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Teachers' Perceptions of Administrative Leadership Styles and Schools as Professional Learning Communities

Clive Coleman
University of New Orleans

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TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP STYLES AND
SCHOOLS AS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
The Department of Education Administration

by

Clive Henry Coleman

B.A. University of New Orleans, 1979
M.S. University of New Orleans, 1983

May 2005

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship of principal and assistant principal leadership style in shaping teachers' perceptions of their schools as professional learning communities. The researcher proposed that the traditional distinctions between the classic modes of leadership, namely, transactional and transformational modes of leadership, are difficult to interpret within the framework of professional learning community without considering the interaction of the principal and assistant principal leadership roles. Using Leithwood's (1992, 1993, 1994) definitions of leadership as transformational and management as transactional, empirical evidence from 81 schools is presented that supports the need for both leadership and management skills in the development of a professional learning community. The data also suggest that the principal alone need not be responsible for both. A leadership model for principals and assistant principals with complementary transactional and transformational modes of leadership styles is advanced.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

School leaders are responsible for implementation of school reform and restructuring initiatives that are increasingly complex and varied. Research has provided evidence that leadership is critical to promoting organizational conditions that contribute to innovation (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Newman & Wehlage, 1995; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Sergiovanni 1996; Sheppard, 1996). A synthesis of recent literature indicates a positive relationship between school leadership that *a)* develops and communicates school goals, *b)* provides incentives for teachers, *c)* and monitors their instruction, with teachers who are committed and professionally involved with successful reform initiatives (Sheppard, 1996). Evidence also suggests that when the principal develops conditions and processes that provide opportunities for teachers to improve their practice, there is a positive impact on student learning (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). Indeed, many researchers contend that the role of the principal continues to be the key variable to the improvement of schools (Heck & Marcoulides, 1993; Keller, 1998; Krug, 1993; Portin, Shen, & Williams, 1998). This research suggests that the principal should cultivate shared power and leadership at all levels of the school's organization.

According to researchers, specific aspects of principal leadership that promote restructuring efforts are varied. Some have found that a highly facilitative principal leadership style, with the principal as a follower or leading from the center, promotes better restructuring

(Murphy, 1994). Other researchers have indicated, however, that a more directive leadership style may be helpful (Louis, 1992; Murphy, 1989). Whatever the specifics, it is very unlikely that professional learning communities can be sustained within a school without strong leadership.

A metaphor such as running a marathon in a circle and without a finish line is not uncommon when describing the principalship for schools today. A study conducted by Portin and Williams (1997) reported that principals were given a new responsibility, a new program, and a new task each year, void of any reduction in their current workload. Many principals were forced to reconsider the viability of the principalship role in education. It may be that principal leadership alone is insufficient to create and sustain professional learning communities. Many have characterized the principalship as a highly demanding job, with multiple competing tasks. The focus of this study is to determine whether leadership from both the school principal and the assistant principal can enhance reform efforts.

The Roles of Principals and Assistant Principals

Leadership in organizations is legitimized by hierarchal structures. In many school systems, assistant principals are appointed to formal leadership positions with a variety of administrative responsibilities. Few studies have focused on the assistant principal as an instructional leader. The assistant principal's position is rarely seen as one of power and status in school organizations (Marshall, 1992). Principals are identified as visionary leaders and assistant principals as managers. The principal is expected to have oversight regarding all aspects of the school while the assistant principal provides general administrative support.

In a study conducted to investigate the sources of school leadership, teachers were asked to identify those persons or groups who they considered to be the most influential sources for change. The principal was the most widely identified source of leadership, with the principal-

assistant principal combination as the second highest source of leadership (Leonard, 1999). Yet, Scott (1995) concluded that school administrative teams “demonstrated significant shortcomings” (p.207) in their ability to work together to articulate a shared vision, reveal personal opinions and beliefs, or even create meeting agendas. Marshall, Patterson, Roger, and Steele (1996) found that assistant principals may perceive their primary role as maintaining quality relationships on the basis of mutual respect and alliance-building and that career assistant principals tend to operate from an “ethic of care” perspective that is grounded in concern for others.

The major responsibilities and duties of assistant principals are identified as student discipline, evaluation of teachers, student attendance, school master schedule, and emergency arrangements (Pellicer, Anderson, Keefe, Kelly, & Mcleary, 1988, p. 49). Assistant principals are identified as being the managers of the school, providing a safe environment, assuring that students and teachers have accurate schedules. This administrative managerial role can lead to opportunities to create a professional learning community.

Marshall (1992) indicated that the reliance on school leadership for successful school reform may force assistant principals to transition to leadership roles similar to those of the principal. She argued that assistant principals and principals must cultivate a shared leadership model that effectively provides assistant principals with opportunities to have significant roles in school leadership.

Researchers have recommended that for educational restructuring to emerge, a change in leadership style is necessary. They propose a major shift in the formation of organizational structures and suggest a focus on the development of shared norms centered on student learning and collective, collaborative responsibility for school operations and improvement (Kurse, Louis,

& Brykl, 1995). In professional communities, these structures are agreed upon and internally developed rather than externally imposed in a bureaucratic fashion (Hord, 1997). Principals, from the communal perspective (Sergiovanni, 1992), play a key role by nurturing a normative climate in which innovation from professionals is supported and encouraged. Huffman and Hipp (2002, p. 1) found that “when professionals, school-wide, come together frequently and unregulated to reflect on their practice, to assess their effectiveness, to collectively study in a social context what they considered to be areas in need of attention, and to make decisions about what they need to learn to become more effective, they are operating as a community of professional learners.”

The Need for School-based Professional Learning Communities

The creation of strong professional learning communities holds several potential advantages for schools. Among them are the development of collective responsibility for teachers for the professional learning and the instructional performance of teachers; increased personal commitment of professionals to their work; the establishment of values, norms, and belief structures as the instrumental control mechanism for school achievement rather than the traditional normative control mechanism based on rules, roles, and regulations; and the establishment of flexible boundaries that lead to greater organizational learning (Hord, 1997).

“Organizations learn only through individuals who learn” (Senge, 1990, p.139); therefore, school leaders must establish conditions that encourage new ways of thinking and interacting to build school-wide capacity for commitment to shared values and visions. An important correlate of a professional learning community is the collective responsibility for performance. Members of each school, working as a unit, take on the responsibility for collectively monitoring the effectiveness of the school. As reported by teachers, the potential

beneficial outcomes associated with collective responsibility include more effective job performance; improved job satisfaction and morale; improved satisfaction of parents, students, and faculty; and improved organizational efficiency (Little, 1990). Strong engagement of teachers within the school community can result in a shared sense of purpose. When teachers work as a unit, they apply their skills to mediate dilemmas and problems associated with student learning (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 1992). The professional learning community is reported by Hord (1996) as an effective method to provide teachers with the opportunity to work collegially as a unit.

Leadership for Professional Learning Communities

Supported leadership is necessary for a professional community to emerge. Leadership, whether emanating from principals or site-based teams, must focus on school improvement, collegiality, shared purpose, continuous improvement, and structural change (Fullan, 1992).

Collaborative organizational leadership structures provide a design for improving the organization's capacity to utilize information and improve communication effectively (Cohen, 1991). Hargreaves (1992) contends that schools have singular identification with departments at grade level groupings and that they are highly political in nature. Professional control restructures schools' shared norms, values, and beliefs. Norms, beliefs, and values in the professional workplace act to create internal social control mechanisms for stronger structures than do traditional models of normative control (Abott, 1991; Angle & Perry, 1983).

New socialization processes are necessary for the recruitment, induction, and continued education of members of the organization. These processes must be present for a strong sense of community to be created and maintained. School leadership must create processes to socialize new members into the organization. Teachers produce, through their mutual efforts and

socialization, processes designed to protect existing norms and beliefs, thereby maintaining the school community. In this way, teachers become keepers of the vision, insuring that future activities will support practices that are valued (Vandenberg & Staessens, 1991).

Leadership socialization activities should focus on training in new curriculum practices and instructional techniques, and on the development of staff as involved and productive members of a collective community. When leaders facilitate teacher communications with one another, the school community becomes aware of what is expected and prohibited. These actions form an element of social control. Certain behaviors are accepted and encouraged while others are dissuaded. This social control process creates a common social reality (Vandenberg & Staessens, 1991).

In summary, the leader's promotion of socialization for teachers in the organization is critical for the implementation of a professional learning community. The principal alone cannot assume sole leadership responsibility for the establishment of professional learning communities because of the many demands placed on him or her. However, the combined and coordinated leadership roles of the principal and assistant principal may increase the effectiveness of the organization's efforts to restructure.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study is based on social capital theory (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Coleman, Hoffer & Kilgore, 1982; Coleman & Schneider, 1993) that suggests that individuals are conditioned by their interactions and that productive use of this social control can produce greater effectiveness. Professional learning communities (Hord, 1996; Sergiovanni, 1993) rely on social capital for their success. If leadership is consistent with the norms of professional learning communities, then greater organizational effectiveness is expected. Transformational leadership (Bass, 1957;

Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Burns, 1978; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997) presents one form of leadership that is reflective of these norms. Therefore, the theoretical and conceptual framework for this study rests in social capital theory, the work on professional learning communities, and transformational leadership theory.

Social Capital Theory

Coleman (1990) maintains that the concept of social capital demands that we come to grips with the notion that modern society consists of a set of independent individuals who are each asked to achieve goals that are independently determined and that the purpose of the social system consists of a combination of these actions of independent individuals (Coleman, 1990, p.300). Coleman's definition of social capital is comprehensive:

Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity, but a variety of different entities having two characteristics in common: They all consist of some aspect of a social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure. Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence.

(Coleman, 1990, p. 300)

The essential characteristic of social capital is its residence in relationships between individuals and within an organization. Social capital is less tangible than physical capital though it can still facilitate productivity. For example, a singular group characterized by distrust will achieve less than a group with high levels of trust (Coleman, 1990, p. 304).

Coleman argued that "The very norms held by the group may reinforce the public good aspect of group relations and indicate the importance of every member to the group as a whole" (Coleman, 1990, p. 321). Administrators and teachers must learn to organize the school not merely as a physical facility or a collection of professionals, but as a coherent set of relationships. In a professional community, it is critical that administrators give serious attention

to providing support to ensure that trust, knowledge, and authority order the stability of relationships within the school. High levels of social capital will result in a high quality of leadership for those who enjoy membership in the organization and community (Coleman, 1990). In summary, social capital theory as defined by Coleman (1990) creates the foundation for the implementation of professional learning communities with shared goals and values that are focused on improvement while concurrently attending to the needs of individuals.

Professional Community and Organizational Community Theory

Sergivoanni (1993) indicated that a major organizational shift was required in schools and suggested the application of sociological constructs. According to Sergiovanni (1993), schools must be viewed as communities that share ideas and bind people, with control being exercised through "norms, purposes, values, professional socialization, collegiality, and natural independence" (Sergivoanni, 1993, p. 7). Traditional social systems and environmental representations of school culture were developed to provide administrators with knowledge to assist in the efficient management of the school and to control organizational behavior. Sergivoanni's (1993) community conception of schools places school culture in an educational rather than management context.

Literature on human relations and organizational theory provides the foundation for the conceptual framework for professional learning communities and for transformational leadership. The learning organization was defined by Senge (1990, p. 3) as one in which "people continually expand their capacity to create desired results, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspirations are set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together." Organizations must utilize the talents of member commitment and capacity to learn at all levels in order to meet the challenges of the future and excel.

Learning organizations are formed because “people love to learn” (Senge, 1990, p. 4). Senge (1990, p. 1) believes that organizations learn only through individuals. “Profound teamwork” is an important construct for members of the learning organization and is also a function of what Senge (1990, p. 4) terms a “great team.” Senge also believes that people who work for a common goal towards achieving “extraordinary results” by trusting each other, complementing other members’ strengths, and compensating for their weaknesses are experiencing the essence of a learning organization (Senge, 1990, p. 4).

In the educational setting, Hord (1997) defined the professional learning community as the professional staff learning together to direct benefits toward improved student learning. According to Hord (1997, p. 5), “professional learning communities can play a major role in turning around troubled schools.” She identified five dimensions that are characteristic of a school with a successful professional learning community: supportive and shared leadership; shared values and vision; collective learning and application; shared personal practice; and supportive conditions (Hord, 1997). Learning communities foster a culture in which learning by all members is valued, encouraged, and supported. Schools with learning community staffs “intentionally and collectively engage in learning and work on issues directly related to classroom practices that positively impact student learning” (Hord, 1997, p. 4). The focal point for both Senge’s and Hord’s definition of a learning organization and learning community is “professionals learning together.” Finally and importantly, Senge (1990, p. 4) noted that in learning organizations, the team had to learn how to produce “extraordinary results.”

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership theory used in this study is developed from the conceptual foundation of the distributed leadership theory, including cognition and activity theories used to

understand human activity in complex environments (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1985). In the social cultural context of leadership practice, distributed leadership is related to transformational leadership in general. Distributed leadership theory premised for this study is based on three assumptions. First, school leadership is best understood through considering all formal and informal leaders. Second, leadership is stretched over the practice of all members within an organization. Third, leadership is distributed in and through an organizational situation or context (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997).

School leadership used in this study is defined as the acquisition, identification, allocation, coordination, and use of social, material, and cultural resources necessary to establish the conditions for teachers to perform to the best of their ability (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997). This definition supports a transformational perspective on leadership (Burns, 1978). Leadership is further defined as the ability to empower others with the purpose of bringing about a major change in the form, nature, and function of some phenomenon (Bennis & Nannus, 1985; Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1994).

School leadership is comprised of activities such as the construction of a school vision, holding a student disciplinary hearing with parents, evaluating teachers and instruction, and meeting with the school level curriculum council. The size and nature of these tasks vary tremendously based on the complexion of the school environment. The leadership responsibility, "constructing a school vision," consists of numerous smaller tasks such as meeting with faculty to discuss a preliminary draft version, revising the version and publishing the final vision, and obtaining consensus from the external and internal school members. In contrast, facilitating a disciplinary hearing is connected with a broader function for establishing a safe school climate. Both responsibilities could be identified as either leader or manager roles of the principal. Bass

(1985) does not dismiss the importance of the managerial role. Instead, he argues that managerial leadership is necessary for organizational success but that it will lead to ordinary rather than extraordinary results. He terms such leadership “transactional.” Leadership that empowers others and is more likely to create professional learning communities is transformational; transactional leadership alone will not “transform” an organization.

The literature documents a variety of transformational leadership school level functions that categorize successful, well-run schools (Purkey & Smith, 1983). Extensive literature identifies and describes transformational leadership functions that are the essence of innovation in school reform (Blase & Blase, 1998; Blase & Kirby, 1992; Firestone & Corbett, 1988; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Seashore, Louis, Toole, & Hargreaves, 1999; Sheppard, 1996). These leadership functions provide a framework for analyzing leadership tasks and exploring their relationship to reform and innovation (Lee, 1987). Focusing on both transformational and transactional leadership tasks will provide a complete and better understanding of the functions of the principal and assistant principal in creating opportunities for teachers to work collaboratively within the school (Goldring & Rallis, 1993).

Little documentation exists regarding school leadership with a focus on the relationship between leadership and management (Cuban, 1988; Peterson, 1978). The nature of school leaders’ work is an important aspect of school reform, yet the connection between leadership theory and leadership practice is weak. Leadership theory that is grounded in the perspective of leadership practice gives more insight into the impact on innovations. It is through leadership practice that a clear definition of the causes of the innovation is analyzed (Burns, 1978; Cuban, 1988; Firestone, 1996).

The writings on school leadership have reinforced the assumption that principals make

the difference, ignoring other sources of leadership. Leadership is a result of an interaction of multiple leaders and followers related to their situational tasks and the situational context of schools. Organizational leadership involves the managerial compliance with the routine directions of the organizational tasks that dominate school leaders' work. Managerial tasks that are designed to produce stability in the organization may differ substantially from leadership tasks designed to promote change. Leaders who neglect managerial concerns may have difficulties executing transformational leadership tasks that are focused on implementing reform (Firestone, 1996; Lee, 1987; Leithwood, 1992). Can the combined leadership style of the principal and assistant principal enhance the school's implementation of a professional learning community?

Professional Learning Community and Transformational Leadership Dimensions

Professional Learning Community Dimensions. The five dimensions of a professional learning community are supportive and shared leadership, shared values and vision, collective learning and application, shared personal practice, and supportive conditions (Hord, 1997). The first dimension, shared leadership, is defined as leadership that is democratic in process through sharing power, authority and decision-making with teachers while promoting and nurturing leadership among staff. Administrators and teachers take the responsibility for both leadership and decision-making in this new concept of "shared leadership" (Hord, 1997).

The second dimension of a professional learning community identified by Hord (1997) is shared values and vision. The concept of shared values and vision is actualized when the staff members share decisions, focusing on student learning, for school improvement. According to Hord (1997, p.3), shared values and visions in the learning community "support the norms of

behaviors that guide decisions about teaching and learning.” Senge (1990, p. 209) asserts, “Without a shared vision, learning communities cannot exist.”

The third dimension of a professional learning community is collective learning and the application of the learning (Hord, 1997). It is through collective learning and application of the learning that high intellectual action and solutions to address student needs are created (Hord, 1997). Teachers in professional learning communities engage in professional development activities that are embedded in the various educational operational processes of schools such as student assessment and evaluation of instructional strategies (Hord, 1997).

The fourth dimension of a professional learning community identified by Hord (1997) is supportive conditions and is associated with the dimension of school conditions and capacities that support the professional learning community operation. The two critical aspects for supportive conditions for a professional learning community are “physical and structural factors” and “human capacities” (Hord, 1997). The physical and structural factors identified by Hord (1997, p. 10) include provision of time for teachers to meet and work collegially, teaching roles that are interdependent, close proximity of the staff members, adequate space and population, communication structures, teacher empowerment, and school autonomy. Hord (1997) also alludes to provision by school leaders of necessary social activities or events that support teacher collaboration and allow members to become better acquainted with each other, thereby creating a caring environment.

The fifth and last dimension of a professional learning community is shared personal practice, which involves peer observation and reviewing of instructional practices (Hord, 1997). It is referred to by Louis and Kruse (1995) as the process by which teachers engage in instructional activities that foster a culture of respect and trust and disclose their teaching as a

personal practice. Teachers are committed to collective involvement in conversations that are centered on their work and student learning (Hord, 1997).

