PRINCIPALS OF EDUCATION:

A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY OF THE PRINCIPAL'S ROLE AS AN INTERMEDIATE

POLICY IMPLEMENTER

by

AMANDA D. STULTS

Under the Direction of Sheneka Williams

ABSTRACT

The main focus of this study is to examine the role of the principal as an intermediate policy implementer with particular focus on implementing Georgia's Teacher Keys to Effectiveness System. This qualitative case study comprises interviews and document analysis to examine the principal's self-identified role identity development process within the framework of Spillane's Distributed Leadership theory model. The research questions are: (1) what is the role of the school principal as an intermediary policy implementer, and (2) how does the school principal's self-defined role as the intermediary policy implementer influence his implementation effectiveness? Interviews with the principal, assistant principals, and teachers were used to triangulate the context in which the principal's role identity development process was situated. Results suggest the principal's process based on the relationship between the principal, assistant principals, Board of Education, teachers, and the school's climate and culture directly impacts the decisions the principal makes and the practices used to implement. This study also supports the policy implementation theory that a smoothly implemented policy is so as a result of forward mapping, evolutionary planning, and continuous monitoring and feedback for change.

INDEX WORDS: principal, role identity, Distributed Leadership, policy, intermediate, policy implementation, education, supervision, evaluation, TKES, relationships, leadership, trust, sense-making

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BSFCS, The University of Georgia, 2006

MEd, The University of Georgia, 2011

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2015

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December 2015

DEDICATION

To my many teachers, who are too numerous to name individually

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge the hard work of the people behind my scenes, without whom, I'd not have been able to persevere long enough to reach this point. Thank you. I'm so blessed to have a great group of family and friends who let me talk through my process. You've let me talk your ears off while I figure out what it all means, and you've let me do that repeatedly. Thank you.

Shannon, thank you for reading this and making sure it made sense. I appreciate the effort you've invested in this for me. I know you didn't want to read it at first, but know that I won't forget it. Mom, thank you for always encouraging me to keep coming back to it and to get it done. Your unwavering vote of confidence helped. A lot. Thank you. Dad and Laura, thank you for the silent support. It was nice to know that I didn't have to explain where I was at in the process every time we talked.

Ean, thank you. Our discussions will never be forgotten. I'm so glad we were able to take this journey together through our good natured and friendly competition. Your friendship means a lot to me, and I'm happy your family will get to have your full attention once you too have finished your "glorified book report". The end is just around the corner; I've never doubted that you've got this. Sincerely, I wish you and your family the very best and brightest future now that we're finishing it strong.

CJ, Beverly, and Katie, thank you for being the best "writing group" ever! Saturday mornings will never be the same without meeting you guys at room 272 of the SLC, Panera, or

the Lib's 2nd floor. Your encouragement and faith that we'd make it through this experience definitely made a difference. I cannot wait to celebrate your successful completion soon too!!

I'd also like to thank the people who opted to participate in my study. Obviously, without your assistance there would have been no study, no dissertation, and no degree. Thank you for sharing with me. I sincerely hope I've represented you all well and honestly. I also wish you the best in your future endeavors.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Schools are complex organizations (Orton & Weick, 1990; Hoy & Miskel, 2008). The

roles school administrators perform are also complex within the multifaceted organizations

(Walker & Lynn, 2013; Waldman, Gavin, & Walumbwa, 2013). Georgia's educational system

has been comprised of policies and practices loosely coupling classroom practices, the local

board of education, the state's Department of Education, and the federal Education Department

(Orton & Weick, 1990; Anderson, 2007; Elmore, 2004; Cohen, Fuhrman, Mosher, 2007; Fullan,

2007; Honig, 2006a; Honig, 2006b; Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Odden, 1991; Vinovskis, 2009).

Principals are tasked with an administrator's role to act as a buffer protecting the ill understood

technical core of teaching and learning by managing school resources and working with the

community (Lortie, 2002; Elmore, 2004; Fullan, 2007; Kirst & Wirt, 2009). With the federal

government's interest in education as a social-change agent and the subsequent tightening of

policy influences on state and local boards of education expectations and classroom practices

regarding student achievement and school accountability, the principal's position as the

designated local administrator and implicit intermediate policy implementer has encountered a

state of heightened conflict between the professionally autonomous teacher and the bureaucratic

policy makers with the federal government's interest in education as social-change agent and the

subsequent policies influencing state and local boards of education expectations and classroom

practices through student achievement and school accountability (Fullan, 2007; Tienken &

Orlich, 2013). Despite the shifting expectations, the principal's evolving role has seen "more lip

service than mind service" (Fullan, 2007, p. 15). How have these organizational policies affected the principal's positional roles? How does the principal, as an intermediate policy implementer, balance the federal government's equality, equity, and effectiveness expectations with the teacher's need for professionalism and classroom autonomy?

Problem

At its inception, the American education system was built to serve the nation by preparing society for the responsibility of governing itself (Rothstein, 2008). Due to the political climate at the time the US Constitution was drafted, the young nation's leaders decided not to include the responsibility of governing education as a federal issue, but rather considered it a state's right and responsibility (Anderson, 2007). Over time, educational policies and expectations have shifted to include social change and economic growth, and became seen as an increasingly federal concern. To promote social change through educational policies, terms like *equality* and *equity* were created and used to describe desired social expectations (Elmore, 2004; Fullan, 2007; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). The concept of *efficiency* has been added as a key component for economically based policy changes and expectations promoting bureaucratic practices in education (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005).

This chapter examines the historical development of President B. Obama's Race to the Top (RT3), and Georgia's attempted implementation of this effort through her teacher evaluation tool, Teacher Keys to Effectiveness System (TKES). This researcher will analyze the dual roles that the key educational terms *equality*, *equity*, and *efficiency* have had on federal educational policies. Additionally, this researcher will explore the responsiveness of the lower to the upper educational business levels, which defines the complexly coupled school structure.

Educational System Foundations

The American education system is a business. It started as small independent businesses that grew into larger conglomerates. Although, the origin of the American education system was founded on the idea of necessity in order to build a strong and educated government, the Tenth Amendment excluded education from the list of federal issues and concerns (Anderson, 2007; U.S. Constitution, 1789). The framers of the Constitution, however, did provide a clause in the First Article known as the "general welfare" clause (Article I, Section 8). These two statements will frame the conflicted nature of federal education policies as the federal government attempts to reclaim education (Anderson, 2007; Vinvoskis, 2009; Tienken & Orlich, 2013). The 1937 *Helvering v. Davis* decision (301 U.S. 619) helped define the phrase "general welfare" allowing the federal government to provide supplemental financial aid to assist in the building and maintenance of schools for the general welfare of the nation (Anderson, 2007).

Education's business. Education, as an organizational system, is studied and defined by looking at the organization's characteristic responsiveness to other organizational practices (Orton & Weick, 1990). These characteristics created two defining system categories: "tightly coupled" and "loosely coupled" organizations. Coupling is the study of organizational responsiveness (Orton & Weick, 1990; Hoy & Miskel, 2008). The loosely coupled system implies a light reactiveness, while tightly coupled systems demonstrate strong responsiveness and stronger explicit connections. The term *loose-coupling* was coined sometime before the 1960s or early 1970s by organizational systems researchers (Elmore, 2004), but was only defined by Orton and Weick (1990) as a method to study the interconnectedness between the organization's policy and praxis. To study the coupled system, one must look for "specific properties and a specific history to the system, rather than an absence of properties" (Orton &

Weick, 1990, p. 219). Therefore, to describe organizations as being loosely coupled, one must identify connected events that are responsive, while each organization maintains an individual identity with evidence of autonomous differences. Hoy and Miskel (2008) simplify this concept when they predicate events are loosely coupled when they demonstrate minimal interdependence. The opposite of loose-coupling is tight-coupling. Historically, a tightly coupled bureaucratic system in schools organically developed in response to the school's structure evolving into a "more elaborate and rigid" (Elmore, 2004, p. 45) institution to provide efficiency in practice.

Elmore (2004) refutes loose coupling as study in complex processes because he sees it more as a state of mind and espouses the modern standards-based reform efforts push for a more tightly coupled system. Loose coupling "resides in individual classrooms, not in the organizations that surround it" (Elmore, 2004, p. 46) and "explains why schools continue to promote structures and engage in practice that research and experience suggest are manifestly no productive for the learning of certain students" (p. 47).

Hoy and Miskel (2008) explain, "schools are complex organizations with both tight and loose structural connections" (p. 123). As the school business grew, administrators developed a new role as technical core protectors (Lortie, 2002) and maintain the loosely coupled influences that external expectations have on the teacher's internal practices. The technical core of classroom practice, still weakly understood, is comprised of the behaviors which define what happens in the classroom: how teachers teach and learners learn (Elmore, 2004; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). School administrators became responsible for protecting the inner technical core of the classroom to build and maintain public confidence in school effectiveness, and to allow the loosely coupled teacher to perform by focusing on the needs of the students (Elmore, 2004).

"Tight coupling improves organizational efficiency and accountability, but loose coupling promotes creativity and professionalism" (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p. 123). School administrators deal with the bureaucratic expectations of external stakeholders to protect the teacher's professionalism.

Schools, being complex organizations, are primarily comprised of two organizational domains: the bureaucratic and the professional. The bureaucratic domain, a tightly coupled system, is comprised of institutional management, policy and laws, internal affairs, funding and resources, and student/teacher mediations (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). The professional domain, a fundamentally loosely coupled system, is defined by the teaching practice in individual classrooms, known as the technical core (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Lortie, 2002; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Lortie (2002) explained, "as school systems multiplied in number and grew in size, they became more bureaucratized" (p. 3) and caused teachers to become employees "supervised by full-time, physically present administrators acting on authority delegated by schools' boards" (p. 3) further developing a conflict between the bureaucratic and the professional domains of a school. Conflict arose from the bureaucratic desire to control and its apparent incompatibility with the professional desire for classroom autonomy further created a strong obstacle for reform efforts. Sizer (1996) explained with the implementation of a bureaucratic environment "teachers [were] often treated like hired hands," (p. 184) negatively impacting the professional domain. Over time, the bureaucracy defining the school's institutional practices had increased so much that Hoy and Miskel (2008) were able to assert, "not on welfare agency has as much hierarchical control or rule enforcement as the *least* centralized or *least* formalized high school" (sic, p. 123).

Educational Policy Implementation. As stated above, schools are complex organizations simultaneously employing tightly and loosely coupled systems. The dual roles of

the tightly coupled bureaucratic and loosely coupled professional domains within school organizations simultaneously promote and prevent reform efforts. Educational reform efforts have had a historical precedence for impacting those coupling systems, usually in the effort to tighten the interrelated responses between the external stakeholders' classroom outcome expectations and the technical core presented by the teachers. Simple reform efforts, including bureaucratic expenditures, were not reaching into individual classrooms with the administrators acting as the first line of deference protecting the professional autonomy of the teachers and the technical core. The technical core being a concept that "cannot be clearly translated into reproducible behaviors, it require a high degree of individual judgment, and it is not susceptible to reliable external evaluation" (Elmore, 2004, p. 46). The technical core is the art of educational praxis.

Orton and Weick (1990) used Firestone's 1985 research, which claimed loosely coupled school systems exist as the precursor to the effort by educational administration leadership literature to redefine the role of administrators to tighten coupling by employing more managerial strategies, like enhanced leadership, focused effort and shared values. Orton and Weick (1990) voiced the idea that both systems could coexist rather than conflict through "employee autonomy, experimentations, and innovation" (p. 215) as "facilitated through a strongly held set of shared values" (p. 215).

"Education policy is about preserving the legitimacy of the institution" (Spillane et al., 2002, p. 734) and, therefore, a political process reliant on the maintained support of the public. Politics surrounding education had not been about the technical core and instructional practices of the teacher as much as it had been "about the logic of confidence between the schools and the community" (Elmore, 2004, p. 49). Policy decisions tended to be symbolic measures focused on

demonstrating the impact of tightly coupled expectations between the federal government, the state education systems, and local educational practices. Elmore (2004) further claimed due to the autonomous nature of the teaching profession and the lack of the administrators' formal authority to incite change in the classroom that any "ambitious and challenging practice in classrooms thus occurs roughly in proportion to the number of teachers who are intrinsically motivated to question their practice on a fundamental level" (p. 28).

Reform

Traditionally, federal educational reform efforts centered around two key concepts: educational equality and equity or management efficiency. While not mutually exclusive, they have often been at cross-purposes. Each conceptual categorical action has created conflict with the other by the nature of its ideological argument. Equality, the idea that all students have a right to equal educational opportunity, strove to level the playing field and allow students of diverse backgrounds the same opportunity to learn and promote the nation's ability to globally compete in various economic arenas. Equity assists equality through financial supplementation to assist in leveling those fields by providing the necessary resources one needs to overcome their disadvantaged environments. Efficiency attempted to manage the fiscal responsibility associated with providing a competitive education. Neither of these terms are well defined via educational policies and implementation expectations.

Anderson (2007) describes most federal policy reform efforts as edicts published on behalf of schools and society "without understanding or acknowledging what is necessary to bring about true reform" (p. 197). Reform efforts often overlook the intrinsic nature change must undergo in order to be effective; an agent of change must define the meaning for the change for him/herself (Fullan, 2007). Equality, equity, and efficiency are as ill understood in practical

implementation concepts as defining the technical core has been ill understood (Fullan, 2007; Elmore, 2004; Lortie, 2002; Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

When the Second Continental Congress was defining the federal government's roles and responsibilities, three loosely coupled branches were formed: the Executive, the Legislative, and the Judicial. Each branch has a list of rights and responsibilities for the other two, and is responsible for its own rights for educational reform efforts. Each branch was explicitly crafted to maintain an operation inefficiency and a "need for cooperation" (Anderson, 2011, p. 37) to weaken the reactiveness of the federal government and prevent a ruling tyrant.

Originally, education was intentionally excluded from the constitutional scope of federal rule and delegated to the States with the Tenth Amendment in 1791. But Article I, section 8 of the U.S. Constitution gives Congress the power to "tax and spend for the general welfare" (Anderson, 2011, p. 38) of the people and validate the actions with the "necessary and proper clause. "General welfare" plus the validation "necessary and proper" provides the federal government the allowance needed to directly influence the education system by creating policies and procedures related to financial support. Policy is "designed to accomplish specified actions to be taken to achieve particular goals" (Anderson, 2011, p. 7). As social and political eras of time have shifted, the federal government has noted several desired societal changes; each branch has participated in the creation of individual policies and goals to influence local level educational praxis. As "equality," already tightly coupled to "equity," reform efforts tightened its coupling to "efficiency" based reform efforts, so did the federal policies tighten with state policies and subsequently to local educational policies and procedures.

Equality and Equity. Generally, equality is the idea of sameness, while equity is the idea of financial supplementation to achieve sameness. In educational policy, the two are

intertwined but distinct because, while separate concepts, they work together to achieve the same ideological outcome: equal access to opportunity (Guthrie, Springer, Rolle, & Houck, 2007). Equality can only be accomplished via equity. Equality provides opportunity and is protected by the Fourteenth Amendment as "no state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the U.S." (U.S. Constitution, 1789, Amendment 14, section 1). Equity provides additional funding to make up for the differences and assist in an equal starting point so two individuals from two different backgrounds can actually accept equal access to opportunities. Federal educational policies focused on equity "to ensure that educational opportunity is distributed equally throughout society" (Guthrie, Springer, Rolle, and Houck, 2007, p. 204). The equality/equity movement, via funding expenditures, can be categorized into three strains: school construction, national defense measures, and student diversity.

Constructing schools. Colonial schools existed at the birth of the nation. But with the continuous acquisition of new territories, the Ordinance Act of 1785, the Northwest Ordinance Act of 1787, and, eventually, the Oregon Organization Act of 1848 demonstrated the founding leaders' respect for education as an important concern for the "general welfare" of the nation's future. Each act delegated specific parcels of land in each territorial region to be designated for common schools using the funds acquired through land taxes surrounding the land parcels. These became the first primary and elementary schools of the time (Vinovskis, 2009; Ravitch, 1989).

The growth of higher education was also financially supported through congressional acts. Many northern colonies were already establishing higher education facilities like Yale and Harvard. Some southern colonies created state chartered universities like Georgia Governor

William Baldwin did with the University of Georgia in 1785 using state funds (University of

Georgia, 2015). The Morrill Act of 1862, also known as the Land Grant Schools Act, set aside

funding for states to help them establish schools focused on agricultural and medicinal sciences

(Ravitch, 1989; Anderson, 2007), which helped establish many state schools after the end of the

Civil War. The University of Georgia, as the previously established state school of Georgia,

accepted the additional funding and used it to expand the colleges and degrees available to the

young men who attended the university in the late 1800s (UGA, 2015).

Unmistakably, despite the U.S. Constitution notably excluding education as a federal

concern and requiring states to address this concern with their own constitutions, Congress

promoted to construction of schools by providing funding and setting a funding precedence,

which precipitated future federal aid programs for educational trends (Anderson, 2007; Ravitch,

1989; Vinovskis, 2009).

National defense. America had a violent birth characterized by the rebellious

Revolutionary War of the late 1700s, followed by the War of 1812, and the Civil War of the

1860s. Socially, the nation wanted a break from the tumultuous effects of war when she was

reluctantly dragged into World Wars. But the realities of being able to defend herself from her

adversaries being a necessity, America's leaders latched onto education as a social means to

promote and strengthen her capacity to protect herself through military and technology, and

global economic competition.

Military technology. With the funding precedence provided via Congressional funding

for school construction, it became relatively easy for President F.D. Roosevelt to establish the GI

Bill in 1944 (P.L. 78-346) as benefit for the soldier returning from World War II. At first,

President F.D. Roosevelt designed the GI Bill to assist the recovering economy and decrease the

impact the returning might have on the unemployment rates (Anderson, 2007). Part of the bill encourages returning soldiers to enroll in high education. Some Ivy League schools, like Harvard, actively opposed these measures out of fear that these soldiers would unintentionally lower the admissions standards, negatively impacting the prestige of attending that school. Reports, however, suggested the more mature, non-traditional military men were better prepared to handle the emotional responsibility of attending college and displayed more responsibility and stronger work ethics, proving them to be a more successful student than the traditional students at the time (Anderson, 2007).

After the end of World War II, the Cold War officially began in 1947 causing a focus developed on improving schools to be impacted by a higher than average military family presence. Congress began providing supplement financing to lend assistance to the impoverished schools housing the military families' children. Society accepted this measure on the grounds that it was a concern related to national defense. This potentially set the precedence of funding for "defense related concerns", which had previously been denied. Add to this the fear incited by Sputnik's 1957 visible representation of the Soviet's touted technological superiority, which had been connected to their educational system regarding math, sciences, and technology curriculums, and the climate was prime for the passage of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) in 1958 (P.L. 85-864) (Ravitch, 1989; Anderson, 2007; Wraga, 2011). At first, President D. Eisenhower opposed the passage of the NDEA. He did not agree that education was a federal issue with which to be concerned. Tienken and Orlich (2013) claim the creators of the NDEA bill's agenda were focused on putting federal funding towards technology, not education. It was this agenda that appealed to President D. Eisenhower, a former high-ranking and highly decorated war General. The NDEA provided federal funding to promote

science and math in the name of national defense concerns; some of the funding trickled down into the schools. Anderson (2007) explains the primary arguments of the political system surrounding this bill focused on the need to protect the U.S.'s ranking and viability to protect itself militarily, and economically, from potential communist invasions.

Global economic competition. Rothstein (2008) explains Horace Mann, a founding reformist focused on equality in the classroom, "demonstrated that expansion of workers' academic skills would enhance economic competitiveness" (p. 19) and that "workers with more education were more productive" (p. 19).   The projected significance that math, science, and technology would have on the growing global economy also helped pass the NDEA. Concerns regarding the U.S.'s global economic competitive standing and ability to counteract potential power struggles in the future helped spawn other federally inspired grants. A Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) movement, later shifting to include art and design (STEAM) is a coalition comprised of the U.S. Department of Education and independent educational initiatives focused on the curricular expectations of schools, directly impacting curriculum applications for those subjects collectively and related vocational subjects (Jolly, 2014; U.S. Department of Education, 2015). Additional funding is provided to support this movement. It also promoted the creation of the Common Core Content Standards for Language Arts and Mathematics, whose adoption became a required component of the currently imposed Race to the Top competitive grant administered by the Education Department under President B. Obama's administration (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

Diverse access. The Fourteenth Amendment, passed in 1868, made allowances for equal access to public schools. As publicly funded institutions, citizens cannot be denied access to schools (U.S. Constitution, Amendment 14, section 1). With the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision of

1896 (163 U.S. 537), racial segregation in schools was allowed with the understanding that establishments could be "separate but equal" (163 U.S. 537). Sixty years later, the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (347 U.S. 483, 1954) decision determined "separate is not equal" (347 U.S. 483) especially in the southern states. School desegregation was subsequently required. But it was not until the 1964 Civil Rights Act (P.L. 88-352), as passed during President L.B. Johnson's administration, a legal basis was provided allowances for organizations like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) the power to sue for discrimination in schools (Ravitch, 1989; Anderson, 2007). Thus, the federal government made allowance for equality in schools.

While he presided over the nation during the Civil Rights Movement, President J. F. Kennedy's attempts to pass educational policies were stultified because of his strong connection with the Catholic Church. Countless federal aid policies had been created prior to President J. F. Kennedy's administration and knocked down because of the adverse lobbying ability of the Parochial school interest groups and the strong political sentiment to keep federal funds out of religious oriented organizations; the two interest groups canceled each other's efforts to pass funding bills. With President L.B. Johnson at the helm, his task force inspired "Great Society" and "War on Poverty" movements created and passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 (P.L. 89-10). The ESEA provided equitable funding to schools to address impoverished conditions and laid the foundation for a federal presence in schools. ESEA's Title I provided direct funding to schools based on a formula of attending students from poverty level families as identified by the Free and Reduced Price Lunch program. Despite the task force noting economic based identification, the division of resources was often also linked to a predominantly racial indicator. An identified achievement gap existed between white and black

sub-groups throughout the nation and seemed to correlate with poverty statistics at the time. The subtlety of the ESEA's racially inspired purpose provided the biggest marker for an increased stronghold between federal policies and local school practices (Anderson, 2007).

