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**DIFFERENCES IN LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS OF  
PRINCIPALS AND SUCCESS IN THE SCHOOL  
TURNAROUND PROCESSES**

by

Annette Lee, B.A., M.A.T..

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Education: Educational Leadership

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY

November 2018

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THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

October 4, 2018

Date

We hereby recommend that the dissertation prepared under our supervision  
by Annette Lee

entitled Differences in Leadership Behaviors of Principals and Success in the School  
Turnaround Process

be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of  
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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to examine leadership behaviors of principals associated with public elementary schools that were either in the school turnaround process or had already transitioned out of school academic turnaround from 2011 through 2016. Transformational leadership guided the study to determine whether leadership behaviors differed among leaders of schools associated with academic failure. School accountability data were initially gathered through the Louisiana Department of Education website. Academically unsuccessful schools (AUS) were identified. Schools that were deemed failing at least one time during the 2012-2016 timeframe were grouped as follows: (a) Group A consisted of two schools that had been out of AUS status for at least two years, (b) Group B consisted of two schools that had fluctuated in and out of AUS status, and (c) Group C consisted of two schools that had never exited out of AUS status. Teacher and principal perceptions of leadership were compared between principals of the three groups, between teachers of the three groups, and between principals and teachers between the three groups. In this quantitative study, data were gathered using the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) which measures leader and follower perceptions of leadership behaviors within an organization. The study participants were six principals, who used the Leader form of the MLQ, and 84 teachers, who used the Rater form of the MLQ. The MLQ contains 45 standardized items that are grouped into four categories: (a) Transformational Leadership, (b) Transactional

Leadership, (c) Laissez-faire Leadership, and (d) Outcomes of Leadership. The results of the MLQ survey were converted into SPSS for analysis. One-way analysis of variances (ANOVA) and Mann-Whitney U Tests revealed significant differences between perceptions of leadership behaviors of leaders from schools that had exited out of AUS status, schools that had fluctuated in and out of AUS status, and schools that had never exited out of AUS status. Recommendations for future research and implications for practice are also included.

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Author \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to the people who inspired, influenced and encouraged my aspirations as an educator. Without their unwavering support, I would not have completed this process. First, I want to thank my mother, Kay Lee, and my daughter, Roxanna Blythe, for their continuous support, prayers, patience, and encouragement throughout this journey. If it had not been for them, I never would have had the courage to start this journey, much less complete it. Thank you to all my friends, relatives, cohorts, classmates, and coworkers who provided prayers, praise, encouragement and support along the way. I wish to thank the women of PEO, particularly Chapter R, for their support of all women and their support of me. Above all, thanks be to God, for His grace and mercy, and for His endless love and support throughout my life.



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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Based on assessment scores provided by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), only 13% of Louisiana's fourth grade students attending public schools were considered proficient in reading in 1992 (National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], 2014). While the percent of students performing at or above the NAEP proficiency level in 2017 increased to 26%, Louisiana was still below the national proficiency level of 36% (National Assessment of Educational Progress website, 2018). Fourth grade reading scores in Louisiana were in the bottom 6% of NAEP tested jurisdictions.

Math proficiency level for Louisiana's fourth grade students was 7% in 1992 (NCES, 2014). In 2017, students performing at or above NAEP proficiency levels in math grew to 27% compared to the national average of 40% proficient or above in math. Although Louisiana fourth grade mathematics proficiency scores have improved since 1992, Louisiana was ranked in the bottom 4% of tested jurisdictions followed only by Puerto Rico.

NAEP, also called the Nation's Report Card, offers insight into the United States education system and what our children are learning (National Assessment of Educational Progress website, 2018). NAEP assessments are administered uniformly using the same sets of test booklets across the nation. Assessments are conducted



periodically in mathematics, reading, science, writing, the arts, civics, economics, geography, U.S. History, and in technology and engineering literacy. NAEP results serve as a common metric for all states along with the District of Columbia, Department of Defense Education Activity, and Puerto Rico. The assessment stays essentially the same from year to year with only carefully documented changes. Results are updated every two years and provide educators, policymakers, elected officials, and families with information regarding how the nation's children are doing compared to other children in participating large urban districts, other states, and the nation. Along with test score data is a breakdown of ethnicity and gender. NAEP assessment results provide a snapshot of student academic progress over time.

Federal funding for school improvement began in 1965 with the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Jackson, 2008). Since then, federal funding has continued to increase. Over \$16 million in grants to improve school leadership at low-performing schools was awarded by the U.S. Department of Education in 2015 ("USDOE Awards more than \$16.2 Million in Grants to Improve Leadership," 2015). The federal discretionary funding budget for elementary and secondary education for 2017 was approximately \$70 billion (*Fiscal Education 2017 Budget*, 2016). The mandatory budget for elementary and secondary education in 2017 was \$140 billion. The 2017 education budget requested for Title I grants which is distributed to states to improve the educational opportunity for disadvantaged students was \$15.4 billion with \$173.7 million designated to augment local efforts aimed at turning around low-performing schools. Financial support for teacher and school leader recruitment and training programs was over \$410 million.

For over 50 years, education and political leaders have enacted legislation and other mandates to improve education for students in low-performing schools (Herman et al., 2008; Iorio & Yeager, 2011; Jackson, 2008). School reform models have been in existence almost as long, and typically assume a slow and steady approach to school reform (Herman et al., 2008). Recent literature on turning around failing organizations suggest that organizations must implement quick, dramatic measures in order to change the performance of a failing organization. With so many children unable to achieve academically at a proficient level and the billions of dollars poured into school reform efforts, productive school turnaround efforts for academically struggling students and low-performing schools were examined.

At the end of the 2017 school year, 272 schools in Louisiana were considered persistently failing and in need of “Comprehensive Intervention” from the Louisiana Department of Education (*2016-2017 School and center performance*, 2017). State intervention was deemed necessary in order to close the achievement gap and help schools improve overall student learning. The importance of school leadership and its relationship to student achievement has been well substantiated over the last four decades (Avci, 2015; Herman et al., 2008; Nichols, Glass, & Berliner, 2012). As a result of their own extensive review of school leadership literature, Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, and Anderson (2010) concluded that school improvement could not occur without effective school principals. The purpose of this study was to provide an examination of successful principal behaviors that were associated with schools that had been labeled a failing school but then achieved academic growth as defined by the Louisiana Department of Education. The research was based on data from schools that were once considered

academically unsuccessful (AUS) but successfully turned around academic achievement for at least two years compared to schools that remained academically unsuccessful. Closer examination of the leadership attributes of the principals of these schools provided insight into leadership behaviors that contribute to the transformation and growth of academic achievement in failing schools.

### **Background**

The Louisiana Legislature passed Act 718 in the 2010 legislative session (Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives [Cowen Institute], 2012). Act 718 grants the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) the state constitutional and statutory authority to govern the public education system of the state. Louisiana Revised Statute 17:10.1 updated and established a school accountability system for every school in Louisiana based on student achievement as approved by BESE (Louisiana BESE: Board of Elementary and Secondary Education website, 2018). High academic achievement which results in continuous and substantial academic improvement for all students is used to establish Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the state of Louisiana and applies to all public elementary and secondary school students within the state. In Louisiana, each school district is evaluated on three different grade clusters: (a) elementary (k-5), (b) middle (6-8), and (c) high school (9-12). Each grade cluster must meet requirements in three areas: (a) test participation, (b) academic performance, and (c) an additional academic indicator. For elementary clusters, the additional academic indicator is the school attendance rate. The school performance score component and the subgroup component of the Louisiana School Accountability System are used to determine the school or district AYP. Changes in statewide testing results for subgroup

components evaluated for AYP are: (a) African American/Black, (b) American Indian/Native Alaskan, (c) Asian, (d) Hispanic/Latino, (e) multi-racial, (f) Pacific Islander (g) white, (h) students with disabilities, (i) limited English proficiency, (j) economically disadvantaged, and (k) all students.

### **Louisiana School Report Card System**

In order to communicate the quality of school performance for each school and district in the state, BESE rates the performance of all schools and school districts with letter grades from “A” to “F” (Cowen Institute, 2012). School letter grades are based on results of the school performance score calculated each year after spring testing. The Louisiana Department of Education provides this information in the form of a school report card which is released to schools and the public.

Primary data used to calculate school performance scores are based on how well each student performs on Louisiana’s standardized tests (Cowen Institute, 2012). Other data that contribute to the school performance scores are dropout rates and attendance. Important indicators of student performance include: (a) indicators of assessment and readiness, (b) graduation, (c) diploma strength, and (d) progress (Louisiana Department of Education, Louisiana Believes website, 2014-2015). Elementary school performance scores are based on data from yearly standardized tests for grades three through five. Middle school performance scores are based on yearly standardized test scores from grades six through eight. High school performance scores are based on End-of-Course exams, ACT results, cohort graduation rate, and graduation index. The cohort graduation rate measures the base expectation that students who enter 9<sup>th</sup> grade will graduate four years later. The graduation index, which measures the quality of the diploma earned by

each 12<sup>th</sup> grade student, is also entered into the school performance score calculator. All schools can earn progress points based on assessment performance by subgroup membership (Louisiana BESE: Board of Elementary and Secondary Education website, 2018). Combination schools, such as schools which include middle grades and high school grades, will receive a score from a weighted average of the school performance score from the K-8 grades and the weighted average of the school performance score from the 9-12 grades. Applicable data are entered into the state school performance score calculator which determines a school's specific performance score. Table 1 shows the distribution of letter grades indicated by the school performance score calculator.

Table 1

*Current School Performance Score Range*

Letter Grade	Standard School Performance Score Range
A	100.0 – 150.0
B	85.0 – 99.9
C	70.0 – 84.9
D	50.0 – 69.9
F	Below 50.0

**Academically Unacceptable Schools**

Schools which have scores below a certain level, which is currently a score of less than 50, are labeled “academically unacceptable schools” (AUS) (Louisiana BESE: Board of Elementary and Secondary Education website, 2018). Beginning with the 2012-2013 accountability release, a school performance score of less than 50.0, out a total of

150, placed a school in AUS status. Prior to 2012-2013, school performance scores of less than 75.0, out of a total of 200, places schools in AUS status. According to federal and state guidelines, all AUSs must implement prescribed remedies. Schools labeled AUS for four consecutive years are eligible for state takeover. Schools exit AUS status when their school performance scores are at least 50. Under special circumstances and during transition periods, BESE has the authority to excuse schools from meeting certain conditions from receiving AUS status and/or from implementing certain sanctions and remedies. AUS schools are sometimes referred to as failing schools.

### **Educational Significance**

The successful management of a school and the productiveness of education and training is the primary responsibility of the school principal (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010; Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Leithwood, Harris, & Strauss, 2010; May & Sanders, 2013). The principal is the guiding factor in the successful turnaround of a school in four key subsystems of a school: (a) parent and community involvement, (b) professional capabilities of the faculty and staff, (c) student-centered learning environment, and (d) cohesive instructional guidance system (Bryk et al., 2010; May & Sanders, 2013). Griffin and Green (2013) examined the use of practices, process and procedures used to turn around low performing schools. Griffin and Green state that limited research has examined the behaviors of principals that have been involved in the transition of an academically failing school to achieving academic success.

This study gathered information from schools that were either in the turnaround process or had already transitioned out of academic failure. This study is significant to educational leadership because principals do make a difference in academic achievement

(Bryk et al., 2010; Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Griffin & Green, 2013; Louis et al., 2010; May & Sanders, 2013). Understanding effective leadership behaviors contribute to research on effective school leadership practices, procedures and school cultural change. Information from this study assists in understanding the multifaceted nature of effective school improvement, particularly in schools that have transformed out of AUS status. Principal turnover rates can be as high as 30% in failing schools (Holme, Jabbar, Germain, & Dinning, 2017; Strickland-Cohen, McIntosh, & Horner, 2014). Therefore, identification, support, and implementation of effective leadership behaviors assists in the training and retention of current and future leaders particularly in failing schools where an effective change model is needed to transform failing schools.

### **Research Questions**

Identifying schools that transformed from academically unacceptable to achieving academic gains on a quick, consistent level served as the starting point for this research which was a study of principal behaviors that contributed to the transformation of failing schools. This study investigated the leadership behaviors that guided schools into sustaining academic growth. Specifically, the research questions guiding this study were:

1. What principal leadership behaviors transformed previously low performing schools to achieving academic gains?
2. Are there differences in leadership behaviors between the leaders of successful turnaround schools, schools that showed occasional success and schools that showed minimal success?

## Hypotheses

For the time period beginning with school year 2011-2012 and ending with school year 2015-2016, school performance scores were examined to identify failing elementary schools. Identified failing schools were examined to determine changes in school performance scores over time. Schools were then categorized into three groups (successful, occasionally successful, and minimally successful) according to the change in school performance scores during that time. Schools classified as successful were identified as schools that had achieved academic gains for at least two years and were no longer considered academically unsuccessful. Schools categorized as occasionally successful staggered between academically unsuccessful and showing academic growth on an inconsistent basis. Schools in the minimally successful group showed no significant growth during that time. Based on the research questions, these were the following null hypotheses:

H1: There will be no statistically significant differences in perceived leadership behaviors between leaders as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) of three groups of once academically unacceptable schools.

H2: There will be no statistically significant differences in perceived leadership behaviors as measured by the MLQ and as perceived by teachers in three categories of once academically unacceptable schools.

H3: There will be no statistically significant differences in perceived leadership behaviors as measured by the MLQ between principals and teachers of each of the three groups.



## **Theoretical Framework**

In order to identify a theoretical framework to guide the exploration of leadership in turnaround schools, leadership theories were examined. Instructional leadership theory applied to education focuses on the curriculum, instruction, school goals, and the school environment (Stewart, 2006). Instructional leadership models evolved from research on effective schools in the early 1980s (Hallinger, 2003). Based on elementary schools that were effective at teaching children in low socioeconomic communities, research indicated that strong, directive leadership from the principal should focus on curriculum. This theory shaped the thinking about effective principal leadership in the 1980s and early 1990s internationally and became a model of choice by most principal leadership academies in the United States.

During the 1990s, critics of instructional leadership emerged because they believed it focused too much on the principal as the center of expertise, power and authority (Stewart, 2006). The principal is not always the educational expert. Principals are often a middle management position with limited authority regarding educational issues. Some principals distance themselves from the classroom environment as they perceive their role to be more administratively focused. The current school climate establishes principals as politically wedged between expectations of parents, classroom teachers, the senior management team, and members of the community. The principal often acts as the liaison between various stakeholders which place competing and often conflicting demands from various interest groups. Principals must maintain some sense of balance between the various stakeholders. Based on the structure of current school

systems and the limited authority of principals, instructional leadership was not chosen as a framework.

Consideration of instructional leadership theory led to consideration of authentic, charismatic, servant, and transformational leadership theories. Although all of these leadership theories have favorable characteristics, transformational leadership theory was ultimately chosen to guide this study because research indicated that dramatic and significant results were produced under the guidance of a transformational leader (Avci, 2015; Bass, 1985; Burns, 2012). A general discussion of these leadership styles follows.

Authentic leadership theory describes how leaders develop genuine connections, gain the trust of others, and empower others to lead (George, 2007). The authentic leader has a pattern of behavior that is built on positive psychological competencies and develops these competencies in others. Followership is developed through transparency, openness and mutual trust. This, in turn, contributes to the competencies in followers. (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005). Based in ethics and values, proponents of authentic leadership propose that it can be developed over time (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008).

Considered a positive leadership style, authentic leadership contributes to the formation of a positive organizational commitment (Karadag & Oztekin-Bayier, 2018). Organizational commitment enhances motivation, increases efficiency and creates commitment. In an educational setting, Karadag and Oztekin-Bayir found that school principals' authentic leadership behaviors positively affected teachers' perceptions of school culture. In a study conducted by Agote, Aramburu, and Lines (2015), research indicated that authentic leadership can influence followers' trust and emotions during

times of organizational change. Motivation, organizational commitment, positive school culture and the ability to positively influence employees during times of change are commendable attributes of any leader. However, authentic leadership was not used as a framework based on the ability to effect quick, dramatic changes found in transformational leadership research.

Charismatic leadership theory was also considered because followers become highly committed to a charismatic leader's mission (Horn, Mathis, Robinson, & Randle, 2015). Under charismatic leadership, the needs, values, preferences and aspirations of followers become aligned with the leader's goals and mission. Followers feel inspired to perform above and beyond previously set behaviors. Charismatic leadership attracts the attention of followers through strong communication skills which stimulate enthusiasm for a stated goal (Grabo & Van Vugt, 2016). However, in challenging organizational environments, such as a failing school, Norris's (2018) research indicated that when followers were continuously pressured to meet the demands of hard work, extra effort and sacrifice became the norm which eventually led to diminished enthusiasm and motivation. Furthermore, attempts to define and measure charisma through the development of a theoretical model have been complex and inconsistent (Sy, Horton, & Riggio, 2018).

Servant leadership is another often examined positive form of leadership that focuses on the needs and growth of others (Robinson, Neubert, & Miller, 2018). Greenleaf (1977) first introduced and developed the concept of servant leadership into a managerial and organizational context. The servant leader seeks to serve first rather than lead an organization. Incorporating ethical behavior and a focus on others, effective and

legitimate leaders place service to others ahead of personal power and control. Because relationships between leaders and followers rest at the core of successful organizations, servant leadership is often examined as a successful leadership theory that promotes positive individual, team, and organizational outcomes in a variety of organizational settings (Parris & Peachey, 2013). Again, servant leadership could be a useful framework to study in the field of education; however, this study focused on behaviors that achieved quick dramatic positive changes within an educational setting. Thus, servant leadership was not chosen for this study.

After examining various leadership theories, transformational leadership was chosen as the framework for which this study was based. Dramatic change is required to effectively change the academic performance of a failing school (May & Sanders, 2013). Transformational leadership, first developed by in 1978 by Burns (2012), was identified as a theory that can dramatically move an organization to a higher level. Further development of transformational leadership by Bass (1985) asserted that transformational leadership inspires followers to attain unexpected and significant results. This is what is needed to transform failing schools into schools of academic achievement. This study examined leadership behaviors of six identified principals in Louisiana and compared those behaviors with transformational leadership behaviors.

### **Transformational Leadership Theory**

Positive forms of leadership that establish effective relationships between leaders and subordinates are at the core of successful organizations (Robinson et al., 2018). Leaders need strong communication skills and the ability to gain the trust of their followers. Avci (2015) stated that the principal is the driving force of change initiated at

schools. Authentic, charismatic and servant leadership were considered for the theoretical framework to guide this study. However, the ability to dramatically move an organization to achieve at significantly higher levels was identified as transformational leadership which was first developed by Burns (2012). Bass (1985) further asserted that transformational leadership inspires followers to attain unexpected and significant results.

Burns (2012) first defined leadership from a transactional and transformational perspective. Transactional leadership involves mutual exchange between leaders and followers. Leaders discuss what is required from followers and specify conditions that must be met to receive benefits and rewards from fulfilling specific requirements. Thus, an exchange or transaction occurs among leaders, colleagues, employees, and followers. Transformational leadership goes beyond transactional leadership. Transformational leaders seek to inspire followers to commit to a shared vision and goals for the organization. These leaders challenge their followers to become innovative problem solvers. Through coaching, mentoring, support and challenges, followers develop leadership capacity. Transformational leadership inspires others to achieve quick, dramatic change within an organization.

