$ ), and (3) joins an informal discussion among staff members ( $p=.005$ ).

Table 7

## T-test for Equality of Means: Promotes Instructional Climate Behaviors

Behavior	Group	N	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equality of Means for <i>Promotes Instructional Climate Scale</i>	Public	166	.067
	Private	94	
57. Write a letter of commendation for a job well done	Public	168	.986
	Private	95	
62. Asks parents to praise teachers for good work	Public	167	.065
	Private	95	
67. Encourage a teacher to try out a new idea	Public	168	.827
	Private	95	
72. Encourage a teacher to compete for an award	Public	167	.000**
	Private	95	
77. Nominate teachers for awards	Public	167	.000**
	Private	95	
82. Encourage and support a staff member seeking additional training	Public	168	.323
	Private	95	
87. Praise staff members for their good work	Public	168	.700
	Private	95	
92. Join an informal discussion among staff members	Public	167	.005*
	Private	95	
93. Seek advice from staff members in making a decision	Public	168	.510
	Private	95	
97. Write a memo to staff praising their efforts	Public	167	.052
	Private	95	
98. Foster regard for teachers among students and parents	Public	168	.990
	Private	95	

Note: Equal variances not assumed, comparison of means is significant at \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .001$ . Total respondents may differ depending on participants' completion of responses to individual items.

### *Manages Curriculum*

The public elementary school principal group and the private lower school head group were found to be similar in only one behavior in the *Manages Curriculum* scale. Leaders from the public and private groups reported that they *frequently* or *almost always* provide specific support for curriculum development. The remainder of the behaviors in this scale differed when comparing frequencies and means related to the individual the *Manages Curriculum* scale items. First, in response to providing information teachers need to plan their work effectively, 43.7% of the public school group and 38.9% of the private school group responded ranking the behavior as *almost always*. Second, 42.9% of the public and 34.7% of the private respondents reported that they *almost always* insisted policies and procedures be followed. Third, both public (56.3%) and private (43.2%) school groups reported that that they *almost always* found resources to help staff do a good job. A fourth difference was found in the frequency of the responses *frequently* or *almost always* by public school principal group (77.6%) compared to the private school group (45.3%). The fifth difference was related to how often the separate groups reported reviewing the fit between curriculum objectives and achievement testing. The public school group (85.8%) and the private school group (55.8%) reported significant differences in the *frequently* or *almost always* ranking of this item. Sixth, the public group responded 93.7% in comparison to the private group who reported of 79.8% for the ranking of *frequently* or *almost always* when reporting on coordinating curriculum across grade levels. The fourth and last difference in frequency of responses to questions in the *Manages Curriculum* scale occurred in how often leaders make sure that lesson plans fit with the stated instructional objectives. *Frequently* or *almost always* was reported by 74.8% of the public responders as compared to 63.2% private responders. Public school

leaders indicated a ranking of *frequently* and *almost always* for these *Manages Curriculum* behaviors in the managerial leadership role as shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics: Manages Curriculum Scale Criteria Frequencies

Behavior / Scale	Group	Almost Never %	Seldom %	Sometimes %	Frequently %	Almost Always %
Provide information needed to plan effectively	Public	0.0	0.0	4.2	52.1	43.7
	Private	0.0	1.1	3.2	56.8	38.9
Insist policies and procedures be followed	Public	0.0	3.0	10.1	44.0	42.9
	Private	0.0	1.1	12.6	51.6	34.7
Find resources to help staff do a good job	Public	0.0	0.0	2.4	41.3	56.3
	Private	0.0	0.0	10.5	46.3	43.2
Make detailed staff improvement plans	Public	0.6	4.8	16.1	41.7	36.9
	Private	4.2	9.5	41.1	35.8	9.5
Review fit between curriculum and testing	Public	0.0	0.6	13.8	62.3	23.4
	Private	4.2	10.5	29.5	33.7	22.1
Coordinate curriculum across grade levels	Public	0.0	1.8	18.5	54.8	25.0
	Private	1.1	0.0	5.3	47.4	46.3
Provide support for curriculum development	Public	0.0	0.6	4.8	40.0	51.8
	Private	0.0	0.0	9.5	42.9	50.5
Make sure lesson plans fit with objectives	Public	0.6	3.0	21.6	46.7	28.1
	Private	5.3	9.5	22.1	42.1	21.1

Scale: 0= almost never, 1=seldom, 2=sometimes, 3=frequently, and 4=almost always

Note: Total percentages for any rows may be greater than 100% due to rounding.

In the analysis of the *Manages Curriculum* scale, the difference calculated in the comparison of means using the independent *t* test was found to be statistically significant

( $p=.001$ ) as shown in Table 9. Six of the individual items in the *Manages Curriculum Scale* were found to have statistical significance. Public and private school leaders differed significantly when asked if they found resources to help staff do a good job ( $p=.008$ ), made detailed staff improvement plans ( $p<.001$ ), reviewed the fit between curriculum objectives and achievement testing ( $p<.001$ ), coordinated curriculum across grade levels ( $p<.001$ ), and made sure that lesson plans fit with the stated instructional objectives ( $p=.008$ ).

Table 9

T-test for Equality of Means: Manages Curriculum Scale and Behaviors

Behavior	Group	N	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equality of Means for Manages Curriculum Scale	Public	167	.001*
	Private	95	
54. Provide information teachers need to plan their work effectively	Public	167	.439
	Private	95	
59. Insist policies and procedures be followed	Public	168	.463
	Private	95	
64. Find resources to help staff do a good job	Public	167	.008*
	Private	95	
69. Make detailed staff improvement plans	Public	168	.000**
	Private	95	
74. Review the fit between curriculum objectives and achievement testing	Public	167	.000**
	Private	95	
79. Coordinate curriculum across grade levels	Public	168	.000**
	Private	95	
84. Provide specific support for curriculum development	Public	168	.565
	Private	95	
89. Make sure that lesson plans fit with the stated instructional objectives	Public	167	.008*
	Private	95	

Note: Equal variances not assumed, comparison of means is significant at \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .001$ . Total respondents may differ depending on participants' completion of responses to individual items.

### *Supervises Teaching*

The findings from the analysis of frequencies are presented in Table 10. Both the public elementary school principal group and the private lower school head group were not found to differ significantly in five of the behaviors when comparing percentages

related to the specific criteria for the *Supervises Teaching* scale items. The frequencies of responses to the following five items were similar between groups: (a) spent time on teaching skills with a teacher, (b) modeled effective teaching techniques, (c) helped a teacher develop a strategy to increase student achievement, (d) motivated a staff member, and (e) demanded more effort from a staff member.

The analyses of the remaining five questions included in this scale revealed differences in the frequency of rankings. First, when asked about observing a class, 91.6% of the public group and 75.8% of the private school group ranked their responses as *frequently* or *almost always*. Second, 99.4% of the public group and 94.8% of the private group indicated that they encouraged staff to try their best. Third, 97.0% of public school principals and 84.3% of the private lower school heads responded that they communicated high expectations to staff *frequently* or *almost always*. Fourth, the analysis showed that 46.3% of the public school group and 96.9% of the private school group reported demonstrating innovative teaching *frequently* or *almost always*. Last, 81.5% of the public and 74.8% of the private school leaders identified checking to see that staff is working up to capacity as a behavior they exhibit *frequently* or *almost always*. The public elementary school principal group ranked these five individual behaviors *almost always* more often than the private lower school heads in the *Supervising Teaching* scale, which is considered a role in managerial leadership.

Table 10

## Descriptive Statistics: Supervises Teaching Scale Criteria Frequencies

Behavior / Scale	Group	Almost Never %	Seldom %	Sometimes %	Frequently %	Almost Always %
Spend time on teaching skills with teacher	Public	0.6	4.8	36.9	49.4	8.3
	Private	2.1	8.4	45.3	34.7	9.5
Observe a class	Public	0.0	0.0	8.3	60.1	31.5
	Private	1.1	2.1	21.1	61.1	14.7
Encourages staff to try their best	Public	0.0	0.0	0.6	29.8	69.6
	Private	0.0	1.1	4.2	41.1	53.7
Communicate high expectations	Public	0.0	0.0	3.0	26.2	70.8
	Private	0.0	2.1	13.7	43.2	41.1
Model effective teaching techniques	Public	2.4	14.4	49.7	25.1	8.4
	Private	12.6	22.1	37.9	17.9	9.5
Demonstrate innovative teaching	Public	1.8	12.6	38.9	32.6	13.7
	Private	2.1	0.0	3.2	27.4	69.5
Help teacher develop a strategy to increase student achievement	Public	0.0	0.0	25.1	51.5	23.4
	Private	0.0	6.3	22.1	38.9	32.6
Try to motivate a staff member	Public	0.0	1.2	13.1	47.0	38.7
	Private	0.0	1.1	17.9	47.4	33.7
Check staff is working up to capacity	Public	0.6	0.6	17.3	58.9	22.6
	Private	0.0	5.3	20.0	61.1	13.7
Demand more effort from staff	Public	1.8	11.3	48.8	29.8	8.3
	Private	2.1	7.4	64.9	19.1	6.4

Rank: 0= almost never, 1=seldom, 2=sometimes, 3=frequently, and 4=almost always

Note: Total percentages for any rows may be greater than 100% due to rounding.