Educational equality was further impacted by the *Green v. County School Board of New Kent* (391 U.S. 430) decision of 1968. Despite the previous desegregation decision of *Brown v. Board*, public schools were not making adequate progress towards desegregation. The NAACP, with the legal support of the Civil Right Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352), brought suit against many school systems, like New Kent, which led to the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (P.L. 90-284) clause giving the Supreme Court the authority to designate schools not integrating as "dual status" schools, thus causing schools to gain permission from the court system before making structural decisions. When a "dual status" school has provided adequate evidence of compliance to all desegregation requirements of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) and petitioned the courts, a "unitary status" designation could be granted removing court supervision. As of the *Brown v Board of Education of Topeka (*347 U.S. 483, 1954) decision, all school districts in Georgia were segregated and operated under a dual status. A study commissioned by the 2007 Georgia General Assembly found of the 180 Georgia public school districts, 109 districts were "Under Court Jurisdiction" (Georgia Advisory Committee, 2007, p. 9) after having been "sued in federal court to eliminate racial segregation" (Georgia Advisory Committee, 2007, p. 5). As of 2007 the study found that 35 of the 109 districts had applied for and been granted "unitary status" (Georgia Advisory Committee, 2007) removing the systems from court jurisdiction.

Initial research published in 1969 investigated the effectiveness of the ESEA funded Head Start program, which showed little to no substantial gains in closing the achievement gap (Ravitch, 1989). Since then, slight and temporary gains from the Head Start program have been

identified but have been shown to regress by the students' third grade year (Vinovskis, 2009).

ESEA-funded studies had suggested the effectiveness greatly depended on the resource

management habits of the schools. As a result, more regulation hasbeen created to monitor how

the funding is spent on resources deemed appropriate for the cause (Vinovskis, 2009; Anderson,

2007). A regulatory norm applied to most federal mandates and programs to ensure the spirit of

the policy was adhered.

The final big federal policy of the equality education movement era was the Education

for All Handicapped Act (EHA) of 1975 (P.L. 94-142), requiring states provided adequate

educational opportunities despite cognitive ability levels (Ravitch, 1989). Since EHA's initial

passage, President G. H. Bush's administration reauthorized the bill in 1990, and President W.

Clinton's administration renamed it the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in

1994 and redefined expectations for "adequate," "appropriate," and "least restrictive

environment" practices. IDEA provided funding to states to help them provide for the

educational needs of the students identified with disabilities that impact their ability learn in the

traditional, general education classroom (U.S. Department of Education, 2007).

Anderson (2007) describes ESEA and IDEA as the first federal mandates that schools

were expected to implement with vastly underfunded support. Essentially, schools in Georgia

were expected to implement these policies despite their apparent inadequate ability to fund the

necessary changes. Both serve as key indicators of the increasingly impactful federal

involvement in local schools systems.

Efficiency. As the federal government found resource management strongly impacted the

effectiveness of a program, like the above noted Head Start, methods of fiscal accountability

were created and adopted to prevent continued excessive spending and shifted practice focus to

goal achievement and global competition. Two methods were designed to combat the

inefficiency: bureaucracy and standards-based professional accountability.

   Bureaucracy. During the initial school institutional growth, some form of institutional

standardization had to organically develop to efficiently maintain the activities in the classroom

(Lortie, 2002). "Local communities developed strategies for monitoring the performance of the

teacher: the usual procedure was to visit the school periodically and demand recitations from the

students" (p. 3)--strategies that included the first form of teacher evaluation based on summative

student assessments forming the first need of some form of bureaucracy in education. The

National Governor's Association (NGA) and the National Educators Association (NEA) lobbied

for the passage of the Department of Education Organization Act (EOA) of 1979 (P.L. 96-88)

during President J. Carter's administration. The EOA created the federal Department of

Education (DOE), later transformed into the Education Department (ED), to manage ESEA and

IDEA expectations and resources. Fear of the ED being a representation of the federal

government's tightening its coupling to state and local education practices did not prevent the

formation of this new bureaucratic entity (Anderson, 2007; Vinovskis, 2009).

   President R. Reagan took office in 1982 with a strong Small Government Movement. He

hoped to eliminate unnecessary spending by dismantling the ED. Secretary of Education Bell

proposed a commissioned report published under the title *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 by the

National Commission on Excellence in Education. President R. Reagan agreed to the study

hoping it would prove the ineffectiveness of the ED and thereby provided support for

eradication, which it did not (Anderson, 2007). Bell's study results were used to support the

ED's influence as effective, but needed more fiscal support to enhance effectiveness. Vinovskis

(2009) stated, "at one point, *A Nation at Risk* acknowledged the average citizens at the time of

publication were better educated and more knowledgeable than their counterparts from a generation earlier" (p. 16). The study did further recommend pointing out despite reform efforts having improved school performance, schools were still underperforming in global competition (Vinovskis, 2009; Ravitch, 1989; Anderson, 2007). *A Nation at Risk*'s recommendations sparked the development of the modern standards based accountability movement.

Professional accountability. During President G.H. Bush's administration, Governor W. Clinton met with the Charlottesville Education Summit and designed the National Education goals, an education package named America 2000 (Vinovskis, 2009). America 2000 provided educators with a short list of recommended standards. These standards began conversations centered on providing a set of national core required curriculum expectations, student achievement improvement, teacher preparation and accountability improvement, and held policymakers accountable for student gains (Anderson, 2007). When the Arkansas Governor W. Clinton became President W. Clinton, America 2000 recommendations were rebranded and published as Goals 2000, but had not developed any measure of ensuring standards were followed. President W. Clinton's Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) of 1994) (P.L. 103-382) reauthorized President L. B. Johnson's ESEA and incorporated some Goals 2000 recommendations, including higher graduation requirements, more rigorous curriculum standards and a focus on improved teacher preparation. The IASA did not include accountability measures to ensure adherence and little financial provision to fund the requirement changes (Anderson, 2007; Vinovskis, 2009).

President G. W. Bush sponsored the 2001 ESEA reauthorization under the new moniker No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (P.L. 107-110). NCLB included the accountability measures needed before and tied them to the primary funding opportunities. Using symbolic language,

potentially designed to provoke passion and acceptance of the federally inspired reform effort, NCLB quickly garnered bipartisan support despite inadequate financial resources to support the reform efforts (Anderson, 2007).

   Educational coupling. The American public education system has been claimed, in some capacity, by the U.S. Government's three branches. Congress gave parcels of land to towns and communities with expressed requirements to set up and maintain school structures in the late 1700s, illustrating an initially loosely coupled interaction between the federal government and public schools. Presidents built task forces and committees to support specialized programs, which influenced policies and practices, created and passed by Congress. The ED was developed out of necessity to manage the paperwork and regulatory measures essential for effective implementation of said federal policies and expectations, further tightening the coupling system between federal and local education agencies. The Judicial branch manifested its own tightly coupled interactions through its court decisions: *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954), and *Green v. Board of Education of New Kent* (1968). As a result of the *Green v. Board of Education of New Kent* decision, the Civil Rights Act of 1968 further tightened the courts to the public schools as they allowed the courts to assimilate themselves to schools not adhering to the desegregation expectations at the time. With the 1938 *Helvering v. Davis* decision having defined "general welfare" and opening the opportunity for federal legislative involvement, Congress passed three key policies: the National Defense Education Act (NDEA), the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and Education for all Handicapped Children Act (EHA). Each branch's actions worked loosely together to develop the tightly coupled educational system of today.

Each legislative act was designed to close the achievement gap by providing equitable supplements to state budgets (Anderson, 2007; Guthrie et al., 2007, p. 204), but ESEA and EHA brought tightly coupled, bureaucratic accountability measures through their reauthorizations. Anderson (2007) attributes "the educational system [being] at the center of federal efforts to solve non-education problems" to the NDEA by having provided the legislative opening needed for federal involvement on local practices. As schools developed a stronger need for financial assistance, their continued acceptance of federal funding with increased accountability measures became the norm.

The states' acceptance of the financial support created a partnership with the federal government regarding education praxis, previously notably not included within federal jurisdiction. Vinovskis (2009) recognizes the development and implementation of NCLB having allowed states the opportunity to "set their own student academic content and performance standards as well as define what constitutes highly qualified teachers" (p. 1) and served as another tightening agent between the federal and state systems. With the states' schools already having accepted their department of education's right to regulate federal aid, as the federal agencies tightened their influences on the state, it simultaneously tightens the federal reach to local policy expectations.

Education's Race to the Top

President G. W. Bush's No Child Left Behind, the most recent version of the ESEA reauthorization, notably included strengthened school level accountability measures with consequences, though no consequences have been enacted (Vinovskis, 2009; Anderson, 2007). Expectations of the school level leaders as supervisors had been evolving away from a developmentally centric supervisory approach to the more critically concentrated evaluation

methods (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005; Lortie, 2002). The expectation evolution school leaders encountered illustrated the recently bureaucratically tightly couple structures, though because of the bureaucratic foundation in which the leadership positions were initially developed, school leaders may not have been as aware of this shift as the evaluated teachers were aware. President B. Obama's Race to the Top, a competitive education grant, as adopted and implemented by Georgia's Department of Education (GaDOE), included an accountability measure for leaders that might have increased the leaders' awareness.

Federal and state coupling. A national recession, possibly more noticeable in the already impoverished southern states like Georgia, weakened state education budgets. President B. Obama's Race to the Top (RT3), a competitive program grant, was designed to provide assistance to states who designed innovative reform plans that addressed four specific areas of concern: 1) preparing students for college and/or careers after graduation; 2) creating and using a data system to measure student achievements and inform teaching practices; 3) improving teacher and leader effectiveness; and 4) specializing plans to correct low student achievement (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). States created a plan that met each of the four areas and submitted them to the ED. The selected states would receive a portion of the budgeted $4 billion to assist them as they "trail-blaze effective reforms and provide examples for states and local school districts throughout the country to follow" (U.S. Department of Education, 2015) the current common educational practices. The proposals that included "ambitious yet achievable plans for implementing coherent, compelling, and comprehensive education reform" (U.S. Department of Education, 2015) efforts were considered.

Accountability measurement results showed states were not meeting the needs of students by implementing enough reform efforts to address the achievement gap or address the Science

and technology wants for the global economic competition and national defense focus pursued through the STEM initiative. Similar to the slow desegregation process, states were not requiring their schools to move as quickly as the federal government anticipated which created an opportunity for President B. Obama's administration to incite more reform efforts through more funding. As a competitive grant, the states hardest hit by the recession were more inclined to seek financial assistance despite some political reservations to participate. Georgia Governor N. Deal had opposed GaDOE, as represented by Superintendent of State Schools J. Barge, seeking the grant because of the known reciprocal nature of the grant, but quickly changed his tune when the state was awarded $400 million for its proposed policy plan (Condon, 2010).

Race to the Top's grants required that all proposals focus on four key areas of concerns, as noted previously. Georgia was awarded her RT3 allotment in 2011 based on seven initiatives: 1) Data Systems to Support Instruction; 2) Great Teachers and Leaders; 3) Improving Early Learning Outcomes; 4) Innovation Fund; 5) Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM); 6) Standards and Assessments; and 7) Turning Around Lowest Achieving Schools. As of spring 2015, most of these initiatives were still being developed and piloted throughout the school systems (GaDOE, 2015).

As Georgia implemented her RT3 plan, she demonstrated a tightly coupled relationship with federal educational expectations. This plan would not exist without the influence of the fiscally-inspired assistance. Because local schools were already tightly coupled to the demands on the state policies through the RT3 process, local systems and individual schools responded directly by implementing Georgia's policies.

Teacher Keys to Effectiveness System. As part of Georgia's application for the RT3 funds, Georgia adopted a new teacher evaluation system to replace Georgia Teachers Evaluation

Program (GTEP), the previous system deemed inadequate. The new system is known as Teacher Keys to Effectiveness System, or TKES. TKES was idealistically designed to improve school supervision methods and aimed to improve student achievement scores. The TKES drafters claimed it was based within the framework of education theory (GaDOE, 2012b), though the drafters support this claim with no specified theories. After the 2012 pilot implementation, two problems for the proposed statewide implementation plan became apparent: 1) preparation and training for school leaders and teachers to know the performance standards, and 2) general system buy-in by the teachers and leaders. Statewide implementation was scheduled, in full force, during the 2015-2016 school year. Some schools had already implemented the system in practice, as of the 2014-2015 school year.

Strauss (2012) noted during the TKES's initial implementation that buy-in was very low for the teachers and leaders, and linked the low acceptance to the teachers and leaders' lack of preparation to fully understand, follow, and further discuss with other school level stakeholders. Teacher evaluations were determined based on a formula which included a value-added approach to account for the students' standardized test scores and student response surveys; both of which were considered by teachers as externally affected factors beyond the scope of the teacher's control. With the external influences impacting the teacher's evaluation score, many teachers opposed the accountability measures and signed petitions for the system to be reviewed. Open letters were sent to Governor N. Deal that requested he review and reconsider the program's implementation (Strauss, 2012).

Research Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of the school principal as his school implements state policy and as the policy is influenced by federal policy expectations. While

examining the principal's role, this study will also explore the process the principal underwent to define his role, which influences his leadership practices and policy implementation. For the purpose of this study, the researcher will focus on the implementation of Georgia's Teacher Keys to Effectiveness System, a teacher supervision and evaluation tool inspired by the U.S. Race to the Top competitive grant initiative, as an example of a federally inspired state policy.

The primary research questions for this study are: (1) what is the role of the school principal as an intermediary policy implementer, and (2) how does the school principal's self-defined role as the intermediary policy implementer influence his implementation effectiveness?

Research Design and Methodology

The study of the school principal's role as an intermediary policy implementer is a complex social phenomena, and this intrinsically instructive case study relies on the data collected via a series of interviews and document analysis. While the case originated as a personal interest for the researcher within the particular context of this school, that the researcher's question by nature relies on the researcher understanding the case is an example of the complex process principals undergo when implementing policies within their schools.

Using the Distributed Leadership model, the units of analysis are the principal's embedded relationships with the other school leaders (both formal and informal), school teachers, external stakeholders, and the situation. The situation is defined as the school climate and culture in which all parties both work with and within. Secondary embedded units of study include the relationships between the Local Board of Education and the situation; and the relationships between the leaders and teachers, the leaders and the situation, and the teachers and situation.
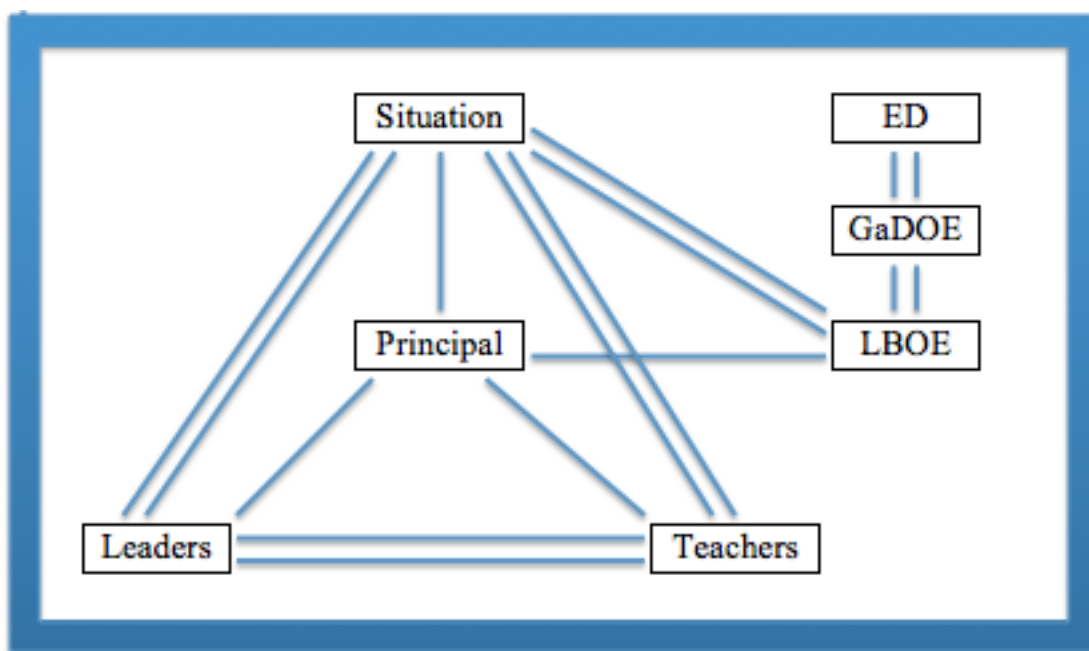
Figure 1.1. Units of Analysis- Framed within the situation, as defined by the school culture and climate, the primary embedded units of analysis include the principal's relationships, as represented by the single connector lines. The secondary embedded units of analysis include the external policy agencies with the situation, the relationships between the leaders and teachers, the leaders and the situation, and the teachers and the situation, as represented by the double connector lines.

With the embedded units of analysis being relationships, the researcher will conduct a series of four interview levels categorized into two sets: leaders and teachers. With the leaders group, the researcher will conduct two semi-structured interviews with the school principal, three individual semi-structured interviews with the school's three assistant principals, and three group semi-structured interviews with the school's department heads divided by TKES department supervisory groups. The second interview category, comprised of the teachers, will include two groups from each school identified department: those who have been at this site for three to five years and those who have been at the school for six or more years. Those with three to five years of experience at the school have been present for the entire TKES implementation process and therefore have sufficient experience for discussion. Those with six or more years of experience at the school have their prior knowledge to temper with the TKES implementation process. A

larger experience discrepancy was not attempted due to the high turn over, which characterized the school.

These semi-structured interviews will demonstrate the various members' impressions of the relationships they have with the other components identified previously and in Figure 1.1. By having both sides of the relationships, the researcher will triangulate their experiences and impressions to develop a more holistic view of the relationship. Document analysis will be used to examine the contribution the policy agencies have made towards building the school's situation, climate and culture. Analysis will follow the Distributed Leadership Model and examine how the interviews juxtapose with each other illustrating the primary relationships then the secondary relationships.

Significance

As Fullan (2007) stated, little time has been spent looking into the role of the principal as the agent of change. Studying the principal's influence on policy implementation will strengthen the association between the principal's actions with student achievement and success rates. By investigating TKES, the researcher examines the dual role that supervision and evaluation play in the influence the principal wields, along with the principal's responsibility to define a school culture and climate that is supportive and conducive to the students' learning.

Researcher's Role and Assumptions

Effective policy implementation relies on the relationships between the leader, followers, and the situation and skill levels of each participant to navigate those relationships, balancing the power and respect of the parties involved. The role of the principal defines his expectations and role behaviors. Distributed Leadership theory studies the relationships in leadership and the

context of the situation. External expectations influence and define the situation and context the principal must work through.

Key Terminology

Intermediate

An intermediate is one who acts as a go-between. The principal acts as a conduit of information from the top-down hierarchy as well as from the bottom-up feedback loop. Traditionally, the principal was the resource manager of the school ensuring the teachers were accomplishing their jobs to educate children while also ensuring the teachers had the proper materials needed to perform their tasks. As time went by, the school principal became more responsible for monitoring the teachers as resources and providing LBOE and policy makers' professional expectations to the teachers while acting as an accountability partner to assist the teachers in their attempt to fulfill their duties and responsibilities.

Distributed Leadership

Distributed Leadership (DL) as defined by Spillane is both a framework and an analysis tool. As a framework, DL is based on the assumption that leaders cannot lead on their own. They rely on the cooperation of their followers to be influenced by their leadership and follow the guidance provided by the leader. DL will be described more fully later in Chapter Two as a framework. As a tool, DL expects one to take into consideration the interplay, or relationships, between the leaders, followers and the situation. By studying the relationships, one is able to see the influence the principal has as well as identify other informal leaders who also enjoy the benefits of influential authority. Once one has been able to identify the relationships of influence one can determine a strategy for accomplishing tasks, like implementing organizational policy.

Situation

The situation, as included in Spillane's DL theory, is comprised of the school climate and culture. In this dissertation, there are two versions of the situation. There is the situation that is influenced by the actions of the leaders and followers, and there is the situation which influences the actions of the leaders and followers. The two situations are the same, yet different. In this dissertation, the situation, which influences the leaders and followers, is called the macro-situation. It is thought of as the big, overarching, holistic version of the situation and includes the aspects of the situation the leaders and followers can control as well as the parts they cannot. The situation that is influenced by the leaders and followers is called the micro-situation. It is thought of as the smaller, more manageable version of the situation and includes the components of the situation, which the leaders and followers have some control over.

Intermediate Implementer

Fullan (2007) explains, "the principal is in the middle of the relationship between teachers and external ideas and people" (p. 155). With the increased federally-inspired state policies that impact current educational outcome expectations, the school principal is responsible for being an intermediate, middle man representative for the various external educational policy agencies. He/she filters the external concerns, expectations, and demands in a top-down hierarchical model. He/she becomes the conduit of information and ultimate building level authority for policy expectations. Fowler (2013) identified intermediaries as those who are delegated implementation responsibilities. Formal implementers, such as governmental officials, expect the intermediaries to carry out the policy practices. The school board tells school principals the system policies they are responsible for implementing, and often, further delegate responsibilities.

Conclusion

Through the use of the Distributed Leadership Theory, the next chapter will examine the literature associated with leadership, the principalship, role identity development, and policy implementation, with particular focus on implementing Georgia's TKES. Then the third chapter will examine the methodology of the study presented. The fourth chapter will serve as a summation of the findings; finally, the last chapter will explore the analysis and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Leadership is relationship. Kouzes and Posner (2002) assert, "leadership is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow" (p. 70). Gardner (1990) explains leadership is "the process of persuasion" (p. 17) through interactions and relationships with others. To accomplish the leader's goals, the leader is dependent upon the friendship with the people he or she lead through authentic trust and confidence (Gardner, 1990; Evans, 1996; Bolmen & Deal, 2003; Sergiovanni, 1992). This chapter will explore the conceptual framework built based role identity developmental theories within Spillane's Distributed Leadership theory frame. Then this chapter will summarize and analyze the existing leadership and the principalship literature, as well as policy implementation.

Conceptual Framework

Leaders have initiated change to achieve their professional goals and visions (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Spillane & Diamond, 2007). Leadership, as a social process, has been influenced by events, goals, activities, motivation and abilities, power relationship and share orientations (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). Spillane (2007) points to research which suggests effective organizations fulfill three categorical functions: compass setting, human development, and organizational development. Historically, the leader's role has been to balance his/her managerial functions with external expectations of policy reform implementation (Lortie, 2002; Fullan, 2007; Elmore, 2004). Leadership theories, like Spillane's Distributed Leadership theory, examine the

relationships between the actions and behaviors demonstrated between the leaders and followers within the situation.