Bass (1985) expanded and refined Burns' leadership theory by describing transformational leaders as leaders who motivate others to achieve more than originally expected or even thought possible. Transformational leaders lead followers to achieve higher levels of satisfaction with a strong commitment to the group and organization. Avolio and Bass (2004) stated that colleagues are motivated when their leader makes sacrifices in order to achieve the mission. This inspires colleagues to develop and perform beyond their own standard expectations. Leaders encourage followers to push

beyond their self-interest for the good of the organization or team. Motivation is achieved by raising the awareness level about the importance of outcomes and methods to reach them. Transformational leaders build trust, respect, and the preference to work cohesively as a team where all are motivated to achieve the same desired future goals. Followers grow and develop into leaders through the assistance of transformational leaders (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Bass and Riggio (2006) state that transformational leadership has proven to be an effective form of leadership because various performance indicators show a consistent relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and success of organizations. Transformational leadership styles have been studied in numerous fields including business, sports, health, manufacturing, and education (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

**Business.** A study using 888 bank employees working under 76 branch managers examined dependence on the leader, empowerment by the leader and followers' identification with the leader and the organizational unit (Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003). One of the findings noted indicated that transformational leadership was found to be positively related to personal identification with the unit and social identification with the work unit. Kark et al. concluded that this provides evidence that transformational leaders are likely to exert their influence on followers by affecting their feelings of identification.

**Sports.** Kim (2009) investigated athletic directors' transformational and transactional leadership styles and its impact on head coaches' attitudinal behaviors and job performance in NCAA Division II institutions. Attitudinal behaviors and job performance included: (a) job satisfaction, (b) organizational commitment, (c) turnover intention, (d) job performance, and (e) organizational citizenship behavior. Kim found

that contingent rewards, a subcategory of transactional leadership, suggested a higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment compared to transformational leadership. In broader terms, however, transformational leadership more positively affected the head coaches beyond the effects that transactional leadership produces.

**Health.** Using Bass's model of transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership, Spinelli (2004) examined the applicability of these leadership styles in hospital administrative environments. The study was designed to evaluate the relationship of CEO leadership behaviors compared to subordinate managers' perceived outcomes. Spinelli's findings indicated that the relationship between measured indicators of transformational leadership and the outcome factors were stronger and more positive than the indicators of transactional and laissez-faire styles.

**Manufacturing.** Using the changing environment of the manufacturing industry, Herkness (2005) studied the possible relationship between transformational and transactional leadership styles conducive to transforming companies from mass production to lean manufacturing systems. Herkness further investigated the theoretical basis for using transformational and transactional leadership to lead organizational change. Overall findings of the study indicated that the most successful leaders are both transformational and transactional. Herkness' research indicated that transactional leadership was enhanced by transformational leadership because it builds on the exchanges between leaders and followers. Further, the data suggested that transformational leadership was useful when leading organizational change.

**Education.** Avci (2015) investigated transformational and transactional leadership styles in the academic realm. This study investigated the leadership styles of

school principals as perceived by teachers working in public and private schools. Results indicated that teachers had a high level of positive opinions about transformational and transactional leadership characteristics of school principals. Teachers' perceptions about transformational and transactional leadership characteristics of school principals did not vary significantly according to the state of education, professional seniority, and gender. The study suggested that management training should include activities that will enhance transformational leadership characteristics in school principals. Avci concluded that principals with transformational leadership styles positively affected the school, as well as, stakeholders involved with the schools.

### **Critique of Transformational Theory**

Transformational leadership was first characterized as a flawless, perfect and idealized form of leadership (Lee, 2014; Yukl, 1999). Critics, however, noted that Adolf Hitler could be described as a transformational leader due to his ability to inspire, motivate and change current situations. Hitler exploited his emotional appeal in a negative way. Bass (1999) termed unethical transformational leaders as pseudo-transformational leaders who are different from transformational leaders.

Transformational leaders are ethical leaders who place a strong emphasis on vision and creating a desire to change among their followers. Pseudo-transformational leaders may initially behave as a transformational leader but will eventually display unethical or immoral characteristics.

Yukl (1999) presented some critiques about transformational leadership theory as applied to the study of organizations. The study of transformational leadership centered around the basic examination of a leader's influence over individual followers. Influence



on group interactions and organizational processes within a system are generally not examined in transformational leadership theory. Group processes include how the group interacts with each other to: (a) accomplish goals, (b) procure and efficiently use resources, and (c) achieve group member agreement about objectives and priorities. Another critique of transactional and transformational theory is that research typically does not identify how specific problems and challenges are handled.

Lee (2014) suggested that the concept of transformational leadership is ambiguous. Transformational leadership is comprised of four components referred to as: (a) idealized influence, (b) inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration. Lee states that these components may overlap and that developers of transformational leadership theory have not explained how to make use of the four components. Due to the ambiguity and overlap, Lee states that it is difficult for transformational leaders to know how to perform the four components. Conversely, Bass and Riggio (2006) claimed that these four components are definable and have been effectively measured and used in leadership training. The original construct of the transactional and transformational leadership model was developed by Bass in 1985. The first Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) measured seven leadership factors (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Through subsequent research, criticisms were noted, and refinements were made. The most current version, the MLQ 5X, uses a nine-factor structure for measurement. Avolio and Bass stated that subsequent meta-analyses of the military and organizational psychology literature confirm that the relationships between transformational leadership and performance were stronger and more positive than other leadership styles. Furthermore, research development and practical applications over the

past 25 years have shown that transformational leadership generally generates greater follower effectiveness which leads to the improvement of an organization.

### **Limitations**

This study initially started with school performance scores and school data provided by the Louisiana Department of Education. The school performance score provides a snapshot of student achievement scores on Louisiana yearly assessments. The Louisiana Department of Education website system, which displays school report card data, has changed over the past few years. The most recent reporting system for the 2016-2017 school year provides general information about the school including: (a) grades served, (b) number of students, (c) student to technology device ratios, (d) programs offered, (e) after-school opportunities and clubs, and (f) location and contact for the school (Louisiana Department of Education: Louisiana Believes website, n.d.). Academic performance provided on the website includes: (a) overall performance, (b) overall performance from the previous two years, (c) breakdown of scores by student groups, (d) diversity of students and teachers, (e) teacher retention rate, (f) number of certified teachers, and (g) discipline and attendance rates. Prior to the 2016 – 2017 school year, data on the website included: (a) performance score and grade, (b) comparison of the score to the previous year, (c) AUS status, (d) assessment indices for yearly assessments, (e) and progress points earned. Progress points are awarded based on students who exceeded growth expectations from the previous year's assessment.

With the exception of school closures, the school performance score provided by LDOE does not provide information about details of the school or changes that occurred during the school year. For example, changes that could have occurred could be a change

in the range of grade levels served. Prior to 2016/2017 data, the grade level was listed as: (a) elementary, (b) elementary/middle school, (c) combination school, or (d) high school. Elementary grades could be: (a) prekindergarten through third grade, (b) third through fifth grade, (c) or any combination of prekindergarten through eighth grade. Thus, the researcher attempted to use schools that were strictly pre-kindergarten or kindergarten through fifth grade. Changes that could have occurred at the school include staff, management, or major curriculum changes. These changes could also affect the school performance score; however, information is not provided regarding structural, academic, economic, or staffing changes occurring at a school.

### **Delimitations**

This study included elementary schools in the state of Louisiana that were deemed academically unsuccessful at least one time during the 2011 through 2016 school years. The researcher chose schools that were pre-kindergarten/kindergarten through fifth grade as a starting reference to establish some consistency when comparing school performance scores. Elementary schools who received an “F” rating at least once during that time were chosen to study in order to determine if leadership behaviors were the same or different between schools that were in the AUS category, schools that fluctuated in and out of AUS status, and schools that had moved out of the AUS category.

### **Definition of Key Terms**

For this study, the following definitions were used:

- *Academically Unacceptable School (AUS)* refers to a rating given by the Louisiana Department of Education to schools that have school performance

scores that fall below an academically acceptable level. Prior to 2012-2103 school year, scores of less than 75 out of 200 placed a school in AUS status. Beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, school performance scores of less than 50 out of 150 placed a school in AUS status (*Title 28 Bulletin 111*, 2016).

- *Achievement Gap* refers to the occurrence of one group of students that outperforms another group and the difference in average scores for the two groups is statistically significant (National Assessment of Educational Progress website, 2018).
- *Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)* as defined by a state refers to the amount of yearly improvement each school and district are expected to make which will enable low-achieving children to meet high performance levels expected of all children ("USDOE," 2011).
- *Elementary Schools* refer to combinations of prekindergarten and/or kindergarten through fifth grade schools used in this study.
- *Local Education Agencies (LEA)* refer to school districts.
- *Minimally Successful Schools* refer to schools that did not score high enough on their school performance scores to exit out of AUS status from 2011 through 2016, categorized as Group C.
- *Occasionally Successful Schools* refer to schools that were in AUS status, improved enough to exit out of AUS status, but then fell back into AUS status from 2011 through 2016, categorized as Group B.
- *School Improvement* refers to methods taken to improve student academic outcomes on achievement tests by changing how schools and classrooms operate.

Often marked by steady, incremental improvements over a long period of time (Herman et al., 2008).

- *School Turnaround* refers to documented, quick, dramatic steps taken to improve academically low performing schools usually within two to three years of implementation (Herman et al., 2008).
- *School Performance Scores* refer to the Louisiana Department of Education issuance of school performance scores based on yearly student assessment data (School Performance Score, n.d.). School performance scores are accessible to the public.
- *Successful schools* refer to schools that were in AUS status, improved and exited out of AUS status, then remained out of AUS status for at least two years from 2011 through 2016, categorized as Group A.
- *Turnaround* refers to a general term used in this study to describe procedures that helped transform academically unsuccessful schools achieve academic growth beginning with the 2011-2012 school year and ending with the 2015-2016 school year.

### **Presentation of Methods**

Chapter One outlined this study and explained the theoretical framework used to guide this study. A literature review examining the research-to-date on methods used to turnaround and improve academic achievement in low performing schools is included in Chapter Two. Chapter Three presents the methodology used to identify academically low performing schools. Selection of participants, description of instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis methods are also provided. Chapter Four

presents the results and analysis of the study. Finally, Chapter Five contains a summary of the study, findings, discussion, conclusions, implications, limitations and recommendations for future research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The purpose of this study was to provide a comprehensive examination of successful school leadership behaviors that transformed low-performing schools in Louisiana. This chapter presents a review of current literature regarding school improvement and school turnaround processes. A review of school improvement literature provides insight and a current perspective into current turnaround models.

The literature review is laid out in the following manner. Eight different research studies were examined to compare dynamics of successful leadership in struggling schools. Most of the studies occurred while the schools were in the process of turning around low academic achievement. Descriptions and methods used in the literature review are discussed along with results and implications. Summaries of each of the eight studies are presented in Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Brown, Thompson, Townsend, and Roney (2016) compared school improvement changes made in three different levels of 12 low performing schools in North Carolina. Each of the 12 high schools made changes that either: (a) turned around academic achievement, (b) was in the process of turning around academic achievement, or (c) was not showing any signs of academic growth despite making changes to the school. Based on school performance composite scores from the 2009-2010 school year, the researchers selected 12 out of 66 ranked schools with contrasting levels of progress. The first group,

called the most improved group, consisted of schools that made consistent progress from 2006 through 2010. Performance composite scores, consisting of student achievement data combined with graduation rates, were used to analyze school performance. Schools that had a minimum increase of 30 percentage points and were removed from turnaround improvement status were placed in one group, titled “most” improved. The next group, called the “moderate” group, consisted of schools that made significant but more moderate levels of progress. The average increase for this group was 15% to 20% on performance composite scores. The third group, referred to as the “stuck” group, consisted of schools that either dropped further behind or improved by fewer than 10% on performance composite scores. The set of schools selected also reflected a variation in: (a) urban versus rural schools, (b) school districts and regions of the state, (c) school size, (d) ethnic composition, and (e) poverty. Underrepresented minority students in these schools ranged from 45% to 99%. Students on free or reduced lunch ranged from 56% to 81%.

Qualitative methods were used to learn what facilitated academic growth in some schools and prevented academic growth in other schools (Brown et al., 2016). In each of the 12 schools, the researchers interviewed: (a) the principal, (b) assistant principal, (c) five to seven teachers, and (d) other key personnel that the principals identified as knowledgeable about the turnaround process. Leadership facilitators and one or two central office staff members that worked with the turnaround program in each school were also interviewed. The total number interviewed included 159 participants. Sample reports filed with North Carolina’s Department of Public Instruction and field notes supplemented information gleaned from the interviews.



Brown, et al. (2016) designed an initial round of interview questions to gain an understanding of what caused the schools to slip into academic decline. Changes in the economy and demographic trends did not necessarily precipitate academic decline. Brown et al. indicated an inconsistency in the response to these changes by school and district level personnel played a larger role in academic decline. Schools often lost strong administrators. High rates of principal and teacher turnover occurred. Student expectations lowered, and children were not challenged. Common among the schools was discipline problems which became widespread. School culture declined as teachers went into survival mode. A negative school identity became prevalent in the minds of teachers, students, and the surrounding community.

When North Carolina's Department of Public Instruction intervened in these failing schools with energetic school leadership and district support, schools began changing and reaching desired outcomes (Brown et al., 2016). In eight out of the nine schools in the most and moderate groups, the appointment of a new principal who then replaced a significant number of teachers sparked the turnaround process at each of these schools. Other key areas identified as contributing to change in the most and moderate groups included: (a) strong school district support with links to the school and the community served by the school, (b) school culture and climate changed to a commitment to student learning, (c) knowledgeable and skilled school leaders with highly trained teachers and other school personnel, and (d) structures and processes in place to support school instruction. Many of these schools already had a high principal turnover. School districts emphasized knowledge of curriculum and instruction as a key qualification for incoming principals who were given a mandate to raise test scores

quickly. Schools that made the most progress had stable, competent open leaders who carefully selected new teachers and developed strategic management of core instructional processes. District level engagement and assistance were sporadic in schools that either did not achieve growth or achieved minimal growth.

Duke and Landahl (2011) examined the efforts of an elementary school principal and his ability to sustain improved student achievement in the third year of the turnaround process. The elementary school studied was Greer Elementary School in Albemarle County, Virginia. Under the leadership of a new principal, Greer achieved sufficient academic progress for the first two years in a turnaround program. The challenge of the school was to continue making academic progress in the third year which would remove the school from “improvement” status.

Duke and Landahl (2011) chose this school to study because the academic growth achieved in the first two years with the efforts of a new principal and his staff was impressive. Greer Elementary worked with the University of Virginia’s Turnaround Specialist Program which provided baseline data from the first two years of the turnaround program. Duke and Landahl collected previous interviews of the new principal and veteran teachers conducted through the University of Virginia Turnaround Specialist Program during the previous two years of turnaround implementation. This background information provided a baseline against which to assess continuity and change in the third year of the school turnaround process.

Greer Elementary School is located in a small school district in Virginia which serves approximately 13,000 students (Duke & Landahl, 2011). Of the 24 schools served by the district, Greer’s student population was the most diverse with students from 30

countries who spoke 20 different languages. The largest minority group in the school was made up of African-American students who made up almost 40% of the student body. The county average of African-American students was 13.5%. The student mobility rate was higher at Greer than all the other schools at a rate of 13.5% versus 27% at Greer. Nearly half of Greer's students qualified for free or reduced lunch compared to the county average for students on free or reduced lunch at a rate of 19.2%.

Qualitative methods were used to obtain information about the changes made in the third year of the turnaround program (Duke & Landahl, 2011). The case study used a continuous collection of qualitative data from multiple sources. Throughout the school year, Greer's principal submitted reflections on activities occurring at Greer. The principal provided written reflections whenever a previous practice was changed from prior years. Duke summarized the reflections using open coding to identify and name substantive concepts. From these concepts, Duke generated questions requiring elaboration or comparisons of previous activities. Duke and Landahl maintained a continuous flow of information throughout the course of the school year with periodic on-site observations and a review of documents and data sources. Documents included minutes of grade-level meetings, school improvement plans, and progress reports required by the Virginia Department of Education. About mid-year, Greer teachers wrote their reflections about the first semester. Teachers reflected on how they felt about changes and recommended improvements that could be made. Axial coding was then used to identify the relationships among Duke's originally identified substantive concepts found using open coding. Through the use of axial coding, the authors searched for information regarding changes made by the principal which affected the school's ability

to sustain improved academic achievement. Third year test results were available for the authors to compare the relationship of the changes and efforts made by the principal and the effects on student achievement.

Overall scores dropped a couple of points which meant that Greer did not meet Annual Yearly Progress goals during the third year of school improvement (Duke & Landahl, 2011). Three themes emerged that coincided with the principal's reflections and the results of test scores. Greer had tremendous success in test scores the first two years of the program, thus implying continued change may be difficult to achieve in the face of success. Teachers also became weary of major program and curriculum changes after seeing progress made in programs implemented during the first two years of the turnaround program. Yet, Duke and Landahl stated that minor adjustments to programs are constantly needed. The principal admitted that support and coaching for his teachers had dropped slightly the third year. Finally, a number of expert teachers transferred out of Greer prior to the study. Duke and Landahl concluded that school turnaround and sustainability was a dynamic process that must be constantly adjusted.

Galindo, Stein, and Schaffer (2016) used a case study analysis to examine the effects of actions taken by the Maryland State Department of Education Breakthrough Center (BTC) at a Baltimore City high school. The school, given the pseudonym Thomas Jefferson High, was among the state's lowest 5% in academic performance. BTC implemented a turnaround model to effect change at the school. Thomas Jefferson High, located in Baltimore City, was slated for closure in 2008 due to the school's failure to make adequate yearly progress goals for several years. Instead, the local education agency kept the school open and designated the school as a turnaround school in order to

provide services and supports to improve academic achievement. Services began at the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year. The turnaround model identified by Galindo et al. was a specific school improvement design that replaced the principal and rehired no more than 50% of the current teaching staff.

The case study for Thomas Jefferson High took place during the 2013-2014 school year (Galindo et al., 2016). Ethnic demographics of the school consisted of 56% Black students, 30% Caucasian students, and 14% Latino or Hispanic students. About 87% of the students received free or reduced-price meals. Faculty members, made up of 28 teachers and three administrators, consisted of 42% Caucasian, 29% African American, 23% Asian, 3% Latina and 3% multiracial. Staff teaching experience ranged from less than three years to no more than 10 years of teaching experience.

Attributes of the turnaround program examined in this case study focused primarily on BTC interventions and staff perceptions of those interventions implemented at Thomas Jefferson High (Galindo et al., 2016). BTC teams consisted of professional development specialists that worked with local education agencies and schools providing supports and resources that improved teaching and learning at identified low-achieving schools. Services provided by BTC specifically to Thomas Jefferson High included areas of instructional improvement and teacher professional development. Support interventions at the school included: a) monthly meetings with BTC leadership members, school administrators, and BTC content specialists, b) supervised monthly training sessions for teachers, and c) teaching support twice-a-month from two BTC content specialists in English and math.

Data collection consisted of interviews, observations, and document analysis (Galindo et al., 2016). Results of open, focused and theoretical coding implied that, overall, school personnel perceived BTC interventions as contributing to the academic achievement of students. Specifically, findings revealed that BTC involvement: (a) improved instruction, (b) provided assistance through professional-development cycles, (c) assisted in the transition to Common Core curriculum, and (d) identified student supports. Critique of BTC implementations perceived by teachers included: (a) lack of relevance for experienced teachers, (b) issues involving the cycle of professional-development meetings, (c) implementation of professional-development activities, (d) lack of services for special student populations, and (e) sustainability of structures and procedures once funding for the services was withdrawn.

The collaboration between BTC and Thomas Jefferson High personnel was a three-year process (Galindo et al., 2016). However, this case study took place during the last year of BTC implementations and focused on teachers' and administrators' perceptions of BTC involvement. At the end of the third year of implementation, Thomas Jefferson High moved out of turnaround status which Galindo et al. credited to BTC interventions. BTC interventions consisted of structural and pedagogical transformations that occurred at the school during this time.