Transformational Leadership Dimensions. Transformational leadership defined by Leithwood and Jantzi (1996) uses two constructs — transformational and transactional leadership. The transformational leader is referred to as a visionary change agent. Leithwood and Jantzi (1996) use six dimensions to describe transformational leaders: symbolizing good professional practice, developing a collaborative decision-making structure, providing individual support, providing intellectual stimulation, holding high performance expectations, and fostering development of vision and goals. Transactional leaders are associated with the term “managers” and are described using four dimensions: establishing good staffing practices, providing instructional support, monitoring school activities, and providing a community focus (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1996).

The first dimension for transformational leadership, symbolizing good professional practice, is associated with leaders who promote a caring and trusting culture among staff by accepting responsibilities and sharing the risks with teachers. This leader also symbolizes accomplishments and success within the profession (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1996). The second dimension, developing a collaborative decision-making structure, is achieved when leaders distribute leadership broadly among the staff, develop a communication system for decision-making, and promote collaboration (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1996).

Providing individual support and providing intellectual stimulation, the third and fourth dimensions for transformational leadership, describe a leader who shows concern and respect for the personal needs of the staff while challenging teachers to engage in continuous learning. The leader providing individualized support is described as inclusive, does not show favoritism, and

is aware of teachers' unique needs and expertise. The leader providing intellectual stimulation encourages staff to evaluate practices and make necessary adjustments, and facilitates opportunities for staff to engage one another as sources of new ideas for professional learning (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1996).

The fifth and six dimensions for transformational leadership are holding high performance expectations and fostering development of vision and goals. Leaders encourage the faculty towards consensus building and establishing priorities for school goals while holding high expectations for both staff and students (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1996).

Transactional leadership dimensions are described as management practices that are “fundamental to organizational stability” (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999, p. 454). The first dimension, establishing effective staffing practices, includes the leader's ability to effectively and equitably staff the school while utilizing teacher expertise in staffing matters. The second dimension, providing instructional support, requires administrators to regularly observe classroom activities and work with teachers to improve effectiveness of instruction by participating in discussions of educational issues. Leaders provide the resources and the technical assistance to help staff improve effectiveness. The third dimension, monitoring school activities, requires the leader to have a visible and positive presence in the school by being accessible to both students and staff. The fourth dimension involves providing a community focus whereby leaders have a productive working relationship with the community and are sensitive to the community's aspirations and requests (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1996).

Connecting Leadership and Professional Learning Communities

Research provides evidence of a correlation between the five major dimensions of professional learning communities (Hord, 1997) and the ten dimensions of transformational and

transactional leadership (Leithwood, 1996; see Figure 1). This study adds to that research by examining the organizational leadership of both principals and assistant principals in shaping the perceptions of teachers of their schools as professional learning communities. The conceptual and theoretical framework for this study connects the theories of transformational leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1996) within a distributed leadership framework to the notion of professional learning communities (Hord, 1996; see Figure 2).

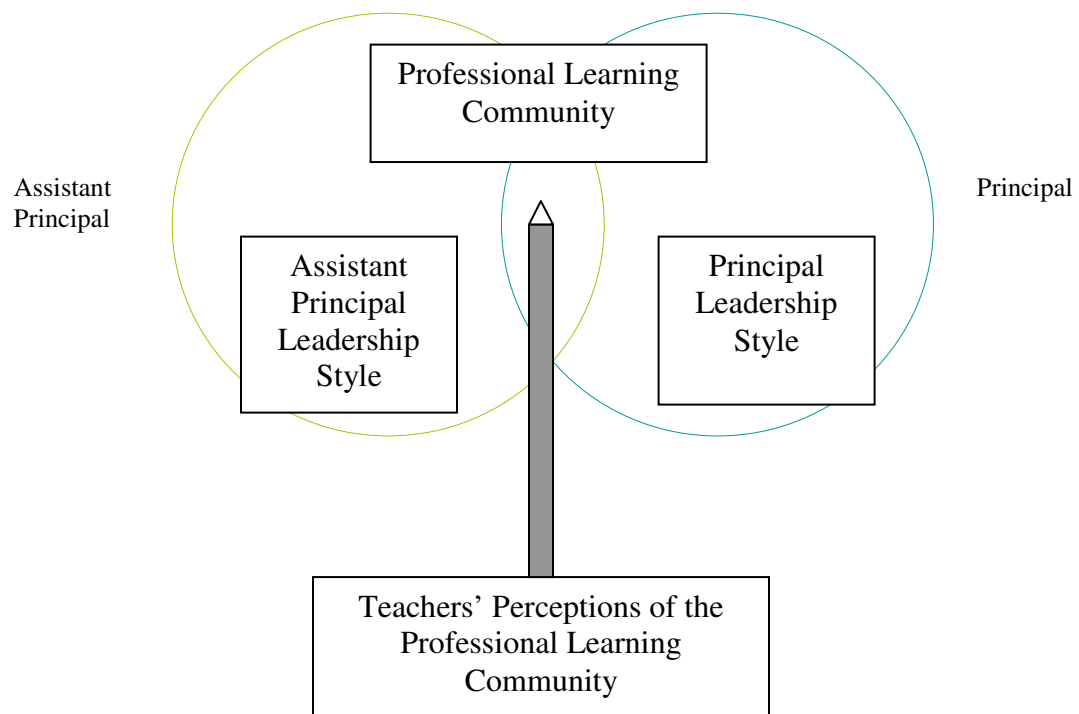


Fig. 1. *Conceptual Framework*

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY DIMENSION	TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP DIMENSION	CATEGORY OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP
Collective Learning and Application	Symbolizing Good Professional Practice	Transformational/ TF
Supportive and Shared Leadership	Developing a Collaborative Decision-Making Structure	Transformational/ TF
Shared Personal Practice	Providing Individualized Support	Transformational/ TF
Shared Values and Vision	Providing Intellectual Stimulation	Transformational/ TF
Supportive Conditions	Holding High Performance Expectations	Transformational/ TF
	Fostering Development of Vision and Goals	Transformational/ TF
	Establishing Effective Staffing Practices	School Management Transactional/ TA
	Providing Instructional Support	School Management Transactional/ TA
	Monitoring School Activities	School Management Transactional/ TA
	Providing a Community Focus	School Management Transactional/ TA

Fig. 2. *Dimensions of Professional Learning Community and Transformational and Transactional Leadership (Hord, 1996; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997)*

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to analyze the relationship between principals' and assistant principals' leadership styles and teachers' perceptions of the school as a professional learning community. Professional learning communities are important to the restructuring of educational organizations and researchers have recommended that strong leadership style is necessary for this to occur (Hetrick, 1993; Lontos, 1993). Consequently, the principal's

leadership role calls for a model that cultivates shared power in leadership at every level of the school (Kaplan & Owings, 1999).

Shared decision making, collaboration, vision, and facilitation are expected leadership behaviors for professional learning communities (Liontos, 1993; Roger, 1992). Yet leadership behaviors of today's administrators are often described as hierarchical, routine, structure-based, and power-centered (Asikainrn & Routama, 1997; Hetrick, 1993; Vaille, 1989). Assistant principals have a variety of job responsibilities that center around assisting "in all matters assigned by the principal" (Weller & Weller, 2002, p. 14). Generally, the number one task that falls to the assistant principal is discipline (O'Neil, 2002; Weller & Weller, 2002); however, filling out paperwork; conferencing with parents, students, and faculty; coordinating professional development activities; evaluating personnel; developing the school semester schedule; and working with community services are other common responsibilities. The assistant principal may be in a position to assist the principal effectively by becoming an important member of the school leadership team. Despite the move to empower and include all faculty members in professional learning communities, little research has been completed on the impact of the leadership style of assistant principals.

I propose that the traditional distinctions between the classic modes of leadership—namely, transactional and transformational—are difficult to understand within the context of the professional learning community without considering the interaction of principal and assistant principal leadership styles. I advance the idea that the transactional and transformational modes are not contingent only on the principal's leadership and that the impact of the assistant principal's leadership role should be considered. I also propose the development of a leadership model for principals and

assistant principals with complementary transactional and transformational modes of leadership styles.

Context of the Problem

Research indicates that professional learning communities are important for school restructuring (Hord, 1997) and that a major shift in approaches to motivating educational organizations and its members is caused by the restructuring (Roger, 1992). Leadership is proven to be important to both school restructuring and professional learning communities. The dimensions of transformational leadership and management are vital for the implementation and sustaining of a professional learning community in schools.

Formal school leadership of the principal and assistant principal is a traditional hierarchical design in a bureaucratic organizational model. Assistant principals are identified as a powerful source of formal leadership, second only to principals. When the principal is absent from the school's campus, the assistant principal, by policy, assumes the "leader in charge role" (New Orleans Public Schools, 2004). The assistant principal's leadership during the principal's absence from the school can impact school restructuring efforts. Because the principal's responsibilities are increasingly complex and varied, assistant principals must be included productively in the major components of the school leadership structure to provide greater services and resources for both teachers and students. Although the major requirement for a professional learning community is the total involvement of staff and faculty, there is a limited amount of research associated with the assistant principal's impact on a professional learning community.

Research Questions

The following research questions are posed:

1. How do teachers and assistant principals rate principals in terms of transformational leadership and management? Is there a relationship between their leadership scores?
2. How do teachers and principals rate assistant principals in terms of transformational leadership and management? Is there a relationship between their leadership scores?
3. How do teachers, principals, and assistant principals rate their schools as professional learning communities? Is there a relationship between their professional learning community scores?
4. What is the relationship of teachers' perceptions of principals' and assistant principals' degree of transformational leadership and management to teachers' perceptions of their schools as professional learning communities?
5. How does the compatibility of principal and assistant principal degree of transformational leadership and management affect teachers' perceptions of their school as a professional learning community?

Overview of Methodology

Population

The population for this study includes public school principals, assistant principals, and teachers from high, middle, and elementary schools in two states. A letter was presented to superintendents explaining the nature of and process for the research and requesting permission for school participation. When confirmations were received from superintendents, letters were mailed and follow-up telephone calls were made to a sample of principals requesting their participation. Administrators were asked to respond to a demographic survey and the Leadership

and Management of Schools Survey (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997). Teachers were asked to respond to a demographic survey and the School Professional Staff and Learning as a Learning Community questionnaire (Hord, 1997) and The Leadership and Management of Schools Survey (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997).

Sample

The four public school districts were selected based on purposeful and convenience sampling. All school districts were readily accessible thereby providing a greater number of participants within the time frame of the study. Teacher participants were selected from teachers who were current members of their school improvement team.

Design

Both correlational and quasi-experimental comparative designs using multivariate analysis of variance were used to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and professional learning communities. The data were obtained from teachers, principals, and assistant principals using the two instruments. First, all teachers completed the School Professional Staff and Learning as a Learning Community questionnaire (Hord, 1997) and the Leadership and Management of Schools Survey (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997) for both the principal and assistant principal. Principals completed the School Professional Staff and Learning as a Learning Community questionnaire (Hord, 1997) and the Leadership and Management of Schools questionnaire (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997) on the assistant principal. Assistant principals completed the School Professional Staff and Learning as a Learning Community questionnaire (Hord, 1997) and the Leadership and Management of Schools questionnaire (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997) on the principal. Last, all participants completed the demographic survey instrument, providing information on years of experience, school type, and

length of service at present school.

Statistical Procedures

The study used descriptive statistics, multiple regression, Pearson *r* correlations, and multivariate analysis of variance to determine the effects of teachers' perceptions of their principal's and assistant principal's use of transformational leadership and management on the professional learning community. Information obtained from the demographic survey was used to analyze mitigating variables such as the type and size of school, years of experience of the participants, and the length of service at present school.

Definitions of Terms

Transformational leadership: A form of consensual or facilitative power that is manifested through other people instead of over other people. Transformational leaders share power and facilitate a school development process that engages the human potential and commitment of teachers (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1996).

Transactional leadership: Denotes a transaction between leader and follower. Daft (1999, p. 427) refers to transactional leadership as "traditional management."

Complementary Leadership: Leadership in which the principal, assistant principal, or both exhibit high levels of transformational and transactional leadership. Schools in this study are categorized based on the level of leadership shown by both principal and assistant principal as Ideal (both high on both leadership dimensions), Complementary (at least one high on each leadership dimensions), or Incompatible (neither high on one or both leadership dimensions).

Professional learning community: The professional staff learning together to direct their efforts toward improved student learning; conceptualized as five related dimensions that reflect the essence of a professional learning community: shared and supported leadership, shared vision

and values, collective learning application, supportive conditions, and shared personal practice (Hord, 1997).

Collegiality: Supportive interpersonal relationships wherein teachers are empowered to exercise professional judgments.

Collaboration: The interaction between teachers and between teachers and administrators in which information is shared on school operational matters, including the instructional program, restructuring, and reform.

Leadership and Management of Schools: An instrument that measures transformational leadership as developed by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997). The six dimensions of the section measuring the nature of leadership are: a) Symbolizing Good Professional Practice, b) Developing a Collaborative Decision-Making Structure, c) Providing Individualized Support, d) Providing Intellectual Stimulation, e) Holding High Performance Expectations, and f) Fostering Development of Vision and Goals. The four dimensions of school management are: a) Establishing Effective Staffing Practices, b) Providing Instructional Support, c) Monitoring School Activities, and d) Providing a Community Focus.

School Professional Staff as a Learning Community: An instrument for measuring a school's professional learning community, based on five dimensions: a) school administration sharing authority and decision-making; b) staff sharing vision for school improvement focused on student learning; c) collective learning application of staff; d) peer reviews based on classroom observations and feedback; and e) school conditions and capacities to support staff's professional learning (Hord, 1997).

Acting Principal: The assistant principal designated as the principal in charge in the event that the principal is not on campus or absent from school.

Underlying Assumptions

This study uses theoretical assumptions associated with transformational leadership and professional learning communities. Transformational leadership involves developing human resources to change an organization's climate for the purpose of enhancing the learning environment (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997). Effective leaders utilize both transformational and transactional leadership behaviors. A professional learning community will result in collective responsibility for the learning performance of students; the establishment of values, norms, and belief structures as the instrumental control mechanism for school achievement rather than the traditional normative control mechanism based on rules, roles and regulations; and the establishment of flexible boundaries that lead to greater organizational learning (Chubb, 1987; Edmonds, 1979; Hord, 1997).

Significance of the Study

Empirical research has shown that the principal's leadership is critical to improving schools. Transformational leadership is an effective form of leadership for restructuring schools (Bass, 1985; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997). Studies reveal that a professional learning community can increase the capacity of individuals within an organization to learn and to overcome the challenges that schools face due to mandated accountability requirements (Hord, 1997). Formal school leadership structures include principals and assistant principals in many schools, but there is little if any research on their combined leadership impact on school restructuring (Marshall, 1992). The school's professional learning community should include all members of the organization--administrators, teachers, faculty, and staff. Assistant principals are often overlooked as important and instrumental to the implementation and sustaining of school restructuring, specifically professional learning communities.

The assistant principal is a direct avenue to the principalship in many school districts. The reported number of vacancies in school principalship positions will cause school boards to promote assistants, who have less experience than their predecessors, to principals (ERS, 1998). It is imperative that assistant principals exhibit transformational leadership abilities and knowledge of how the leadership of assistant principals will impact school restructuring. It is imperative that training and preparation programs for assistant principals include knowledge of both transformational leadership skills and the implementation of professional learning communities to enhance leadership performance and school restructuring. Principals' current roles and responsibilities place limits on the amount of time available for the effective implementation of school restructuring. Research on shared leadership in schools with hierarchical organizations must include the relationships of the principal and assistant principal.

Research supports transformational leadership as a means of improving organizational effectiveness. Evidence from this study provides support for Leithwood and Jantzi's (1996) model of transformational leadership for both principals and assistant principals, as well as the implementation and support of the professional learning community model identified by Hord (1997).

Organization of Study

Chapter One introduced the context of the problem and the purpose of the research, including the conceptual and theoretical perspectives that framed the study. Chapter Two presents a review of the literature related to transformational leadership and the professional learning community. Although there is a limited amount of research on the leadership styles of assistant principals, this chapter includes studies of roles and responsibilities of principals and assistant principals. This chapter also discusses empirical literature on both transformational

leadership and professional learning communities. Chapter Three provides a description of the instruments of the study, including a discussion of their validity and reliability. This chapter also describes the research design, sampling techniques, and data collection procedures. Additionally, the chapter describes the statistical analysis procedures, research questions, and research hypotheses. Chapter Four presents the results of the data analysis of the study. This chapter includes the descriptive and inferential statistics for the sample, including inferential tests of each hypothesized relationship. Chapter Five summarizes the completed research and presents the conclusions related to the research questions and hypotheses. This chapter also provides recommendations for further studies on the relationship of transformational leadership styles of principals and assistant principals. Implications for the assistant principal's connection with a professional learning community are debated.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The literature review for this study is organized into two major sections--transformational leadership and professional learning communities. The first section provides an overview of leadership theories to facilitate understanding of the evolution of transformational leadership. This section also discusses the relationship of principals and assistant principals in school restructuring and reform, with a review of the current roles of both. The conclusion of this section includes a comprehensive summary of transformational leadership and transactional leadership styles for school leaders. The second section is focused on professional learning communities as a school restructuring initiative. The professional learning community's impact on academic performance is reviewed, and the connection between professional learning communities and leadership is discussed.

Leadership Theories

Yukl (1989) defined leadership as an interaction between two or more persons. He also stated that leadership involves an influence process that is intentional and exerted by leaders over followers. According to Moorhead and Griffin (1998), studies conducted at the University of Michigan Survey Research Center focused on identifying leadership characteristics that impacted group performance. Two basic forms of leadership behaviors identified were "production-

centered” leader behavior and “employee-centered” leader behavior. Hoy and Miskel (1991, p. 269) cite Vroom in summarizing the findings of the Michigan studies:

1. More effective leaders tend to have a relationship with their subordinates that is supportive and tend to enhance the followers’ sense of self-esteem.
2. More effective leaders use group rather than person-to-person methods of supervision and decision-making.
3. More effective leaders tend to set higher performance goals.