In the analysis of the *Supervises Teaching* scale the difference in the comparison of means for the public elementary principal group and the private lower school head group was found to be statistically significant ( $p=.045$ ) as shown in Table 11. The analyses of the remaining five items included in this scale detailed differences in the mean rankings. The five questions that were found to be statistically significant are as follows: (1) observing a class ( $p<.001$ ), encouraging staff to try their best ( $p=.004$ ), communicating high expectations to staff ( $p<.001$ ), demonstrating innovative teaching ( $p=.034$ ), and checking to see that staff is working up to capacity ( $p=.037$ ).

Table 11

## T-test for Equality of Means: Supervises Teaching Scale and Behaviors

Behavior	Group	N	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equality of Means for Supervises Teaching Scale	Public	167	.045*
	Private	94	
55. Spend time working on teaching skills with a teacher	Public	168	.070
	Private	95	
60. Observe a class	Public	168	.000**
	Private	95	
65. Encourages staff to try their best	Public	168	.004*
	Private	95	
70. Communicate high expectations to staff and students	Public	168	.000**
	Private	95	
75. Model effective teaching techniques for staff	Public	167	.112
	Private	95	
80. Demonstrate an innovative teaching method to staff	Public	168	.034*
	Private	95	
85. Help a teacher develop a specific strategy to increase student achievement	Public	167	.977
	Private	95	
90. Try to motivate a staff member	Public	168	.311
	Private	95	
95. Check to see that staff is working up to capacity	Public	168	.037*
	Private	95	
99. Demand more effort from a staff member	Public	168	.267
	Private	95	

Note: Equal variances not assumed, comparison of means is significant at \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .001$ . Total respondents may differ depending on participants' completion of responses to individual items.

### *Monitors Student Progress*

The public elementary school principal group and the private lower school head group were found to be similar in five of the behaviors specific to the *Monitors Student Progress* scale items. Leaders from the public and private groups reported the ranks of *frequently* or *almost always* with high frequency when asked if they reviewed a student's performance with a teacher, used the work and projects of students as part of the instructional evaluation, made regular contact with teachers to evaluate student progress, worked with teachers to discover new approaches for dealing with learning problems, and modeled creative thinking for staff and students.

The analyses of the remaining five questions included in this scale were found to demonstrate differences in the frequencies of rankings of the public and private respondents. First, when asked how often principals and lower school heads stressed the importance of achieving top test scores to teachers, 58.7% of the public school principals surveyed and 16.3% of the private lower school heads surveyed assigned the rank of *frequently* or *almost always*. Second, 96.5% of the public group compared to 68.0% of the private group reported that they used student assessment information to gauge progress toward the school's goals *frequently* or *almost always*. Third, the analysis of the data showed 91.6% of the public leaders and 65.6 % of the private leaders indicated that they discussed assessment results with faculty to determine areas of strengths and weaknesses *frequently* or *almost always*. Fourth, 89.8% of the public group compared to 54.7% of the private group reported that they informed teachers, students, and community of assessment results through newsletters, memos, assemblies, and other media *frequently* or *almost always*. Last, 93.5% of the public school group and 68.6% of

the private group identified setting specific expectations for student performance as a part of their behavior *frequently* or *almost always*. The findings from the analysis of data are provided in Table 12.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics: Monitors Student Progress Scale Criteria Frequencies

Behavior / Scale	Group	Almost Never %	Seldom %	Sometimes %	Frequently %	Almost Always %
Review student performance with teacher	Public	0.0	0.6	18.0	65.9	15.6
	Private	0.0	3.2	11.6	55.8	29.5
Stress importance of achieving test scores	Public	3.0	12.0	26.3	37.1	21.6
	Private	16.8	32.6	33.7	14.7	2.1
Use student assessment to gauge progress toward school's goals	Public	0.0	0.0	3.6	28.0	68.5
	Private	4.3	5.3	22.3	48.9	19.1
Discuss assessment with faculty	Public	0.0	0.0	8.4	46.7	44.9
	Private	0.0	5.4	29.0	36.6	29.0
Inform teachers, students, community of assessment results	Public	0.0	0.6	9.6	40.7	49.1
	Private	10.5	15.8	18.9	30.5	24.2
Use work of students as evaluation	Public	2.4	7.8	31.1	41.9	16.8
	Private	4.2	7.4	22.1	43.2	23.2
Make contact with teachers to evaluate student progress	Public	0.0	1.2	15.5	53.6	29.8
	Private	1.1	1.1	17.9	43.2	36.8
Work with teachers to discover new approaches for learning problems	Public	0.0	0.6	23.4	61.1	15.0
	Private	3.2	2.1	20.0	45.3	29.5
Model creative thinking	Public	0.0	3.6	29.9	47.3	19.2
	Private	1.1	4.2	24.2	38.9	31.6
Set expectations for student performance	Public	0.0	0.6	6.0	53.6	39.9
	Private	1.1	7.4	23.2	52.6	15.8

Scale: 0= almost never, 1=seldom, 2=sometimes, 3=frequently, and 4=almost always

Note: Total percentages for any rows may be greater than 100% due to rounding.

In the analysis of the Monitors Student Progress scale, the difference between the means of the public elementary principal group and the private lower school head group was found to be statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ) as shown in Table 13. The analysis of five questions included in this scale demonstrated statistically significant differences ( $p < .001$ ) in the comparison of means for the rankings of the public and private respondents on the following items: (a) stressed the importance of achieving top test scores, (b) used student assessment information to gauge progress toward the school's goals, (c) discussed assessment results with faculty to determine areas of strengths and weaknesses, (d) reported that they informed teachers, students, and community of assessment results through newsletters, memos, assemblies, and other media, and (e) set specific expectations for student performance. The public elementary school principal respondents and the private lower school head respondents were found to significantly ( $p < .05$ ) differ in the comparison of means analysis using the independent t test for the Monitors Student Progress scale items considered to be behaviors in managerial leadership.

Table 13

## T-test for Equality of Means: Monitors Student Progress Scale and Behaviors

Behavior	Group	N	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equality of Means for <i>Monitors Student Progress</i> Scale	Public	165	.000**
	Private	92	
56. Review a student's performance with a teacher	Public	167	.086
	Private	95	
61. Stress the importance of achieving top test scores to teachers	Public	167	.000**
	Private	95	
66. Use student assessment information to gauge progress toward the school's goals	Public	168	.000**
	Private	94	
71. Discuss assessment results with faculty to determine areas of strengths and weaknesses	Public	167	.000**
	Private	93	
76. Inform teachers, students, and community of assessment results through newsletters, memos, assemblies, and other media	Public	167	.000**
	Private	95	
81. Use the work and projects of students as part of the instructional evaluation	Public	167	.401
	Private	95	
86. Make regular contact with teachers to evaluate student progress	Public	168	.859
	Private	95	
91. Work with teachers to discover new approaches for dealing with learning problems	Public	167	.618
	Private	95	
94. Model creative thinking for staff and students	Public	167	.217
	Private	95	
96. Set specific expectations for student performance	Public	167	.000**
	Private	98	

Note: Equal variances not assumed, comparison of means is significant at \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .001$ . Total respondents may differ depending on participants' completion of responses to individual items.

### *Leadership Role Findings*

In the analysis of the two scales, *Defines Mission* and *Promotes Instructional Climate*, which meet the criteria for an instructional leadership role, the difference between the means of the public elementary principal group and the private lower school head group was found to be statistically significant ( $p=.039$ ). In the analysis of the three scales, *Manages Curriculum*, *Supervises Teaching*, and *Monitors Student Progress*, which meet the criteria for a managerial leadership role focus ( $p<.001$ ), the difference between the means of the public elementary school principal respondents and the private lower school head respondents was found to be statistically significant ( $p<.05$ ). The findings from the analysis for the comparison of means for instructional and managerial leadership are provided in Table 14.

Table 14

T-test for Equality of Means: Instructional and Managerial Leadership Roles

Behavior	Group	N	Sig. (2-tailed)
Instructional Leadership Role	Public	166	.039*
	Private	94	
Managerial Leadership Role	Public	165	.000**
	Private	91	

Note: Equal variances not assumed, comparison of means is significant at \* $p<.05$ , \*\* $p<.001$ . Total respondents may differ depending on participants' completion of responses to individual items.

## Research Question 2

The second question guiding this study was, “To what extent are there differences, if any, in the demographic characteristics of public and private school principals?” MetriTech Inc. assigned values to the ranked categories of the *ILI* for the responses corresponding to questions 100-110 with values ranging from one to five depending on the number of categories available for selection in each question.

### *Similarities and Differences of the Groups*

The public elementary principal group and the private lower school head group surveyed were found to be similar in: (a) gender, (b) average age, and (c) ethnicity. The highest frequencies of responses reported by elementary principals and lower school heads that participated in the survey were from female, white Caucasians between the ages of 50 and 59 years. The data analysis is presented in Table 15.