May and Sanders (2013) examined 16 Ohio K-8 schools from the Cleveland Metropolitan School District in order to discover factors that could be considered leading indicators of future academic gains. Eight elementary schools identified as turnaround schools were compared to eight traditional elementary schools. The turnaround schools had implemented two years of turnaround strategies. Strategy implementations at the

turnaround schools included: (a) administrative, curricular and data support, (b) significant increase in professional development, and (c) resources for parent support groups. In order to support the turnaround schools, the school district provided: (a) a dedicated assistant superintendent, (b) a dedicated full-time curriculum specialist, (c) a part-time data analyst, and (d) a scope and sequence core curriculum plan. Each of the turnaround schools added a full-time assistant principal and a part-time leadership coach as part of the turnaround process.

The eight identified low performing turnaround schools were demographically matched to eight traditional schools based on: (a) achievement rating on state report cards, (b) performance index score, (c) average number of subgroups for adequate yearly progress analysis (d) student enrollment, (e) students on free and reduced lunch rates, (f) average teacher tenure, and (g) rate of violent incidents (May & Sanders, 2013). Specific information about these seven categories was not provided.

Teachers and principals from all 16 schools responded to the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) which assessed how teachers perceived the leadership ability of their principals and how the principals perceived their own leadership abilities (May & Sanders, 2013). The data included responses from 510 teachers and 16 principals. The MLQ uses 12 subcategories which are attributed to four leadership styles: (a) Transformational Leadership, (b) Transactional Leadership, (c) Passive/Avoidant behaviors, and (d) Outcomes of Leadership. Depending on participant responses to the MLQ, principals were categorized according to four leadership styles.

The participants also rated their perceptions of their overall school climate by answering three questions with a letter grade choice of A, B, C, D or F with A being the

highest grade (May & Sanders, 2013). The three questions focused on: (a) feelings about positive school climate, (b) leadership being open to change, and (c) leadership creating an upbeat and pleasant working environment. One other component that May and Sanders used to analyze their information was grades three through eight math and reading scores from the Ohio Achievement Assessment from 2008 to 2011. May and Sanders used a general linear model to analyze all the data.

Analysis indicated that teachers from turnaround schools were more likely to assign behaviors attributed to Transformational Leadership to their principals than teachers from traditional schools (May & Sanders, 2013). Turnaround teachers and principals were more aligned in their perceptual ratings than traditional teachers and principals. Turnaround schools assigned significantly higher grades when rating school climate than the traditional schools. Analysis of assessment scores revealed that average scores from traditional schools scored higher in math and reading than the turnaround schools.

As a result of their findings, May and Sanders (2013) concluded that assessment scores should not be the only measurable indicator of whether a school is on track for success. Turnaround school principals and teachers perceived school climate and leadership to be significantly more effective than traditional schools. However, the turnaround school state assessment scores significantly lagged the traditional school assessment scores. May and Sanders suggested that using test scores as the only measure of progress in turnaround schools may not accurately measure the success of the turnaround program.



Player and Katz (2016) used a Comparative Interrupted Time Series (CITS) design to examine schools in Ohio which participated in a school turnaround program. Twenty schools from Cleveland and Cincinnati, Ohio, were chosen. The Cincinnati Public School district identified the 15 lowest performing schools in the district to participate in the School Turnaround Specialist Program (STSP) sponsored by the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business and the Curry School of Education. Fourteen of the schools had either prekindergarten through eighth grade students or kindergarten through eighth grade students with one school serving prekindergarten through twelfth grade students. Ten persistently low performing schools were identified in Cleveland to participate in the program; however, due to budget constraints, five low-performing schools participated in the School Turnaround Specialist Program. These five schools consisted of grades prekindergarten through eighth grade students. Demographic information provided by Player and Katz consisted of school levels served and state assessment scores. Six of the 20 principals were changed in the year the schools began the turnaround process.

Effective school leadership, district and school ownership of the turnaround process, and the importance of data-driven management were the three guiding principles of the School Turnaround Specialist Program (STSP) (Player & Katz, 2016). Principals, district leaders, and teachers participated in extensive education training sessions prior to the beginning of the program and throughout the two-year program. The Darden School of Business and Curry School of Education faculties provided both on-site and off-site training. During the summer preceding each year of the STSP, participants developed 90-day plans for their schools designed to bring change during the first half of the school

year. Training included topics on effectively engaging and motivating a high-performance team and effective use of student data. Student data were used to monitor student progress and diagnose student learning issues.

Basing their study on a quasi-experimental design, Player and Katz (2016) implemented a CITS design that chose a group of comparison schools facing similar improvement pressure and contrasted post intervention deviation from baseline trends of the STSP schools. School level data from the Ohio State Department of Education were merged with demographic data from the Common Core of Data. Pre-period assessment outcomes and demographic data from school years 2005 through 2009 were collected. Post-period data included assessment outcomes and demographic data from school years 2009 through 2013. Analysis of these time periods allowed the researchers to examine data: (a) prior to the STSP intervention, (b) during the intervention, and (c) then for two years following the STSP intervention.

Analysis of the data indicated rapid and significant improvement in the schools that participated in STSP (Player & Katz, 2016). Player and Katz were confident that statistical tools isolated the causal influence of STSP which indicated dramatic improvement from schools that implemented STSP. Since the majority of the STSP schools had the same principals both prior to and after implementation, Player and Katz attributed academic gains to the turnaround program rather than to motivated “new” principals. Dramatic positive improvement in a relatively short period of time occurred with implementation of focused change strategies and by working with an external partner. Another observation was that change did not necessarily require replacement of the school leaders and a certain percentage of teachers. Player and Katz attributed the

STSP school successes to: (a) the intense two-year embedded professional development program, (b) support for school leaders in creating and achieving goals, (c) the use of data to drive instruction, and (d) motivated teachers.

Sampson (2011) provided a distinctly different study than the previous literature in this section. Using a geographic region in Texas, Sampson wanted to: (a) determine to what extent school districts sustained academic improvement over time, and (b) identify district leaders' actions in high performing districts that impacted sustained improvement. Sampson used mixed methods to examine changes in school improvement throughout the region. The region chosen for this study was due to the proximity of the region to a regional university used by Sampson.

Data provided by the Academic Excellence Indicator System from the Texas Education Agency were compared across distinct time periods for this longitudinal study (Sampson, 2011). The analysis of school performance data focused on three data points from 1998 to 2009. Means used from the region included: (a) the district's size, (b) the percentage of academically disadvantaged students, (c) the percentage of African American students, (d) the percentage of white students, and (d) the percentage of Hispanic students. Sampson chose these variables based on influences that predict student achievement. Overall, the longitudinal study indicated increases in the percentage passage rate in reading and writing with a decrease in mathematics. For the most part, school districts within the region sustained improvement at least in reading and writing. The only school reform method examined was the role of district leaders' actions to improve school districts that had high rates of poverty and higher rates of ethnic diversity.

Based on the results from the longitudinal analysis, Sampson (2011) conducted a case study on three ethnically diverse and low socio-economic status school districts that showed sustained improvement in all subject areas. The case study revealed three common themes from all three schools. School board members, administrators, and teachers within each district viewed their primary mission as placing the children first, both as a group and as individuals. The second theme consisted of strong communication in each of the school districts. Formal and informal communications among board members, district administrators, campus administrators and teachers occurred regularly. Individual student needs were tracked between campuses. Teachers were encouraged to provide feedback at school board meetings regarding curricular improvements and progress reports on newly implemented programs. The common goal was tied to increasing student achievement. The third theme identified in the case study was the involvement of the board of education in each district with hiring and then supporting strong administrative and teaching staff. All three superintendents commented positively on the support provided by the school board. All three school boards worked to increase financial resources to fund new programs and to recognize excellent work done by individual staff members.

Strunk, Marsh, Hashim, Bush-Mecenas, and Weinstein (2016) examined the impact of turnaround reform on student outcomes using data from the Los Angeles Unified School District. The district implemented school turnaround reform called the Public School Choice Initiative (PSCI). PSCI sought to improve student achievement by turning around the district's lowest performing schools. Both internal and external stakeholders competed to operate PSCI schools. The district's theory of change proposed

that a range of providers could increase student achievement in low-performing schools. Strunk et al. first studied the effects of school turnaround reform and how it impacted student outcomes in low-performing schools. Then possible explanations of the variations in outcomes for different cohorts of turnaround schools were provided.

Strunk et al. (2016) placed 28 schools into three categories. The categories and placement of schools were strictly based on types of turnaround methods used at the school. With the exception of low achievement scores, demographics were neither provided nor used to categorize the schools. The 14 schools placed in the 1.0 cohort utilized moderate forms of turnaround methods including the implementation of new school programs and curriculum. Schools placed in the 2.0 cohort followed the restructuring or restart models of reform. Five schools made up the 2.0 cohort. Principals and at least some of the teachers were replaced at schools in the 2.0 cohort. Programmatic changes occurred at these schools as well. Strunk et al. described the 3.0 cohort as schools utilizing “softer” turnaround models. Cohort 3.0 included nine schools. Reform processes were changed during the first year of implementation of cohort 3.0. Strunk et al. believed this caused confusion and difficulties for the school teams. Each cohort of the intervention was studied as a separate variant of a turnaround intervention and impacts of turnaround on student outcomes were examined separately in each cohort.

Strunk et al. (2016) collected school district administrative student-level and school-level data for all three cohorts. The California Standard Test provided student achievement results. Cohort 1.0 consisted of data from students enrolled in the first three years of PSCI implementation from 2010-2011 through 2012-2013. Data collected from Cohort 2.0 schools included data from the first two years of implementation from 2011-

2012 and 2012-2013. Cohort 3.0 schools only had one year of data, from 2012-2013 because California stopped offering the California Standard Tests after the first year of Cohort 3.0. Thus, impact of the reform on student achievement could not be measured after the first year in cohort 3.0. Strunk et al. compared student test results in cohort schools with students who were enrolled in a set of “near-selected” comparison schools and all low-performing schools in the district. Near-selected comparison schools consisted of schools that were excluded from participating in PSCI interventions because they lacked one indicator out of a set of four required for PSCI intervention. A Comparative Interrupted Time Series (CITS) estimation approach was used to compare data from the three cohorts with data from the near-selected schools and all low-performing schools.

Administrative data provided student outcome comparisons for the school years that occurred during PSCI implementation (Strunk et al., 2016). Student level data included: (a) students’ California Standard Test scores in math and English Language Arts (ELA), (b) students’ race and ethnicity, (c) poverty indicators, (d) special education services, and (e) students’ English language learner status. Grades served by the school and school enrollment were also included.

After analyzing results of the CITS, surveys and qualitative data provided context and possible explanations for the quantitative findings (Strunk et al., 2016). Qualitative methods included four case studies from 2.0 focus schools and two case studies from 3.0 focus schools. Interviews with 26 key leaders and partners in the school district included: (a) school board members, (b) superintendents, (c) executive-level staff, (d) teachers’ and administrators’ unions, (e) members from the United Way, and (f) the Los Angeles

School Development Institute. Observations included four school accountability reviews and three technical assistance meetings that involved multiple 1.0 schools. Document analysis consisted of: (a) meeting agendas, (b) PowerPoint presentations, (c) print and online communication, and (d) other relevant documents. PSCI focus school principals responded to surveys in the spring of each study year. Cohort team leaders also responded to surveys in the second and third years of the initiative.

CITS analysis compared ELA and math achievement of students enrolled in focus versus near-selected schools (Strunk et al., 2016). Cohort 1.0 saw no statistically significant changes in achievement in overall growth in any of the three years compared. However, students in the Cohort 2.0 schools experienced statistically significant and somewhat substantial gains in ELA achievement in both the first and second year of the reform. Students in Cohort 2.0 performed significantly better in ELA scores than students at near-selected schools. Math regressions for Cohort 2.0 showed positive but statistically insignificant improvement in both years one and two. Students in Cohort 3.0 focus schools showed a rather large and significant drop in both ELA and math achievement in the first year of the reform, relative to students in near-selected schools.

Qualitative results implicated four primary factors contributed to the success of Cohort 2.0 focus schools (Strunk et al., 2016). First, the school district learned from and improved upon difficulties it faced in the initial 1.0 cohort of the reform. Second, the school district and partners provided Cohort 2.0 schools with substantial professional development focused on improving implementation. Next, softer forms of turnaround reform used in Cohorts 1.0 and 3.0 were not as effective as the reconstitution and restart models used in Cohort 2.0 focus schools. Finally, Cohort 2.0 respondents reported

greater ease of implementation and a stronger commitment to implementation of the plans than did respondents from the other two cohorts.

White and Levin (2016) took a completely different approach in their study of turnaround reform implemented at academically low-performing schools. Using a design research experiment, White and Levin developed, implemented and then evaluated a school reform experiment at a “continuation” high school. Defined by the California Department of Education, continuation education was specifically designed as a high school diploma program targeted to meet the needs of identified at-risk students, ages 16 through 18 years. All school and district names used in this study were given pseudonyms.

The school selected for this study, Gonzaga High School (GHS), was used by the school district in which it was used as both a dropout prevention and dropout recovery school (White & Levin, 2016). Students were referred to GHS by school district counselors. GHS served about 450 students who were critically deficient in high school credits needed to graduate with an inability to catch up to their graduating class. Although exact numbers vary from month-to-month, an average of 350 students were enrolled in the school’s continuation education program and about 100 students were enrolled in the school’s independent study program. This study began during the 2006-2007 school year and ended during the 2010-2011 school year.

Demographics provided by White and Levin (2016) were taken from the 2006-2007 school year and remained stable throughout the period of the study. GHS served predominately low-income students with 69.7% eligible to participate in the free and reduced-price lunch program. The student population consisted of 76% Hispanic and



14% African American. About 29.1% of the student population was identified as English Language learners. Approximately 15% of the student population was either pregnant, parenting, or both.

Two main sources of data, school documents/records and interviews, were collected for this study (White & Levin, 2016). School documents and records collected included but were not limited to: (a) action plans, (b) college assessment test results, (c) GHS student class records, (d) School Accountability Report Card, (e) expected school-wide learning results, (f) program improvement proposal, and (g) a Memorandum of Understanding between GHS and the school district. Audio-recorded interviews were conducted by White between April 2009 and September 2009. Interviewees included: (a) the principal, (b) three guidance counselors, (c) seven teachers, and (d) six students.

Complex adaptive systems (CAS) provided White and Levin (2016) with a theoretical lens for describing the changes that occurred at GHS and a guided strategy for implementing transformational changes within the study and as the study progressed. White and Levin chose the CAS theory system model because CAS examines a system, the agents within the system, and its state of equilibrium. In order for transformational change to occur, a system must first be in a state of equilibrium and then that state must be disrupted. The disruption of the equilibrium may or may not be by design. However, disruption of the equilibrium at GHS was by design so that information could be analyzed for further possible disruptions and analysis. White and Levin named their disruptions of equilibrium “purposeful perturbations.” White was an active participant in this study in that he taught at the school during this time and served as the change agent in creating conditions necessary for transformational change. White also conducted and transcribed

audio-recorded interviews. Backup copies of school documents and records to support analysis of transcripts were provided by White as well.

The purposeful perturbations introduced at GHS coincided with the introduction of a college prep program called Academic Commitment Creates Empowered Successful Students (ACCESS) (White & Levin, 2016). GHS had been in a state of dynamic equilibrium from 1998 through the 2006 school year. Although GHS students had opportunities to enroll in college preparatory classes, the majority of students chose the basic high school diploma path. Low academic performance and low expectations from the school staff created a static atmosphere that did not encourage student academic growth. Furthermore, practically none of the students at GHS graduated with the skill sets necessary for college coursework. Because the staff at GHS did not think GHS students were capable of higher education, the ACCESS program was met with hostility and open skepticism from the staff. Despite the opposition, GHS students began taking college math and English assessments at the end of the 2007 school year. The assessment data challenged the skepticism of the GHS staff and provided feedback regarding the academic achievement of students as they progressed through the ACCESS program. From 2007 through 2010, the percentage of students opting for college preparatory classes grew from less than 25% to over 70% of GHS students taking rigorous college coursework. Based on their analysis, White and Levin concluded that low-income, low-performing minority students could achieve college academic level success using purposeful perturbations to dramatically alter a system of equilibrium.

## Characteristics of Current Research

Typical descriptions of the schools studied throughout the literature predominantly included a reference to student achievement score status. Specific descriptions of student populations of schools studied were sometimes mentioned but generally not provided in detail except for the Sampson (2011) study. Table 2 provides summarized characteristics about the eight studies examined in this literature review. The time frame reference in Table 2 describes data that was used by researchers to either: (a) determine which schools to study, or (b) to provide the researchers with baseline data, or (c) group schools into specific categories to study the categorical effects of the turnaround program, or (d) analyze events during the turnaround process, or (e) analyze events following the turnaround process.

In general, studies included in this literature review used data to initially guide their research and then determine if academic progress was achieved between the beginning of the study and the end of the study (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011; Galindo et al., 2016; May & Sanders, 2013; Strunk, et. al., 2016). White and Levin (2016) used their collected data to: (a) adjust curriculum during their study, (b) analyze the effects of the adjustment, and (c) continued to adjust changes in the equilibrium as indicated by ongoing analysis. Player and Katz (2016) was the only study that had school academic results from years following the exit of the turnaround program. Sampson (2011) examined academic data for all schools within a geographic region of Texas. Sampson's study was not specifically designed to research turnaround schools. However, Sampson identified three low-performing school districts that sustained improvement in all core subject areas and proceeded to implement a closer examination of these schools.

Table 2

*Characteristics of Current Research*

Study	Interventions	Time Frame	No. of Schools	Grade Level	State
Brown et al. (2016)	Development plan Professional development for leadership team Onsite staff coaching and professional development	Data from 2010	12	HS	NC
Duke & Landahl (2011)	New principal School Turnaround Specialist Program University of VA	2009-2010	1	E	VA
Galindo, Stein, & Schaffer (2016)	Turnaround model	2011-2014	1	HS	MD
May & Sanders (2013)	Dedicated Assist. Superintendent Curriculum Spec., Assist. Principal, Leadership coach, curriculum plan, Data analyst, professional dev. plan, resources for parent support groups	2008-2011	16	K-8	OH
Player & Katz (2016)	School Turnaround Specialist Program University of VA	2005-2013	20	PK-12	OH
Sampson (2011)	N/A	1998-2009	State region	K-12	TX
Strunk et al. (2016)	3 levels of reform from 1) moderate – new curriculum & school plans-Cohort 1.0 2) reconstitution & restart models with new leadership, staff & programmatic changes-Cohort 2.0 3) “soft” changes – transformation-Cohort 3.0	2010-2013	28	K-12	CA
White & Levin (2016)	“Purposeful Perturbations”	2007-2011	1	HS	CA

*Note.* N/A = Information not provided, HS = High school, E = Elementary school.

School comparisons were made in three of the studies. Brown et al. (2016) studied schools that had turned around academic achievement versus schools in the process of turning around academic achievement versus schools that were stuck and not able to turnaround academic achievement. Turnaround and traditional schools were examined and compared in the May and Sanders (2013) research. Strunk et al., (2016) compared turnaround school program data to data from schools that were nearly selected for turnaround programs but did not meet the criteria.

### **Literature Review, Research Designs, and Methods**

Research methods included in this review were qualitative, quantitative, or a combination of both. Table 3 provides a brief description of the research designs and methods used in the current research literature. Player and Katz (2016) provided analysis of schools that had exited the turnaround program and included data from two years following the turnaround program. Sampson (2011) examined all schools within a region. Although the improved schools did not mention using specific school turnaround initiatives, school district involvement in sustaining academic growth was provided. Sampson included information about school district supports provided to low-performing schools that showed academic improvement over a three-year timeframe. The other studies in this review were conducted while schools were either in the first, second or third year of implementing turnaround programs designed specifically to change the direction of academic achievement (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011; Galindo et al., 2016; May & Sanders, 2013; Strunk et al., 2016; White & Levin, 2016).