Situational Leadership Theory

Hersey and Blanchard (1982) expanded the concept of effective leadership with their situational leadership theory. It focused on the relationship between leadership style and the readiness of the subordinate. The contingency theory of leadership behavior is a well-known and empirically tested contextual leader behavior model. Leader effectiveness is viewed as a function of leader behavior and contextual factors. In a contingency leadership model, the leader’s personality traits were either task-motivated behavior or relationship-motivated (Moorhead & Griffin, 1998). The maturity level of the follower determined the most effective combination of task and relationship approaches. Their model is similar to path goal theory and focuses on the extent to which subordinates should be involved in the decision-making process (Hoy & Miskel, 1991; Moorhead & Griffin, 1998). Hersey and Blanchard (1982) argued that leadership behavior affects the effectiveness of the organization and that changes in the organization affect the next leadership intervention. Leadership is defined as "working with and through people to accomplish a particular organizational goal" (Blanchard, Zigarmi, & Zigarmi, 1987, p. 13).

Transformation Leadership Theory

The emergence of the concept of transformational leadership was first introduced by Burns in 1978 and presented an alternative to the contingency theories. As first conceptualized, there were two types of leaders--the transactional leader and the transformational leader (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). The transactional leader uses contingent reinforcement, either positive contingent reward or the more negative active or passive forms of management by exception (Bass & Avolio, 1994). The transformational leader articulates a vision of the future that is shared with peers and subordinates; intellectually stimulates followers; is cognitive of individual differences among people; is likely to use personal resources including time, knowledge, and experience; and serves as a coach, teacher, and mentor (Yammarino & Bass, 1990; Yukl, 1989). Bass, Waldman, Avolio, and Bebb (1987) found that transformational leaders attract strong feelings of identity, excitement, and expectations by focusing on ideas and creating a vision for their followers.

In an ethnographic single case study, Lontos (1993) profiled a school principal using observations and interviews. Walker's (1993) classification strands of transformational leadership were used to describe the principal. Lontos concluded that the partnership-oriented style of the principal resulted in teachers feeling empowered. Lontos also reported that the principal was caring, developed collaborative goals, and led by example.

In a meta-analytical review of 39 studies using Avolio and Bass's (1987) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire to assess transformational and transactional leadership, Lowe, Kroeck, and Sivasubramaniam (1996) found that key elements of transformational leadership correlated positively with subordinate satisfaction and performance. Contingent reward, a transactional behavior, also was correlated positively with the criteria, although the results were weaker and

less consistent. In descriptive studies based on interviews and observations, it was also discovered that transformational leadership is effective in a variety of different situations (Tichy & Devanna, 1986).

Transformational leadership supplements transactional leadership and does not substitute for transactional leadership. Bartol and Martin (2000) contend that even the most successful transformational leaders need transactional skills to manage the day-to-day affairs of the business. Bass and his colleagues (Avolio and Bass, 1987; Bass & Avolio, 1989; Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990a; Bass, 1990b; Bass, 1997; Hater and Bass, 1988) conducted extensive empirical and quantitative research on transformational and transactional leaders. Avolio and Bass (1987) found overwhelming evidence supporting the concept that transformational leadership appears to exist at many levels of organizational settings. According to Bass (1998), transformational leadership can be taught and learned.

Leaders and Managers

Bolman and Deal (1994), in answering the question of whether a great manager can also become a great leader, stated that while there are managers with the capacity to become great leaders, there are also managers who do not have the capacity as leaders. Additionally, there are “leaders who have no capacity to be managers, but are great leaders” (p. 79). Silins (1994) stated that the “essential function of ‘leadership’ ... is to produce appropriate change whereas management is used to maintain operations of the current organization” (p. 275). The emphasis for leaders, therefore, is more on doing what is right instead of doing it right (Bolman & Deal, 1994).

The observations of Conger (1998) also hold true for principals, many who are excellent managers and transactional leaders and whose training at the time of becoming a principal was

appropriate. Any move towards transformational leadership may require not only a review of current practice but also training in the new approach.

Yammarino (1994) cites Kotter and Zaleznik in distinguishing between managing and leading. He explains that managers deal with "the complexity of the organization" (school) by means of "planning and budgeting, organizing and staffing" (p. 28). There is a focus on process; therefore, the manager's concern is with "how decisions get made and how communication flows." Contrasting that emphasis, the transformational leader copes with complexity through "setting a direction (vision), aligning people to that direction (communicating the vision), and motivating and inspiring people (moving people to walk the vision)" (p. 28). Thus, the transformational leader is more concerned with the "what" and less with the "how," more with stimulating ideas and inspiring others to work hard and to be innovative and creative.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leaders are described as creative and innovative in thinking. These leaders provide followers with ideas that enable them to generate solutions by looking at problems from various perspectives (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Kirby, Paradise, and King's (1992) study on transformational leadership in education analyzed the degree to which leaders were perceived as exhibiting transformational and transactional behaviors. In the first part of the study, over 100 educators who responded to the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Avolio & Bass, 1987) revealed that higher levels of satisfaction and performance were associated with transformational leadership (Kirby, Paradise, & King, 1992). The second part of the study required a different group of 58 educators to write a descriptive narrative on extraordinary leadership. In the findings from an analysis of participants' narratives, indications

were that modeling, challenging behaviors, and promoting high expectations inspired followers to higher levels of performance.

Transformational leaders are never satisfied and are always seeking to utilize creative thinking and encourage new approaches to the resolution of problems (Bass, 1985). Bass and Avolio (1994) contend that transformational leaders, by acting as coaches and mentors, can attend to each individual's needs. In the delegation of tasks, there is an emphasis on the creation of a supportive climate as a means of developing the potential of colleagues and subordinates. The leader promotes a climate of trust where each individual is heard and treated with respect and dignity (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Research by Leithwood and his colleagues moved transformational leadership—already established in the corporate world—into the educational setting. Leithwood, reviewing the dimensions of transformational leadership as postulated by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985), developed dimensions relevant and specific to the educational setting. Transformational leadership in the school setting was defined along six leadership and management dimensions. The leadership dimensions identified by Leithwood and Jantzi (1996) are:

- Building school vision and goals by developing, identifying, and communicating the vision for the school and inspiring teachers.
- Providing intellectual stimulation by challenging teachers to be continuous learners.
- Providing individualized support by showing concern and respect for the personal needs of teachers and giving encouragement and support.
- Providing an appropriate role model by being ethical and moral in behavior while accepting responsibilities and sharing the risk with teachers.

- Demonstrating high performance and expectations by communicating through actions that are goal-oriented.
- Developing structures to foster participation by creating an atmosphere of trust for teachers to freely collaborate and share ideas for the purpose of improving the effectiveness of the school.

The four management dimensions are staffing, instructional support, monitoring school activities, and community focus (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999). These managerial practices, according to Leithwood and Jantzi, are “fundamental to organizational stability” (p. 454).

Effects of Transactional Leadership

Transactional leaders use exchange rewards contingent upon performance and positional resources in order to encourage desired behaviors of followers. Transactional leaders clarify role and task requirements to guide or motivate their followers in the direction of established goals (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). Bass (1990b, p. 20) states that leadership that is based on transactions between managers and employees is called transactional leadership. Daft (1999, p. 427) refers to transactional leadership as a "traditional management function." The traditional management function is typical of leaders who initiate structure, clarify the role and task requirements of subordinates, and provide appropriate rewards to meet the social needs of subordinates. The transactional leader's ability to satisfy subordinates and do extremely well at management functions may improve productivity.

Transactional leadership is a continuous interaction between leaders and followers. The focus is on rewarding or using other forms of reinforcement in exchange for satisfactorily carrying out the assignment, or on taking corrective actions for failure to meet objectives (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Transactional leaders complete administrative tasks and often emphasize the

impersonal aspects of performance, such as budgets, plans, and schedules. Transactional leaders reveal a deep sense of commitment to the organization and conform to the organization's norms and values. Burns (1978) contends that transactional leadership reveals values relevant to the exchange process, such as honesty, fairness, responsibility, and reciprocity. Yukl (1998) asserts that transactional leaders motivate their employees by appealing to their self-interest. The transactional leader interferes only when the required standards are not being met (Bass, 1990a).

In summary, transactional leadership is based on an exchange process whereby followers are rewarded for accomplishing specific goals (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). The exchange relationship between transactional leaders and their followers is based on an implied contract that involves positive reinforcement for a higher level of performance (Waldman, Bass, & Yammarino, 1990). Transactional leaders recognize the follower's needs and desires and clarify how those needs and desires will be met in exchange for enactment of the follower's work role (Bass, 1985).

Effects of Transformational Leadership

In organizations where change occurs frequently, it is argued that transformational leadership style produces the best results, benefiting the organization as a whole (Leithwood, 1996). Transformational leadership engages understanding of the human environment and attending to the strategic environment. It involves developing human resources and anticipating, rather than reacting to, the need for organizational change and development.

Empirical research (Hater & Bass, 1988; Howell, & Avolio, 1993; Koh, Steers, & Terborg, 1995) found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and organizational performance. In an empirical study of 78 managers, Howell and Avolio (1993) found that transformational leadership directly and positively predicted unit-level performance.

In a study conducted in Singapore, Koh, Steers, and Terborg (1995) reported a high level of performance of high school students whose institutions were managed by charismatic leaders. Hater and Bass (1988) found that managers identified independently as top performers were rated higher on transformational leadership than a randomly chosen group of ordinary managers. Transformational leadership in the world of business has been identified as the factor that improved the work force and ultimately determined the success or failure of the organization (Bennis, 1978).

Larson (1980) suggested that principals play a role similar to business leaders by creating the organizational context and establishing linkages among teachers to allow for cohesiveness and improved collaboration. Additionally, principals can institute policies and practices within their control critical to improve effectiveness (Mortimore & Sammons, 1987). Moorhead and Griffin (1998) emphasized similar views for managers, arguing that in "relying on formal power in formal dimensions of influence," principals are able to "guide and direct the efforts of others toward organizational effectiveness" (p. 350).

Azumi and Madhere (1983) examined principal effectiveness as a function of principal leadership style. They found that principals who utilized a system incorporating rich feedback, while focusing on socialization as a means of achieving the organizational goals, had greater teacher conformity and higher student achievement than those who relied on programming and sanctions as methods of control.

Transformational leaders use their relationships with followers to raise themselves as well as their followers to higher levels of achievement. Relationship building is an important aspect of transformational leadership. Research has consistently argued that transformational leaders increased group performance by empowering their followers to perform their jobs

independently of their leader's direct supervision and control (Avolio & Bass, 1987). A transformational leader works effectively within a more horizontal organizational structure. This implies that the leader's roles and responsibilities are coordinated effectively with other formal and informal leaders of the organization. Transformational leaders are sometimes directive with their followers and often seek followers' participation in group work by highlighting the importance of cooperation and collective task performance, providing the opportunity to learn from shared experience, and delegating authority for followers to execute any necessary action for effective performance (Bass, 1985).

Roles and Responsibilities of School Site Administrators for Restructuring

The roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes of the principal and assistant principal are changing as a result of school restructuring. Consequently, the principal's role calls for a model that cultivates shared power and leadership at all levels of the school.

Transformational leadership and shared leadership are necessary for many new school restructuring initiatives to succeed. The success of any social system depends on the involvement and cohesion of its members, who share a collective identity and common purpose. Few could argue that many principals and assistant principals endure such extensive work days that it is difficult for them to have a life beyond their work.

There is ample evidence that the principal is significant in shaping the learning environment to facilitate student learning (Edmonds, 1979; Sergiovanni, 1991). Chubb (1987) explained that principals, by articulating clear goals, holding high expectations of student and teachers, and exercising strong educational leadership, are instrumental in guiding schools to achieving educational goals.

Principals and assistant principals must redefine their roles and responsibilities to influence those in the hierarchy to acquire resources and the authority they need to facilitate a strong learning community. It is reported that leaders who are able to influence those above them also tend to be more influential with their followers (Yurl, 1994). On the managerial side, time and resources must be provided to allow this to occur. Principals play a key role in nurturing a climate in which innovative professional activity is supported and encouraged (Sergiovanni, 1993).

In a case study of one principal, Sergiovanni (1990) found that school improvement and school success are a result of transformational leadership. His findings reinforced the importance of leadership by bonding which he equated to Burns's (1978) theory of moral leadership (Sergiovanni, 1990). The principal used shared values, commitment, and interpersonal support qualities.

The effectiveness of the principal's leadership frequently has been associated with improved student learning. However, specific aspects of the assistant principal's leadership that promote this development are less clear. We know a considerable amount about the organizational structures, leadership roles, and conditions of schools that have managed to improve instruction (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Newman & Wehlage, 1995; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Sergiovanni 1996; Sheppard, 1996). Instructional improvement depends on school-level factors, especially school leadership (Barth, 1986; Leithwood, 1994).

Principals and assistant principals should view themselves as leadership teams that collectively hold responsibility for total school administrative oversight, but no one individual can have direct oversight of every dimension of school activity. There are a variety of ways that administrative responsibilities can be shared by a leadership team. A single administrator alone

cannot provide direct oversight for all school dimensions and activities. Leadership can vary in responsibilities. Roles must be shared effectively with the assistant principal without duplicating efforts and solutions. It is the entire formal leadership's responsibility to help the organization maintain a focus on what is important. Researchers have found that creativity among followers tends to be higher when group members work with a transformational rather than a transactional leader (Jung, 2001).

Schools with weak and strong professional communities reveal substantial differences in the nature of the principal leadership (Louis, Marks, & Kurse, 1996; Useem, Christman, Gold, & Simon, 1997). The differences reported involve how school leaders employ their roles and relationships as opposed to how the roles are formally defined. When principals promote social trust in schools, then schools' capacities for professional learning communities are likely to be strengthened. Research indicates that when principals distribute influence over decisions related to professional development and school improvement by sharing responsibilities with teachers, trust among teachers and enhanced collective responsibility for student learning is increased (Spillane, 2001). Trust is developed when principals support teachers' work on a consistent basis and manage conflict proactively (Smylie & Hart, 1999).

Leader-School Relationships

Letnier (1994) contrasted most of the findings from other studies by finding no statistically significant relationship between the principal's role in instructional management and student academic achievement. Using Hallinger's (1984) framework of the principal's role in his operational definition—that is, defining the school's mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive school climate—he found no relationship between the principal's score on the instructional management rating scale (IMRS) and student achievement;

but the dimension, "promoting a positive school climate," was significantly related to student achievement and language, ($p < .05$) and approached significance in reading, ($p < .08$; p. 228). This finding confirms many researchers' belief that the principal, although one step removed from the direct instructional process, still has an indirect effect on student outcomes (Bossert, 1988; Heck, Larsen, & Marcoulides, 1990). As Heck (1993, p. 160) explained, the principal's actions that influence teachers to work more effectively with students also impact student outcomes. Heck investigated the relationship among the contextual variables—the in-school process focusing on principal and teacher actions, in addition to student outcomes—in secondary schools in Singapore. His results indicated that despite mediating contextual variables such as school size, type of school, and teacher experience on student outcomes, the variables "did not appear to influence perceptions of the principal strategic interactions with teachers in areas of governing the school, building school culture or climate, and organizing instruction," (p. 161) the areas directly related to student achievement.

Silins (1994) revealed that there are comprehensive changes in the organization of schooling. She noted that several factors such as the devolution of authority, the democratization of the decision-making process, the demand for increased school accountability, and central reorganizations have "placed new demands on principals to provide leadership within a complex system that provides self-determination within a centrally determined framework" (p. 1). The implication is that the principal must embrace an important new role—evaluating his or her view of leadership.

Assistant Principal Roles

In many school cultures, assistant principals are often seen as peacemakers. This may present complications to the assistant principal's role to protect and serve the school's culture and

environment. These roles are similar to what Leithwood and Jantzi (1996) identified as transactional leadership. The assistant principal's traditional role of disciplinarian is a challenge to maintaining the image of a peacemaker (O'Neill, 2002).

Brown (1995) conducted a study examining the experiences of schools that were attempting to change to professional learning communities. Transformational leadership style, along with the emerging models of team leaders, accounted for a significant variance in selected learning organization characteristics. The study utilized the Principal Leadership Questionnaire (adapted from Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990) and the School Climate Survey (Gruenert & Valentine, 1988) as instruments. Using quantitative and qualitative methods to study the responses from 13 schools and 312 teachers from three school districts in Canada, the researchers concluded that the principal and vice-principal were recognized as the primary sources of leadership.

Instructional leadership can generate from the leadership of people other than the principal. Few studies have focused on the assistant principal as an instructional leader. Glathon and Newburg (1984) reported findings that the predispositions of assistant principals did help them to obtain administrative positions, moving out of the classroom. They noted that sponsorship was the critical support necessary for administrative career movement. But sponsorship from principals meant that the assistant principal's efforts would be relegated to discipline and away from instructional issues (Gross, 1987).

Calabrese and Adams (1987) reported that role conflicts of the assistant principal and principal impact their relationships and performance. Assistant principals, who are given less satisfactory jobs such as discipline and monitoring students' attendance, felt a sense of powerlessness and alienation. Assistant principals with role ambiguity and role overload

increased the possibility for on-the-job dissatisfaction and conflicts (Calabrese & Adams, 1987). In a study conducted by Croft and Morton (1977), it was concluded that assistant principals' highest job satisfaction was due to the performance of duties that required a higher degree of expertise and administrative ability.

Teachers' Perceptions of Leadership

Teacher perceptions of leaders can be developed through inferential processing. Inferential processing is dependent on the opportunity of teachers to observe events in which the leader is involved, assess the outcomes of the events, and draw conclusions about the contributions of the leader to those events (Lord, 1985; Lord & Mayer, 1993). Perceptions of a person as a leader result from the follower's judgments that events had desirable results and the leader was instrumental in bringing about those results.

Teacher demographic characteristics of age, gender, and length of experience influence their perceptions of leaders. An exploratory study conducted by Leithwood and Jantzi (1995) indicated a significant gender effect on the influences on teachers' perceptions of principals' transformational leadership styles. Followers rated female leaders higher than male leaders on transformational behaviors. It was reported by Leithwood and Jantzi (1995) that mediating factors such as female leaders being younger than male leaders and a majority of participants being from small primary schools possibly could have influenced the findings. A more important finding was that a greater impact on teacher perceptions was caused by the actions of the leader with respect to instructional programs, vision, decision-making, organization, and policy.