Table 15

Frequencies: Sex, Age, and Ethnicity

Demographic		Public		Private	
		N	%	N	%
Sex	Male	43	25.6	21	22.3
	Female	125	74.4	73	77.7
Age	Younger than 30	1	0.6	0	0.0
	30 to 39 years	12	7.1	10	10.6
	40 to 49 years	33	19.6	17	18.1
	50 to 59 years	110	65.5	50	53.2
	Older than 59	12	7.1	17	18.1
Ethnic	White	139	83.2	88	93.6
	Black	18	10.8	0	0.0
	Hispanic	9	5.4	3	3.2
	Other	1	0.6	3	3.2

Note: Total percentages for any columns may be greater than 100% due to rounding.

The public respondents and the private respondents were found to be similar in: (a) years of experience teaching, and (b) number of continuing education courses taken. Public (63.1%) and private (66.3%) school leaders reported having more than 12 years of teaching experience, and both (86%) reported taking four or more continuing education courses. The frequencies computed for teaching experience and continuing education courses taken are presented in Table 16.

Table 16

Frequencies: Teaching Experience and Continuing Education Courses Taken

Demographic	Public		Private		
	N	%	N	%	
Teaching Experience	0 to 3 years	2	1.2	1	1.1
	4 to 6 years	14	8.3	6	6.3
	7 to 9 years	21	12.5	17	17.9
	10 to 12 years	25	14.9	8	8.4
	More than 12 yrs	106	63.1	63	66.3
Continuing Education Courses Taken	0 courses	8	4.8	6	6.3
	1 course	5	3.0	2	2.1
	2 courses	6	3.6	5	5.3
	3 courses	4	2.4	0	0.0
	4 or more	144	86.2	82	86.3

Note: Total percentages for any columns may be greater than 100% due to rounding.

The statistically significant differences found between the two groups existed in: (1) years of experience as a principal, (2) highest degree earned, and (3) presentation of an award for administrative work. First, 63.7% of the public elementary principal respondents reported having 6 or more years of experience while only 54.7 % of the private lower school head respondents reported having 6 or more years of experience as principal. Second, 99.5% of the public group responded that they had earned a master's degree or higher, but only 73.49% of the private group responded that they had earned a master's degree or higher. Last, 63.7% of the public school principals noted having received an award or commendation for administrative work, while 56.8% of the private lower school heads reported never having been presented with an administrative award or

special commendation for administrative work. The frequencies computed for principal experience, degree earned, and awards received are depicted in Table 17.

Table 17

Frequencies: Principal Experience, Degree Earned, and Awards Received

Demographic		Public		Private	
		N	%	N	%
Principal Experience	1 to 5 years	61	36.3	36	37.9
	6 to 10 years	48	28.6	16	16.8
	11 to 15 years	28	16.7	14	14.7
	16 to 20 years	17	10.1	14	14.7
	More than 20 yrs	14	8.3	15	15.8
Degree Earned	Bachelor	0	0.0	16	17.0
	Master	109	64.9	58	61.7
	Specialist	31	18.5	8	8.5
	Doctoral	27	16.1	11	11.7
Awards Received	1 No	55	32.7	54	56.8
	2 Yes	107	63.7	40	42.1

Note: Total percentages for any columns may be greater than 100% due to rounding.

The greatest difference in frequencies between the two groups related to school population. The public elementary school group reported 86.9% had a student population of more than 400 students, while the private lower school group reported 79% had a student population below 400 students. The analysis of data is presented in Table 18.

Table 18

## Frequencies: Student Population

	Demographic	Public		Private	
		N	%	N	%
Student Population	Less than 100	0	0.0	4	4.2
	100 to 199	4	2.4	23	24.2
	200 to 299	4	2.4	24	25.3
	300 to 400	14	8.3	24	25.3
	More than 400	146	86.9	20	21.1

Note: Total percentages for any columns may be greater than 100% due to rounding.

In the comparison of means analyses of the demographic variables the difference between the public elementary principal group and the private lower school head group for: (a) highest degree earned ( $p=.002$ ), (b) presentation of an award for administrative work ( $p<.001$ ), and (c) school population ( $p<.001$ ) were found to be statistically significant. The findings from the analysis for the comparison of means are provided in Table 19.

Table 19

## T-test for Equality of Means: Demographic Characteristics

Behavior	Group	N	Sig. (2-tailed)
Gender	Public	168	.553
	Private	94	
Age	Public	168	.490
	Private	94	
Ethnicity	Public	167	.606
	Private	94	
Principal Experience	Public	168	.127
	Private	95	
Teaching Experience	Public	168	.866
	Private	94	
Highest Degree	Public	168	.002*
	Private	94	
Continuing Education	Public	167	.754
	Private	95	
Awards	Public	168	.000**
	Private	95	
Student Population	Public	168	.000**
	Private	95	

Note: Equal variances not assumed, comparison of means is significant at \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .001$ . Total respondents may differ depending on participants' completion of responses to individual items.

## Research Question 3

The third question guiding this study was, "To what extent are there differences, if any, in the work environment (i.e., school characteristics, community characteristics, and staff characteristics) of public and private school principals?" Responses to this

question were based on the *ILI* categories and were ranked with values established by MetriTech, Inc. ranging from *strongly disagree*, assigned a value of 0; *disagree*, assigned a value of 1; *uncertain*, assigned a value of 2; *agree*, assigned a value of 3; and *strongly agree*, assigned a value of 4.

### *School Contextual Characteristics*

The public elementary school group and the private lower school head group were found to be similar in that both groups' calculated mean ranks were *agree* or *strongly agree* for responses to the following *Staff Contextual* characteristics: (a) had a sense of direction/mission; (b) ran smoothly; (c) had adequate educational resources; (d) were effective in reaching objectives; (e) had a good reputation in the district; (f) consistently outperformed schools in the area; (g) were viewed with extreme pride by the students; (h) were clean, orderly, and safe; (i) had high expectations for student achievement; and (j) had students who took homework seriously and completed it on time.

The mean ranking of the principals in the public elementary school group was computed to be *uncertain* when asked if the school: (a) had inadequate facilities, (b) had high student mobility, and (c) had inadequate finances. The mean ranking for the above statements differed from the mean ranking of the private lower school head group. The private group's mean ranking for the above statements was *disagree*. Public elementary principals *disagree* and private lower school heads *strongly disagree* when asked if the school had a truancy/dropout problem or had frequent incidents of vandalism/theft. Table 20 presents the mean values for the public and private *School Contextual* characteristics items.

Table 20

## School Contextual Characteristics: Public and Private

School Contextual Items	Public		Private	
	N	$\bar{X}$	N	$\bar{X}$
27. Sense of direction/mission	168	3.58	95	3.66
28. Runs smoothly	166	3.46	95	3.43
29. Adequate resources	168	2.94	95	3.22
30. Inadequate facilities	168	1.61	95	1.19
31. High student mobility	167	2.23	92	1.24
32. A truancy/dropout problem	167	0.87	95	0.19
33. Reaches objectives	167	3.14	95	3.31
34. Inadequate finances	168	1.75	95	1.14
35. Good reputation in district	167	3.43	94	3.60
36. Consistently outperforms area schools	167	2.60	95	3.22
37. Viewed with extreme pride by students	167	3.23	95	3.43
38. Clean, orderly, and safe	168	3.50	95	3.67
39. High expectations for student achievement	168	3.58	94	3.70
40. Frequent vandalism/theft	168	0.64	95	0.26
41. Students take homework seriously and complete it on time	168	2.84	94	3.40

Scale: 0=strongly disagree, 1=disagree, 2=uncertain, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree

Note: Total respondents may differ depending on participants' completion of responses to individual items.

In a comparison of means for the individual *School Contextual* characteristics items, 10 of the 15 statements were found to be statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ). The individual question analysis showed the following statements to be statistically significant: (a) had adequate educational resources ( $p = .014$ ); (b) had high student mobility ( $p = .013$ ); (c) had a truancy/dropout problem; (d) had inadequate finances ( $p < .001$ ); (e) consistently outperformed schools in the area ( $p < .001$ ); (f) was viewed with

extreme pride by the students ( $p=.031$ ); (g) was clean, orderly, and safe ( $p=.009$ ); (h) had frequent incidents of vandalism/theft ( $p<.001$ ); and (i) had students who took homework seriously and completed it on time ( $p<.001$ ). The analysis for the comparison of the means is provided in Table 21.

Table 21

## T-test for Equality of Means: School Contextual Characteristics

School Contextual Characteristic	Group	N	Sig. (2-tailed)
Your school has a sense of direction/mission	Public	168	.246
	Private	95	
Your school runs smoothly	Public	166	.649
	Private	95	
Your school has adequate educational resources	Public	168	.014*
	Private	95	
Your school has inadequate facilities	Public	168	.013*
	Private	95	
Your school has high student mobility	Public	167	.000**
	Private	92	
Your school has a truancy/dropout problem	Public	167	.000**
	Private	95	
Your school is effective in reaching objectives	Public	167	.154
	Private	95	
Your school has inadequate finances	Public	168	.000**
	Private	95	
Your school has a good reputation in the district	Public	167	.062
	Private	94	
Your school consistently outperforms schools in the area	Public	167	.000**
	Private	95	
Your school is viewed with extreme pride by the students	Public	167	.031*
	Private	95	
Your school is clean, orderly, and safe	Public	168	.009*
	Private	95	
Your school has high expectations for student achievement	Public	168	.171
	Private	94	
Your school has frequent incidents of vandalism/theft	Public	168	.000**
	Private	95	
Your school has students who take homework seriously and complete it on time	Public	168	.000**
	Private	94	

Note: Equal variances not assumed, comparison of means is significant at \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .001$ . Total respondents may differ depending on participants' completion of responses to individual items.