Table 3

*Literature Research Designs and Methods*

Study	Method	Methodology	Collected Data	Turnaround status during study	AYP after study
Brown et al. (2016)	Qualitative	Interviews	SPS	C-Ongoing turnaround stages	NA
Duke & Landahl (2011)	Qualitative	Case Study	Year one & two data	3 <sup>rd</sup> year	Failed to meet AYP
Galindo, Stein, & Schaffer (2016)	Qualitative	Case Study	Administrative data	3 <sup>rd</sup> year	Successful
May & Sanders (2013)	Quantitative	MLQ Questionnaire	SPS	C-Ongoing vs. traditional	Failed to meet AYP
Player & Katz (2016)	Quantitative	CITS	SPS	Two years of after completion	Successful AYP
Sampson (2011)	Mixed	Longitudinal Case Study	SPS	N/A	Successful AYP
Strunk et al. (2016)	Mixed	CITS, Surveys, Interviews, Case studies, Observations, Document analysis	Math, ELA California Standard Test	C-Ongoing stages of turnaround	Cohort 2.0 partially successful
White & Levin (2016)	Qualitative	Interviews, Document analysis	HS - Degree Program	Ongoing	N/A-AYP, INC college track diplomas

*Note.* N/A = not applicable, AYP = Annual Yearly Progress, C = Comparative study between turnaround schools and demographically matched traditional schools, CITS = Comparative Interrupted Time Series, MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, SPS = School performance scores, INC - increase. Collected Data represents data used to establish research methods, sometimes this is baseline data.

The interviews and case studies in this literature review provided insight into what teachers and administrators viewed as effective educational practices in their targeted schools (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011; Sampson, 2011; Strunk et al., 2016). White and Levin (2016) included student interviews, as well as, teacher and administrator interviews. Two of the studies used CITS designs using multiple years of pretest data (Player & Katz, 2016; Strunk et al., 2016). Choosing comparison schools, the impact of post intervention treatments was analyzed for deviations from baseline trends. Quantitative data were analyzed to determine whether meaningful improvements occurred based on turnaround interventions.

### **Descriptions of Leadership**

Since transformational leadership was used as the framework to guide this study, it was important to note leadership comparisons in these eight studies. Table 4 provides a summary of successful and unsuccessful leadership styles discussed in the literature review.

Principals that created a stable work environment and built strong relationships with their staff were viewed as contributing to the academic success of their schools (Brown et al., 2016; May & Sanders, 2013; Player & Katz, 2016; Strunk et al., 2016; White & Levin, 2016). Ways in which principals built strong relationships were: (a) being present in the classrooms, (b) individual teacher discussions, (c) appreciating contributions from staff, (d) teacher involvement in decision-making processes, and (e) building strong accountability goals.

Table 4

*Descriptions of Leadership*

Study	Successful leadership	Unsuccessful leadership
Brown et al. (2016)	Strong knowledge of curriculum & instruction; mandated to raise test scores quickly; provide stability; open leadership; built strong and trusting relationships with staff, students, parents and community; strong accountability pressures; distributed leadership	Frequent principal and staff turnover created unstable environment; inconsistent discipline and management policies; top-down management; lacked relationship building skills
Duke & Landahl (2011)	Provide clear focus and sense of direction; top-down leadership style changed to distributive leadership; data-driven decision making; frequent learning-walks; individual teacher discussions, setting professional goals for teachers	High turnover rate of teachers and administration; focus on adult problems and not on student learning;
Galindo, et al. (2016)	Primarily professional development focused; administrators and teachers take ownership of school reform; support professional development and professional learning communities	N/A
May & Sanders (2013)	Principal must pursue innovative answers to old problems that challenge current belief systems; staff members feel their contributions are valued; teachers who feel appreciated, connected and energized bring out the best in students; principal effective in determining school climate	N/A
Player & Katz (2016)	Principal establishes and communicates data-driven goals; promotes collaboration; creates an environment that attracts, retains and develops high quality teachers	N/A
Sampson (2011)	“Students First” focus conveyed to all stakeholders; strong communication with school board and teaching staff	N/A
Strunk et al. (2016)	Principal given flexibility to create daily schedule, periodic assessments, curriculum, and staffing; implemented school plan with fidelity.	Principal did not implement school reform plan; inability to provide professional development on a consistent basis
White & Levin (2016)	Liaison/buffer between proponents/ opponents of reform proposal; provided opportunity for program growth; blocked attempts to stop program development	N/A



Conversely, unstable environments and inconsistencies in dealing with management and discipline issues led to mistrust of administration and were found in schools that did not show academic growth (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011; Strunk et al., 2016). Frequent principal and staff turnover contributed to an unstable school environment (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011).

Duke and Landahl (2011) noted that the principal initially provided a top-down leadership style that was viewed as successful because academic gains were achieved during the first two years of their study. However, during the third year of the study, teachers became more involved in decision-making because the principal was more comfortable with his staff and wanted all teachers to share in the success of the school. The principal then noticed that teachers willingly stayed after school to plan and conduct committee work. Through the process of distributed leadership, the school culture became characterized by volunteerism, professionalism and collaboration. Brown et al. (2016) also noticed that when a top-down management principal was convinced to change his management style to distributed leadership, teachers felt empowered and invested. The principal felt that he was able to attain loyalty and mobilize support through informal influence rather than formal authority.

Successful leadership behaviors included strong communication skills with faculty and staff, students, parents, and all stakeholders (Player & Katz, 2016; Sampson, 2011). Providing consistent professional development and support were also implicated in strong leadership styles (Galindo et al., 2016, Strunk et al., 2016). Other implications of successful leadership found in the literature review was a “students first” attitude and establishing goals using student data (Player & Katz, 2016; Sampson, 2011).

## Major Findings

The literature review revealed several major trends. Table 5 provides a summary of major findings and implications found in each study. The first trend suggested that school leadership played a key role in the turnaround process (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011; Galindo et al., 2016; May & Sanders, 2013; Player & Katz, 2016; Strunk et al., 2016). The second trend indicated that strong support from within the school and outside of the school was often critical to the success of turnaround implementations (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011; Galindo et al., 2016; May & Sanders, 2013; Player & Katz, 2016; Sampson, 2011; Strunk et al., 2016). When schools only made minor changes to the school plan and the curriculum, student academic improvement did not occur (Brown et al., 2016; Strunk et al., 2016; White & Levin, 2016). Another implication from the literature was that working with a turnaround partner outside of the school district contributed to effective school improvement gains (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011; Galindo et al., 2016; Player & Katz, 2016; Strunk et al., 2016). The final trend that the literature revealed was that the school environment must change to a positive, supportive culture (May & Sanders, 2013; Sampson, 2011; White & Levin, 2016).

Table 5

*Major Findings and Implications*

Study	Findings	Issues and Implications
Brown et al. (2016)	Turnaround began with new principal and replacement of staff, changes in school operation Instructionally oriented principal with support Accountability built upon test results	Successful principals in high demand, usually leave Train assistants is advisable if possible Moving “goalposts” may frustrate staff When should support be withdrawn Are foundations sustainable Replacement staff must continue to develop structure, bonds
Duke & Landahl (2011)	Gains not matched to two previous years Drop in teacher support/coaching Continued change justified Teachers weary of major program/curriculum changes Lose expert teachers prior to study	Constant adjustments are necessary Continued gains require additional expertise Support for teachers important Coaching, administrative focus important
Galindo, Stein, & Schaffer (2016)	Improved instruction Assistance through professional development (PD)	PD not relevant for veteran teachers, PD cycle Implementation of PD activities Sustainability questioned Services for speciation populations
May & Sanders (2013)	Academic gains may lag improved school culture & effective leadership Transformational leaders productive	Fostering school climate & effective leadership leads to academic improvement Reliance on lagging indicators for school quality may be counterintuitive
Player & Katz (2016)	Rapid & significant improvement after 2-year program, persisted & grew following two years Improved schools had same principal after turnaround process Focused attention, external partner dramatic improvement in short amount of time, two year embedded professional dev program Schools continue to lag other schools	Supports meaningful change but will require longer term follow-ups to determine sustainability Relatively low-cost can yield promising results School leadership driven Sustained measurable growth, still lagged other schools

Sampson (2011)	3 lower districts showed sustained improvement District supported students, open communication, strong administrative & teaching staff High expectations	School Board, district administration must show positive support in all activities & messages
Strunk et al. (2016)	Schools that improved had increased support, used reconstitution and restart models Major changes in schools more successful School led/designed professional development increased teacher motivation	Cautiously make mid-course adjustments as needed Both changes to curriculum and staff is needed Provide time for professional development, increased planning time, flexibility in hiring, curriculum, operational decisions
White & Levin (2016)	Success of “Purposeful Perturbations” Complexity Theory can guide change Principal acts as a buffer between teachers and counseling/administrative staff	Practitioners must put researching findings into practice Research-practitioner based Guide for navigating school reform “Purposeful perturbations” will differ from setting to setting

Either new or strong leadership was implicated as one of the primary influences for successful turnaround efforts in much of this literature (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011; May & Sanders, 2011; Player & Katz, 2016; Strunk et al., 2016). Brown et al. and Strunk et al., in their comparison of the three levels of turnaround stages, found that academic turnaround did not occur unless or until the principal and many teachers had been replaced at the schools. These new leaders incorporated major changes in the school plans and operations which were also implicated as being successful in turning around academic achievement at the schools. Brown et al. noticed that once successful teachers and principals were identified as contributing to student achievement, they were often promoted to other positions outside of the school. Player and Katz (2016) indicated that principals did not necessarily have to be changed when initiating a new school

turnaround program. This implies that existing principals at low performing schools can be trained to affect changes needed to improve academic progress.

May and Sanders (2013) revealed that teachers considered leadership in turnaround schools as effective and transformational; yet, achievement scores still significantly lagged traditional schools. Achievement scores did not show gains during their study. Although May and Sanders describe interventions used at the eight turnaround schools, they do not mention how much time these schools spent utilizing these changes.

Support for turnaround school principals and the teaching staff was another important aspect revealed in the literature (Brown et al., 2016, Duke & Landahl, 2011, Player & Katz, 2016, Sampson, 2011, Strunk et al., 2016; White & Levin, 2016). Successful schools had instructionally oriented principals and strong, focused professional development. Duke and Landahl noticed that when support for teachers was scaled back during the third year of turnaround, student achievement gains were not as high as in previous years. White and Levin observed a different type of leadership from the principal at the school in their study. Change within the high school studied was initiated by the teachers in a bottom-up approach. The principal served as a buffer between teachers and those that resisted the changes which were primarily the assistant principal and the Counseling Department. Serving as a buffer, the principal cleared away attempts to block the development of the program and provided an opportunity for the program to grow. Even though Sampson described positive academic growth in three low performing school districts without noting any turnaround programs in place, focused

support and effective, stable leadership from school district level personnel were implicated in the achievement gains in each of the districts.

Another implication from the literature showed that minor changes at low-performing schools were not as successful when compared to schools that made major changes to the school in the form of staffing and restructuring the schools (Brown et al., 2016; Strunk et al., 2016; White & Levin, 2016). Schools that made only slight modifications to the curriculum or school plan did not see the progression of achievement gains. Even though Player and Katz (2016) and Galindo et al. (2016) did not discuss whether major staff changes occurred during the turnaround program, both studies stated that intensive training occurred at schools and academic growth was achieved.

Four studies examined the effects of working with turnaround partners from outside the school district (Duke & Landahl, 2011; Galindo et al., 2016; Player & Katz, 2016; Strunk et al., 2016). Benefits of working with an outside partner were generally considered favorable. Strunk et al. studied three types of turnaround processes. The group that worked with an outside partner was more successful in attaining academic growth in ELA than the schools that did not work with a partner. Duke and Landahl studied a school that had initial success in the turnaround program in the first two years of implementation, but not during the third year of implementation. Player and Katz studied schools that showed academic success for two years following the turnaround program. Finally, Galindo et al., reports that the state agency created to work with a low-performing high school was beneficial in achieving academic gains made at the school. Although studies by Brown et al. (2016) and then May and Sanders (2013) did not mention working with an outside partner, both studies reported that schools were given

extra support staff to support teachers. As Tannenbaum et al. (2015) noted, school administrators across the country report that turning a school around was very challenging. Turning around low performing schools was also considered a high priority in school districts across the country. This literature justifies the need for strong support for staff members at turnaround schools.

Current literature suggests that a positive, student-centered school culture contributed to student achievement (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl 2011; Le Floch et al., 2016; May & Sanders, 2013; Sampson 2011; Thompson, Brown, Townsend, Henry, & Fortner, 2011). Raising expectations for student achievement and placing students first were top priorities for many of the schools who achieved academic gains. The literature also implied that when student data were used to drive instruction, this positively correlated with academic achievement (Brown et al., 2016, Player & Katz 2016; White & Levin, 2016).

### **Implications**

Klute, Cherasaro, and Apthorp (2016) stated that turnaround results are mixed, and sustainability is challenging, these eight studies verify this as well. Duke and Landahl (2011) advised that continued gains and sustainability may require additional expertise. Turnaround programs need constant adjustments during the turnaround process (Duke & Landahl, 2011; Galindo et al., 2016; White & Levin, 2016). However, Brown et al. (2016) and Strunk et al. (2016) advised that too much change on a frequent basis can frustrate the teaching staff. Constantly moving up the goals can also have a

negative impact on staff. Player and Katz (2016) recommended longer term studies with more in-depth analysis in order to find more meaningful information about continued sustainability.

Issues considered challenging for the turnaround process were also provided in the literature. Once principals and teachers were identified as contributing to student achievement gains, they often left their schools because they were promoted to higher positions (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011). School leaders should remember this and strive to train assistants in effective turnaround procedures. Continuous adjustments to curriculum should be monitored carefully. Duke and Landahl stated that constant and major curriculum adjustments negatively impact teacher attitudes. Yet, Duke and Landahl also stated that the entire process must be monitored while making at least slight modifications when needed. Continuous support and training is needed even after student achievement has begun to improve. Sustainability of improvement efforts after support was withdrawn was also a concern (Brown et al., 2016; Galindo et al., 2016; Player & Katz, 2016).

### **Limitations of Previous Research**

The literature review showed that turning around academic achievement in low performing schools was challenging and not all schools studied in the literature review were successful. Four of the studies included schools that did not improve academic achievement while in turnaround programs (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011, May & Sanders, 2016; Strunk et al., 2016). This suggests that turnaround programs face many challenges in improving conditions that contribute to failing schools. This coincides with decades of school improvement reform efforts that have produced limited



success (Herman et al., 2008; Mead, 2012). Most of the schools in this literature review analyzed the effects of the school turnaround process while schools participated in the turnaround program (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011; May & Sanders, 2011; Player & Katz, 2016; Strunk et al., 2016). Only Player and Katz (2016) collected data after schools completed turnaround programs. More studies are needed to analyze whether or not schools have continued to grow academically after achieving their initial goals.

Although Player and Katz's (2016) analysis showed that turnaround schools continued to make academic gains, their study did not detail how these schools continued to experience academic growth. More studies are needed that examine the sustainability of academic success once turnaround schools have exited turnaround programs. Once sustainability is determined, identifying key factors of leadership and curriculum changes need to be identified as well. Identifying this information could lead to effective change in other low performing schools. Player and Katz maintained that their research results may have been one of the first studies to provide causal evidence of the benefits of focused school improvement efforts.

May and Sanders (2013) used transformational leadership theory to identify how teachers at turnaround schools perceived their principals. Principals at these same turnaround schools self-reflected on their own leadership style through the lens of transformational leadership. Even though the results of their study indicated that teachers and principals at turnaround schools viewed principals as more transformational than teachers and principals at comparative, non-turnaround schools, the analysis was completed before academic gains were achieved at the schools. Examining schools that

have successfully completed turnaround programs through the lens of transformational theory could provide insight into leadership behaviors.

### **Conclusion**

Turnaround programs show mixed results in achieving academic growth (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011; May & Sanders; 2013, Strunk et al., 2016). A key factor noted in the literature was the importance of strong leadership. Therefore, it is important to identify schools that have: (a) successfully completed a type of academic turnaround process as measured by continued academic growth, and (b) strong leadership in place in order to identify critical contributions of these leaders that have taken a previously low performing school and improved academic growth on a consistent basis.

Although one of the key findings from the literature review was that strong principal leadership played a key role in implementing academic turnaround, strong leadership was not necessarily the focus of the studies included in the literature. May and Sanders (2013) examined the effects of transformational leadership on schools working to transform academic achievement. Successful leadership skills identified in the literature review have many of the same qualities found in transformational leaders. A transformational leader is described as a person that is admired, respected and trusted (Bass, 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders motivate and encourage their followers to attain organizational goals and objectives and to achieve higher levels of potential. Followers are encouraged to have a new or different perspective towards experienced situations and problems. Transformational leaders act as a coach or mentor by paying attention to each individual follower's needs for achievement and growth. Two-way communication is encouraged and interactions with followers are personalized.

Many transformational behaviors were described as successful leadership characteristics in the literature review; however, these characteristics were not specifically identified as being characteristics of transformational leadership (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011; May & Sanders, 2013; Player & Katz, 2016; Sampson, 2011; Strunk et al., 2016; White & Levin, 2016). Burns (2012) and Bass (1985) both agree that transformational leadership inspires followers to achieve dramatic, sometimes unexpected, and significant results in difficult situations. Meyers and Hitt (2017) state that effective principals of turnaround schools have the same behaviors as described in Transformational Leadership theory.

A gap in the literature exists between leadership behaviors that have successfully contributed to the academic turnaround of a failing to school compared to principals that have not been successful in turning around academic achievement. Using Transformational Leadership theory as the foundation to guide this study, school leadership behaviors as perceived by principals and teachers were examined. Chapter Three discusses the methodology of this study, information about the schools and participants, sample size and selection, the criteria for the sample selection, a description of the data collection procedures and an explanation of the data analysis.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter presents information about the research design, the process of approval for the study, information about the survey instrument, the distribution of the survey, and methods of data analysis. Based on the literature review, it was determined that a gap in the literature existed regarding leadership behaviors of school principals of failing schools compared to principals' behaviors at schools that were no longer failing. Turnaround programs are designed to quickly transform a failing school into an academically successful school. Rather than continuing the study of turnaround schools in the turnaround process, this study seeks to identify which schools have transitioned out of low-performance status and then understand how school leadership behaviors contributed to schools that made that transition. The literature review indicated that principals play a key role in turning a school around. Thus, the goal of this study was to understand which school leadership behaviors influence school turnaround success.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the billions of taxpayer dollars spent and the multiple federal, state and school district efforts allocated to improving student achievement in turnaround schools, results have been mixed (Brown et al., 2016; Herman et al., 2008; Klute et al., 2016).

Failing schools in Louisiana face the possibility of state takeover or closure (*Title 28, Bulletin 111*, 2016). Thus, finding critical components that lead to the continued academic success of a formerly failing school are essential for the school, the district, and most importantly for the students served. Research indicates that strong leadership positively impacts turnaround achievement (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011; Player & Katz, 2016; Strunk et al., 2016).

### **Research Design**

According to Creswell (2014), quantitative research tests objectives by examining the relationship among variables. A typical instrument, such as a survey, is used with variables that can be measured in a way that generates numbered data that can be analyzed. A quantitative design is appropriate for this study because the study examines the relationship between principal behaviors at different types of schools. Creswell stated that a survey design provides a numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a sample population. A survey was used in this research to generate a numeric description of the perceptions of principal behaviors at six schools.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

Identifying schools that transformed from academically unacceptable to achieving academic gains on a consistent basis served as the foundation for this research. Based on academic research, principals are the guiding factor in the successful turnaround of a school. This study aimed to investigate the leadership qualities that guide schools into sustaining academic achievement.

Specifically, the research questions guiding this study were:

1. What principal leadership behaviors transformed these previously low performing schools to achieving academic gains?
2. Are there differences in leadership behaviors between the leaders of successful turnaround schools, schools that showed moderate success and schools that showed minimal success?