Distributed Leadership

Distributed Leadership (DL) is the study of the relationships between the leader(s), the followers, and the situation within the situation (see Figure 2.1). The three primarily symbiotic relationships work together to define DL's conceptual framework. Spillane and Diamond (2007a) explain DL's perspective was designed to help "researchers and practitioners make sense of leadership" (p. 148). DL had been defined by Spillane and Diamond (2007b) as both a "conceptual framework for thinking about and studying school leadership and management" (p. 7) and an analytical tool "used to frame research on school leadership and management" (p. 7).
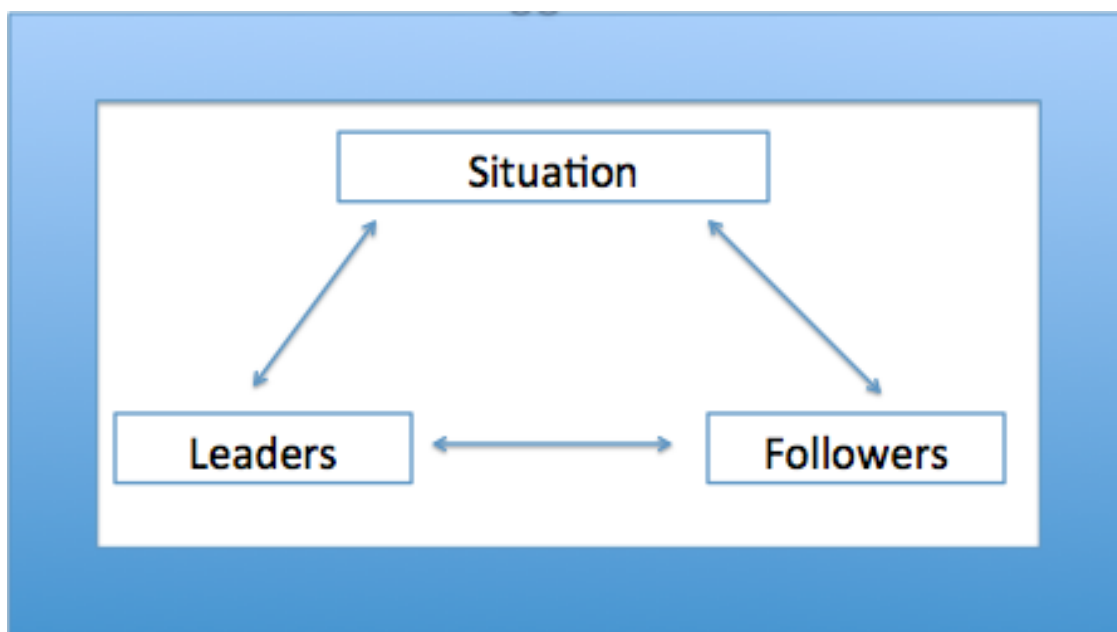

Figure 2.1. Simple Distributed Leadership-- DL theory relies on the symbiotic relationship between the leader(s), followers, and the situation.

The school principal, assistant principals, department heads and, occasionally, master teachers make up the leadership category in the school environment. The most common group

of people considered followers are the teachers. Technically, however, students and parents would be frequent members of the followers group, as well as any others who at some point, in the right situation, choose not to lead but rather to follow the leadership of another in the school. The fluidity of the concepts defined within Distributed Leadership illustrates the complexity of said concepts. As a conceptual framework, Distributed Leadership relies on the interactions and participation of the leaders' followers. The Distributed Leadership perspective has been foregrounded in the connections that exist between leading and managing a school organization with instructional practice, and between teachers' actions and behaviors and the actions and behaviors of the school leadership.

Distributed Leadership is a descriptive tool, not a prescriptive. Grace (1995) explains the traditional view of leadership believes there are two participants in the relationship: leaders and followers. This view relied on the prejudice that only these two roles existed, which allowed previous leadership theories to prescribe appropriate leadership behaviors based on those two role expectations. Traditional leadership theories did not include the effects the situation could have on the interactions of the three components.

Spillane and Diamond (2007a) explain Distributed Leadership is designed to find meaning through the leaders' interactions. By finding meaning through analysis, one could describe in a specific situation how or why a particular leadership method was effective or not. But because of the specificity of each individual situation, one cannot attempt to prescribe how another should interact with his/her followers.

An important concept to note with Distributed Leadership is the capacity of the situation within the situation. The situation is not simply a passively static notion. The situation has been shaped by the other two and has shaped them. It also defines the space in which the leaders and

followers work together. If one thought of the situation as an entity of its own, one could visualize the situation has two personalities. The micro-situation, defined as the personality that interacts directly with the leaders and followers, would include parts of the situation shaped by the interactions. The macro-situation, defined as the personality that indirectly interacts with the leaders and followers, would include the aspects of the situation that shape the leaders and followers as they interact with each other. This researcher uses "micro" to denote the smaller, more manageable situational pieces, and "macro" to denote the larger pieces, which cannot be controlled (Figure 2.2).
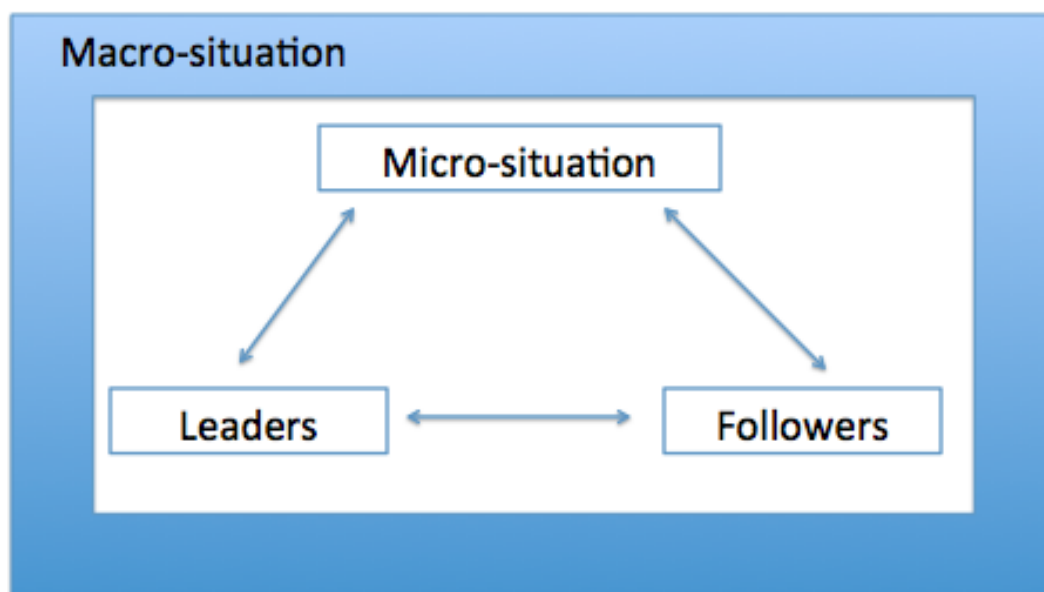
Figure 2.2. Distributed Leadership (with both situations noted)**:**—The interactions between the micro-situation, as a more reactive element of the situation like the school's climate, leaders, and followers are represented within the macro-situation, a more stable component of the situation like the school's culture.

As a study in relationships, Distributed Leadership focuses on the practices, or behaviors, of the leaders as they interact with others. A Distributed Leadership leader relies on those interactions and the participation of their followers along with a favorable situation to achieve

his/her personal and organizational goals (Spillane & Diamond, 2007a, 2007b). A Distributed

Leadership leader does not have to intentionally share leadership responsibilities with his/her

followers, but without the cooperation of others there would be no leader and no followers. The

leader is, therefore, inherently dependent upon the follower to fulfill his/her role. Spillane and

colleagues define Distributed Leadership as a symbiotic relationship between two conceptual

aspects: leader plus and practice; a symbiotic relationship between actions and the understanding

and acceptance that more than one leader exists in a given situation.

Leader plus aspect. Leaders do not work singularly. They cannot work alone. Leaders,

by definition, must work with others. Formal leaders, with formal authorities and titles, rely on

the cooperation of other informal leaders within the building to support the actions and visions of

the organization, which the formal leader is responsible for setting (Spillane and Diamond,

2007a). Formal leaders have their positions, titles, and designated authority to influence others,

but informal leaders have created an influential dynamic with others that is accounted for in the

leader plus aspect. The informal leaders' influence does not negate the traditional power and

influence of the formal leaders; but, instead, identifies other key players who take on leadership

roles. The leader/follower dynamic shifts with the shifting goals of the organization and the

symbiotic relationships of both.

DL "allows for the possibility that people without any formal leadership designations

might take part in that work" (Spillane et al., 2008, p. 191) by defining leadership as the practice

between the leaders and the leadership team, which makes up the leaders-plus aspect. This does

not make everyone a leader at all times. The leader/follower dynamic shifts with the shifting

goals of the organization or primary leader. He who was once a follower can become a leader in

another situation. The leader does not have to intentionally share his/her authority; he/she cannot

control every action of other people. DL is not defined by a collaborative, democratic sharing of

power and influence between the formal and informal leaders. Informal leaders can work

towards his/her own agenda, influencing his/her peers to work towards the informal leader's

vision. Since DL is not a prescriptive method focused on sharing power to empowered informal

leaders in a situation, it does not address the suggested democratic sharing either. Spillane and

his colleagues (2002; 2007) describe the DL perspective as open to recognizing that leaders can

be working counterproductively with each other, while still working with similar purpose,

interest, agendas, goals, or visions. The leader does not have to want to share but he/she does

rely on the cooperation of his/her other, sometimes competing, leaders.

This concept becomes more complex when one considers the autonomy the teacher has

as a leader within his/her classroom regarding his/her students. With the complex nature of

modern schools, a researcher would find multiple layers of leadership demonstrated within the

hierarchy usually found within such a bureaucratic system. Each layer of the hierarchy contains

leaders for the level beneath. And if one closely examines each level, leaders within the level

provide guidance for their peers. Principals lead assistant principals, teachers, and students;

while teachers lead other teachers and students; and students lead each other. The challenge

embedded within this concept is the identification of the leaders and the situations, which make

those individuals leaders. What identifies the leader? According to Spillane, this is the practice

aspect of Distributed Leadership.

Practice aspect. Relationships are defined by actions. By examining the practices of a

leader, the researcher is capable of making sense of the interactions and situations that arise from

policy implementation processes. Because not all leaders within the same situation are working

towards the same goals, Distributed Leadership uses the practice aspect to identify how some

leaders work counterproductively to the formal leader. By definition, leadership is an action, through relationships, made up by what the leader does. It is the leader's action that creates the product, therefore the practice of the followers is an essential component in identifying and describing the situation in which the leader is working. Practices display patterns in behaviors, habits, and routines. The followers' behavior patterns directly and indirectly influence the leaders' practices with regards to the leaders' goal attainment. Teachers operate with "relatively high degrees of discretion and relative autonomy from organizational authority, contributing to school leaders' dependency on teachers" (Spillane et al., 2002, p. 735). Principals exhibit a limited amount of formal authority with teachers because of the teachers' autonomy. So school leaders are noted to rely more on "subtle strategies including the manipulation of language and ideological control" (Spillane et al., 2002, p. 725).

"A distributed perspective frames practice as a product of the interactions of school leaders, followers, and aspects of their situation" (Spillane. et al., 2008, p.191). The product provides the researcher a tangible item to study and interact with while examining the effectiveness of leaders' abilities to promote change towards a desired goal. Spillane et al. (2008) further describes interactions as "paramount in efforts to understand the practice from a distributed perspective" (p. 191). By analyzing the practices of a leader, or group of leaders, through the Distributed Leadership framework, one has to examine the products since products are the results of practices.

Spillane et al. (2008) notes, "while most leadership theories posit that leadership occurs through social influence interactions or relationships, leadership may also occur through non-interactional means" (p. 211). Leaders influence others indirectly through the products their

actions create. A leader develops the culture and climate of the building, the situation, which further impacts the followers without the direct interaction of the leader.

Role Identity

The school organization's primary formal leader has been the school principal since schools outgrew the effective management practices of the first schools of the early 1800s. The principal's position developed out of necessity to manage the facility's resources ensuring students received a quality learning experience. The role of the principalship relied on the relationship between prevalent leadership theories that defined principal practices, the individual principal's independent role identity development, and the emergent conflict between the dual bureaucratic and professional expectations of the principal.

Two components defined the developmental process of the leader: to learn and to apply what has been learned. If one examined Bloom's Taxonomy, which defines the stages of learning, one would identify the initial stages of learning as direct work with building a thorough understanding of a concept. Once the concept has been understood, the material can be internalized and applied. As the role of the principal is a social role, the socially constructed approach is used to explain the process of the leader's self knowledge acquisition, comprehension, and internalization.

Socially constructed. A school principal is the term used to identify the formal authority based leader in the school building. Lortie (2002) explains the role of the principal was designed as a result of the natural growth schools underwent organically over time. Originally, schools were managed by a small group of teachers who shared the responsibility for teaching the students. When the schools grew too large for the small groups of teachers to effectively manage the structure, the principal position was created to manage that facility. The principal protected

the teachers' autonomy and allowed the teachers the opportunity to perpetuate a successful classroom. The principal became the onsite leader, answerable to the ruling school board comprised of concerned parents and citizens of the community served by the school. With this new role, the leader must construct his own positional definition.   Constructivism's learning theory claims by merging one's prior experience with trial and error one organically constructs meaning associated with a concept. The school principalship, as a concept, has been built through years of practice and experimentation.

Glanz and Neville (1997) interpret Vygotsky's social constructivist theory as being primarily focused on building a cultural understanding with "the sense of a word within a particular context far more powerful than its dictionary *meaning* [emphasis in text]" (p. 118). To determine the culturally constructed meaning of a term, one must investigate the theories and histories followed by a reflection on the interaction of the two. For leadership, one must examine the conceptual shift from traditional management to current leadership.

Waldman et al. (2012) define the leader's role identity as a three step process where people define their roles for themselves, share that definition with others, and finally apply that definition to address all aspects of their lives. The school leader defines their roles within the context of the school they serve. But this process is not a solitary endeavor. With the leader's role self defined based on a balance of past interactions with leaders and one's ideological perspective of what that role should consist of, and before the leader can effectively apply this definition, he/she must internalize it. When the leader has internalized his/her definition, the leader has fully accepted the definition and made it his/her own. By internalizing, the leader has ensured his/her definition flows naturally within the contexts, or situations, he/she finds him/herself in as a leader. Role internalizations serve as a sign that the role has been fully

learned and achieved equilibrium (Nye, 2002). A leader's initial role identity development is a socially constructed process accounting for many varying views, connotations, practices, and expectations.

The primary difference between a leader and manager is the leader's stride towards an envisioned goal. A manager seeks to maintain the status quo while the leader initiate change to achieve old and new goals of the organization (Hoy & Miskel, 2007; Spillane & Diamond, 2007). Hoy and Miskel (2007) further define leadership as a social process that influences events, goals, activities, motivation and abilities, power relations and shared orientations. Research suggests effective organizations fulfill three categorical functions: compass setting, human development, and organizational development (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). It has become the leader's responsibility to not only manage these functions but to also make the necessary changes to create a more effective organization. The leader's role, as defined by his/her actions, has been represented by the leader's actions as accepted by his/her self, his/her followers, and his/her peers.

Contextualized. Leaders define their roles within their settings. Waldman et al. (2012) call this process Leader Role Identity, and explain it as a sequential process that involves the leader first defining him/herself, sharing that definition with others then using that definition to address other various aspects of his/her life. Essentially, as DeRue and Ashford are credited by Waldman et al. (2012), the leader's identity is an internalized state where a person incorporates the leader role into his/her self-concept. Walker and Lynn (2013) use the structural theory of role internalization to describe the process role identity internalization the principal's experiences. This theory suggests the leader's level of entrenchment in his/her personal social network increases the salience of the identity associated with his/her leadership role independent

of the leader's commitment to their school groups. This could lead to a much deeper understanding of the internalization process (Walker & Lynn, 2013). The principal's role developed as an individual, personal process affected by the structure of the self's connections as well as the differing identities of ego's social contacts (Walker & Lynn, 2013). Without the social contacts and interactions, the leaders' role would become much more difficult to define. With the roles internalized, they become part of the leader's personal concept, which determines his/her behaviors further refining his identity via his/her role. It is here, with the internalized definition, that one became identified and began defining the associated roles based on that identity.

Sense Making

Spillane et al. (2002) explains sense-making as the process leaders and followers use to define the situation within which they work. Sense-making extends the Distributed Leadership perspective by increasing their explanatory power supplementing the description of the situation and deepening the researcher's exploration of the practices defining the leader's actions (Spillane et al., 2002). Two sectors of the situation are examined and evaluated within the sense-making process: institutional and political circumstances. Institutionally, educational policies have been created to protect the existence of the educational institution. When situating these institutional policies, leaders need to become aware and examine the assumption that the institution itself is vital to achieve one's goals. Individuals in a school setting work within their own political areas. Each decision and action within a school setting is based on the climate and culture of these political areas, and defined by the political circumstance of the situation in which the leaders and followers of Distributed Leadership navigate and with which they interact.

With modern accountability measures changing the role of the principalship, the principal must shift his/her behaviors to effectively implement the new policies associated with the accountability measures. First, he/she must interpret the policy before attempting to implement so he/she knows what actions to take. While working to interpret the policy he/she must implement, he/she employs his/her ability to use sense-making by situating the policy within the phenomenon of the school's environment (Spillane et al., 2002). When the principal and his/her leadership has situated the policy, he/she could proceed with an effective plan for change.

Role Identity in Distributed Leadership

Through interactions, or relationships, with others, leaders develops a personal definition that directly influences their leadership practices as represented by their products. The role identity developmental process naturally fits within the Distributed Leadership frame. As stated above, Distributed Leadership is the relationship between the Leader (and team), followers, and micro-situation within the macro-situation. The role identity process is based on the relationships between the individual and others. Figure 2.3 represents the addition of the role identity process by placing that process within the triangular relationships of Distributed Leadership model previously presented in Figure 2.2.
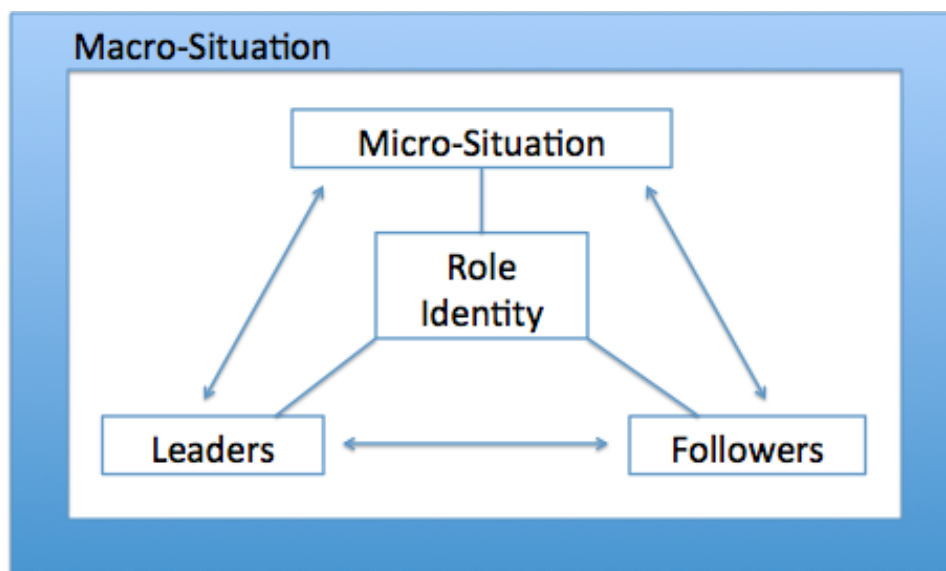
Figure 2.3: Distributed Leadership and Role Identity—Role identity theory's placement within the model is present.

The principalship's evolution revolves around the changing role expectations of the times, and depends on the interactions of the people with which the principal interacts. Because this study focuses on the principal's role identity as a policy implementer, the researcher pointedly separates the principal from the rest of the leaders within the model. The phrase "Role Identity" is then replaced by Principal to represent the principal's innate role identity process as connected but separate from the individual interactions of the other players, as illustrated in Figure 2.4. The primary followers the principal encounters daily are the teachers, so the original term "followers" is replaced by Teachers to represent that group.
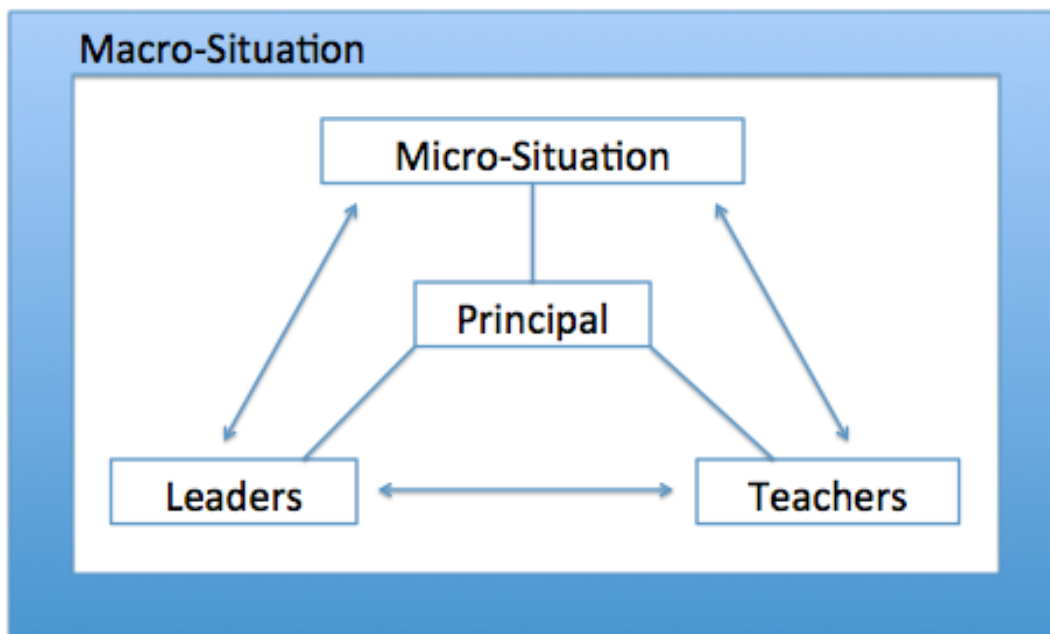
Figure 2.4. Role Identity of the Principal within Distributed Leadership

Literature Review

Through the use of the Distributed Leadership theory defined above, the following literature review defines leadership as relationships based on trust within the context of the school's culture as well as the climate as defined through the principalship. This review will also examine the evolution of the principalship by including policy implementation as it also affects the culture and climate of the school and falls under the responsibility of the principal.

Distributed Leadership

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, leadership is a relationship with people, ideas and goals. Leaders are people who "inspire their followers to sacrifice their selfish interests for a larger cause" (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p. 420). Leaders connect their actions to an idea that is often bigger than themselves or the organization they work within (Gardner, 1990). Leaders are loosely coupled to the organization they work within, as they work within the organization's mission and purpose but to achieve their independent goals and/or visions. Leaders are different

from managers. Managers are tightly coupled with their organization, as they work solely within

the organization's mission and purpose, accomplishing tasks according to the leaders within that

structure. Bolman and Deal (2003), Gardner (1990), Evans (1996), Leithwood (1990), and

Sergiovanni (1992) define leadership characteristics as a relationship between Power levels and

authority types, relationships, and trust, which further impact the leaders' effectiveness.