### *Community Contextual Characteristics*

The public elementary school group and the private lower school head group were similar in that both groups' calculated mean ranks were found to be *agree* or *strongly agree* for the following *Community Contextual* factors: (a) had high expectations for student achievement, (b) encouraged educational innovation, (c) was a partner in education, (d) helped the school enforce policies such as timely completion of homework. Both groups' mean ranking was *disagree* for the following statements: (a) was antagonistic toward school policies and (b) did not take an involvement in the educational process.

The two groups differed in the computed mean rank for four items. The mean ranking of the principals in the public elementary school group was computed to be *uncertain* when asked if the school's community: (a) was highly involved in education, (b) was progressive, (c) was highly educated, and (d) provided an abundance of volunteer services to the school; while the private group's mean ranking for the above statements was *agree*. The mean ranking of the leaders in the lower school head group was computed to be *uncertain* when asked if the school's community was ethnically diverse, whereas the public group ranked ethnic diversity as *agree*. Table 22 depicts the mean values for the public and private *Community Contextual* Characteristics items.

Table 22

## Community Contextual Characteristics: Public and Private

Community Contextual Items	Public		Private	
	N	$\bar{X}$	N	$\bar{X}$
Highly involved in education	168	2.45	95	3.40
High expectations for student achievement	167	2.96	95	3.53
Encouraged educational innovation	168	2.55	95	3.12
Progressive	168	2.47	95	2.84
Ethnically diverse	168	2.73	95	2.21
Highly educated	168	1.76	94	3.20
A partner in education	167	2.65	95	3.07
Helped the school enforce policies such as timely completion of homework	167	2.51	94	2.96
Antagonistic toward school policies	167	0.93	95	0.83
Did not take an involvement in the educational process	166	1.30	95	0.81
Provided an abundance of volunteer services to the school	166	2.32	95	3.11

Scale: 0=strongly disagree, 1=disagree, 2=uncertain, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree

Note: Total respondents may differ depending on participants' completion of responses to individual items.

In a comparison of means for the individual *Community Contextual* characteristics items, 10 of the 11 statements were found to be statistically significant: (a) was highly involved in education ( $p < .001$ ), (b) had high expectations for student achievement ( $p < .001$ ), (c) encouraged educational innovation ( $p < .001$ ), (d) was progressive ( $p = .005$ ), (e) was ethnically diverse ( $p = .003$ ), (f) was highly educated ( $p < .001$ ), (g) was a partner in education ( $p = .001$ ), (h) helped the school enforce policies such as timely completion of homework ( $p < .001$ ), (i) did not take an involvement in the educational process ( $p < .001$ ), and (j) provided an abundance of volunteer services to the school ( $p < .001$ ). The one

statement not found to be statistically significant referred to the school community as antagonistic toward school policies ( $p=.410$ ). The analysis for the comparison of the means is provided in Table 23.

Table 23

## T-test for Equality of Means: Community Contextual Characteristics

Community Contextual Characteristic	Group	N	Sig. (2-tailed)
Your community is highly involved in education	Public	168	.000**
	Private	95	
Your community has high expectations for student achievement	Public	167	.000**
	Private	95	
Your community encourages educational innovation	Public	168	.000**
	Private	95	
Your community is progressive	Public	168	.005*
	Private	91	
Your community is ethnically diverse	Public	168	.003*
	Private	95	
Your community is highly educated	Public	168	.000**
	Private	95	
Your community is a partner in education	Public	167	.001*
	Private	95	
Your community helps the school enforce policies such as timely completion of homework	Public	167	.000**
	Private	94	
Your community is antagonistic toward school policies	Public	167	.410
	Private	95	
Your community does not take an involvement in the educational process	Public	166	.000**
	Private	95	
Your community provides an abundance of volunteer services to the school	Public	167	.000**
	Private	95	

Note: Equal variances not assumed, comparison of means is significant at \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .001$ . Total respondents may differ depending on participants' completion of responses to individual items.

### *Staff Contextual Characteristics*

The public elementary school group and the private lower school head group were similar in that both groups' calculated mean ranks were found to be *agree* or *strongly agree* for the following *Staff Contextual* characteristics: (a) had a sense of direction/mission; (b) ran smoothly; (c) had adequate educational resources; (d) were effective in reaching objectives; (e) had a good reputation in the district; (f) consistently outperformed schools in the area; (g) were viewed with extreme pride by the students; (h) were clean, orderly, and safe; (i) had high expectations for student achievement; and (j) had students who took homework seriously and completed it on time.

The mean ranking of the principals in the public elementary school group was computed to be *uncertain* when asked if the school: (a) had inadequate facilities, (b) had high student mobility, and (c) had inadequate finances. The mean ranking for the above statements differed from the mean ranking of the private lower school head group. The private group's mean ranking for the above statements was *disagree*. Public elementary principals *disagree* and private lower school heads *strongly disagree* when asked if the school had a truancy/dropout problem or had frequent incidents of vandalism/theft. The analysis of data collected from respondents for the mean values of individual items in the Staff Contextual scale is displayed in Table 24.

Table 24

## Staff Contextual Characteristics: Public and Private

Staff Contextual Items	Public		Private	
	N	$\bar{X}$	N	$\bar{X}$
Cohesive	168	3.22	95	3.18
Professionally committed	168	3.43	95	3.55
Motivated	168	3.27	95	3.36
Respected in the district	168	3.19	91	3.36
Respected in the community	168	3.43	95	3.60
Innovative and creative	168	3.15	95	3.40
Capable, skillful	167	3.52	95	3.59
Respectful	168	3.39	95	3.54
Productive	168	3.35	95	3.45
Self-disciplined	168	3.20	95	3.28
Persevering	168	3.34	95	3.39
Enthusiastic	167	3.23	95	3.48
Forceful, assertive	166	2.75	94	2.65
Cooperative	168	3.40	95	3.37

Scale: 0=strongly disagree, 1=disagree, 2=uncertain, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree

Note: Total respondents may differ depending on participants' completion of responses to individual items.

In a comparison of means for the individual *Staff Contextual* characteristics items, only three statements were found to be statistically significant: (a) staff is respected in the community ( $p=.019$ ), (b) staff is innovative and creative ( $p=.004$ ), and (c) staff is enthusiastic ( $p=.001$ ). The analysis for the comparison of the means is provided in Table 25.

Table 25

## T-test for Equality of Means: Staff Contextual Characteristics

Staff Contextual Characteristic	Group	N	Sig. (2-tailed)
Your staff is cohesive	Public	168	.681
	Private	95	
Your staff is professionally committed	Public	168	.114
	Private	95	
Your staff is motivated	Public	168	.236
	Private	95	
Your staff is respected in the district.	Public	168	.070
	Private	91	
Your staff is respected in the community	Public	168	.019*
	Private	95	
Your staff is innovative and creative	Public	168	.004*
	Private	95	
Your staff is capable and skillful	Public	167	.289
	Private	95	
Your staff is respectful	Public	168	.076
	Private	95	
Your staff is productive	Public	168	.207
	Private	95	
Your staff is self-disciplined	Public	168	.237
	Private	95	
Your staff is persevering	Public	168	.500
	Private	95	
Your staff is enthusiastic	Public	167	.001*
	Private	95	
Your staff is forceful and assertive	Public	166	.362
	Private	94	
Your staff is cooperative	Public	168	.683
	Private	95	

Note: Equal variances not assumed, comparison of means is significant at \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .001$ . Total respondents may differ depending on participants' completion of responses to individual items.

*Contextual Characteristics Scales*

The *School* and *Staff* scales for the contextual characteristics were not found to be statistically significant when compared with the independent *t* test for comparison of

means, but the *Community Contextual* scale ( $p < .001$ ) differed and was found to be statistically significant. Table 26 presents the results of the analysis for the contextual scales.

Table 26

T-test for Equality of Means: Contextual Characteristics

Contextual Characteristic	Group	N	Sig. (2-tailed)
School Contextual	Public	164	.077
	Private	89	
Community Contextual	Public	166	.000**
	Private	93	
Staff Contextual	Public	164	.095
	Private	90	

Note: Equal variances not assumed, comparison of means is significant at  $*p < .05$ ,  $p < .001$ . Total respondents may differ depending on participants' completion of responses to individual items.

### Summary

This chapter presented the analyses of the data reported by the 263 public elementary school principals and private lower school heads in the state of Florida that responded to the survey. The survey instrument, The *Instructional Leadership Inventory* (see Appendix B), a self report instrument, was used to collect information on the leadership behaviors *Defines Mission*, *Manages Curriculum*, *Supervises Teaching*, *Monitors Student Progress*, and *Promotes Instructional Climate*; demographic characteristics; and work environment characteristics of the respondents. The data collected from the participants in the two groups were compared to determine the

similarities and differences between the public elementary school principals and the private lower school heads in relation to the three research questions that guided this study. A comprehensive summary of the findings, implications, conclusions, and recommendations follow in Chapter 5.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

This chapter includes a brief summary of the Review of Literature, the statement of the problem, the methodology, the findings and conclusions drawn from the data analyses of the three questions that guided this research, and the implications related to the role and behaviors of the public school principal during the age of accountability. Finally, a summary of the recommendations for future research concludes this chapter.