Using data from the school years starting with 2011 through 2016, school performance scores were examined to generate a list of failing schools. Based on the research questions, these are the following null hypotheses:

H1: There will be no statistically significant differences in perceived leadership behaviors between leaders as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) of three groups of once academically unacceptable schools.

H2: There will be no statistically significant differences in perceived leadership behaviors as measured by the MLQ and as perceived by teachers in three categories of once academically unacceptable schools.

H3: There will be no statistically significant differences in perceived leadership behaviors as measured by the MLQ between principals and teachers of each of the three groups.

## **Procedures**

Before beginning this study, the Louisiana Tech Institutional Review Board reviewed and evaluated this research proposal. This was done to protect participants from undue risk and ensure the safety, welfare, rights and dignity of all research

participants. Since individual teachers and principals were asked to participate confidentially and anonymously, a Human Use Approval form was used.

Steps to safeguard the identities of schools used in the data collection process were as follows. Schools selected for the study were assigned an alphabetical and numerical number. The number assigned to each school was documented and linked to the school on a separate form. This form was locked in a filing cabinet and will be kept on file for five years following the completion of this study. The code was used on all documentation instead of the school name. Steps to safeguard participant information included using pseudonyms instead of actual names and keeping all identifying information in a locked filing cabinet that only the researcher had access to.

A list of elementary schools was generated using the Louisiana Department of Education School Performance Score data from spring test results from 2012 through 2016. Elementary schools were defined as either prekindergarten through fifth grade or kindergarten through fifth grade. The list of elementary schools contained schools that received failing grades on their school performance scores at least once during the 2011 through 2016 time frame. Schools that received failing grades were placed in Academically Unacceptable School (AUS) status. Beginning in 2012-2013, schools that scored below 50 out of 150 points are labeled AUS (*Title 28, Bulletin 111*, 2016). Prior to 2012-2013, a score of less than 75 out of 200 placed a school in AUS. Once this list was generated, the researcher tracked the changes in school performance scores and placed schools in the following categories: (a) successful schools that made high enough scores to be removed from AUS status and maintained growth for at least two years were placed in Group A, (b) schools that were removed from AUS status but then fell back

into AUS status were considered occasionally successful and were placed in Group B, and (c) schools that were unable to exit out of AUS status were considered minimal growth schools and placed in Group C.

Initially, 19 Louisiana public elementary schools from 11 different school districts were identified as academically unsuccessful based on school performance scores from 2012 through 2016. Schools were categorized based on the following criteria: a) schools that never improved academically, b) schools that came out of AUS status briefly and then went back in, or c) schools that sustained academic growth for at least two years. School district superintendents were then contacted to obtain permission to contact each individual school to participate in the study. Of the 11 school superintendents notified, three superintendents agreed to let their schools participate in the study. Eight of the original 19 identified schools were in these three school districts. Once permission was obtained from school superintendents, the Louisiana Tech Institutional Review Board reviewed and evaluated this research proposal. This was done to protect participants from undue risk and ensure the safety, welfare, rights and dignity of all research participants. Since individual teachers and principals were asked to participate confidentially and anonymously, a Human Use Approval form was used. Forms included for the Louisiana Tech Institutional Review Board included copies of superintendent approval letters and copies of the survey instruments. Permission was granted to conduct the study.

Once permission was obtained from school district superintendents and the Human Use Committee, individual principals from eight different schools, located in three different school districts were contacted via emails and phone calls. Six school



principals from three different school districts agreed to allow their schools to participate in this study. The six schools were categorized according to school performance score data from 2012 through 2016. Schools that achieved and maintained significant academic growth for at least two years from 2012 through 2016 were placed in Group A. Schools that showed occasional improvement but remained in AUS status were placed in Group B. Schools that did not show any growth during the same time were placed in Group C.

Principals and teaching staff were asked to participate in a survey that measured teachers' and principals' perceptions of principal leadership behaviors. Participants were invited to participate in the study through e-mail. Participants were sent a link to the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) which was completed in approximately 15 minutes. Each participant was given a link specific to their school. Principals received links to the leader survey for their school. Teachers received links to the rater survey for their school.

### **Participants**

Participants for this study were principals and teachers from Louisiana public elementary schools that were employed at schools designated AUS from 2012 through 2016. Elementary schools participating in the study consisted of either prekindergarten through fifth grade or kindergarten through fifth grades. Principals were contacted in order to arrange e-mail contacts directing participants to the survey links. Principals and teachers were invited to participate in an online survey that measured their perceptions of principal leadership behaviors. Teacher surveys were completed anonymously through a link associated with their individual school identified by a confidential code assigned to

each school. Principal surveys were kept confidential with the associated school identifying number on individual principal surveys.

### **Instrumentation**

The researcher used the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by Avolio and Bass (2004) and published by Mind Garden, Inc. The MLQ, sometimes referred to as the MLQ 5X, measures: (a) Transformational behaviors, (b) Transactional behaviors, (c) Passive/Avoidant behaviors, (d) and Outcomes of Leadership behaviors as related to success of the group. The MLQ Leader Form assesses leader self-perceptions of leadership behaviors. The MLQ Rater Form assesses follower perceptions of leadership behaviors. Each of the two 45-item questionnaires uses a 5-point Likert-type scale that measures key leadership and effectiveness behaviors that lead to organizational and individual success. The instruments assessed both how teachers perceived the leadership behaviors of their principals, as well as, how the principals perceived their own leadership behaviors. The MLQ was not designed for the purpose of labeling leaders as either Transformational, Transactional, or Passive/Avoidant. Rather, the MLQ rates various types of behaviors and the degree to which they are associated with the three leadership styles: (a) Transformational Leadership, (b) Transactional Leadership, and (c) Passive/Avoidant leadership. A fourth category on the MLQ focuses on the organizational effects of leadership behaviors, known as Outcomes of Leadership. The MLQ Manual provides a norm table to compare the results of the mean measures of each subcategory. Principals in this study were assessed on 12 subcategories which are attributed to the three leadership styles and the outcomes of the leaders' behaviors.

Bass and Riggio (2006) identified four core components that Transformational leaders employ on a constant basis that meet the higher-order needs of colleagues and followers. These four components are: (a) Idealized Influence, (b) Inspirational Motivation, (c) Intellectual Stimulation, and (d) Individualized Consideration.

**Idealized influences.** The degree to which Transformational leaders serve as role models to their followers is categorized as Idealized Influence (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leaders engage in behaviors that encourage followers to identify and then desire to emulate them. Followers admire, respect and trust Transformational leaders. Leaders, in turn, reap the benefits because their followers demonstrate extraordinary capabilities, persistence, and determination. Leaders with a great deal of Idealized Influence are willing to take risks and their actions are consistent rather than inconsistent. Idealized Influence is made up of two components: (a) elements that are attributed to Influential Attitudes, and (b) the leader's Influential Behaviors. Questions 10, 18, 21, and 25 on the MLQ assess the degree in which a leader displays Idealized Attributes. Questions assessing Idealized Behaviors are 6, 14, 23, and 34.

**Inspirational motivation.** Inspirational Motivation combined with Idealized Influence form a combined single trait of charismatic-inspirational leadership which emulate behaviors described in charismatic leadership theory (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Enthusiasm, optimism and team spirit are displayed. Through clearly communicated expectations, followers envision desirable future goals. Followers demonstrate a commitment to goals and a shared vision. Transformational leaders provide meaning and

challenge to their followers' work by behaving in ways that motivate and inspire those around them. Questions assessing Inspirational Motivation behaviors are 9, 13, 26, and 36.

**Intellectual stimulation.** In the process of addressing problems and finding solutions, creativity and innovation are stimulated and encouraged by Transformational leaders (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leaders encourage and solicit followers to question assumptions, reframe problems, and approach old situations in new ways. Individual mistakes and ideas that differ from the leader are not publicly criticized. Followers are encouraged to try new approaches. Questions 2, 8, 30, and 32 assess Intellectual Stimulation behaviors.

**Individualized consideration.** Transformational leaders act as a coach or mentor by paying attention to each individual follower's needs for achievement and growth (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leaders seek to encourage individuals to achieve higher levels of potential. Two-way communication is encouraged and interactions with followers are personalized. The leader effectively listens to and recognizes individual differences in terms of needs and desires. The leader's behavior demonstrates acceptance of individual differences by structuring his or her interaction according to the needs of the individual. The delegation of tasks is a way to further develop skills and responsibilities in followers. The leader then progress monitors delegated tasks in order to provide additional support and direction if needed. The follower may or may not know he or she is being monitored. Individualized Consideration is assessed in questions 15, 19, 29, and 31.

Two components that measure Transactional Leadership behaviors are: (a) Contingent Reward, and (b) Management-By-Exception, Active (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Transactional leaders reward or discipline the follower depending on the job performance of the follower. Transactional Leadership relies on contingent reinforcement, either positive Contingent Reward or the more negative active form of Management-By-Exception – Active.

**Contingent reward.** Contingent Reward is a constructive transaction that has been found to be effective in motivating others to achieve assigned levels of development and performance (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The leader assigns or obtains follower agreement on job performance with promised or actual rewards offered in exchange for adequately carrying out the assignment. When the reward is a material one, such as a bonus, it is considered transactional. When the reward is psychological, such as praise, it is considered transformational. Questions on the MLQ that measure Contingent Reward behaviors are 1, 11, 16, and 35.

**Management-by-exception – active.** Bass and Riggio (2006) state that this corrective transaction is less effective than Contingent Reward or the components of Transformational Leadership. Management-By-Exception – Active, requires the leader to actively monitor deviations from standards, mistakes, and errors in the employee's assignments and take corrective action as necessary. Sometimes this is required such as when safety is a major concern. Questions 4, 22, 24, and 27 assess a leader's Management-By-Exception – Active, behaviors.

Passive/Avoidant Leadership behaviors are also made up of two components: (a) Management-By-Exception – Passive, and (b) Laissez-faire (LF) behaviors (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Bass and Riggio state that Passive/Avoidant Leadership is the most ineffective style of leadership amongst the three leadership styles measured on the MLQ.

Passive leaders tend to avoid: (a) getting involved, (b) establishing standards, (c) identifying and clarifying potential problem areas, and (d) monitoring results. This leadership style has a negative effect on leadership results.

**Management-by-exception – passive.** Management-By-Exception is passive when the leader waits passively for deviances, mistakes, or errors to occur and then takes corrective action (Bass & Riggio, 2006). This type of leadership behavior occurs when a leader does not take any action until complaints are received. However, leaders must sometimes practice Management-By-Exception – Passive, when required to supervise a large number of subordinates. Questions that assess Management-By-Exception – Passive, behaviors are 3, 12, 17, and 20.

**Laissez-faire leadership.** The avoidance or absence of leadership is called Laissez-faire Leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Laissez-faire Leadership represents a nontransactional style of leadership that is demonstrated through: (a) delayed actions, (b) ignored responsibilities, and (c) not making necessary decisions. Questions that measure Laissez-faire Leadership behaviors are 5, 7, 28, and 33.

**Outcomes of leadership.** The last three components of the MLQ measure organizational leadership success in a category called Outcomes of Leadership. Behaviors in this category are: (a) Extra Effort, (b) Effectiveness, and (c) Satisfaction (Bass & Riggio, 2006). These three components are combined in the Outcomes of Leadership section of the MLQ. Both transformational and transactional leadership are positively associated with the success of a group. The MLQ measures success by: (a) Extra Effort put forth by employees based on motivation from the leader, (b) perception of leader Effectiveness at different levels of the organization, and (c) Satisfaction with the

leader's methods of working with others. Extra Effort is measured with questions 39, 42, and 44. Effectiveness is measured with questions 37, 40, 43, and 45. Questions 38 and 41 measure Satisfaction.

### **Validity**

Content validity is important for instruments used to measure competency (Creswell, 2014; Krathwohl, 2009). Validity explains how well an instrument measures a specified, particular concept. The MLQ has been shown to have external validity (Avolio & Bass, 2004). In a study conducted by Muenjohn and Armstrong (2008), the MLQ model was tested using the multi-data source of 138 cases. Results revealed that the MLQ appropriately and adequately captures the factor constructs of transformational transactional leadership. Published research has used the MLQ for over fifteen years and has been completed by 15,000 respondents (Bass & Riggio, 2006). This body of research provides an adequate conceptual basis for proposing a factor structure tested with data collected using the MLQ. Based on research and data provided by Bass and Avolio, four meta-analyses have shown a strong correlation between strong leadership performance and Transformational Leadership. Thirty-three studies using the MLQ indicated a strong positive correlation between components of the MLQ and Transformational Leadership.

### **Reliability**

Evidence of reliability is important for instruments used in research (Krathwohl, 2009). Reliability tests the consistency of an instrument used to measure a specific concept. According to Bass and Riggio (2006), the MLQ scales have demonstrated good to excellent internal consistency. A meta-analysis of transformational leadership

literature found the MLQ to be reliable and significantly predicted work unit effectiveness across the particular set of studies examined (Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996).

### **Data Analysis**

Teachers and principals completed the MLQ online using Google forms. There are two forms of the MLQ (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The first is the Leader Form that asks the leader to rate the frequency of his or her own leadership behavior. Principals used this form. The second form is the Rater Form which uses the same items but asks how the rater views his or her leader. Associates of leaders, in this case teachers, rated the frequency of their leader's leadership behavior. Both the Leader Form and the Rater Form use the same 5-point rating scales ranging from 0 = *Not at all*, 1 = *Once in a while*, 2 = *Sometimes*, 3 = *Fairly often*, to 4 = *Frequently, if not always*. The MLQ contains 36 standardized items consisting of four items assessing each of the nine leadership dimensions associated with three descriptive leadership categories. Subcategories attributed to the Transformational Leadership Category of behaviors include: (a) Idealized Influence (Attributed Charisma), (b) Idealized Influence (Behaviors), (c) Inspirational Motivation, (d) Intellectual Stimulation, and (e) Individualized Consideration. Transactional Leadership subcategories include: (a) Contingent Reward, and (b) Management-By-Exception – Active. Passive/Avoidant leadership behaviors subcategories are: (a) Management-by-Exception – Passive, and (b) Laissez-faire.

Avolio and Bass (2004) stated that Transformational and Transactional Leadership are key components related to individual, group and organizational success. Therefore, in addition to the 36 standardized items, nine additional items measure



Outcomes of Leadership that address perceptions of leadership efficacy. Using the same 5-point scale, three items rate the extent to which followers exert Extra Effort as a result of the behaviors and actions of their school leaders. Four items rate perceived leader Effectiveness. Two items rate Satisfaction with the leader. According to Bass and Riggio (2006), higher averages in these nine items measure overall perceived leader effectiveness and success within the organization. Comparisons of leader and follower averages for these nine items are also provided.

The results of the MLQ survey were converted into SPSS for analysis. The SPSS statistical package (version 25) was used to calculate the mean and standard deviation for each of the four categories and each subcategory. The mean scores of each category was compared to the norm table provided by the MLQ Manual (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Both leader and follower averages for each category provide information about perceived leadership behaviors and allow comparisons between the perceptions of leaders and followers and across the three groups of schools. The standard deviation calculation measures the spread and dispersion of the data used to calculate the mean. Salkind (2017) stated that analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used when examining the differences between groups of one or more variables and when dealing with more than two groups. Group A consisted of schools that had been out of AUS for at least two years. Group B consisted of schools that were in and out of AUS. Group C consisted of schools that had never been out of AUS for the time studied. Analysis of standard deviations allowed the researcher to analyze data dispersion for significant differences. ANOVA techniques were applied to assess mean scores and test for significant differences between the

leaders at each school and between the teachers at each school on the MLQ survey.

Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) was set at .05. Tables are included in the data analysis section along with an accompanying narrative.

A nonparametric Mann-Whitney test was used to test for significant differences in data dispersion between perceptions of teachers and perceptions of principals at each school. This analysis is appropriate for this study because the sample size of both groups was small, and the variances were not equal (Krathwohl, 2009; Salkind, 2017). The teacher groups at each school consisted of 34 teachers or less. Each principal group consisted of two principals.

### **Conclusion**

Chapter Three provided information about the methodology used to conduct this study. Information about selection of the participants, administration of the MLQ, and a description of data analysis were also presented. A description of the nine subcategories of Transformational, Transactional, and Passive/Avoidant behaviors analyzed on the MLQ was provided in this chapter. Also presented in this chapter was a discussion of the validity and reliability of the MLQ. Chapter Four presents the results of the survey and analyzes the findings.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

The results of the statistical analysis of the data are contained within this chapter. The purpose of this study was to provide a comprehensive description of leadership behaviors that contribute to turning around a failing school. Identifying schools that transformed from academically unacceptable to achieving academic gains on a consistent basis served as the starting point for this research. The literature review from this study revealed that strong leadership was effective in turning around academic achievement in failing schools. Based on their own extensive review of school leadership literature, Louis et al. (2010) determined that school improvement could not occur without an effective school principal. This study examined the behaviors of principals that have transformed academically failing schools into academically successful schools. Therefore, the research questions guiding this study were:

Research Question 1: What principal leadership behaviors transformed these previously low performing schools to achieving academic gains?

Research Question 2: Are there differences in leadership behaviors between the leaders of successful turnaround schools, schools that showed moderate success and schools that showed minimal success?

Based on the research questions, the following null hypotheses were developed:

H1: There will be no statistically significant differences in perceived leadership behaviors between leaders as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) of three groups of once academically unacceptable schools.

H2: There will be no statistically significant differences in perceived leadership behaviors as measured by the MLQ and as perceived by teachers in three categories of once academically unacceptable schools.

H3: There will be no statistically significant differences in perceived leadership behaviors as measured by the MLQ between principals and teachers of each of the three groups.

This chapter presents the results of the MLQ survey and an analysis of the data as it relates to the research questions. The results are presented in five parts: (a) total results with descriptive statistics, (b) ANOVA results for Hypothesis 1, (c) ANOVA results for Hypothesis 2, and (d) Mann-Whitney U test results for Hypothesis 3. Throughout the chapter, the results of the MLQ are presented with descriptive and inferential statistics. Tables are included which detail results of the ANOVA and Mann-Whitney U tests which were conducted to analyze the MLQ survey. The means and standard deviations for responses to the MLQ survey were calculated and reported by MLQ categories for Groups A, B, and C.

### **Descriptive Analysis Results**

The study of leadership behaviors was achieved using the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) survey administered to teachers and principals at various stages of the school turnaround process. The researcher gathered quantitative

data from a Likert-type scaled instrument. Data were analyzed based on comparing perceived leadership behaviors by teachers and principals which were divided into the following groups:

1. Six schools were divided into three categories based on school performance scores from 2012 through 2016. Each group consisted of two schools:
  - a. Group A consisted of two schools that had been out of AUS status for at least two years,
  - b. Group B consisted of two schools that had been in and out of AUS status,
  - c. Group C consisted of two schools that had been in AUS status for all five years,
2. Leader results from all three groups were compared to address the first hypothesis,
3. Teacher results from all three groups were compared to address the second Hypothesis,
4. Teacher results were compared to principal results from each group to address the third hypothesis.

The results of these analyses are provided in this chapter.

This study consisted of six elementary schools from three different parishes in the state of Louisiana. MLQ data were collected between February 2 through April 16, 2018. At the end of the data collection period, 84 teachers and six principals from six different schools had completed the survey. Group A consisted of 34 teachers and two principals, Group B consisted of 23 teachers and two principals, and Group C consisted of 27 teachers and two principals.

To determine whether there were specific principal behaviors that turned around academic achievement, results of the MLQ survey were analyzed. Table 6 presents mean and standard deviation results of teachers and principals in each of the four categories. Mean scores give the average scores of the respondents in each category of the four sections of the MLQ.

