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Assessment of Leadership Practices of Principals of Turnaround Elementary Schools in Minnesota

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Turnaround Elementary Schools in Minnesota

by

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Abstract

The quantitative study examined the perception of principals in Minnesota elementary Reward Schools (also known as turnaround schools) regarding their leadership practices with reference to transformational leadership. Data for the study were collected from principals' responses to the Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI-SELF) developed by Kouzes and Posner.

The study acknowledged that transformational leadership has great potential to effect meaningful change in turning around schools; the principals in the study reported the highest frequency of engagement in the leadership practices of Enable others to Act, Encourage the Heart, Model the Way, and Challenge the Process. The fifth and last practice, inspire a Shared Vision, was not selected as a practice in which principals' frequently engaged.

In addition, the study's research found that principals ranked maintain focus on student learning and related goals; developing a feeling of mutual accountability among staff, and providing clear expectations as the top three essential leadership skills among eight developed by Herman et.al (2008) to use to further student achievement. The study provided insight into the types of leadership practices and skills that could positively impact student achievement in low performing elementary schools in Minnesota.

Acknowledgment

(Amharic translation first)

"Fear of God is the Beginning of Wisdom and Understanding of Knowledge".

These are the first words I learnt when I go to school and these same words I dearly hold when I finish school at a doctoral level. These words are the beginning and the end of my understanding and acquisition of knowledge for the almighty gave me the strength, the ability and opportunity to undertake this journey. I thank God for helping me persevere all the way to the finish line. Without his blessings, this achievement would not have been possible.

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I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to Dr. James Kouzes and Dr. Barry Posner, Santa Clara University, CA for their kind permission to use their Leadership Practices Inventory instrument in this study.

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the absolute privilege and honor of being able to call you my advisor and best friend; Thank you for giving me these reasons, and a million more, to be thankful.

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mate and the rock of my life. I love you and I am proud to say again and again that you are the best thing that has ever happened to me.

Kassahun C. Wana

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my late mother emahoye Tiru Wana and late mother in-law W/o Tenagne Tedeneke. You are my guardian angels who are constantly watching over me. This one is for both of you. A Million Thanks!

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter I: Introduction

Narrowing the achievement gap has been a priority issue on the agenda of educational reform in the United States for decades. In 1983, the national report entitled "A Nation at Risk" was highly critical of American public education, claiming other countries were outperforming American schools (U.S. Department of Education, A Nation At Risk, 1983). The report outlined specific details that were believed would improve the quality of American schools: extended time, improving teacher quality, examining content, and assessment methods for students (U.S. Department of Education, A Nation At Risk, 1983). As a result, governmental officers, business leaders, politicians and others called for school reforms and greater accountability.

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act was signed into law by President Bush in 2002 to increase public school accountability. The bill was signed almost two decades after "A Nation at Risk" and signing the act into law was an attempt to address the inequalities in education, since "too many of our neediest children are being left behind" (No Child Left Behind—ED.gov, 2001). The law established minimum qualifications for teachers and paraprofessionals and goals of all children to achieve a state defined proficiency levels by 2013-2014.

Over the years, the NCLB legislation received increasing criticism, and, consequently the U.S. Department of Education established a goal to turn around the nation's lowest performing 5% of schools through a School Improvement Grant (SIG) program, which provided states with criteria for identifying eligible schools and enabling competition among Local Education Agencies (LEA) to secure School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding (School Improvement Grants, 2018). At the same time, the U.S. Department of Education made school turnaround a key component of its Race to the Top (RTTT) competition for states and later for Local Education Agencies (LEA).

In 2009, President Barack Obama's administration made funding available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to improve the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program and focus on turning around 5,000 low performing schools nationwide (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). The SIG program was the latest in the federal policy initiatives to reform education at the school and district levels from the U.S Department of Education and required applicant school districts to commit to one of the four federally approved school transformation models: the turnaround model, the restart model, the school closure model and the transformation model (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).

In 2011, Congress acknowledged the practical challenges inherent in the implementation of some of the provisions of NCLB; the turnaround models and created opportunities for states to revise their accountability structures (Flexibility and Waivers, 2012).The Elementary and Secondary School Flexibility waiver (also known as the "Waiver") provided opportunities to gain greater flexibility in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive state developed plans (Flexibility and Waivers, 2012).

Minnesota applied for and received U.S Department of Education approval for the ESEA flexibility waiver, which provided the opportunity to craft a state-specific plan for education and to implement a new system of accountability for schools (Minnesota ESEA Flexibility Map Page, 2015). At the foundation of the accountability system was a Multiple Measurement Rating (MMR) that replaced Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) as the primary measurement of school performance (MMR, How it works, n.d.). Using the MMR, schools were designated as Priority, Focus, Continuous Improvement, Celebration eligible and Reward schools. Reward schools were those that ranked highest on the Multiple Measurement Ratings (MMR) scale (Minnesota ESEA Flexibility Map Page, 2015).

The principals of these turnaround schools were challenged with the task of closing the achievement gap and raising achievement for all students. Those who failed to do so were held responsible and subject to a series of sanctions ranging from dismissal, (being fired), to closing a low performing school. Educational policy standards also demanded that the principals meet standards and ensure effective applications of those standards (Educational Leadership Policy Standards; ISLLC 2008, 2008).

In light of these demanding tasks, knowledge of the best way to prepare and develop highly qualified leader/principal candidates was sparse (Darling-Hammond, Lapointe, Meyerson, & Orr, 2007). Research in the last decade suggested that leadership programs failed to equip leaders and principals with the skills needed to build thriving schools (Styron & LeMire, 2011). A number of studies identified specific leadership practices and skills of effective leaders. Transformational leadership was one of those practices that was supported by several researchers (Bass, 1996; Bass & Avolio, 1994a). Leaders' effectiveness rests on their ability to select and implement the best leadership practices that will highly impact student achievement (Herman et al., 2008).

Understanding schools are transformed and improved by their leaders, and how those leaders perceive their leadership in the transformation process, is of central importance to the study. The study intended to examine the perceptions of select principals of high performing elementary turnaround schools (Reward schools) with regard to leadership roles and practices they employed in turning around their schools and then, relate their leadership practices to the norms of five exemplary leadership practices found in the literature.

Statement of the Problem

Although several years have passed since the implementation of the turnaround school

model, there is a need to understand how leadership practices support student achievement.

Some schools that received school improvement grants achieved positive results and

demonstrated exemplary performance levels in state examinations, student growth, graduate

rates, and in closing the achievement gap (Leithwood, Harris, & Strauss, 2010). Understanding

this, it would seem valuable to undertake an inquiry to identify effective school improvement

leadership practices in select turnaround schools. The transformational leadership theory by

Kouzes and Posner provided a model of leadership practices that may facilitate "turning around"

low performing schools.

Significance of the Study

The results of the study may assist principals of low performing schools in developing an

effective model of practice that may be employed to promote student academic achievement and

meet accountability standards in their efforts to turn around their schools. School leadership

programs may use the study's findings to teach effective practices to practitioners and school

systems in Minnesota in order to affect achievement gains for students in all schools.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopted a conceptual leadership framework developed by Kouzes and Posner

to examine the leadership practices of turnaround school principals and relate those leadership

practices to the five practices of exemplary leadership identified in their research. Kouzes' and

Posner's research was conducted for nearly 30 years and has been recognized, by many

researchers, as demonstrating highly effective leadership practices (Taylor, 2002). The

leadership framework included the following five practices: Model the Way; Inspire a Shared

Vision; Challenge the Process; Enable Others to Act and Encourage the Heart (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). These practices are discussed below.

Model the Way: model the behavior expected of others (positive role model); lead from beliefs, word and deed; demonstrate values and beliefs; and follow the person, then the plan. Inspire a Shared Vision: envision the future by imagining, exciting & ennobling possibilities; bring others in to a shared vision by appealing to shared aspirations.

Challenge the Process: seek innovative ways to change, grow, & improve; experiment and take risks by generating small wins and learning from mistakes.

Enable Others to Act: promote cooperative goals & build trust; strengthen others by sharing power and discretion.

Encourage the Heart: recognize individual contributions to the success of every project; celebrate team accomplishments regularly.

The study employed the use of the Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI-SELF) as a measurement tool to determine the extent to which the leadership practices identified by Kouzes and Posner appeared in turnaround elementary schools in Minnesota and also determined how principals of turnaround schools ranked essential leadership skills identified by Herman et al, (2008).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the study was to seek principals' level of engagement with five Leadership Practices in select Minnesota elementary Reward (turnaround) Schools based on the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI-SELF) developed by Kouzes and Posner (2017). In addition, using eight essential leadership skills identified by Herman et al. (2008), the study sought to find how principals of turnaround schools ranked ordered these leadership skills and

their level of confidence in using these skills to bring about change in their schools. The results

of the study can be used to assist principals in identifying essential leadership practices and skills

to improve student achievement in low performing elementary schools.

Research Questions

The following questions were developed to guide the study:

1. How did elementary principals of Minnesota turnaround (Reward) schools perceive

   their leadership practices in relation to five practices of exemplary leadership (LPI-

   SELF)?

2. How did elementary principals of Minnesota turnaround (Reward) schools rank the

   importance of eight essential leadership skills identified by Herman et.al as having an

   impact on turning around low-performing schools? What did principals report as their

   confidence in using these essential skills to bring about change in their schools?

Assumptions

It is assumed that the schools that are studied have implemented the turnaround program

with the fidelity that was intended by the program developers. It is also assumed that the school

turnaround intervention model can be implemented in different types of schools, regardless of

their specific contextual make-up. It is assumed that the principals of the select turnaround

schools are knowledgeable about the leadership practices that positively influenced the increase

in student achievement.

Delimitations

- The study uses a small sample size, which limits statistical application and the ability

  to be generalized to larger populations. It is recognized that the principals of the

  select Minnesota turnaround schools who participated in the study may not have been

the principals primarily responsible for the turnaround effect. The study used only the LPI-SELF instrument to gain the perception of the school principals.

- The study is limited in scope and more information is needed to better understand the findings in terms of demography, geographical location, leadership training, experience and professional category.

Definition of Terms

- Adequate Yearly progress (AYP): Student performance based on proficiency, participation, and attendance or graduation rates. Based on the measurement, schools, districts and states are held accountable for student performance under Title I of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB.) Under the waiver, that goal is replaced with a new goal of reducing the achievement gap in half within six years. Under the waiver, there are no sanctions attached to not making AYP (Wiley, Mathis, & Garcia, 2005).

- Celebration Eligible: Schools that score 16-40% on the MMR scores. These schools are identified every year (MDE, Data Center, August 12, 2012).

- Continuous Improvement: Schools, which rank the bottom 25 percent on the MMR in Minnesota. Within this group, schools are required to develop improvement plans but don't need state approval for the plan. The schools are required to set aside 20% of their Title I funds to implement the plans (MDE, Data Center, August 12, 2012)

- Focus Schools: Title 1 schools with Student Gap Groups that are among the lowest performing in the state according to state assessment results (MDE, Data Center, August 12, 2012).

- Multiple Measurement Ratings (MMR): An alternative measurement and ranking system that the state of Minnesota presented to the U.S. Department of Education.

The MMR score measures how the school is performing based on test scores, graduation rates, and student growth (MDE, Data Center, August 12, 2012).

- Priority Schools: Schools that had been identified as among the lowest-performing five percent of Title I schools in the state over the past three years, or any non-Title I school that would otherwise have met the same criteria (MDE, Data Center, August 12, 2012)

- Reward schools: Model schools in the state of Minnesota that comprise the top 15% on the MMR score. These schools represent the highest-performing schools on the four measurements. Currently, the reward for these schools' performance mainly comes through public recognition. These schools are identified annually (MDE, Data Center, August 12, 2012).

- Turnaround schools: a dramatic and comprehensive intervention in a low-performing school that produces significant gains in student achievement within two academic years (Mass Insight, 2007).

- Title I, Part A (Title I): Part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (ESEA) provides financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards (Title I, Part A Program, 2018).

Organization of the Study

Chapter I includes introduction, a problem statement, significance of the study, theoretical framework, purpose statement, research questions, assumptions, delimitations and definition of terms. Chapter II provides a comprehensive review of literature that supports the

conceptual framework of the study. Chapter III contains the methodological approach of the study Including the research questions, participants, human subject approval, instruments for data collection and analysis, research design and treatment of data, and procedures and time line. Chapter IV discusses study findings and results and Chapter V provides summary, conclusions, and recommendations for practice and recommendations for future research.