Influential power. Leaders do and inspire. Leaders do not need to have the formal

authority, position, or status or the perception of power that comes with the formal authority

position. Leaders rely on the cooperation of the people with whom they work. Leaders happen.

Sergiovanni (1992) asserts, "leaders must lead" (p. 76); they cannot not lead as they will be

followed despite making no conscious effort to lead. Gardner (1990) also defines leadership as

"the process of persuasion or example by which an individual induces a group to pursue

objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his/her followers" (p. 17). Leadership is

the "act of guiding a group of people" (Oxford, 2011) to achieve an organizational goal. School

leadership refers to the "activities linked to the core work of the school and designed by

organizational members" (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p. 440), usually led by the school principal.

Principals wield power to influence the teachers and other administrators. Power can

alter the reality of the situation the leader perceives he/she is working within and thereby impact

the decision he/she politically makes. Lashway (2006) claims "the only meaningful question for

school leaders is *how* they will conduct themselves in the political arena" (p. 281). He continues

by asserting if principals focused on the impact their actions had on student success they would

be "more likely to elevate politics from game-playing to an act of leadership" (p. 281). Hoy and

Miskel (2008) emphasize principals who empowered teachers through curriculum directly

connected to improved student performance. But Dambe and Moorad (2008) note "there is still a

lack of genuiness and trust in order to achieve true empowerment" (p. 585) negatively impacting student achievement. Lashway (2006) explains that lack resulted from the likelihood of power becoming "an end in itself, offering leaders the satisfaction of feeling in control of a chaotic world" (p. 280).

Shipp and White (2007) demonstrated in their study of the principalship politics, that principals were shaped by many external political forces, which in turn shaped their decisions and realigned their professional expectations. They argued researchers should examine principals like other political leaders with a micropolitical lens, which identified special interest constituencies, personally competitive motivations, and standard professional practices that aligned and conflicted with their superior's expectations.

Relationships. Leadership is the relationship between a leader and the people he/she leads. Gardner (1990) claims "leaders shape and are shaped" (p. 17) through their interactions with their constituents. Bolman and Deal (2003), Gardner (1990), Evans (1996), Leithwood (1990), and Sergiovanni (1992) define leadership characteristics as being able to see the larger realities and the various complex relationship between them, possessing political skill, displaying authenticity and innovation, demonstrating charisma, being intellectually stimulated, purposefully driven, and capable of juggling multiple roles.

Constructive relationships that promote professional growth and development without the fear of hurting one's professional career allow a teacher to build trust in his/her leader. This can be challenging to do with the evaluative role leaders have to balance with their supportive supervisory roles. Swaffield (2008) describes "critical friends" as individuals, possibly in leadership roles, who support a teacher by leading critical discussions with the teacher focused on the teacher's practices. These critical discussions were not formal evaluations and were used

to improve the teacher's ability to reflectively evaluate him/herself and identify methods to improve. Swaffield (2008) explains, "the relationship must be one in which there can be open and honest communication" (p. 324).

Trust. The leader accomplishes things because of his/her relationship with the people he/she leads through authentic trust and confidence (Gardner, 1990; Evans, 1996; Bolman & Deal, 2003; Sergiovanni, 1992). A trustworthy leader demonstrates his ability to be trusted through his actions. He/she uses transparency and politics in a balanced approach to allow the most people to see just enough of the plan and steps within the plan to guide the leader's behaviors and achieve his/her goal.

Noonan, Walker, and Kutsyuruba (2008) explain the importance of trust between teachers and principals. Teachers need to trust that the principal has the best interest of the teachers and students in mind, while the principals need to trust the teachers have the students' best interests as the foundation of their technical core. As the principal's role shifted from a master teacher to an information broker, the principal became more of a facilitator with the teachers' learning and policy implementation. Once trust is developed, it is the leaders' responsibility to maintain the teachers' trust. When the trust is broken, it becomes the responsibility of the individual with the higher authority power in the relationship to resolve the conflict as quickly as possible (Noonan et al., 2008).

Trust in leadership is a vital component leading to success in school in this high-stakes testing environment. If a leader took a developmental approach, that leader would be able to determine the motivation behind human behavior by observing their behavioral cues and use that information to garner support for their vision. Trust is a necessary multi-faceted component that builds on the success rate of a school. It is made up of the interaction between benevolence,

honesty, openness, reliability, and experience of the leader (Tshchannen-Moran, 2007). Once

trust has been lost, the school principal must rebuild trust. The principal can rebuild trust

through courageous, persistent, and forgiving efforts easily identifiable by the school population.

Though it takes time, trust promotes learning and achievement.

Two types of trust impact a leader's effectiveness: cognitive-based and affective-based

trust. They both work together. Trust in schools usually starts with a cognitive-based trust

foundation before an affective-based trust eventually grows (Schaubroek, Lam, & Peng, 2011).

Leaders are more effective when a foundation of trust has been built with the teachers. If the

teachers trust the leaders, trust can promote a team mentality and improve student achievement

rates. According to Schaubroek et al (2011) by "engaging in the behaviors associated with

servant leadership and transformational leadership," (p. 870) it became an important tool for

leaders to further,

> Cultivate and maintain team members' confidence in his or her agenda and competencies
>
> as a leader and to gain their faith that he or she will act in a manner that supports both
>
> their individual well-being and that of the teams (p. 870).

Once the leader demonstrates his/her role is a supportive one for the teachers' benefit, the

teachers trust their leaders and fulfill a component of effective team performance. Teachers who

received autonomous room to lead their classroom spaces were also discovered personally

investing their skills towards the school's agenda or vision as identified by the leader (Shaubroek

et al., 2011).

Cognitive-based trust. Trust is an assurance of dependability upon another. McAllister

(1996) asserts the most prominent form of trust in the workplace is cognitive trust because work

relationships are task oriented. With common goals and tasks, people are expected to complete

their work within a timely fashion, which builds trust through competency. Cognitive-based

trust is built upon learning what to expect from others in the team. As trust is built, each member

acts on faith "on the basis of the words, actions, and decisions of another" (McAllister, 1995, p.

25).

The power behind cognitive-based trust depends on the "success of past interaction, the

extent of social similarity, and organizational context considerations" (McAllister, 1995, p. 28).

Cognitive-based trust is founded on reliability. McAllister (1995) further stated,

> In working relationships involving high interdependence, peer performance can have a
>
> determining impact on personal productivity, and evidence that peers carry out role
>
> responsibilities reliably will enhance a manager's assessments of a peer's trustworthiness
>
> (p. 28).

School principals, through the Distributed Leadership framework, rely on the teachers and other

school leaders to productively perform; and as they do, the principal learns to rely more on the

teachers and other school leaders to consistently continue performing.

Affective-based trust. Over the course of time, exposure with people tends to develop

feelings of trust based on expressions of "genuine care and concern for the welfare of partners, in

the intrinsic virtue of such relationships, and that these sentiments are reciprocated" (McAllister,

1995, p. 26). Affective-based trust is built on a sense of faith the other person has one's best

interests motivating their actions. To develop this type of trust leaders must have "insight into

the motives of relationship partners" (McAllister, 1995, p. 29). Through rapport building, a

leader simultaneously exposes opportunities to observe motivation in action. Personal

perception can influence the interpretation of another's actions, thus cognitive-based trust is

often developed first.

Principalship. The first accountability measures taken in public schools constituted school board members visiting the schools, quizzing the students, and then determining teacher effectiveness based on the students' responses. Schools were small and managed by teachers. When school populations began growing they required larger numbers of teachers and an on-site administrator was necessary to standardize the use of the school resources to best meet the needs of the students and teachers. School principals became the on-site administrator with a primary role based on maintaining teacher quality through effectiveness. "Master" teachers, who had demonstrated strong organizational and evaluation skills, would fill this new position (Lortie, 2002), called the principalship.

The principalship has been a socially constructed role created to manage the growing schoolhouse efficiently, minimizing misappropriated resources in the schools' bid to develop citizens investing in promoting the future development of the country. It becomes imperative for the researcher to first examine the historical precedence of the school principal before analyzing the contemporary and emergent roles (Lortie, 2002).

The historical principal. The first school principal was created to supervise his staff "based on intuition rather than technical or scientific knowledge" (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005, p. 8) and focused on ensuring teachers ultimately performed as school boards expected. Visiting board members would quiz students to determine teachers' effectiveness. Master teachers with strong organizational skills and strong evaluations would be awarded responsibility of managing the school's resources (Lortie, 2002). During the US Industrial Revolution, the supervisor's role focused on promoting efficiency and legitimizing a "control oriented" role for the school principal, which began the business model influence on educational practice and a bureaucratic school set up (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). The school principal became the reaching arm of the

school bureaucracy as a "full-time, physically present administrator acting on authority delegated by school boards" (Lortie, 2002, p. 4).

During the Cold War era of the 1960s and 70s, supervision practice developed into its own era which Sullivan and Glanz (2005) refer to as "Supervision as Leadership." This combined the previously efficient and democratic leadership practices with the promotion of developing mutually acceptable goals, extending cooperative and democratic methods of supervision, improving classroom instructions, encouraging research into educational problems and supporting professional leadership. Lortie (2002) described the expected role of the principal to be as an approachably knowledgeable yet firm individual who supported teacher autonomy with moderated authority. Another shift emerged with the standards-based accountability reform efforts of the 1990s initiated by Presidents G. H. Bush and W. Clinton, continuing with Presidents G.W. Bush and B. Obama's educational initiatives and reauthorizations of Elementary and Secondary Education Act in the 21st century.

Modern role expectations. Normore (2004) explores the principal's role evolution in the modern accountability season in school leadership and administration. When the burgeoning expectations handed down by the federal government's funding caused the role to change, role conflicts became evident. But the process of redefining his/her role is a slow change, and the leader's effectiveness is measured based the new policies. Normore (2004) asks a notable question: "if school administrators do not understand what is expected of them in their role and function as administrators, how can they justifiably be held accountable?" (p. 59). With ambiguous policies and unclear expectations, it becomes a vital first step for a school principal to identify his/her role within the complex school organization. The leader participates in a social construction process to identify his/her role, and through this process the leader begins to

understand what vital practices he/she must perform and which conflicts he/she must solve for him/herself. With this definition, the principal can then act. Two broad definitions have been used to describe the principal's role: manager and policy implementer.

Facility Manager. The traditional principal's role was designed to manage the school resources (Lortie, 2002). Early teachers were evaluated by surprise visits by the Board of Education who would randomly question the students over content the teachers should have covered. Shipp and White (2007) identified competition between schools as an example of modern resource management. As a response to feelings of "pressure" from external systems, schools recruit competitively to find the best newly graduated teachers by maintaining constant communication with the major universities' education professors and job fair days

It is the principal's responsibility to use each function to its best ability to build then sustain trusting relationships with all members of the school environment. With a high level of trust, schools can "be wonderful places to learn and grow: a positive, open, and healthy climate pervades the school" (Tschannen-Moran, 2007, p. 110).

Policy Implementer. With increased federal involvement defining the expectations of a school's outputs, the principal became responsible for developing implementation plans for underfunded federally inspired state education policies like those associated with Georgia's acceptance of the Race to the Top competitive grant funds, which precipitated Georgia's Teacher Keys to Effectiveness System (US Department of Education, 2013). How does the principal redefine the school's culture and climate in order to develop an implementation plan that aids the teachers' autonomy and creativity while simultaneously meeting the goals of the policy?

As the federal government increasingly tightened the coupled political policies associated with educational funding and educational praxis, the principal became an intermediary position

designed to continue managing the school resources, while guiding the teachers to achieve the goals set by the parameters of the funding capital. The school principal's role became a balancing act between the teachers' professional autonomy and the policies' bureaucratic outcome standardization.

Implementation is the result of the policy design conflicting with the stakeholder resistance (Spillane, Reiser, & Gomez, 2006). Coburn and Stein (2006) explain, "social relations influence the degree to which and manner in which they act on policy messages" (p. 27). As policy implementation plans are utilized, the teachers work within social communities building meaning and influence through formal and informal interactions. Principals may lead the formal interactions, but the informal interactions are based on the teachers' hallway discussions with other teachers, students and external individuals. Each conversation continues to develop the teachers' perceptions of the policy or policy implementation. If the principal wants to maintain a climate-based understanding of the building's acceptance of a policy, the principal needs to be aware of the informal discussions. By maintaining awareness, the principal can define the situation and determine the best actions to take to successfully promote the policy, counteracting the effective discussions the teachers are developing around the subject matter impacting the policy implementation. Policy implementation is contingent on the principal's political power within the school system (Malen, 2006; McLaughlin, 2006).

Conflict. Role conflicts are present when two or more role expectations compete. The individual defining his/her role must solve the conflict to achieve their goals with a little stress as possible. According to Kirst and Wirt (2009), "the principal must follow requirements of the system, but also he or she may wish to lead. Thus, a principal can be either a supporter of status quo or an agent of change (p. 206). This dual role often leads to conflict. Two role conflicts

emerge when studying the school principal's role development. The most prominent conflict identified by other researchers is the professional versus the bureaucrat. Professionalism generally has been associated with the maintenance and protection of autonomous actions within the school building and developed a mentality that workers accomplished tasks out of job integrity. Bureaucracy has been the result of a policy based influence within a system, which developed the hierarchical authority structures with expectations that followers will accomplish tasks because they were requested.

Professional Bureaucrat. Historically, the shift from the efficiency model in business and supervision practice of the democracy model led to the current trend of trying to buy the past and ignore the authoritarian roots on which supervision was based. Shipp and White (2009) explain New York principals in 2004-2005 defined this conflict as the "emerging influence of tested outcomes competing with the pedagogical goals schools had for their students" (p. 364) and as "a tension between school developed instruction and district-wide curricular mandates" (p. 365). By the 2007-2008 school year, principals viewed the proper response to these conflicts as an institutionalized balancing act between two distinct accountability expectations. Through budgets, principals faced frustrating conflicts with the New York DOE as initiatives were too quickly added without any being removed to make time for the new initiatives.

Supervisory Evaluator. Another role conflict developed as a result of the professionalism/bureaucracy conflict: supervision versus evaluation role expectations. Supervision is the process of engaging teaches in instructional dialogue for the purpose of improving teaching and increasing student achievement" (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005, p. 27). Traditionally, the term *supervision* had a contextual meaning based on the authoritarian supervision approaches. Three characteristics defined the authoritarian supervision approach:

bureaucratic, inspection, and evaluation. Those components worked together to build the highly

negative context that practitioners have developed in connection to the concept of supervision.

Recently, a shift occurred in supervisory approaches principals used to keep tabs on their

supervisees. Bureaucratic approaches have shifted towards democratic approaches, where

inspection moved into participation and collaboration and evaluation practices attempted to be

viewed as more supportive of teacher growth. Despite evaluation's attempts, the negative

connotation of the term has yet to be changed (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005).

 Effective principalships. Fullan (2007) defines the principal's position as an intermediate

policy implementer. He explains, "the principal is in the middle of the relationship between

teachers and external ideas and people" (p. 155). Before the principal can influence policy

implementation, it is essential the principal construct a practical theory of situational meaning

and change results by understanding reality. Spillane called this process *sense-making*, as

discussed above in the Distributed Leadership theory. To understand the reality, the researcher

must learn the point of view of the principal.

 Principal effectiveness has been questioned as a natural result of the accountability

movement. Fullan (2007) asserts principals have been ineffective for three strong reasons: 1)

incongruent centric office based strategies and school level needs; 2) the role as an "instructional

leader" is too large in scope and underprepared for principal preparatory programs; and 3) the

overwhelming nature of the new expectations simply being added to the traditional expectations

placed impossible amounts of expectations for one position to successfully handle. To

summarize the three excuses Fullan (2007) identifies as barriers of success for principals, the

principal's role needs to be reevaluated, redefined, and provided an updated set of expectations.

"The net effect is that the principalship is being placed in an impossible position" (Fullan, 2007,

p. 168) because principals lack the capacity to perform their new roles, are burdened with too many responsibilities with not enough time to develop and practice these new responsibilities, and must balance constantly added expectations with nothing being taken away.

Principals who have been successful have shared leadership among teachers. Fullan (2007) explains successful principals share leadership because "as the change expectations heightened, the *principalship* itself has become overloaded in a way that makes it impossible to fulfill the promise of widespread, sustained reform" (emphasis in original, p. 156). Effective reform became contingent on the principals' "work on building meaning and capacity" (p. 300) by owning the role as a school principal, understanding others' roles, and understanding the situational big picture. Spillane's Distributed Leadership theory is supported by Fullan's assessment.

Policy Implementation

Fowler (2013) explains when referring to school leaders that "their jobs can be summarized in two words: policy implementations" (p. 241) and defines implementation as the school activities carried out to apply policies that are adopted by bureaucratic agencies. As role expectations have shifted, the school principal must pave the way for the school's policy implementation ideology and practices. Two implementation parties are key to the successful implementation: formal implementers and the intermediaries. Formal implementers, as noted in chapter one, are the government officials who are legally required to implement the policies, while intermediaries are those to whom implementation responsibilities are delegated. These parties follow the stages of implementation while overcoming the challenges commonly identified via the three separate waves of implementation research (Fowler, 2013).

Gross, Giacquinta, and Bernstein (1971) found, during the first wave of policy implementation research, policy implementation to be difficult because most implementers did not understand what they were supposed to do. Often policy changes had been introduced during short in-service session during preplanning, and as a result "intermediate implementers often lack the knowledge and skills necessary to implement a policy" (Fowler, 2013, p. 245). Fowler (2013) further summarized the second wave of research having found implementation was still difficult but possible with adaptability, participant buy-in, and planning. The third wave taught successful implementers were learners who understood the deep meaning behind the reform policy, making it easier to adapt appropriately, and be passionate enough to create buy-in and pursue enough planning to properly implement.

Gross et al. (1971) found five barriers to implementation during the first wave of research: 1) the implementers do not understand the change, 2) the implementers do not know how to apply the pedagogy, 3) common necessary materials were not available, 4) the organization's culture was inconsistent with the policy requirements, and 5) the implementers lost motivation to continue striving towards change.

The third wave listed participant resistance, entrenchment in status quo, and incompetence as the primary barriers challenging the successful implementation of educational reform. To overcome those challenges, Fowler (2013) recommended "professional development should be shaped by an understanding of cognitive psychology" (p. 254), providing an ongoing strong social infrastructure with mentors, coaches, and facilitators assisting others. Fowler (2013) maintains effective school leaders know "successful implementation depends on developing and maintaining both the will and the capacity of the intermediaries" (p. 242).

School principals are intermediaries who rely on the cooperation of other intermediaries. As noted in chapter one, formal implementers are those legally responsible for implementing policies. In this case, the formal implementers would be school board members responsible for ensuring the Teacher and Leader Keys to Effectiveness Systems have been implemented within the district. The school principal has the implementation responsibilities delegated to him/her, and further delegates and shares the supervisory responsibilities with the assistant principals. Implementation follows three common stages of implementation.

Stages of policy implementation. According to Fowler (2013), policy implementation generally follows three stages: mobilization, proper implementation, and institutionalization. The mobilization phase serves as the foundational, and perhaps, most important stage as it defines the actual who's, what's, and how's of the process. Proper implementation is the practice phase, focused on attempting to actually execute the plans defined in the foundational phase. Finally, institutionalization is the result of adequate practice during the implementation phase causing the implementers to automatically carryout. This phase serves as evidence of full integration.

Mobilizing. Again, as Fowler (2013) defined as the foundational stage, mobilization serves as the primary step to implementing the policies school officials are responsible for achieving. Three components make up this stage: adoption, planning, and resources. Policy adoption requires three questions be answered with a yes. Is there a good reason to adopt this policy? Is this policy appropriate for this school and/or school district? Is there sufficient support from the stakeholders to adequately implement? After these three questions have been affirmed, the implementers proceed to the planning step. Two planning methods are used primarily Evolutionary Planning (Louis & Miles, 1990) and Forward Mapping (Weimer &

Vining, 2011). Both methods include their own various steps and procedures to prepare for

policy implementation. Once the planning phase is complete, one can focus on acquisitioning

adequate resources to successfully carryout the plan during proper implementation. Effective

planning includes the principals and the teachers in the building (Fowler, 2013).

     Evolutionary planning. The evolutionary planning perspective anticipates implementation

is a journey that will require adjustments despite the identified top-down expectations and vision.

Strategies are identified as "flexible tool[s]" (Louis & Miles, 1990, p. 194) that must be

"reviewed and refined" (p. 193) throughout the process. Louis and Miles (1990) claim

organizations cycle between 1) normative consensus, 2) planning strategies to get there, and 3)

decentralized incremental experimentation, which includes all members' creativity, as the

"evolutionary perspective rests on the assumption that the environment both inside and outside

organization are often chaotic" (p. 193). The flexibility of the process is essential as no amount

of planning can fully anticipate the dynamics of each environment. According to Louis and

Miles (1990), the premise of evolutionary planning includes first acting, then further planning; a

focus on the "inspirational themes" (p. 215) to guide the change process and, then remember the

mission and goals; and an understanding that evolutionary change is a reflection on the

relationship between action and improvement.

     When using the evolutionary planning perspective, implementers understand "the

objective of evolutionary planning is to capitalize on the 'low risk' quality of smaller-scale

innovation (acting) *sic* to increase certainty (a mental event) *sic.* This in turn increases

motivation and the possibility of concerted, more 'tightly coupled' action across the school"

(Louis & Miles, 1990, p. 211). Small-scale innovation results from schools, a loosely coupled

system to ensure allowances for teacher autonomy, should segment smaller portions of the

school and encourage those segments to experiment. At the school level, implementers can also segment and experiment their implementation actions. With successes, motivation builds to promote further experimentation and implementation.

Once the successful experiments have been identified and expanded, the school's implementation process progresses towards creating a story (Louis & Miles, 1990). When creating the implementation story, the implementers define the connections between the segmented themes. Once a loose story is drafted, the implementers refine the story, reaffirming member commitment and sync organizational efforts. Implementers must link the prior knowledge and understanding to future knowledge to build a collective understanding of the process and using idealistic language tying actions to the themes. Louis and Miles (1990) affirms, "to build on past change efforts, even those that have not been entirely successful acknowledges the fact that change and improvement are a continuous (and difficult) *sic* process" (p. 213).

Louis and Miles (1990) also emphasize that "evolutionary planning must celebrate the energy and hope that still exist, and involve key people who can be counted on for new projects" (p. 213). This helps to maintain the motivation one needs to continue the implementation process. Eventually, according to the evolutionary planning perspective there should be a "gradual shift of control from the administrators to department heads and teachers" (Louis & Miles, 1990, p. 214). Through reflection on relationships, as previously noted, between action and improvement, the implementers can identify which of their actions created success within which contexts assisting in the identification of which practices to continue using and build from.