Table 6

*Descriptive Statistics*

	N	Transformational		Transactional		Passive/Avoidant		Outcomes	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Group A									
Teachers	34	3.25	1.063	2.59	1.444	0.98	1.323	3.35	1.029
Principals	2	3.13	0.853	2.50	1.095	0.94	1.063	3.45	0.671
Group B									
Teachers	23	3.19	0.977	2.68	1.277	0.63	1.008	3.40	0.739
Principals	2	3.43	0.874	2.38	1.500	0.28	0.752	3.39	0.850
Group C									
Teachers	27	2.88	1.214	2.28	1.359	1.17	1.390	2.78	1.317
Principals	2	3.60	0.709	2.75	1.183	1.00	1.211	3.78	0.428

*Note.* N = Number of Respondents, SD = Standard Deviation, Outcomes = Outcomes of Leadership.

The leader is perceived as more transformational than the norm if all five categories have a mean score of 3.0 or greater with 3.0 being the research validated benchmark (Avolio & Bass, 2004). A rating of three denotes “fairly often” for a behavior and four denotes “frequently, if not always” on the MLQ survey. Research validated benchmarks for Transactional Leadership styles are separated into two categories. The research validated benchmark for rewards achievement (Contingent Reward), is 2.0 to 3.0. The research validated benchmark for actively monitoring mistakes (Management-By-Exception – Active) is 1.0 to 2.0, with a score of 1 indicating “once in a while” and 2

indicating “sometimes.” Both subcategories attributed to Passive/Avoidant Leadership behaviors have a research validated benchmark of 0 to 1 with 0 indicating “not at all” and 1 indicating “once in a while.” Ideally, mean scores of leaders should: (a) have a combined mean score of at least 3.0 in all the transformational subcategories, (b) have a moderate to lower range score in the transactional subcategories, and (c) have a very low score in the Passive/Avoidant subcategories.

### **Hypothesis 1**

To compare principals’ perceptions of their leadership behaviors, the researcher performed a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine the significance of the differences between the means of the principals in Groups A, B, and C. Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) was set at .05. An ANOVA was used to analyze significant differences between the three groups and each category: (a) Transformational, (b) Transactional, (c) Passive/Avoidant, and (d) Outcomes of Leadership. Table 7 shows the final summary table for the ANOVA comparing principals’ leadership perceptions between the three categories of schools. No significant differences were found among the principal groups except in the Transformational category ( $F_{2,117} = 3.47, p = .00$ ). The ANOVA indicated that a significant difference existed between the perceptions of principals in the three groups. However, since the ANOVA does not reveal which group or groups varied significantly, further analysis was conducted.

Since a significant difference was noted, a univariate Scheffé post hoc test was used to determine which group or groups in a particular category varied significantly. Following Table 7, Table 8 shows the final summary table of the Scheffé analysis.

Table 7

*Principal Comparisons One-Way Analysis of Variance*

Categories	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
<b>Transformational</b>					
Between Groups	4.617	2	2.308	3.474	0.034*
Within Groups	77.750	117	0.665		
Total	82.367	119			
<b>Transactional</b>					
Between Groups	1.167	2	0.583	0.361	0.699
Within Groups	72.750	45	1.617		
Total	73.917	47			
<b>Passive/Avoidant</b>					
Between Groups	4.625	2	2.313	2.151	0.128
Within Groups	48.375	45	1.075		
Total	53.000	47			
<b>Outcomes of Leadership</b>					
Between Groups	1.593	2	0.796	1.860	0.166
Within Groups	21.833	51	0.428		
Total	23.426	53			

Note. \* $p < .05$ , df = Degrees of freedom, F = F-ratio, Sig. = Significance.

Table 8

*Principal Comparisons Transformational Leadership Scheffé Post Hoc*

(I) Category Status	(J) Category Status	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
A	B	0.062	0.067	0.655	-0.10	0.23
	C	0.370*	0.066	0.000	0.21	0.53
B	A	-0.062	0.067	0.655	-0.23	0.10
	C	0.309*	0.071	0.000	0.13	0.48
C	A	-0.370*	0.066	0.000	-0.53	-0.21
	B	-0.309*	0.071	0.000	-0.48	-0.13

Note.  $p < .05$ , Std. Error = Standard Error, Sig. = Significance.



Post hoc analysis using the Scheffé post hoc criterion for significance indicated that even though the averages for Group A, Group B, and Group C indicated that these principals perceived their behaviors as Transformational, the perceptions of Group C principals ( $M = 3.60$ ,  $SD = .709$ ) were significantly higher than the perceptions of the principals in Group A ( $M = 3.13$ ,  $SD = .85$ ), and the perceptions of the principals in Group B ( $M = 3.43$ ,  $SD = .87$ ), ( $F_{1, 78} = 7.34$ ,  $p = .01$ ). Because a significant difference was found between the perception of principals and their own leadership behaviors between the three groups of principals regarding Transformational Leadership behaviors, null Hypothesis 1 was rejected.

### **Hypothesis 2**

An ANOVA was used again to compare teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership behaviors using the means of the teachers in Groups A, B, and C. An ANOVA was used to analyze significant differences between the three groups in each category: (a) Transformational, (b) Transactional, (c) Passive/Avoidant, and (d) Outcomes of Leadership. Table 9 shows the summary of the ANOVA. The ANOVA revealed a significant difference in all four categories ( $p < .05$ ).

Because the ANOVA revealed a significant difference in all four categories, a univariate Scheffé post hoc test was used to identify which group or groups within each category varied significantly. Table 10 shows the summary of the Scheffé post hoc analysis. Scheffé post hoc analysis shows significant differences between specific groups in specific categories. A discussion of the results follows Table 9 and Table 10.

Table 9

*Teacher Comparisons One-Way Analysis of Variance*

Categories	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
<b>Transformational</b>					
Between Groups	41.173	2	20.587	17.237	0.000*
Within Groups	1891.792	1584	1.194		
Total	1932.965	1586			
<b>Transactional</b>					
Between Groups	16.563	2	8.281	4.397	0.013*
Within Groups	1171.476	622	1.883		
Total	1188.038	624			
<b>Passive/Avoidant</b>					
Between Groups	27.606	2	13.803	8.626	0.000*
Within Groups	1017.634	636	1.600		
Total	1045.239	638			
<b>Outcomes of Leadership</b>					
Between Groups	53.559	2	26.779	23.810	0.000*
Within Groups	807.537	718	1.125		
Total	861.096	720			

Note. \*  $p < .05$ , df = degrees of freedom, F = F-ratio, Sig. = Significance.

**Transformational Leadership**

In the Transformational category, an ANOVA showed that the perceptions of leadership revealed by teachers was significant ( $F_{2,1584} = 17.24, p = .00$ ). A Scheffé test revealed that both Groups A ( $M = 3.25, SD = 1.06$ ) and B ( $M = 3.19, SD = .977$ ) perceived their principals to be significantly more transformational than Group C ( $M = 2.88, SD = 1.214$ ), ( $F_{1, 1585} = 33.63, p = .00$ ). No significant difference was found between Group A and Group B. Both Group A and Group B teachers perceived their principals to be Transformational; however, Group C teachers did not perceive frequent

Transformational behaviors in their principals. Since significant differences were found between groups, null Hypothesis 2 for Transformational Leadership was rejected.

Table 10

*Teacher Comparisons Scheffé Post Hoc*

Category	(I) Group Status	(J) Group Status	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Transformational	A	B	0.062	0.067	0.655	-0.10	0.23
		C	0.370*	0.066	0.000	0.21	0.53
	B	A	-0.062	0.067	0.655	-0.23	0.10
		C	0.309*	0.071	0.000	0.13	0.48
	C	A	-0.370*	0.066	0.000	-0.53	-0.21
		B	-0.309*	0.071	0.000	-0.48	-0.13
Transactional	A	B	-0.088	0.135	0.810	-0.42	0.24
		C	0.306	0.130	0.064	-0.01	0.63
	B	A	0.088	0.135	0.810	-0.24	0.42
		C	0.394*	0.143	0.023	0.04	0.74
	C	A	-0.306	0.130	0.064	-0.63	0.01
		B	-0.394*	0.143	0.023	-0.74	-0.04
Passive/Avoidant	A	B	0.328*	0.123	0.029	0.03	0.63
		C	-0.209	0.119	0.216	-0.50	0.08
	B	A	-0.328*	0.123	0.029	-0.63	-0.03
		C	-0.537*	0.130	0.000	-0.86	-0.22
	C	A	0.209	0.119	0.216	-0.08	0.50
		B	0.537*	0.130	0.000	0.22	0.86
Outcomes of Leadership	A	B	-0.048	0.097	0.855	-0.29	0.19
		C	0.567*	0.094	0.000	0.34	0.80
	B	A	0.048	0.097	0.885	-0.19	0.29
		C	0.615*	0.103	0.000	0.36	0.87
	C	A	-0.567*	0.094	0.000	-0.80	-0.34
		B	-0.615*	0.103	0.000	-0.87	-0.36

Note.  $p < .05$ , Std. Error = Standard Error, Sig. = Significance.

**Transactional Leadership**

An ANOVA showed that teacher perceptions of leadership revealed significant differences ( $F_{2, 622} = 8.281, p = .01$ ). Post hoc analyses using the Scheffé post hoc criterion for significance indicated that Group B teachers ( $M = 2.68, SD = 2.28$ )

perceived their principals as having more Transactional behaviors compared to Group C teachers ( $M = 2.28, SD = 1.359$ ). All three groups of teachers perceived their principals as having an appropriate level of Transactional behaviors; however, teachers in Group C rated their principals significantly lower than in Group B ( $F_{1, 369} = 8.21, p = .00$ ). Since a significant difference was found between Group B and Group C, null Hypothesis 2 for Transactional Leadership was rejected.

### **Passive/Avoidant Leadership**

An ANOVA showed significant differences between the three groups of schools in the Passive/Avoidant category ( $F_{2, 636} = 8.63, p = .00$ ). Post hoc analyses using the Scheffé post hoc criterion for significance indicated Group A ( $M = .98, SD = 1.32$ ) teachers rarely perceived Passive/Avoidant behaviors from their principals and their mean was significantly higher than Group B ( $M = .63, SD = 1.01$ ) teachers ( $F_{1, 437} = 7.89, p = .01$ ). The mean of Group B teachers was also significantly lower than the mean of Group C ( $M = 1.17, SD = 1.390$ ) teachers ( $F_{1, 378} = 18.22, p = .00$ ). Group C teachers perceived moderate amounts of Passive/Avoidant behaviors in their principals while teachers in Groups A and B rarely perceived Passive/Avoidant behaviors in their principals. Since significant differences were found between groups, null Hypothesis 2 for Passive/Avoidant Leadership was rejected.

### **Outcomes of Leadership**

Based on an ANOVA, significant differences occurred between the three groups of schools and teacher perceptions of leadership influencing the success of their schools ( $F_{2, 718} = 23.81, p = .00$ ). Post hoc analyses using the Scheffé post hoc criterion for significance indicated that both teachers from Group A ( $M = 3.35, SD = 1.03$ ) and Group

B ( $M = 3.40$ ,  $SD = .74$ ) perceived the outcomes of the behaviors of their principals as significantly more positive than Group C ( $M = 2.78$ ,  $SD = 1.32$ ) teachers ( $F_{1, 719} = 47.43$ ,  $p = .00$ ). Since significant differences were found between groups, null Hypothesis 2 for Outcomes of Leadership was rejected.

Because significant differences were found in all four categories, null Hypothesis 2 was rejected. Teacher perceptions of their principals' leadership behaviors varied significantly between schools that had: (a) stayed out of AUS status for two or more years, (b) fluctuated in and out of AUS status, and (c) never exited AUS status from 2012 through 2016.

### **Hypothesis 3**

The final hypothesis examined the perceptions of leadership behaviors between teachers and principals within each group. A nonparametric Mann-Whitney test was used to compare the teacher and principal means in each group due to the small sample sizes of the two groups. When a significant difference was noted, then comparisons were made between the teachers and principals and each subcategory within the major categories. Table 11 shows the summary of the analysis of Group A teacher and principal perceptions. A Mann-Whitney test indicated that Group A showed no significant differences between teachers' and principals' perceptions ( $p < .05$ ). Since no significant differences were found between Group A teacher and principal perceptions in all four Leadership categories, null Hypothesis 3 was retained.

Table 11

*Group A Mann-Whitney Analysis*

	N	Mdn	U	Z	Sig
Transformational					
Teachers	646	4	10924.000	-1.832	0.67
Principals	40	3			
Total	686				
Transactional					
Teachers	254	3	1846.500	-0.637	0.524
Principals	16	2.5			
Total	270				
Passive/Avoidant					
Teachers	259	0	1943.000	-0.463	0.643
Principals	16	1			
Total	275				
Outcomes of Leadership					
Teachers	292	4	2480.000	-0.463	0.643
Principals	18	4			
Total	310				

*Note.* N = Number of sample responses, MDN = median, U = Mann-Whitney test value, Z = z-score, Sig = Significance.

A Mann-Whitney test using Group B schools showed no significant differences between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the four leadership behavior categories ( $p < .05$ ). Since no significant differences were found between Group B teacher and principal perceptions for all four Leadership categories, null Hypothesis 3 was retained.

Table 12 shows the summary of the Mann-Whitney test analysis of Group B teachers' and principals' perceptions.

Table 12

*Group B Mann-Whitney Analysis*

	N	Mdn	U	Z	Sig.
Transformational					
Teachers	453	3	7826.000	-1.550	0.121
Principals	40	4			
Total	493				
Transactional					
Teachers	174	3			
Principals	16	3	1250.000	-0.699	0.485
Total	190				
Passive/Avoidant					
Teachers	180	0	1195.000	-1.334	0.179
Principals	16	0			
Total	196				
Outcomes of Leadership					
Teachers	204	4	1799.500	-0.156	0.876
Principals	18	4			
Total	222				

*Note.* N = Number of sample responses, MDN = Median, U = Mann-Whitney test value, Z = Z-score, Sig = Significance.

A Mann-Whitney test using Group C schools indicated significant differences between teachers' and principals' perceptions in the Transformational and Outcomes of Leadership Categories ( $p < .05$ ). Since significant differences were found between teacher and principal perceptions in Group C, null Hypothesis 3 was rejected. Table 13 shows the summary of the Mann-Whitney test analysis of Group C teachers' and principals' perceptions. A discussion of significant differences found in the Transformational Category and the Outcomes of Leadership Category follows Table 13.

Table 13

*Group C Mann-Whitney Analysis*

	N	Mdn	U	Z	Sig.
Transformational					
Teachers	488	3	6487.500	-3.743	0.000*
Principals	40	4			
Total	528				
Transactional					
Teachers	197	2	1288.000	-1.245	0.213
Principals	16	3			
Total	213				
Passive/Avoidant					
Teachers	200	0	1536.000	-.286	0.775
Principals	16	.5			
Total	216				
Outcomes of Leadership					
Teachers	225	3	1144.000	-3.250	0.001*
Principals	18	4			
Total	243				

*Note.* \* $p < .05$ , N = Number of sample responses, MDN = Median, U = Mann-Whitney test value, Z = Z-score, Sig = Significance.

### **Transformational Leadership**

A Mann-Whitney test indicated that teachers' perceptions of Transformational behaviors ( $Mdn = 3$ ) was significantly lower than principals' perceptions ( $Mdn = 4$ ),  $U = 6487.5$ ,  $p = .00$   $r = .16$  (see Table 13). To identify the significant differences in which teachers' and principals' opinions differed in the subcategories of Transformational Leadership, Mann-Whitney tests were used to identify the subcategories that varied significantly between teacher perceptions of principal behaviors and principal perceptions of their own behaviors. Table 14 shows a summary of the subcategories of Transformational behaviors.



Table 14

*Group C Mann-Whitney Transformational Subcategories*

	N	Mdn	U	Z	Sig.
Idealized Attributes (IA)					
Teachers	90	3	233.000	-2.047	0.041*
Principals	8	4			
Total	107				
Idealized Behaviors (IB)					
Teachers	95	3	315.500	-.836	0.403
Principals	8	4			
Total	103				
Inspirational Motivation (IM)					
Teachers	200	0	1536.000	-.286	0.775
Principals	16	.5			
Total	216				
Intellectual Stimulation (IS)					
Teachers	225	3	1144.000	-3.250	0.001*
Principals	18	4			
Total	243				
Individualized Consideration (IC)					
Teachers	99	3	217.000	-2.206	0.027*
Principals	8	4			
Total	107				

*Note.* \* $p < .05$ , N = Number of sample responses, MDN = Median, U = Mann-Whitney test value, Z = Z-score, Sig = Significance.

The analyses indicated that teacher perceptions ( $Mdn = 3$ ) of leader Idealized Attributes were significantly lower than their principal perceptions ( $Mdn = 4$ ),  $U = 233$ ,  $p = .04$ ,  $r = .20$ . A Mann-Whitney test indicated that perceptions of Individual Consideration were greater for principals ( $Mdn = 4$ ) than for teachers ( $Mdn = 3$ )  $U = 217$ ,  $p = .03$ ,  $r = .21$ . The third Mann-Whitney test indicated that perceptions of Intellectual Stimulation were greater for principals ( $Mdn = 4$ ) than for teachers ( $Mdn = 3$ ),  $U = 204$ ,  $p = .021$ . Since significant differences were found in three of the five subcategories in

the Transformational Leadership category for Group C teacher and principal perceptions, null Hypothesis 3 was rejected.

### **Outcomes of Leadership**

Mann-Whitney test results showed that the perceptions of teachers' ratings of the effects of leadership on their school ( $Mdn = 3$ ) was significantly lower than the perceptions of their principals' ratings of their own leadership outcomes ( $Mdn = 4$ ),  $U = 1144$ ,  $p = .00$ ,  $r = .21$ . A Mann-Whitney test was used on Outcomes of Leadership subcategories to determine which subcategories were significantly different between the teachers and principals. Table 15 shows the summary of the Mann-Whitney tests for the subcategories of Outcomes of Leadership. Subcategory results indicated a marginally significant difference in the perceptions of teachers ( $Mdn = 3$ ) and principals ( $Mdn = 4$ ) whereas principals perceived the effectiveness of their own leadership more favorably than teachers,  $U = 241.00$ ,  $p = .05$ ,  $r = .19$ . Satisfaction with leadership was also marginally significant in that teachers' perceptions ( $Mdn = 3$ ) were lower than principals' perceptions ( $Mdn = 4$ ),  $U = 44.00$ ,  $p = .05$ ,  $r = .27$ . Since the Mann-Whitney test results showed significant differences in Group C teacher and principal perceptions of Outcomes of Leadership, null Hypothesis 3 was rejected.

Because significant differences were found in the perceptions between teachers and principals in Group C regarding Transformational Leadership and Outcomes of Leadership, null Hypothesis 3 was rejected. Teacher perceptions varied significantly lower than principal perceptions in Group C which were schools that had never been out of AUS status during the 2012 through 2016 timeframe.

Table 15

*Group C Mann-Whitney Outcomes of Leadership*

	N	Mdn	U	Z	Sig.
Extra Effort (EE)					
Teachers	77	3	134.000	-1.781	0.075
Principals	6	4			
Total	83				
Efficient (EFF)					
Teachers	99	3	241.000	-1.956	0.050
Principals	8	4			
Total	107				
Satisfaction with Leadership (SAT)					
Teachers	49	3	44.000	-1.952	0.051
Principals	4	4			
Total	53				

*Note.* \* $p < .05$ , N = Number of sample responses, MDN = Median, U = Mann-Whitney test value, Z = Z-score, Sig = Significance.

### Research Question 1

Two research questions guided this study. Research Question 1 was “What principal leadership behaviors transformed previously low performing schools to achieving academic gains?” Implications from this study show that teachers from successful and occasional growth schools were more likely to assign frequent transformational behaviors to their principals and did not assign Passive/Avoidant behaviors to their principals. Conversely, teachers from minimal growth schools did not rate their principals as frequently transformational, and rated their principals as displaying moderate amounts of Passive/Avoidant behaviors. The overall impact of the

success of the leadership behaviors was rated higher among teachers in successful and occasionally successful schools but significantly lower in minimal growth schools.