Chapter II: Review of Literature

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to seek principals' level of engagement with five

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Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI-SELF) developed by Kouzes and Posner (2017). In

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their level of confidence in using these skills to bring about change in their schools. The results

of the study can be used to assist principals in identifying essential leadership practices and skills

to improve student achievement in low performing elementary schools.

The literature review examined each of the following areas:

- Overview of leadership theories

- Kouzes and Posner transformational leadership

- School leadership and student achievement

- Leadership practices

- School turnaround models

- Leadership practices of principals of turnaround schools.

Overview of Leadership Theories

Leadership is one of the most widely researched social science topics today. According to

Burns, (1978) leadership is one of the most observed phenomena on earth, but the least

understood. In the last two decades research identified different types of leadership theories such

as the great man theory, trait theory, contingency theory, behavioral theory, transactional theory

and transformational theory. Despite this plethora of theories, there is no comprehensive theory

and meaning of the term leadership (Day, Zaccaro, & Halpin, 2004). "There are nearly the same numbers of leadership definitions as there are people who have attempted to define it" (Stogdill, 1948, p. 7).

According to Yukie, Gordon, and Taber (2002), in all these theories, leadership is defined in different ways in terms of traits, behaviors, influence, interaction patterns, role relationship and occupation of an administrative position. For example, the great man and trait theory focus on leaders' dispositions and, suggested individuals must possess three important categories of skill to lead, technical, human and conceptual skills (Northouse, 2018). This is often referred as skill-based leadership theory, which emerged as one of the leadership theories in 1955, when Robert Katz published "Skills of an effective administrator". According to Katz, good leaders develop a set of skills over time and that included technical, conceptual and human skills. Technical skills are specialized skills related to education in a school setting and involve knowledge and understanding of the methods, processes, procedures, or techniques of instruction. Human skills are the ability to work as a group member and the leaders' primary concern is working with people and building cooperation within the team they lead. Conceptual skills include the ability to see the system as a whole, and set the vision for the organization (Katz, 1955). Mumford and his team (2000) expanded on this approach and identified problem-solving and social judgment, as additional skills a leader need to develop. Critics of the theory however hold that traits vary widely from situation to situation, thus a person does not become a leader based on the possession of traits alone (Bryman, Stephens, & a Campo, 1996).

The literature on turnaround schools (Herman et al., 2008) emphatically stated the need for strong leaders who have the competencies required to turn around a failing school. According to Herman, turnaround leaders have the capacity to analyze data, notice patterns and underlying

issues that may be the cause of low student achievement, and act on the data in a focused and uncompromising manner (Herman et al., 2008). They create a sense of urgency as well as a sense of mutual accountability among all staff members at the school by communicating clear expectations that instruction is the first priority and by consistently monitoring the impact of instruction on student learning and holding teachers accountable for results (Herman et al., 2008). The most effective leaders accomplish both short- and long-term results by building the capacity of school staff and encouraging shared leadership rather than acting in a dictatorial manner. Finally, turnaround leaders model initiative and persistence by doing more than is required and facing and overcoming barriers rather than using them as an excuse for poor performance (Herman et al., 2008; Public Impact, 2008).

Behavioral theory focused on leadership behavior as a means of identifying the best way to lead and proposed that specific behaviors differentiate leaders from non-leaders.

In 1939, Kurt Lewin conducted a classic study of leadership, and this involved three styles of leadership: autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire (Bryman et al., 1996). Another study conducted by Ohio State University found two major dimensions of leadership either of which could be high or low and were independent of one another: initiating structure and consideration (Judge, Piccolo, & Ilies, 2004). Initiating structure was the extent to which a leader is likely to define and structure his or her role and those of subordinates in the search for goal attainment. Consideration is when a leader has job relationships characterized by mutual trust, respect for subordinates' ideas and regard for his/her feelings.

The University of Michigan study further expanded the Ohio studies and focused on employee centered and job centered activities of leaders emphasizing interpersonal relationships and technical or task aspects of the job (The University of Michigan Studies, 2009). These

studies found that groups who have leaders who were employee-centered were more productive than leaders who were job centered. Blake and Mouton (1975) developed a managerial grid composed of five categories that are based on concern for production and concern for people, and suggested that it was better to be high on both dimensions indicating that both task orientation and employee orientation are crucial to work performance (Blake & Mouton, 1975). The contingency theories suggested that a leadership style is dependent upon the appropriate match of leadership traits and skills with the situation (Blake & Mouton, 1975). A leadership model such as the Fiedler's contingency model proposes a proper match between the group performance, the leader's style and the degree of control of the leader. The model stated that effective leadership depends not only on the style of leading but also on the control over the situation (Fiedler, 1996).

The Managerial grid theory by Robert Blake and Mouton was another step in understanding the dimensional behavioral aspects of leadership expressed on a continuum on a scale from 1 to 9 (Molloy, 1998). In summary, contingency theories contend that there was no one best way of leading and that a leadership style that is effective in some situations may not be successful in others.

Transformational leadership prevailed as an appropriate leadership model since the 1990s in order to respond to the restructuring initiatives of schools (Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). The idea was conceptualized by James McGregor Burns who explained and leadership as transactional or transformational. Transactional leadership is initiated solely by the formal leader and is based upon the exchange of valued goods such as money, resources, time recognition or praise between the leader and followers. Transformational is based upon the fulfillment of higher order needs such as self- esteem, self-actualization and is based upon a

model of principled morality. The model is grounded in the needs and values of both leaders and followers and is a mechanism for the authentic empowerment of followers (Burns, 2004). This idea expanded to non-educational contexts by Bass, (1985), who viewed leadership as a continuum of transactional and transformational.

Transformational leadership has been recognized as a model of leadership in the classroom by the work of Bernard Bass in 1985. According to him, transformational leaders exhibit four transformational leadership behaviors in their daily interactions with the staff or subordinates: intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, idealized influence (charisma) and inspirational motivation (Bass, 1985). The transformational theory considered leaders' relationships with followers and viewed leadership as dynamic process where leaders mobilize others to get extraordinary things done (Bass & Avolio, 1994a). According to Kouzes and Posner (2002), leadership is the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations.

Kouzes and Posner Transformational Leadership

Kouzes and Posner co-authored the Leadership Challenge, an inspirational and evidence-based book that identified five best practices of an exemplary leader. The following section describes the practices from the Leadership Challenge book (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

Model the way. "Model the way" is the first of the five exemplary leadership practices mentioned in the leadership challenge. According to Kouzes and Posner (2002) leaders model the way by setting an example and by aligning shared action with shared values. Modeling the Way allows leaders to build their credibility and trust. Kouzes and Posner stated, "If people don't believe in the messenger, they won't believe the message" (p. 46). In order to effectively model the behavior of they expect of others, Kouzes and Posner (2002), stated that leaders must be clear

about their guiding principles. They must find their own voice, and should stand up for their beliefs, so, they must have some beliefs to stand up for. Modeling the way is essentially about earning the right and the respect to lead through direct individual involvement and action. People first follow the person and the plan (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

Inspire a shared vision. The second exemplary leadership practice is "Inspire a Shared Vision." Inspiring a shared vision is the ability of a leader to see a potential future and motivate others to pursue it. According to Kouzes and Posner (2007), Leaders are able to accomplish this through a unified purpose that benefits the entire organization and its constituents. Common purpose comes from listening to their constituents and determining what is best to the team. Kouzes and Posner stated, leaders must "see and feel how their members interests and aspirations are aligned with the vision (p. 141). The authors also argue that leadership is a dialogue not a monologue and leaders must enlist the support of their constituents by having intimate knowledge of peoples dreams, hopes, aspirations, visions and values (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). They acknowledge that leaders need to command commitment and inspire a shared vision. Leaders have a " a desire to (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). make something happen, to change the way things are, to create something that no one else has ever created before" (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 15).

Challenge the process. "Challenge the Process" is the third exemplary leadership practice. The leadership practice promotes the belief that those who lead others to greatness seek challenge. Successful leaders know well that innovation and change involve experimentations, risk and failure and bring change through incremental steps and small wins. According to Kouzes and Posner, transformational leaders make positive change and search for opportunities to make change through innovative ways. They challenge the status quo and to make change

happen, they must be farsighted and the change must challenge everyone to be effective. In an effort to create positive change, leaders challenge others to try new approaches and must be "willing to search for opportunities to innovate, grow, and improve" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 164)

  Enable others to act. "Enable others to act" is the fourth fundamental practice identified by Kouzes and Posner and included behaviors such as establishing collaboration, relationship building and successful delegating. Kouzes and Posner (2007) stated, "Leaders enable others not by hoarding the power they have but by giving it away" (p. 215). Leaders want their followers to be proactive to be able to act. A team must foster collaboration in order to be successful. They do this by promoting cooperative goals and building trust. Kouzes and Posner wrote that a key realization for all leaders is the need to develop cohesive and collaborative teams, with trust as the framework. It is now recognized that collaboration is one of the consistent, key components of success for today's leaders (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

  Encourage the heart. "Encourage the Heart "is the last exemplary leadership practice mentioned in the leadership challenge According to Kouzes and Posner (2007) encouraging others is strengthening followers to be leaders on their own, at all times. The authors stated "Leaders must keep hope alive, even in the most difficult of times" (Kouzes & Kouzes, 2003, p. 349). Effective leaders show genuine appreciation for each individual and reward people for their efforts as part of their contribution to the success of the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). The authors suggested that leaders should facilitate a sense of appreciation by building " a culture of collective identify and community spirit that can carry a group through extraordinary tough times" (Kouzes & Posner, 2006).

Leadership Practice Inventory

Principal leadership practices significantly impact teaching and learning and researchers confirm that school leadership is second only to classroom instruction as an influence on student learning (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). However, research on the use of valid tools to understand the leadership practice was limited (Hallinger & Heck, 1996).

Kouzes and Posner developed the Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI) using the personal best quantitative and qualitative research results (Kouzes & Posner, 2003b). It was developed to empirically measure the conceptual framework developed in the case studies of manager's personal best experiences as leaders when they had accomplished something extraordinary in an organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2003b).

A considerable body of educational research has established the predictive validity of the LPI and the model approaches leadership as a measurable, learnable, set of behaviors. Leaders, who engage in the five practices more frequently, achieve better results than those who engage in them less frequently (Interactive leadership associates, 2015).

School Leadership and Student Achievement

School leadership is second only to classroom instruction as an influence on student learning and much of the research conducted in the last 2 decades indicated a relationship between student achievement and school leadership. There seems to be consensus that principals impact student learning outcomes in varying degrees (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2004).

Hallinger and Heck reviewed 40 studies and described how principal's leadership influenced student-learning outcomes. Their review found that principals wield a significant but indirect effect on school effectiveness and student achievement through setting the vision, goals

and tone for a school but also thorough creating school structure and building organizational culture. This indirect effect makes a case for the importance of principal leadership practices in connection to their focus in on instruction (Hallinger & Heck, 1996).

Marzano (2003) examined the relationship between school leadership and student achievement and found a strong correlation existed between principal leadership and student achievement. A meta-analysis of all available research on school leadership that covered for more than 30 years (1970-2005), found that there exists a correlation, second to teaching, between the leadership behaviors of the principal and the average academic achievement of the students. (No direct link was discovered between student achievement and principal leadership. However, principals do share an indirect link with student success due to their effect on the school culture, environment, and teachers (Larsen, 1987; Leitner, 1994).

Waters et al. (2004) further analyzed the studies in 2005 and looked for specific behaviors related to effective principal leadership. Twenty-one responsibilities of a school leader were identified that included affirmation; change agent; contingent rewards; communication; culture; discipline; flexibility; focus; ideal/beliefs; input; intellectual stimulation; involvement in curriculum, instruction, and assessment; knowledge of curriculum, instruction and monitoring/evaluating; optimizer; order; outreach; relationships; resources; situational awareness; and visibility (p. 42). These responsibilities validated many of the leadership theories, but also provided new insights into the nature of school leadership. The researchers concluded that effective leaders understand the changes linked to school achievement and tailor their leadership practice accordingly (Waters et al., 2004).

Leithwood and Jantzi (2007) also stated "leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school" (p.

3). Their research also concluded that there are "no documented instances of troubled schools being turned around without intervention by a powerful leader" (p. 3). With these two claims, Leithwood, Seashore, et al. (2004) suggested three core practices in leading schools successfully; setting direction, developing people, and redesigning the organization.