#### Summary of Literature Review

In summary, this research has recognized that the school's principal has been identified as the change agent with the potential to lead the nation to successful schools (Hale & Moorman, 2003; Herrington & Wills, 2005; McGuire, 2002). States have directed their policy actions affecting accountability reform through this local level school administrator (Greenfield, 1995; Lashway, 2003c; Marks & Printy, 2003; Meyer & Feistritzer, 2003). The principal has been put in the spotlight and charged with producing positive school outcomes measured by student performance gains (Bottoms et al., 2003; Cooley & Shen, 2003). This has demanded changes in the behaviors and roles of the public school principal and expanded the job description so that instructional leadership also encompassed all of the managerial aspects of the leadership position. The principal has been expected to embrace the instructional leadership role of defining the mission of the school and promoting the instructional climate while the evaluation tool

determining the principal's success has been defined as gains in student achievement, which focuses the leader on managerial leadership behaviors.

The very nature of the public school principal's role has changed, and instructional leadership has emerged from the accountability movement as a policy focal point in the dilemma of how best to lead America's schools to educational success (Doud & Keller, 1998; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; McGuire, 2002; Portin et al., 2003). The Task Force on Elevating Leadership in Schools, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, the National State Boards of Education Study Group on School Leadership, and the National Association for Elementary School Principals recognized a shift in the nature of educational leadership to an instructional leadership role focused on teaching and learning. Public elementary school principals have adjusted their leadership role and behaviors to meet the demands of the accountability movement by prioritizing their job responsibilities and allocating their time accordingly (Chan & Pool, 2002). Principals have been encouraged to build a school climate with a mission, vision, and culture focused on teaching and learning: (1) to raise student achievement, (2) to demonstrate an expertise in knowledge of state standards and benchmarks, and (3) ultimately to close the achievement gap (Fink & Resnick, 2001; Grogan & Andrews; McGuire; Meyer & Feistritzer, 2003; Whitaker, 1996). The accountability mandates have taken the form of instructional leadership role responsibilities; however, they have also come with additional managerial role responsibilities. The effect of this controversial and influential accountability movement on educational leadership has been largely uninvestigated.

### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this work was to present information about the effects of accountability reforms on the role and behaviors of public elementary school principals. Public school principals have been subject to the mandated policy initiatives associated with the accountability movement. These principals have had to adjust to the push for standards-based assessment to demonstrate student progress (Harris, Ballenger, & Leonard, 2004; Marsh & LeFever, 2004). Accountability reforms have called for public school principals to focus on the instructional behaviors of the leadership position as the priority over the managerial requirements (Daresh, 1998; Jones, 1999; Marsh & LeFever). Accountability has affected the leadership role focus and behaviors of public school principals, but it has not been known what effect this has had on their leadership behaviors and how these principals have adjusted to these new requirements.

Private school principals, or lower school heads, were not subject to these federal and state policy reforms; therefore, the leadership role and behaviors of public and private elementary school principals working under two distinctly different circumstances were compared to investigate leadership role focus. Leadership behaviors and role perceptions of principals in Florida's public elementary schools administering the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT) and the leadership behaviors and role perceptions of principals in Florida's private elementary schools that do not administer the FCAT were compared for similarities and differences to add to the existing research on the effects of the accountability movement. Significant differences in the leadership role focus and behaviors of public and private school principals during the age of accountability would: (a) inform public and private school policymakers and representatives who impact the educational system through local, state, and federal

legislation; (b) inform educational leadership training programs and licensing systems; and (c) assist those who lead schools (Lashway, 2003a; Portin, 2000). Findings from this research were intended to contribute to the existing knowledge and to provide new knowledge about principals' leadership role focus and behaviors based on data gathered during the accountability movement (Glatthorn, 1998).

## Methodology

### Population, Instrumentation, and Data Collection

The population in this study represented two groups, the public elementary school principals and the private lower school heads. The public school population studied was comprised of a random sample of the 1,570 public elementary school principals derived from the Florida Department of Education public school records for the 2004-05 academic year. The private school population included 151 lower school heads derived from the Florida Council of Independent Schools' Directory. A total of 501 elementary school leaders were included in the final sample group. The data collection process resulted in 263 returned surveys, a 52.5% rate of return. The public school response rate was 168 or a 48.0% rate of return. The private school response rate was 95 or a 62.9% rate of return.

The *Instructional Leadership Inventory (ILI)*, a self-report instrument (see Appendix B) from MetriTech, Inc., was used to survey the two sample groups of public elementary school principals and private lower school heads (Maehr & Ames, 1988). The *ILI* item content was determined to cover the research requirements for this study based on findings in the review of literature on instructional and managerial leadership behaviors. The instrument's scoring system includes a set of eight scales (see Appendix

A). Each scale has a select number of associated questions. Specific questions organized into the scales are identified in Appendix A. Principals were required to self-report perceptions of their leadership behaviors using the *ILI* survey instrument.

The data collection for this study was conducted according to the elements of Dillman's (2000) Tailored Design Method, a mailed survey design. The 501 participants received five contacts. The first contact was the pre-notice message (see Appendix C), which included the date, personalized inside address, what will happen, what it is about, usefulness of survey, thank you, personal professional benefit, and researcher's signature. The second mailing was the package including the cover letter, the survey, an answer sheet, and a stamped return address envelope. The cover letter (see Appendix D) provided the inside address, the request, why one was selected, usefulness of the survey, token of appreciation, IRB information with confidentiality, willingness to answer questions, thank you, directions for survey return, and researcher's signature. The third personalized contact, a postcard (see Appendix E), was sent several weeks later stating the need for each and every response, a thank you for participating in the research project, and a method for obtaining a replacement survey if needed. The fourth contact, a postcard (see Appendix E), was sent to nonresponders and stressed the usefulness of the research, value of each and every response, and the e-mail and phone number of the researcher as a method to obtain a second copy of the survey. The fifth and last contact was by phone when possible.

### Summary and Discussion of the Findings

Three research questions guided this study. These questions were designed to explore the similarities and differences between principals of public elementary schools

and private lower schools in the state of Florida in a comparison of characteristics and behaviors related to a managerial or an instructional leadership focus. The summary and discussion of findings derived from the data analyses are presented below:

### Research Question 1

The first research question explored, “To what extent are there differences, if any, in the leadership behaviors (i.e., defines mission, manages curriculum, supervises teaching, monitors student progress, and promotes instructional climate) of public school principals and private school principals?”

Data obtained from section three of the *ILI* (see Appendix A) was analyzed to compare the behaviors of public elementary school principals with private lower school heads in the areas of instructional leadership and managerial leadership. The instructional leadership scales were identified as *Defines Mission* and *Promotes Instructional Climate*. The comparison of means for the *Defines Mission* scale using the *t* test for two independent means was found to be statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Significant differences were found in only two behaviors in the *Defines Mission* scale: (a) taking advantage of an opportunity to stress and communicate school goals and (b) recognizing good teaching at formal school ceremonies. These two behaviors were found to define the differences in the two groups, public and private.

Differences in the *Promotes Instructional Climate* scale were not found to be significant when the scale was analyzed as a whole; however, three of the questions were significant individually and one question was found to have a large difference in response percentages between groups. The four behaviors with notable differences related to how often the leader: (a) encouraged a teacher to compete for an award, (b) nominated

teachers for awards, (c) joined an informal discussion among staff members, and (d) wrote a memo to staff praising their efforts.

The managerial leadership scales were *Supervises Teaching*, *Monitors Student Progress*, and *Manages Curriculum*. The comparisons of means for these three scales using the *t* test for two independent means were found to be statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ). Public school principals reported exhibiting behaviors in these three scales more often than private lower school heads.

First, in the analysis of the *Manages Curriculum* scale the public elementary school principal respondents and the private lower school head respondents were found to be similar in only one behavior related to providing support for curriculum development. The following behaviors demonstrated the differences between the two groups: (a) providing information teachers need to plan their work effectively, (a) finding resources to help staff do a good job, (b) making detailed staff improvement plans, (c) reviewing the fit between curriculum objectives and achievement testing, (d) coordinating curriculum across grade levels, and (e) making sure that lesson plans fit with the stated instructional objectives.

Second, the analysis of the *Supervising Teaching* scale collectively demonstrated the significance of the differences for these three scales. The difference in public and private school leaders was determined to be in the following five behaviors: (a) observing a class, (b) encouraging staff to try their best, (c) communicating high expectations to staff and students, (d) demonstrating innovative teaching, and (e) checking to see that staff was working up to capacity.

Third, the analysis of the *Monitors Student Progress* scale also demonstrated the significance of the differences in public and private school leaders in relation to the managerial leadership focus. Differences were recognized in the *Monitors Student Progress* behaviors of: (a) stressing the importance of achieving top test scores to teachers, (b) using student assessment information to gauge progress toward the school's goals, (c) discussing assessment results with faculty to determine areas of strengths and weaknesses, (d) informing teachers, students, and community of assessment results through newsletters, memos, assemblies, and other media, and (e) setting specific expectations for student performance.