### **Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leaders have followers who view them in an idealized way (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Because of this, leaders wield much power and influence over their followers. Followers desire to identify with their leaders and their mission. Followers develop strong feelings about their leaders who have their trust and confidence. Transformational leaders inspire others with whom they work with their vision of what can be accomplished through extra personal effort.

Although principals from all three groups considered their behavior as being frequently transformational, the teacher perceptions were different. Teachers from minimal growth schools that had never achieved academic success perceived their principals as lacking in behaviors that (a) build trust (Idealized Attributes), (b) encourage innovative thinking in others (Intellectual Stimulation), and (c) train and coach others to develop to their full potential (Individualized Consideration). These three behaviors grouped together with the other two transformational behaviors measured in the MLQ, Idealized Behavior and Inspirational Motivation, are behaviors identified as characteristics of effective principals of successful turnaround schools (Meyers & Hitt, 2017). Teachers in successful and occasionally successful schools were more likely to ascribe higher scores in all five Transformational Leadership behaviors to their principals.

### **Transactional Leadership**

Transactional Leadership behaviors occur when the leader either rewards or disciplines the follower, depending on the level of the follower's performance (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Transactional leaders recognize and clarify the needs and desires of followers so that followers understand the effort required of them to complete assignments. This provides followers with a sense of direction and helps to energize others. Transactional Leadership augments Transformational Leadership in achieving the goals of the leader, the followers, and the organization. Thus, Transactional Leadership is often used in lower levels of performance or non-significant change. All three groups of teachers perceived transactional behaviors in their principals. However, teachers who had fluctuated in and out of AUS status perceived their principals as significantly more transactional than teachers who had never exited out of AUS status. Thus, teachers at schools that occasionally exited out of AUS status felt their principals were more active in rewarding their work efforts than principals at schools that showed minimal success.

### **Passive/Avoidant Leadership**

Passive/Avoidant Leadership behaviors are seen in leaders who do not react systematically to situations and problems which arise (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Leaders who are perceived as Passive/Avoidant may be (a) absent when needed, (b) avoid making decisions, (c) have late reactions to urgent problems, (d) do not offer feedback, and/or (e) do not acknowledge or work towards their followers' satisfaction. These principal behaviors are not characteristically seen in successful turnaround schools based on empirical research conducted by Meyers and Hitt (2017). Teachers from schools that showed minimal success in this study were likely to ascribe Passive/Avoidant behaviors

to their principals. Principals from schools that showed minimal growth were perceived as waiting for problems to appear before taking corrective actions rather than monitoring issues and taking corrective actions before problems occurred. Conversely, teachers from successful schools and occasionally successful schools did not ascribe Passive/Avoidant behaviors to their principals.

### **Outcomes of Leadership**

Outcomes of Leadership, categorized on the MLQ, measures the overall impact of leadership related to individual, group and organizational success (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

Three subcategories are attributed to Outcomes of Leadership: (a) Extra Effort, (b) Effectiveness, and (c) Satisfaction. Extra Effort is achieved when followers strive for superior performance and exceed expectations of their leaders or their organization. Effectiveness is achieved when leaders are efficient in meeting the school's objectives and generate a higher efficiency in all the structures of the school. The MLQ measures Satisfaction with leadership by identifying leaders who are able to generate satisfaction in their followers through interpersonal interaction with their followers and colleagues. These leaders are considered warm, nurturing, open, authentic, honest, with good interpersonal and social skills, and capable of developing feelings of satisfaction in their followers.

Teachers from successful schools and occasionally successful schools were more likely to assign their principals higher averages on all three Outcomes of Leadership subcategories than teachers from minimally successful schools. Teachers and principals from successful and occasionally successful schools were more aligned in their perceptual rankings in overall Outcomes of Leadership as well.

## **Research Question 2**

Research Question 2 was “Are there differences in leadership behaviors between the leaders of successful turnaround schools, schools that showed occasional success, and schools that showed minimal success?” The answer to this question depends on whether you examine teacher perceptions or principal perceptions.

### **Principal Perceptions**

Results of the MLQ indicated that principals from the three groups rated their own behaviors in line with validated benchmarks perceiving their behaviors as Transformational and Transactional, but not Passive/Avoidant (see Table 6). However, the MLQ and ANOVA indicated that principals from the minimally successful group rated their Transformational behaviors significantly higher than the other two groups. Principals from all three groups perceived their leadership behaviors to have positive effects on their organizations.

### **Teacher Perceptions**

Conversely, results from the MLQ and ANOVA indicated that teacher perceived leadership behaviors from minimal growth schools were significantly different than teacher perceived leadership behaviors from both successful and occasionally successful turnaround schools (see Tables 6, 9, and 10). Teachers from successful schools and occasionally successful schools showed no significant differences in perceived leadership behaviors and their perceptions showed small variances between teacher and principal perceptions (see Table 6). However, teacher perceptions from minimal growth schools did not align with their principals’ perceptions (see Tables 6, 13, 14, and 15). Teachers from minimal growth schools did not rate their principals high enough to fall within the

3.0 validated benchmark for Transformational behaviors. This indicates that leaders from successful schools are perceived as more Transformational than leaders at schools that have not yet attained academic growth. Another difference can be seen in the Passive/Avoidant category. Teachers from minimal growth schools perceived their principals as displaying Passive/Avoidant behaviors more often than teachers from the other two groups who rarely perceived Passive/Avoidant behaviors in their principals (see Tables 6, 9, 10, and 13). The overall impact of the success of leadership behaviors was perceived higher among teachers in successful and occasionally successful schools but significantly lower in minimal growth schools.

Although Group C principals perceived their behaviors as Transformational, the teachers in Group C did not (see Tables 6 and 13). The mean score for Group C teacher perceptions of their principals was lower than Group A and Group B teachers. Furthermore, the Group C teacher mean scores did not reach the validated benchmark of 3.0. Group A and Group B teachers both perceived their principals as Transformational. Areas that Group C teachers rated their principals significantly lower were the principal's ability to: (a) build trust (Idealized Attributes), encourage innovative thinking (Intellectual Stimulation), and coach teachers (Individualized Consideration) (see Table 14).

Implications from this study show that teachers from successful and occasionally successful schools were more likely to assign Transformational behaviors to their principals and did not assign Passive/Avoidant behaviors to their principals. On the other hand, teachers from minimal growth schools did not rate their principals as Transformational but did rate their principals as displaying Passive/Avoidant behaviors



(see Tables 6 and 13). The overall impact of the success of the leadership behaviors was rated significantly lower in minimal growth schools (see Tables 6, 13, and 15). Further analysis of minimally successful schools in the Outcomes of Leadership category indicated that teachers were not very satisfied with the leadership at the school nor did they view the leadership as effective (see Table 15). Results were marginally significant.

Chapter Four presented the results and analysis of the study. Chapter Five contains a summary of the study, findings, discussion, conclusions, implications for practice, limitations and recommendations for future research.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF STUDY, FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS**

A gap in the literature exists regarding an analysis of schools that have transformed out of AUS status and leadership behaviors associated with those schools. A comparison was made between schools that were classified at three different stages of AUS status by the Louisiana Department of Education and the perceived leadership behaviors in each category. The purpose of this study was to provide a description of leadership behaviors that contribute to turning around a failing school. This chapter provides a discussion of the results, conclusions, and implications of the data collected in relation to the following research questions that framed this study:

1. What principal leadership behaviors transformed previously low performing schools to achieving academic gains?
2. Are there differences in leadership behaviors between the leaders of successful turnaround schools, schools that showed occasional success and schools that showed minimal success?

Based on the research questions, three null hypotheses were developed:

H1: There will be no statistically significant differences in perceived leadership behaviors between leaders as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) of three groups of once academically unacceptable schools.

H2: There will be no statistically significant differences in perceived leadership behaviors as measured by the MLQ and as perceived by teachers in three categories of once academically unacceptable schools.

H3: There will be no statistically significant differences in perceived leadership behaviors as measured by the MLQ between principals and teachers of each of the three groups.

### **Summary of the Study**

This study initially started with analysis of school performance scores and school data obtained from the Louisiana Department of Education. Elementary schools with a kindergarten and/or pre-kindergarten through fifth grade curriculum were examined for AUS status from 2012 through 2016. Schools that were classified AUS but had been out for at least two years were considered successful and classified as Group A. Schools that had been in and out of AUS during the same 2012-2016 timeframe were considered occasionally successful and classified as Group B. Schools that were in AUS throughout the same time were considered minimally successful and classified in Group C.

The researcher performed an ANOVA to determine if significant differences existed between the principals and their perceived leadership behaviors in the three different groups of schools. A post hoc analysis using the Scheffé criterion was then used to determine which groups varied significantly. An ANOVA and post hoc analysis using

the Scheffé criterion was also used to determine if significant differences existed between the teachers' ratings of their perceived principals' leadership behaviors in the three different groups of schools. Finally, a Mann-Whitney U test was used to determine if significant differences existed between teacher and principal perceptions in each category of schools.

### **Findings**

1. Hypothesis 1 was rejected. There were significant differences between perceived leadership behaviors between the three groups of principals in the Transformational Leadership Category. Group C principals rated their Transformational Leadership behavior significantly higher than both Group A and Group B principals. No significant differences were found in the other three leadership categories measured on the MLQ.
2. Hypothesis 2 was rejected. There were significant differences between teacher perceptions of their principals' leadership behaviors between the three groups of teachers. Teacher perceptions of their principals' leadership behaviors varied significantly between schools that had: (a) stayed out of AUS status for two or more years, (b) fluctuated in and out of AUS status, and (c) never exited AUS status from 2012 through 2016. Significant differences occurred in all four leadership categories.
  - a. Group C teacher perceptions of principal behaviors were significantly lower than teacher perceptions in both Group A and Group B in the Transformational Leadership Category.

- b. Group C teacher perceptions of principal behaviors were significantly lower than teacher perceptions in Group B in the Transactional Leadership Category.
  - c. Group B teacher perceptions of principal behaviors were significantly lower than both Group A and Group C in the Passive/Avoidant Leadership Category.
  - d. Group C teacher perceptions of principal behaviors were significantly lower than both Group A and Group B in the Outcomes of Leadership Category.
3. Hypothesis 3 was rejected. Although no significant differences were found between teacher and principal perceptions in Group A and Group B schools, significant differences were found between teacher and principal perceptions in Group C schools in the Transformational Leadership and Outcomes of Leadership Categories.
- a. No significant differences were found in Group A and Group B schools between teacher and principal perceptions.
  - b. Teachers in Group C perceived their principals' Transformational Leadership behaviors significantly lower than principals perceived their own Transformational Leadership behavior. Analyzation of Transformational Leadership subcategories revealed that teachers perceived principal behaviors significantly lower in three of the five subcategories: (a) Idealized Attributes, (b) Intellectual Stimulation, and (c) Individualized Consideration.

- c. Teachers in Group C perceived their principals' Outcomes of Leadership behaviors significantly lower than principals perceived their own Outcomes of Leadership behavior. Analyzation of Outcomes of Leadership subcategories revealed that teacher perceptions were marginally significantly lower than the principals' perceptions in the Efficient and Satisfaction subcategories.

There were two research questions guiding this study.

Research Question 1: What principal leadership behaviors transformed previously low performing schools to achieving academic gains?

The ANOVA and Scheffé findings for Research Question 1 indicated that a significant difference existed among teacher perceived leadership behaviors between principals that had successfully and occasionally exited out of AUS. Principals in these two categories were perceived by their teachers to be more transformational and their behaviors had a more positive effect on the organization than principals that had never exited out of AUS status (see Tables 6, 9, and 10). Mann-Whitney U test results indicated that teachers at minimally successful schools perceived their principals as weaker in the Transformational Category (see Tables 6 and 13). Further analysis indicated that principals were perceived as lacking in three transformational subcategories: (a) building trust (Idealized Attributes), (b) encouraging innovative thinking (Intellectual Stimulation), and (c) coaching teachers to develop to their full potential (Individualized Consideration) (see Table 14). Teachers at minimal growth schools also perceived their principals as displaying a stronger degree of Passive/Avoidant behaviors (see Tables 9 and 10).

Research Question 2: Are there differences in leadership behaviors between the leaders of successful turnaround schools, schools that showed occasional success and schools that showed minimal success?

The answer to this question depends on whether one examines the teacher or the principal perceptions. The ANOVA, Scheffé, and Mann-Whitney U test findings for Research Question 1 indicated that principals all perceived their behaviors to be: (a) Transformational, (b) Transactional, and (c) not Passive/Avoidant. Principals perceived their leadership behaviors as positively affecting the outcome of their organizations (Outcomes of Leadership category). However, some teachers perceived their principals' behavior slightly differently. Teachers from both successful and occasionally successful schools did not perceive any significant differences in leadership. Teachers from minimal growth schools perceived significant differences in leadership behaviors. These teachers perceived their principals as more Passive/Avoidant and not as Transformational in comparison to the teacher perceptions in the other two groups. Organizational success was perceived lower by teachers at minimally successful schools as well.

### **Discussion**

Principals at successful and occasionally successful schools in this study were perceived differently than principals at minimally successful schools. Teachers at successful and occasionally successful school perceived their principals as effective leaders whose behaviors aligned with Transformational Leadership characteristics. Teachers at minimally successful schools perceived Passive/Avoidant behaviors from their principals. This replicates some of the findings in the literature review. May and Sanders (2013) stated that academically failing schools need leaders with

Transformational characteristics in order to effect dramatic change and sustain growth. Based on the analysis of the MLQ, principals at schools that had exited out of AUS status and fluctuated in and out of AUS status were perceived by teachers to have stronger Transformational Leadership behaviors. May and Sanders also found that teachers in turnaround schools perceived their principals to be significantly more transformational than principals in traditional schools.

### **Transformational Leadership**

Avolio and Bass (2004) described leaders who score high in this area are perceived as going beyond their own individual interests by focusing on the interests of the organization. The leader acts in a way that inspires followers. Leaders display a sense of power, confidence, and pride which then inspires power, confidence, and pride in their followers. Followers look to these leaders as reference models for their own behaviors. Primary findings from this study indicated that principals from successful and occasionally successful schools were perceived by teachers as stronger in three Transformational subcategories. First, successful and occasionally successful principals had the ability to build trust between themselves and their teaching staff (Idealized Attributes). This quality was rated lower by teachers at minimally successful schools.

Examples of the importance of trust building throughout the school were found in the literature review. Brown et al. (2016) noted that stability and strong relationships with staff were strong principal characteristics in schools that had successfully turned around academic achievement. Teachers at turnaround schools studied by May and Sanders (2013) also ranked their principals high in their ability to build trust among their staff. Trust was a successfully implied characteristic in the White and Levin (2016) study. The



principal actively served as a buffer between staff members that opposed a change in curriculum and staff members that actively supported the change. The principal allowed members of his staff to run the program while keeping other staff members from stopping the program. Documented results in the White and Levin study showed that the program was successful in preparing extremely low-performing minority students for college-level coursework.

A second behavior that was perceived higher in principals at successful and occasionally schools was the ability to encourage innovative thinking in others, known as Intellectual Stimulation on the MLQ. Transformational Leadership involves the stimulation of associates' ideas and values (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Transformational leaders encourage others to think about old problems in new ways by questioning their own beliefs, assumptions, and values. When appropriate, others are encouraged to question the leader who may have outdated or inappropriate ways for solving current problems. Through support, creativity, and innovation, associates learn to tackle and solve problems thus developing a capacity to solve future problems unforeseen by the leader. Associates then develop the capacity to solve future problems on their own. Hitt and Tucker (2016) substantiated the importance of encouraging innovative thinking among staff members as well. The ability to intellectually stimulate their faculties was found to be a primary domain of effective leaders in their empirical research study. According to Bass and Riggio (2006), leadership training is a key characteristic of a Transformational Leader.

The encouragement of innovative thinking among school faculty was described throughout the literature. May and Sanders (2013) stated that principals must pursue

innovative answers to old problems by challenging current belief systems in order to turn around academically low-performing schools. In their study, staff members felt their contributions were valued and appreciated. The principal in the study by White and Levin (2016) allowed staff members to develop and implement a new system that challenged the methods and beliefs of other current staff members. In both instances, the new challenges were successful in changing the school climate and academic goals of the schools. Distributed leadership was also implicated as a successful leadership tool in the success of a school (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011). Although distributed leadership was not in place initially at these schools, it was noteworthy in changing the climate of the schools. Teachers became more involved in attaining academic goals when leadership was shared. This contributed to building strong relationships and trust between principals and staff members. Galindo et al. (2016) found that when administrators and teachers took ownership of school reform, this contributed to the success of the academic turnaround of the school. Typically, shared responsibilities and distributed leadership were developed through training and were not an initial characteristics of school leadership (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011; Galindo et al., 2016; May & Sanders, 2013).

The third Transformational behavior that was perceived higher by teachers at successful and occasionally successful schools was their ability to coach people on an individual basis, known as Intellectual Consideration on the MLQ. Transformational leaders understand and share in others' concerns and developmental needs while treating each individual uniquely (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Not only does the transformational leader understand and develop current needs in others, but also helps others maximize

and develop to their full potential. Transformational leaders provide opportunities and tasks are assigned on an individual basis. Leaders develop an organizational culture that supports individual growth.

Principals that established an organizational culture that supports individual growth is seen throughout the literature as a successful characteristic. Duke and Landahl (2011) deemed it important that the principal work with teachers individually to set professional goals. Professional learning communities were established at the school in the Galindo et al. (2016) study. The successful turnaround schools in the Player and Katz (2016) study promoted collaboration among the staff. These principals created an environment that attracted, developed, and retained high quality teachers. The Duke and Landahl, Galindo et al., and Player and Katz studies implied that providing professional development opportunities were important to turning around academic achievement. Furthermore, the failure of principals to provide professional development on a consistent basis was determined to be a contributing factor in schools that did not improve academically (Duke & Landahl, 2011; Strunk et al., 2016).

### **Passive/Avoidant Leadership**

Principals at minimally successful schools behaved more passively and had an avoidant leadership style than principals in the other two categories. Transformational leaders rarely or never display Passive/Avoidant behaviors. Passive leaders do not make their expectations clear nor do they set clear objectives and performance standards for their followers (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Principal behaviors are not proactive, but reactive and focused on punishment. The leader avoids involvement completely and may not even react to threats and problems until it is too late. Passive/Avoidant leaders believe

that most of the time a problem will disappear or solve itself in time. These behaviors typically have a negative impact on the performance of individuals, groups, and organizations.

Various examples of Passive/Avoidant leadership styles were found throughout the literature. Brown et al. (2016) found that academically unsuccessful schools had inconsistent discipline and management policies. Strunk et al. (2016) found that academically unsuccessful schools had principals that did not implement school reform plans. Prior to the turnaround program at the school studied by Duke and Landahl (2011), the focus was on adult problems and not on student learning. A new principal shifted the focus back to student learning. The Sampson (2011) study, which also examined three academically unsuccessful school districts that had transformed into academically successful school districts, found that those districts also focused on “students first” which contributed to the success of those schools.