Robinson et al. (2008), in their study on leadership impact on student learning, found five leadership dimensions having moderate to significant impact on student learning based on effect size. The five dimensions termed as student - centered leadership are: a) promoting and participating in teacher learning and development b) planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and the curriculum c) establishing goals and expectations; d) strategic resourcing, and e) ensuring an orderly and supportive environment. Among the five leadership dimensions, leading for teaching learning and development through formal and informal learning opportunities was found to be the most significant leadership dimension having the greatest effect. According to Robinson "the most powerful way that school leaders can make a difference to the learning of their students is by promoting and participating in the professional learning and development of their teachers" (p. 104). Similarly, the researchers also found the three additional leadership dimensions that had positive impact on student learning, which included: a) creating educationally powerful connections, b) engaging in constructive problem talk, and c) selecting, developing, and using smart tools (Robinson et al., 2008).

Leadership Tasks, Functions, or Practices

Hallinger and Heck (1996), Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003), Leithwood and Jantzi (2007), and Robinson et al. (2008) recognized one or many of the following leadership practices: (1) Setting Direction, (Motivation), (2) Developing People, (Ability), (3) Redesigning the Organization (Setting) and (4) Improving Instructional Program.

Setting direction is about motivating people through the establishment of a shared purpose. The major practices in this category are building a shared vision, communicating the vision, fostering the acceptance of group goals, and demonstrating high performance expectations. Vision is the direction in which the leader seeks to move and goals are specific targets that need to be achieved in pursuit of the vision (Hallinger & Heck, 2010a). A properly conceived vision serves as a filter for the myriad of daily decisions a principal is asked to make and, according to Robison, vision and goals greatly impact student learning. Leaders need to articulate and share that vision and provide the necessary resources and support to improve achievement and motivation for all students (Robinson et al., 2008).

The major practices in developing people include individualized support, intellectual stimulation and serving as a model (Leithwood & Strauss, 2009). Developing people means building collaborative work cultures that develop the long-term capacity for change (Leithwood & Strauss, 2009). Principals need to provide individualized support, develop teacher's knowledge and skills and provide the necessary resources to support the implementation of school improvement program. They also provide intellectual stimulation by re-examining some basic assumptions and stimulate thinking towards student achievement (Leithwood & Strauss, 2009). According to Linda Darling-Hammond, professional development has to be directly connected to daily work with students and, related to content areas; organized around real problems of practice instead of abstractions; continuous and ongoing and able to provide teachers with access to outside resources and expertise (Leithwood & Strauss, 2009).

The specific practices included in redesigning the organization include: building collaborative cultures, restructuring the organization, building productive relations with parents and the community, and connecting the school with its wider environment. When re-designing

the organization, principals build collaborative cultures, provide productive relationship with

families and communities and connect the school to community (Leithwood & Strauss, 2009).

Reorganization of a school involves changes in student's behavior, norms, shared attitudes,

values and beliefs expectations and relationships developed over time. Changes that address

school culture require collaboration between school and community (Leithwood & Strauss,

2009).The specific practices in managing the teaching and learning program/improving the

instructional program are staffing the teaching programs, providing teaching support, monitoring

school activity, and buffering staff against distractions from their work. The main purpose of this

practice is to create productive working conditions for teachers by fostering organizational

stability and strengthening the school's infrastructure. This function focuses on the coordination

and control of instruction and curriculum and involves three primary leadership practices:

supervise and evaluate instruction, coordinate the curriculum, and monitor student progress

(Hallinger, 2003; Hallinger & Heck, 2010b; Leithwood, 2006).

School Turnaround Models, Definition and Strategies

The United States government on-going commitment to school turnaround reform was

reflected in the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, (ESEA, 2001),

the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation in 2001 (No Child Left Behind—ED.gov.), and its

reauthorization in 2011 and 2015.

In 2011, the United States Department of Education released schools from provisions of

NCLB to soften the consequences of failure to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) (Education

at a Glance, 2016). The NCLB wavier persuaded states to adopt the common core standards and

design specific systems for ensuring student achievement. States agreed to adopt college and

career standards, new educator evaluation systems, and to identify additional schools that are

underperforming (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Minnesota was one of the forty-three

states that asked for waivers. The waivers, often referred to the Race to the Top, were initiated by

President Barack Obama's administration to provide funding to states and specified four

turnaround models for those qualifying for Race to the Top (RTT) and School Improvement

Grant (SIG) funding (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).Local Education Agencies had to

choose from one of the four-turnaround models as defined by the U.S. Department of Education

(2009). These models included:

1. School Closure. This model was intended to offer students a better chance for success
   at another school. The school is closed and the students attended other schools
   including charter schools or new schools in the district (Herrmann, Dragoset, &
   James-Burdumy, 2014).

2. Restart. This model assumed that private operators will foster greater innovation and
   improvement than public school districts. In this model a school is closed and
   reopened under the direction of a charter management organization or an education
   management organization (Herrmann et al., 2014).

3. Turnaround. This model was designed "to bring in new, highly qualified staff, and
   new programs, training, and support" (Herrmann et al., 2014, p. 2). In this model,
   schools must adopt a new governance structure, and the principal and at least half of
   the staff are replaced. The Turnaround School provide job embedded professional
   development, used data to inform instruction, expanded learning time, and
   implemented a research- based, aligned instructional program (Herrmann et al.,
   2014).

4. Transformation. This model assumed that the core instructional staff at a failing

   school is competent but needs new leadership, programs, training, and support. The

   principal was thus replaced and staff need not be changed but must be evaluated in

   part according to students' outcomes. In addition, the school must make changes in

   professional development, instruction, curriculum, learning time, and operating

   flexibility (school-level autonomy over budgetary and staffing decisions), as part of

   the transformation model (Herrmann et al., 2014). While questions remain about the

   term "turnaround," Mass Insight (2007) developed a definition:

   > "Turnaround is a dramatic and comprehensive intervention in a low-performing
   >
   > school that: a) produces significant gains in achievement within two years; and b)
   >
   > readies the school for the longer process of transformation into a high-
   >
   > performance organization" (Mass Insight, 2007, p. 3)

Turnaround was also defined as a situation, process, consequence or condition (Meyers &

Murphy, 2007), and the associated intervention strategies by type, level and intensity (Wolk,

1998). According to Wang, turnaround, as a "dramatic improvement in performance created by

various changes in the organization; organizations that go from bad to great in a short period of

time" (Wang & Manning, 2000, p. 309).

All definitions of turnaround included a time frame of rapid, dramatic change followed

by incremental improvement, within 2 years (Fullan, 2005; Mass Insight, 2007). This period is

necessary for organizational survival, creates motivation and hope, and requires leadership

credibility (Wrigley, 2003). As school leaders sought organizational results, the sense of urgency

created enabled both dramatic change and an environment that permitted action around the rules

(Herman et al., 2008). Success in accomplishing core objectives quickly provided a significant

lever toward changing school culture (Kanter, 2003). Success through this phase provided a platform for recovery, rebuilding organizational capacity, including system renewal (Fullan, 2007) rallying and mobilizing people, growing people and creating productive cultures (Herman et al., 2008; Levin & Fullan, 2008).

Many authors recognized the tenuous nature of improvement following periods of rapid change and the implementation of practices outside the norm (Herman et al., 2008) and supported the view that school turnaround must include a period that functions to embed and sustain improvements. In addition, sustainability is most likely to be achieved if the initiatives of turnaround leaders are anchored in school improvement practices and strategies (Meyers & Murphy, 2007). The capacity to balance school resources with rising expectations and the consequences of 'even more' change, sits at the center of this consideration (OECD, 2008).

Turnaround is broadly defined as the process of improving a poorly performing school and is not taken as is one of the four approaches that school districts can take to improve an underperforming school participating in the School Improvement Grant program. In the context of schools, turnaround would be when a pattern of low student achievement has been improved dramatically, usually in the areas of mathematics and literacy (Duke, 2004). The ability of turnaround schools to maintain the improvement in student achievement for a minimum of two years is vital in the process (Chrisman, 2005).

The state of Minnesota legislature submitted a proposal to the United States Department of Education in 2011 to ask for a waiver for turnaround low performing schools. Minnesota received federal approval of its NCLB Flexibility Waiver in 2012. The waiver was developed focusing on goals of closing achievement gaps and promoting high growth for all students. Minnesota had a new accountability system that measured school performance based on multiple

measurements and provided more flexibility to districts in the way they use federal funds for school improvement (MDE, 2011). While NCLB strived to have every student achieving at a proficient level by 2013-2014, the NCLB Flexibility Waiver had a goal of reducing the state's achievement gap in half by 2017. At the foundation of the Waiver plan is a Multiple Measurement Rating (MMR) that replaced Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) as the primary measurement of school performance. Using the MMR, Title I schools were given designations based on student achievement and improvement (MDE, Data Center, August 12, 2012).

Using the results of the MMR, Title I schools can be categorized into five groups:

1. Reward Schools—These schools are the top 15% of Title I schools based on the MMR. They represent the highest-performing schools on the four measurements. Currently, the reward for these schools mainly comes through public recognition. These schools are identified annually (MDE, Data Center, August 12, 2012).

2. Celebration Eligible—These are the 25% of schools directly behind the Reward School cutoff. These schools may apply to be Celebration Schools, and the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) selects approximately 10% of Title I schools to receive the Celebration School designation. When combined with the Reward Schools, the top 25% of Title I schools are recognized. These schools are identified annually (MDE, 2012).

3. Continuous Improvement—These are the bottom 25% of Title I schools that have not already been identified as Priority or Focus. Continuous Improvement schools must work with their districts to create and implement improvement plans. MDE audits 10% of Continuous Improvement schools to ensure fidelity (MDE, Data Center, August 12, 2012).

4. Focus Schools—Using just the proficiency and achievement gap reduction measurements from the MMR, each school receives a Focus Rating that measures their contribution to the state's achievement gap. The 10% of Title I schools with the lowest Focus Ratings are identified as Focus Schools, and must work with MDE and the Regional Centers of Excellence to implement serious interventions aimed at improving the performance of the school's lowest-performing subgroups. Essentially, Focus Schools are designed to attack the achievement gap head on. These schools are identified every three years (MDE, Data Center, August 12, 2012).

5. Priority Schools—These are the five percent most persistently low-performing Title I schools based on the MMR. Just less than half of these schools are identified through their participation in the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program. The remaining schools in this group are the Title I schools with the lowest percentages in the MMR. These schools must work with MDE and the Regional Centers of Excellence to implement turnaround plans to drastically change the way the school operates. These schools are identified every three years (MDE, Data Center, August 12, 2012).

The Minnesota Regional Centers of Excellence provided technical assistance to school leadership and implementation teams for Priority and Focus Title I schools across the state in Minnesota. Through regular, ongoing dialogue and support, these specialists assisted principals and teachers in improving academic outcomes for all students by working in partnership with the school staff (Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), n.d.). The MDE supports and oversees the efforts of the three Regional Centers by collaborating with staff from across the agency to provide guidance that will result in coordinated support to meet the needs of school leadership

teams and enable them to improve achievement for all learners (Minnesota Department of Education: Regional Centers of Excellence, n.d.).

Finally, in order to ensure that all schools are being held accountable, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) annually publishes two measurements for every school in the state: Multiple Measurement Rating (MMR) and Focus Rating (FR). Annual Yearly progress (AYP) results will be reported with new targets and there are no sanctions for not making AYP. The new state targets will reduce the achievement gap by half within six years. The MMR will be reported on the MDE website using a Multiple Measurements Chart that will allow parents, community stakeholders and educators to compare the performance of schools in all four MMR categories, as well as overall performance (Minnesota Report Card, n.d.).

Turnaround Strategies and Leadership Practices

The research base on school turnaround leadership practices is limited. Turnaround schools' studies are generally case studies that reflect on factors that may have contributed to success. In this section, major studies are discussed:

The first source of information is the four strategies identified by Herman, in his publication, Turning around chronically low-performing schools, Herman et al. (2008) identified the following improvement strategies for the success of turnaround schools.

A. Signal the need for dramatic change with strong leadership.

- Changing the leadership within the school is often necessary and crucial. Putting a new leader in place can be an urgent signal that change is on the way.

- If the existing leader is not changed, altering current leadership practices can bring about needed adjustments.

- The school leader must be highly visible in the classroom demonstrating the importance of instructional leadership.