For the most part, both public and private school leaders exhibited instructional leadership behaviors, but public school leaders were found to significantly demonstrate more managerial behaviors than private school leaders. In conclusion, the findings from these analyses of the data revealed valuable information on the instructional and managerial behaviors of public school principals and the private school lower heads during the accountability movement.

## Research Question 2

The second research question explored, "To what extent are there differences, if any, in the demographic characteristics of public and private school principals?"

Information gathered from questions 100-110 of the *ILI* (see Appendix A) was analyzed to compare the characteristics of public elementary school principals with private lower school heads. The elementary school principals and the lower school heads surveyed in this research study were found to be similar in gender, average age, ethnicity, years of experience teaching, and number of continuing education courses taken. The

elementary principals and lower school heads reported being predominantly female white Caucasians between the ages of 50 and 59 years with 10 to 12 years of teaching experience and four or more continuing education courses.

Differences found in the frequencies for the demographic characteristics were related to the number of years of experience as a principal, the highest degree earned, the presentation of an award for administrative work, and the size of the school population. First, 63.7% of the public elementary principal respondents reported having 6 or more years of experience while only 54.7 % of the private lower school head respondents reported having 6 or more years of experience as principal. Second, 99.5% of the public group responded that they had earned a master's degree or higher, but only 73.49% of the private group responded that they had earned a master's degree or higher. The public school principals were noted as being recognized with an award or special commendation for their administrative work more often than the private lower school heads who reported they seldom were recognized with awards or special commendation for their work as leaders.

The significantly different ( $p < .05$ ) demographic variables that were found in the comparison of means were also: (a) highest degree earned, (b) presentation of an award for administrative work, and (c) school population. The greatest difference between the two groups related to school population. A high frequency of public elementary school principals reported a school population of 400 or more students, while the majority of private lower school leaders reported a school population below 400 students.

### Research Question 3

The third research question explored, “To what extent are there differences, if any, in the work environment (i.e., school characteristics, community characteristics, and staff characteristics) of public and private school principals?”

The examination of contextual characteristics revealed differences in the public and private groups surveyed. First, the following 10 of the 11 statements in the *Community Contextual* characteristics had statistical significance: (a) was highly involved in education, (b) had high expectations for student achievement, (c) encouraged educational innovation, (d) was progressive, (e) was ethnically diverse, (f) was highly educated, (g) was a partner in education, (h) helped the school enforce policies such as timely completion of homework, (i) did not take an involvement in the educational process, and (j) provided an abundance of volunteer services to the school. The only statement that was not found to be statistically significant was in reference to the community feeling antagonistic toward school policies.

Second, the following 10 of the 15 statements in the *School Contextual* characteristics were found to differ: (a) had adequate educational resources, (b) had high student mobility, (c) had a truancy/dropout problem, (d) had inadequate finances, (e) consistently outperformed schools in the area, (f) was viewed with extreme pride by the students, (g) was clean, orderly, and safe, (h) had frequent incidents of vandalism/theft, and (i) had students who took homework seriously and completed it on time.

Third, the following three statements were found to be significantly different in the *Staff Contextual* characteristics: (a) staff was respected in the community, (b) staff was innovative and creative, and (c) staff was enthusiastic. However, when analyzed for differences between means collectively by contextual characteristic, staff, school, and

community, only the *Community Contextual* scale was found to have any notable statistical significance.

### Discussion of the Findings

This study sought to determine the effects of accountability reforms on the role and behaviors of public elementary school principals. Public and private school leaders that participated in the survey were found to be predominantly female white Caucasians between the ages of 50 and 59 years with 10 to 12 years of teaching experience and four or more continuing education courses. The mean public elementary principal reported 6 to 10 years of experience as a principal and had earned an educational specialist degree, while the mean private lower school head reported 11 to 15 years of experience as principal and had earned a master's degree. The public school principal was noted as having received an award or commendation for administrative work more often than the private lower school head.

The greatest difference between the means of the two groups related to school population. The public elementary school group reported a mean school population of more than 400 students, while the private lower school group reported a mean school population of between 200 and 299 students. The significantly different demographic variables were found to be: (a) highest degree earned, (b) presentation of an award for administrative work, and (c) school population.

### *Contextual Characteristics*

Items in section two of the *ILI* (see Appendix A) provided information on the three contextual scales related to the work environment. The analyses of the data

compared the behaviors of public elementary school principals with private lower school heads in relation to *School Contextual* characteristics, *Community Contextual* characteristics, and *Staff Contextual* characteristics. The comparisons of means using the *t* test for two independent means for the *School Contextual* and *Staff Contextual* characteristics were not found to be statistically significant. The public elementary school principals and lower school heads were found to be significantly different ( $p < .001$ ) when comparing the means of the *Community Contextual* scale. When describing the characteristics of the community, the private lower school heads reported that their community was highly involved in education, had high expectations for student achievement, encouraged educational innovation, was progressive, was highly educated, was a partner in education, enforced school policies, was involved in the educational process, and provided an abundance of volunteer services to the school. Public school principals disagreed or were uncertain about these characteristics. Public school principals held a very different perception of their community's characteristics in relation to education, although neither group reported that their community was antagonistic toward their school's policies.

#### *ILI Scales: Instructional vs. Managerial Leadership*

It appeared in the research findings that there were very few statistically significant differences between public elementary school principals and private lower school heads when looking at the two scales related to the *ILI* instructional leadership criteria. Public elementary principals and private lower school heads were found to differ in two areas of the scale related to stressing and communicating school goals and recognizing good teaching at formal school ceremonies. When analyzing the frequencies

for these two behaviors public school principals perceived that they frequently or almost always stressed and communicated school goals and recognized good teaching at formal school ceremonies, while private school heads did not perceive that they exhibited these behaviors as often. Both groups were found to be similar in all other criteria for the *Defines Mission* scale. The analysis of the *Promotes Instructional Climate* scale was not found to be statistically significant, but the individual question frequencies for two of the behaviors included in the scale, encouraging teachers to compete for awards and nominating teachers for awards, were reported as statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ).

An additional finding of interest in the *Promotes Instructional Climate* scale related to the frequency that leaders reported participating in informal discussions among staff members. Public principals reported frequently participating in informal discussions while private school principals reported a statistically significant ( $p = .005$ ) higher frequency of joining staff in informal discussions. Schriff (2001) surveyed public school principals before the accountability movement and found that 99% of principals ranked teacher and administrator collaboration as a major factor in contributing to student success. Teachers were recognized as knowledgeable about teaching and learning and were included in decision-making.

The research findings revealed that there were considerable statistically significant differences between public elementary school principals and private lower school heads when looking at the three scales related to the *ILI* managerial leadership criteria. The public elementary principals reported a higher frequency of *Supervises Teaching* behaviors by observing classes, encouraging staff to try their best, communicating high expectations to staff and students, demonstrating an innovative

teaching method to staff, and checking to see that staff was working up to capacity. On examination of the *Monitors Student Progress* scale items, public elementary school principals reported a higher frequency of the behaviors stressing the importance of achieving top test scores; using student assessment information to gauge progress toward the school's goals; discussing assessment results with faculty to determine areas of strength and weakness; informing teachers, students, and the community of assessment results through newsletters, memos, assemblies, and other media; and setting specific expectations for student performance. Public principals reported spending more time on items in the *Manages Curriculum* scale of finding resources to help staff do a good job, making detailed staff improvement plans, reviewing the fit between the curriculum objectives and achievement testing and making sure lesson plans fit with the stated objectives than do the private lower school heads.

In summary, the public elementary school principals and private lower school heads were found to be similar in the two instructional leadership scales of *Defining Mission* and *Promoting Instructional Climate* but were significantly different in the three scales related to managerial leadership, *Manages Curriculum*, *Monitors Student Progress*, and *Supervises Teaching*. The public and private groups were found to be similar in the demographic characteristics with the exception of years of experience as a principal, highest degree earned, presentation of an award for administrative work, and school population. In addition, the two groups were also found to be similar in the *Staff Contextual* and *School Contextual* scales but were significantly different in the *Community Contextual* characteristics scale.

### Implications and Recommendations

The role of public school principal is changing and is considered in a state of transition (Copland, 2001; Lashway, 2003a; Portin, 2000). Daresh (1998) identified accountability and assessment as two major managerial categories of change in the leadership role of principals. First, the implications derived from these analyses support these two areas of change in the leadership behaviors of public school principals. A significant number of principals who participated in the above data collection from Florida's public elementary schools reported that they were spending significant time on the managerial leadership behaviors of *Monitoring Student Progress*, *Supervising Teaching*, and *Managing Curriculum*, behaviors related to assessment and accountability. Public school principals reported using achievement test results in multiple ways to gauge the progress of the school toward school goals.

Previous to the accountability movement, principals ranked the following indicators of success in order of importance from one being the highest to eight being the least important: (1) teacher skills and performance, (2) climate among teachers and administrators, (3) quality of candidates for teacher openings, (4) parent satisfaction, (5) teacher satisfaction, (6) autonomy to make decisions impacting the school, (7) level of parent involvement, and (8) gains and scores on standardized tests (Schriff, 2001). Few principals, 19.8%, agreed that schools should create pre- and post-test benchmark assessments, use student performance as assessment, or use school wide achievement test data in the evaluation process; and only 6.6% of principals surveyed by Schriff felt that standardized achievement test scores would accurately represent the academic achievement of students in their school. Standardized test results were not ranked high in level of importance when determining measures to gauge success before accountability

reforms; yet, the NCLB Act (2001) and other educational reform initiatives have identified accountability measures as the method to determine school success and public school principals surveyed in this study have reported that they are frequently or almost always assuming the behaviors that support this movement.