With increases in the number of females in school leadership positions and historical images of effective leaders as male, experienced, older teachers are more likely than younger colleagues to develop leader prototypes favoring masculine traits that are authoritarian (non-

transformational) styles of leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1995). Current evidence indicates a considerable disparity between elementary and secondary schools in the gender of their leaders. Because secondary school leaders have always been and are still overwhelmingly male, there is a greater likelihood that secondary teachers, rather than elementary teachers, will feature male traits in their leader prototypes. In addition, images of principal leadership in larger secondary schools may be less personal and more bureaucratic in form than is characteristic of transformational leadership (Tabin & Coleman, 1993).

Teacher Loyalty

Teacher loyalty can impact perceptions of principals' transformational leadership style. Teacher loyalty to the principal, school district, and colleagues can impact teacher perceptions of both transformational leadership and professional learning communities (Hord, 1997; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997). There is a minimal amount of scholarly research on faculty loyalty in schools and on loyalty as a multidimensional construct (Reiss & Hoy, 1998). Research conducted by Reiss and Hoy conceptualized loyalty as a multidimensional construct, operationalized the dimensions of loyalty, and analyzed the factors that predict the aspects of faculty loyalty in urban schools. Loyalty to the principal was conceptualized as teachers' commitment to the principal based on their faith in the principal's ability to lead (Hoy & Miskel, 1991; Reiss & Hoy, 1998). Loyalty of the teachers to their co-workers is tied into the informational side of an organization that promotes cohesiveness (Hoy & Miskel, 1991; Reiss & Hoy, 1998).

Reiss and Hoy (1998) use the aspects of teacher and principal openness as relevant concepts for the theoretical framework for the study. Teacher openness is defined as supportive, directive, and restrictive. Principal openness is defined using the behaviors collegial, intimate and engaging (Reiss & Hoy, 1998). The measurement for the study involved the use of two

instruments: the revised edition of the Rutgers' School Loyalty Questionnaire (RSLQ) and the revised edition of the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ-RE). The Rutgers School Loyalty Questionnaire (RSLQ) dimensions' coefficient alphas were principal loyalty, .96; school district loyalty, .83; and colleagues' loyalty, .95. The Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ-RE) for elementary schools climate descriptors' coefficient alphas were; collegial, .87; restrictive, .85; intimate, .85; directive, .81; supportive, .96; and disengaged, .76 (Reiss & Hoy, 1998).

The findings from the study supported the researchers' hypotheses in several important areas. First, the concept of faculty loyalty is a multidimensional concept requiring analysis of all the factors. Reiss and Hoy (1998, p. 19) state, "factors that predict one aspect of teacher loyalty are different from those that predict other aspects." Second, urban elementary teachers were most loyal to school districts that recruit professional and collegial teachers and principals who are highly supportive. Third, loyalty to the principal by teachers is best explained by supportive principal behavior and loyalty to colleagues by collegial and engaged teacher behavior.

Professional Learning Communities

Impact on Organizations

The term "professional learning community" labels schools in which interaction among teachers is frequent and their actions are shared and governed by norms focused on the improvement of teaching and learning (Hord, 1996). The three core practices that characterize faculty behavior in a school-based professional learning community are a) reflective dialogue among teachers about instructional practices and student learning, b) an open system of practice in which teachers observe each other's practices using a joint problem-solving mode, and c) peer collaboration in which teachers engage in actual shared work. Critical reflection and engaging

collegial activities expose teachers to the practices of professional learning communities that provide them with the opportunities to learn new ways of teaching (Kurse, Louis, & Brykl, 1995). These practices focus on the development of shared norms that are centered on student learning and collective responsibility for school operations and improvement. In professional learning communities, behavioral guidelines are internally developed and agreed upon, rather than externally imposed in a bureaucratic fashion (Hord, 1996).

The goal of a 5-year project studying professional learning communities sponsored by Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) was to examine the impact of shared values and visions on the development of professional learning communities (Huffman, 2001). The study was conducted in 18 school sites, with varying grade configurations and a diverse economic and demographic student population. The principal and the teacher leader were interviewed by a “Co-Developer.” The Co-Developers were identified as educators who participated in collecting and analyzing the data for the research. The research data collected by the Co-Developers involved interviews using audiotapes that were transcribed and analyzed using the five dimensions of professional learning communities as a conceptual framework (Hord, 1997).

The study incorporated a holistic approach by placing schools in clusters on a continuum ranging from established to less established (Huffman, 2001). Inter-rater reliability techniques were used to distinguish between and among clusters by Co-Developers. Characteristics of schools were studied in detail and condensed into phases of development; these characteristics were used to differentiate between schools based on the categories of more or less mature in the development of professional learning communities. The characteristics identified early in the analysis were used to identify major phases of development that were processed into the

operational model to describe the continuum of professional learning communities (Huffman, 2001). The data analyzed using the dimensions of Hord's (1997) model of professional learning communities revealed that seven schools, categorized as mature, had better results than schools categorized as less mature (Huffman, 2001).

Shared Leadership and Teacher Collaboration

Empirical research findings point to the conclusion that schools that focused on improving student learning are successfully redesigning themselves to become organizations that continually learn and invent new ways to increase the effectiveness of their work (Rosenholtz, 1989). Effective teachers are those who are supported in their own ongoing learning and classroom practice and are more committed when compared to teachers who are not supported (Rosenholtz, 1989). Methods that provide support for teachers are identified as being organized in networks, cooperation among colleagues, and expanded professional roles that increase teacher efficacy for meeting students' needs.

McLaughlin and Talbert (1993) supported Rosenholtz's (1989) findings that suggested that when teachers had opportunities for collaborative inquiry and related learning, the results were a widely shared body of wisdom concerning teaching. Shared decision making became widely discussed as a factor related to curriculum reform connected to the transformation of teaching roles (Darling & Hammond, 1996). Researchers also began observing improvements in schools where faculties were functioning as learning communities (Brandt, 1996; Lee, Smith, & Croninger, 1995; Newmann & Wehlage, 1995; Scribner & Reyves, 1999).

In schools that have professional learning communities, individual talent and commitment are harnessed into group efforts that push for high-quality learning for all students (Brandt, 1995). Teachers' collaborative work is grounded in active dialogue and inquiry where

the staff conducts conversations about teaching and learning, identifying related issues and problems (Hord, 1997).

The level of shared leadership is dependent upon the principal's willingness to share authority and his or her ability to motivate teachers to take on new responsibilities (Hord, 1997). Shared leadership emerged as a critical component of successful professional learning communities.

Leadership Teams and Professional Learning Communities

The emphasis for school-based leadership teams is collaboration of strengths and expertise, reinforcing the need for all members to share a common view of both the purposes of the team and its methods of operations. Many school-based reform initiatives mandate the creation of school leadership teams with school improvement as a main focus. The literature on teams is similar to the argument for coercive action outlined by Gronn (2002) in that team activity can amount to more than the aggregate sum of individual action. Teams identified and created for specific initiatives and formal teams must recreate a consensus about ways of working. Gronn (2002) stipulates that both kinds of teams operate best in an open climate, where relationships are based on trust, support from school leadership, and mutual protection.

Several empirical researchers found positive relationships between transformational leadership and organizational performance. In a study conducted in Singapore, Koh, Steers, & Terborg (1995) reported a high level of performance of high school students whose institutions were managed by charismatic leaders. A second empirical study on a sample of 78 managers by Howell and Avolio (1993) found that transformational leadership directly and positively predicted unit-level performance. Hater and Bass (1988) found that managers identified

independently as top performers were rated higher on transformational leadership than the randomly chosen group of ordinary managers.

Professional Learning Communities and Transformational Leaders

Transforming the school's organization into a professional learning community is accomplished when leaders actively nurture the entire staff as a professional learning community (Hord, 1996). The traditional pattern of teachers teach, students learn, and administrators manage is completely altered. "There is no longer a hierarchy of who knows more than someone else, but rather the need for everyone to contribute" (Kleine-Kracht, 1993, p. 393). It is the principal's role to keep reminding stakeholders of the vision. School leaders must communicate an image of the vision of the organization, sharing pictures of the future that foster genuine commitment from the faculty.

The principal's and assistant principal's form of leadership can impact the effectiveness of the school's professional learning community. In many situations, especially in large school environments, organizational design and administrative tasks require all formal leadership personnel to be involved in technical aspects of the school's operations, including implementation of school-wide reform initiatives. Thus, leadership would have to be transformed in order to have a restructured school (Leithwood, 1993; Lontos, 1993). Unfortunately, empirical studies are limited on the impact of assistant principals' and principals' leadership styles on school reform initiatives, including professional learning communities. School administrators are encouraged to "re-culture" teacher professionalism by increasing collegial interaction through shared decision making in professional growth initiatives (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Hord, 1997; Rottier, 1996).

Supportive Working Conditions

Supportive conditions can determine where and how the staff regularly comes together as a unit to complete the learning, decision-making, problem solving, and creative work that characterize a professional learning community (Louis & Kruse, 1995). The following are physical factors that are identified in supporting learning communities: time to meet and talk, small size of the school and close physical proximity of the staff members to one another, teaching roles that are interdependent, communication structures, school autonomy, and teacher empowerment (Louis & Kruse, 1995). A list of Boyd's (1992) physical factors in a context conducive to school change and improvement are similar: the availability of resources; schedules and structures that reduce isolation; and policies that provide greater autonomy, foster collaboration, provide effect of communication, and provide for professional staff development. Principals and assistant principals can nurture the human capacity needs of professional learning communities by helping the staff relate to each other, providing social activities for staff members to get to know each other on a personal level, and creating a caring environment. Teachers require an environment that values and supports hard work and provides opportunities for challenging tasks, risk-taking, and the promotion of growth (Midgley & Wood, 1993). Shared personal practice contributes to such a setting. Mutual respect and understanding are the fundamental requirements of this kind of workplace. In such schools, "teachers and other staff members experienced more satisfaction and higher morale, while students dropped out less often and cut fewer classes. Both staff and students posted lower rates of absenteeism" (Lee, Smith, & Croninger, 1995).

Professional Learning Communities' Impact on Student Achievement

The Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools completed a rigorous four-year longitudinal case study researching schools and the factors associated with student achievement (Lee, Smith, & Croninger, 1995). The data covered 1500 elementary, middle, and high schools throughout the United States, with field research in 44 schools in 16 states. The results showed that comprehensive redesign of schools including decentralization, shared decision-making, schools within schools, teachers teaming, and professional communities can improve student learning (Newmann & Wehlage, 1995). The researchers published findings on a study of 11,000 students enrolled and 820 secondary schools across the United States. In schools that were characterized as professional learning communities, the staff worked collegially to change their classroom pedagogy. As a result, they engaged students in high intellectual learning tasks and students achieved greater academic gains in math, science, history, and reading than students in traditionally organized schools. In addition, the achievement gaps between students from different backgrounds were smaller and learning was distributed more equitably (Lee, Smith, & Croninger, 1995). In five schools that successfully operated as professional learning communities, noticeable evidence indicated that the administrator is vital to the existence of a professional learning community. All of the schools examined had structural challenges for administrative redesign to provide the opportunity for profound change. The schools' administrative staffs had a realistic understanding of change as a process that requires an ongoing commitment that, oftentimes, simply reduces to perseverance. The principal constantly nurtured those who understood the value of becoming a professional learning community and persuaded those who had yet to recognize the value of a professional learning community.

Teacher perceptions from high and low performing schools were used in a study on professional learning communities by AEL (Regional Educational Laboratory). The schools that participated were selected from two different states, with performance identification labels based on the respective state department of education analysis of student achievement. The instrument used in the study was the AEL Continuous School Improvement Questionnaire (AEL CSIQ) measuring teachers' commitment to continuous learning and improvement. The instrument is comprised of six key concepts measuring continuous learning and improvement: effective teaching; shared leadership; purposeful student assessment; shared goals for learning; school, family, and community connections; and learning culture (Meehan & Cowely, 2003). The results from the research indicated that performance of the school, based on student achievement, was not an accurate indicator of the performance of the professional learning community; high-performing schools are not always high-performing learning communities (Meehan & Cowely, 2003).

Summary of Literature Review

Schools in general are identified as open systems that are responding to the demands of school-wide reform and restructuring by utilizing transformational leadership and professional learning communities (Hord, 1996; Levin, 1993). Years of research on leadership style have failed to include assistant principals as transformational leaders impacting the professional learning community in schools. Current research has indicated a strong relationship between the dimensions of transformational leadership and the dimensions of professional learning community constructs such as trust, collaboration, vision, and shared leadership (Hord, 1996; Halter & Bass, 1988; Leithwood, 1997).

The main focus of professional learning communities is developing collaborative efforts for learning with goals of improving student learning (Hord, 1996). Transformational leaders use relationships with followers to raise the learning community to higher levels of achievement. The effectiveness of transformational principal leadership is essential for school restructuring and professional learning communities (Hord, 1996; Leithwood, 1996). Teacher perceptions of leaders can be influenced by loyalty to the principal. Reiss and Hoy (1998) attribute that loyalty to supportive principal behavior that encourages collegial faculty engagement. Assistant principals must redefine their roles and abilities to provide assistance to nurture a climate in which innovative professional activity is supported and encouraged (Sergivoanni, 1993).

This research will attempt to provide additional knowledge about the leadership relationships of principals and assistant principals within professional learning communities (Brandt, 1996; Lee, Smith, & Croninger, 1995; Newmann & Wehlage, 1995; Scribner & Reyves, 1999). Empirical research on transformational leadership dimensions and professional learning community dimensions suggests that they are related constructs. Incorporating assistant principals in leadership models will expand our knowledge of effective leadership styles.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes correlational and comparative designs to investigate the relationship of principal and assistant principal leadership styles to teacher perceptions of professional learning communities. The Leadership and Management of School survey (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1995) and School and Professional Staff as Learning Communities (Hord, 1996) were the instruments employed. The predictor/independent variables for this study were principal and assistant principal leadership styles. The criterion/dependent variable was professional learning community. This chapter is divided into four sections: participants, instruments, research design, and statistical procedures.

Participants

The population for the study included principals, assistant principals, and teachers of public high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools. Schools were selected based on purposeful and convenience sampling. Four school districts were readily accessible for providing a large number of participants within the time frame of the study. The school district participants represented rural, suburban, and urban schools, providing both increased participation and a diverse sample population. A sample of 80 principals and assistant principals and 480 teachers from elementary, middle, and high schools was targeted. Each school had to have an assistant principal as a current member of the administrative staff. For schools with more than one assistant principal, the assistant principal participant was selected based on his or her

responsibility with the school improvement team and/or role as the “acting principal” when the principal was away from the campus. Teacher participants were selected from teachers who were current members of their school improvement team. Approximately 80 principals and assistant principals and 480 teachers were needed to achieve statistical power to conduct the analyses. The researcher arrived at this minimum based on the criterion of approximately 20 participants per predictor variable.

Research Procedures

Permission from the superintendent or designee to contact principals, assistant principals, and teachers was obtained prior to distributing any research instruments. Principals received a packet containing an introductory letter (Appendix B), The Leadership and Management of Schools survey for assistant principals, the School and Professional Staff as a Learning Community questionnaire, a demographic survey (Appendix C), and a return self-addressed stamped envelope. Assistant principals received a packet containing an introductory letter (Appendix D), the Leadership and Management of School Survey for principals, the School and Professional Staff as a Learning Community questionnaire, a demographic survey (Appendix C), and a return self-addressed stamped envelope. Principals and assistant principals were required to complete the Leadership and Management of School Survey on one another. The introduction letter for principals included instructions for the selection and identification of teachers (all members of the school's improvement team) who would participate, the estimated time required to complete the Leadership and Management of School survey, a statement of assurance regarding confidentiality, and a brief description of the purpose and nature of the study. The letter emphasized that participation was voluntary, that the results would be strictly confidential, that no school or any member would be identified, and that all identifying information would be

destroyed once entered into the computer. The return envelopes for teachers and principals were coded for school matching purposes only. Teachers' and principals' names were not be assigned to questionnaires.

The 10 to 15 teachers selected per school received an introductory letter (Appendix E), a demographic survey (Appendix C), the School and Professional Staff as a Learning Community questionnaire, the Leadership and Management of School for principals' survey, and the Leadership and Management of School for assistant principals' survey, with a return self-addressed and stamped envelope. Teachers participating in the study were members of their school's improvement team. The introduction letter emphasized that participation was voluntary and that the data were to be used in a dissertation study. The letter also emphasized that the results would be confidential; that neither school, administrators, nor teachers would be identified; and that any identifying information would be destroyed once entered into the computer. The introduction letter also described the reason for their selection to participate in the study.

Teachers were purposefully selected to participate based on their involvement with their school's improvement team. It was assumed that the teachers with the most experience and involvement with the school's reform efforts were teachers who were members of the school improvement team.

Instruments

The instruments for this relationship study were standardized and widely used scales to measure transformational leadership and professional learning communities. The Leadership and Management of Schools (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997) is a 53-item questionnaire used to describe the leadership practices of school administrators. The School Professional Staff and Learning as

a Learning Community questionnaire (Hord, 1997) is a 17-item questionnaire developed as an assessment of staff as a learning community. From extensive reviews of current literature, both instruments show statistical robustness in prior measurements with acceptable reliability and validity characteristics. A description is included concerning information for both instruments.

School Professional Staff as Learning Community Questionnaire

The School Professional Staff as Learning Community instrument was initially titled, "Descriptors of Professional Learning Communities," and is a by-product of a rubric assessing the presence or absence of components of a professional learning community based on a review of literature (Hord, 1996; Meehan, Merrill, Orletsky, & Sattes, 1999). Through the joint efforts of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) and the Appalachian Educational Laboratory (AEL), several aspects of the constructs—shared leadership, collective thinking, and collegial learning for continuous improvement—were examined as possible measurements of the a professional learning community. Their combined efforts created a new instrument. This instrument could be used as an assessment to monitor the establishment of a professional learning community and to identify any early warnings of possible problems (Hord & Boyd, 1995; Meehan, Merrill, Orletsky, & Sattes, 1999).