- Changes and anticipated changes should be publicized to all stakeholders.

B. Maintain a consistent focus on improving instruction.

- Identify specific gaps in student achievement by reviewing data.

- Use formative assessment data to determine the progress of individual student progress toward state standards.

- Build priority areas for instructional focus and make the needed changes in those areas to improve student achievement.

- Have professional development opportunities that are targeted to teacher needs and content area needs for improvement.

- Ensure curriculum alignment by having teachers review the current curriculum with state and local standards.

- Monitor student progress regularly and systematically.

C. Make visible improvements early in the school turnaround process.

- Begin with goals that can be accomplished quickly to get the "quick wins" needed to stay motivated.

- Set early goals for which the authority and resources to implement are already in place.

- Consider routine goals such as scheduling, improving access to resources, physical facilities, and improving discipline as examples of early wins.

D. Build a committed staff.

- Identify staff that are not committed to turnaround or who do not have the qualifications to carry out turnaround efforts.

- Redeploy staff with valuable skills that are not effective in their current roles.

- Remove staffs that oppose the turnaround efforts.

- Enlist new staff needed such as interventionists, specialists, coaches, and mentors.

The second source of information is published by the Centre on Innovation & Improvement (CII) published, School Turnarounds: A Review of the Cross-Sector Evidence on Dramatic Organizational Improvement (2008) that identified the following fourteen leader actions connected to turnarounds:

1. Collect and analyze data

2. Make action plan based on data

3. Concentrate on big, fast payoffs in year 1

4. Implement practices even if they require deviation from norms

5. Require all staff to change

6. Make necessary staff replacements

7. Focus on successful tactics; halt others

8. Do not tout progress as ultimate success

9. Communicate a positive vision

10. Help staff personally feel problems

11. Gain support of key influencers

12. Silence critics with speedy success

13. Measure and report progress frequently

14. Require all decision makers to share data and problem solve

The literature on turnaround schools (Herman et al., 2008), is another source of information that emphatically states the need for strong leaders who have the competencies required to turn around a school. According to Herman et al. (2008), these eight leadership skills include:

1. *Capacity to analyze data*. Classrooms, schools and districts use different data in different ways to make decisions. Ackoff (1989), contends that data, information, and knowledge form a continuum in which data, are transformed to information, and ultimately to knowledge that can be applied to make decisions. Principals acquire the skills to collect and organize at data level and analyze and summarize at information level. At the knowledge level they synthesize and prioritize (Light, Wexler, & Heinze, 2004).

2. *Notice patterns and underlying issues that may be the cause of low student achievement*. Factors that contribute to achievement gaps are multiple and interrelated. Various studies have identified the factors as contributing to achievement gaps. According to the National Education Association (NEA, 2019) the factors are categorized as follows (Larsen, 1987).

Factors that Contribute to Achievement Gaps

Within Schools' Control	Outside Schools' Control
School wide Factors Low expectations for student achievement; Lack of rigor in the curriculum; Large class size; Tracking groups of students into a less demanding curriculum; Unsafe schools; Culturally unfriendly environments; and Poor, or no, instructional leadership.	Factors in the Local Community Economic opportunity for students' families; Access to health and social services; Community safety; Access to libraries, museums, and other institutions that support students' development; and Access to child care and after-school programs and facilities.
Teacher- and Teaching-Related Factors Uncertified and inexperienced teachers; Insensitivity to different cultures; Poor teacher preparation; Low expectations of students; and Inadequate materials, equipment, and resources, including technology-based resources.	Students' Background Families' income level; Students' birth weight; Students' diet and nutrition at home; Students' mobility; and Students' primary language (if other than English).
Student-Related Factors Students' interest in school; Students' level of effort; Students' feeling that they are, in part, responsible for their learning.	Education Funding Shortfalls State budget deficits; Unfunded federal mandates; and Inequities in funding among school districts.
Families' Support of Students' Learning Families' participation in school activities; Families' skills to support and reinforce learning; and Students' TV watching and at-home reading.	Families' Support of Students' Learning Time family members are able to devote to support and reinforce learning. Other Factors Societal bias (racial, ethnic, poverty and class)

3. *Maintain focus on student learning and related goals*. Chronically low- performing schools need to maintain a sharp focus on improving instruction at every step of the reform process. To improve instruction, schools should use data to set goals for instructional improvement, make changes to immediately and directly affect instruction, and continually reassess student learning and instructional practices to refocus the goals (Herman et al., 2008).

4. *Create a sense of urgency*. Principals can start with one or two clear goals that can be addressed quickly and provide visible improvements. They can start with common goals for quick wins, such as changing the school's use of time, improving access to resources and the physical facilities, and improving discipline.

5. *Develop a feeling of mutual accountability among all staff members*. Principals are required to develop committed staff and obtain support from teachers by interacting with staff by focusing on the belief that all students can be successful. They need to develop a common vision and provide the necessary support so that both teachers and students can achieve success. In addition, the leaders need to communicate to the staff that everyone is responsible and accountable for the success of the school and if necessary, take on the difficult task of replacing ineffective teachers.

6. *Communicate clear expectations that instruction is the first priority*. Communicating a clear purpose to school staff and creating high expectations and values are important for turnaround leaders to signal change and move the school forward with some immediate changes.

7. *Consistently monitoring the impact of instruction on student learning*. Turnaround schools need to examine student achievement data to identify gaps and weaknesses in student learning through standards-based assessments and classroom assessments. Using the state

assessments aligned with the state standards, they can closely monitor the achievement gap and ensure that the progress in learning that will result in higher achievement on high-stakes tests.

8. *Model persistence and resilience by doing more than is required and facing and overcoming barriers rather than using them as an excuse for poor performance*. Principals model persistence and resilience when they are challenged with difficult problems. Turnaround school leaders develop resiliency as a coping mechanism to bounce back from bumps in the road as well as failures, by doing whatever is necessary to support teachers, by attending staff development sessions and contributing to team meetings.

The most effective leaders accomplish both short-and long-term results by building the capacity of school staff and encouraging shared leadership rather than acting in a dictatorial manner (Herman et al., 2008).

Summary

The literature reviewed identified four major leadership practices, which include setting direction, developing people, redesigning the re-organization and Improving Instructional Program (Bass & Avolio, 1994b; Hallinger & Heck, 2002; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). These are also practices of a transformational leadership as described by Kouzes and Posner. This literature review mainly focused on principal behaviors that are reported to have a profound impact on student achievement and school reform. In addition, the review included an overview of leadership theories specifically focusing on transformational leadership. A synopsis of the leadership practices are presented and school turnaround models, definition and strategies concluded the chapter.

Chapter III: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter presents an outline of the research methods that were followed in the study. The chapter discussed how the data and information to address the research questions were collected, presented, and analyzed. The research design, data sources, data collection techniques and research instruments were highlighted.

Problem Statement

Although several years have passed since the implementation of the turnaround school model, there is a need to understand how leadership practices support student achievement. Some schools that received school improvement grants achieved positive results and demonstrated exemplary performance level in state examinations, student growth, and graduate rates and in closing the achievement gap (Leithwood & Strauss, 2009). It would seem valuable to undertake an inquiry to identify effective school improvement leadership practices that focus on school leadership and renewal strategies among leaders in select turnaround schools. The transformational leadership theory by Kouzes and Posner provides a model of leadership practices for principals in turnaround schools.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to seek principals' level of engagement with five Leadership Practices in select Minnesota elementary Reward (turnaround) Schools based on the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI-SELF) developed by Kouzes and Posner (2017). In addition, using eight essential leadership skills identified by Herman et al. (2008), the study sought to find how principals of turnaround schools ranked ordered these leadership skills and their level of confidence in using these skills to bring about change in their schools. The results

of the study can be used to assist principals in identifying essential leadership practices and skills to improve student achievement in low performing elementary schools.

Research Questions

The research study was prompted by the need to identify effective research-based practices that ensured successful school turnaround in select Minnesota school districts. The following questions were investigated in the study.

1. How did elementary principals of Minnesota turnaround (Reward) schools perceive their leadership practices in relation to five practices of exemplary leadership (LPI-SELF)?

2. How did elementary principals of Minnesota turnaround (Reward) schools rank the importance of eight essential leadership skills identified by Herman et.al as having an impact on turning around low-performing schools? What did principals report as their confidence in using these essential skills to bring about change in their schools?

Participants

The participants in the study were 25 principals of Turnaround/Title I schools, each of which had been recognized by the Minnesota Department of Education as distinguished Title I schools with exceptional student achievement in 2013-2017. The Minnesota Department of Education recognized these schools for having closed the achievement gap and /or achieved high academic achievement based on Multiple Measurement Ratings (MMR). The MMR measures school performance in the areas of proficiency, growth, achievement gap reduction, and graduation rates. Schools receive up to 25 points for each of their focus areas, with the highest score for elementary schools totaling 75 points. Schools are awarded total points every year and receive special designations based on their scores. Schools with high scores compared to other

Title I schools, may receive designations as Reward or Celebration. Schools with low scores are designated as Continuous Improvement, Focus or Priority schools (Minnesota Department of Education, MMR). The researcher obtained a list of elementary schools that met the criteria as distinguished Title I schools from the Minnesota Department of Education website and secured permission from district superintendents and from the principals to participate in the study. It was anticipated that there would be a 50% return rate. In actuality, there were only 9 valid, completed surveys with a return rate of 36.0%.

Human Subject Approval

The researcher completed training on responsible conduct of research involving human subjects on Jan 2018 and ensured that all requirements established by St Cloud State University Institutional Review Board are strictly observed. Data were collected by means of an online survey, and the terms of implied consent were strictly followed. The researcher ensured the confidentiality of all participants and established that no damage would occur to the schools or participants during the study process.

Instrument Development

The study employed an existing questionnaire that was based on a ready-made index. The reason for using an established questionnaire was that it had previously been well validated and tested for reliability and provides a baseline for the study. After a thorough investigation of existing materials, the researcher selected the Leadership Practice Inventory, (LPI-SELF), instrument developed by Kouzes and Posner for use in validating the conceptual framework and providing a reliable measure to assist in the development of respondent principals' abilities in using the five leadership practices. The Kouzes and Posner instrument measures the use of the following five leadership practices as outlined in their theory, including, enable others to act,

encourage the heart, model the way, challenge the process and inspire a shared vision. The

survey instrument consists of 30 behaviorally based statements with six separate items forming

each of the five leadership practices. Each statement is cast on a 10-point Likert scale scored

from 1 (almost never) to 10 (almost always) representing the frequency with which each

behavior is engaged or used. The survey was distributed to respondents in an online format using

survey monkey. Completion of the survey required 15-20 minutes in time.

Instrument Reliability and Validity

The research was conducted on data retrieved from the administration of the Leadership

Practice Inventory instrument (LPI). It is assumed that the LPI has a reliability coefficient

(Cronbach Alpha) that ranges between 0.75 and 0.87. Many researchers have used the LPI with

reliability coefficients higher than 0.80 (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). According to Kouzes and

Posner (2002), researchers who have completed the LPI found the instrument to measure what it

claims to measure, i.e., their beliefs about excellent leadership practices.

Research Design

The research design involved the conduct of a quantitative study and examined the

leadership practices of principals of turnaround schools using descriptive statistics. A descriptive

research design is appropriate for study comparisons, relationships, contrasts, or differences of

samples and variables (Cormack, 2000; Dempsey & Dempsey, 1986; Johnson & Christensen,

2012). Quantitative data were gathered through a web-based survey (Survey–Monkey) and

administered to principals of select Minnesota turnaround schools.

The participants in the study were selected in accordance with a purposive sampling

procedure. A purposive sampling procedure is a quantitative procedure in which the researcher

selects participants because they are willing and available to be studied (Creswell, 2014). The

participants were purposefully selected principals from among distinguished public schools, which have been publicly recognized by the Minnesota Department of Education.

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher first secured permission from the authors of the Leadership Practices Inventory to use the Instrument and another permission was granted for the study from St. Cloud State University Institutional Review Board. Upon receiving permission an email was sent to superintendents in the school districts that had a Reward School informing them of the study and that the identified elementary school principal in their school district would be contacted through email to ask for his/her voluntary participation in the study. The email was then sent to the select principals and included a link to the survey using Survey Monkey. The letter included information such as the aims of the study, any potential benefits or harm resulting from the study and what will happen to the information provided. When participant's voluntarily consented, they were provided with the survey (Appendix). A follow up mail was sent after two weeks to secure timely and numerically adequate responses. The survey had an anticipated rate of 50% of the possible 25 participants. Surveys are one of the most important data collection tools available in evaluation (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2004, p. 341).