Although this study did not focus on communication as a separate characteristic, the ability to communicate effectively with stakeholders and communicate the mission and goals of the school was viewed as important to school academic turnaround in several of the schools examined in the literature review (Brown et al., 2016; Duke & Landahl, 2011; May & Sanders, 2013; Player & Katz, 2016; Sampson, 2011; White & Levin 2016). Principals must be able to communicate and elicit support of the school’s vision and goals to all stakeholders. Passive/Avoidant leaders either have an unwillingness or an inability to communicate effectively in order to guide the school. Transformational leaders inspire their followers through actions and effective communications (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

## **Outcomes of Leadership**

Avolio and Bass (2004) stated that both Transformational and Transactional Leadership behaviors are closely related to the success of both the individual and organization. In this study, the perceptions of teachers and principals in all three groups of schools perceived the principals as transactional. Basically, there were no variances in Transactional Leadership behaviors that could have affected Outcomes of Leadership perceptions. Therefore, the variances were found in Transformational Leadership behaviors and Passive/Avoidant behaviors in this study which coincides with how the success of a school is measured in Louisiana. The success of a Louisiana school is measured by the state test scores. Schools in this study that had never exited out of AUS status had principals that were perceived by teachers as less Transformational and more frequently Passive/Avoidant than principals that had successfully and occasionally exited out of AUS status. These same teachers at minimally successful schools rated the overall success of their principals significantly lower than teachers at schools that exited out of AUS status.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were reached:

1. Teachers at schools that had successfully and occasionally exited out of AUS status perceived strong transformational behaviors in their principals as measured by the MLQ (see Table 6).
2. Teachers at schools that remained in AUS status had lower perceptions of Transformational behaviors in their principals predominately in the areas of:  
(a) building trust (Idealized Attributes), (b) encouraging innovative thinking in

others (Intellectual Stimulation), and (c) training and coaching others (Individualized Consideration).

3. Principals at successful and occasionally successful schools rarely displayed Passive/Avoidant behaviors as perceived by teachers.
4. The overall Outcomes of Leadership effectiveness at successful and occasionally successful schools was perceived by teachers as significantly higher than in schools that had achieved minimal success.

### **Implications for Practice**

The relationship between student achievement and effective school leadership has been well substantiated over the last four decades (Avci, 2015; Herman et al., 2008; Nichols et al., 2012). In 2015, the U.S. Department of Education awarded more than \$16.2 million in grants to improve school leadership at low-performing schools ("Grants to Improve Leadership," 2015). Hitt and Tucker (2016) defined an effective school principal as one that establishes and maintains vision, leads instructional improvement, facilitates a learning environment for teachers and students, and engages all stakeholders on issues of capacity and student achievement. Griffin and Green (2013) identified principal practices, processes and procedures that successful principals use to transform high poverty, underperforming schools into high performing schools. Thus, the importance of effective school leadership is clearly established.

Identifying principal behaviors that contribute to the transformation of underperforming schools contributes to identified processes and procedures that can transform a school. Although certain processes and procedures are established in many turnaround schools, it takes an effective principal to implement the changes in such a way

as to transform the school. Identifying these transformative behaviors of an effective leader is key to the training and development of current and future leaders. Leadership training institutions can develop their programs to include a module of successful leadership behaviors. Successful behaviors as defined by Transformational behavior that training programs should be aware of include: (a) Idealized Influence both in attitude and behavior, (b) Inspirational Motivation of employees, (c) Intellectual Stimulation of employees, and (d) Individual Consideration that focuses on individualized training and goal setting among employees. According to Bass and Riggio (2006), these behaviors can be developed. Conversely, examining unsuccessful leadership behaviors should also be examined in order to assist current and future leaders in effectively dealing with difficult or challenging situations found in underperforming schools.

### **Limitations of Study**

Although the research was carefully prepared, there are some limitations. First, only a small amount of schools participated in this study. This was partially due to school closures and an attempt by the researcher to keep a consistency in grades taught in the study group on the elementary level. Therefore, in order to generalize the results for larger groups, the study should be replicated to involve more participants. Second, the survey was administered during the 2017-2018 school year. Therefore, it is not known if the principals and teachers that participated in the survey were at the school during the time period from 2011 through 2016. Teacher and principal turnover rates can be as high as 30% in failing schools (Holme et al., 2017; Strickland-Cohen et al., 2014). Thus, it was difficult to gauge the true behaviors of principals that were in the school during that time because it was not known if the teachers and principals participating in the study

were at the school that entire time. Third, results of this study are strictly based on survey participation. Background information about the school, the principals and demographics could provide a more thorough study on school turnaround issues. Experience and former training of principals was not addressed.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The following recommendations for further research were developed as a result of this study and the review of literature:

1. Additional research on specific behaviors of principals that have achieved success in turning around academically unsuccessful schools needs to be replicated on a broader scale. Further research should extend to multiple schools from various geographic regions and in other states.
2. The current study was limited to a comparison of leadership behaviors in elementary schools in various stages of the school turnaround process. Additional research that compares leadership behaviors from middle and secondary AUSs could be undertaken to study leadership behaviors.
3. Further investigations should examine leadership training and experience aligned with school turnaround results and leadership behaviors.
4. If a qualitative component was added to this study, background data could provide a more complete analysis of principal and teacher perceptions of leadership behaviors.



Because improving academically unacceptable schools is a primary issue in the state of Louisiana, future investigations of leaderships behaviors in academically struggling schools will add to this body of research. By identifying key behaviors in effective school leaders, these behaviors can be used to train and develop educators to meet the needs of struggling students.

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**APPENDIX A**

**HUMAN USE APPROVAL LETTER**



LOUISIANA TECH  
UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF SPONSORED PROJECTS

TO: Ms. Annette Lee and Dr. Randy Parker

FROM: Dr. Richard Kordal, Director of Intellectual Properties  
[rkordal@latech.edu](mailto:rkordal@latech.edu) *RJK*

SUBJECT: HUMAN USE COMMITTEE REVIEW

DATE: December 4, 2017

In order to facilitate your project, an EXPEDITED REVIEW has been done for your proposed study entitled:

**"Investigation into the Leadership Behaviors of LA School Leaders  
Involved in the School Turnaround Process"**

HUC 17-123

The proposed study's revised procedures were found to provide reasonable and adequate safeguards against possible risks involving human subjects. The information to be collected may be personal in nature or implication. Therefore, diligent care needs to be taken to protect the privacy of the participants and to assure that the data are kept confidential. Informed consent is a critical part of the research process. The subjects must be informed that their participation is voluntary. It is important that consent materials be presented in a language understandable to every participant. If you have participants in your study whose first language is not English, be sure that informed consent materials are adequately explained or translated. Since your reviewed project appears to do no damage to the participants, the Human Use Committee grants approval of the involvement of human subjects as outlined.

Projects should be renewed annually. *This approval was finalized on December 4, 2017 and this project will need to receive a continuation review by the IRB if the project, including data analysis, continues beyond December 4, 2018.* Any discrepancies in procedure or changes that have been made including approved changes should be noted in the review application. Projects involving NIH funds require annual education training to be documented. For more information regarding this, contact the Office of University Research.

You are requested to maintain written records of your procedures, data collected, and subjects involved. These records will need to be available upon request during the conduct of the study and retained by the university for three years after the conclusion of the study. If changes occur in recruiting of subjects, informed consent process or in your research protocol, or if unanticipated problems should arise it is the Researchers responsibility to notify the Office of Research or IRB in writing. The project should be discontinued until modifications can be reviewed and approved.

Please be aware that you are responsible for reporting any adverse events or unanticipated problems.

A MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA SYSTEM

P.O. BOX 3092 • RUSTON, LA 71272 • TEL: (318) 257-5075 • FAX: (318) 257-5079

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**APPENDIX B**

**HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE FORM**

## DEPARTMENT HEAD APPROVAL FORM

TO: Project Directors

FROM: Barbara Talbot, Office of University Research  
[btalbot@latech.edu](mailto:btalbot@latech.edu)  
 318-257-5075 phone  
 318-257-5079 fax  
<http://research.latech.edu/>

SUBJECT: HUMAN USE COMMITTEE REVIEW

Please submit this page, signed by yourself, and your Department Head or Dean, when submitting a proposal to the Human Use Committee for expedited approval.

Your signatures are stating that you are aware of this proposal and/or survey being conducted, and all aspects of the study comply with the appropriate University Policies and Procedures.

(Print or type below)

Curriculum, Instruction and Leadership  
 Department

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Faculty Member Serving as Principal Investigator (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Student Researcher (If applicable)

Doctor of Education  
 Academic Program

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Department Head Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Department Head  
 (Actual Original Signature Required)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date



Do you plan to publish this study?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Will this study be published by a national organization?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
Are copyrighted materials involved?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Do you have written permission to use copyrighted materials?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Researchers must comply with all training requirements from their funding agency.		
COMMENTS:		

**STUDY/PROJECT INFORMATION FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE**

**Describe your study/project in detail for the Human Subjects Committee. Please include the following information.**

TITLE: Investigation into the Leadership Behaviors of Louisiana School Leaders  
Involved in the School Turnaround Process

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S): Annette Lee  
Dr. Randy Parker

EMAIL: all046@latech.edu, doctorp@latechedu  
PHONE: Lee – (318) 469-1192, Parker – (318) 257-2834

DEPARTMENT(S): Curriculum, Instruction, and Leadership

PURPOSE OF STUDY/PROJECT: (1) To identify successful turnaround schools in Louisiana, (2) To identify leadership characteristics of the principals who successfully turned around failing schools. (3) Teachers and principals will be asked to participate in the study to identify characteristics of principals.

SUBJECTS: Selected principals and teachers who work in public schools in Louisiana.

PROCEDURE: No data will be collected before the study is approved by the Human Subjects Committee of Louisiana Tech University. Selection of principals and teachers asked to participate in the study will be based on “D” or “F” school performance score status that have achieved improved school performance, achieved improved school performance and then declined back to “D” or “F” status, and schools that have never improved from the years 2006 to 2016. Permission to conduct the study and interview principals will be obtained from the superintendent of each participating school district. Principals will then be interviewed. Then principals and teachers will complete the MLQ survey instrument online.

**INSTRUMENTS AND MEASURES TO INSURE PROTECTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY, ANONYMITY:** (1) Principals from schools that were rated “D” or “F” during the 2006 to 2016-time frame will be interviewed in order for the researcher to learn about the school improvement processes implemented at each school. (2) Principals and teachers from schools rated “D” or “F” during the 2006 to 2016-time frame will complete the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by Bernard Bass and Bruce J. Avolio. Originally developed in 1995, the MLQ has evolved over the last 30 years based on numerous investigations of leaders in public and private organizations. The MLQ has been used extensively in field and laboratory research to study transformational, transactional and passive/avoidant leadership styles. The MLQ is a 45 item questionnaire with a Likert scale from 0 to 4. The principals will complete the Leader Form version of the MLQ, the teachers at each school will complete the Rater form version of the MLQ. The forms will be used to measure and compare leadership characteristics of principals at each of the schools that were once rated “D” or “F” and improved their school performance scores, improved the score but then declined back to a “D” or “F” status, or never improved their status beyond a “D” or “F” score. All collected information will be held confidential and only viewed by the researchers.

**RISKS/ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS:** There are no known risks associated with participation in this study. The participant understands that Louisiana Tech is not able to offer financial compensation nor to absorb the costs of medical treatment should you be injured as a result of participating in this research.

**BENEFITS/COMPENSATION:** None

**SAFEGUARDS OF PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING:** This study involves no treatment or physical contact. Participation is voluntary. All information collected from the survey and interviews will be held strictly confidential. No one will be allowed access to the data other than the researchers.

<p>Note: Use the Human Subjects Consent form to briefly summarize information about the study/project to participants and obtain their permission to participate.</p>
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## HUMAN SUBJECTS CONSENT FORM

The following is a brief summary of the project in which you are asked to participate. Please read this information before signing the statement below. You must be of legal age or must be co-signed by parent or guardian to participate in this study.

**TITLE OF PROJECT:** Investigation into the Leadership Behaviors of Louisiana School Leaders Involved in the School Turnaround Process

**PURPOSE OF STUDY/PROJECT:** (1) To identify successful turnaround schools in Louisiana, (2) To identify leadership characteristics of the principals who turned around failing schools.

**PROCEDURE:** No data will be collected before the study is approved by the Human Subjects Committee of Louisiana Tech University. Selection of principals and teachers asked to participate in the study will be based on “D” or “F” school performance score status from 2006 to 2016. These schools will then be divided into three categories: a) schools that have achieved improved school performance, b) schools that have achieved improved school performance and then declined back to “D” or “F” status, and c) schools that have never improved from the years 2006 to 2016. Permission to conduct the study and interview principals will be obtained from the superintendent of each participating school district. Principals from all three categories of school performance will then be interviewed. Then principals and teachers from all three categories will complete the MLQ survey instrument online.

**INSTRUMENTS:** (1) Principals from the three categories of schools will be interviewed in order for the researcher to learn about the school improvement processes implemented at each school. (2) Principals and teachers will complete the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by Bernard Bass and Bruce J. Avolio. Originally developed in 1995, the MLQ has evolved over the last 30 years based on numerous investigations of leaders in public and private organizations. The MLQ has been used extensively in field and laboratory research to study transformational, transactional and passive/avoidant leadership styles. The MLQ is a 45 item questionnaire with a Likert scale from 0 to 4. The principals will fill out the Leader Form version of the MLQ, the teachers at each school will complete a Rater form version of the MLQ. Principals and teachers from the three categories of schools will be asked to participate in the survey. The forms will be used to measure and compare leadership characteristics at each of the selected schools. All collected information will be held confidential and only viewed by the researchers.

**RISKS/ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS:** There are no known risks associated with participation in this study. The participant understands that Louisiana Tech is not able to offer financial compensation nor to absorb the costs of medical treatment should you be injured as a result of participating in this research.

The following disclosure applies to all participants using online survey tools: This server may collect information and your IP address indirectly and automatically via “cookies”.

**BENEFITS/COMPENSATION:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, attest with my signature that I have read and understood the following description of the study, "Investigation in the Leadership Behaviors of Louisiana School Leaders Involved in the School Turnaround Process", and its purposes and methods. I understand that my participation in this research is strictly voluntary and my participation or refusal to participate in this study will not affect my relationship with Louisiana Tech University or my grades in any way. Further, I understand that I may withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any questions without penalty. Upon completion of the study, I understand that the results will be freely available to me upon request. I understand that the results of my survey will be confidential, accessible only to the principal investigators, myself, or a legally appointed representative. I have not been requested to waive nor do I waive any of my rights related to participating in this study. I am over 18 years of age.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** The principal experimenters listed below may be reached to answer questions about the research, subjects' rights, or related matters.

**PROJECT DIRECTOR(S):** Annette Lee  
Dr. Randy Parker  
**EMAIL:** all046@latech.edu, doctorp@latechedu  
**PHONE:** Lee – (318) 469-1192, Parker – (318) 257-2834

Members of the Human Use Committee of Louisiana Tech University may also be contacted if a problem cannot be discussed with the experimenters:

Dr. Stan Napper (257-3056)

Dr. Mary M. Livingston (257-2292 or 257-5066)

**APPENDIX C**

**PERMISSION LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS**

Annette Lee  
405 Wellington Ct.  
Shreveport, LA 71115  
318-469-1192

November 6, 2017

(INSERT NAME), Superintendent  
(INSERT SCHOOL DISTRICT) Parish School Board  
(INSERT ADDRESS), (INSERT CITY), LA (INSERT ZIP CODE)

RE: Permission to Conduct Research study

Dear Dr. (INSERT NAME):

I am writing to request permission to conduct a research study at (INSERT SCHOOL). I am conducting this research as part of my Doctor of Educational Leadership at Louisiana Tech University. The study investigates leadership in turnaround schools. I hope that you will allow me to interview the principals and survey the principals and teachers at the schools. All information, including the names of the schools will be kept confidential and pseudonyms will be given to all participants.

If approval is granted, the surveys will be completed anonymously on line and the principals will be interviewed over the phone at a mutually agreeable time. The survey consists of 45 statements and should take about 15 minutes to complete. The individual results of the study will remain absolutely confidential and anonymous. No costs will be incurred by either the school or the individual participants.

Your approval to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated. I will follow up with a telephone call next week and will be happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have at that time. You may contact me at my email address: all046@latech.edu.

If you agree to let me conduct this study at these schools, please respond to this email or send a letter acknowledging your consent and permission for me to conduct this study at (INSERT SCHOOL).

Sincerely,

Annette Lee

**APPENDIX D**

**RESPONSES FROM DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS**

Annette Lee  
Doctor of Educational Leadership Program  
Louisiana Tech University

Dear Mrs. Lee:

I commend you on your efforts to pursue an advanced degree. Your request to conduct research to investigate leadership in turnaround schools at [redacted] Elementary, [redacted] Elementary, [redacted] and [redacted] Elementary Schools, has been approved.

Your project will be coordinated through the office of [redacted] Supervisor-Accountability and Data, via e-mail at [redacted]

Research participation of [redacted] employees is strictly on a voluntary basis.

Approval of the research study does not mandate/require [redacted] employees to participate.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

[redacted signature]

Chief Academic Officer

c:

[redacted]



**Permission to Conduct Research Study**









Date: 11/10/2017 (07:03:52 CDT)

From: [REDACTED]

To: all046@latech.edu

Cc: [REDACTED]




Attachments:  
[Save All]

-  Mixed (58 KB)
-  Alternative (2 KB)
-  Text (1 KB) 
-  Text (2 KB) 
-  0068\_001.pdf (56 KB) 

✉ You forwarded this message on 12/04/2017 13:36:13 to: Barbara Talbot <bta006@latech.edu>.

↩ You replied to all recipients of this message on 11/12/2017 16:25:42.

✉ You forwarded this message on 12/04/2017 13:43:45 to: "Barbara T. Talbot" <btalbot@latech.edu>.

 Text (1 KB)  

Annette:

Thank you for contacting my office regarding requested permission to conduct a research study at [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Schools. Permission is granted for you to interview school leadership.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Superintendent

[REDACTED] Parish School System

**Fwd: Permission to Conduct Research study**






Date: 11/06/2017 (14:35:11 CDT)

From: [REDACTED]




To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Attachments:  
[Save All]

-  Alternative (4 KB)
-  Text (2 KB) 
-  Text (2 KB) 

 You forwarded this message on 12/04/2017 13:41:17 to: btalbot@latech.edu.

 Text (2 KB)  

[REDACTED]

I am approving the request (below) with the understanding that you and your faculty are under no obligation to participate. You may, however, participate should you decide to do so.

[REDACTED]

## **APPENDIX E**

### **MULTIFACTOR LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE LICENSE**



[www.mindgarden.com](http://www.mindgarden.com)

To Whom It May Concern,

The above-named person has made a license purchase from Mind Garden, Inc. and has permission to administer the following copyrighted instrument up to that quantity purchased:

**Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire**

The three sample items only from this instrument as specified below may be included in your thesis or dissertation. Any other use must receive prior written permission from Mind Garden. The entire instrument may not be included or reproduced at any time in any other published material. Please understand that disclosing more than we have authorized will compromise the integrity and value of the test.

**Citation of the instrument must include the applicable copyright statement listed below. Sample Items:**

As a leader ....

- I talk optimistically about the future.
- I spend time teaching and coaching.
- I avoid making decisions.

The person I am rating....

- Talks optimistically about the future.
- Spends time teaching and coaching.
- Avoids making decisions

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Published by Mind Garden, Inc. [www.mindgarden.com](http://www.mindgarden.com)

Sincerely,

Robert Most  
Mind Garden, Inc.  
[www.mindgarden.com](http://www.mindgarden.com)

## **APPENDIX F**

### **VITA**

## VITA

I received a Bachelor's degree in Marketing from the University of Utah and a Master of Teaching degree from Centenary College. Later I added a Gifted Education certification from Louisiana State University in Shreveport. I originally taught elementary students, moved to teaching gifted middle school students in math and high school and have since returned to teaching elementary gifted students. I have served as a Teacher Leader and presented several Professional Development workshops at the school level, district level, and the state level. One of my career goals was to get my doctorate degree, so I enrolled at Louisiana Tech University and focused on Educational Leadership. While attending Louisiana Tech, I received the Department of Curriculum, Instruction, and Leadership Outstanding Graduate Award. During my time with Louisiana Tech, I was the featured speaker for the PEO state convention. I also presented my dissertation work at the annual meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association. Jennifer was named Principal of St. John Berchmans in 2017. Jennifer holds the following certifications: Elementary Education (1-8), School Counseling (K-12), Educational Leadership Level 1, National Certified Counselor, and National Certified School Counselor.