The questionnaire, initially called “Learning Community” (LC), was renamed and redesigned into the current questionnaire, “School Staff as a Community of Professional Learners.” Its three uses include screening, filtering, or assessing to ascertain the staff maturity as a learning community; collecting baseline data to determine the development of a school staff as a professional learning community; and diagnosing school efforts to evolve as a professional learning community (Hord, 1996; Meehan, Merrill, Orletsky, & Sattes, 1999).

The instrument contains 17 descriptors grouped into five major dimensions identified

from the literature on professional learning communities (Hord, 1997). The five dimensions are collegial participation, facilitative participation, shared vision, collective learning, and shared personal practice. The 17 descriptors are unevenly distributed across the five dimensions. The format of the instrument forces respondents to read each indicator and corresponding descriptors before marking their response. Compared to the true Likert-type instrument, this format requires more mental processing (Hord, 1997). The respondents analyze each descriptor with all three statements before making the final selection decision. These statements add clarity to the responses on the Likert scale for the 17 descriptors of the School Staff as a Community of Professional Learners questionnaire.

Information concerning the validity and reliability of the instrument was obtained using both a pilot and field test. The results from the pilot test yielded a +.92 Cronbach alpha reliability for 17 items. The field test of 600 teachers from 21 schools yielded a coefficient alpha for the total instrument of .94. The alpha for the individual schools ranged from .62 to .95. The general research standard for internal consistency is .75 or above (Hord, 1996; Meehan, Merrill, Orletsky, & Sattes, 1999).

Content validity was assessed at three stages: during development, early review, and reformatting of the instrument. The content validity of the three dimensions was first established using the review of literature, then by three AEL staff members, who modestly transformed the instrument, and finally a review and confirmation of the minor word changes that were consistent with original intentions of the instrument. Concurrent validity was assessed by comparing the instrument with a school climate instrument. A field test with a sub sample of 114 was used to measure concurrent validity. The resulting concurrent validity for the School Professional Staff as Learning Community instrument was .75 with a significance level of .001

(Hord, 1996; Meehan, Merrill, Orletsky & Sattes, 1999).

Construct validity was obtained using two methods. The first used the scores of teachers from previous research studies who were identified as members of a professional learning community compared to scores of teachers as a total in the field test data base. The analyses of the scores using a t-test revealed significantly higher scores for the teachers who were in schools that had previously implemented a professional learning community (Hord & Boyd, 1995; Meehan, Merrill, Orletsky, & Sattes, 1999).

Factor analysis was the second method of construct validation. According to the developers, the 17-item instrument represents a unitary construct of a professional learning community within schools (Hord, 1997; Hord & Boyd, 1995; Meehan, Merrill, Orletsky, & Sattes, 1999).

Leadership and Management of Schools Survey

The Leadership and Management of School Survey (LMSS) was developed by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. It is a 53-item questionnaire that measures transformational leadership and management practices. The items are randomly assigned throughout the questionnaire without reference to any specific section or dimension. The participants respond to the items using a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The instrument yields a score for leadership ranging from 32 to 160 and for management from 19 to 95, with a combined total score of 51 to 255.

The survey is divided into two sections. Leadership (part A) contains six dimensions and Management (part B) contains four dimensions. The dimensions identified as leadership in the instrument are symbolizing good professional practice, developing a collaborative decision-

making structure, providing individualized support, providing intellectual stimulation, holding high performance expectations, and fostering development of vision and goals. The dimensions for the management section are establishing effective staffing practices, providing instructional support, monitoring school activities, and providing a community focus.

Construct validity for the instrument was established by its repeated use in research studies involving transformational leadership and also established by Leithwood and Jantzi's (1997) consistency with the theory outlined by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985). The respective Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients for the dimensions and sections of the instrument are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients for LMSS

LMSS Scale	Alpha
Total School Leadership	.978
<i>Symbolizing Good Professional Practice</i>	.932
<i>Developing a Collaborative Decision-Making Structure</i>	.932
<i>Providing Individualized Support</i>	.896
<i>Providing Intellectual Stimulation</i>	.938
<i>Holding High Performance Expectations</i>	.874
<i>Fostering Development of Vision and Goals</i>	.931
Total School Management	.938
<i>Establishing Effective Staffing Practices</i>	.761
<i>Providing Instructional Support</i>	.848
<i>Monitoring School Activities</i>	.918
<i>Providing a Community Focus</i>	.897

Source: Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997

The School Professional Staff as Learning Community and the Leadership and Management of School questionnaire provided scores related to each dimension of professional learning community, leadership, and management. The ratings of all items within each dimension were averaged to establish dimensional scoring for each participant. The average of the professional learning community dimensions provides a professional learning community

score, the average of the leadership dimensions provides a transformational leadership score, and the average of the management dimensions provides a management score.

Demographic Survey

A demographic survey was used to collect data on all participants to provide information on possible mediating variables for the study. This information included title of current position (principal, assistant principal, teacher, other), total work experience (years) in education, the number of years at current school site, number of years of experience or involvement with school improvement teams, gender, and ethnicity of participants (see Appendix C).

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between assistant principal and principal leadership to teachers' perceptions of the school as a professional learning community. Correlational and comparative designs utilizing Pearson r correlations, multiple regression, and multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) were selected for the study.

Statistical Analyses

Descriptive Statistics

All data were analyzed using the SPSS version 11.5 Computer Data Analysis Software System for Windows. Descriptive statistics include number, frequencies, means, and standard deviations for all scales and sub-scales.

Inferential Statistics

Multiple regression, Pearson r correlations, and MANOVA were the inferential statistics used in the study. Specific analyses are indicated following each research question.

Research Questions

1. How do teachers and assistant principals rate principals in terms of transformational leadership and management? Is there a relationship between their leadership scores?
2. How do teachers and principals rate assistant principals in terms of transformational leadership and management? Is there a relationship between their leadership scores?
3. How do teachers, principals, and assistant principals rate their schools as professional learning communities? Is there a relationship between their professional learning community scores?
4. What is the relationship of teachers' perceptions of principals' and assistant principals' degree of transformational leadership and management to teachers' perceptions of their schools as professional learning communities?
5. How does the congruence of principal and assistant principal degree of transformational leadership and management affect teachers' perceptions of their school as a professional learning community?

Research questions 1 through 3 were answered with descriptive statistics. Questions 1 and 2 used averages of scores of teachers within the same schools to assign a leadership and management score to each principal and assistant principal. Ranges and means for assistant principals and principals are reported. Also reported, using Pearson r correlations with an expected probability less than .05, are the relationships between the teachers' average rating of the principal/assistant principal with the assistant principal/principal's rating of the other administrator to determine the congruence between teacher and administrator ratings. Question 3 was answered by averaging the teacher scores within the same school to obtain a school rating of the extent to which the school resembles a professional learning community. Ranges and means

for each dimension of professional learning community are reported. A Pearson r correlation was used to test the relationships between teacher, principal, and assistant principal perceptions of the school as professional learning community.

Multiple regression was used to answer research question 4. Teachers' perceptions of the leadership of their principals and assistant principals were used to predict their perceptions of the school as a professional learning community.

A factorial ANOVA was used to answer research question 5. This question concerns the congruence between principal and assistant principal leadership as it affects teacher perceptions of the school as a professional learning community. It was hypothesized that the best school leadership would be when the principal and assistant principal have complementary styles that cover both leadership (transformational) and management (transactional) dimensions. Principal and assistant principal transformational leadership and management were categorized as low or high based on median splits of the empirical results. The two independent variables were level of transformational leadership and level of management. There were 16 possible cells based on compatibility of leadership (see Figure 3 below). Cells were classified as "Ideal," "Complementary," or "Incompatible" based on how well the leadership dimensions were covered by the pair of administrators (see Figure 4). The dependent variable was professional learning community score.

Transformational Leadership/ Management	Principal/AP High/High	Principal/AP High/Low	Principal/AP Low/High	Principal/AP Low/Low
Principal/AP High/High	1) Mean PLC & dimensions	2) Mean PLC & dimensions	3) Mean PLC & dimensions	4) Mean PLC & dimensions
Principal/AP High/Low	5) Mean PLC & dimensions	6) Mean PLC & dimensions	7) Mean PLC & dimensions	8) Mean PLC & dimensions
Principal/AP Low/High	9) Mean PLC & dimensions	10) Mean PLC & dimensions	11) Mean PLC & dimensions	12) Mean PLC & dimensions
Principal/AP Low/Low	13) Mean PLC & dimensions	14) Mean PLC & dimensions	15) Mean PLC & dimensions	16) Mean PLC & dimensions

Note: PLC=Professional Learning Community

Fig. 3. Variables Used to Test Statistical Hypotheses

IDEAL LEADERSHIP

Principal and assistant principal are high in both Leadership and Management. Cell #1

COMPLEMENTARY LEADERSHIP

- I. Principal High in Both Leadership and Management with:
 - a) Assistant principal low in both leadership and management. Cell # 6
 - b) Assistant principal high in management and low in leadership. Cell # 2
 - c) Assistant principal low in management and high in leadership. Cell # 5
- II. Principal is Low in Both Leadership and Management with:
 - a) Assistant principal high in both leadership and management. Cell # 11
- III. Principal is High in Leadership and Low in Management with:
 - a) Assistant principal high in both leadership and management. Cell # 9
 - b) Assistant principal low in leadership and high in management. Cell # 10
- IV. Principal is Low in Leadership and High in Management with:
 - a) Assistant principal high in both leadership and management. Cell # 3
 - b) Assistant principal high in leadership and low in management. Cell # 7

INCOMPATIBLE LEADERSHIP

- I. Principal and Assistant Principal are both low in Leadership and Management Cell # 16
- II. Principal Low in Both Leadership and Management with:
 - a) Assistant principal low in leadership and high in management. Cell # 12
 - b) Assistant principal high in leadership and low in management. Cell # 15
- III. Principal High in Leadership and Low in Management with:
 - a) Assistant principal low in both leadership and management. Cell # 14
 - b) Assistant principal high in leadership and low in management. Cell # 13
- IV. Principal Low in Leadership and High in Management with:
 - a) Assistant principal low in both leadership and management. Cell # 8
 - b) Assistant principal low in leadership and high in management. Cell # 4

Fig. 4. *Classification of Principal/Assistant Principal Compatibility in Leadership Style*

The following research hypotheses are related to research question 5.

H1: Schools with ideal leadership will have statistically higher ($p < .05$) teacher perceptions of the school as a professional learning community than schools with Complementary or Incompatible Leadership.

H2: Schools with Complementary Leadership will have statistically higher ($p < .05$) teacher perceptions of the school as a professional learning community than schools with Incompatible Leadership.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of statistical analyses employed in this study. The research data reported examines the impact of transformational leadership and management styles of principals and assistant principals in shaping teachers' perceptions of professional learning communities. The study proposed that the interaction of the principal's and assistant principal's leadership styles are related to the teachers' perceptions of their schools as professional learning communities. The key variables described are Transformational Leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997) and Professional Learning Community (Hord, 1996).

Principals of schools participating in the study received packets containing introduction letters (Appendix A), a demographic survey, the Leadership and Management of School Survey (LMSS) for both the principal and assistant principal, and the School and Professional Staff as Learning Community Survey (PLC). Principals received instructions to identify the assistant principal and 10 to 15 teachers who participated in their school's improvement plan process as the school's participants in the study. Teachers completed the Leadership and Management of School Survey (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997) for both the principal and assistant principal and School and Professional Staff as Learning Community Survey (Hord, 1996). Principals completed The Leadership and Management of School Survey for assistant principals and School and Professional Staff as Learning Community Survey. Assistant principals completed The Leadership and Management of School Survey for principals and School and Professional Staff

as Learning Community Survey. The research design for this study did not use administrators' self assessment as data. An internet web site was created and designed to provide an additional mean for participants to obtain information concerning the study.

Descriptive statistics were used to provide a profile of the participants and schools and to summarize the degree of the relationship of teachers' perceptions of the school's leadership with their perceptions of their school's professional learning community. In addition, correlation results are discussed using the school as the unit of analysis. The chapter concludes with analyses from research findings to address the research questions and research hypotheses presented.

Sample Schools and School District Information

Participation request letters (Appendix B) and research instruments were sent to four school district superintendents. The school districts were selected based on purposeful and convenience sampling. All school districts were readily accessible for providing a greater number of participants within the time frame of the study. The school district participants represented a sample base from rural, suburban, and urban schools, providing a diverse sample. The school districts each represented a specific category with one district having all three -- rural, suburban, and urban schools.

Schools from each school district were identified using the school district's school profile directory. The prerequisite for the study was that the schools had to have both a principal and an assistant principal as members of their faculties. This requirement limited the number of schools from each school district. A total of 116 schools were identified and received survey packets for the study. Table 2 summarizes the response rate of the sample surveyed.

Table 2
School Districts and School Participation

School District	Schools Surveyed	Schools with Returned Surveys	Percent	Schools with Surveys used in Study	Percent of Returned Surveys used in the Study
A	11	4	36.4	4	100.0
B	18	9	50.0	8	88.8
C	48	36	67.0	34	94.4
D	49	37	69.0	35	94.5
TOTALS	116	86	74.1	81	94.2

Although there was an acceptable percentage of schools participating (74.1%), three factors may have limited the response rate. First, the length and organization of the surveys required approximately 20 minutes for completion. The survey package was organized into four separate instruments requiring the participants to complete one instrument before responding to another. Second, principals were required to select teachers and assistant principals who were actively involved in the school improvement process. Some principals who were contacted for participation in the study reported that the demands for teacher involvement in required workshops would limit schools responses. Finally, surveys were mailed the week prior to a holiday which may have limited the mail service's ability to deliver the surveys within the timelines required for the completion of the study.

From the 116 schools surveyed, 86 schools returned surveys (74.1%), and 81 schools (70%) were used in the study. For the 30 schools (25.9%) that did not participate, 19 schools did not return surveys; eight schools reported a change in administrative staff as a reason for not

participating; one school was reported as being closed; one school returned the surveys declining participation; and one school reported that time constraints delayed the return of surveys. Five schools that returned surveys were excluded due to the limited number of surveys returned and the absence of either the principal's or assistant principal's survey instruments.

School Demographics

There were three types of schools identified using each school district's directory of schools. Elementary schools included students with enrollment of Grades K-6. Middle/junior high schools were identified as schools with students in Grades 6-8 or Grade 9. Finally, high schools included students in Grades 8 or 9 through 12. Table 3 provides a summary of the response rate by type of school.

Table 3
School Participation Based on School Level

School	Schools Surveyed	Schools with Returned Surveys	Percent	Schools with Surveys Used in Study	Percent of Returned Surveys Used in the Study
Elementary	26	22	84.6	14	63.6
Middle	51	31	60.7	28	90.3
High	39	33	84.6	29	87.8
TOTALS	116	86	74.1	81	94.1

Schools participating in the study were closely balanced by school type. The largest representation was from the high school then the middle/junior high school, with the elementary school level providing the fewest participants.

Respondents

In all, 1,856 survey packets were mailed to teachers, assistant principals, and principals of schools participating. One survey package was designated for each participant. Each school received 16 surveys for principals to distribute to teachers and assistant principals who participated in the school improvement planning process and/or the school leadership team. Principals also completed survey packets. A total of 1,127 (61%) surveys were returned.

All schools received the same number of surveys for all participants due to the wide range of unknown numbers of teachers participating in individual school improvement planning processes. The inconsistency in total number of surveys returned per school was attributed to schools having varying numbers of potential teacher participants. Schools with larger faculties were observed to have a larger number of teacher participants. Principals served as the key contact person for the identification of teachers and assistant principals as participants for the study.

Approximately 356 surveys from 28 schools were returned within the first two weeks of mailing. District administrators were then mailed reminder letters to encourage school participation in the study. Follow-up phone calls were made to principals of schools that had not responded, requesting their input and involvement in securing participation from their faculty. Principals also received notification letters using the U.S. postage priority mail delivery system to inform them that their school's participation was not documented. The response rate increased to a total of 889 surveys from 72 schools two weeks after implementing additional notification procedures. A second follow-up call was made to the 44 remaining schools without returned participation documentation. This increased the number of schools responding to 86 and the number of individual respondents to 1,127.

Demographics

Participants

The study sample consisted of 1,127 principals, assistant principals, and teachers from 81 schools. High schools and middle schools levels combined for nearly three quarters of the total number of respondents (see Table 4). More than two thirds of the respondents were female (see Table 5) and just over half were minority (see Table 6).

The teaching experience of respondents varied, with just over one third having fewer than 10 years experience and about one fifth having 26 or more years of teaching experience (see Table 7). About three quarters of respondents had 10 or fewer years of experience at their school site (see Table 8). Almost two thirds of the respondents had five or less years experience working with the school improvement process (see Table 9). The respondents' years working with the principal and assistant principal were similar, with about 7 in 10 having fewer than five years working experience with the principal and about 8 in 10 with fewer than five years working with the assistant principal (see Table 10). Teachers represented 85.6% of the total respondents (see Table 11).

Table 4
School Level of Respondents

School Level	f	%
Elementary	252	26.1
Middle	334	34.6
High	379	39.3
Total	965	100.0

Table 5
Gender of Teachers

Gender	f	%
Male	251	26.0
Female	714	74.0
Total	965	100.0

Table 6
Ethnicity of Teachers

Ethnicity	f	%
Non-Minority	407	42.2
Minority	558	57.8
Total	965	100.0

Table 7
Teaching Experience of Teachers

Experience Level	f	%
1 to 5 Years	205	21.2
6 to 10 Years	218	22.6
11 to 15 Years	131	13.6
16 to 20 Years	117	12.1
21 to 25 Years	103	10.7
26 + Years	191	19.8
Total	965	100.0

Table 8
Teachers Number of Years at Current School

Years at School	f	%
1 to 5 Years	453	46.9
6 to 10 Years	256	26.5
11 to 15 Years	109	11.3
16 to 20 Years	61	6.3
21 to 25 Years	45	4.7
26 + Years	41	4.2
Total	965	100.0

Table 9
Teachers' Years Experience with School Improvement

Experience with School Improvement	f	%
1 to 5 Years	629	65.2
6 to 10 Years	230	23.8
11 to 15 Years	56	5.8
16 to 20 Years	25	2.6
21 to 25 Years	19	2.0
26 + Years	6	.6
Total	965	100.0

Table 10
Teachers' Years with Principal

Years with Principal	f	%
1 to 5 Years	690	71.5
6 to 10 Years	192	19.9
11 to 15 Years	55	5.7
16 to 20 Years	12	1.2
21 to 25 Years	12	1.2
26 + Years	4	.4
Total	965	100.0

Table 11
Teachers' Years with Assistant Principal

Years with Assistant Principal	Frequency	Valid Percent
1 to 5 Years	782	81.0
6 to 10 Years	150	15.5
11 to 15 Years	25	2.6
16 to 20 Years	8	.8
Total	965	100.0

The demographics of principals and assistant principals, including experience demographics, are detailed in tables 11 to 19. The gender for both the principal and assistant principals is similar, with an approximate 1:2 male to female ratio of respondents (see Tables 12 and 13). The ethnicity of principals and assistant principals is similar to that of the total respondents, with about half minority and half non-minority (see Tables 14 and 15).