Data Analysis and Treatment of Data

Descriptive analysis is often employed to summarize characteristics of data in a form others can understand and use (Slavin, 2007). In the study, descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data, employing frequency distributions and measures of central tendency of the scale responses on the LPI instrument. The measures of central tendency included the mean and standard deviation, as well as minimum and maximum values for the study variables. Analysis of data was conducted at the St. Cloud State office of Statistical Analysis using the Statistical

package for Social Sciences (SPSS). All data were stored on a private, firewall- protected

network through the University campus server and will only be accessible by the researcher

through a unique username and password. The University Statistical Center has implemented

various security measures at the application, network, and physical levels to ensure that data

were not compromised. In addition, the employees were trained in the ethics of research

involving human subjects. The survey was encrypted using the technology. Once the data were

stored on the campus server, they were held in an isolated database that ensured the security of

the data.

Procedures and Timeline

The following steps were used to complete the study:

1. Request permission from the authors of the Leadership Practice Inventory to use the
   instrument.

2. Request permission for the study from St. Cloud State University Institutional Review
   Board.

3. Send an invitation letter to principals of turnaround schools to participate in the study
   along with a survey monkey link.

4. Conduct a follow up mails two weeks after the initial mailing.

5. Obtain data for analysis.

Chapter Summary

The chapter illustrated the research methodology of the study. It included the research

design, the participants, the instrument, data collection and procedures. Data were collected and

analyzed to explore the perceived leadership practices of the principals of select Minnesota

turnaround schools using the Leadership Practice Inventory, which has been proved to be both

valid and reliable.

Chapter IV: Results

Introduction

Research in the last decade has suggested that leadership programs are failing to equip school leaders with the skills needed to build thriving schools (Styron, 2009). A number of studies have also identified specific leadership practices and skills of effective leaders (Bass, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1994a; Kouzes & Posner, 2006) and found that school leaders' effectiveness depends on their ability to select and implement the best leadership practices that will highly impact student achievement. Furthermore, Wahlstrom and Louis (2008) stated that low achieving schools are unlikely to be turned around without a committed principal (Leithwood, 2010). Those authors stressed that leadership may be a catalyst among many factors that contributes to turning around low performing schools (Leithwood, 2010).

Given this context and because of the responsibility and accountability expected of principals, it is essential that the effective leadership practices of elementary school principals be examined utilizing a validated, research-based leadership framework. Transformational leadership practices have been linked to student success and recognized by many researchers as truly representative of highly effective leadership practices (Kouzes & Posner 2007). Additionally, research on principal leadership behaviors conducted by Herman et al. (2008) identified and defined eight leadership skills related to student and school performance and potentially influencing student achievement in turnaround schools.

Understanding how transformed schools are improved by their leaders and how those leaders perceived their leadership in the transformation process is of central importance to the study. By seeking the perspectives of principals of turnaround elementary schools as to effective leadership practices, their data could provide opportunities for other principals to reflect upon

their own practices and consider leadership practices proven to be effective in creating positive

school change.

The study is a quantitative study using a survey design to examine Minnesota Reward

School elementary principals' perception of their levels of engagement with five leadership

practices based on the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI-SELF) and rank order the importance

of the eight essential leadership skills identified by Herman et al. (2008).

Research Design

The sample for the research study consisted of 25 Reward School elementary school

principals in Minnesota. The study participants were purposefully selected from a number of

distinguished elementary public schools that had been publicly recognized in Minnesota. The

schools were designated as Reward Schools by the Minnesota Department of Education for

exceptional student performance for five or six consecutive years. The schools had been publicly

recognized for having closed the achievement gap and /or achieved high academic achievement

measured in the areas of proficiency, growth, achievement gap reduction, and graduation rates

(MDE, Data Center, n.d.). Reward Schools represent the highest-performing schools on the four

MDE measurements.

To examine the research questions, the researcher used The Leadership Practice

Inventory (LPI-SELF) questionnaire to gather essential data from elementary Reward School

principals. James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner (2007) developed the inventory as a tool to

help leaders gain perspectives on how they could assess themselves as leaders and improve their

leadership practices.

Permission to use the LPI-SELF was granted by Barry Posner (Appendix A). The LPI-

SELF measures five exemplary leadership practice categories of transformational-leadership:

Model the Way, Enable Others to Act, Challenge the Process, Inspire a Shared Vision, and Encourage the Heart.

The first category, Model the Way, refers to the credibility of leadership and setting examples, and includes leadership statements that must be enacted to aid individuals or groups in emerging potential leaders. The second category, Enable Others to Act, directs attention to the leaders' ability to "strengthen others" by sharing power and providing choice and by making each person feel competent and confident. This includes actions that enable or empower individuals or groups to assume a leadership role. The third category, Challenge the Process, focuses on the leaders' ability to search for opportunities to identify innovative ways to change, to grow, to innovate, and to improve. The fourth category, Inspire a Shared Vision, refers to the leaders ability to "envision the future," to enlist others, to make a difference, and to create a common vision. Finally, Encourage the Heart, pertains to the leaders' actions regarding creating a spirit of community celebrating victories, recognizing contributions, showing appreciation, and demonstrating genuine acts of caring (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

The Leadership Practice Inventory, LPI-SELF, uses a 10-point Likert scale on which principals are requested to answer each survey item as to: "How frequently do I engage in the behavior described?" using the following scale: (1 Almost never; 2 Rarely; 3 Seldom; 4 Once in a while; 5 Occasionally; 6 Sometimes; 7 Fairly often; 8 Usually; 9 Very frequently; and 10 Almost always). The LPI-SELF consists of 30 items in the Likert scale format (often termed as behavioral statements) that describe the leadership practices and distributes the items among the five main categories: Model the Way (items 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26); Inspire a Shared Vision (items 2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27); Challenge the Process (items 3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28); Enable Others to Act (items 4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29); Encourage the Heart (items 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30). The instrument

was designed to empirically measure "personal best experiences when they had accomplished something extraordinary in an organization" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 495).

Description of the Study Participants

An online version of the Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI-SELF) was provided to 25 principals serving in Minnesota elementary Reward Schools at the time of the study. A total of 15 principals (60%) responded to the survey questionnaire, but six of the returned questionnaires had missing data on select items resulting in a final sample size of nine respondents on a 36% participation level. Despite the low response rate, each research question was answered by all nine respondents. A confidence level of 90% is common in social science research where a smaller sample is expected from a smaller population (Kalton & Graham, 1983; Moore, McCabe, & Craig, 1999). A low response rate is acceptable for a web-based on- line survey (Cook, Heath, & Thompson, 2000).

Research Findings

The study results are reported below for each of the research questions that guided the study. To analyze the results of research Question 1, the participants' responses regarding the frequency of use of the LPI-SELF leadership practices were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics describe or summarize a set of data in terms of frequency distribution and measures of central tendency (Narkhede, 2018). This type of statistical method often uses mean and standard deviation to determine the frequency and distribution of survey items and participants' responses. The mean is the average score on a given variable computed by summing all of the values for the variables in the sample and dividing by the number of values in the sample.

Standard deviation is a measure of the spread (variability) of the scores on a given variable. As an example, for category 1, Inspire a shared Vision, there are six individual questions. Each of the nine participants assigned a numerical rating to each of the six questions. Then, those ratings were added together and divided by six (the number of questions). Each of the nine participants had a mean score calculated for each of the five leadership categories. The nine mean scores for each of the five categories were added and divided by nine to obtain the "mean of the means" score which for category 1 was 39.33 with a range of 34.00 to 44.00.

Research question 1. *How did elementary principals of Minnesota turnaround (Reward) schools perceive their leadership practices in relation to the five practices of exemplary leadership (LPI-SELF)?*

Table 1 reveals the data for each of the five LPI-SELF categories as reported by principals of Reward elementary schools.

Table 1

Mean Scores of Leadership Practices as Reported by Elementary Reward School Principals

LP-Self Categories	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Inspire a Shared Vision	9	34.00	44.00	39.33	4.00000
Challenge the Process	9	30.00	52.00	46.11	7.28774
Enable Others to Act	9	47.00	57.00	53.11	2.80377
Encourage the Heart	9	41.00	57.00	49.56	4.85054
Model the Way	9	41.00	57.00	49.56	4.85054
N	9				

Table 1 reports the minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation values for each of the five leadership practices categories. The standard deviation details how closely the individual data values were from the mean value. It provides an indication of how far the individual responses to a question varied from the mean scores, but does not indicate right or wrong. The mean and the standard deviation provide a more complete picture of the statistical data.

As the Table 1 indicates, the highest standard deviation value was found to be the Challenge the Process (7.28774) category and the lowest standard deviation value was found to be the Enable Others to Act (2.80377) category, which means that there was more variability between responses for Challenge the Process than there was for the Enable Others to Act. The remaining standard deviation ranged from 4.000 to 4.85054 illustrating that these data points are on average, were distant from the mean value.

The leadership practices category, Enable Others to Act, had the highest mean score, 53.11, followed by Model the Way and Encourage the Heart, each with mean scores of 49.56. Challenging the Process had a mean score of 46.11, and Inspire a Shared Vision had the lowest mean score, 39.33. The mean scores of the five leadership practices suggest that all respondents were able to practice four of the five leadership practices moderately.

An explanation of each of the leadership practices categories and the participant responses is as follows: principals reported the highest use of the leadership practice, Enabling Others to Act, (e.g., "I develop cooperative relationships among the people I work with"; "I actively listen to diverse points of view"; I involve others in decision making"), most often, followed by Model the way (e.g., "I set a personal example of what I expect from others"; "I follow through on the promises and commitments that I make"; "I ask for feedback on how my actions affect other people's performance"); The third highest leadership practice was Encourage

the Heart (e.g., "I praise people for a job well done"; "I make it a point to let people know about my confidence in their abilities"; "I publicly recognize people who exemplify commitment to shared values"), followed by Challenge the Process (e.g., "I seek out challenging opportunities that test my skills and abilities"; "I challenge people to try out new and innovative ways to do their work"; "I experiment and take risks, even when there is a chance of failure"). The principals reported the lowest use of Inspire a Shared Vision leadership practice.(e.g., "I talk about future trends that will influence how our work gets done"; "I describe a compelling image of what our future could be like"; "I appeal to others to share an exciting dream of the future".

Mean Scores and Percentile Rankings

The study also used Percentile Graph for Recording Leadership Practices Inventory Scores, developed by Kouzes and Posner, to provide normative information regarding the relative rank of participating principals' performances in comparison to others who administered the examination using the LPI-SELF.

The Percentile Graph for Recording Leadership Practices Inventory Scores assessed the accumulated ratings of thousands of leaders and divided the scores into three percentile categories: 1) Mean scores in the 70th percentile or above were placed in the "high" range. The "high" range denotes those practices that principals reported they used most frequently, (2) Mean scores in the 30th to 70th percentile were in the "medium" range. The "medium" range identifies the practices principals reported they used frequently and might need to improve. 3) Mean scores in the 30th percentile or lower were in the "low" range. The "low" range practices were those principals reported they used least frequently and, thus, might need the most improvement. (Appendix B). The percentile rankings may be used to illustrate how the mean scores in the study compare with those of other respondents in the national database (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

Table 2 reports the study participants' LPI-SELF mean scores for each of the five main leadership practices and their national percentile ranking.

Table 2

LPI-SELF Mean Scores and National Percentile Ranking

Leadership Practice Category	Mean Scores	National Percentile
Enable Others to Act	53.11	60th
Inspire a Shared Vision	39.33	29th
Model the Way	49.56	52nd
Encourage the Heart	49.56	53rd
Challenge the Process	46.11	47th

Table 2 reveals that the mean scores reported by the study participants in four of the five leadership practices were within the medium range of 30th to 70th percentile when compared to respondents' mean scores in the LPI-SELF national database. These four categories included: Enable Others to Act (M = 53.11, 60th percentile) Encourage the Heart (M = 49.56, 53rd percentile), Model the Way (M = 49.56, 52nd percentile) and Challenge the Process (M = 46.11, 47th percentile). The leadership practices category, Inspire a Shared vision, (M = 39.33, 29th percentile) was rated below the 30th percentile nationally.