Portin (2000) suggested principals tended to lean toward managerial duties due to the visible and consequential nature of managerial responsibilities as a high priority. It appears that the responsibilities for the role of principal in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have expanded to include the managerial strategies that are required for compliance with increased federal and state measures for assessment and accountability (Harris, Ballenger, & Leonard, 2004; Lashway, 2003a).

The broad definition of instructional leadership used in this study included the managerial leadership behaviors of *Monitoring Student Progress*, *Supervising Teaching*, and *Managing Curriculum* but also included the instructional leadership behaviors of defining the mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting the school's climate to promote student learning (Sheppard, 1996; Stronge, 1993). The National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) published *Principals for Our Changing Schools* which supported the two dimensions of this position: (a) the ability to influence school culture and build vision for encouraging performance in teaching and learning and (b) the functional role of ensuring that technical tasks were accomplished (Thomson, 1991).

The final implication of this change refers to the push by the federal government toward the instructional leadership behaviors of *Defining Mission* and *Promoting Instructional Climate*. Public elementary school principals did report that they were

maintaining these instructional behaviors that have been recognized in research and recommended by the government to promote teaching and learning, but principals burdened with managerial behaviors in the past have reported not having enough time to simultaneously: (a) monitor the academic health of the school, (b) seek a personal vision for the school, (c) develop open and trusting relationships, (d) foster a common agenda for improvement, (e) communicate effectively, (f) collaborate in collegial relationships, and (g) create an inviting learning environment (Cross & Rice, 2000).

The resulting recommendation would be to further explore the degree to which principals are able to achieve a balance between the two roles to determine if additional staff support is needed to prioritize instructional leadership behaviors in the face of managerial demands. Alternative strategies have been suggested by concepts such as shared or distributive leadership, learning communities, delegation of tasks to support staff, or training teachers for leadership responsibilities (Bottoms, et al., 2003; Cushing, Kerrins, & Johnstone, 2004; Elmore, 2000; Hale & Moorman, 2003; IEL, 2000; Jamentz, 2002; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Manno, 2000; McInerney, 2003; Meyer & Feistritz, 2003; NAESP, 2001; Whitaker, 1996).

Second, the comparison of the two groups, public and private, demonstrated that principals and lower school heads reported being similar in many ways in relation to the demographics and the work environment of the two groups. The differences in personal and professional characteristics were minimal. The most notable difference, though, related to school size. There may be important implications beyond the scope of this research that would necessitate a recommendation for further research into the impact of large student populations as opposed to smaller student populations on the behaviors and

role focus of principals. Implications from this research have recognized a significant difference in the size of the school population. This suggests that schools should work toward reducing their populations through increased facility construction, charter schools, or alternative strategies for reducing the scope of student population within the school by splitting the student body and hiring additional personnel to assume the leadership of the new group (Manno, 2000; Whitaker, 1996).

Third, the work environment was reported to be similar for the public elementary school principals and the private lower school heads with the exception of the school community. The community has been recognized in research to exert an external force on the school that may be impacting the ability of the school to succeed in achieving its school goals (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). More extensive research on the implications for community influence on student achievement would provide insight into this statistically significant difference between public and private schools. Recommendations resulting from this research suggest that the community has been recognized as a strong external influence and strategies should be considered to improve the strength of community interest and support for the school (Hale & Moorman, 2003; Hess, 2003; Leithwood & Riehl; Manno, 2000; Meyer & Feistritz, 2003; NAESP, 2001).

Last, Blank (1987) suggested the mandates of policymakers for increased accountability through political actions or forces to improve school performance have been enacted, but the policymakers have not anticipated the implications of the changed expectations. These unanticipated outcomes could potentially become inhibitors blocking the achievement of desired state and national goals for education. One outcome could refer to the work done by Portin (2000) who noted that layers of additional responsibility

did not always come accompanied by related job authority such as when locus of control was ambiguous, top down, and restricted by state legislation and policy. Blank recommended that policymakers at the state and national level modify policy initiatives and consider the short and long term influences on the leadership role of principals, which in turn would directly affect the performance of the schools and teachers, and the achievement of students. Blank (1987) recommended that government organizations should conduct further research to understand the consequences of the various goals and stresses of the accountability movement. Smith, Maehr, and Midgley (1992) found important patterns in leadership behaviors suggesting that further work be done to better understand the influence of external social and political goals, standards, and accountability on the middle management role of the school principal.

In conclusion, there were multiple factors influencing the leadership role and behaviors of the school principal that have generated implications and recommendations. Principals reported spending significant time on managerial leadership behaviors, a shift from past findings on the behaviors of principals. The resulting recommendation suggested alternative staff support might be needed to prioritize instructional leadership in the face of managerial demands. The difference in the public and private groups related to school size led to the recommendation that schools should work toward reducing their populations through alternative strategies. Third, differences in the work environment were reported in the contextual criteria of the school community leading to the suggestion for enhancement of the strength of community interest and support for the school. Last, Blank (1987) and Smith, Maehr, and Midgley (1992) recommended further

work be done to better understand the influence of external social and political goals, standards, and accountability on the middle management role of the school principal.

### Recommendations for Future Research

Further research is suggested in the following areas:

1. It is recommended that a replication of this study be done in another state in the United States to validate the research findings discussed in this study.
2. It is recommended that a replication of this study be done nationally in the United States to validate the research findings discussed in this study.
3. It is recommended that further research be done to explore the effects of increased monitoring of student progress on achievement gains.
4. It is recommended that further research be done to explore the effects of increased supervision of teaching on achievement gains.
5. It is recommended that further research be done to explore the effects of increased management of curriculum on achievement gains.
6. It is recommended that further research be done to explore the effects of student population or school size on student achievement gains.
7. It is recommended that further research be done to explore the effects of community involvement on student achievement gains.
8. It is recommended that further research be done to explore the effects of external social and political goals, standards, and accountability on the leadership role of the school principal.

9. It is recommended that a research instrument be designed specifically to address principal roles and behaviors during the accountability movement and used to further investigate the findings and implications of this study.

## APPENDIX A

### RELATIONSHIP OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS TO ILI SURVEY QUESTIONS

Relationship of Research Questions to *ILI*

Survey Question One

*Instructional Leadership Inventory: The Instructional Leadership Inventory Scales*

Managerial Leadership Role Scales with Items

<u>Manages Curriculum</u> How often do you...	<u>Supervises Teaching</u> How often do you...	<u>Monitors Student Progress</u> How often do you...
54. provide information teachers need to plan their work effectively?	55. spend time working on teaching skills with a teacher?	56. review a student's performance with a teacher?
59. insist policies and procedures be followed?	60. observe a class?	61. stress the importance of achieving top test scores to teachers?
64. find resources to help staff do a good job?	65. encourages staff to try their best?	66. use student assessment information to gauge progress toward the school's goals?
69. make detailed staff improvement plans?	70. communicate high expectations to staff and students?	71. discuss assessment results with faculty to determine areas of strengths and weaknesses?
74. review the fit between curriculum objectives and achievement testing?	75. model effective teaching techniques for staff?	76. inform teachers, students, and community of assessment results through newsletters, memos, assemblies, and other media?
79. coordinate curriculum across grade levels?	80. demonstrate an innovative teaching method to staff?	81. use the work and projects of students as part of the instructional evaluation?
84. provide specific support for curriculum development?	85. help a teacher develop a specific strategy to increase student achievement?	86. make regular contact with teachers to evaluate student progress?
89. make sure that lesson plans fit with the stated instructional objectives?	90. try to motivate a staff member?	91. work with teachers to discover new approaches for dealing with learning problems?
	95. check to see that staff are working up to capacity?	94. model creative thinking for staff and students?
	99. demand more effort from a staff member?	96. set specific expectations for student performance?

### Instructional Leadership Role Scale with Items

<u>Defines Mission</u> How often do you...	<u>Promotes Instructional Climate</u> How often do you...
53. discuss school goals, purposes, and mission with staff?	57. write a letter of commendation for a job well done?
58. take advantage of an opportunity to stress and communicate school goals?	62. asks parents to praise teachers for good work?
63. try to be visible in the school building?	67. encourage a teacher to try out a new idea?
68. recognize good teaching at formal school ceremonies?	72. encourage a teacher to compete for an award?
73. communicate excitement about future possibilities to staff and students?	77. nominate teachers for awards?
78. instruct a committee to be creative and innovative in its work?	82. encourage and support a staff member seeking additional training?
83. focus on school goals in curriculum development?	87. praise staff members for their good work?
88. discuss school goals with students?	92. join an informal discussion among staff members?
	93. seek advice from staff members in making a decision?
	97. write a memo to staff praising their efforts?
	98. foster regard for teachers among students and parents?