All principals and assistant principals reported fewer than 10 years of experience of working with each other. More than three quarters of principals and assistant principals reported working with each other 5 or fewer years (see Tables 16 and 17). The administrators' total years of experience at the school site followed similar patterns as for teachers, with approximately 75% having fewer than 15 years (see Tables 18 and 19). Over four fifths of principals had 16 or more years of teaching experience, but over two thirds of assistant principals had 16 or fewer years of teaching experience (see Tables 20 and 21).

Table 12
Gender of Principal Respondents

Principal Gender	f	%
Male	30	37.0
Female	51	63.0
Total	81	100.0

Table 13
Gender of Assistant Principal Respondents

Gender	f	%
Male	26	32.1
Female	55	67.9
Total	81	100.0

Table 14
Ethnicity of Principal Respondents

Ethnicity	f	%
Non-Minority	42	51.9
Minority	39	48.1
Total	81	100.0

Table 15
Ethnicity of Assistant Principal Respondents

Ethnicity	f	%
Non-Minority	37	45.7
Minority	44	54.3
Total	81	100.0

Table 16
Principals' Years with Assistant Principal

<i>Years with Assistant Principal</i>	f	%
1 to 5 Years	63	77.8
6 to 10 Years	18	22.2
Total	81	100.0

Table 17
Assistant Principals' Years with Principal

<i>Years with Principal</i>	f	%
1 to 5 Years	63	77.8
6 to 10 Years	18	22.2
Total	81	100.0

Table 18
Principals' Years at Current School

<i>Years at Current School</i>	F	%
1 to 5 Years	37	45.7
6 to 10 Years	20	24.7
11 to 15 Years	14	17.3
16 to 20 Years	1	1.2
21 to 25 Years	2	2.5
26 + Years	7	8.6
Total	81	100.0

Table 19
Assistant Principals' Years at Current School

<i>Years at Current School</i>	F	%
1 to 5 Years	46	56.8
6 to 10 Years	27	33.3
11 to 15 Years	3	3.7
16 to 20 Years	4	4.9
26 + Years	1	1.2
Total	81	100.0

Table 20
Principals' Teaching Experience

<i>Teaching Experience</i>	F	%
1 to 5 Years	1	1.2
6 to 10 Years	3	3.7
11 to 15 Years	10	12.3
16 to 20 Years	23	28.4
21 to 25 Years	18	22.2
26 + Years	26	32.1
Total	81	100.0

Table 21
Assistant Principals' Teaching Experience

<i>Teaching Experience</i>	F	%
1 to 5 Years	3	3.7
6 to 10 Years	17	21.0
11 to 15 Years	22	27.2
16 to 20 Years	14	17.3
21 to 25 Years	9	11.1
26 + Years	16	19.8
Total	81	100.0

Research Questions

The key variables are measured by the items on the Leadership and Management of Schools Survey (LMSS) and School as Professional Learning Community (PLC) survey. All information is presented using the school as the unit of analysis. Items measuring transformational leadership and management range from 1 to 5, with 1 representing strongly disagree, 3 agree, and 5 strongly agree.

The PLC survey is designed to simulate a Likert-scale. The format provides the respondents a range of example answers to questions on the survey that are related to the range of responses on a Likert-type scale. An example is: "School administrators participate democratically with teachers sharing power, authority, and decision-making." The response ranges are: 5) administrators involve the entire staff, 3) administrators involve a small committee, council, or team of staff, or 1) administrators do not involve staff.

Descriptive statistics, using the school as the unit of analysis, for the principals and assistant principals' leadership and management and the school as a professional learning community sub-scales are identified in Tables 21 through 28. Evaluation of the descriptive statistics for both variables are similar, with both receiving mean scores approximately 4 out a possible maximum of 5 for the Likert-scale ranges.

Research questions 1 and 2 are answered in Tables 22 through 24. Table 22 presents the sub-scales of the variables of transformational leadership and management for the principal as rated by teachers, using the school as the unit of analysis, and by assistant principals. The mean scores for the sub-scale variables for transformational leadership and management averaged approximately 4 on a range of 1 to 5.

Table 23 presents the descriptive statistics for the sub-scales of transformational leadership about the assistant principal as perceived by the teachers, using schools as the unit of analysis, and by principals. All sub-scales for transformational leadership and management were rated high for both the principal and assistant principal. Teachers rated principals slightly higher on all sub-scales than they rated assistant principals. Teachers' ratings of principals were higher than those of assistant principals, but principals' ratings of assistant principals were slightly higher than those of teachers. The highest reported principal means from teachers ($M=4.42$, $SD=.93$) and assistant principals ($M= 4.29$, $SD =.65$) were for the leadership sub-scale, high performance expectations.

The relationships between teacher and assistant principal ratings of principals were small to moderate and in a positive direction. This means that as teachers perceived the principals more positively, so did assistant principals. The relationships between principal and teacher ratings of assistant principals were slightly lower but all were significant and positive.

Table 22

Descriptive Statistics for Perceptions of Principals' Transformational Leadership and Management Sub-Scales

LMSS Sub-scale	Teacher M	Teacher SD	Asst Prin M	Asst Prin SD	<i>r</i> for Teacher and Asst Prin Scores*
1. Principal Symbolizing Good Professional Practice	3.96	.70	4.25	.81	.45
2. Principal Collaborative Decision Making Structure	3.92	.68	4.22	.88	.49
3. Principal Providing Individualized Support	3.91	.69	4.30	.83	.55
4. Principal Providing Intellectual Stimulation	4.01	.68	4.28	.90	.47
5. Principal Has High Performance Expectations	4.29	.65	4.42	.93	.52
6. Principal Development of Vision and Goals	4.04	.67	4.31	.92	.43
7. Principal Effective Staffing Practices	3.90	.67	4.13	.84	.51
8. Principal Providing Instructional Support	3.91	.72	4.21	.87	.49
9. Principal Monitoring School Activities	4.04	.74	4.38	.90	.54
10. Principal Providing a Community Focus	4.03	.70	4.32	.96	.53

n=81

*All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 23

Descriptive Statistics for Perceptions of Assistant Principals' Transformation Leadership and Management Sub-Scales

LMSS Sub-scale	Teacher M	Teacher SD	Prin M	Prin SD	<i>r</i> for Teacher and Prin Scores*
1. Assistant Principal Symbolizing Good Professional Practice	4.08	.57	4.18	.77	.33
2. Assistant Principal Collaborative Decision Making Structure	3.98	.52	4.18	.67	.38
3. Assistant Principal Providing Individualized Support	4.05	.56	4.29	.79	.37
4. Assistant Principal Providing Intellectual Stimulation	3.98	.55	4.17	.75	.41
5. Assistant Principal has High Performance Expectations	4.26	.49	4.31	.78	.32
6. Assistant Principal Development of Vision and Goals	4.01	.55	4.15	.74	.38
7. Assistant Principal Effective Staffing Practices	3.97	.53	4.16	.84	.38
8. Assistant Principal Providing Instructional Support	4.00	.50	4.17	.89	.42
9. Assistant Principal Monitoring School Activities	4.18	.51	4.24	1.00	.41
10. Assistant Principal Providing a Community Focus	4.01	.54	4.22	.96	.44

n=81

*All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Descriptive statistics for the overall transformational leadership and transactional management variables for principals and assistant principals are presented in Table 24. The variables leadership and management are mean scores for the sub-scales identified in Tables 22

and 23. Sub-scales 1-6 refer to leadership and sub-scales 7-10 to management. The means indicate high ratings for the principal's and assistant principal's leadership and management style. The mean is approximately 4 of a possible score of 1 to 5. Teacher responses are also high and similar to the administrators' responses. The correlations are moderate and positive.

Table 24
Descriptive Statistics for Transformational Leadership and Management

LMSS Sub-scale	Teacher M	Teacher SD	Other Admin M	Other Admin SD	<i>r</i> for Teacher and Other Admin Scores*
Principal Leadership	4.02	.66	4.30	.85	.50
Principal Management	3.98	.70	4.26	.87	.53
Assistant Principal Leadership	4.06	.53	4.21	.71	.39
Assistant Principal Management	4.04	.50	4.20	.89	.43

n=81

*All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Descriptive statistics represented in Tables 25 and 26 are used to answer research question 3, how do teachers rate their school as a professional learning community, and is there a relationship between the scores? The school as a professional learning community sub-scale means and standard deviations from all respondents are reported in Table 25, using the school as the unit of analysis for teacher scores. The results indicate similarities, with all respondent groups (teachers, principals, and assistant principals) giving the sub-scale, Shared Personal Practice, the lowest rating. Teachers rated this professional learning community sub-scale near the mid-point on a 5-point scale. The teachers rated all remaining sub-scales closer to 4.0.

Table 25

Descriptive Statistics for Professional Learning Community Sub-Scales from all Respondents using the School as a Unit of Analysis.

PLC Sub-scale	ALL RESPONDENTS							
	PRINCIPAL		ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL		TEACHER		TOTAL	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Supportive and Shared Leadership	3.90	.62	3.91	.71	3.70	.55	3.72	.51
Shared Values and Vision	4.08	.70	4.20	.81	3.99	.59	4.01	.58
Collective Learning	4.12	.63	4.12	.67	3.93	.54	3.95	.52
Shared Personal Practice	3.59	.93	3.48	1.00	3.14	.56	3.20	.53
Supportive Conditions	4.00	.70	3.90	.67	3.76	.49	3.79	.47
PLC TOTAL	4.00	.58	3.97	.60	3.77	.50	3.80	.48

n= 81

The correlations between teachers' perceptions of the school as a professional learning community and administrators' perceptions are reported in Table 26. The school was again the unit of analysis. The results for principals and teachers indicated moderate to strong correlations for all sub-scales. The relationships between teacher and assistant principal ratings were lower, with one non-significant correlation, that of shared personal practice. Similarly, the relationships between the two administrators' perceptions were lower than those between the teachers and principal. Overall, it appears that teachers and principals are generally in agreement about the quality of the learning community whereas assistant principals are not as closely aligned to teacher opinions.

Table 26

Correlations for Teachers Perceptions of the School as a Professional Learning Community Sub-Scales with Principal and Assistant Principal

PLC Sub-scale	<i>r</i> for Teacher and Principal Scores	<i>r</i> for Teacher and Assistant Principal Scores	<i>r</i> for Principal and Assistant Principal Scores
Supportive and Shared Leadership	.46**	.23*	.31**
Shared Values and Vision	.64**	.61**	.45**
Collective Learning	.62**	.46**	.40**
Shared Personal Practice	.48**	.17	.24*
Supportive Conditions	.61**	.38**	.28*
PLC TOTAL	.70**	.48**	.46**

N =81

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Inferential Statistics

Research questions 4 (“What is the relationship of teachers’ perceptions of principals’ and assistant principals’ degree of transformational leadership and management to teachers’ perceptions of their schools as professional learning communities?”) and 5 (“How does the congruence of principal and assistant principal degree of transformational leadership and management affect teachers’ perceptions of their school as a professional learning community?”) were addressed using correlations and inferential statistics.

Using the school as unit of analysis, Pearson *r* correlations were used to determine the relationship of teachers’ and ratings for all PLC sub-scales and total with their ratings of principals’ and assistant principals’ leadership and management scales (see Table 27). The principal’s leadership and management were much more strongly associated with teachers’ perceptions of the school as a learning community than were the assistant principal’s leadership and management. The Pearson *r* correlation coefficients for teachers’ perceptions of the school as a professional learning community and principal leadership and management were strong,

positive, and statistically significant for all PLC scales. For assistant principals' leadership and management, the relationships were weaker, but all were positive and statistically significant.

Table 27

Correlations of Teacher Perceptions of Professional Learning Community, Leadership, and Management

PLC Sub-Scale	Principal Leadership		Principal Management		Assistant Principal Leadership		Assistant Principal Management	
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Supportive and Shared Leadership	.87	.000	.84	.000	.31	.005	.32	.004
Shared Values and Vision	.90	.000	.88	.000	.26	.020	.28	.013
Collective Learning	.87	.000	.89	.000	.33	.002	.37	.001
Shared Personal Practice	.56	.000	.57	.000	.22	.050	.25	.027
Supportive Conditions	.88	.000	.89	.000	.28	.012	.32	.004
PLC TOTAL	.91	.000	.91	.000	.31	.005	.34	.002

n= 81

In a further attempt to answer research question 4, multiple regression was used to determine the extent to which principal and assistant principal leadership and management predict the variability in teachers' perceptions of their school as a professional learning community. Caution must be used in interpreting the results because there was high collinearity between the means of leadership and management for principals and between the means of leadership and management for assistant principals (see Table 28).

Table 28

Relationships Between Teachers' Perceptions of Principal and Assistant Principal Leadership, Management, and PLC

Scale	PLC	AP Leadership	Asst Prin Management	Principal Leadership	Principal Management
Professional Learning Community	1.00				
Asst Prin Leadership	.309	1.00			
Asst Prin Management	.341	.970	1.00		
Principal leadership	.905	.320	.357	1.000	
Principal management	.907	.382	.428	.984	1.000

n=81

*All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Results of the multiple regression showed that only principals' management was a significant predictor of teachers' perceptions of the school as a professional learning community (see Table 29). This model accounts for 82.8% of the variance in teachers' perceptions of the school as a professional learning community. However, interpretations should be based primarily on correlation coefficients presented in Table 26 rather than the regression analysis due to the caveat regarding collinearity. In this model, 2 of 4 condition indices from collinearity diagnostics were above 30. Condition indices over 30 indicate that the model is "ill-conditioned" (<http://www.jmu.edu/docs/sasdoc/sashtml/insight/chap39/sect29.htm>).

Table 29

Multiple Regression Summary Table for Leadership and Management as Predictors of PLC

Predictor	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Asst Prin Leadership	.116	.123	.604	.548
Asst Prin Management	-.153	-.154	-.724	.471
Principal leadership	.233	.309	1.040	.302
Principal management	.448	.621	2.011	.048

$F(4,76)=91.738, p<.001; R^2=.83; \text{Adjusted } R^2=.82$

Research question 5 and related hypotheses used a factorial ANOVA to analyze the impact of the congruence between principal and assistant principal leadership and management on teachers' perceptions of the school as a professional learning community. It was hypothesized that the best school leadership is established when the principal and assistant principal have complementary styles for leadership and management. Principal and assistant principal transformational leadership and management were categorized as low or high based on median splits of the empirical results. The two independent variables were level of transformational leadership (high or low) and level of management (high or low). There were 16 possible cells based on the two sources of leadership and management – principal and assistant principal (see Figure 5).

Transformational Leadership/Management	Principal/AP High / High	Principal/AP High / Low	Principal/AP Low / High	Principal/AP Low / Low
Principal/AP High / High	(1) Mean PLC & dimensions	(2) Mean PLC & dimensions	(3) Mean PLC & dimensions	(4) Mean PLC & dimensions
Principal/AP High / Low	(5) Mean PLC & dimensions	(6) Mean PLC & dimensions	(7) Mean PLC & dimensions	(8) Mean PLC & dimensions
Principal /AP Low / High	(9) Mean PLC & dimensions	(10) Mean PLC & dimensions	(11) Mean PLC & dimensions	(12) Mean PLC & dimensions
Principal/AP Low / Low	(13) Mean PLC & dimensions	(14) Mean PLC & dimensions	(15) Mean PLC & dimensions	(16) Mean PLC & dimensions

Fig. 5. *Possible Combinations of Principal and Assistant Principal Leadership and Management*

Hypothesizing that both leadership and management are needed to build strong school communities, each cell was coded in one of three ways: 1) ideal – both principal and assistant principal are high on both leadership and management dimensions; 2) complementary – at least one of the two administrators was high on each of the two dimensions; or 3) incompatible - neither administrator was high on one or both of the two dimensions (see Figure 6). These categories are color coded in Figures 5 and 6.

IDEAL LEADERSHIP

- I. Principal and Assistant Principal are both High Leadership and Management.
Cell #1

COMPLEMENTARY LEADERSHIP

- V. Principal High in Leadership and Management combined with:
a) Assistant principal low in leadership and management. Cell # 6
b) Assistant principal high in management and low in leadership. Cell # 2
c) Assistant principal low in management and high in leadership. Cell # 5
- VI. Principal is Low in Leadership and Management combined with:
a) Assistant principal high in leadership and management. Cell # 11
- VII. Principal is High in Leadership and Low in Management combined with:
a) Assistant principal high in leadership and management. Cell # 9
b) Assistant principal low in leadership and high in management. Cell # 10
- VIII. Principal is Low in Leadership and High in Management combined with:
a) Assistant principal high in leadership and management. Cell # 3
b) Assistant principal high in leadership and low in management. Cell # 7

INCOMPATIBLE LEADERSHIP

- V. Principal Low in Leadership and Management combined with:
a) Assistant principal low in leadership and high in management. Cell # 12
b) Assistant principal high in leadership and low in management. Cell # 15
- VI. Principal High in Leadership and Low in Management combined with:
a) Assistant principal low in leadership and management. Cell # 14
b) Assistant principal high in leadership and low in management. Cell # 13
- VII. Principal Low in Leadership and High in Management combined with:
a) Assistant principal low in leadership and management. Cell # 8
b) Assistant principal low in leadership and high in management. Cell # 4
- IV. Principal and Assistant Principal are both Low in Leadership and Management
Cell # 16

Fig. 6. *Leadership and Management Categories*

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to determine whether the categories of leadership and management compatibility had an effect on the dependent variable, professional learning community. The means for PLC by category are reported in Table 30 and the ANOVA results in Table 31.