In summary, the LPI mean scores for the study participants reflected that they perceived, in themselves, moderate levels of leadership practice in the categories of Enable Others to Act, Encourage the Heart, Model the way and Challenge the Process. The mean scores for the leadership practice, Inspire a Shared Vision, indicated that it was reported less frequently used

than the other four leadership practices. None of the means scores from the study was above the 70th percentile, which would indicate that participants perceived they employed none of the leadership practices categories most frequently.

      Research question 2. *How did elementary principals of Minnesota turnaround (Reward) schools rank the importance of eight essential leadership skills identified by Herman et.al as having an impact on turning around low-performing schools? What did principals report as their confidence in using these essential skills to bring about change in their schools?*

      There were two components to Research Question 2. The following three tables (Tables 3, 4 and 5) reveal the data from the survey questions related to Research Question 2. The first component of the research question examined the rank order of the importance of eight essential leadership skills as reported by principals of Minnesota Reward elementary schools. The survey questionnaire provided a checkbox with a dropdown menu of skills and asked principals to compare and, then rank each of the items in order of importance with number one as the most important skill and number eight the least important skill. In other words, the most important identified skill ranked by the principals had the largest weight, (which was ranked # 1) and the least important skill (which was ranked #8) had the lowest weight. The response choice with the largest average ranking was the most preferred choice. Table 3 displays the scores and rankings in order of importance for the eight essential leadership skills.

Table 3

Essential Leadership Skills in Order of Importance

Skills	Average Score	Rank
Maintain focus on student learning and related goals	6.20	1
Develop a feeling of mutual accountability among staff	5.60	2
Provide Clear expectations	5.30	3
Analyze data	4.80	4
Assess underlying issues affecting or causing low student achievement	4.80	5
Create a sense of urgency to improve	3.20	6
Model persistence and resilience	3.10	7
Consistently monitoring instruction	3.00	8

Table 3 data reveals the essential leadership skills identified by the study participants in order of importance:

(1) Maintain focus on student learning and achievement (6.20)

(2) Develop a feeling of mutual accountability among staff (5.60)

(3) Provide clear expectations (5.30)

(4) Analyze data (4.80)

(5) Assess underlying issues affecting or causing low student achievement (4.80)

(6) Create a sense of urgency to improve (3.20)

(7) Model persistence and resilience (3.10)

(8) Consistently monitoring instruction (3.00)

The three skills receiving the highest importance rankings were: maintain focus on student learning and achievement, develop a feeling of mutual accountability among staff and provide clear expectations. The three lowest importance rankings include: create a sense of urgency, model persistence and resilience and consistently monitor instruction.

The second component of Research Question 2 requested that participants identify those skills they believed they were prepared to use in order to bring about change in their schools.

Table 4 details the number of participant responses for each category and the percentages. Respondents could select more than one choice.

Table 4

Responses to "Skills I feel prepared to use"

Skills	# of responses in %	# of Responses
Analyze data	20.0	7
Assess underlying issues affecting or causing low student achievement	8.5	3
Maintain focus on student learning and related goals	14.3	5
Create a sense of urgency to improve	0.0	0
Develop a feeling of mutual accountability among staff	20.0	7
Provide expectations	17.1	6
Consistently monitoring instruction	8.5	3
Model persistence and resilience	11.4	4
Total	99.8	35

Nine participants could select any that applied from the skills list.

Table 4 reveals that the study participants perceived themselves most prepared in three of the eight leadership skills identified by Herman et.al. The largest numbers of responses were in

the categories of: analyze data (7 = 20.0%), develop a feeling of mutual accountability (7 = 20.0), and provide clear expectations (6 = 17.1). Maintain focus on student learning and related goals (5 = 14.3%) and model persistence and resilience (4 = 11.4%) were the third and fourth skills the nine study participants believed they were most prepared to use to bring about change in their schools. Consistently monitoring instruction and assess underlying issues affecting or causing low student achievement each received three responses (3 = 8.5%), which create a sense of urgency to improve was not selected by any of the study participants as a skill they believed they were prepared to use to bring about change in their schools. Participants were also asked to select the leadership skills they were less confident in using to bring about change in their schools.

Table 5 reveals the skills in which participants related they were less confident in using among the eight leadership skills identified by Herman et.al. Participants could select more than one response

Table 5

Responses to "Skills I feel less confident to use"

Skills	# of responses in %	# of Responses
Analyze data	14.3	2
Assess underlying issues affecting or causing low student achievement	7.1	1
Maintain focus on student learning and related goals	0.0	0
Create a sense of urgency to improve	35.7	5
Develop a feeling of mutual accountability among staff	14.3	2
Provide expectations	0.0	0
Consistently monitoring instruction	21.4	3
Model persistence and resilience	7.1	1
Total	99.9	14

Nine participants could select any that applied from the skills list.

Table 5 reveals the nine study participants' responses to essential leadership skills in which they felt less confident in using to bring about change in their schools include: Create a sense of urgency to improve (5 = 35.7%) was selected most frequently by participants while the skill consistently monitoring instruction (3 = 21.4%), was ranked second. The leadership skills develop a feeling of mutual accountability among staff (2 = 14.3%), and analyze data (2 1 4.3%), received the third and fourth most responses. Model persistence and resilience (1 = 7.1%), and assess underlying issues affecting or causing low student achievement (1 = 7.1%) had the least number of responses. No participants the participants selected the leadership skill provide expectations, as a skill area in which they had less confidence to use in bringing change in their schools.

Summary

Research Question 1 data illustrated that the LPI-SELF means scores reported by study participants revealed that they perceived a moderate level of the use of the following leadership practices: Enable Others to Act, Encourage the Heart, Model the Way and Challenge the Process. These results placed their mean scores within the 30th to 70th percentile of Kouzes and Posner's normative data for other respondents nationally. Thus, the study participants reported they were frequently engaged in transformational leadership in those four categories of leadership practices with some improvement needed. The leadership practices reported by study participants of turnaround schools were consistent with Kouzes and Posner (2007) research.

Research Question 2 requested that principals' rank eight essential leadership skills in order of importance. The eight essential skills were ranked by the study participants in order of importance as follows: maintain focus on student learning and related goals, develop a feeling of mutual accountability among staff, provide clear expectations, analyze data, assess underlying issues affecting or causing low student achievement, create a sense of urgency to improve, model persistence and resilience and consistently monitoring instruction.

The survey data for a second component of Research Question 2 illustrated that participants reported low levels of confidence in performing three of the eight leadership skills identified by Herman et.al. The findings indicate that participants had low level of confidence in creating a sense of urgency, constantly monitoring instruction and to developing a feeling of mutual accountability among staff.

Chapter V is the summary of the study including conclusions, discussion, and recommendations for future study and recommendations for future practice.

Chapter V: Discussion, Conclusions, Limitations, and Recommendations

School leadership is a key factor in supporting student achievement and is essential to building successful turnaround schools (Wahlstrom, Seashore, Leithwood, & Anderson, 2010). Mackey, Pitcher and Decman (2006) believed that principals needed to be instructional leaders and demonstrate characteristics of strong leadership. Recent research studies indicated that effective leadership involved a combination of instructional, transformational, and managerial leadership behaviors (Grissom, Loeb, & Master, 2013; Hitt & Tucker, 2016). However, school leaders' effectiveness depends on their ability to select and implement the best leadership practices that will highly impact student achievement. While the researchers in the literature recognized the importance of school leadership, questions about which leadership style, particularly in preparation of turnaround leaders, remain unanswered. In this regard, little research could be found to explain principal leadership in a school turnaround environment and less so in relation to transformational leadership. Understanding the perceptions of principals in the context of transformational leadership could very well provide a framework for the leadership practices of elementary school principals in turnaround schools.

The study is a quantitative study which employs a survey design to examine the types of leadership practices used by elementary principals in turnaround schools as identified by Kouzes and Posner in their Leadership Practices Inventory and to rank order in importance eight essential leadership qualities as identified by Herman et.al (2008).

Chapter V discusses the specific results of the study and summarizes the research findings and their implications. The findings are synthesized as a framework for describing Kouzes and Posner leadership practices in turnaround elementary schools. The chapter offers recommendations for researchers and practitioners and discusses limitations of the study.

Discussion and Conclusions

- **Research Question 1**: How did elementary principals of Minnesota turnaround schools rate their engagement in leadership practices as identified in the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI- SELF) by Kouzes and Posner?

Study participants were asked to rate their level of engagement with the transformational leadership practices identified in the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI-SELF) developed by Kouzes and Posner and based on their transformational leadership model. The Kouzes and Posner transformational leadership model consists of five practices identified through their extensive research namely: Enable Others to Act, Model the way, Encourage the Heart, Challenge the Process, and Inspire a Shared Vision.

The study findings revealed that the LPI mean scores ranged from the 30th to the 70th percentile on the national data base scale for four of the five LPI leadership practices: Enable Others to Act, Model the Way, Encourage the Heart and Challenge the Process. In other words, study participants reported that they implemented those four practices of exemplary leadership with moderate frequency. The highest mean score the study participants reported was on the leadership practice Enable Others to Act, which indicated that the study participants engaged in the development of team spirit and collaboration for student learning and related goals. The lowest mean score reported by the study participants was on the leadership practice, Inspire a Shared Vision related to the enlistment of others to make a difference and to create a common vision.

The findings also revealed that the four leadership practices study participants reported with mean scores of 46.1111 to 53.1111 were based on interactions and relationships. These are considered as essential attributes for a school leader in the educational literature (Goleman,

2006). School leaders build relationships by cultivating trust and leader integrity. "Trust is not just what is in your mind; it is also what is in your heart" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 225). The lowest score reported by study participants was in the leadership practice Inspire a Shared Vision, which revealed it was the least frequently practiced. Therefore, there is a need for improvement by respondents in helping others to envision the future.

Discussion, In the following section, the findings of the study are discussed in detail as they relate to the five key exemplary practices identified by Kouzes and Posner: Enable Others to Act, Model the Way, Encourage the Heart, Challenge the Process and Inspire a Shared Vision.

Enable others to act. The principals in the study reported moderate levels of engagement in the practice Enable Others to Act, one key aspect of transformational leadership. According to Kouzes and Posner, leaders who demonstrate this practice enable others to "take ownership and responsibility for their group's success by enhancing their competence and their confidence in their abilities, by listening to their ideas and acting upon them, by involving them in important decisions, and by acknowledging and giving them credit for their contributions" (2007, p. 281). Principals adopting this leadership practice are committed to "Foster collaboration by building trust and facilitating relationships and strengthen others by increasing self-determination and developing competence" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 26). By frequently practicing Enable Others to Act, study participants strengthen their teams and create an enabling environment in which others excel.

This is consistent with the literature in which school leadership was defined as relationship between people (Leithwood, 2006). Therefore, empowerment is "crucial to achieve results"(Satia, Kumar, & Liow, 2014, p. 144, New Approaches in Educational Research). Since the study participants' mean scores for this leadership practice were located at the 60th percentile

on the national percentile scale, the study participants more frequently practiced this leadership practice than the other four. Nevertheless, the 60th percentile ranking also suggests the need to place more emphasis on Enable Others to Act, leadership practice. The research identified the need for leaders to create a climate of trust, facilitate positive interdependence, develop cooperative goals and roles, support norms of reciprocity, promote face to face interactions, produce social capital, generate power of around, ensure self-leadership, provide choices, build competence and confidence and foster ownership (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a).

Model the way. The principals in the study reported moderate levels of engagement in the Model the Way practice, another essential practice of transformational leadership. According to Kouzes and Posner (2007), leaders who Model the Way exhibit two key behaviors. They clarify their values and set an example (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Model the Way is essentially about "earning the right and the respect to lead through direct involvement and action. People first follow the person, then the plan" (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 15). Participants' mean score averages were within the 30th to 70th percentile rankings in the national database, which suggested moderate level of engagement in this practice. The findings revealed that the participants often did what they say they would do and their actions were aligned with their values. "If you don't believe in the messenger, you won't believe the message" (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 38). This result was consistent with other studies in the literature and crucial for transformational leadership practice. Elements of Model the Way include the following: clarify your values, explore your inner territory, build and affirm shared values, renew shared values, lead by example, spend time and pay attention, turn critical incidents into teachable moments, tell stories to teach virtues, choose words and questions deliberately, and develop competence (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a).