Forward mapping. The second method used during the planning phase is forward mapping. Weimer and Vining (2011) defined forward mapping as a top-down perspective that

specifies the "chain of behaviors that link a policy to desired outcomes" (p. 293). Effective forward mapping requires a combination of cleverness and courage to develop and use what Weimer and Vining (2011) call a "dirty mindedness" (p. 293). This dirty mindedness allows the planner to create the worst case scenarios because he/she has the "ability to think about what could go wrong" (p. 293) and who will make it go wrong. If one can identify potential obstacles, one can also identify possible solutions to overcome those challenges. Weimer and Vining (2011) identify three steps to the forward mapping approach: write the scenarios, critique the scenarios, and revise the scenarios.

When writing the scenario, or story, the author should answer four questions: 1) what is the action?; 2) who does the action?; 3) when do they do the action?; and 4) why do they do the action? Weimer and Vining (2011) assert, "much of the value of forward mapping comes from the thinking that goes into being specific" (p. 293) rather than in the accuracy of the predictions. The more the individual can add to the scenario, the more prepared he/she is to respond to the possible concerns, proactively overcoming challenges.

After creating the scenarios, the author should critique the stories. Weimer and Vining (2011) list three general questions to guide the critique. First, how plausible is the scenario? Are the actors capable of doing what the plot requires? Second, will the actors be willing to do what the plot requires? Is the behavior consistent with personal and organizational interests? Can you list ways to respond to noncompliance? And third, what about those who do not verbally oppose the methods? How might they interfere? What can be done to respond?

Finally, the critical forward mapping leader revises the scenario based on the results of the critique. If the revised scenario is plausible and achieves the desired goal, the scenario becomes the basis for the implementation plan. If the revised scenario is implausible and/ or

does not achieve the goal, the policy is unfeasible and alternative policies should be used instead. Weimer and Vining (2011) state, "prudent policy design anticipates implementation problems by including policy features to generate information, resources, and fixers to solve them" (p. 306).

Resources. Many implementation problems result from insufficient resources. Fowler (2013) explains that "leaders who wish to bring about genuine policy changes must analyze carefully what resources are necessary and obtain them bother before and during implementation" (p. 263). Money, time, personnel, space, and equipment and materials are common resources leaders must figure into the equation and costs for implementation. Most money comes from grants, reallocated budgets, and contributed funds (Fowler, 2013). Many implementers overestimate the amount needed to fully implement the plan (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978). Another question that arises about money is how to spend it. Louis and Miles (1990) identify the project facilitator with the ultimate authority to decide that answer. Timing is often underestimated as it takes time to fully prepare and train the implementers. Then more time to plan, practice, expand and contract, implement, and finally institutionalize. Choosing the right personnel as a project director or training coordinator to lead the change can directly impact the effectiveness of the implementation plan (Fowler, 2013).

Proper Implementation. The second stage of the implementation, after mobilization, is usually known as proper implementation. This is the actual active component. Fowler (2013) identifies three categories of proper implementation: early, late, and throughout.

Early. Beginning implementation can be rough, as internalization of new practices takes time and practice. The grassroots implementers, known as the teachers, must learn new behaviors while simultaneously executing those new behaviors. Fowler (2013) identified three predictors of, eventual, success: a rough start, leader pressure to continue, and ongoing

assistance. Fowler then summarized those three predictors as a "judicious combination of pressure and support" (p. 466). So, a rough implementation start is a good thing. It provides a learning curve. But a smooth start is a bad sign of effectiveness. Huberman and Miles (1984) identified two categorical environments when implementing policies: "smoothly implementing" and "roughly implementing" explaining,

> Smoothly implementing sites seemed to get that way by reducing the initial scale of the project and by lowering the gradient of actual practice change. This 'downsizing' got rid of most headaches during the initial implementation but also threw away most of the potential rewards; the project often turned into a modest, sometimes trivial enterprise (p. 273).

Midgetizing involved cutting the size of the expected scope and demands of the change creating smaller scale change demands. Huberman and Miles's (1984) "roughly implementing" groups showed very different programs from the norm that were ill prepared, the policies were poor fits for the site, and or simply poor planning.

Late. The success from the late implementation stage relied on "making genuine change" (Fowler, 2013, p. 266). Genuine change is characterized by the internalization of the process, when the practices have been so thoroughly adopted and they become automatic, they have been internalized. Fowler (2013) characterized late implementation from failed projects as participants who are disappointed, discouraged, and suffering from burnout. Usually failed implementation was the result of withdrawn buy-in and funding to support or maintain the resources needed to continue. Teachers lost trust in their leaders for future programs and policies (Huberman & Miles, 1984; Louis & Miles, 1990). Demonstrated levels of comfort and cognitive trust in the policy and the building's capacity to continue implementation characterized successful projects

and midgetized projects, however. Often the policies were refined and debugged removing

ineffective components (Fowler, 2013). Problems were still present, but drastically less often or

serious when compared with failed implementation attempts.

 Throughout. Three common themes were found by Fowler (2013) to exist throughout the

implementation proper phase. Monitoring and feedback, the first continuous process common

during implementation, should be led by one leader and has usually been the program facilitator

or project director. Fowler (2013) further asserted, "principals and central office leaders should

be actively engaged in the evolutionary planning process that characterizes good

implementation" (p. 267). Evolutionary planning relies on a "flexibility and experimental

attitude, but also depends on accurate knowledge about what's going on" (Fowler, 2013, p. 267).

Evolutionary planning, while introduced during the mobilization phase, continues throughout the

implementation proper stage. Flexibility in the planning allows the implementers to respond to

issues as they appear. Providing ongoing assistance to meet the needs of the implementers

should also be present throughout the process. Well-planned and targeted help with reliably

prompt responses helps the formal implementers meet the needs of the intermediate

implementers.

 Problems also arise throughout the process. Problems can be categorized into three

categorical types: program, people, and setting-based problems. Fowler (2013) identified

program problems as the easiest to solve, while setting-based can be the most difficult. Two

coping approaches are usually present: ignore the problem or handle the problem. When

ignoring the problem, it's usually in response to unwelcome intruders, while handling problems

are seen as a normal part of the process. Fowler (2013) lists three strategies to effectively handle

problems as they arise: technical, political, and cultural. Technical responses require the

implementer to analyze the problem and target resources to solving the problem. It is considered the most effective method. Political and cultural methods have shown moderate success. Political strategies mobilize power to encourage people's behavior towards the desired direction. Cultural strategies target group beliefs, values, and key symbols related to the problem to affect change.

Institutionalization. When a policy has "seamlessly integrated into the routine practices of the school or district" (Fowler, 2013, p.270), it is considered to have entered the third, and final, stage of policy implementation. Institutionalization requires thought and planning, and often overlaps late implementation. Effective change may weaken during this stage as a result of defunding the project, but full institutionalization cannot happen till the Budget fiscally supports policy needs.

Implementation challenges. Some policies face challenges due to self-interest and incongruent professional values conflicting with the policy required for proper implementation (McDonnell, 1991). Resistance is the usual obstacle to policy implementation that must be overcome. Hirschman (1970) and Dowding and John (2013) identified three methods of resistant behaviors school level implementers must manage when working with teachers: exits, voices, and disloyalty.

Exits. Dowding and John (2013) named four types of exits. Traditional complete exits, the standard response, were described as leaving the profession and viewed as treasonous responses by Hirschman (1970). Internal exits were comprised of leaving the position but staying within the field. Private exits included leaving the public sector for the private sector. Geographic exits involved leaving the area in hopes of avoiding the situational policies (Dowding & John, 2013).

Spillane's Chicago Studies

Spillane and his colleagues' empirical studies (Spillane et al., 2007; Diamond, 2007; Hallett, 2007; Sherer, 2007; Burch, 2007; Hallverson, 2007; Coldren, 2007; Spillane & Diamond, 2002) focused on public elementary and middle schools in Chicago, and investigated the role of the principal as he/she attempted to implement Board of Education-based accountability policies. He and his team conducted observations, structured and semi-structured interviews, and video recordings of leadership practices. Using a distributed leadership model and a sense-making framework, Spillane's study found teachers had an impact in motivating their leaders' response types based on their interactions, which could have a positive or negative impact on the level of change wanted (Spillane et al., 2002).

Routines define the practices leaders took in Spillane's studies and illustrated the actors' ideological perspectives (Hallett, 2007; Coldren, 2007). The leaders often had to find subtle ways to gain the cooperation of their followers, relying heavily on political games to encourage positive collegial interactions (Halverson, 2007). Diamond (2007), Burch (2007) and Sherer (2007) found the differing subject matters within a Middle school study showed different approaches between the Language Arts and Math teacher groups. One group, Language Arts, chose a more democratic method of change while the other group, Math, chose a linear, classic hero authority with a single leader and many followers.

School leaders often act as intermediaries for the political arenas at the state and local levels and their individual school's political structures. According to Spillane et al.'s (2002) study, intermediary status depends on gaining and maintaining legitimacy within the school to gain the cooperation of the staff, and balancing differing views of the student body and between the Board of Education and the teaching staff. These dual status points seem to manifest itself

within the institutional theory describing the principal's action as they "do things that look like they are making improvement but do not cut deep below the surface" (p. 760). A key component in basic interaction and communication is the concept of trust. Leaders who demonstrate trustworthy behaviors use a balanced transparent approach, allowing most people to see enough of the leaders' implementation plan and find the leaders' actions match the plan building the sense of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2007). Other behaviors associated with higher trust include any actions associated with servant leadership and transformational leadership approaches. Both of these approaches are connected with cultivating and maintaining team confidence in the agenda and competency as a leader (Schaubroeck et al., 2011). Power differences also play a part in the leaders' ability to build trust to promote change within the classroom (Swaffield, 2008).

Swaffield's (2008) study focused on the results of an international qualitative study, which applied different cultural backgrounds and languages to test the effectiveness of trust through the use of critical friends. This study suggested the only way to promote positive, effective change through critical friends was when the different power levels were suspended during interaction between the leaders and their subordinates. As long as the teacher felt the content of their conversations with their mentor could be used against them, they would not be authentically open to sharing areas of weakness, preventing the mentors from being authentically able to offer advice. As one can see, trust plays a large part in the relational power the leader has when implementing a change in the program.

Accountability studies like Finnigan's (2010) and Spillane et al.'s (2002) show when a teacher has developed trust in the principal's leadership competency, the principal's ability to incite change has increased. Without the foundational trust, both cognitive and affective, the

teacher does not feel he/she has the room to take the necessary risk to affect change as new policy may suggest it wants (Finnigan, 2010), thusly cultivating a fearful environment stifling the opportunities for reform. Finnigan's (2010) study took a random subsample of 4,545 teachers within 398 schools in the Chicago public school system and found lower performing schools showed no statistically significant difference in the teachers' level of affective trust in the schools' leaders. The study did, however, show a stronger sense of cognitive trust between the leaders and their teachers with higher expectancy in higher and lower performing schools. So while there was no real connection between the performance levels and trust, cognitive trust did seem to be connected to higher expectations of their teachers. That higher expectancy causing higher cognitive trust levels would be allowing the teachers to take the necessary risk to change the methods they saw as connected to student achievement.

Summary

When determining the process a school leader goes through when implementing policies, using a sense-making perspective to situate the stimuli within the political and institutional context helps the researcher understand the schools' response as part of the leaders' identities as well as the context (Spillane et al., 2002): "viewing accountability policies from this perspective underscores how the implementation of the district accountability policy has to be understood in terms of a two-way interaction in which accountability policy shapes and is shaped by the implementing agent and agency" (p. 755). Two components define this theoretical perspective: political and institutional. While Spillane et al. (2002) define the institutional aspect within the educational policy context as a self-serving practice designed to maintain the necessity of the institution, the political aspect focuses on the implementing agents as they relate from their nearly independent political arenas.

To connect this back to Distributed Leadership theory, studying the relationships between action and improvement in evolutionary planning is essentially the study of relationships between practices and success. By studying the relationship, implementation researchers and school administrators can determine best practices within a given context to promote a smooth implementation.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative research design to examine the principal's role as an

intermediate policy implementer through the principal's implementation decisions and practices

when implementing Georgia's Teacher Keys to Effectiveness System (TKES. TKES is an

evaluation system created in part in response to Georgia's winning Race to the Top (RT3)

funding proposal. RT3 required, as part of its application for funds, an innovative approach to

improve teacher effectiveness subsequently improving student achievement rates through

"ambitious yet achievable plans for implementing coherent, compelling, and comprehensive

education reform" (USDOE, 2013). A qualitative case study methodology allows the researcher

to "understand complex social phenomena" (Yin, 2014, p. 4) and maintain a "holistic and real-

world perspective" (p. 4) while focusing on a case. This chapter explains the research design,

the site selection strategy, data sources, data collection and analysis, and the anticipated

limitations of the study.

Lortie (2002) explained the historical principal was a master teacher, an identified teacher

leader, who had been removed from the classroom because the school facility had grown too

large to effectively and efficiently manage the school resources through a school committee of

teachers. The historical school board pulled the principal from the classroom to manage the

facility's fiscal and human capital, and act as the site based intermediate, "a link between people

in order to try to bring about an agreement" (Oxford, 2010, p. 907), between the Board of

Education and the school's teaching staff. As the principalship's role expectations shifted to

include the implementation of policies mandated by the state Department of Education and policies inspired by federally regulated monies, the principalship's role identity evolved to accommodate the changing expectations (Lortie, 2002; Anderson, 2007; Vinovskis, 2009). The principalship shifted from a singularly management based role to a pluralistic leadership and managerial position.

The principal's traditional supervisory role, as part of his/her managerial duties, had to adjust to a complex evaluator's role for both increasing teacher accountability measures and educational reform policies, which impact the school's culture and climate, and define the context the principal works (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Manna, 2011; Lortie, 2002). RT3's inspired TKES merged supervision and evaluation practices to foster teacher effectiveness (GADOE, 2012b). Stake (1995, 2005) described three categorical case studies: intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. While the developing the research questions, the researcher developed a personal interest in the case. As a personal curiosity, Stake (1995, 2005) would label the study intrinsic, but as the researcher developed the research questions, the personal interest shifted to the questions and the case evolved into an instrumental case study. The researcher chose the site because of the original personal interest in answering the research questions, which could be used as an example case for future studies. For this reason, the researcher termed this study an *intrinsically instrumental* study and merged the two categorical monikers as presented by Stake (1995, 2005).

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to examine the principal's role as an intermediate policy implementer by exploring how the principal defined his role, and how that definition affected his effective policy implementation. To guide this study, the research questions are: (1) what is the role of the school principal as an intermediate policy implementer,

and (2) how does the school principal's self-defined role influence his implementation

effectiveness? Spillane's Distributed Leadership perspective was applied to the case and created

the framework, in conjunction with role identity developmental theories and policy

implementation research, to guide the study's methodology. As is common for both Spillane's

Distributed Leadership case studies (Spillane & Diamond, 2007) and education policy research

(Cohen, Fuhrman, & Mosher, 2007; Floden, 2007), this case study used data from interviews and

document analysis to "examine the ways that education policies [were] carried out" (Floden,

2007, p. 9) within the case.   Data analysis was conducted using the previously described

Distributed Leadership and role identity framework, while maintaining awareness for the

individual participant's sense-making interpretation.

Research Design and Rationale

The Distributed Leadership perspective explained effective policy implementation

depended on the leadership skills and the school principal's effective use of his/her relationships

with other school leaders, teachers, and the situation within the context of the school's situation

(Spillane, Reiser, & Gomez, 2006). The principal's behaviors defined his/her relationship with

those he/she worked (Spillane & Diamond, 2007) and the principal's role defined his/her

behaviors and interactions within the school's context (Waldman et al., 2012; Walker & Lynn,

2013). As the Distributed Leadership perspective relied on the defined relationships within the

context of the school situation or environment, the perspective required a holistic research

perspective to fully understand the phenomenon studied. Schwandt (2007), Yin (2014), and

Patton (2002) agreed the case study research approach allowed the researcher to study a

particular phenomenon within the context of the phenomenon. In this study, the principal's

policy implementation process within the complex social phenomena at the school justified a holistic investigation through the case study approach.

As the Distributed Leadership perspective had been defined as a holistic study of the relationships in leadership between the leaders, followers, and the situation, this case study fit the conceptual framework and provided an analytic tool to describe the education policy implementation practice at the school site (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). Spillane and Diamond (2007) explained, "the situation is both the medium and an outcome of practice" (p. 10). In this study, the situation was defined by the climate and culture of the school and the principal both built the climate (outcome) within the context of the culture (medium). Because the school principal must have understood and used necessary technical knowledge to comply with policy implementation expectation within the district's context (Fuhrman, Clune, & Elmore, 1991), the principal's knowledge personalized policy implementation plans to fit the context of the school and the leaders charged with implementation (Spillane et al., 2006; McLaughlin, 2006; Fuhrman et al., 1991). The personalized implementation required the researcher to study the leadership practices in a holistic approach well matched by case study methodology (Yin, 2014; Patton, 2002; Stake, 1995, 2010) and the Distributed Leadership perspective (Spillane & Diamond, 2007).

The case study method is used to study a particular phenomenon within the context of the phenomenon, with the case or unit of analysis identified as a "person, process, event, group, organization" (Schwandt, 2007, p. 27) that has a primarily created knowledge, or an understanding, of the phenomenon. Yin (2014) asserted explanatory case studies answered "how" based research questions, which supported Spillane's defined purpose of using the Distributed Leadership analytical perspective as descriptive rather than prescriptive (Spillane &

Diamond, 2007). Stake (2005) explained the purpose of case studies was to build a thorough understanding of the phenomenon for knowledge. This case study focused on the interactions between the principal, assistant principals, and teachers, which defined the principal's TKES implementation.

Yin (2014) identified five design components: the research question(s), preliminary propositions of the researcher, units of analysis, the linking logics, and criteria for interpretations. In this study, the phenomenon and case was the principal's implementation of TKES within the context of his school as examined through the Distributed Leadership perspective. The research questions focus on how the principal defined his role then used that role to effectively implement the mandated policy. As the Distributed Leadership perspective relied on relationships and interactions, the embedded units of analysis were the principal's relationships with the other school leaders, the teachers, the Board of Education and the situation.

Site Selection

Pleasant Valley High School (a pseudonym used to protect the study participants' identities) was selected as the site principal's TKES implementation process was of a personal interest to the researcher with an inside connection to the school and staff. Pleasant Valley is situated within a rural North Georgia community that has been identified as a Title I school system for many years. The majority of the 1,800 students at Pleasant Valley qualified to receive free and/or reduced price lunch. Pleasant Valley was built as the first high school in a growing county, which eventually required two additional high schools to accommodate student growth.

Data Sources

Purposeful sampling was designed to determine participation. The principal and assistant principals were chosen because of their job title and associated duties, responsibilities, and expectations as intermediate policy implementers. Originally, department heads were also selected to participate, but during the interview process it was determined their roles as teachers superseded their roles as school leaders, so their interviews were removed from the study. The teachers were selected to represent school gender demographics; the school has a 3:2 female to male population. The teachers selected attempted to closely match that ratio. The resulting participation was 4:3 females to males. Racial demographics were not used as identifies due to the low diversity rates presented at Pleasant Valley.

With recent high turnover rates at the school, teachers were categorized into one of three groups based on their years of experience specifically at Pleasant Valley.: (1) *zero to two* years, (2) *three to five* years, and (3) *six or more* years. The TKES implementation process at Pleasant Valley was completing its second year at the time the interviews were conducted. The teachers with less than two years were not asked to participate, as their experience within the school would not preclude them to the entire TKES implementation process at Pleasant Valley. Teacher representatives with *three to five* or *six or more* years were then selected to represent each core academic department: English, Math, Science, and Social Studies. These two categories were identified to allow for the high turnover rates as well as distinguish between the novice teachers and the site's veteran teachers. The years of experience were site specific. Some teachers with only *three to five* years at Pleasant Valley High School had more years of experience in other schools. Two representative teachers were selected from each department; one from each of the two participating categories.

During the recruitment process, the researcher purposefully selected from the categorized lists and sent a recruitment email soliciting participation. Most recruits agreed to participate. When an emailed potential participant responded negatively, the researcher selected another from the appropriate list and tried again. One department did not have a representative in the *three to five* year experience category as a result of the high turnover rate, so the researcher adjusted the category and allowed teachers with *two to five* years experience to be included. Most departments promptly responded affirmatively. However, one department's *three to five/ two to five* years experience list was exhausted with no participation.

The school principal and the three assistant principals were purposefully selected and sent recruitment emails based on their leadership positions. Pleasant Valley High School has one principal, who has been there for seven years. The three assistant principals worked with the principal by dividing the TKES evaluation responsibilities and were responsible for his/her own group of departmentalized teachers, while the principal was responsible for evaluating the department heads. Department heads and department leaders define a group of intermediary leaders within the building; however, in this case, their experience did not extend to implementing TKES and their interviews were not included in the analysis.

Participant confidentiality was maintained to protect the identity of the participants through the use of coded pseudonyms to which the researcher has sole access. To ensure each participant is protected, all participants' names and identifying credentials were redacted from the interview transcriptions prior to coding for themes. Participation was voluntary and could have been revoked at anytime by the participant. Participants were given the opportunity to review their transcripts and provide feedback to ensure their opinions and impressions were accurately represented.

Data Collection

Spillane's Distributed Leadership perspective explained the interaction between the school principal, the school leaders, the teachers, and the situation created the phenomenon's situation (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). In Chapter Two's Conceptual Framework, the phenomenon's situation was identified as the macro-situation and described earlier in this chapter as the school's culture or outcome, while the micro-situation was described as the school's climate or medium. The embedded units of analysis for this case were the relationships between the principal and the assistant principals, the principal and the teachers, the principal and the micro-situation, and the principal and Local Board of Education (Figure 3.1).
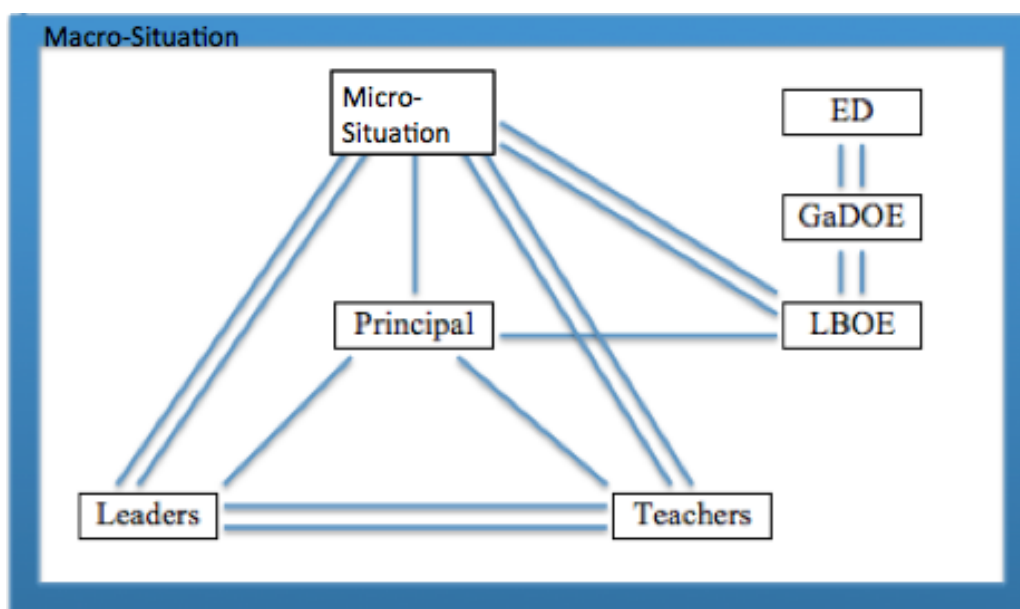

Figure 3.1. Embedded Units of Analysis in Distributed Leadership**-** Primary units of analysis are embedded in the relationships between the principal and the other agents, as noted by the single connecting line. Secondary embedded units of analysis, as represented by the double connecting lines, exist between the other agents.