Table 30

PLC Means by Leadership/Management Compatibility Category

Category	Mean	N	SD
Ideal	4.123	27	.189
Complementary	3.870	20	.574
Incompatible	3.423	34	.398
Total	3.767	81	.501

Table 31

ANOVA Summary Table for Effects of Leadership/Management Category on Teachers' Perceptions of School as Professional Learning Community

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	7.664(a)	2	3.832	24.103	.000	.382
Intercept	1119.090	1	1119.090	7038.694	.000	.989
Leadership/ Management Group	7.664	2	3.832	24.103	.000	.382
Error	12.401	78	.159			
Total	1169.194	81				
Corrected Total	20.066	80				

R Squared = .382 (Adjusted R Squared = .366)

Because the compatibility category was significant, a Duncan post hoc test was used to determine which categories were significant (see Table 32). As hypothesized, the results show that the Ideal category had the highest mean, significantly higher than either of the other two categories. Also, the Complementary category had a significantly higher mean than the Incompatible category.

Table 32

Duncan Post Hoc Test of Means of Teacher Perceptions of Leadership and Management Categories

Compatibility Category	n	Subset*		
		1	2	3
INCOMPATIBLE	34	3.423		
COMPLEMENTARY	20		3.870	
IDEAL	27			4.123
Total	81			

*Means for different subsets are statistically different ($p < .05$)

Research hypotheses related to research question 5 were supported:

H1: Schools with Ideal Leadership will have statistically higher ($p < .05$) teacher perceptions of the school as a professional learning community than schools with Complementary or Incompatible Leadership.

Ideal Leadership had a mean of 4.12, the largest mean score for all categories.

H2: Schools with Complementary Leadership will have statistically higher ($p < .05$) teacher perceptions of the school as a professional learning community than schools with Incompatible Leadership.

Complementary leadership had a mean score of 3.87, higher than the mean of 3.42 for incompatible leadership.

Ancillary Analyses

Because the compatibility categories confirmed the hypothesis that complementary leadership enhances the learning community, the mean differences in PLC by principal and teacher leadership and management were further examined. First, the cell means, using all 16 possible combinations are reported in Table 33. Because the school is the unit of analysis ($n=81$), some cells are empty. To alleviate the problem of empty cells in attempting to compare mean differences, another analysis of means was done at the teacher level (see Table 34).

Table 33

Leadership and Management Means for Principals and Assistant Principals - School Level

Principal LEADERSHIP	Principal MANAGEMENT	Assistant Principal LEADERSHIP	Assistant Principal MANAGEMENT	Mean	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
High Principal Leadership	High Principal Management	High Assistant Principal Leadership	High Assistant Principal Management	4.123	.062	3.999	4.247
			Low Assistant Principal Management	4.257	.323	3.611	4.902
			High Assistant Principal Management	4.231	.145	3.942	4.519
			Low Assistant Principal Management	4.153	.132	3.890	4.416
		High Assistant Principal Leadership	High Assistant Principal Management	.	.	.	.
			Low Assistant Principal Management	4.118	.323	3.472	4.763
			High Assistant Principal Management	.	.	.	.
			Low Assistant Principal Management	3.924	.323	3.279	4.570
	Low Principal Management	High Assistant Principal Leadership	High Assistant Principal Management	.	.	.	.
			Low Assistant Principal Management	4.075	.323	3.429	4.720
			High Assistant Principal Management	.	.	.	.
			Low Assistant Principal Management	3.581	.323	2.936	4.226
Low Principal Leadership	High Principal Management	High Assistant Principal Leadership	High Assistant Principal Management	3.286	.122	3.042	3.530
			Low Assistant Principal Management	3.046	.162	2.723	3.368
			High Assistant Principal Management	3.174	.229	2.718	3.630
			Low Assistant Principal Management	3.449	.065	3.320	3.578
	Low Principal Management	High Assistant Principal Leadership	High Assistant Principal Management				
			Low Assistant Principal Management				
			High Assistant Principal Management				
			Low Assistant Principal Management				

Table 34

Leadership and Management Means for Principals and Assistant Principals – Teacher Level

Principal LEADERSHIP	Principal MANAGEMENT	Assistant Principal LEADERSHIP	Assistant Principal MANAGEMENT	Mean	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
High Principal Leadership	High Principal Management	High Assistant Principal Leadership	High Assistant Principal Management	4.280	.031	4.219	4.342
			Low Assistant Principal Management	4.097	.140	3.822	4.371
		Low Assistant Principal Leadership	High Assistant Principal Management	4.115	.120	3.879	4.351
			Low Assistant Principal Management	4.139	.062	4.017	4.260
	Low Principal Management	High Assistant Principal Leadership	High Assistant Principal Management	3.971	.182	3.613	4.328
			Low Assistant Principal Management	3.816	.149	3.523	4.108
		Low Assistant Principal Leadership	High Assistant Principal Management	.(a)	.(a)	.(a)	.(a)
			Low Assistant Principal Management	3.773	.149	3.480	4.065
Low Principal Leadership	High Principal Management	High Assistant Principal Leadership	High Assistant Principal Management	3.885	.132	3.626	4.145
			Low Assistant Principal Management	3.892	.235	3.430	4.354
		Low Assistant Principal Leadership	High Assistant Principal Management	3.725	.333	3.072	4.379
			Low Assistant Principal Management	3.765	.136	3.498	4.031
	Low Principal Management	High Assistant Principal Leadership	High Assistant Principal Management	3.296	.066	3.167	3.426
			Low Assistant Principal Management	3.327	.086	3.158	3.496
		Low Assistant Principal Leadership	High Assistant Principal Management	2.980	.149	2.688	3.273
			Low Assistant Principal Management	3.220	.035	3.152	3.288

What is evident from table 34 is teachers who perceive their principals and assistant principals to use more leadership and management skills, the more they perceive their school to resemble a professional learning community. These results are graphically depicted in Figure 7 using the same color coding as with the school-level results. What is most interesting is that in all cases except one (cell 11), the means are in the predicted direction. Only cell 11, where the principal is low in both leadership and management has a mean closer to the means of the Incompatible cells. This and other findings are discussed in Chapter 5.

Transformational Leadership/Management	Principal/AP High / High	Principal/AP High / Low	Principal/AP Low / High	Principal/AP Low / Low
Principal/AP High / High	(1) Ideal 4.280	(2) Complementary 4.115	(3) Complementary 3.885	(4) Incompatible 3.765
Principal/AP High / Low	(5) Complementary 4.097	(6) Complementary 4.139	(7) Complementary 3.892	(8) Incompatible 3.765
Principal /AP Low / High	(9) Complementary 3.971	(10) Complementary (a)	(11) Complementary 3.296	(12) Incompatible 2.980
Principal/AP Low / Low	(13) Incompatible 3.816	(14) Incompatible 3.773	(15) Incompatible 3.327	(16) Incompatible 3.220

Fig. 7. *Teacher Perceptions' of Administrators' Leadership and Management by Compatibility Category*

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The final chapter briefly summarizes the research problem and key findings. It suggests possible limitations and provides a discussion of the results. Recommendations for future research and implications for current practice are discussed.

Overview of Findings

The study proposed that traditional distinctions between the transformational and transactional modes of leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997) are difficult to interpret within the framework of the professional learning community (Hord, 1996) without considering the interaction of the principal and assistant principal leadership roles. The study advanced the idea that the transformational and transactional modes of leadership are not contingent only on principal leadership but that the impact of the assistant principal's leadership role also should be considered. The purpose of the study was to analyze the relationship between principal and assistant principal leadership styles and teacher perceptions of the school as a professional learning community.

Results of the study of 81 principals, 81 assistant principals, and 965 teachers from 81 schools are discussed in relation to the research questions and hypotheses. The population for the study consisted of public school principals, assistant principals, and teachers from rural, urban and suburban school districts. The participants were identified by their principal as members of the school leadership team or as having had experience with the school improvement process.

Administrators rated their transformational leadership and management styles very favorably. Teachers also rated administrators' transformational leadership and management styles high. The highest rated leadership and management sub-scale by all respondents was "High Performance Expectations." The leadership sub-scales "Collaborative Decision Making Structure" and "Providing Intellectual Stimulation" had the lowest teacher ratings for both administrators.

Correlations for teacher ratings with the administrator ratings of leadership and management were moderate. Teacher and assistant principal ratings of principals' leadership and management had higher correlations than teacher and principal ratings of assistant principals' leadership and management.

Overall the respondents perceived their schools to operate as professional learning communities. The high mean averages and standard deviations for all subcategories of the school professional learning community also confirm these findings. The highest sub-scale rating for all respondents was "Collective Learning" and the lowest was "Shared Personal Practice." Stronger positive correlations were found for the school as a professional learning community between teacher and principal ratings than between teacher and assistant principal ratings. Results from a multiple regression analysis indicated that only principal management was a significant predictor of teacher perceptions of the school as a learning community.

Principal and assistant principal leadership and management as perceived by teachers was classified as either "high" or "low" based on empirical results. How well the two administrators represented leadership and management as a team was then classified as "Ideal," "Complementary," or "Incompatible." If both administrators were high on both leadership and management, the team was deemed Ideal. If at least one administrator was high on leadership

and at least one was high on management, the team was Complementary. Other teams were Incompatible. Teachers who perceived the leadership team as Ideal were more likely to perceive their schools as a professional learning community. Similarly, Complementary teams were perceived as having stronger learning communities than Incompatible teams.

Limitations

The use of surveys that measure perceptions of behavior rather than actual behavior is one limitation of this kind of study. Three separate surveys were used with teachers and the researcher had to accept perceptions as proxy for behavior in all three. Further, there is the risk of single-perceiver bias when the same individuals are asked to complete more than one instrument. It is possible that the respondent will ascertain the intent from the instruments themselves and give more socially desirable responses. For example, completing the LMSS on both principal and assistant principal may have alerted the respondents that these two administrators would later be compared. Loyalty or disloyalty to either or both could have influenced the responses.

The sub-scales for both survey instruments were operationalized a priori according to previous research theory and concepts. Respondents did not have the opportunity to provide alternative meanings for leadership styles or school as a learning community.

Teachers participating in the study were identified as teachers who were actively involved in the school improvement plan based on information from the school site administrator and documentation from a copy of the School Improvement Plan signature page. The transformational leadership style for both principal and assistant principal is determined by the perceptions of behavior. For the purpose of the study, it was assumed that the teachers selected to participate had prior knowledge of the leadership behavior of both the assistant principal and

principal. Teachers who were not selected to participate on a school improvement team would likely have different perceptions of leadership. Further, the study involved only one assistant principal in schools where there was more than one assistant principal. Therefore, perceptions of the complete leadership team (all assistants and teacher leaders) were not captured.

Discussion

This study was designed to gain insight into the relationships of the principal and assistant principal to the school as a professional learning community (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997; Hord, 1996). The researcher proposed that the interaction of the transformational leadership and management styles for the principal and assistant principal impact teacher perceptions of the school as a learning community. Sarason (1990) and others noted that deficiencies in leadership are connected to reasons for failure of school reform.

Results of the study of 81 public school principals, 81 assistant principals, and 965 teachers are discussed in relation to the research questions and hypotheses. The issues discussed include a) perceptions of teachers of principal and assistant principal transformational leadership and management styles; b) perceptions of teachers of their schools as professional learning communities; and c) the relationship of principal and assistant principal leadership and management style to the school as a professional learning community.

Transformational Leadership and Management

The Leadership and Management of School Survey (LMSS) was used to measure principal leadership and management styles. The survey instrument, designed for identifying characteristics of both transformational leadership and transactional management, has attributes that are consistent with current leadership theory and research. Results from teacher perceptions of administrator leadership styles indicated that both principals and assistant principals averaged

a score of about 4 on a 5-point Likert-scale. A comparison of scores from administrator perceptions of their leadership and management styles revealed a slightly higher rating.

Although the overall ratings for school administrators were similar and very favorable, only about one fourth of the school faculties had the two administrators rated one point or more differently in transformational leadership and management styles. Unexpectedly, the principal was not rated more favorably in the use of transformational leadership than the assistant principal. This finding indicates that the assistant principal role is viewed from a school change perspective and not only from a management perspective. This contradicts earlier research showing the relegation of the assistant principal to the more mundane tasks of running a school. In schools that operate through leadership teams, teachers who are selected by the principals to be part of those teams may now observe leadership and management as a combined administrative function for both the principal and assistant principal.

Teacher, principal and assistant principal leadership and management sub-scale ratings were very similar. All respondent groups gave the sub-scale “High Expectations” for both principals and assistant principals the largest mean score. Current school reform and accountability policies increase the pressure on schools to improve student academic achievement, thereby compelling administrators to focus on high expectations as a means for school improvement. Specifically, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) mandates educational policies that augment the academic achievement standards for schools. While high expectations have long been associated with better student outcomes, the outcomes themselves have become more rigorous. Thus, expectations for student achievement are now higher than ever before. The focus of accountability programs may have re-prioritized the goals of school leadership.

School as a Professional Learning Community

Teachers rated their school professional learning community close to 4.0 on a 5-point scale. The lowest rated sub-scale was “Shared Personal Practice” which received a score closer to the mid-point. A majority of teachers had fewer than 10 years of teaching experience (44%) and had less than 10 years at their current school site (73%). This was considerably contradictory to the belief that teachers with more experience would serve in leadership positions in the school. Although these teachers were actively engaged with fellow teachers in discussions of school improvement, actual sharing of practice was less emphasized. Peer observation and whole faculty study groups are two mechanisms to make practice more open in schools yet these two processes have not received widespread acceptance. Teachers still operate fairly autonomously once inside their classrooms. The new accountability movement with its sanctions on students and districts may in fact have the unintended consequence of further isolating teachers. If teachers perceive accountability as a threat, as the backlash against NCLB would suggest, they may be less likely to open their classrooms for scrutiny of their practices.

Administration Impact

Administrator leadership and management ability was a strong predictor of teacher perceptions of the school as a professional learning community. This finding is consistent with current research conducted by Leithwood and associates (1994) and Hord (1997).

It was reported by Coladarci and Donaldson (1991) that the more administrators encourage and facilitate collaboration among staff members, the better the organizational climate.

Teacher opinions concerning the quality of the school learning community were not closely aligned to assistant principal opinions. Teacher and principal opinions are generally in agreement regarding the quality of the school learning community. Principals may be

communicating more with the teachers concerning aspects of the school as a professional learning community than with assistant principals. Senge (1990) and Louis (1993) contend that organizations learn through the social processing of information. Teachers who were selected by the principals to participate in the study may have commonalities of opinions concerning the school. Goldman, Dunlap and Conley (1993) stated that information filters from the principal to the teachers. Assistant principal positions are often entry-level administrators and are rarely seen as holding positions of power and status. Principals are generally identified as visionary leaders and assistant principals as the managers (Marshall, 1992). Although teachers perceived the assistant principals in this study as exhibiting behaviors of transformational leadership, those behaviors were not necessarily associated with the school culture.

Leadership and Management as a Social Process

Administrators work in a politically charged arena and must “acknowledge and respond to the political qualities and nature of schools both internally and in their community contexts” for schools to become professional learning communities (Mathews & Crow, 2003, p.199). Several researchers reported the existence of an imbalance of power relationships of school leaders to address the needs of both teachers and students in the era of school reform. Coleman (1990, p. 301) states, “Individuals do not act independently and goals are not arrived at independently. Positive and effective relationships between individuals, mainly school administrators, can facilitate productivity in school organizations.”

Teachers who are engaged in the school learning process in a continuous and intentional manner are more likely to solve the schools problems than teachers who are organized in isolated pockets (Huffman & Hipp, 2002). This study provided evidence that teachers value shared professional practice as important to their perception of their school as a professional learning

community. School leaders must reduce the isolation of teachers, especially at the high school and middle school levels, to help increase opportunities for teachers to meet to solve school related problems. Principals and assistant principals must also model and participate in the social process of the school organization.

Contributions to Theory Development

The findings of this study support a leadership and management model wherein both leadership and management are needed to build strong professional learning communities. Correlations for possible leadership and management combinations were coded using three categories: Ideal, Complementary, and Incompatible. The categories of leadership and management compatibility had a significant effect on the dependent variable professional learning community. The Ideal category had the highest mean, significantly higher than the other two categories. The Compatible category had a significantly higher mean than the Incompatible category.

The most interesting aspect of the data analysis for the categories came from a comparison of means in the 16 cells of leader (principal or assistant principal) by transformational leadership (high or low) and transactional leadership (high or low). In all cases except one, the means are in the predicted direction. That is, the one cell associated with ideal leadership had the highest mean. All cells except one associated with complementary leadership had higher means than all cells associated with incompatible leadership. The one cell thought to be complementary that fell in line with the incompatible means was where principals were perceived as low in both transformational and transactional leadership and the assistant principal was perceived as high in both. Apparently teachers will accept a shared leadership model, but they will not accept an abdication of leadership by the principal. Position power still mandates

that the principal be primarily responsible for shaping the school culture. The model of shared leadership supported by this study is depicted in Figure 7.

TRANSACTIONAL LEADESRHIP	TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP				
		Both	One	Neither	
	Both	IDEAL	COMPLEMENTARY*		INCOMPATIBLE
	One				
	Neither	INCOMPATIBLE			

*If the principal is low in both, the team is incompatible.

Fig. 8. *Coleman's School Leadership Model*

Based on the findings of this study three propositions are considered for school leadership teams.

- 1) Ideal – both principal and assistant principal are high on both leadership and management dimensions.
- 2) Complementary – at least one of the two administrators is high on each of the two dimensions.
- 3) Incompatible – neither administrator is high on one or both of the two dimensions.

Implications

Implications for Practice

Many assistant principals aspire to become a principal at some point in their careers. Principals must nurture and utilize the abilities of the assistant principal to form the most effective leadership and management team that will best serve the interests of teachers and students. The information gained from this study will help school administrators understand the impact of their leadership and management congruency on the perceptions of teachers of the school as a professional learning community.