Encourage the heart. In relation to the leadership practice, Encourage the Heart, Kouzes and Posner related various approaches to encourage team members. "When done with authenticity and from the heart, build a strong sense of collective identity and community spirit that can carry a group through extraordinarily tough times" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 23). According to the authors, leaders Encourage the Heart by "Recognizing the Contributions of Others" and by Celebrating the Use of Values and Victories (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). The study participants' average mean score was within the 30th to 70th percentile ranking in the national data base and therefore, revealed moderate levels of engagement. This suggested that study participants reached out to others and "touch the hearts". The result was found to be consistent with the writings of Cashman (2008), who wrote, in his book, Leadership from the inside out: Becoming a leader for life, leaders ought to "improve the lives of everyone and everything (they) touch" (p. 77).

However, to achieve a higher placement in percentile rankings when compared to the national data base, more frequent practice of the seven essential components of Encourage the Heart is encouraged: set clear standards, expect the best, pay attention, personalize recognition, tell the story, celebrate together, and set the example (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a).

Challenge the process. Transformational leaders exhibit two behaviors in employing the Challenge the Process exemplary leadership practice: Searching for opportunities and by experimenting and taking risks and learning from mistakes (Covey, 2005). According to Kouzes and Posner "Search for opportunities, by seizing the initiative and looking outward for innovative ways to improve and experiment and take risks by constantly generating small wins and learning from experiences" (2007, p. 26). The study participants reported moderate levels of engagement in practices related to Challenge the Process, which suggested that they take risks

and sustain change despite difficulties. Research supports these characteristics for transformation

(Northouse, 2018; Yukl, 2010). Since the average mean score for this leadership practice was in

the 30th- 70th percentile ranking when compared to the national data base, this is a leadership

practice that could also be further encouraged. The essential components of Challenge the

Process include: seize the initiative, encourage the initiative in others, make challenge

meaningful, look outward for fresh ideas, Initiate incremental steps, make small wins work, learn

from mistakes and promote psychological hardiness (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a).

Inspire a shared vision. The study participants reported low levels of engagement in

practices related to Inspire a Shared Vision leadership practice. A transformational leader's goal

is to inspire followers to share the leader's values and connect with the leaders' vision.

According to Kouzes and Posner, leaders "Envision the future by imagining exciting and

ennobling possibilities and enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations"

(Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 106). A good vision helps to articulate shared beliefs and develop a

common language, thereby securing alignment and effective communication (West-Burnham,

2010). By offering an exciting vision, transformational leaders give life and work a sense of

meaning and purpose (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

The study participants rated this leadership practice below the 30th Percentile ranking

suggesting that the leadership practice was less frequently employed than the other four

leadership practices. The result was inconsistent with the need of a shared vision as cited in the

educational literature. Transformational leadership involves uncovering potentials that can bring

vision in practice and to realign visions and values with transformative ideas (Krishnan, 2002).

Given the study results, the following actions to Inspire a Shared Vision is a practice that

should be encouraged in principal leaders*:* have a vision, discover your theme, explore your past,

immerse yourself, find meaning in the ideal, take pride in being unique, create images of the future, develop a shared sense of destiny, listen deeply, discover a common purpose, practice positive communication and be expressive (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a).

Conclusion: Research question 1. The study findings revealed that principals of turnaround schools reported they implemented the four practices of exemplary leadership with moderate frequency. Both the findings of the study and the related literature illustrate the importance of personal and professional development of all school leaders to provide tools and/or strategies for effective leadership, particularly if challenged with turning around low performing schools. Principals should be offered professional development opportunities that will assist them in developing each of the leadership skills to complement their management skills. It is also recommended that courses in the principalship or educational leadership studies at postgraduate levels should be developed for school principals in general and turnaround school principals in particular.

- **Research Question 2**. How did elementary principals of Minnesota turnaround (Reward) Schools rank the importance of eight essential leadership qualities identified by Herman et.al as having an impact on turning around low-performing schools? What did principals report as their confidence in using these essential skills to bring about change in their schools?

Study participants rank ordered the eight essential leadership skills as identified by Herman et.al on the basis of their impact on turning around low-performing schools and, they reported their confidence in using these essential leadership skills to bring about change in their schools.

A skill is defined as "an ability which can be developed, not necessarily inborn, and which is manifested in performance, not merely in potential" (Katz, 1955, pp. 33-34). It is also defined as an acquired task that can be developed and change by training and experience (Nahavandi, 1997).

Herman et.al identified eight skills as the most important for a principal to demonstrate to effectively lead a turnaround school in improving student achievement. The skills include the capacity to analyze data; assess underlying issues affecting or causing low student achievement; maintain focus on student learning and related goals; create a sense of urgency to improve; develop a feeling of mutual accountability among staff; provide clear expectations; consistently monitoring instruction; and model persistence and resilience (Herman et al., 2008).

The study participants were asked to rank order the perceived importance of each leadership skill by assigning to each skill a number from one to eight with one as the most important. Rank ordering is considered a powerful form for reporting survey data as it represents a comparative decision and not just an opinion (Crawford, Lang, Fink, Dalton, & Fielitz, 2011). According to Crawford et al. (p. 2), a rank order represents "a choice, discriminating from most to least important soft skills, and rank order data can assist in identifying when there is congruence of priorities; highlight important misconceptions of when a valued activity isn't perceived as highly important by a stakeholder group; and to prioritize limited time and resources for soft skills development" (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a).

Among the eight skills, maintaining focus on student learning and related goals was ranked first in importance by study participants (mean = 6.20). This skill enables school leaders to focus on student learning results and on actions needed to set challenging goals and reach high standards of performance despite barriers (Public Impact, 2008). Based on the rankings, focusing

on student learning and related goals was viewed as a skill that principals must demonstrate to turn around a low performing school. The skill identified by participants as second most important was develop a feeling of mutual accountability among staff (mean = 5.60).

Rank ordered by study participants as the least important of the eight essential skills (mean = 3.00) was consistently monitoring instruction which was defined as "The ability to set clear expectations and to hold others accountable for performance (Public Impact, 2008). It may be possible that the reason the skill was perceived as least important was that participants thought it was partially included in one or more of the other skill areas. The next to last skill identified in the principals' rank ordering of importance was model persistence and resilience (mean = 3.10). The remaining skills had mean scores from 3.20 to 5.30.

With respect to preparedness, the study participants perceived themselves most prepared or confident to use in bringing about change in their schools. The following three of the eight skills: analyze data, develop a sense of accountability among staff, and provide clear expectations. The overall results revealed that the skills are achievement-oriented tasks and have the highest influence for driving results. With respect to confidence, the participants were less confident in using the leadership skills; create a sense of urgency, and consistently monitoring instruction, to bring about change in their schools. Given the need for constant improvement in schools to meet the important responsibility of assuring achievement for all students, leading by creating a sense of urgency and achieving some short-term wins are critical for success (Public impact, 2008). According to Kotter, "Real transformation takes time. Complex efforts to change strategies or restructure businesses risk losing momentum if there are no short-term goals to meet and celebrate (Kotter, 2012, p. 11). The rank order of the eight leadership skills can assist principals to better understand those areas in which they need further development. However, it

is important to note that all of the skills are important and must complement one another.

Discussion

In the following section, the most important leadership skills a principal must demonstrate to effectively lead turnaround school in improving student achievement are discussed. The skills identified in this section represent the four highest ranked skills identified by the study participants in order of their importance.

Skill area 1: Maintain focus on student learning and related goals. The capacity to maintain focus on student learning and related goals was ranked as most important by study participants. This skill relates to setting high performance goals for students, using a variety of strategies to meet these goals, regularly monitoring student performance against the standards, and making the needed changes (Public Impact, 2008). The findings of the study suggest that while it is important for school leaders to have a set of clear goals, principals need to have the abilities and skills to engage students in learning. Additionally, the skill of maintaining focus on student learning and related goals may be far more important to lead teachers in turnaround schools than to lead teachers whose students make progress more easily (Public Impact, 2008)

Skill area 2: Provide clear expectations. In the study, participants ranked provide clear expectation as the second most essential skill to improve student learning in turnaround schools. Researchers have confirmed that high teacher expectations promote motivation and a commitment to achieve and learn content among students (Arroyo, Rhoad, & Drew, 1999). Setting clear and consistent expectations in turnaround schools help staff members to meet those high expectations. Teachers who teach students to meet very high standards of behavior and performance are exceptionally clear and consistent about their expectations, which can also be a reflection of the school leader's expectations (Public Impact, 2008).

Skill area 3: Hold others accountable for performance. The essential leadership skill ranked third most important by study participants was to develop a sense of mutual accountability among staff members. According to Boven, accountability is a social relation in which an actor feels an obligation to explain and to justify his or her conduct to some significant other (Boven, 2005). Fullan also contends that creating a more responsible culture is "to focus on the collective expectations and transparent performances of teachers. In effect, mobilizing support and built –in pressure for taking responsibility for student learning" (Fullan, 2015, p. 115). In light of this, turn around school leaders must set the foundation of accountability using clear and concise communication, focusing on consequences that produce outcomes and encourage accountability (Public Impact, 2008).

Skill area 4: Analyze data. The capacity to analyze data to identify school needs was ranked fourth most important by study participants. As student populations become more diverse and the role of the principal becomes more challenging, policymakers urge districts and schools to engage in data-driven decision making as a complement to research-based practice (Consortium for School Networking n.d.). Furthermore, education funds to be distributed to states under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 were made contingent on assurances about the use of student data systems. By improving skills related to collecting, analyzing, and interpreting student assessment data, school leaders and teachers will be potentially better equipped to adjust their instruction to accommodate the needs of individual students.

Conclusions: Research question 2. To ensure improved student learning and turn around a school or school system, a particular set of skills are desired by turnaround leaders (Leithwood, 2006). The results of the study's research suggest that principals who participated in

the study mainly focused on student achievement through setting high expectations and using data to further student achievement. These rankings can help principals to reflect upon their own leadership skills in order to affect student learning and become more aware of the hierarchy of importance of leadership skills that have been associated with improving student achievement (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). Additionally, the findings may inform principal preparation programs, at the very least, about the essential skills required to meet the increasing challenges faced by principals in Minnesota turnaround schools.

Limitations

According to Roberts, limitations are defined as "features that negatively affect a study and the ability to generalize areas over which you have no control" (Roberts, 2010, p. 162). In the study, the following limitations were observed:

- The survey relied on a sample selected from a number of distinguished elementary public schools that have been recognized and designated as Reward Schools in Minnesota and, therefore, did not represent all Minnesota turnaround school principals.

- An online version of the LPI-SELF was sent to twenty-five participants serving as principals in Reward Schools in Minnesota at the time of the study. Ten respondents chose not to complete the entire survey. Six of the returned questionnaires had missing data for some of the items resulting in a final sample size of nine respondents. The limited sample size may not be representative of elementary turnaround school principals' perceptions in the state of Minnesota.

- The data were collected within a two-week time span. Increasing the length of the survey window open longer may have allowed additional school principals to participate in the study.

- The survey allowed no space for participants to make comments or elaborate on the answers that they provided.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the results of the study, the following are suggested for further research of the topic:

- Further research is recommended involving a larger population of elementary school turnaround school principals to validate the findings of the current study.

- Further research is recommended that includes the use of qualitative methods to analyze leadership practices through personal interviews and observations instead of or in addition to the survey method in order to gain further insights from principals who have been successful in low performing turnaround schools.

- It is recommended that additional studies be undertaken to gather and analyze data systematic data at all levels of education on transformational leadership.

- Further research is recommended on the reasons select principals are successful and other principals are not as successful in affecting student achievement in a school.

Recommendations for Practice

Based on the results of the study, the following are recommended for professional practice:

- Reward school principals in Minnesota practice the transformational leadership model moderately which suggests there is room for improvement in leadership

development. Therefore, there is a need to offer more professional development to principals at all organizational levels on transformational leadership.

- Teacher leaders should be trained in and supported to understand and practice Kouzes and Posner Five Leadership Practices.

- It is recommended that principals of turnaround schools be offered professional development opportunities that will assist them in developing each of the leadership practices and skills to complement their management skills.

- It is also recommended that a center be established to offer principal leadership training, and development programs or courses be designed at postgraduate levels for school principals in general and turnaround school principals in particular.

- On a personal note, the study has provided me with tools that will assist me in leadership training and development programs that I want to operate back home in Africa. The research has helped me to understand leaders' perceptions and reality. It has also helped me to understand transformational leadership theory.

Summary

Chapter V presented discussion and conclusions derived from the study.