Interviews formed the basis of the majority of the data collection process, while analysis of documents were used to supplement, support, and illustrate the participant's practices and interpretations of events. The researcher conducted two waves of interviews. First the leaders were interviewed, then the teacher representatives from each department.

Interviews

Since the case revolves around the actions and interactions of the principal within the context of his school, the researcher had planned to conduct a series of two semi-structured interviews with the principal, each lasting approximately an hour. The principal's tight schedule, however, required the interviews be conducted in one three hour session. The first part of the interview focused on the process the principal had experienced to identify and define his professional role as a principal based on his interactions with each group of agents identified in Figure 3.1. The second part of the interview focused on his TKES specific implementation process. Interview questions are listed in Appendix B. A copy of the transcript was provided for member checking. Field notes were taken in conjunction with the interview to supplement the interview during analysis.

The assistant principals participated in individual semi-structured interviews averaging 50 minutes during their lunch hour. The interview questions, as provided in Appendix B, focused on their roles in implementing TKES and their perceived relationship with the principal's role. Each assistant principal was given a copy of his or her interview transcript for member checking.

Each teacher was asked to participate in individual semi-structured interviews that averaged 44 minutes; the briefest interview was 22 minutes, and the longest was 77 minutes. The interview questions focused on the teacher's experiences during the TKES implementation

and his/her relationships with the building leaders regarding this policy implementation, as provided in Appendix B.

Participants

This study's participants can be divided into four groups of people: the principal, the assistant principals, teachers with six or more years experience at Pleasant Valley High School, and teachers with two to five years experience at Pleasant Valley High School. Before delving into each participant's interview, this researcher has provided a simple profile on the each participant. See Appendix A for a summary table of all interview participants and their general impression of the principal's implementation of the TKES program at Pleasant Valley High School.

Principal. Dr. Carter, alumnus of Pleasant Valley High School, started in education as a coach in a variety of sports and taught social studies before returning to Pleasant Valley High School as an assistant principal. When the principal at the time retired, Dr. Carter was awarded the position as school principal by the county's Board of Education. Upon his high school graduation, he attended an out of state small liberal arts university as an athlete before transferring to a larger university in Georgia where he earned his Bachelors of Science in Education. He later earned his Masters of Education and Doctorate in Educational Leadership. By the time of his interviews, Dr. Carter had been the principal of Pleasant Valley High School for seven years.

Assistant Principals. Mrs. Gatsby, Mrs. Harkin, and Mr. Crane served as the assistant principals during the second year of Pleasant Valley High School's TKES implementation experience. As the assistant principals, they agreed to participate in the study. It should be noted that Mrs. Havisham, not listed above as a participant, was an assistant principal during the initial

year TKES was being implemented at Pleasant Valley High School, but left during the summer to be an assistant principal in another school district.   Mrs. Havisham's departure opened an opportunity for Mrs. Harkin to become assistant principal implementing TKES at Pleasant Valley High School during its second implementation year. The researcher requested the assistant principal participation based on their professional position in Pleasant Valley High School and during the interview process identified the assistant principals. Each assistant principal promptly agreed to participate in the study, finding time within his or her schedules to meet with the researcher and participate in an interview.

Mrs. Gatsby earned her Bachelor of Science and Masters of Arts while attending an out-of-state university. While accumulating classroom experience as a teacher in another Georgia county system, she earned her Educational Specialist in Educational Leadership and Administration before joining Pleasant Valley High School as an assistant principal of curriculum and instruction.

Mrs. Harkin earned her Bachelors of Science in Education at a large Georgia university before she earned her Masters in Education and Educational Specialist in Educational Leadership and Administration from smaller Georgia universities. She was originally a teacher and a teacher leader at Pleasant Valley High School for many years before being awarded the opportunity to move into an assistant principal position.

Mr. Crane attended a large university in Georgia to earn his Bachelor's and Masters in Education, and attended an out-of-state large university where he earned his Educational Specialist in Educational Leadership. Prior to transferring to Pleasant Valley High School as an assistant principal, Mr. Crane worked as an academic classroom teacher in a variety of high

schools balancing his teaching role with his coaching role. At Pleasant Valley High School, Mr. Crane serves as both an assistant principal and the school's athletic director.

Teachers. Each assistant principal was responsible for evaluating the teachers within each department. This study focused on the teachers from the four core academic content areas to remove the potential influence students types may play on the teachers' impressions of the evaluation process and TKES implementation. According to Georgia's and Alphabet County's Board of Education, all students must successfully complete four courses in each core academic department. The students have no choice in that matter. They do, however, have choice in which Career, Technical, and Agriculture Education, Fine Arts, Modern Languages, and Physical Education courses they choose to take. Student choice may affect their interactions with the teachers they are assigned, which would affect the dynamic of the classroom and potentially influence teacher effectiveness. Classroom dynamics could influence the situation within which the TKES evaluator would base his/her evaluations. For this reason, the researcher interviewed participants from the four core academic content areas to provide a control element within the participating teacher situational perceptions.

Mrs. Gatsby evaluated Mrs. Pascal and Mrs. Descartes. Mrs. Harkin evaluated Mrs. Quimby and Mrs. Godberd. Mr. Crane evaluated Mr. Newton, Mr. Oglethorpe, and Mr. Arnell. The researcher categorized all teachers at Pleasant Valley High School into one of three groups: less than two years, two to five years, and more than six years experience at Pleasant Valley High School. Originally, this study attempted to interview teachers with three to five years and teachers with more than six years of experience at Pleasant Valley. With the interviews conducted near the end of the second year of Pleasant Valley High School's TKES implementation, teachers with three to five years of experience at Pleasant Valley High School

had been present during the whole implementation process, but not present long enough to have fully developed a situational understanding of the school's process in using the previous evaluation method. Teachers with more than six years of experience at Pleasant Valley High School were present during the whole implementation process, and had experienced the previous evaluation system long enough to develop a comparison and contrast of differences. During the selection process, the researcher found some departments had undergone turnover causing a lack of teachers in a department with three to five years of experience. To ensure at least two teachers were interviewed from each assistant principal's evaluation pools, the researcher included teachers finishing their second year at Pleasant Valley High School, because they did have full exposure to the implementation of TKES.

The participating teachers with two to five years of experience at Pleasant Valley High School were Mrs. Quimby, Mrs. Pascal, and Mr. Oglethorpe. The participating teachers with six or more years experience at Pleasant Valley High School were Mrs. Godberd, Mrs. Descartes, Mr. Newton, and Mr. Arnall. One core academic department's potential participant list was exhausted before the researcher found a participant, explaining the reason only three teachers with two – five years experience at Pleasant Valley High School.

Two to five years. Mrs. Quimby, Mrs. Pascal, and Mr. Oglethorpe, at the time of the interviews, had acquired at least two years of experience at Pleasant Valley High School. All three had prior teaching experience before transitioning into Alphabet County's system. Mrs. Quimby and Mrs. Pascal started their careers outside of education before adding their returning to school to earn Masters degrees in Education, and earned their teaching certification. Their non-traditional education career beginnings may impact their interpretations of the evaluation process.

Mrs. Quimby has earned multiple degrees from large state universities and smaller universities, including her Educational Specialist and Educational Doctorate. She is also certified to teach gifted students. Her first degree was outside of education. When starting her career in education, Mrs. Quimby earned her Masters of Education in Special Education before adding her specialist and doctorate and transferring out of the Special Education classroom and into a core academic classroom.

Mrs. Pascal earned two Bachelors of Science in Ecology and Forensics. She later earned her Masters of Art in Teaching and became gifted and Advanced Placement certified. She taught at a few schools before accepting her position at Pleasant Valley High School.

Mr. Oglethorpe earned his Bachelors of Art at a large out-of-state university before adding his Masters of Education from a larger Georgia university. He is endorsed in gifted education and certified to teach Advanced Placement in his content area.

Six or more years experience. Mrs. Godberd, Mrs. Descartes, Mr. Newton, and Mr. Arnall comprise the core academic teachers who agreed to participate and each was selected to participate from a particular content area.

Mrs. Godberd earned her Bachelor of Art degree from a small Georgia university before earning her Masters of Art in Teaching and eventually her Educational Specialist degree from separate but large Georgia universities.

Mrs. Descartes earned her Bachelor of Science degree outside of education at a large Georgia university before entering education through the acquisition of her Masters of Education degree at the same institution.

Mr. Newton earned his Bachelor of Science in Education, Masters in Education, and Educational Specialist in Education degrees, each from a large Georgia university. He also

earned his gifted endorsement and was recognized during his work at Pleasant Valley High School as one of Georgia's finalists for Teacher of the Year.

Mr. Arnall earned his Bachelor of Science in Education and Bachelor of Art degrees, both earned from a large Georgia university. He is currently working towards his Masters of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from a smaller in-state university.

Documents for Analysis

Documents are analyzed according to three qualities: production and function, consumption, and content (Prior, 2003) and should be "analysed in action" (p. 173), or within the context they were created and used. The production function of the document would be the process and purpose for which the document was created. Prior (2003) stated, "Documents need to be considered as situated products, rather than as fixed and stable 'things' in the world" (p. 26). As "foundations of a collective" (Prior, 2003, 10), documents were produced within the context of the organization which created the document. Their function determined the effective usefulness for the document's creation. In analyzing the production and function of the document, one can determine the author's perspective of a phenomenon. Document consumption defined how the reader used the document, whether in response to the implied function or individually derived by the reader. By analyzing consumption of the document, one can determine the reader's dynamic response to the data within the document. Prior (2003) considered the content to be "not the most important feature of a document" (p. 26). According to Prior, the content's analysis was often ignored by either the straightforward enumerative approach to counting the number of times a specific term was used or because of the unreliability of the individual's interpretation of the meaning behind the content. When analyzing documents, the biggest concerns to appear in a study were the reliability and validity of

document's interpretation. For this reason, the researcher needed to "state at the outset of the research project what, exactly, [the researcher was] seeking to achieve, and what [was] to be included in the study" (Prior, 2003, p. 163), including the selection and exclusion criteria.

Documents were collected to primarily supplement the interviews and provide the product representation of the secondary embedded units of analysis as represented in Figure 3.1. Attending to the purpose and function of the documents, documents published by the US DOE, GADOE, and Pleasant Valley High School were collected and analyzed for their contribution to the implementation process. Most TKES informative documents were published for teacher consumption and to generate buy-in for the program. The US DOE documents were website-based documents used to inform grant applicants and general public individuals. Documents which focused on training the teachers were also analyzed for consumption in conjunction to recorded instances from interviews.

Prior's claims that document analysis must be situated within the context they were designed and used supports Spillane's Distributed Leadership perspective that documents are products of their situations and must be analyzed to fully define the situation within which the participants worked (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). For this reason, after the documents have been identified and collected, their authors, purpose and functions within the context of TKES implementation were analyzed and marked.

Field notes were taken during the interview process. As part of the document analysis, the researcher compiled the results of the field notes and compared the context of the interview responses to determine if common themes were present. The field note comparison also served to support authenticity in responses and allowed for anti-thematic response causes.

Data Analysis

Because the purpose of this study was to identify the principal's role in implementing TKES and examine the influence that role had on his implementation process, the research used the Distributed Leadership perspective to define the situated relationships inherent in policy implementation and role identity development. This approach identified themes from the relationships between the principal and the assistant principals, the principal and the teachers, and the assistant principal and the teachers.

Text passages from the interviews were reviewed based on leader/teacher status categorization. The leader responses were compiled to illustrate the leader perspective and situate the leadership actions and decisions during the TKES implementation process. The teacher responses were compiled to illustrate the teacher perspective and situate their interpretations of the leadership actions and decision-making during the TKES implementation process.

The researcher used the "distributed perspective to understand practice" (Spillane & Diamond, 2007), as Spillane intended, in policy implementation and role development. So during data analysis, the relationships that defined leadership practice were grouped by influencing categories to define the interactions and manifestation of leadership activities. Themes that were developed from the coded relationships were then checked for rival interpretations or explanations, initially in comparison to the other interviews coded, but also against the documents collected and analyzed. The documents were analyzed to supplement the explanation of the situational interactions and descriptions for each active participant of the analysis framework as illustrated in Figure 3.1.

After the themes and memos were created to explain the themes, the themes were reapplied to the research questions to examine their connections with the original questions. The principal's identified role was defined and situated within the context of the data provided by all participants. The interpreted effectiveness of the principal's implementation plan was then defined according to his identified role. The teachers' perspectives of the principal's effectiveness was also applied to the assistant principals, as in their situations the assistant principals appeared to have a strong connection with the policy implementation plan.

Reliability and Validity

Yin (2014) suggested rigor was the leading potential weakness of the case study approach, especially when compared with other more explicitly detailed approaches. In case studies, the same flexibility that afforded it to the study of relationships within the case, like in this study, also had the potential to hinder the study's rigor during the analysis phase. It was common for a case study to lose rigor when it lacked a detailed plan already identified and followed (Yin, 2014). Therefore, by building an interview and document analysis protocol and following it, the researcher ensured the study demonstrated rigor while it also employed reliability. A protocol provided the plan for the study and added reliability because it indicated a researcher's authentic integrity behind his/her methods (Yin, 2014).

To protect a study's validity, Yin (2014) proposed the researcher test for construct validity, internal validity, and external validity. Construct validity focused on the study's structures, or the procedural measures taken to study the concepts within the phenomena and addressed the causal relationship between the context of the situation and the situation. Triangulating the study by using multiple interview perspectives, member checking and document analysis provides a holistic perspective and strengthens the construct validity of the

study (Yin, 2014; Stake, 1995, 2010). During the interviews, the researcher also verified meanings to ensure understanding for later analysis.

To account for internal validity, the researcher matched patterns of information, built explanations, examined potential rival explanations, and used graphic organizers to work with the data and build full comprehension (Yin, 2014). External validity required a theory on which the researcher's explanation and propositions was based. During the explanation of the analysis and findings, the researcher applied the results within the Distributed Leadership perspective, the role developmental theories, and policy implementation theories on which to base the explanations. The researchers' subjectivity was also examined to raise awareness of any internal biases that may have and an opportunity to influence the data analysis interpretation and findings based discussion.

Subjectivity Statement

The researcher grew up in a small rural Georgia town with not much to do for entertainment, so the researcher spent a lot of her childhood years in philosophical discussions reviewing metaphysical explanations of life. This developed a broader perspective, which allowed various learning experiences to work in conjunction with each other. With an undergraduate major in Child and Family Development, the researcher developed an appreciation for a holistic approach towards the overall development of a child through the interactions of the various developmental domains and the myriad internal and external factors that impact development. After being introduced to educational policies as the Legislative Aid for the Women's Legislative Caucus during the 2006 Georgia General Assembly, the researcher developed an interest in examining the educational reform efforts in conjunction with an understanding of developmental theory and often viewed the policies trough a critical and

sometimes feminist lens. Shortly after beginning work as a teacher in a high school classroom focusing on early childhood development and education, the researcher began a Masters in Early Childhood Education and further developed an interest in the environmental factors created by the teacher and the impact that a good administrative leader can have in encouraging that role. Immediately upon completing the Masters of Education, the researcher began her Educational Doctorate in Educational Leadership despite not being endorsed by her high school, as Georgia requires for Leadership Certification. An interest in synthesizing these three streams of consciousness caused the researcher to constantly investigate, evaluate, and propose appropriate methods of encouraging holistic development and learning (theory and praxis) while simultaneously bringing that ideology into the educational leadership praxis and public policy frame of reference and develop a working definition for the phrase "Quality Learning Environments".

As a critical constructivist, the researcher viewed learning and understanding through the frame of individual interpretations, and knowledge construction with the hopes of creating a deeper understanding of a situation in need of change. This researcher's knowledge banks were created via her interpretations through her perspective as a white female from a rural town in a southern state. With a historical family lower socio-economic status and a present professional middle class socio-economic status, the shift relied on the participation of both grandparent sets in the armed forces. Both grandparents groups overcame poverty by either joining the military or marrying into the military and raised their children in lower middle class homes that moved a lot before settling in Georgia long enough for the researcher's parents to use their jobs affiliated with a city and county police departments to meet and marry. The researcher's parents stressed

the importance of education and the teacher's role as an ultimate authority figure in the classroom.

Limitations

Study limitations include participant candidness during the interviews. As an outsider-insider, the researcher knows the participants, but is neither a member of their content departments nor a member of leadership within the study. This could prove a limitation. With the potential risk the leadership team may decipher the interviewee's responses and hold those responses against the interviewee, the level of candidness during the interview may be negatively impacted despite measures taken by the researcher to protect said participants' involvement. The same can be said about the principal and assistant principals' involvement. Fear of reprisal from the next higher member of the school hierarchy may prevent total trust of the participants.

Another limitation is timing. The timing of the study was conducted near the end of the school year. It is common during this time the participants' positions shift and change. Due to the political nature of career advancements within the education field, some participants may be more concerned with maintaining politically correct responses and as a result limit the authenticity of the inquiry results.

Aside from those two concerns, another possible limitation of this study is that it is an examination of a single principal within a single school setting. While being an instrumental sampling, this study would require a much longer time frame and larger scope for this researcher to develop a truly in depth inquiry into the role of the principal as an intermediate policy implementer.

Summary

This study examined the role of the principal as an intermediate policy implementer by investigating the development the principal underwent to define his role and apply that definition to implementing TKES at Pleasant Valley High School. Patton's (2002) holistic perspective of a case study showed the importance and relevance of using Spillane's Distributed Leadership perspective as a theoretical proposition and analytical guide. Through the strict following of the study protocol that addressed issues of validity and reliability, this study's data was triangulated, member checked, and exposed to the researcher's reflexivity to provide an objective analysis of the interviews and documents collected to examine the aforementioned purpose of this study.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

This chapter reports findings based on the analysis of the data from primarily the interviews and supplemented by the document analysis. The interview participants offered their interpretations of the implementation of TKES by the school's administrative team. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed as perspectives of the participant's knowledge of the implementation process. Documents were assessed to demonstrate the intermediate implementation process as the federal Department of Education worked with Georgia's Department of Education to necessitate Pleasant Valley High School's participation and implementation of the new teacher evaluation system. Many materials were provided via training purposes to induce a smoother implementation processes at school levels. The fifth and final chapter discusses a summary of the findings presented here, implications in light of the relevant literature, limitations and recommendations for future research, and a conclusion of significance.

Findings

This section identifies the emergent themes from the analysis process. Positional types according to Spillane's Distributed Leadership perspective defined the grouped themes: the leaders, known collectively as the administrative team, and the teachers. The themes, as divided by position, reflected the various embedded relationship based units of analysis discussed in chapter three.

Upon completion of the analysis, the administrative team's themes, which emerged from the data included: (a) administrative teamwork and delegation; (b) the principal's focus on relationships through genuine communication and support; (c) the principal as the final authority; (d) the assistant principals' roles as intermediate policy implementers; (e) the power of perceptions in implementation; and (f) a student achievement oriented decision making process. The teacher themes that emerged from the data included: (a) the principal's invisible role as a delegator; (b) leadership practice and trust; (c) relationships with evaluators influenced TKES implementation; (d) the administrators' experience and cognitive trust; (e) the influence of a people oriented culture on implementation; and (f) evaluator subjectivity and trust.

Table 4.1. Themes Found During Data Analysis

Themes	
Administrative Team	**Teachers**
Administrative teamwork and delegation	The principal's invisible role as a delegator
The principal's focus on relationships through communication and support	Leadership practice and trust
The principal as the final authority	Relationships with evaluators influenced TKES implementation
The assistant principals' roles as intermediate policy implementers	The Administrators' experience and cognitive trust
The power of perceptions in implementation	The influence of a people oriented culture on implementation
A student achievement oriented decision making process	Evaluator subjectivity and trust

Administrative Team Themes

Spillane's Distributed Leadership perspective utilized a leadership plus aspect and explained a school leader could not lead or affect change independently without the cooperation of other building leaders (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). At the high school level, the assistant principals served as the next hierarchical leaders. The administrative team at Pleasant Valley High school encompassed the formal leadership plus aspect. During the data analysis process,

the researcher developed the following themes based on the results of all interviews. These themes represented the administrative team's relationships primarily between the principal and assistant principals, though some teacher interviews contributed to the thematic results.

Administrative teamwork and delegation. Mrs. Gatsby described Dr. Carter as a "team-approach leader" and continued to describe how he **"**allowed us—him being an integral part of the team-- to say how [implementation] was going to happen and what stages. And how we are going to get through the system." When defining his contribution to the team, Dr. Carter listed his role based contributions as to,

> Collaborate among other school leaders in a professional environment, being able to
>
> provide opinions, debate, deliberation, just conversation, based on all the entities of what
>
> collaboration truly means. In conclusion, hoping that you can improve the student
>
> achievement and student growth and professional learning in all of the different entities
>
> that come from a principalship in running their buildings.

Dr. Carter's team worked together to define their implementation process.   Mr. Crane explained, "We talk. We meet. We talk about the frustrations. We talk about the positives, and –but, just like with anything, he's in charge of the school." Mr. Crane continued, "ultimately, he's going to make the decision, but we all give the ideas, and we all chip in and contributed." Dr. Carter defined his contribution to the team when he explained,

> I think it's very important that teachers understand that the principal has that instructional
>
> perspective and push, and also putting people in place to make sure that it's implemented.
>
> And then allow people that are in this position to actually grow themselves, because you
>
> build trust and belief that they can move things forward with their own style.

So he specifically chose people to fill positions to carry out purposeful functions related to his instructional perspective's implementation. Each member's different contribution to the team was credited with creating "rich discussions" and providing multiple perspectives through those discussions.