Teachers indicated the sub-scale “Shared Personal Practice” the weakest for Schools as a Professional Learning Community. The two sub-scales indicate the importance for school administrators to provide teachers with the opportunity to meet and discuss instructional issues. Administrators’ use of time to improve the opportunity for teachers to shared personal practice is a predictor of leadership and management effectiveness for both the principal and assistant principal.

Teachers rated the principal and assistant principal as having high expectations. This was the highest rated sub-scale of the ten. School accountability and reform movements emphasize high achievement standards which has positioned high expectations goals at both the principal and assistant principal levels. This is also considered an important predictor for leadership and management effectiveness for both the principal and assistant principal.

School level administrators are faced with challenges that will require the most effective utilization of leadership resources available. Unfortunately the assistant principal is rarely considered as an important member of the leadership of the school. Research has focused attention on the school leadership involving the principal, teacher leaders, and the school

community as units of analysis. School-wide reform efforts, such as converting schools into professional learning communities, will benefit from the leadership model presented in this study.

Most importantly, the study suggests that principals and assistant principals must self-assess and reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses to develop a strong leadership team. Weaknesses should be identified as those areas where neither leader is strong. The message for school leaders is, “You don’t have to do it alone!”

Leader preparation programs also can learn from the findings of the study. In preparing future school leaders, attention must be given to the sharing of responsibilities. More self-assessment to understand both leadership and management strengths is needed. Similarly, future leaders must receive validation in relinquishing some leadership functions to others. This is not a natural leadership role. Quite the contrary, principals have often been characterized as the alone person in the middle—bravely protecting teachers below them from central office administrators above them. This depiction creates undue stress on the principal who should instead be freed to become a team member.

Implications for Future Research

This study could be replicated with schools from different geographic regions to increase generalizability. Collecting data from a random sample of all teachers from the schools also would help to improve the generalizability of the findings and offer more evidence for the best model of school leadership to build a strong school community.

The principal and assistant principal are not the only sources of leadership in schools. Additional studies might employ qualitative methods to describe the richer complexity of school leadership from all sources and how each source affects the school professional culture.

To eliminate the problem of single perceiver bias, research might be conducted that had one group of teachers complete the leadership survey about principals, another group about assistant principals, and a third group about the school as a professional learning community. Finally, researchers might study schools in a pre and posttest design wherein school leaders are rated on leadership and school culture then trained in transformational and transactional leadership and rated again a year later on leadership and school professional culture.

Summary

The results of this study suggest a shift away from the traditional managerial role of the assistant principal, at least in schools engaged actively in school improvement. Results also suggest that both principals and assistant principals exhibit behaviors of both leadership and management and that the shared leadership roles influences perceptions of a professional culture.

A model for school leadership is proposed that takes into account both principal and assistant principal leadership and management styles. The strongest learning community results when these styles complement one another so that transformational and transactional needs are met. Unlike previous studies of transformational leaders, this study acknowledges that leadership is shared relationship. Although principals cannot abdicate their leadership responsibilities, they should feel free to build on the strengths of their assistants.

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Appendix A
Superintendents' Introductory Letter

February 2005

Dear Superintendent:

Please allow me to introduce myself. I am Clive H. Coleman, principal of Sarah T. Reed High School in Orleans Parish. This semester, I will be engaged in conducting research as part of my doctoral requirements for the University of New Orleans. The topic of my research requires examination of the relationship between principal and assistant principal leadership styles and the professional learning community.

The study will involve 10 to 15 teachers in a school with the principal and assistant principal. The teachers and assistant principals selected will have experience with and involvement in the school improvement team. All participants will complete a *Demographic Informational Survey* and the *Leadership and Management Survey* designed by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997), and *School Professional Staff as Learning Community Questionnaire* (Hord, 1996). The instruments used for this study are used in numerous empirical research studies that are based on the theoretical and conceptual constructs of leadership and school restructuring. Completion of the surveys and questionnaires should take no longer than 20 minutes.

All information obtained will be strictly confidential. Participants, schools or school districts will not be identified. No survey data will contain names of any participants or their schools. All data will be disposed upon the completion of the research. Since the surveys and questionnaires will take a short amount of time, I do not anticipate any discomfort due to the completion of the instruments. Participation in the study is entirely voluntary; and participants can terminate participation at any time without consequence. Schools or participants will not be required to bear the expenses for postage and copies for all documents. Self-addressed, return mail envelopes and copies of documents will be provided at no cost to the participants. I will serve as the point person for the study for all communications and documentations.

I foresee the benefit of this research study as adding to the body of knowledge in the development of a leadership model for principals and assistant principals. This research will also provide a better understanding of the relationship for school level administrators' leadership interaction with professional learning communities as a school improvement initiative.

For your information and review, I have included a copy of all letters that will be sent to all participating principals, assistant principals and teachers. I have also included a copy of the instruments that will be used to collect the data for the research. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Dr. Peggy Kirby (504) 280-6661.

The internet web site <http://clivecoleman.com> is also available for additional information.

To confirm your approval for your schools' participation in the research, please complete the bottom portion of this letter and fax or mail to the address indicated as soon as possible. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Clive H. Coleman
Doctoral Student, UNO

I have been fully informed of the above procedures with their possible benefits and risks; and I have given permission for participation in this study.

DISTRICT_____ SIGNATURE_____

DATE_____

FAX : 504-280-6453

MAIL TO: Clive H. Coleman
University of New Orleans Educational Leadership, Counseling & Foundations
348 Bicentennial Education Building
Lakefront Campus
2000 Lakeshore Drive
New Orleans, Louisiana 70148

Appendix B

Principals' Introductory Letter

February 2005

Dear Colleague:

Please allow me the opportunity to respectfully request your help with my dissertation research on leadership and professional learning communities. I am currently a doctoral student at the University of New Orleans and have served as a principal, assistant principal and teacher in Orleans Parish Public Schools for 27 years. The topic of my research requires examination of the relationship between principal and assistant principal leadership styles and the professional learning community.

The study will involve 10 to 15 teachers in a school with the principal and assistant principal. The teachers and assistant principals selected will have experience with and involvement in the school improvement team. All participants will complete a *Demographic Informational Survey* and the *Leadership and Management Survey* designed by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997). Only teachers will complete the *School Professional Staff as Learning Community Questionnaire* (Hord, 1996). The instruments used for this study are used in numerous empirical research studies that are based on the theoretical and conceptual constructs of leadership and school restructuring. Completion of the surveys and questionnaires should take no longer than 30 minutes.

All information obtained will be strictly confidential. Neither participants, schools, nor school districts will be identified. No survey data will contain names of any participants or their schools. All data will be disposed upon the completion of the research. Since the surveys and questionnaires will take a short amount of time, I do not anticipate any discomfort due to the completion of the instruments. Participation in the study is entirely voluntary; and participants can terminate participation at any time without consequence. Schools or participants will not be required to bear the expenses for postage and copies for all documents. Self-addressed, stamped envelopes and copies of documents will be provided at no cost to the participants. I will serve as the point person for the study for all communications and documentations.

I foresee the benefit of this research study as adding to the body of knowledge in the development of a leadership model for principals and assistant principals. This research will also provide a better understanding of the relationship for school level administrators' leadership interaction with professional learning communities as a school improvement initiative.

All of the information that is collected from research questionnaires and processed for this study will be strictly confidential and destroyed at the conclusion. At no time will the names of participants or schools be attached to any part of this research. Your participation is entirely voluntary; and you may withdraw consent and terminate your participation at any time. If you wish not to participate, then return the entire manilla envelope using the return postage documents included.

Included in this packet are the following:

- *The Leadership and Management Survey* designed by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) for you to complete on your identified assistant principal. If there is more than one assistant principal, please select the assistant principal that you have designated as “principal in charge” when you are not on campus and or the individual with the greatest responsibility for direct involvement with the school improvement team. This questionnaire is divided into two sections with a total of 53 questions and should take no more than 15 minutes to complete.
- A copy of the *Demographic Informational Survey* with seven (7) questions concerning information related to your years of service as a teacher and demographic information that will be used only for statistical analysis.
- A packet for you to return via postal service with return address stamped envelopes.
- Twenty packets for you to distribute to teachers that are involved with the School Improvement Team efforts for your school. You must identify and notify teachers of the assistant principal selected to participate in the research so that they are referencing the same assistant principal.
- Teachers participating in the research will complete *The School Professional Staff as Learning Community Questionnaire* and will be randomly selected to complete *The Leadership and Management Survey* for either the principal or assistant principal.

The total time required to complete all information requested is approximately 20 minutes. All information requires anonymity; the names of participants and schools are not required for completion of the research. All participants will mail their responses using the documents enclosed in their packets. Your input will provide additional knowledge used to improve the educational environment for all professionals. Please complete and mail all information within two weeks of receipt. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (504)-280-6661. Your completion and return of the enclosed surveys and questionnaires will indicate your consent to participate in the study.

The internet web site <http://clivecoleman.com> is available for additional information.

Thank you,

Clive H. Coleman

Appendix C

Demographic Information Survey

Demographic Information

1. How many years (including this year) have you been in the teaching profession?

_____ 1 to 5 years	_____ 16 to 20 years
_____ 6 to 10 years	_____ 21 to 25 years
_____ 11 to 15 years	_____ 26 + years

2. How many years have you been at your present school?

_____ 1 to 5 years	_____ 16 to 20 years
_____ 6 to 10 years	_____ 21 to 25 years
_____ 11 to 15 years	_____ 26 + years

3. How many years have you participated with the School Improvement Team for your school?

_____ 1 to 5 years	_____ 16 to 20 years
_____ 6 to 10 years	_____ 21 to 25 years
_____ 11 to 15 years	_____ 26 + years

4. How many years have you worked with the current Principal?

_____ 1 to 5 years	_____ 16 to 20 years
_____ 6 to 10 years	_____ 21 to 25 years
_____ 11 to 15 years	_____ 26 + years

5. How many years have you worked with the current Assistant Principal?

_____ 1 to 5 years	_____ 16 to 20 years
_____ 6 to 10 years	_____ 21 to 25 years
_____ 11 to 15 years	_____ 26 + years

5. Gender: _____ Male _____ Female

6. Race: _____ White _____ NON White

7. Current Position: _____ Teacher _____ Assistant Principal _____ Principal

Thank you for completing the questionnaires and surveys.

Appendix D

Assistant Principals' Introductory Letter

February 2005

Dear Assistant Principal:

Please allow me the opportunity to respectfully request your help with my dissertation research on leadership and professional learning communities. I am currently a doctoral student at the University of New Orleans and have served as a principal and assistant principal and teacher in Orleans Parish Public Schools for 27 years. The topic of my research requires examination of the relationship between principal and assistant principal leadership styles and the professional learning community.

The study will involve the principal, assistant principal and 10 to 15 teachers in a school. The participants selected should have experience with and involvement in the school improvement team. All participants will complete a *Demographic Informational Survey*, the *Leadership and Management Survey* designed by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997), and *School Professional Staff as Learning Community Questionnaire* (Hord, 1996). The instruments used for this study are used in numerous empirical research studies that are based on the theoretical and conceptual constructs of leadership and school restructuring.

I foresee the benefit of this research study as adding to the body of knowledge in the development of a leadership model for principals and assistant principals. This research will also provide a better understanding of the relationship for school level administrators' leadership interaction with professional learning communities as a school improvement initiative.

All information obtained will be strictly confidential. Participants, schools or school districts will not be identified. No survey data will contain names of any participants or their schools. All data will be disposed upon the completion of the research. Schools or participants will not be required to bear the expenses for postage and copies for all documents. Self-addressed, return postage envelopes and copies of documents will be provided at no cost to the participants. I will serve as the point person for the study for all communications and documentations.

If you wish not to participate, simply return the entire manilla envelope to the principal. The surveys and questionnaires will take a short amount of time and participation in the study is entirely voluntary. Participants can terminate participation at any time without consequence.

Included in this packet are the following:

- *The Leadership and Management Survey* designed by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) for you to complete on the identified assistant principal designated as “principal in charge” when the principal is not on campus. This questionnaire is divided into two sections with a total of 53 questions and should take no more than 15 minutes to complete.
- The principal will identify and notify teachers of the assistant principal selected to participate in the research so that they are referencing the same assistant principal.
- *The School Professional Staff as Learning Community Questionnaire* for you to complete on your school’s professional learning community, divided into five (5) dimensions and 17 responses as identified by Hord (1997) to be completed in approximately 5 minutes.
- A copy of the *Demographic Informational Survey* with six (6) questions concerning information related to your years of service as a teacher and demographic information that will be used only for statistical analysis.
- A self-addressed, return postage envelope for you to return via the mail at no cost to the participant.

The total time required to complete all information requested is approximately 20 minutes. All participants will seal and return responses using the documents enclosed in their packets. Your input will provide additional knowledge used to improve the educational environment for all professionals. Please complete and mail all information within one week of receipt using the return postage. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Dr. Peggy Kirby at (504) 280-6661. Your completion and return of the enclosed surveys and questionnaires will indicate your consent to participate in the study.

The internet web site <http://clivecoleman.com> is available for additional information.

Thank you,

Clive H. Coleman

Appendix E

Teachers' Introductory Letter

February 2005

Dear Teacher:

Please allow me the opportunity to respectfully request your help with my dissertation research on leadership and professional learning communities. I am currently a doctoral student at the University of New Orleans and have served as a principal and assistant principal and teacher in Orleans Parish Public Schools for 27 years. The topic of my research requires examination of the relationship between principal and assistant principal leadership styles and the professional learning community.

The study will involve the principal, assistant principal and 10 to 15 teachers in a school. The participants selected should have experience with and involvement in the school improvement team. All participants will complete a *Demographic Informational Survey*, the *Leadership and Management Survey* designed by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997), and *School Professional Staff as Learning Community Questionnaire* (Hord, 1996). The instruments used for this study are used in numerous empirical research studies that are based on the theoretical and conceptual constructs of leadership and school restructuring.

I foresee the benefit of this research study as adding to the body of knowledge in the development of a leadership model for principals and assistant principals. This research will also provide a better understanding of the relationship for school level administrators' leadership interaction with professional learning communities as a school improvement initiative.

All information obtained will be strictly confidential. Participants, schools or school districts will not be identified. No survey data will contain names of any participants or their schools. All data will be disposed upon the completion of the research. Schools or participants will not be required to bear the expenses for postage and copies for all documents. Self-addressed, return postage envelopes and copies of documents will be provided at no cost to the participants. I will serve as the point person for the study for all communications and documentations.

If you wish not to participate, simply return the entire manilla envelope to the principal. The surveys and questionnaires will take a short amount of time and participation in the study is entirely voluntary. Participants can terminate participation at any time without consequence.

Included in this packet are the following:

- *The Leadership and Management Survey* designed by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) for you to complete on the identified assistant principal designated as “principal in charge” when the principal is not on campus. This questionnaire is divided into two sections with a total of 53 questions and should take no more than 15 minutes to complete.
- The principal will identify and notify teachers of the assistant principal selected to participate in the research so that they are referencing the same assistant principal.
- *The School Professional Staff as Learning Community Questionnaire* for you to complete on your school’s professional learning community, divided into five (5) dimensions and 17 responses as identified by Hord (1997) to be completed in approximately 5 minutes.
- A copy of the *Demographic Informational Survey* with six (6) questions concerning information related to your years of service as a teacher and demographic information that will be used only for statistical analysis.
- A self-addressed, return postage envelope for you to return via the mail at no cost to the participant.

The total time required to complete all information requested is approximately 20 minutes. All participants will seal and return responses using the documents enclosed in their packets. Your input will provide additional knowledge used to improve the educational environment for all professionals. Please complete and mail all information within one week of receipt using the return postage. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Dr. Peggy Kirby at (504) 280-6661. Your completion and return of the enclosed surveys and questionnaires will indicate your consent to participate in the study.

The internet web site <http://clivecoleman.com> is available for additional information.

Thank you,

Clive H. Coleman

Appendix F

University of New Orleans Human Subjects Approval

University Committee for the Protection
of Human Subjects in Research
University of New Orleans

Form Number: 05JAN05

(please refer to this number in all future correspondence concerning this protocol)

Principal Investigator Clive Coleman Title: Student

Faculty Supervisor: Peggy Kirby (if PI is a student)

Department: ELCF College: Education

Project Title: Principals and assistant principals' leadership style relationship on teachers' perceptions of professional learning communities

Date Reviewed:

Dates of Proposed Project Period From 02/01/05 to 03/31/05

*approval is for one year from approval date only and may be renewed yearly.

Note: Consent forms and related materials are to be kept by the PI for a period of three years following the completion of the study.

Approval Status

Date

☐ Full Committee Approval

☒ Expedited Approval

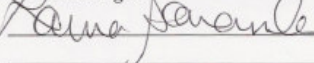
☐ Continuation

☐ Rejected

☐ The protocol will be approved following receipt of satisfactory response(s) to the following question(s) within 15 days:

12-14-04

Committee Signatures:

 Laura Scaramella, Ph.D. (Chair)

Pamela Jenkins, Ph.D.

Anthony Kontos, Ph.D.

Richard B. Speaker, Ph.D.

Gary Talarchek, Ph.D.

Kari Walsh

L. Allen Witt, Ph.D.

VITA

Clive H. Coleman is a native of New Orleans, Louisiana. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education in 1979 and Master's degree in Education Administration in 1984 from the University of New Orleans. Clive entered the doctoral program at the University of New Orleans in fall 2001 and completed requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Administration in May 2005.

Clive began his teaching career in 1979 as a math teacher for the New Orleans Public School District at Colton Junior High School. He was appointed to his first administrative position in 1985 as an administrative assistant for Colton Junior High School. He was appointed assistant principal for John F. Kennedy Senior High in 1989.

Clive received his first principal appointment in 1993 at Fannie C. Williams Middle school in New Orleans, one of the largest middle schools in the state of Louisiana. Before the completion of his first year as the principal of Fannie C. Williams Middle School, Clive was appointed as Principal of Sarah T. Reed Senior High School in New Orleans. Reed has a student population of 1,600 students; Clive has served as its principal for the past twelve years. He is actively involved in cultivating and nurturing future administrators. During his current tenure as principal, Clive was instrumental in helping fourteen teachers and administrators receive appointments to administrative positions. He believes that successful administrators are those who received effective training and support.