The purpose of the study was to seek principals' level of engagement with five Leadership Practices in select Minnesota elementary Reward (turnaround) Schools based on the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI-SELF) developed by Kouzes and Posner (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). In addition, using eight essential leadership skills identified by Herman et al. (2008), the study sought to find how principals of turnaround schools ranked ordered these leadership skills and their level of confidence in using these skills to bring about change in their schools. The

results of the study can be used to assist principals in identifying essential leadership practices and skills to improve student achievement in low performing elementary schools.

The results for question one illustrated that principals of select Minnesota elementary turnaround schools implemented four of the five practices of exemplary leadership with moderate frequency. They were as follows: Enable Others to Act; Encourage the Heart; Model the Way; and Challenge the Process. This finding correlated with other researchers who have noted that transformational leaders foster higher levels of motivation and commitment to the organization by developing organizational vision, commitment and trust among employees, and facilitating organizational learning (Bass, 1985; Yukl, Gordon, & Taber, 2002).The results were supported by the work of other researchers who showed that transformational leadership practices are conducive to positive results in school reform efforts (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999) and are measurable (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008).

The second question was specific to the eight leadership skills developed by Herman et al. (2008) and asked participants to rank order those skills in their order of importance. The results of the study revealed that the four highest ranked leadership skills were maintain focus on student learning and related goals; develop a feeling of mutual accountability among staff; provide a clear set of expectations; and analyze data. The study participants perceived themselves most prepared to use and bring about change in their schools in the following three of eight leadership skills: analyze data; develop a feeling of mutual accountability; and provide clear expectations. It is important to note that Herman et al. (2008) indicated that all eight of the leadership skills identified in their research are important and must complement one another.

As a result of the study, the following recommendations were offered expand the study of leadership qualities essential for turnaround low performing schools, and, that school leaders

must recognize that targeted, skill-based professional development is needed for

transformational leadership to become comprehensively embedded as part of the leadership

practices of all principals who are focused on increasing student achievement.

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Appendix A: Implied Consent to Participate in a Web-based Online Survey

You are invited to participate in a web-based online survey entitled "Assessment of the Leadership Practices of Turnaround School Principals in Minnesota". This is a research project being conducted by Kassahun Wana, a student at St. Cloud State University. It should take approximately ten minutes to complete.

Benefits of the research

There are no direct benefits to participants as a result of participating in this study. Participants may, however, be prompted to reflect on their practice and thereby providing them with an opportunity for assessing themselves as a transformational leader. In addition, this study will add to the knowledge and literature regarding the leadership practices of principals in turning around low performing schools. The results of this study may serve to inform low achieving principals to learn from the success of others and

Risks and discomforts

There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life. The information gained from participants will remain confidential. The participants' identities and responses will not be disclosed without permission of the participants or as required by law.

An implied consent document detailing the purpose and procedures of the study, the potential risks and discomforts, steps that will be taken to maintain confidentiality, and the rights of the research participant will be provided to each participant. Participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from participation at any time without repercussion or consequences.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your survey answers will be sent to a link at SurveyMonkey.com where data will be stored in a password protected electronic format. Survey Monkey does not collect identifying information such as your name, email address, or IP address. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study. Confidentiality will be maintained to the degree possible given the technology and practices used by online survey company. Your participation in this online survey involves risks to confidentiality similar to a person's everyday use of the Internet. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason.

CONTACT

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact me at kcwana@stcloudstate.edu or via phone at 320-380-5776 or my research supervisor, Professor Kay Worner via email at ktworner@stcloudstate.edu or via phone at 612-810-7986

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records. Clicking on the "Agree" button indicates that

- You have read the above information
- You voluntarily agree to participate
- You are 18 years of age or older

☐ Agree

☐ Disagree

Appendix B: Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)
COMPLETION REPORT - PART 2 OF 2
COURSEWORK TRANSCRIPT**

** NOTE: Scores on this Transcript Report reflect the most current quiz completions, including quizzes on optional (supplemental) elements of the course. See list below for details. See separate Requirements Report for the reported scores at the time all requirements for the course were met.

- **Name:** Kassahun Wana (ID: 6836613)
- **Institution Affiliation:** St. Cloud State University (ID: 1328)
- **Institution Email:** kcwana@stcloudstate.edu
- **Institution Unit:** Educational Administrationn & Leadership
- **Phone:** 320 308 4220

- **Curriculum Group:** Responsible Conduct of Research
- **Course Learner Group:** NSF-Responsible Conduct in Research for Students
- **Stage:** Stage 1 - RCR

- **Record ID:** 25608540
- **Report Date:** 15-Jan-2018
- **Current Score**:** 87

REQUIRED, ELECTIVE, AND SUPPLEMENTAL MODULES	MOST RECENT	SCORE
Authorship (RCR-Basic) (ID: 16597)	15-Jan-2018	3/5 (60%)
Data Management (RCR-Basic) (ID: 16600)	15-Jan-2018	5/5 (100%)
Research Misconduct (RCR-Basic) (ID: 16604)	15-Jan-2018	5/5 (100%)

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

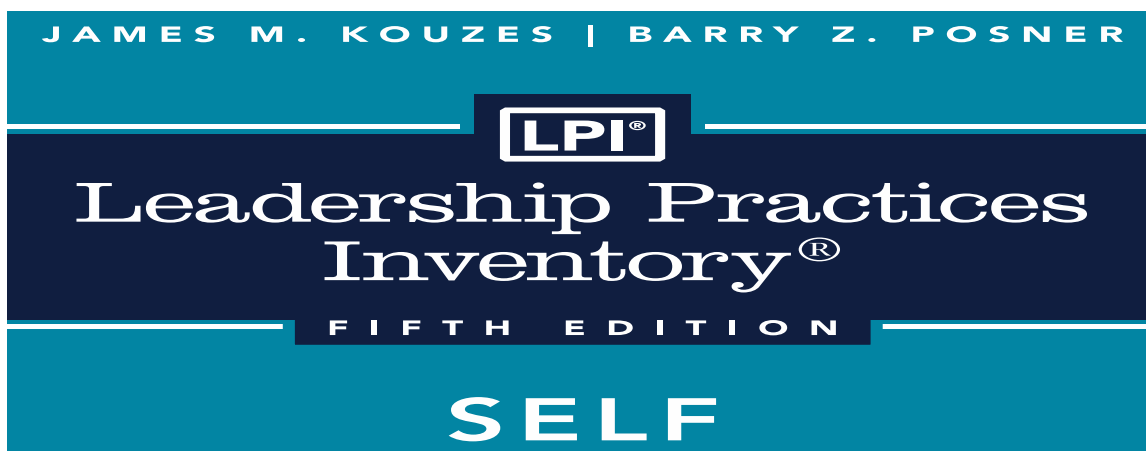**Verify at**: www.citiprogram.org/verify/?k9b4632cc-8184-4f47-882c-a9cc346f466f-25608540

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program)
Email: support@citiprogram.org
Phone: 888-529-5929
Web: https://www.citiprogram.org

Appendix C: Leadership Practice Inventory

JAMES M. KOUZES | BARRY Z. POSNER

LPI®

Leadership Practices Inventory®

FIFTH EDITION

SELF

Your name: _____

To what extent do you engage in the following behaviors? Choose the response number that best applies to each statement and record it in the box to the right of that statement.

1. I set a personal example of what I expect of others.
2. I talk about future trends that will influence how our work gets done.
3. I seek out challenging opportunities that test my own skills and abilities.
4. I develop cooperative relationships among the people I work with.
5. I praise people for a job well done.
6. I make certain that people adhere to the principles and standards that have been agreed upon.
7. I describe a compelling image of what our future could be like.
8. I challenge people to try out new and innovative ways to do their work.
9. I actively listen to diverse points of view.
10. I make it a point to let people know about my confidence in their abilities.
11. I follow through on the promises and commitments that I make.
12. I appeal to others to share an exciting dream of the future.
13. I actively search for innovative ways to improve what we do.
14. I treat others with dignity and respect.
15. I make sure that people are creatively recognized for their contributions to the success of our projects.
16. I ask for feedback on how my actions affect other people's performance.
17. I show others how their long-term interests can be realized by enlisting in a common vision.
18. I ask "What can we learn?" when things don't go as expected.
19. I involve people in the decisions that directly impact their job performance.
20. I publicly recognize people who exemplify commitment to shared values.
21. I build consensus around a common set of values for running our organization.
22. I paint the "big picture" of what we aspire to accomplish.
23. I identify measurable milestones that keep projects moving forward.
24. I give people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work.
25. I tell stories of encouragement about the good work of others.
26. I am clear about my philosophy of leadership.
27. I speak with genuine conviction about the higher meaning and purpose of our work.
28. I take initiative in anticipating and responding to change.
29. I ensure that people grow in their jobs by learning new skills and developing themselves.
30. I get personally involved in recognizing people and celebrating accomplishments.

LPI: LEADERSHIP PRACTICES INVENTORY SELF

Appendix D: LPI Permission

Kouzes Posner International
221 Stonewall Road
Berkeley, California 94705

January 21, 2018

Mr. Kassahun Wana
6200 Country Road 120, Apt 203
St. Cloud, Minnesota 56303

Dear Kassahun:

Thank you for your request to use the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) in your dissertation. We are willing to allow you to *reproduce* the LPI and distribute it electronically through the St. Could State University statistical center for the population outlined in your letter, at no charge, with the following understandings:

(1) That the LPI is used only for research purposes and is not sold or used in conjunction with any compensated management development activities;

(2) That copyright of the LPI, or any derivation of the instrument, is retained by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, and that the following copyright statement is included on all copies of the instrument: "Copyright 1980-2018 James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. All rights reserved. Used with permission.";

(3) That one (1) **electronic** copy of your dissertation and one (1) copy of **all** papers, reports, articles, and the like which make use of the LPI data be sent **promptly** to our attention; and,

(4) That you agree to allow us to include an abstract of your study and any other published papers utilizing the LPI research on our various websites.

If the terms outlined above are acceptable, would you indicate so by signing one (1) copy of this letter and returning it to us. Best wishes for every success with your research project.

Cordially,

Barry Z. Posner, Ph.D.
Managing Partner

I understand and agree to abide by these conditions:

(Signed) _____ Date: 2-1-18
Expected Completion Date: _____ Dec, 2018 _____
Department Advisor _Kely T. Warren_ Date: 2-1-18

Appendix E: IRB Approval Letter

ST. CLOUD STATE
UNIVERSITY
EDUCATION FOR LIFE.

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

720 4th Avenue South AS 210, St. Cloud, MN 56301-4498

Name: Kassahun Wana

Email: kcwana@stcloudstate.edu

**IRB PROTOCOL
DETERMINATION:
Exempt Review**

Project Title: Assessment of Leadership Practices of Principals of Turnaround Schools in Minnesota

Advisor Kay Worner

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed your protocol to conduct research involving human subjects. Your project has been: **APPROVED**

Please note the following important information concerning IRB projects:

- The principal investigator assumes the responsibilities for the protection of participants in this project. Any adverse events must be reported to the IRB as soon as possible (ex. research related injuries, harmful outcomes, significant withdrawal of subject population, etc.).

- For expedited or full board review, the principal investigator must submit a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date indicated on this letter to report conclusion of the research or request an extension.

-Exempt review only requires the submission of a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date indicated in this letter if an extension of time is needed.

- Approved consent forms display the official IRB stamp which documents approval and expiration dates. If a renewal is requested and approved, new consent forms will be officially stamped and reflect the new approval and expiration dates.

- The principal investigator must seek approval for any changes to the study (ex. research design, consent process, survey/interview instruments, funding source, etc.). The IRB reserves the right to review the research at any time.

If we can be of further assistance, feel free to contact the IRB at 320-308-4932 or email ResearchNow@stcloudstate.edu and please reference the SCSU IRB number when corresponding.

IRB Chair:

Dr. Benjamin Witts
Associate Professor- Applied Behavior Analysis
Department of Community Psychology,Counseling, and Family Therapy

IRB Institutional Official:

Dr. Latha Ramakrishnan
Interim Associate Provost for Research
Dean of Graduate Studies

OFFICE USE ONLY

SCSU IRB# 1826 - 2334	**Type:** Exempt Review	**Today's Date:** 6/12/2018
1st Year Approval Date: 6/12/2018	**2nd Year Approval Date:**	**3rd Year Approval Date:**
1st Year Expiration Date:	**2nd Year Expiration Date:**	**3rd Year Expiration Date:**