Dr. Carter often relied on delegation among his team members to achieve his vision for the school. He defined delegation as "shared leadership" and "shared decision making" vital to meet goals and explained,

> I know that delegation is a huge component to [the principalships]. There is no way one
> person can sit in this position and do everything. And that's another I've told Mrs.
> Gatsby is, while you're a go-getter, you tend to take things and run with them, and that's
> great, but it's so big, don't try to conquer it, because it will win at the end of the day. So
> delegation's a big part.

Dr. Carter explained what they decided about their TKES implementation plan: "we took time, which we incorporated and embraced in professional learning—what this looked like, what it meant, what's it going to do, kind of thing. And provided that assurance that we're in this together," which promoted the team perspective.

Mrs. Pascal, however, as a teacher, disagreed with the team perception. She stated, "the leadership may call themselves a team, but they have very specific roles and goals." She indicated she did see the potentially delegated roles and goals as parts of the greater picture determined and defined by Dr. Carter's leadership. Mrs. Pascal was the only teacher to argue against the team perspective.

Assistant principal's role as intermediate policy implementers. Fowler (2014) defined formal implementers as the policymakers, which legally required schools implement their

policies. Intermediate implementers were those Honig (2006) referred to as the "street level bureaucrats" responsible for actual implementation. Mr. Crane explained, "we're just another step in the whole system from the state to the county office to us to teachers" and replicated Dr. Carter's team approach by assuring the teachers "we're all in it together."

When the duties and responsibilities were delegated out to the assistant principals, Mrs. Gatsby, the assistant principal of instruction, curriculum, and testing, explained she was tasked with "managing TKES so it didn't overwhelm everybody." During their summer discussions and planning sessions, Mrs. Gatsby further explained, "we decided our approach is to embed this in professional learning" at 100% participation because they "wanted everyone to experience the kinds of the platform" until they could "get comfortable with the standards" and the process.

After the initial implementation year, the responsibilities shifted back out to everyone because as Mrs. Gatsby explained, "all of us need to be instructional leaders. That's just—that's the goal of—that's got to be the goal of education right now. The assistant principals no longer only do TADRA and tardies." As teacher evaluators, assistant principals needed to be competent at informing instructional practices within the building.

The principal as the final authority. So while Dr. Carter delegated implementation responsibilities to the assistant principals because their strengths allowed a smoother implementation and the team discussed each planning step and stage of implementation, Dr. Carter maintained his right as the final authority in decisions. Mrs. Gatsby described Dr. Carter's as "he puts the final stamp on our decisions and says, 'okay, we're going to go with it this way.' And he absolutely works and steps in on a difficult teacher or when we see a domain, or a teacher disagrees with a rating." Mr. Crane explained,

Dr. Carter's in charge of the school and everything comes down to him. So he wants to

make sure we're doing the best job obviously because that's going to reflect on him, and

not in a selfish way, not in any egotistical way. It's just he way it is.

Mr. Crane summarized by stating, "It's ultimately Dr. Carter's call."

The power of perceptions in implementation. Dr. Carter focused on the power of

perception and defined,

Perception is, based on a large high school like ours, it can sometimes go unnoticed that

the principal has an instructional impact, because you have a support staff around you,

such as your assistant principals that are responsible for major areas in school

improvement.

Not only did Dr. Carter express concern over the unnoticed connection between his actions and

instructional improvement, but Dr. Carter also expressed concern about being perceived as a

politician. "I don't want to be considered a politician," claimed Dr. Carter, but when "you're

selling the program so that it will be embraced," Dr. Carter understood, "you're a politician.

You're selling something. You're getting people to buy-in, move forward, move in this

direction." One's delivery methods, to be effective, has to be timely, and presented at the start of

the school year when teachers are most receptive to change in order for teachers develop buy-in

and feelings of support and being valued. Despite the apparent political nature of effective

delivery methods, Dr. Carter further explained,

My belief is a lot of times my heart and actions are hopefully showing they're in the right

place. That hey, this isn't political at all. This is about the student. This about that

particular students. This is about that particular teacher. Because no matter what

happens, I'm your biggest advocate, whether you're students, teacher, employer,

classified or certified. And sometimes, in the business of the day, it may not always be

perceived or delivered that way either, because it just gets hectic.

Dr. Carter also identified and explained "political trust". First he explained it as it related to his

relationship with the local Board of Education.

There is a political trust. It comes with that in some aspects. You know, one of the

things I can say about our board members—now, they're some that I would—obviously,

I'm not going to mention names—but there are some others that I—there's some there

that I think have challenges about the truth, global perspective versus our community.

But I can honestly say that all nine, their heart's in the right place. They have proven that

their heart's in the right place. And they want to make a difference in every kid that

comes to the thresholds of our schools, there's no doubt.

As Dr. Carter took the principalship at Pleasant Valley High School, the former principal shared

an analogy that left a lasting impact on Dr. Carter, and gifted him with a flag of a hurricane to

represent the debris the position must learn to dodge. Dr. Carter shared, "Mr. Smith told me

when he gave that flag up there, he said, 'you look at the principalship as a quill with six

arrows'." He continued,

I called him up one day about some prior leadership in this school district, and I said, 'let

me ask a unique question, Mr. Smith.' I said, 'back to that quill with six arrows.' I said, 'I

think I may have shot one in four years, maybe.' I said, 'but I'm discovering, and have

got this great question for you, what happens when somebody else shoots the arrow for

you?'

He continued again,

There's only a certain group of people that can shoot an arrow for me, and those are the

ones above me. If anybody knows the line of support in a principalship, there's only one

line, that one line is the superintendent. The support is all the folks around him. So

there's only one that could shoot one for me. And so my question was, what happens

when that happens. He just chuckled; didn't really have an answer. I said, 'well, I've got

a couple I think are being shot. They're out of my control, and I've got a kind of, almost

a war, between this teacher and this superintendent, and I'm in the middle and have no

ammunition. You know, from a political perspective, it can be very, very, very, very,

very challenging, when you know that you can make a difference in this person.

Aside from the political perceptions, Dr. Carter focused on pushing two other perceptions: a

focus on relationships and student achievement oriented decision-making.

The principal's focus on relationships through communication and support. Dr.

Carter described communication as a key component of his position. He explained,

Listening from this seat has got to be a strength. To me, it's maybe the one of the

number—it's at least in the top—could be number-one lifeline to being or be successful.

And then compassion.

He further explained, "You have to be genuine, even in celebrations, obviously, but most

importantly genuine in the most difficult and courageous situations" to maintain good working

relationships with teachers and leaders alike. Having previously referred to his faculty as a team,

Dr. Carter also described his faculty and staff as an "extended family". Mr. Oglethorpe stated,

"The relationship that Dr. Carter builds with the teachers here is very strong." Mrs. Harkin

described, "Dr. Carter makes relationships with kids, parents, teachers. He's not behind closed

doors ever, unless there's something. His door's always open." She continued, "Dr. Carter will

stop everything to have a conversation with you." Dr. Carter explained, "I try to make sure that I

am open; that I am fair, and that there are not any pre-conceived biases, if you will, on any

important decisions made."

With a focus on relationships so strong that Dr. Carter will stop what he is doing to talk,

Mrs. Harkin easily explained, "Dr. Carter's very supportive of us, [administrators]." She

continued by connecting his support for the administrative team to the teachers by adding, "Dr.

Carter's supporting and guiding us in the right way to give this teacher the support they need. So

he supports us to support them." There is a limit to Dr. Carter's supportive compassion. Dr.

Carter explained,

> I'm not as compassionate when I've said, well, listen, I've supported you, and supported
>
> you, and supported you, and there we are. You continue to ignore kind of some directive,
>
> or kind of some suggestions. You know what else? It's making me harder and harder to
>
> support things when they continue.

These moments led to Dr. Carter conducting "courageous conversations" geared to improving

teacher's professional behavior and promote positive change.

A student achievement oriented decision-making process. Throughout Dr. Carter's

interview, he reiterated "I really want to say upfront, though, it's really about the kids. You

know kids really value that, and that's meaningful to them." With a student-focused approach

that identified the overarching goal about promoting student achievement rates, Dr. Carter

explained the students were the reason for everything. He claimed,

> When your heart's in the right place, and you love kids, you know you're making a
>
> difference when you see what happens on Friday night [graduation]. Everyone has its

own story, no matter if they're ranked ninth in the class or not. They still have their own story, and they still overcome many different things.

When asked, Dr. Carter commented, "So while it's very, very overwhelming, my belief is, it's worth it" because it's for the kids.

Mrs. Godberd agreed and described Pleasant Valley High School's culture as student centered. She explained, the school "encouraged us to think about the lives of our children" and "to see our kids as people" while "loving our kids is always put before data" and acknowledged "people aren't data", students or adults.

Dr. Carter also looked at the individual students with an *index finger* analogy and shared, It's a different print than anybody else's in the world, just like our students have that index print, our teachers do too. So I'm going to put this spin on it, which I believe wholeheartedly that this is the case, each person has value and purpose. Each person has a gift. And as educators, to the students, the message is that you all have gifts. You all have value and purpose. It's our goal; it's our job to help you find what you are great at. And what you're great at is find that niche in school, some form or fashion.

He continued,

It's a cultural perspective; it's an engaging perspective from the seat of the principal. Everybody has valued and purpose regardless what position you're in, regardless if you're food and nutrition, regardless if you're custodian, teacher, students, support, doesn't matter; everybody does. And I think setting that theme in motion will help kids, and most importantly understand that you have a place here, and we'll help you find your niche.

Dr. Carter also pointed to his focus on getting teachers to express their shared focus on students during the interview process as he explained

> If I can get teachers in some form or fashion to tell me in the interview process they love kids, they've already won me over, because I know they got into it for the right reasons. They may not say exactly, 'I love kids;' but, some form or fashion, I will find my question. How much they really want to teach, and how they got into the business, and why they wanted to do it. One of the questions is, 'who made the biggest difference in your life? Who is that influence?' And you usually get it. That's usually the person or persons that had made difference for them to teach. Almost 90 percent of the time, that's my own statistic.

Teacher Themes

Spillane's Distributed Leadership perspective distinguished the leaders from the followers. In the study of Pleasant Valley High School's implementation of TKES, the leaders were the members of the administrative team and the followers were the teachers. As a group, the teachers' themes often contradicted the themes the administrative team created.

> **The principal's invisible role as a delegator.** Mr. Arnall described Dr. Carter's role as, more of a behind the scenes kind of thing. I mean, I know, obviously he has a major role, being the head guy. But I think because of the delegation, I'm—I see more of the assistant principals in that—in the implementation.

Mr. Arnall continued, "Dr. Carter's not the one doing the observation, and the principal, because of the delegated responsibility, isn't necessarily more visible. In fact, I would say, because of the delegation, it's almost a less-visible thing." Mrs. Quimby qualified this sentiment with, "I think Dr. Carter's very busy. I don't think he had time to everything that's expected." Mrs. Pascal

also stated, "I admit the principals and APs are busy. They don't need to pop in classrooms all the time." Mrs. Godberd explained Dr. Carter's invisibility as, "The principal doesn't observe me. I always assume there is something super important happening up in the office. Super important. Requiring a lot of time in the office." Mrs. Descartes also explained, "I do know that he's busy, and he has to have his assistant principals support his role." Mr. Newton added, "I really haven't had any interaction with the head principal, because I'm evaluated by one of the assistant principals."

Dr. Carter's delegated responsibility has caused his teachers to note his absence, though they do give him the convenient excuse that he is busy to justify his choice to delegate the relationship building opportunity provided via classroom visits.

Leadership practice and trust. Mrs. Pascal explained,

I think the better the leaders, the trickle down effect. If the leaders are stepping up and doing what they are going to do, the colleagues are going to step in line. They see that their leaders are doing right, so they gotta do it too.

The premise behind Spillane's Distributed Leadership perspective's practice aspect is that the products from leadership interactions are practices. Pascal above explained the impact leadership practice could have on the teacher behaviors and expectations. She continued with,

If I was constantly unsupported, my teaching will slowly deteriorate. It could quickly deteriorate. The rate of deterioration to the point that it will affect my observations, because they will see that I'm becoming a crappy teacher, but it is a trickle down effect.

Mr. Arnall pointed out, "that in general, the administration is probably the biggest overall determinant of the school climate." Their support for the teachers via practice defines the

situation. Mrs. Descartes agreed with Mr. Arnall when she claimed, "the principal, and his supporting cast, affects the climate and culture."

Mrs. Godberd described the leadership's practices as "it makes me feel like they are on my team and not against me." She continued, "In this whole process, we are like in this together; we are learning together. This is where we are now." She also stated, "that we are all in it together is a good feeling to have in a school."

Mrs. Quimby questioned the administrator's practices as they suggested a lack of mastery for a program they were charged with implementing and training the staff to use. She shared, "I think the administrators themselves are trying to find, find their understanding of what was expected."

Relationships with evaluators influenced implementation. Mr. Arnall described the positives of a relationship based climate,

> I feel like when we had a new administration come in, that was a little bit more trusting, a little bit more professional, that allowed us some academic freedom, and some professional discretion, that the overall school climate improved. Teachers generally, at least in my department, seem very happy with the autonomy we've been given to do our jobs, and that we generally meet the targets the administrators set of us. And so we get praise for that. And so I think overall, the climate has moved in a positive direction, as far as teachers coming to work, having good collegial relationships, being happy with their jobs.

As Descartes explained the administrative team used TKES implementation to open a "dialogue between my evaluator and myself." Mr. Newton described the increased exposure to his administrative evaluator, "I feel more like they're my friend, because I see them more often."

The increased visits "gives me a better relationship with them, as far as comfort that they see what I'm doing and can give me good feedback, or help me improve in them," added Mr. Arnall. Mr. Oglethorpe posited, "Giving them one or two departments to look at allows them to build more personal relationships with the teachers in that department."

Mrs. Godberd clarified, "I think we enjoy each other's company. I think that we are a pretty loving faculty." Mrs. Quimby, unlike the rest of the teachers, did not view the possible influence personal relationships played on the evaluation outcomes. "I find that sometimes we let our relationship within the building dictate how comfortable we feel in our classroom," stated Mrs. Quimby. She continued, "I believe that relationships are not supposed to play a part in the TKES platform, but I believe that—I believe that relationships do play a part because it is subjective." That subjectivity can have a negative impact on the ability of a teacher to build a relationship with his/her evaluator and potentially affect his/her evaluation result. Mrs. Quimby clarified, "it's hard to build a relationship when you have a different outlook on how TKES should be implemented."

Another concern expressed regarding the power relationships may have on Pleasant Valley High School's implementation of TKES was a noted tendency to hire friends for leadership positions. Mrs. Quimby explained,

> When you hire your friend, it comes back. If your friends—if your friend is the best candidate, because your friend has the best, most well-rounded background, okay. When your friend is your buddy, that's not always the best placement and in the best interest of the climate of the school.

Dr. Carter noted in his interview that he hired based on his gut feeling providing an edge when hiring an inside person. He explained,

Mr. Russell and the second candidate was very, very close. Matter of fact, I can prove it on paper, if it has merit. Rubric for grading them; how they got to the interview; a rubric for grading them on the interview, almost pointed out the same. Literally, within points of one another. So you get two equal candidates on paper. My gut feeling, my heart, was saying Mr. Russell, but in the eyes of some on the committee that were outside of this building—I think had a hard time seeing it, because I think that they probably thought I had favoritism, because he's mine. I worked really, really hard at making sure that that's not some way I'm thinking though. Does that make sense? And I try to make sure that I am open, that I am fair, and that there are not any pre-conceived biases, if you will, on any important decisions made.

After hiring Mr. Russell as a new administrator, Dr. Carter stood firm in his decision by defending following his *gut feeling* by claiming, "nobody knows this building more than me." Dr. Carter's feelings of comfort were stronger when he envisioned Mr. Russell in the position over the others. He also added, "I think God gave me a gift; sometimes, I'm wondering if it's a curse, but its reading people."

Part of Mrs. Quimby's concern regarding the power of relationships in the school came back to an inconsistent presentation of information presented during the new teacher support meetings proved insufficient for preparing the new teachers to understand the expectations for each standard observed and the ramification for not meeting that expectation. An analysis of the school produced professional development powerpoints, as provided by Mrs. Gatsby, showed the new teacher support powerpoints were nearly exact duplicates of the original presentations prepared for the official professional development training sessions. Mrs. Quimby was not the only who felt "If you're looking from a new teacher perspective, I think that what we had in

place for new teachers—to understand the TKES process—was insufficient." Mrs. Pascal, also described the new teacher support resembled a "sink or swim" mentality.

      The administrative experience and cognitive trust. Mrs. Gatsby summarized the connection between an evaluating administrator's experience and knowledge with a teacher's cognitive trust,

> I don't think people make change if they don't respect the person suggesting a weakness.
> So, if a teacher doesn't think I've invested enough time know and understanding what
> I'm evaluating, then why would they ever respond positively to, say like a two, or even a
> three? A three sometimes doesn't mean 'perfect'. I mean, a three can just still have a
> suggestion, like, 'this was great. Here, how about trying this?' And I don't know if
> people always take value in it if they don't think you've invested enough time to learn it.

The nature of an evaluation requires the evaluated to trust the cognitive skill of the evaluator in order to trust the results of the evaluation. Mrs. Godberd explained when she was evaluated by an administrator who had proven she knew what she was evaluating, "I really valued her opinion on content knowledge and what I'm doing." Mrs. Gatsby explained, "You can't tell people what to do from a directive position until you have done it yourself and get respect at the same time. It's a tough battle."

      Teachers don't trust the feedback provided by administrators who do not have applicable experience in their content. Mr. Newton described it with "I think they just need to experience if from our side of the coin, before they judge us on it." He continued, "If you're being evaluated on your expertise, and your quality of teaching in a field, but the person who's evaluating you has no idea what's going on—it's very subjective. I don't think it's fair." Mr. Newton liked his evaluator and considered the administrator a friend, but also commented, "But a lot of time,

when we're having a conversation, it's just like a different language. I think it goes over their head, and they don't realize exactly what's going on."

Mrs. Quimby agreed with Mr. Newton and said, "I think that someone who has been in a different type setting, and has never encountered the type of teaching that this particular administrator is being expected to evaluate, that's a big deal." She continued, "I don't know that I want my evaluation done by someone who has no idea what is in my content area." She has had multiple evaluators. Mrs. Quimby had an evaluator she trusted. About this evaluator she said,

> I've had a great one where I felt like, I felt valued. And I felt like that person knew what was happening. And I felt like that was a valid evaluation, because they knew what I was trying to accomplish then they sat down.

But Mrs. Quimby's opinion of her most recent evaluator was very different, "I think this administrator doesn't know what the real, a real classroom is like." Mr. Oglethorpe acknowledged, "They've all been teachers and instructors in the classroom before, and I understand that, but for some of them it's been a little while for what they've done in the classroom." So while the administrators have some experience, their time in the classroom as a teacher was not recent enough to ensure their valid understanding of what is happening when they enter the classroom. Without a valid understanding, cognitive trust does not develop between the teacher and the evaluator.

The influence of a people-oriented culture on implementation. "People are not data," claimed Mrs. Godberd. In describing the school climate:, "we're encouraged to think about the lives of our children first," and teachers are "encouraged to see our kids as people. "Loving our

kids is always put before data, which I like about here," added Mrs. Godberd. Mrs. Harkin explained,

> People need to be valued. And people need to know that what you're doing means something. And so I just want to make sure that when I'm in your room I want to make sure that you know that I care about your, your topic. And I care about what you're teaching your kids. So I want to make it personal.

Dr. Carter added, "this is a service. To me, teaching is a service, and it's a people business; it's a kid business". Mr. Oglethorpe expressed, "I'm happy to work with these students and our bosses and the administrators" because the leaders "are very personable."

Evaluator subjectivity and trust. "Any evaluation tool's only as good as it's evaluator," explained Mrs. Gatsby. The teachers had their own interpretations of the validity of the evaluators' impressions of their skills and the amount of trust they should put into the leader's objectivity. While "they have been very forthcoming about the flaws of the system too, which I think is endearing for them to not be like salespeople of this," Mrs. Godberd continued to explained, "it's an unfair system for everybody." Mr. Newton shared,

> I feel like they are only doing this because they're being told to do it. I don't think they would have done a system like this if they hadn't been told by the state to do it. But they did the best they could.

But Mrs. Godberd claimed, "It's time to stop acting like you can evaluate people."

A common concern teachers had about the evaluator's subjectivity related back to the scores tallied. Mr. Newton explained, "Because they're subjective. [The evaluation scores] don't have anything to do with what you can actually accomplish." In his experience, "basically, if you're a coach [at Pleasant Valley High School], you have four points higher on your grade. If

you're not a coach of a sport, your average is about what mine is- 21, 22, 23." Mrs. Godberd stated, "coming up with a number next to my name and saying that's how valuable I am—I just think that's subjective and to act like it's true data, to me, is very silly." She continued to qualify, "my scores have been fine. There's nothing personally that has happened to me." She just questions the validity of a number representing her effectiveness in the classroom. Mrs. Pascal also questioned the validity of the evaluation score when she maintained, "people get away with not being good teachers anyways and apparently the evaluations don't matter."

Mrs. Quimby shared, "I would like to feel that the administrators are working more towards objectivity." Why would she like to think that if the administrators were in fact objective in their evaluation methods?

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Discussion

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The purpose of this study was to identify the role of the school principal as an intermediate policy implementer and examine the principal's effectiveness based on that role. According to the Distributed Leadership perspective, the principal cannot act without the cooperation of his followers (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). The primary research questions for this qualitative case study are (1) what is the role of the school principal as an intermediary policy implementer; and (2) how does the school principal's self-defined role as the intermediary policy implementer influence his implementation effectiveness? The researcher used the research questions organize this section of chapter four.

Principal's Role as an Intermediary Policy Implementer

Distributed Leadership is a teamwork-based approach to leadership that acknowledges the importance of cooperation of the other members of the leadership team (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). Role identity is a socially constructed understanding of one's responsibilities

and expectations, which define one's practices (Nye, 2002). Both the Distributed Leadership perspective and role identity theories rely on the relationship of the leader and his/her situation to culturally understand, or situate, or define one's sense-making process. Glanz and Neville (1997) explained the crux of social constructivism relied on a built understanding of a concept within the cultural context the concept developed. The principal's role, i.e. the concept, developed within the cultural context of the school and the position in which the principal worked, and Distributed Leadership provided a method of identifying the situation or context in which the principal worked, therefore Dr. Carter's role development can be identified and defined through the Distributed Leadership analytical approach. To define Dr. Carter's role identity development though Distributed Leadership's perspective, one must define the context and then the interactions he/she experienced in building his/her definition. Role identity development is a three-step process: define the role for self, share that definition with others, and internalize by applying to every facet of one's life (Waldman et al., 2012).

Principal's defined role within the school's context. Pleasant Valley High School's climate and culture, the micro and macro situation within the model outlined in chapter two, centered on a people oriented view that focused on the individuals that make up the school. Student achievement rates were identified as the primary goal. Mrs. Godberd's assessment that the teachers were encouraged "to see our kids as people" and that "people aren't data", summarized this view. According to Marzano (2007), Dr. Carter's focus on assisting the students find their niches would provide students with the motivation they may need to want achieve in school.