## Relationship of Research Questions to *ILI* Survey Question Two

### Demographic Items

Data collected from the *ILI* Survey questions 101- 110 collect data on: sex, age, ethnic background, years experience as a principal, years of teaching experience, highest degree earned, current position, student population, number of continuing education courses, and special commendations or awards.

Relationship of Research Questions to *ILI* Survey Question Three

Contextual Scales with Items

Staff: Items 13-26	School: Items 27-41	Community: Items 42-52
Your staff is cohesive.	Your school has a sense of direction/mission.	Your community is highly involved in education.
Your staff is professionally committed.	Your school runs smoothly.	Your community has high expectations for student achievement.
Your staff is motivated.	Your school has adequate educational resources.	Your community encourages educational innovation.
Your staff is respected in the district.	Your school has inadequate facilities.	Your community is progressive.
Your staff is respected in the community.	Your school has high student mobility.	Your community is ethnically diverse.
Your staff is innovative and creative.	Your school has a truancy/dropout problem.	Your community is highly educated.
Your staff is capable and skillful.	Your school is effective in reaching objectives.	Your community is a partner in education.
Your staff is respectful.	Your school has inadequate finances.	Your community helps the school enforce policies such as timely completion of homework.
Your staff is productive.	Your school has a good reputation in the district.	Your community is antagonistic toward school policies.
Your staff is self-disciplined.	Your school consistently outperforms schools in the area.	Your community does not take an involvement in the educational process.
Your staff is persevering.	Your school is clean, orderly, and safe.	Your community provides an abundance of volunteer services to the school.
Your staff is enthusiastic.	Your school has high expectations for student achievement.	
Your staff is forceful and assertive.	Your school has frequent incidents of vandalism/theft.	
Your staff is cooperative.	Your school has students who take homework seriously and complete it on time.	

APPENDIX B

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SURVEY

**INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP INVENTORY  
SAMPLE COPY**



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## SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS

In this part, read each pair of statements and decide which represents the goal that is *more* important to you as an instructional leader. Mark your choice, A or B, on the answer sheet.

### SELECT THE GOAL THAT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU

1. (A) Foster cooperation among staff and students.  
(B) Achieve recognition for you and your school.
2. (A) Achieve recognition for you and your school.  
(B) Create an enriching educational experience for students.
3. (A) Assume a strong position of authority in the school.  
(B) Create an enriching educational experience for students

When you leave your current position, what would you want your staff to say about you? For each pair, pick the statement that you would be more proud to have said about you. Mark your choice, A or B, on the answer sheet.

### WHICH WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE SAID ABOUT YOU?

7. (A) Was known and admired throughout the district.  
(B) Was fully committed to staff.
8. (A) Valued excellence about all else.  
(B) Was powerful and provided strong leadership
9. (A) Was powerful and provided strong leadership.  
(B) Was known and admired throughout the district.

This part consists of items that can be used to describe your current situation with regard to staff, your school, and your community. Use the following scale to determine your answers.

(A) Strongly Disagree (B) Disagree (C) Uncertain (D) Agree (E) Strongly Agree

### YOUR STAFF IS . . .

13. cohesive.
14. professionally committed.
15. motivated.

YOUR SCHOOL . . .

- 27. has a sense of direction/mission.
- 28. runs smoothly.
- 29. has adequate educational resources.

YOUR COMMUNITY . . .

- 42. is highly involved in education.
- 43. has high expectations for student achievement.
- 44. encourages educational innovation.

This part lists a number of activities in which instructional leaders are involved. Read each one and decide how often it seems to occur in your own case. Use the following scale to select your answer.

(A) Almost Never (B) Seldom (C) Sometimes (D) Frequently (E) Almost Always

HOW OFTEN DO YOU . . .

- 53. discuss school goals, purposes, and mission with staff?
- 54. provide information teachers need to plan their work effectively?
- 55. spend time working on teaching skills with a teacher?

SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMAITON QUESTIONS

101. Sex

- (A) Male
- (B) Female

102. Age

- (A) Less than 30
- (B) 30 to 39
- (C) 40 to 49
- (D) 50 to 59
- (E) 60 or older

103. Ethnic background

- (A) White
- (B) Black
- (C) Hispanic
- (D) Asian
- (E) Other

APPENDIX C

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

March 25, 2005

Inside Address

Dear

Several days from now you will receive a request in the mail to fill out the *Instructional Leadership Inventory*. This questionnaire is part of an important research project to investigate the principal's leadership role and behaviors.

The study looks into the growing responsibilities of the principalship in the elementary setting that have resulted from the No Child Left Behind Act.

I am writing to you now to alert you ahead of time about this important mailing that is on the way. The study will help to update principals, administrators, and policymakers about the job responsibilities of the principalship, and how they may be changing during the age of accountability. Your response is valuable to the accuracy of the results of this research.

Thank you for your time and support. Your generosity and consideration in returning this inventory will lead to valuable and accurate information about characteristics in the principalship, a key position in the success of schools and ultimately the success of the students who attend them.

Sincerely,

Caron Staples

UCF Doctoral Student

APPENDIX D

INVENTORY COVER LETTER

April 1, 2005

Inside Address

Dear name:

I am a graduate student at the University of Central Florida. As part of my coursework, I am conducting a survey, the purpose of which is to help in understanding the complex and multifaceted role of the principal, a key administrator in the success of schools during the accountability movement. I am asking you to participate in this interview because you have been identified as a principal of an elementary school. Participants are asked to fill in the Instructional Leadership Inventory, which will take about 20 minutes. The Inventory is enclosed with this letter. You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. You will mail the Inventory back in the self-addressed envelope included. Your Inventory will be returned to me anonymously, and you will not be identified. Your identity will not be connected to the Inventory you submit and participants will not be revealed in the final report.

There are no anticipated risks, compensation or other direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate and may discontinue your participation in the inventory at any time without consequence.

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact me at 239-591-0998. My dissertation committee chair is Dr. Jess House. Questions or concerns about research participants' rights should be directed to the UCFIRB Office, University of Central Florida Office of Research, Orlando Tech Center, 12443 Research Parkway, Suite 207, Orlando, Florida 32826. The phone number is (407) 823-2901.

Sincerely,

Caron Staples

Student

University of Central Florida

APPENDIX E

FOLLOW-UP LETTERS A AND B

Follow-up letter A

April 25, 2005

Dear

Several weeks ago you received a request in the mail to fill out the Instructional Leadership Inventory. This inventory is part of an important research project. It looks into the growing responsibilities of the principalship during the recent increase in accountability as a result of the No Child Left Behind Act.

If you have already completed and mailed the inventory, then please accept my sincere thanks. If you have not completed it yet, please do so at your soonest convenience. I am especially grateful for every inventory that is returned completed.

Thank you for your time and support. Your generosity and consideration in returning this inventory will lead to valuable and accurate information about the principalship, a key position in the success of schools and ultimately the success of the students who attend them.

If you did not receive your questionnaire or have misplaced it, please e-mail this address [cstaples@fgcu.edu](mailto:cstaples@fgcu.edu) , and I will mail you another inventory today.

Sincerely,

Caron Staples

UCF Doctoral Student

Follow-up Letter B

May 15, 2005

Several weeks ago you received the Instructional Leadership Inventory.

***PLEASE* COMPLETE AND MAIL THIS SURVEY IF YOU HAVE  
NOT ALREADY DONE SO!**

If you have already completed and mailed the *ILI*, then please accept my  
***deepest*** thanks.

Returning this inventory provides vital information about you and your  
job right now during the push for accountability. The research is designed to  
help all principals in the state of Florida by informing policymakers about the  
effects of the latest legislation.

**Without your response, the numbers of respondents will be too low  
to complete this vital project.**

If you did not receive your questionnaire or have misplaced it, please call  
239-398-6604 or write to this e-mail address, [cstaples@fgcu.edu](mailto:cstaples@fgcu.edu), and I will mail  
you another *ILI*.

Thank you so very much,

Caron Staples, UCF Doctoral Student *and Teacher* ☺

APPENDIX F

IRB APPROVAL LETTER



Office of Research & Commercialization

March 9, 2005

Caron Staples  
Department of Educational Research, Technology & Leadership  
College Education  
University of Central Florida  
4000 Central Florida Blvd.  
Orlando, FL 32816-1395

Dear Mrs. Staples:

With reference to your protocol #05-2373 entitled, "A Comparison of The Leadership Roles of Public and Private Elementary School Principals" I am enclosing for your records the approved, expedited document of the UCFIRB Form you had submitted to our office. **The expiration date for this study will be 3/4/06.** Should there be a need to extend this study, a Continuing Review form must be submitted to the IRB Office for review by the Chairman or full IRB at least one month prior to the expiration date. This is the responsibility of the investigator.

Please be advised that this approval is given for one year. Should there be any addendums or administrative changes to the already approved protocol, they must also be submitted to the Board through use of the Addendum/Modification Request form. Changes should not be initiated until written IRB approval is received. Adverse events should be reported to the IRB as they occur.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 407-823-2901.

Please accept our best wishes for the success of your endeavors.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barbara Ward".

Barbara Ward, CIM  
IRB Coordinator

Copies: IRB File

12443 Research Parkway • Suite 302 • Orlando, FL 32826-3252 • 407-823-3778 • Fax 407-823-3299

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