Dr. Carter defined his role as a team member who delegated responsibility because that was the only way to accomplish all that had to be done in the principalship position. Dr. Carter's

team approach led to his conducting many meetings with his team as they built, reviewed, and revised implementation plans as necessary. Dr. Carter's role focused on collaboration via "opinions, debate, and deliberation," and focused on improving student achievement and growth.

When Dr. Carter defined his role during the implementation process, he chose to delegate the responsibilities of training the teachers and the bulk of evaluation practice to the assistant principals. He understood the role of the principal's primary role as the leading instructional perspective in schools. His reliance on delegation a led to him defining the term *delegation* as "shared leadership" and "shared decisions making", highlighting his focus on delegation as a sharing act that would promote the growth and development of the others' strengths overcoming their character flaws.

He also defined his role as that of a supporter. In his teamwork-based defined role, the team worked to develop a supportive plan that would allow time for the teachers to slowly become acclimated to the new program and experience it in a low risk environment, before the program shifted from practice to legitimate.

Principal's role as shared and applied with the assistant principals. Street level policy implementers in schools are known as intermediaries (Fowler, 2013). Mrs. Gatsby, Mrs. Harkin, and Mr. Crane, all stated their relationships with Dr. Carter revolved around Dr. Carter's team approach to leadership. As members of a team, they identified working together to crate group decisions mutually beneficial to each participant as well as the team at large. Throughout their teamwork, the administrative team accepted Dr. Carter's roles as a supportive delegator, who maintained his final decision making authority.

The assistant principals agreed over Dr. Carter's supportive nature; but despite his supportive nature, he does make the final decisions as the leader of the team and the school. This

delegation based relationship between Dr. Carter and the assistant principals defined the assistant principals as extension intermediaries (Fowler, 2013). Mrs. Gatsby noted, "he allowed us—him being an integral part of the team, to say how [implementation] was going to happen and what stages. And how we are going to get through the system." "He's definitely very much involved in the process and training," shared Mr. Crane to support his impression of Dr. Carter's supportive influence on the team's decision making. Mrs. Harkin described his approach as, "he's supporting and guiding us in the right way to give this teacher the support they need. So he supports us to support them."

Mrs. Gatsby and Mr. Crane noted despite Dr. Carter's team approach, he's also the final authority in policy decisions. Mrs. Gatsby said, "he puts the final stamp on our decisions and says, 'okay, we're going to go with it this way.' " Mr. Crane explained, "we talk; we meet; we talk about the frustrations; we talk about the positives; and—but, just like with anything, he's in charge of the school. Dr. Carter's in charge of the school and everything comes down to him. So he wants to make sure we're doing the best job obviously because that's going to reflect on him." Mr. Crane continued, "Ultimately, he's going to make the decision, but we all give the ideas and we all chip in and contribute. But he's going to make the final decision."

Effective TKES Implementation at Pleasant Valley

When the Distributed Leadership perspective was used in conjunction with the examination of policy implementation, Spillane, Reiser, and Gomez (2006) explained the principal built cognitive understanding through his/her interactions with other administrators, leaders, training sessions, and teachers. It was during this process, the principal began to find ways to share his/her cognitive understanding of the policy to be implemented with his/her staff and formulate a plan for implementation. The principal's cognitive understanding would

influence the principal's social capital and his/her capital's influence on policy implementation through trust, communication, and expectations (Smylie and Evan, 2006). Trust would be required to embrace the risk inherent with change, while continuing to build upon one's cognitive understanding. Communication of one's understanding and expectations provided the foundation on which the change was expected.

Implementation steps. Dr. Carter's implementation practice, based on his previously identified roles, includes primarily delegation of responsibility and support for carry out. As the assistant principals work through the implementation process, the teachers rely on the administrative staff to provide for the needs of the teaching staff. Dr. Carter's support then filters through the assistant principals to the teachers as the assistant principals in turn support the teachers. Dr. Carter's involvement in the implementation process was less apparent for the teachers, but all participants agreed the implementation of TKES was conducted effectively and smooth. This effectiveness was evidence of the forward mapping and evolutionary planning conducting during the administrative team's meetings during the summers and the impromptu weekly discussions reflecting of the practices throughout the week and openness to make effective adjustments to better suit the needs of the participants. In turn, each adjustment further shifted Dr. Carter's role identity, suggesting his role is ever changing despite his desire to want to claim it as stable.

Planning. Prior to Pleasant Valley High School's initial TKES implementation year, the administrative team, comprised of Dr. Carter, Mrs. Gatsby, Mrs. Harkin, and Mr. Crane, attended a three-day training session where the team decided to implement the system for 100% of the teachers rather than a smaller percentage of the teachers. According to Mrs. Gatsby, the team opted to implement 100% of the teaching staff because they "wanted everyone to experience the

kinks of the platform," and selected to chunk the performance standards through professional

development training to help teachers "get comfortable with the standards." While participating

in their three-day summer training sessions, the administrative team conducted many

conversations to define their implementation plan, "carved out [their] roles", and "determined

which departments [each] would cover."

As the assistant principal of curriculum, instruction, and testing, Mrs. Gatsby's county

identified role provided a natural fit for the various aspects of the TKES and became primarily

her responsibility to master during that initial year of implementation. By the second year, all

members of the administrative team had sufficient practice to be considered masters of the

material, enough so the teachers were encouraged to ask questions of their evaluator rather than

just Mrs. Gatsby. The goal of the administrative team in this regard was for all members to

become instructional leaders for the building.

Proper implementation process. Each month during that initial year, the teachers were

expected to attend a professional development session conducted during their planning periods.

Mrs. Gatsby conducted the session using powerpoints she created for the sole purpose of

preparing the teachers for their next evaluation, when any of the presented performance

standards could have been used to evaluate the teachers. Dr. Carter's role during this was to

support Mrs. Gatsby and the other administrators, so they could provide adequate support to the

teachers experiencing their own learning curve (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011).

Each year, the administrative team divided the responsibility of evaluating the teachers

by sharing the various departments between the four. The first year, the principal's assigned

group of teachers were too numerous to complete, so by the December of that initial year, the

administrative team revisited their decision and redistributed the teachers who had originally

been assigned the principal to the rest of the administrators to ensure they all received the

observations the teachers were then guaranteed. The second year found the teachers

redistributed to allow for some variety for the observers.

      Contributing factors to effectiveness. Dr. Carter's involvement in the implementation

process was less apparent for the teachers, but all participants agreed the implementation of

TKES was conducted effectively and smooth (Huberman & Miles, 1984; Gross, Giacquinta, &

Bernstein, 1971). This effectiveness was evidence of the forward mapping and evolutionary

planning conducting during the administrative team's meetings during the summers and the

impromptu weekly discussions reflecting of the practices throughout the week and openness to

make effective adjustments to better suit the needs of the participants (Louis & Miles, 1990;

Weimer & Vining, 2011). Two components of the effective TKES implementation at Pleasant

Valley High Schools included the relationship between the teacher and his/her evaluator and the

trust present (Noonan et al., 2008).

      Relationships. Relationships, as described by the teachers, determined their acceptance

of the evaluation results and ultimately determined whether the result instigated change or not.

With a strong relationship, sometimes characterized by membership in the same clique the

evaluator had, the teachers were perceived to receive higher scores with more personalized and

genuine feedback. Weaker relationships, characterized by a lack of membership in the

evaluator's peer group or clique, were perceived by the teacher with a weaker relationship and

had the impression of receiving lower scores with generalized feedback and little applicable

value for the teacher.

      Teacher relationships with their assistant principals improved and showed an opened

dialogue based on their observations and the subsequent feedback provided. While for the

majority, the teachers shared an appreciation for their observers and the care they put into ensuring their observations were authentic and fair. The increased frequency of the classroom visits was credited for giving the teachers "a better relationship with them" because the visits assured the teachers their classroom practices were being seen, provided them sound feedback based on the observed practices, and assisted the teachers in improving said practices. One described the result of the increased visits by saying, "I feel more like they're my friend because I see them more often", because "in the past, I would only talk to them once or twice a year, and now it's once or twice a month."

Each assistant principal had been assigned a specific group of teachers by department or content taught. Their interactions with their assigned teachers increased with the amount of time they spent in the classrooms, according to the teachers. One of Mrs. Gatsby's assigned teachers described her approach as personal and proactive because she would ask "what do you need from me, what would you be more interested in finding?" While the TKES program could have determined Mrs. Gatsby's approach, the teacher describing the interaction shared he/she felt it was more Mrs. Gatsby's personal approach that supplemented and complimented the TKES system. Because Mrs. Gatsby was assigned to this teacher, her presence was more visible and involved than the other assistant principals. Mrs. Gatsby was also the point lead for the TKES implementation process the first year, so many of the teachers, even those not assigned to her, expressed comfort in approaching her with a question about the process or platform. Mrs. Harkin and Mr. Crane were also mentioned as competent and approachable regarding questions about the program.

Only one teacher interviewed seemed to have a negative experience with his/her observer, and whose experience was described as likely the result of a missing relationship with

the evaluator. The teacher commented, "it's hard to build a relationship when you have different outlook on how TKES should be implemented." The negative experiences for this teacher led to frustration each time the evaluator returned to the classroom and the feedback was not trusted as valid. The teacher shared, "If you want to know what's going on in my classroom, you need to come in and let me keep teaching." The teacher continued later in the interview, "I've had great ones where I felt like, I felt valued. And I felt like that person knew what was happening. And I felt like that was a valid evaluation, because…they knew what I was trying to accomplish when they sat down." But when the assistant principal's classroom experience did not include the subject being observed, questions of validity continued to arise.

Trust. The perceived subjectivity levels in the evaluations caused trust issues. While previously noted, cognitive and affective trust made up the basis of the teacher's trust in the evaluator's impression of their teaching abilities. Dr. Carter also identified political trust. Political trust (Schoon & Cheng, 2011; Hooghe, Marien, & de Vroome, 2012) is a contextual and abstract pro-social behavior taught and enhanced through the education process. Dr. Carter's role included political trust as a concern he needed to be both aware of when interacting with the board of education, but also a concern to ensure teacher cooperation. Dr. Carter described political trust as reliance that the other's heart was in the right place for the betterment of the students involved and their actions would reflect that trust. It is a cognitive based trust (Schoon & Cheng, 2011).

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

The principal's role identity is changing. With increased policy expectations coming

from external stakeholders and government agencies, principalships must make adjustments in

their daily management practices of the schools. How does a principal in a rural Georgia county

with a large high school population manage his required policy implementation expectations and

lead his school towards improved student achievement?

Summary

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of the principal as an intermediate policy

implementer while implementing federal and state educational policies, with a specific focus on

the implementation of Georgia's TKES. The primary research questions for this study are: (1)

what is the role of the school principal as an intermediary policy implementer, and (2) how does

the school principal's self-defined role as the intermediary policy implementer influence his

implementation effectiveness? Using Spillane's Distributed Leadership theory, role identity

development theories, and policy implementation theories to frame a qualitative case study, this

study focused on Dr. Carter from Pleasant Valley High School and his implementation of TKES.

Based on an adjusted Distributed Leadership model (Figure 3.1), the researcher examined the

relationships between the principal and the situation, the principal and the other leaders, the

principal and the teachers, and the principal and the local Board of Education. These

relationships represent the embedded units of analysis associated with the principal within the

context of Pleasant Valley High School's implementation of Georgia's TKES.

To study those units of analysis, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews of the principal, the assistant principals, and a group of teacher representatives with various years of experience within the specific school context.   Documents from the school and the state and US Departments of Education were gathered and analyzed to assist in triangulating the context the school's expected situation, via school climate and culture. The researcher utilized previous connections earned with study participants from inside the school as outside insider. The researcher did work within Pleasant Valley High School, but not as a teacher in one of the represented content departments or as a school leader. Participant names were substituted with pseudonyms, as were names used in interviews. While a profile chart (Appendix A) was created to list and briefly describe the participants, the subject areas in which the degrees were earned were removed, also to protect the anonymity of the participants. The data was collected, transcribed and analyzed by hand and through a purchased qualitative data analysis software program, NVivo2.

According to Dr. Carter, his defined role as an intermediate policy implementer was primarily through delegation of implementation responsibilities through the assistant principals to master the content, train the teachers, and evaluate the teachers. He also provided support to assist the assistant principals in their role as a supportive team for the teachers to help the teachers improve their effectiveness in the classroom and ultimately improve student achievement scores and rates. Dr. Carter's role as a supportive role model for the assistant principals allowed him to "support [the administrative team] to support the teachers". Often Dr. Carter's supportive role went unnoticed, but assumed, by the teaching staff, as they were not direct recipients of his support.

Conclusions

Dr. Carter at Pleasant Valley High School, as the school principal of a large high school in a rural Georgia county, has relied on the power of relationships to build his role identity. Applying the Distributed Leadership model, Dr. Carter's interactions with his background, the school's culture and climate, the assistant principals, the external school Board of Education, and the teachers worked together to define his practices, which in turn defined his role's identity (McLaughlin, 2006; Spillane et al., 2006; Fuhrman et al., 1991). After Dr. Carter went through the process of defining his role, he had to follow the steps laid out by Waldman, Galvin, and Walumbwa (2012): define the role for himself, share that role with others, and internalize the role by applying it. Once his role was defined and internalized, policy implementation was ready to occur.

Distributed Role Identity

Gardner (1990) claimed through interactions with others "leaders shape and are shaped" (p. 17). Dr. Carter's background and relationships with his father, grandmother, teachers and coaches molded him into a leader who chose a team approach preferring to share decision making opportunities with those identified as part of his team. His historic relationships laid the foundation of his professional ideology (Fuhrman et al., 1991), which he defined as humble, open, and shared.

When defining his role based on his current situations, Dr. Carter participates in a sense-making activity with the school context to identify which practices should be used to carry out his positional expectations (Spillane et al., 2006; McLaughlin, 2006; Fuhrman et al., 1991; Spillane et al., 2002). Dr. Carter's position, as a school leader, also expects him to comply with any and all policy implementation requirements (Fuhrman et al., 1991). His interactions with the

other human participants in his reality affect his interpretation of which steps he should take to promote the situation towards his intended goal.

Role Identity Development

During Dr. Carter's process to define his role identity, he defines his expectations for himself within the context of his situation. Dr. Carter defined his role within the policy implementation expectation at Pleasant Valley High School as a delegator, team support builder, plan assistant, and the final authority when necessary. After defining his role expectations, Dr. Carter shared his expectations with his team and began immediately applying these practices to his interactions with the team regarding the TKES implementation.

As a delegator, he identified which team members would best be suited to carry about the tasks required for a smooth implementation of Georgia's TKES. Mrs. Gatsby, as the curriculum, instruction, and testing coordination assistant principal, was a nearly perfect fit for the task. She has a passion for education and improving teacher instruction to improve student performance. Her roles were then to master the information, prepare the teachers through planning, and evaluate a set of assigned teachers. She acted as the point person for the process and content. She was the initial go-to for all things TKES.

Dr. Carter defined himself as a team support builder. He focused on supporting the team and building their capacity to implement the new evaluation method. Mrs. Harkin described his role as a support person as a vital component of her ability to support the teachers she was assigned to evaluate and support. In this sense, Mrs. Harkin acts as an intermediary support person connecting Dr. Carter to her teachers.

When assisting in building the plan for implementation, Dr. Carter initially acted as a sounding board to discuss, vent, and strategize methods for the three assistant principals to take

lead on this implementation plan. All three assistant principals noted Dr. Carter's active

involvement behind the scenes in planning the implementation process.

The last role Dr. Carter identified for himself was the final authority. This role played

out in practice differently depending on the situation. Mr. Crane assured that ultimately, what

Dr. Carter said, went. If Dr. Carter didn't want the team to do something, he would veto it and

they would come up with another approach. Mr. Crane explained this was the direct result of Dr.

Carter serving as the authority figure for the school in the Board of Education. Another way Dr.

Carter was the final authority, as Mrs. Harkin described it, included him stepping in when a

teacher who was struggling either refused to improve or correct her behavior. Dr. Carter would

lead what he referred to as,"courageous conversations" designed to address unprofessional

behavior or behavior that just was not meeting the expectation Dr. Carter had for his teaching

staff. Mrs. Gatsby described Dr. Carter's final authority status as the ultimate project facilitator.

The project facilitator with final say is necessary to successfully implement new policy (Louis &

Miles, 1990) as he is the only one who can make some difficult calls.

Role Implementation

All participants described the physical TKES implementation process as smooth or "well

done" or "nearly perfect," and even if they did not agree with the program being implemented,

the participants commended the process. Fowler (2013) described part of the school leader's

updated job duties as implementing policy. To fully implement, Dr. Carter had to trust in the

assistant principals to carry out the implementation plans as delegated, which encouraged their

confidence and leadership competencies promoting their capacities to grow as well (Shaubroek

et al., 2011).

To define the effectiveness of Dr. Carter's implementation plans, one looks for a smooth implementation. Smooth effective implementation as result of assistant principals being knowledgeable of policy, ideology behind policy, having required materials, supportive culture for expectations, and motivation to create the change resulting from implementation (Huberman & Miles, 1984; Gross et al., 1971). Effective implementation resulted from sound evolutionary planning (Louis & Miles, 1990) and forward mapping (Weimer & Vining, 2011) with continuous monitoring and feedback to make changes as they require (Fowler, 2013).

All evidence supports these three components of an effective implementation process. Dr. Carter's plan should involve evolutionary planning as the team remained flexible to make changes each year as well as mid-year as the situation necessitated when Dr. Carter's evaluation responsibilities were too time consuming considering his other principalship responsibilities. Forward mapping was evidenced through the implementation training plans when they chose not to evaluate a teacher based on performance standards they had yet to present to the teachers. They started the year with a goal for the professional learning regarding TKES training. One could also say that Dr. Carter's identified goal for his students, which helped to define the school's culture as student centric, promoting higher student achievement rates demonstrated movement and progress through TKES towards the larger picture goal provided by Dr. Carter.

Implications

The results of this study demonstrate the role all stakeholders play in the actions, behaviors, and expectations of the school principal in his ability carry out his duties and responsibilities, even when examining his intermediary responsibilities as assigned him from external forces. But the stakeholders do not make the final call of the principal's decisions. The decisions are his and show that the school's effectiveness still results from his actions. The

primary implication from this study suggests policymakers be aware of their impact on school activities and progress towards student improvement goals. If the principal's job is to support the teachers and work as a team towards higher students achievement rates, the policies he has to implement need to reflect that.

Future studies using the mixture of the Distributed Leadership, role identity, and policy implementation theories to examine the principal's effective implementation of educational policies should be conducted with more schools and wider-range of diversity in participating populations. The administrative team, while diverse in gender, was composed of socio-economically and racially similar participants. The participating teachers were also composed of the same racial background and similar education levels. All participating teachers either had multiple degrees or working on obtaining another degree. The members of the departments and their availability and eagerness to participate tempered the participation pool. This researcher would suggest the greater diversity in representation for a more holistic perspective representative of the school demographic.

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APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

Participant	Job Title	Profile	General Impression of principal's TKES implementation
Dr. Carter	Principal	Pleasant Valley High School Alumnus BSEd, MEd, EdD Coach, Teacher, AP	Focused on building trust in the administrator, as primary evaluators, by creating sense of "shared decision-making process" with the administrative team. Worked behind the scenes as a self-identified developmental facilitator supporting his team through their summer TKES training sessions, team building planning sessions, reflective discussions with tweaking of process, and provided the final authority for implementation plans.
Mrs. Gatsby	Assistant Principal	BS, MAT, EdS Teacher	Identified the principal as the team leader who provided feedback based on shared ideas and plans for the TKES implementation.
Mrs. Harkin	Assistant Principal	BSEd, MEd, EdS Teacher	Appreciated the supportive nature of the principal, which in turn assisted the assistant principal in supporting the teachers. "He supports us to support them."
Mr. Crane	Assistant Principal	AB, MEd, EdS Coach, Teacher , Athletic Director	Identified the principal as the final authority and the assistant principal's role is to support the principal's leadership decisions regarding all matters, including the implementation plan.
Mrs. Quimby	Teacher	ABJ, MEd, EdS, EdD gifted certified	Did not note an apparent direct link between the administrative team's implementation of TKES and the principal's actions. She does assume there must be some behind the scenes delegation of responsibility and practice linking administrative team's implementation with the principal's leadership and instruction.
Mrs. Godberd	Teacher	AB, MAT, EdS	Considered TKES a joke what was well implemented by the administrative team. It appeared to be well planned. Training sessions appeared to be well throughout and thorough. Authentic, team-like approach by the administrative team towards the implementation of

			a state mandated program.
Mrs. Pascal	Teacher	BS, AB, MAT gifted certified AP certified	Did not connect the principal's leadership with the administrative team's actions during the TKES implementation process.
Mrs. Descartes	Teacher	BSEd, Med	Did not note a connection between the principal's actions and the administrative team's practices during the TKES implementation process.
Mr. Newton	Teacher	BSEd, MEd, EdS gifted endorsement finalist for GA TOTY club sponsor	Noted belief in the administrative team implementing a required program as prescribed by the state, but also noting the team had done a nearly perfect attempt to implement TKES at Pleasant Valley High School.
Mr. Oglethorpe	Teacher	BA, MEd gifted endorsed AP certified coach	Appreciated the shared responsibility between the four administrative team members, especially referring to the physical evaluation process.
Mr. Arnall	Teacher	BSEd, BA, MEd (In progress) coach	Expressed the opinion that TKES had "been implemented fairly well" at Pleasant Valley High School. Noted the principal relied on his administrative team to train and implement the program.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Principal Interview Questions

Interview 1

1. What is your leadership role when interacting with the other school leaders?
2. What is your leadership role when interacting with your teaching staff?
3. What is your leadership role when interacting with BOE?
4. How did you define your role? What process did you go through?
5. On a scale of 1-10, how static is your role's definition? Why?
6. What methods do you use when defining your role as a policy implementer?

Interview 2

7. How has your defined role impacted your TKES policy implementation?
8. How effective would you rate your TKES policy implementation?
9. What factors do you think have attributed to your TKES policy implementation effectiveness?

Assistant Principal Interview Questions

1. What is your role when implementing TKES?
2. How did your role become defined?
3. What methods do you use to implement according to your role?
4. How does the principal influence your actions when implementing TKES?

Teacher Interview Questions

1. Tell me how well you feel TKES has been implemented at this school.
2. Explain the impact implementing TKES has had on your impression of the school climate and culture.
3. Explain the impact implementing TKES has had on your interactions with the principal and assistant principals.
4. Tell me how implementing TKES has influenced your interactions with teacher peers.
5. How effective has the principal's implementation of TKES seemed to you? Why do you feel this way?